

Youth Unemployment: Do You Have an Attitude Issue?

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SUMMARY

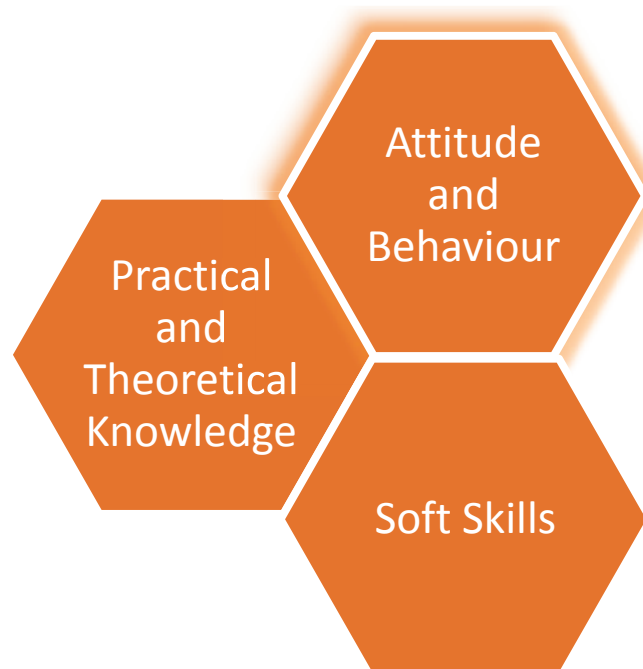
Youth unemployment is an issue that is very high on the agenda worldwide. Even though it is not specific to Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), it appears that young people in this country are faring the worst with 58% of youth unemployed. The predominant view holds that their predicament is exclusively due to the bad economic environment and lack of opportunities, but overlooks the factor of youth's behaviour and attitude when entering the job market.

Being aware of the multiple layers and numerous factors contributing towards this chronic issue, we have decided to embark on a path of explaining its complexities through a larger project addressing each of the layers separately. Each of the briefs in this series will tackle one specific aspect that contributes to the problem of youth unemployment and how these factors and their interconnection are comprehended by different groups. This brief is the first one in this series, and deals with often overlooked attitudes in the studies of youth unemployment.

The youth of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) are widely regarded as knowledgeable, capable and willing to work; only that many of them are unemployed because in BiH of today there are no opportunities. But have you ever wondered how many of the highly educated young people would be willing to temporarily take up *any* job, including bartending or working in a car wash just to get by and not be dependent on their parents? Have you ever thought about how many of them are prepared to actually step out of their comfort zone and relocate to a different part of BiH if offered a job? Did you ever pay attention to the youth's understanding of the value of money in relation to the quantity and quality of work it requires? Have you ever tried to count young people in your proximity, who are gaining work experience while studying, volunteering or doing internships, and if you did, was it more than a single digit number? And finally, has it ever occurred to you that the attitude of the young and highly educated young people in BiH, when they are entering the labour market, might not be best adapted to today's capitalist markets?

If you never thought about these questions, the following brief will prompt you to. Analyses dealing with youth unemployment nowadays for the most part focus on the bad economic

environment. They look at the demand side of the labour market in terms of its low level of job-seekers absorption, and neglect the supply side of the chain. Rarely, studies emphasise the actual competencies of the workforce: the knowledge, the skills and the behaviour combined. Behaviour especially is hardly ever discussed, as it includes difficult to pin down aspects such as preparedness, attitude or mind set of the fresh workforce to enter and participate in the job market. The attitudes we are putting forward in this analysis are understood as a *“relatively stable overt behaviour of a person which affects his status.”*¹ Attitudes are due to their nature near impossible to measure and thus under researched, which does not make them less important; in a capitalist environment of the 21st century, for instance, young workforce should aside from its knowledge and skills also prove its employability through flexible and pro-active attitude or an inclination towards accepting alternatives. This brief will shed light on the attitude aspect as one of the overlapping components of the much broader and complex youth unemployment problem. It will voice what, from our experience, many are thinking but are not willing to say – and we will encourage you to think again. Critically.

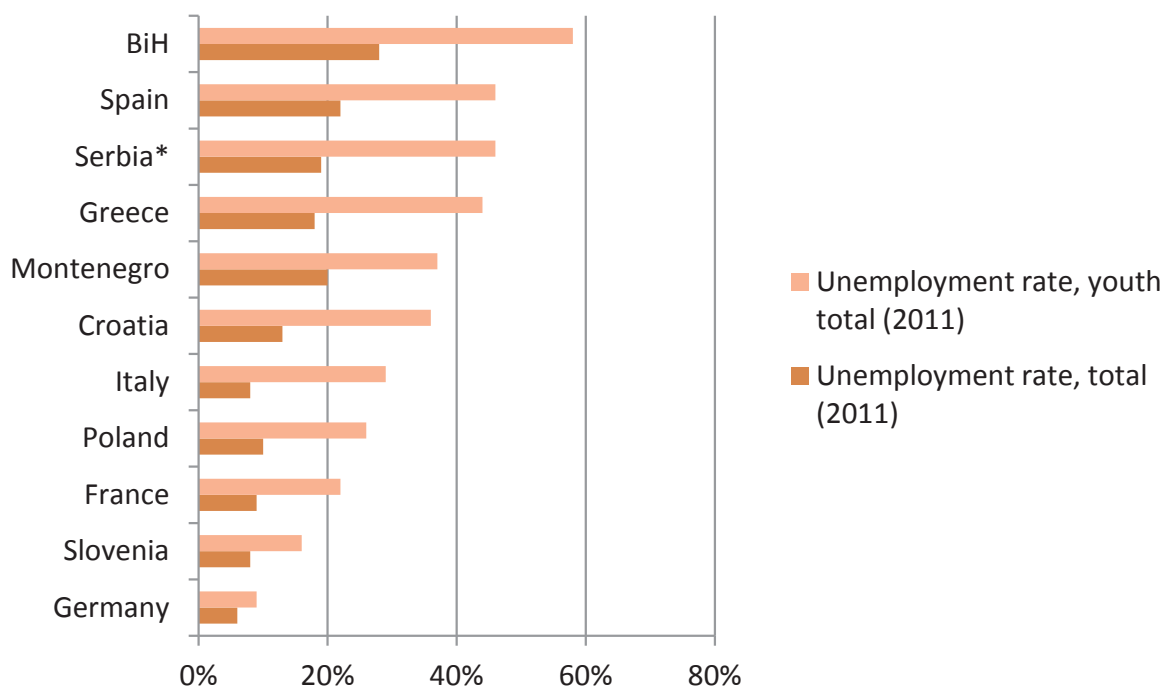


Bosnians are not Special

According to the latest data almost 58% of BiH youth among 15 and 24 years of age are unemployed.² In statistical sense this means that 58% of that age range of the labour force is without work, but available for and seeking employment. It is particularly worrying because the rate is more than double the overall unemployment level and is by far the highest unemployment among the countries in the region. But not only in the Western Balkans, all over Europe the issue of youth unemployment has turned to be *“the most pressing problem facing [the continent] at the present time,”*³ especially in countries like Greece or Spain, where youth find it similarly difficult getting a job in comparison to the rest of the population. The chart below illustrates a comparison of youth unemployment and overall unemployment rates in some of the Western Balkan and European Union (EU) countries.

Another almost universal issue in context of youth unemployment is that many of the unemployed are highly educated. According to the Agency for Statistics of BiH,⁴ out of more than half a million people that were registered as unemployed in July 2013, 38,834 persons had graduated from university. This is roughly only 7%, but with around 20,000 students graduating in BiH every year,⁵ this means there are almost two full generations of graduates registered as unemployed at the moment. Surely, a part of the youth’s overall predicament is due to the general economic downturn and lack of opportunities, they are mostly listing as the primary reasons for their predicament.⁶

But youth unemployment is a far more complex issue generated by numerous mutually enforcing and even overlapping factors that tend to form a vicious circle, which is hard to break.



*Data for Serbia is from 2010.

Chart 2: Total unemployment and youth (15–24) unemployment rates in selected Western Balkan and EU countries
Source: The World Bank (World Development Indicators)

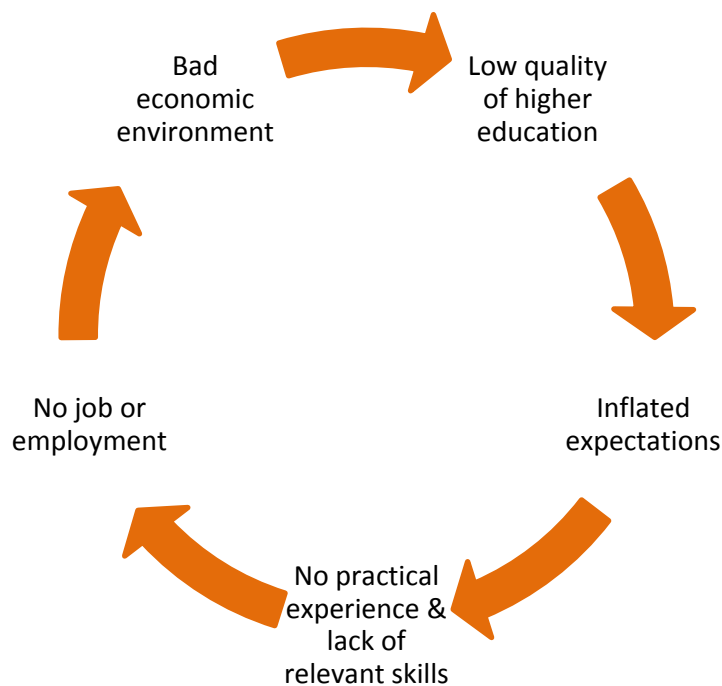


Chart 3: The vicious circle of youth unemployment in BiH

Due to a lack of investment into the educational system and of effective labour market policies – which is officially mainly due to the bad economic situation – the quality of higher education in BiH remains low. Regardless, students are made feeling special and made believe they are the elite, which leads to their inflated expectations and a clear misjudgement of the real value and applicability of their knowledge. The system also rarely provides relevant skills or opportunities to gain practical experience, which is partly why youth do not understand the need for their constant improvement or for life-long learning. Equipped with outdated knowledge and no experience, they find it difficult to get a job; hence, the human resources that should in ideal circumstances represent the potential of the society, are underutilised and their already low skills further drained. In turn, this is another contributing element worsening the economic environment in BiH, which thus joins the vicious circle's ends.

Great Expectations

If we enter the circle immediately upon the problem of bad education, the first problem are youth's frequent unrealistic expectations. Jasmin

Bešić from the Institute for Youth Development KULT describes how when enquiring about what young people in BiH would want to do, a lot of the recent graduates said how the perfect job would be to sit in a café, and over telephone manage their employees.⁷ Many of such idealistic pictures of what 'work' and effort needed to earn money are like are founded on the belief of youth that they are special and entitled to special treatment because they finished university. This, in turn, is to a large part seeded into them during their studies under the guidance of the 'old school' academics. Most of the latter have been in their positions since either the time of Yugoslavia or since the war, and hold a monopoly over the knowledge that is shared with younger generations. As Sifet Kukuruz, Assistant Minister for Higher Education in the Sarajevo Canton, explains, the promotion into academic ranks leaves little space for newcomers and fresh ideas:

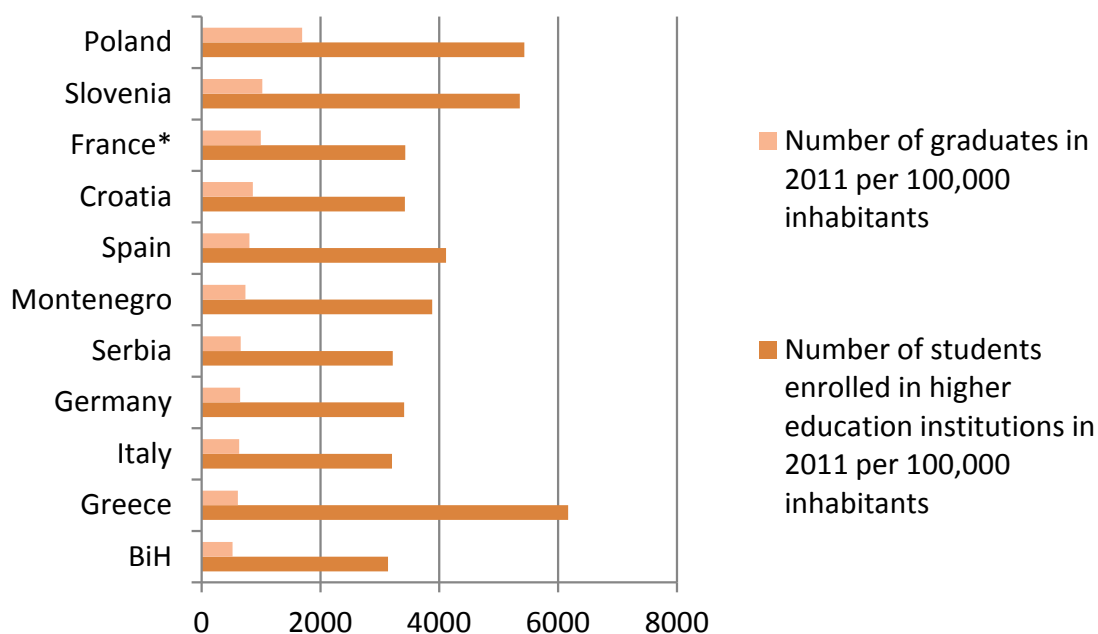
"Most often than not, promotions from one academic rank to the other are automatic. I have never seen a scholar remain in the same academic rank for longer than the minimum period of time. [...] And once you get to the rank of a professor, you will await your retirement in that position."⁸

Many of these same professors continue passing on the same knowledge they have been passing on years ago, which is then dry theory that is not adapted to the current state of the world and hardly includes any practical application.⁹ Like the academics, young people are then also not encouraged to be active, to learn at all times or be progressive or critical about their work. Students are made believe that they are elite or the so called “academic citizens”,¹⁰ and that a job is likely waiting for them at the doorstep of their faculty. This appears to be a part of the heritage of former Yugoslav time during which higher education was reserved for a small portion of the society:¹¹

“Truth be told, the academic community in BiH does not exist. [...] And yet they inflate students’ ideas that solely because they will soon graduate they are special, they are “academic citizens”, believed to be better than others. In accordance with that they should do precisely what they were educated for. Professors make students believe some jobs are shameful if you are highly educated.”¹²

But in fact being a university graduate today is nothing special and elite anymore with 20,000 young people graduating yearly only in BiH and more than 4.5 million throughout the EU.¹³ What is more, nowadays tertiary education is not necessarily related to better employability. Greece, for instance, has a very high ratio of students in relation to the rest of the population, a relatively low number of graduates, but at the same time one of the highest unemployment rates all in all. Germany, though, has a relatively small number of students and graduates, and yet low unemployment, which could indicate to better targeted and better overall quality of its educational programmes. Bottom line, however, is that being a student or a graduate in today’s economic situation in itself no longer guarantees a job to an individual, especially if one’s academic education is outdated and not practical.

Similar to the academic community, the influence of the parents can also be linked to youth’s inflated expectations. The parents of those who are now considered young were born when comrade Tito was still around, when former Yugoslavia was in expansion, and when job



*Data for France is from 2010.

Chart 4: Ratios of students and graduates per a hundred thousand inhabitants

Sources: Agency for Statistics BiH; Eurostat; Statistical Office of Montenegro; Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia.

opportunities were abundant and secure without the need to be creative and to stand out.¹⁴ In the early 1990s a war followed, which together with the post-conflict reconstruction efforts left many people additionally passive and waiting for – or even expecting – help. Is it then realistic to expect from parents who were raised and lived in such spirits to encourage pro-activeness in their children? Probably not. But it similarly also does not make sense for them to be looking for jobs for their children or to eternally support their studies, vacation and/or other spare time activities. Davor Odobašić, Executive Director at Posao.ba¹⁵ describes:

“Instead of letting them find a job for themselves, to earn money on their own and experience hard work, parents are loading young people with pocket money, and then vacation money so that they can relax after a year of focused studies. Parents are subsidising their kids’ unemployment!”¹⁶

To make matters worse they often make their children believe that after an investment into their education – which is in BiH public universities for regular full time students free,¹⁷ and amounts only to administrative costs – they are “too valuable” to either do jobs that are not considered prestigious or fitting to their educational profile, or even less to do unpaid internships or volunteer.¹⁸ Less than a half of youth have during their studies gained practical work experience,¹⁹ while only around 20% of them had volunteering experience.²⁰ In comparison, for instance, in the United Kingdom where graduate or post-graduate studies at public universities can cost as much as 20,000 KM,²¹ nearly two thirds of students are currently doing various part-time students jobs in order to cover their living expenses.²² Most of these positions include bar services, working in fast food restaurants or hotel receptions, even though they are “below” the educational profile of the students. Summer breaks are, apart from vacation, also used for volunteering and internships, through which students boost their CVs, gain experience and improve their employability. A similar trend has also been established in Croatia, where a research

shows that more than half of job-seekers make use of the summer to apply for jobs more actively than during the rest of the year.²³

In BiH, though, the most frequent attitude “I would never work for free!” speaks volumes of their awareness of reality and the need to gain practical experience. Similarly, a large part of the youth thus tends to decline a job offer if it entails a move, especially to a less urban area. Internal mobility in BiH is almost non-existent,²⁴ as only around 6% of Bosnian youth have either for a shorter or a longer period of time worked outside of their municipality of residence.²⁵ Ljubiša Mičić, Project Manager at the Centre for Career Development and a student himself, speaks from his experience:

“Among people that surround me or among my acquaintances I often see, how they study and don’t do anything else either during the studies or afterwards. [...] There is absolutely no investment in one’s own skills or preparedness to take up an opportunity when it comes your way, especially if it is first working experience. They reject everything that is ‘below them’, they are not interested. But then they complain about everything but themselves.”²⁶

Young people are often also not aware of the reality in the sense that it is better to do anything – being a waiter, a promoter or a driver – than nothing. According to the research done by Youth Development Institute KULT that included surveying privately-owned companies, education if it is not combined with working experience does not mean much. 80% of the surveyed companies believe education is not producing cadres that can be employed immediately without any prior experience; for the same percentage of them it is then important for the job-seekers to have prior working experience.²⁷ Most of the employers base their argument not only on the need for practical knowledge young graduates gain with work experience, but also with the need for them to demonstrate their willingness to work, to learn and of cultivating healthy work ethic.²⁸

Taking the Path of Least Resistance?

Private companies, which are normally due to their need to subsist in the market very demanding in terms of their employees' competency, are most often not where young people in BiH would seek their 'dream jobs'. One research shows that the state is the ideal company owner for more than a half of Bosnians.²⁹ At the same time, for three years in a row, between 2010 and 2012 the results of the project 'Most wanted employer' in BiH put state-owned companies BH Telecom and Elektroprivreda BiH on the first two or three positions of top employers Bosnians want to work for.³⁰ Similar to the state-owned companies, working in public administration has come to be a much desired prestige, but at the same time also a safe option of blending into the crowd and a tested matrix:³¹

"Nowadays, young people are looking for job posts, but not for actual work. Seeing how the public administration in BiH functions, and not being willing to progress or do a lot of work, everyone wants to join the administration because it spells security to them. But honestly, I don't understand how someone in their 20s or 30s would want to work in the same position for 1,000 KM per month for the rest of their lives. Where is the ambition?"³²

Again, possibly as a remnant of the 'old times' when a secure job with a permanent contract was the biggest possible career success, working in the private sector where you need to prove yourself every day and can – although with difficulty – climb the hierarchical ladder, is not considered safe. And even though more than a half of youth claim that their career is important to them,³³ the effort to build it is minimal. As Snežana Borovčanin from the Employment Institute of Republika Srpska elaborates, young graduates do not understand that their first job is just that – a first job.³⁴ It is a springboard to a further career, which is inherently something that can be gradually built and improved. But that is something young people do not comprehend, as well as they also do not consider alternatives or

other fields they could work in when they do not immediately get the job they want.

A case in point of the opposite is Davor Odobašić, whom we talked to in his capacity of the Executive Director at employment portal Posao.ba. His path is an example of how young people should ideally stand up on their feet, even though the floor might be wobbly; he initially finished a post-secondary programme in physical therapy, hoping he could work in medical rehabilitation. Things, though, went off the foreseen path and he found himself unemployed which lasted for more than a year; realising that his 'dream job' will not knock on his door, he started taking up an odd job here and there. Driving more or less important persons to or from the airport during the day or doing massages after 5 p.m. was enough to get him by, but would also leave him frustrated as he could still spend most of the day sitting around. Somehow, the road finally led him to join Posao.ba in 2005, after he was frustrated with drinking coffee. Since then he finished undergraduate studies in economics, and subsequently an MBA.³⁵

Davor's case illustrates how greater things can be created out of small ones provided that you have the attitude it takes. There are also industries out there that might not sound as fancy as marketing, management or information technology that provide space and opportunities that are rarely taken. Nobody wants to work in, for example, agriculture, because being a farmer is not considered prestigious.³⁶ And that is in spite of the fact that agriculture in BiH has several times proven to be a lucrative business, especially when combined with innovative approaches. The example of Krompir.ba proves this. An invention of young entrepreneurs – brothers Amel and Almir Mukača, and their friends – combined family's agricultural tradition with a model seen in the United Kingdom, and a healthy work ethic. A very simple concept of delivering fresh and organic vegetable boxes to the clients' home addresses has in the past few years enabled them to include 10 to 15 farmers

in their co-operative and employ more than 10 people. Putting effort into developing an idea and a business in agriculture has in this case proven that even agriculture can be an area in which good jobs are created.

But with such simple and effective ideas that only require an appropriate mind set and not also a university diploma, at most universities the number of post-graduate master students is at the same time increasing – partly also because many young people find it better to be in education than looking for or creating a job. In BiH, the number of students has doubled in the past 15 years. In the 1999/2000 academic year, around 58,000 students were enrolled, while by the 2012/2013 academic year this number has increased to more than 115,000 students.³⁷ But simultaneously with an increased production of university graduates in general, there is also a hyper-production of certain profiles. For instance, there are large numbers of criminologists, psychologists and social workers³⁸ who have difficulties finding a job, while there always seems to be a need for IT experts, pharmacists or people working in the tourism sector.³⁹ Given that especially for some educational profiles there is a lot of competition when trying to find a job, it would be reasonable to expect of young graduated job-seekers to strive to stand out, to be different from the mass, to do better and more, to not study for the sake of a diploma but for the sake of gaining knowledge, being competent and actually representing what was once termed “academic citizens”.

Looking for a Job is a Job

But most of the young people do not feel the need for standing out; in spite of the great feeling of entitlement, they are convinced it is impossible to find jobs without some sort of connections and nepotism. This implies that they are aware of the low quality of higher education they are getting and its inapplicability to the world today, but do not want to acknowledge this.⁴⁰ According to one research, only every 12th young person in BiH believes getting a job is possible on merit, and more than a half of youth who are still in schooling find nepotism imperative to get a job,

which is a trend similar in for instance Croatia or Serbia, where 52% and 45% of youth share the same opinion respectively.⁴¹ Many thus do find it unlikely that positions are not filled based on personal acquaintances, and consequently they also do not trust the actual human resources selection procedures.

Yet, in reality, every time a position is advertised, there is almost certainly an entire pool of people applying for it. Posao.ba in average gets 100 applications for a single position, all of which then compete in the selection process. Processing all of them is a huge administrative burden and employers often reply only when the candidate has been selected for an interview. When there is no feedback to application, many young people neglect the possibility that one’s application did not stand out enough to proceed to the second stage of the selection process, and prefer to believe their application ended up in the garbage bin and interpret this as the position being filled by the son of employer’s best friend anyways.⁴²

This is indicative of a profound lack of self-criticism and awareness of the reality among young people. When applying for a job, especially in the non-state sector it is vital to impress the potential employer with the presentation of one’s knowledge, skills, attitude and willingness to work and learn. This is where soft skills, like functional literacy, communication or presentation skills come in. But Bojana Vujinović who was leading the CISO centre⁴³ in Banja Luka tells of the young people’s most frequent standpoint:

“They first come with the conviction that they know everything, as if they are ashamed to learn anything new. When they realise this is not the case, they become sceptic of how a CV and a motivation letter will actually get them a job.”⁴⁴

When young people do send the CVs or cover letters, though, the key issue is that to a large extent they are simply bad. Jasmin Bešić and Davor Odošić both tell of the same patterns; first and foremost, all possible documents other than those required (e.g. certificates and transcripts instead of CVs and motivation letters)

are sent which leave the potential employer with the sense that the applicant does not possess basic reading skills. Secondly, when correct documents are sent, the applications are incomplete (e.g. no contact information), and either written in bad grammar (be it English or BHS) or include a number of spelling and similar mistakes that give the impression the applicant spent no more than 5 minutes putting it together. Thirdly, they are clearly not targeted and adapted for a specific job post, but rather copy-pasted and sent around to numerous different addresses automatically. And fourthly, they are rife with lies – from those related to the ability to speak languages to computer programme knowledge.

Lies, when related to job applications, are very short-lived. Of course, the applicant should do their utmost best to present themselves in a light that would intrigue the potential employer and want the applicant on their team. But not with lies. Similar to how the grade average achieved at the university means nothing to employers,⁴⁵ English language certificates attached to the CV mean nothing to employers when they can easily check applicant's English language knowledge skills during an interview with a little chat in English. And finding out that the applicant cannot in fact speak English, but only "understand it", is not something that would get the applicant a job. And with neglecting or rejecting all of the above, many of the young people get caught in a vicious circle of unemployment – and combined with the bad economic environment, it is difficult getting out of it.

However, it is not impossible. Practical advice on how to write a CV, how to prepare for an interview and boost one's own competency and employability, are not only available through numerous non-formal education channels, but also on the internet. Online, young people can also find information on measures for active

employment, implemented by both the RS and FBiH employment bureaus. Through the programmes they subsidize employment of youth (for university as well as secondary school graduates) for a year as a manner of gaining first working experience. Reportedly, about a third of them remains with the same employer and continue working for them.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, it is only a small percentage (around a quarter)⁴⁷ of youth that have heard of such programmes, even though in a digital age information is available to all.

"According to some estimation 80% of young people in BiH are using Facebook. And for many of those, Facebook is their main preoccupation and the only source of finding information. If it is posted on Facebook, they will know of it, if not, they will not search it. No one googles anymore."⁴⁸

Instead of a Conclusion

Like many other social phenomena this one, too, according to an economic analyst and management expert Erol Mujanović "[...] follows the Pareto distribution rule: 80–20."⁴⁹ The 20 is in this case represented by those trying at all fronts, pushing to be best, knowing that nowadays it is all about soft skills, up-to-date knowledge, practical experience and flexibility that go beyond the BiH context. Those are the ones that are self-driven, want to find a job and work, and were *not* a subject of this brief. The majority of the 80%, however, is the group that we hope will read this paper. We live in the 21st century, when enrolling in a university or graduating from it is not special and thus does not in itself guarantee a job. For that we need a bit more: that bit is a proper attitude.

Endnotes

- ¹ Bain, Read. 1928. "An Attitude on Attitude Research", American Journal of Sociology, 33(6): 940–957.
- ² The World Bank. 2013. "From Double-Dip Recession to Fragile Recovery", South East Europe Regular Economic Report, No. 4, 18 June.
- ³ Kate Connolly. 2013. "Angela Merkel: Youth Unemployment is the Most Pressing Problem Facing Europe", The Guardian, 2 July.
- ⁴ Agency for Statistics of BiH. 2013. "First Release: Registered Unemployment in July 2013", year VII, number 7.
- ⁵ Agency for Statistics of BiH. 2013. "First Release: Education Statistics for 2012/2013", year VIII, number 1.
- ⁶ Populari interview with Ljubiša Mičić, Project Manager at Center for Career Development, 7 March 2013.
- ⁷ Populari interview with Jasmin Bešić, Executive Director at the Institute for Youth Development KULT, 23 September 2013.
- ⁸ Populari interview with Sifet Kukuruz, Assistant Minister for Higher Education in the Sarajevo Canton, 23 September 2013.
- ⁹ Populari interview with Mario Milanović, Director at University of Banja Luka Entrepreneurship Center, 7 March 2013.
- ¹⁰ The notion "academic citizens" marks highly educated members of the society, who tend to stand out from the average in that they participate actively in the society and aim to contribute back to it.
- ¹¹ According to the Unesco Statistical Yearbook (cited in Šoljan, Nikša Nikola. 1991. "The Saga of Higher Education in Yugoslavia: Beyond the Myths of a Self-Management Socialist Society", Comparative Education Review, (35)1: 131–153) there were 1,491 students per a hundred thousand inhabitants in Yugoslavia. In BiH today, the same ratio is at around 3,000 students while neighbouring countries such as Croatia and Serbia count 3,400 or 3,700 students per a hundred thousand inhabitants respectively.
- ¹² Populari interview with Davor Odobašić, Executive Director at Posao.ba, 17 September 2013.
- ¹³ Eurostat. 2010. Tertiary Education Statistics, Graduates from Tertiary Education.
- ¹⁴ Populari interview with Mario Milanović, Director at University of Banja Luka Entrepreneurship Center, 7 March 2013.
- ¹⁵ Posao.ba is the first and largest private employment web portal in BiH. Within its scope of work and activities there is also a human resources recruitment agency that is working with various clients. Posao.ba was established with the goal of making BiH a part of universal trends of internet databases and online information exchange related to job-seeking.
- ¹⁶ Populari interview with Davor Odobašić, Executive Director at Posao.ba, 17 September 2013.
- ¹⁷ In BiH the majority of places public universities offer to students are financially covered from the budget of the respective level of government. At the same time, there is also a limited number of places available for regular full time students who should cover the costs of the programme themselves. In this case the tuition fees vary from around 200 to 1.500 euros per year, depending on the university and the study programme.
- ¹⁸ Populari interview with Bojana Vujinović, Leader of the CISO center in Banja Luka, 7 March 2013.
- ¹⁹ Prism Research & MDG Achievement Fund. 2012. "Voices of Youth: Survey on Youth in BiH. Quantitative Research Findings", February 2012.
- ²⁰ Posao.ba. 2011. "Istraživanje: Profesionalna očekivanja mladih", August 2011.
- ²¹ In December 2010 the government of the United Kingdom adopted a policy which allows the universities in England to charge up to £9,000 per year of undergraduate studies.
- ²² Leone Richmond. 2013. "Student Part-Time Work Increases", The Times Higher Education, 2 September.
- ²³ MojPosao.hr. 2013. "Aktivno ljeto: Dok jedni traže posao, drugi o njemu razmišljaju i na godišnjem."
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- ²⁵ Prism Research & MDG Achievement Fund. 2012. "Voices of Youth: Survey on Youth in BiH. Quantitative Research Findings", February 2012.
- ²⁶ Populari interview with Ljubiša Mičić, Project Manager at Center for Career Development, 7 March 2013.
- ²⁷ Institut za razvoj mladih KULT. 2013. "Koje su potrebe na tržištu rada? Za 75% poslodavaca volontersko iskustvo nije bitno prilikom zapošljavanja", IUVENTA, časopis o radu s mladima, no. 3, April 2013.
- ²⁸ Populari interview with Davor Odobašić, Executive Director at Posao.ba, 17 September 2013.
- ²⁹ Posao.ba, Mojposao & Infostud. 2010. "Regionalno tržište rada", "Virtualni dan karijera i znanja", October 2010.

- ³⁰ These are the results of the Posao.ba-led project, in which a number of people were surveyed on who their favourite potential employer would be. The top employers then receive an official award as a means of promoting positive practices in human resource management.
- ³¹ Populari interview with Ljubiša Mičić, Project Manager at Center for Career Development, 7 March 2013.
- ³² Populari interview with Jasmin Bešić, Executive Director at the Institute for Youth Development KULT, 23 September 2013.
- ³³ Posao.ba. 2011. *“Istraživanje: Profesionalna očekivanja mladih”*, August 2011.
- ³⁴ Populari interview with Snežana Borovčanin, Assistant Director at the Employment Institute of RS, 5 March 2013.
- ³⁵ Populari interview with Davor Odobašić, Executive Director at Posao.ba, 17 September 2013.
- ³⁶ Ibid.
- ³⁷ Agency for Statistics of BiH. 2013. *“First Release: Education Statistics for 2012/2013”*, year VIII, number 1.
- ³⁸ Populari interview with Haris Huskić, Head of Labour Department at the Federal Employment Institute of BiH, 25 September 2013.
- ³⁹ Posao.ba. 2012. *“Tržište rada 2012. Godišnja analiza”*.
- ⁴⁰ Populari interview with Jasmin Bešić, Executive Director at the Institute for Youth Development KULT, 23 September, 2013.
- ⁴¹ Posao.ba, Mojposao & Infostud. 2010. *“Regionalno tržište rada”*, *“Virtualni dan karijera i znanja”*, October 2010; Prism Research & MDG Achievement Fund. 2012. *“Voices of Youth: Survey on Youth in BiH. Quantitative Research Findings”*, February 2012.
- ⁴² Populari interview with Davor Odobašić, Executive Director at Posao.ba, 17 September 2013.
- ⁴³ CISO (Centar za informisanje, savjetovanje i obuku) centres were formed within the framework of Youth Employability and Retention Programme (YERP), supported by the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund. To a certain extent the CISO centres were integrated into the work of local employment bureaus and enhanced their capacities in the sense that they offered career guidance, career training and advice to young people.
- ⁴⁴ Populari interview with Bojana Vujinović, Leader of the CISO center in Banja Luka, 7 March 2013.
- ⁴⁵ Populari interview with Jasmin Bešić, Executive Director at the Institute for Youth Development KULT, 23 September 2013.
- ⁴⁶ Populari interview with Haris Huskić, Head of Labour Department at the Federal Employment Institute of BiH, 25 September 2013.
- ⁴⁷ Prism Research & MDG Achievement Fund. 2012. *“Voices of Youth: Survey on Youth in BiH. Quantitative Research Findings”*, February 2012.
- ⁴⁸ Populari interview with Jasmin Bešić, Executive Director at the Institute for Youth Development KULT, 23 September 2013.
- ⁴⁹ Populari interview with Erol Mujanović, former Youth Employment and Retention Programme Project Manager, 17 September 2013.

Acknowledgments

This brief has benefited enormously from insightful comments and creative observations of the entire Populari team. They significantly facilitated the development of the initial idea and pieces of desk and field research into a coherent and understandable narrative. Equally, the contributions of all those who participated in the research and were willing to share their experience related to the topic were essential and indispensable, and this brief could not have been produced without them.



About Author

Katarina Cvikl has been working with Populari as a policy researcher since 2012, and has since then been involved in a number of different projects and activities. To date, she has mostly been researching topics related to BiH's EU accession process and regional policies. Katarina's professional interests, however, include transitions and democratisation processes more generally along with social and political trends that accompany them, for example good governance practices, international cooperation or civil society participation. She holds an MA degree in International Development from the University of Manchester, where she focused on development issues and human rights in post-conflict regions.

About Populari

Populari is an independent think tank, founded in 2007 that seeks to provide credible research and analysis, offer solutions and advocate changes. Through our unique blend of rigorous policy analysis, creativity and practical approaches to explaining complex issues, we aim to challenge mainstream thinking that surrounds us. Populari operates throughout BiH and the region, combining desk and field research. Our team is made of young and vibrant individuals that build up a dynamic group of people passionate about Populari's work. We are unique in BiH by combining interesting and useful analysis intended for wide audience.