

PROMOTION OF EMPLOYMENT AMONG YOUTH – REMARKS FOR NEXT INITIATIVES

**VLADIMIR MODRAK, JANUSZ GRABARA,
RENATA VOKOROKOSOVA, SEBASTIAN KOT ***

ABSTRACT: *In the paper authors presets experience of Czestochowa University of Technology within collaboration with Czestochowa Business Incubator (CBI). In 2010, chosen staff of Czestochowa UT have been working within brand new Phare project “Promotion of employment among youth”. Because relatively high unemployment level among young people in Czestochowa city and region, the project has been implemented in order to help graduates to find their strengths and to advise in planning individual job track, to extend their job skills adequate to present and foreseen market needs, prepare them to the job interviews, prepare and help in starting own business. Authors also describes CBI’s other initiatives undertaken to increase number of new business set up by young people, especially.*

KEY WORDS: *youth employment; Czestochowa Business Incubator; new business.*

JEL CLASSIFICATION: *J10; J21.*

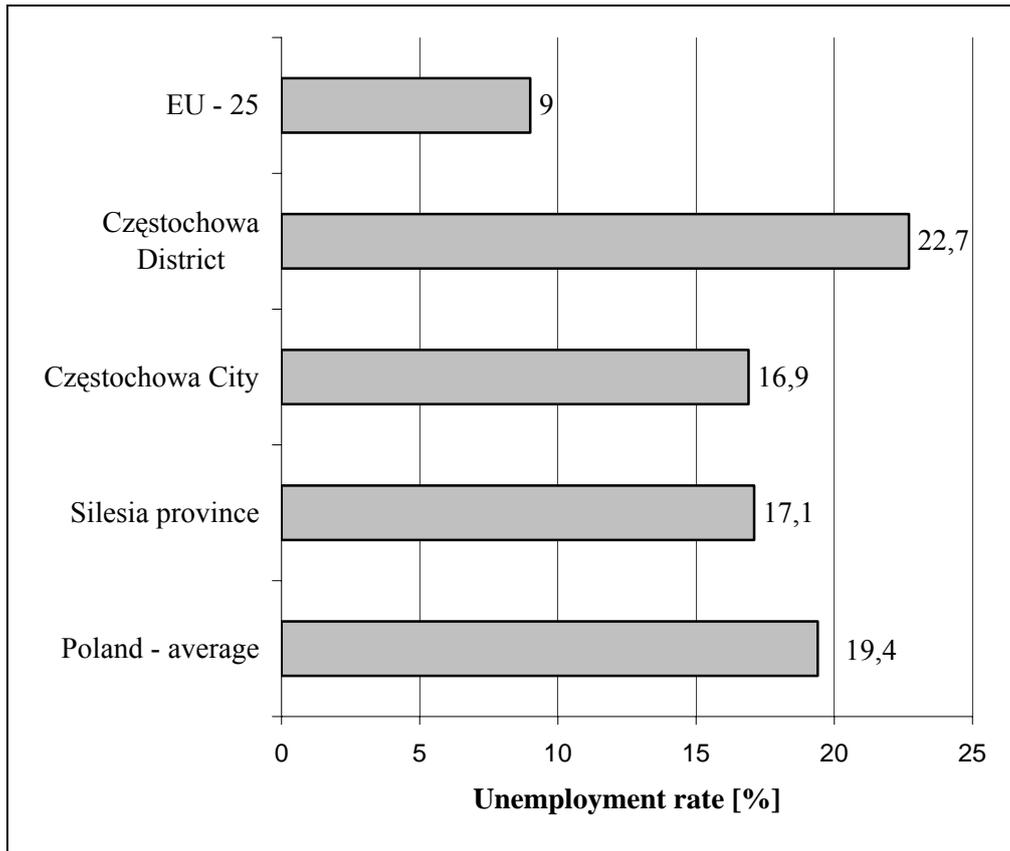
1. INTRODUCTION

Unemployment is one of the most important problem of Polish economy in macro and micro scale. It causes economical and social problems as well. Unemployment rate in Poland is the highest of EU countries. It is quite higher then average total unemployment rate (9% - Eurostat, 2005) for 25 countries of European Union (compare figure 1).

Częstochowa is the city in Silesia province. The employment of Częstochowa City and the district is based on the one ironworks and many SME’s both foreign and domestic. However above-mentioned business cannot fulfill the employment demand.

* *Prof., Ph.D., Technical University of Košice, Slovakia, vladimir.modrak@tuke.sk
Prof. Ph.D., Czestochowa University of Technology, Poland, grabara@zim.pcz.pl
Assoc. Prof., Ph.D., Technical University of Kosice, Slovakia, renata.vokorokosova@tuke.sk
Prof. Ph.D., Czestochowa University of Technology, Poland, sebacat@zim.pcz.czest.pl*

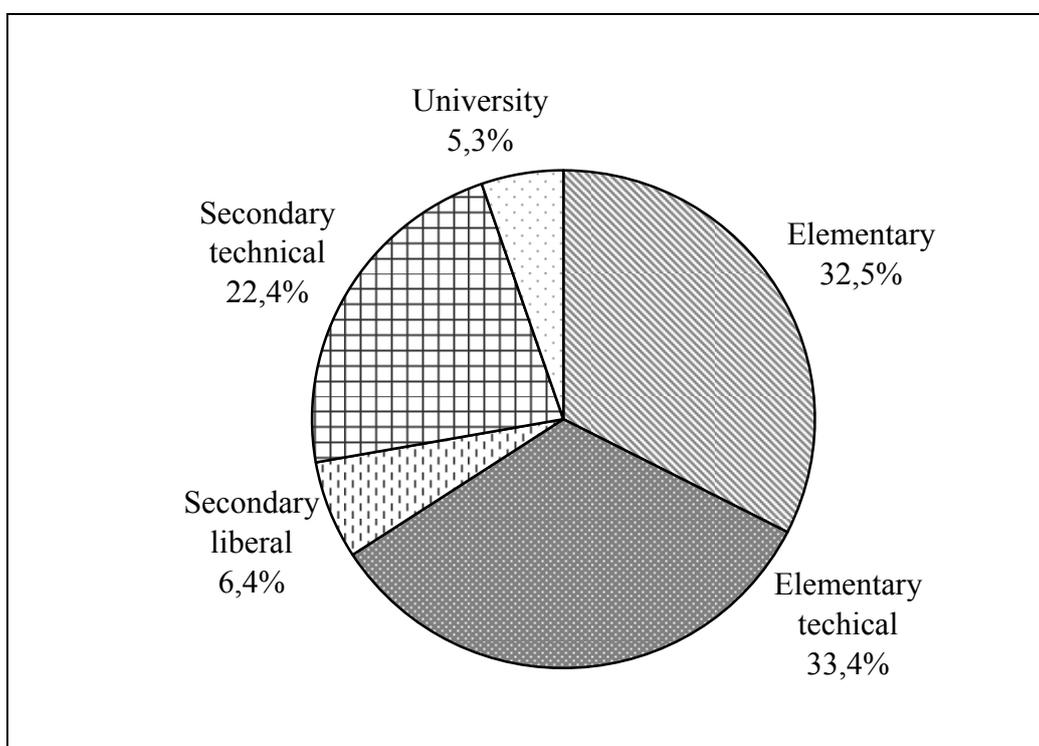
In Częstochowa City and the district, there are 16.9 and 22.7 unemployment rate, respectively. Częstochowa City unemployment rate is lower than average unemployment rates in Silesia province and in Poland. However Częstochowa district unemployment rate is higher than average unemployment rates in Silesia province and in Poland.



Source: Authors' elaboration based on <http://www.wup-katowice.pl>

Figure 1. Unemployment rate - 2009

Considering structure of unemployment in Silesia-province according to education level, it can be noticed that unemployed of the elementary and technical elementary education are the largest group of the jobless. Unemployed of technical and liberal secondary education are next the largest groups. The out of work of university education share amounts of 5.3% of total unemployed number, only (see figure 2).

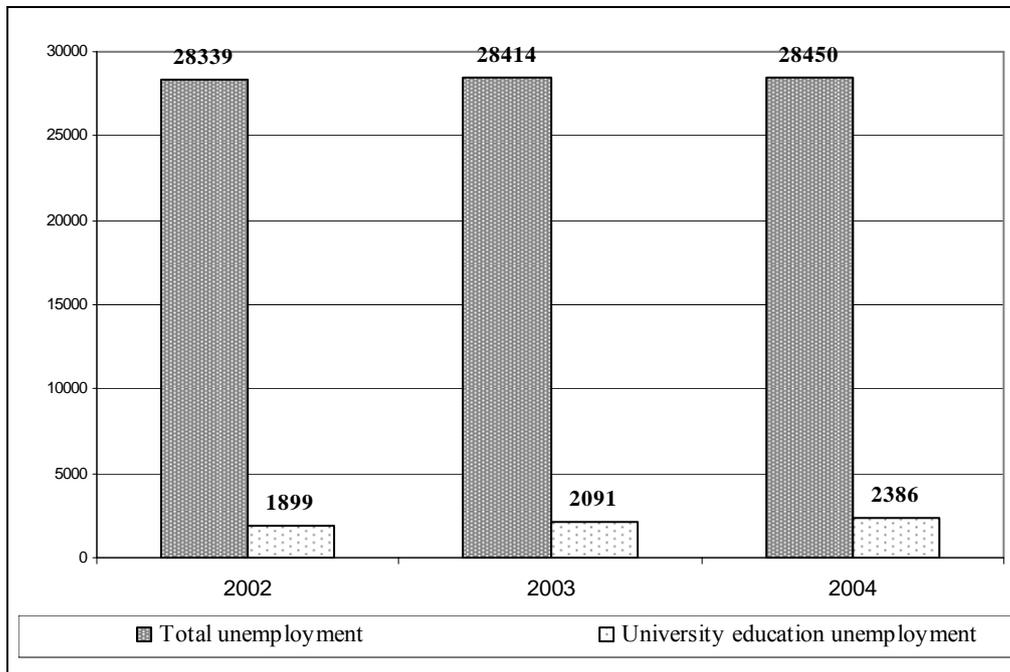


Source: Authors' elaboration based on <http://www.wup-katowice.pl>

Figure 2. Juxtaposition of unemployment in Silesia-province according to education level

In Częstochowa City and the district, there were 28450 total unemployed in January 2010. In this group there were 2386 persons of university education out of work. Namely, the share of university education unemployed amounted to 8.39% of total. Additionally, the university education unemployed number has been rising faster than other education groups (figure 3).

It is quite interesting from the scientific point of view but it is quite dangerous from the social point of view. In fact, contrary to many initiatives for employment of lower education unemployed, the university education graduates and jobless have not special government initiatives helping them in employment or in starting their own business. The university education graduates and jobless are treated as a persons those can help themselves. It is not true that those unemployed are pure educated or without a practical preparation for the job. Very often they are people with large knowledge, excellent practical skills but they are not prepared from the psychological point of view for the rising competitiveness. Many of them have excellent ideas for their own business but they have problems with legal, financial sides of business establishment.



Source: Authors' elaboration based on <http://www.wup-katowice.pl>

Figure 3. Czestochowa city and district unemployment, total and university education

2. THE PROJECT FEATURES

The Czestochowa universities' authority have started to look for the solution of this situation: changing curricula, improving the education quality, starting closer collaboration with the industries and local business. Czestochowa UT has participated to some programs (Pachura, 2002) to help graduates in job searching. In 2010, chosen staff of Czestochowa UT has been working within brand new Phare project "Promotion of employment among youth". The project is a partnership initiative of Czestochowa Business Incubator (CBI) and Czestochowa UT. The Czestochowa universities' graduates have been the project beneficiaries. The project financial assumption included fifty participants.

The project main aim – "increase young people opportunities on the employment market" could be realized through following particular aims:

- elaboration and introduction of Personal Employment Plans (PEP);
- professional skills improvement;
- collaboration with vocational guide and psychologist;
- professional experience increase within professional practice.

The aims have been realized through the following main activities:

1. Vocational Effective Activities Centre (VEAC) was established.

Realization and coordination of all activities within the project were the VEAC tasks.

The VEAC was an intermediary between the project participants and all activities. The main services of VEAC were as follows:

- personal vocational guidance,
- dissemination of information related to the project,
- help with CV preparation, preparing for the interview and salary negotiation,
- assistance in schooling organizing within the project framework,
- participants' data base elaboration for the employers, portfolio preparation,
- direct meeting organization with the employers and project participants contribution
- research and monitoring of the participants' professional future careers
- project public relations
- vacancy, professional schooling, local employment market information or newspaper free accessibility for participants.

Within the VEAC, there were two vocational guides with large experience working. Help with Personal Employment Plans elaboration and wide understood support were their main tasks.

2. Personal Employment Plans elaboration. Within this project activity, the participants were prepared for the job position that is inspiring and motivating for the effective work. Personal Employment Plan was divided on five stages.

The first stage consisted of participant recruitment, registering, interviews. This way the group of fifty participants was chosen plus five persons as a reserve group.

The second stage included: vocational guide interview in order to vacancy problem defining, special psychological tests determining participants professional predispositions, psychological training improving enterprising. In this stage the participants tried to elaborate their portfolios. They defined their own skills, professional experiences, knowledge, potentials, personal features, life aims and activity motives. The participants' partition was the final results of this stage. They were divided in three groups:

- men of business initiatives;
- professional qualification transition and skills improvement;
- new professional image creation – “Independence in job searching”.

The participants had been divided according to their needs and their choice was verified according to their psychophysical predispositions based on the test and interviews results.

The third stage was composed of training suitable for the particular group. The results of this stage were participants employment or own business establishment.

In the fourth stage, still jobless participants could start three months practice organized within the project to increase their experience. After that they would try to find a job once again. If some of them would fail they can be participants of the fifth stage.

In fifth stage participants can use of individual vocational guidance and other below presented activities.

3. Multimedia – stand. The stand offering computer with the Internet access and printer were given for the participants in order to CV – preparing, job offers

searching using the vocational guide support. The multimedia - stand could be used by the other unemployed.

4. Advisory for the men of business initiatives. Men of business initiatives could also be supported by the Advisory Point. The Advisory Point services consisted of:

- business plan preparation and initiative SWOT analysis;
- searching for the financial resources for the firm;
- advisory with the financial means gaining for the firm (grants, credits);
- searching for the partners and clients;
- customer market analysis;
- credits application fulfillment.

The project participants own business establishment have been the effects of this stage of the project. Three full equipped office spaces in Czestochowa Business Incubator for six months were founded for the best business initiatives.

3. PROJECT RESULTS

During the time of this paper preparing the project schedule is on the fourth stage of Personal Employment Plan. So it is hard to point on final project results. However, hitherto: 50 participants elaborated their Personal Employment Plans, portfolios, they wrote their CV, they were trained within the suitable schooling modules, they achieve certificates that can strengthen their employment competitiveness. Four new businesses have been established, seventeen participants have found a new jobs. Twenty participants have started a professional practice. Moreover, five bulletins were published containing problems of professional trainings curricula, methods of job searching, motivation, interviews.

The experience gained within this project preparing and realizing started another initiative for youth employment. The Academic Business Incubator in Czestochowa University of Technology was established. In this initiative, students help themselves in employment increase and job searching using the experience of the staff of Czestochowa UT collaborating in the Phare project.

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