

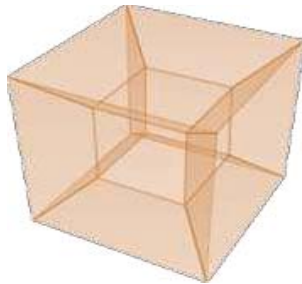


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## **Job Developer: Creation of services in the context of digitalisation**

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# RESEARCH PAPER



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**Summary:** "Job Developer" enables young job seeking adults to develop employment opportunities and to create jobs by themselves on the basis of a local employment opportunities analysis as well as their own interests, knowledges and skills. The SHS/Minipreneure Zentrum gGmbH has developed the instruments employment radar, talent diagnostic and expert hearing which are used in this context. The aim of the EU project "Job Developer" is to set impulses for the reduction of the high youth unemployment in Europe by adjusting the professional further education and the vocational guidance in the respective countries to the conditions and requirements of the job markets. By the means of a matching of qualification requirements with the given talents as well as with the local employment and further education possibilities, on the one hand further education measurements can be recommended and on the other hand gaps in the consisting further education offer can be identified.

**Key words:** employment radar, talent diagnosis, Job Developer qualification

### **1. Initial situation and theoretical context**

Through globalisation and the increasing digitalisation the structure of the national and international job markets and the competence requirements for employees increasingly change. To appropriately react to those changes and requirements especially in the field of digital technology it is on the one hand necessary to adjust the competences and abilities to the changes on the labour market, to maintain employability and to prevent unemployment in the long run. On the other hand not only the pure "usability of persons" for the labour market should be emphasized but also the talents and interests of persons in order to identify new areas for employment opportunities and to maintain the motivation for a steady further development. The need for improvement of the general and professional education and the promotion of competences for self-employment is given by the current challenges of the labour market in the EU regarding youth unemployment, foundation difficulties as well as problems of low skilled persons.

The youth unemployment has risen in most of the EU countries in the last years and was about 19.9% in the EU zone (28 EU countries, 15 to 24 years) in September 2015. Especially in countries like Greece (49.5%) or Spain (47.7%) the figures were very high (Eurostat 2015a). The highest risk group within the young unemployed is represented by premature dropouts of school and vocational training – 55% of those have no job, although 70% of them are willing to work (EU Commission 2015). The strengthening of employability is essential for all measures that help to reduce youth unemployment. Moreover, persons under the age of 25 have a relatively low rate of self-employment: 4% in the average of all OECD-countries but in none of those countries the rate is higher than 11%. Especially in the EU countries with a low rate of self-employed young adults an increase of this rate would generate an enormous improvement of the economic dynamics and thereby of the employment. Mostly low-skilled groups of persons were affected by the negative changes on the labour market. From 2008 to 2012 their employment rate decreased the most to a level of 45%. In the range of the 18 to 24 year old population the rate of the premature dropouts from school and vocational training, who have at most a graduation of the first secondary cycle, is about 11.3% in Europe in 2014 (e.g. Germany 9.7, Spain 22.3%, Lithuania 5.9%, Bulgaria 13%, Greek 9.3%, Hungary 11.1%) (Eurostat 2015b). In order to prevent missing competences to become

a barrier for those groups of persons, creative solutions of job creation have to be found. According to the qualification requirements forecast of the “European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training” (CEDEFOP) most of the employment opportunities in the EU are in the area of business and the services sector.

## 2. Aims and tasks of the project

The following section refers to the three-year EU project “Job Developer” that is financed with EU funds by the BiBB under the sponsorship of the National Agency (www.jobdeveloper.eu). The superior purpose of this transnational project is the improvement of the general and vocational training of young adults regarding the labour market requirements in the EU and the local creation of new jobs in cooperation with experts. This is realised by assessing the qualification requirements of new and consisting local employment opportunities by matching them with the abilities and talents of the participants as well as with the consisting contents of further education methods and by recommending suitable measures for the development of competencies. The autonomous research and the guided search for answers in this field is one of the success factors of entrepreneurship education (EU 2013).

The aim of the project is also the development of a curriculum for the new field of activity of a “Job Developer”. He shall take the role of a „career” for the job-seeking youth. This task is located in the interface between chambers, job centres, general and vocational schools as well as business development. The “Job Developer” has the task to accompany and to take care of the youth. He shall help them to develop new services on the basis of the employment radar concept. Furthermore, he gives the youth feedback regarding their talents with the help of the talent diagnosis and works together with them on an individual development plan (including competence development activities) (Kröll & Voß, 2013). Moreover the “Job Developers” have the function to give the youth an overview over the possible use of social media (e-mail, Facebook, Twitter etc.) concerning the distribution of the developed services. Last but not least the “Job Developer” shall inform the youth about the importance of network capability for the realisation of new ideas and to support them to further develop their network competences. Thus, it shall be possible to enable the youth to build up appropriate useful networks with different target groups. Together with the organisers the “Job Developers” select the participants and support them regarding the execution of the market analysis, the further development and the creation of new ideas of services in the framework of the employment radar. They set up target groups resp. milieu groups and together with the participants they localise these groups in geo maps on the basis of quantitative data to assess the consumer needs in the respective region. Depending on the social situation and the basic orientation the following milieus are differentiated: traditional, established conservative, liberal intellectual, mover and shaker, social-ecological, adaptive pragmatic, escapist and high achiever milieu as well as the new middle class milieu. The degrees of these milieus can be very different in the particular EU countries. So promising ranges of services or potentials for the further development of already existing service offers can be identified by conducting the market analyses with the interviewer technology. On the basis of the current state of curricula research, the tasks as well as the task fulfilment processes of the “Job Developer” are taken as a starting point (Pätzold

& Rauner, 2006) to determine the competence requirements for the task fulfilment regarding a certain degree of professionalization. The corresponding necessary qualification measures of “Job Developers” are established as a recognized certification programme in the particular EU countries. Contents of the modules are basis competencies for the management and encouragement of a (self-help) group, the creation of the employment radar with talent diagnostics, digital competences in the field of social media for entrepreneurs, entrepreneurial creativity as well as cultural awareness and cooperation, especially networks for entrepreneurs.

In the present project a unique connection is established between a competence and talent diagnosis instrument for youth and young adults and elements of entrepreneurship education with an interdisciplinary oriented labour market political concept that accompanies young adults concerning the transition and the reorientation in the working world.

The concepts “employment radar” and “talent diagnosis” that are implemented and adjusted within the project contribute to a registration of competence requirements of the local labour market, the fitting of the professional (further) education as well as the vocational guidance and orientation. So existing and new employment possibilities on the labour market are identified to show a mismatch between competence requirements and the competencies that are conveyed in the education system and as a consequence to adapt curricula and contents to the requirements of the labour market. Thereby, the number of people who drop out of their vocational training shall be reduced in the EU countries.

Primary the acquisition of decision-making and responsibility is in the foreground. To offer permanently work capacity on a changing market and to take over responsibility for the development of own talents, the acquisition of self-organisation competencies with the help of “Job Developers” is significant. The dimension of self-assessment which is important for the receipt of employability and the attentive observation of relevant market changes (Van der Heijden & Van der Heijden, 2006) are encouraged. Social competencies and the takeover of responsibility for the own person and the team are promoted by learning tandems, which are for example used in the operational context as means of knowledge transfer and experience exchange between mixed-age experts. Case-to-case teaching contents can be transferred and used in practice to support the team and personality development (Schmette, 2008).

The target group of the project can be subdivided in a primary and secondary target group. The primary target group consists of multipliers. Within the multipliers different multiplier groups can be differentiated: a) organisers who organise the initiation, conduction and evaluation of the employment radar, the talent diagnosis and the expert hearing in the EU countries; b) “Job Developer” who act as experts for the creation of the trend and market analysis and as mentors for the promotion and company of the participants and who apply the talent diagnostics. The secondary target group is represented by youth and young adults in the age of 18 + who take part in the activities.

The function of a “Job Developer” can be assumed by (alum) entrepreneurs and managers, vocational counsellors, teachers (who are career changers and who formerly pursued other professional activities) or appropriately qualified jobseekers who can accompany and support the participants through their entrepreneurial know-how and their long-standing experiences. They can help to sustainably anchor the project idea in the

institutional structures.

In Germany, the activities of so-called economical seniors, alum managers or entrepreneurs who fulfil the function of multipliers within the project have risen in recent years (<http://www.arbeitsratgeber.com>). Studies prove that older people are willing to work even after entering the retirement age because they would like to share and apply their knowledge and experiences with others (Saba & Guerin, 2005). By the integration of experienced, elderly people who are examples and mentors for the youth a win-win-situation is generated. This group of Job Developers acquires new competences and profits from a higher life quality. The younger ones benefit from the know-how and the pool of experiences of the older ones. The process of mentoring is supported by a mutual, structured feedback.

### 3. Interaction of employment radar, talent diagnosis and expert hearing: concept and implementation potentials

In the framework of the project the concept of the minipreneurs which was developed and successfully tested by the SHS in Saarbrücken in the course of the last six years, is picked up (Hartz & Petzhold, 2014). In this course, especially the concepts of the employment radar, talent diagnostic and expert hearing should be highlighted (also referred as Polylog). The concept of talent diagnosis goes beyond previous assessment processes because of its psychological diagnostic and its way of result exploitation. In this process not only the previous professional biography is taken into consideration but also leanings and interests are examined as well as the potential of future professional activities.

A strengths profile will be set up that includes the fields of personality, cognitive skills, knowledge and interests. This aspect is essential to promote decision-making and responsibility. The focus of the talent diagnosis is not on the weaknesses and placement obstacles of the job-seekers but on their strengths and development possibilities (Kröll, 2015). Besides their affinities and interests their skills and abilities are also concerned as well as their health situation.

In the context of the employment radar the following three steps can be differentiated:

a) find new working places, b) generate new working places, c) observe trends and chances through the analysis of economic outline data, revelation of social mega trends (e.g. wellness, health, leisure activities), use and processing of information of the sinus-meta-milieus, application of geographical data for customer localization, identification of 131 potential services in 7 job families as well as interview techniques for the determination of the quantitative and qualitative market potentials for several services (Hartz & Petzhold, 2014). The concept of the employment radar helps to reveal the existing and future employment possibilities in the respective regions by involving the participants actively in this process. They establish a trend and market analysis of the local economic structure together with a mentor (Job Developer), deduce qualification requirements for existing and future employment sectors and consumer needs and create new resp. develop existent employment sectors/ ranges of services offered on this basis. Competences like the self-organization and problem solving ability as well as the capability of innovative and creative thinking will be developed through the participative approach. This process is created on the basis of real data about the economic structure, consumer needs and potential target groups of products and

services offered with which a practical reference is established and an "effective" employment potential is shown. Thereby, not only the exploration of the key market, but the development of an individual perspective for the youth and young adults is concerned. These should not wait until the economy is stimulated and new employment possibilities are created, but they should be motivated to take actively part in the creation of their professional perspective and "to implement their ideas" (Remmele et al. 2008). The position that lifelong learning and vocational education are essential to maintain the employability is present in the mind of most of the responsible persons in the EU countries. This point is taken up by the present project by adapting the relevance of the vocational (further) education and consulting to the requirements of the labour market to show the youth a promising professional perspective within their country.

By combining the results of the employment radar and the talent diagnosis in an expert hearing with the participants a matching between the talents and competences of the participants and the employment potential of the local labour market is effected. The participants receive specific recommendations for professional activities in their regions and advice for further education measures if necessary. Hence, the project contains a "dual expertise". Though the participants are considered as (1) "experts of their own living situation". They can be supported by further (2) experts like labour market experts, occupational physicians and/or technology experts as well as (former) business leaders of the economy. The experts evaluate the participants' ideas, think about possible consequences together with them and support them in terms of further questions concerning the establishment of services up to the setting up of companies such as the search for subsidies. There are not only the "Job Developers" who take part in this expert hearing but also personnel consultants in the region who are looking for new workforces as well as employees of job centers or chambers.

### 4. Impacts of the application of the employment radar, the talent diagnosis and the expert hearing and outlook

With regard to the youth unemployment and the current amount of foundations the support of youth entrepreneurship plays a key role. In order to develop the extension and implementation of new ideas for services it is necessary to identify and analyse existing potential. By using the "employment radar" in the several EU countries it should be found out to what extent this tool developed in Germany can be applied to other countries. Furthermore, the implementation can provide important information on additional (country-specific) characteristics which have to be considered concerning conceptual, organisational or methodical modifications to foster the dissemination. With regard to the project impact not only a sufficiently high level of acceptance of the concepts "employment radar", "talent diagnosis" and "expert hearing" in the several EU countries is essential. Empirical studies show that the use of highly accepted but rarely reflected tools can have counterproductive consequences (Kröll, 2015). This implies that participating actors have to reflect the country-specific implementation of the tools in an appropriate way. Therefore, it is useful to analyse country-specific chances and threats by respecting social, cultural, economic and educational dimensions in addition to the labour market specific and legal situation concerning the support of unemployed. Against this background the concepts of "employment radar", "talent diagnosis" and "expert hearing" will be adjusted to the country-specific circumstances.

In order to figure out the concrete situation of professional development, career guidance and requirements of the labour market in the particular countries, semi-standardised interviews were conducted with representatives of the project partners. A central matter was the collaboration of educational institutions, chambers or job centres in terms of career guiding questions as well as questions regarding the determination and education of (entrepreneurial) competences. At this point, the career guidance situation in Hungary and Bulgaria is shown exemplary: In Hungary job centres and chambers work together to offer a vocational guidance to pupils and youths. The existing career guidance at secondary schools shall be extended to primary and middle schools. The Job Developer concept could be offered there perspectively. For example the Chamber of Industry and Commerce in Pécs-Baranya is responsible for 124 jobs and takes part in a regional development and education committee which is in charge of vocational training matters and which conducts an annual company survey regarding skills shortage. As a consequence, indications concerning possible jobs for pupils are provided. An explicit vocational guidance that points out the potentials of the youth and adjusts them to the requirements of the labour market is currently at the beginning.

In Bulgaria it is the task of job centers to support unemployed people regarding the re-entry in their working life but not to give advice to youth. Explicit career counselors – as in Germany – do not exist. There are career centers for the youth that are supported by the ministry for education and science as well as community departments which accompany the youth in terms of their academic development, their career and their path of life. The Job Developer project could contribute in this context to set up a vocational guidance with the help of the multipliers and the trained Job Developers by applying the certified further education program to career centres and/ or communities and by promoting the entrepreneurial orientation of the youth in this way.

The project activities help to anticipate the future competence needs in a better way, to adapt the range of competences to the needs of the labour market as well as to close the gap between the educational and the working world by identifying employment possibilities systematically and by supporting entrepreneurial thinking and acting. In this context, the findings of the research program „New Skills for new jobs“ can be linked (Kröll, 2015). Against this background multipliers are qualified on an institutional level to contribute to a reduction of youth unemployment with the help of „Job Developers“ and networks on a local and regional level. The counselling and professional educational institutions are addressed on a local and regional level. On the basis of „best practices“ the implementation of „Job Developers“ in the school sector can be taken into consideration to anchor „entrepreneurship education“ early. (Vocational) schools can support their pupils on their way to professional independence or as intrapreneurs in a pedagogical way. Implementation possibilities of „Job Developers“, the application of the talent diagnosis and the employment radar in the fields of school and further education or employment service shall be proved in terms of an entrepreneurship strengthening on a national level. A way out of youth unemployment and a strengthening of entrepreneurship shall be achieved on a European level. The project contributes to the promotion of the „entrepreneurship education“ idea and can help to adapt teaching/learning content of academic and professional education to the requirements on the labour market in a better way. To succeed in this, a concrete knowledge about the respective national system which is taken up in the course of the project is necessary.

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