

RELATIONS BETWEEN UNEMPLOYMENT, COMPETENCE AND TRAINING

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Abstract

Increasing the rate of structural unemployment and increasing the duration of maintaining the status of the unemployed is becoming more and more serious for the new generations. That is due to the natural difference between young people's new way of thinking and the rigidity of a system of work built many years ago. At the same time, young people, under the urge to grow socially and economically faster than the current society allows, give up education and training to access the labour market sooner. The low number of competences accumulated in the limited time of education reduces the potential of new employees, making them the real victims of the labour market. Following a survey conducted in Dr. Tr. Severin, lacks of competences were identified. They should be solved through a correct and coherent education in the national educational system, until the end of the gymnasium cycle. The most important of these are the lack of technological skills of young people under the age of 25 and the lack of digital skills among adults aged over 55.

Keywords: *qualification of personnel, competences, decreasing unemployment, digital competences, technological competences, structural unemployment.*

JEL Classification: *J2, J6.*

Introduction

Actual society is far from perfection. It has multiple specific „failures” which generate negative effects on social, economic and political aspects of the individuals’ or groups’ lives.

Getting out from the labour market, as jobless, and being kept in such status for long time is one of the most important „failure” met within our society. Following the results of that situation, it is obvious the necessity to apply two ways analysis: from the individual to the phenomenon and from the phenomenon to the individual. Anyhow, however, the sensation is similar, as neither of the two sides makes efforts to influence the other side correctively.

The tendency of the current individual, an active actor in the labour market, is to pursue opportunistic situations that call for personal minimum efforts to gain access to a position in a system that activates in the labour market. The interest in personal development, the attribute of which will be part of the negotiation with the employer, is alarmingly decreasing to the Y (Millennials, born in 1977-1995 and already mature in 1998-2006) and Z (born in the period 1995-2012 and which are maturing, the specific period being 2013-2025) generations, when the educational reference is made up of current education and training systems. The only sources of information accepted as educational are the electronic ones, without a minimal effort to separate the correct information from the false information.

Both the Y generation and the Z generation aim to change the education system and the active system, which we have been accustomed to label it as the "labour market". 2020 will be the year when the Y generation will approach their share of their parents, the X generation, in this labour market. The balance will be somewhere around the 20% Y / 28% Y / 31% X ratio. This share is very visible today in developing countries where young people under 16 attack seasonal jobs, paid with the minimum wage, being driven by their parents. The latter have had many disappointments in their professional and family life as a result of the ongoing misunderstandings they have had with older generations. Guiding their own children to the labour market means leaving the education systems too early. Young people are inoculated with the idea of wage prevalence in relation to the elements of knowledge. Thus, part of the Z generation suffers from a lack of culture and acute professional training, making its representatives victims of the active system - the labour market. As far as the Y generation is concerned, the international political changes of the years 1989-2001 have had a similar effect to that presented above.

The idea of enriching the family by increasing the number of active people on the labour market, against of a coherent training in terms of both general and professional culture, makes many of the labour market actors unable to read and interpret adequately today an employment contract, either collectively or individually (Mergeani, Danciulescu & Danciulescu, 2017, pp.10-12; Cristea& Danciulescu, 2016, pp.186-190).

Even less, they are expected to maintain direct contact with technological developments and, implicitly, with the "Industry 4.0" concept, which is built on digital components (McKinsey, 2015, p: 8).

So, from the individual side, the potential for change in the phenomenon of unemployment is extremely low.

Looking at the unemployment phenomenon, corroborated with the actions of the authorities (national or regional / EU) that have the power to influence the evolution of the individual, the situation may be somewhat better, in the sense of the existence of a legislation that imposes and promotes both a remanence of the individual in the educational system on a period as close as necessary to good training, as well as a continuation of education and professional training, together with the labour market activity. Moreover, there is a system of individual employee rights to protect it from possible abuses that may arise due to the lack of education (Mergeani et. al., 2017, pp.10-12; Savu & Savu, 2011; Savu & Domuta, 2011).

However, the authorities cannot influence the labour market in the sense of imposing measures to stop and reduce unemployment, otherwise than by promoting policies that support new job creation and better workforce training.

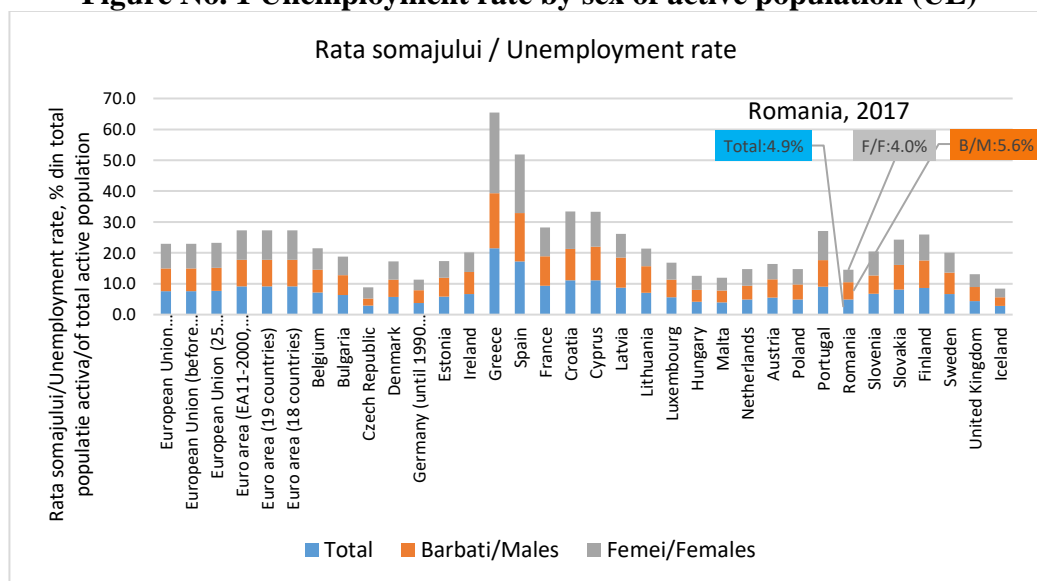
The previous analysis applies predominantly to those who do not go through high school or vocational education. With small adjustments, this can also be applied to those who have completed all stages of training, including tertiary education level, because the unemployment, as effect phenomenon has different forms, depending on the causes of it: structural unemployment, cyclical unemployment and frictional unemployment. In the case of Romania, structural and cyclical components predominate, although the crisis triggered in 2009 was exceeded three years later. The effects, at the level of Romania, are still felt, which gives importance to the cyclical component.

As far as the structural component is concerned, it is the one that is manifestly present as a result of the partly controlled transformations of the economy. If, in some sectors, demand for products has contracted significantly over the past 10 years and has led to job restructuring, product type shifts and even the total closure of some producers,

in some sectors technological development has led to job restructuring, and the automation and robot of some technological operations. Important examples of this latter state were presented in a previous analysis (Mergeani et. al., 2017, pp.10-12).

In the case of structural unemployment, the equilibrium point is given by the relation between the supply of skills and the salary offer (Cristea & Danciulescu, 2016, pp.186-190). Both are, however, inert. Neither the workforce has the power to improve its skills package in a reasonable time, nor does the employer have the potential to change the wage package in the direction of growth. These lack of potentiality is due to lack of desire in the labour force, due to low education, while in the case of the employer it is caused by the interest for profit. In all this, interesting is the gender delineation that is highlighted in EUROSTAT's multiannual report (Figure 1). If in most of the analysed countries the female workforce has higher unemployment than the male labour force, the situation in Romania is reversed, revealing a more accentuated appreciation of the native qualities of women in relation to the occupation: surplus attention to detail, greater tenacity, obedience and listening in calm conditions and often a greater responsibility of well done work. Another possible reason may be a better positioning of the female workforce relative to the level of education and training. It is well known that at the level of a student class, pupils are more conscientious and more ambitious than their male colleagues.

Figure No. 1 Unemployment rate by sex of active population (UE)



Source: Eurostat - Unemployment statistics, 2018

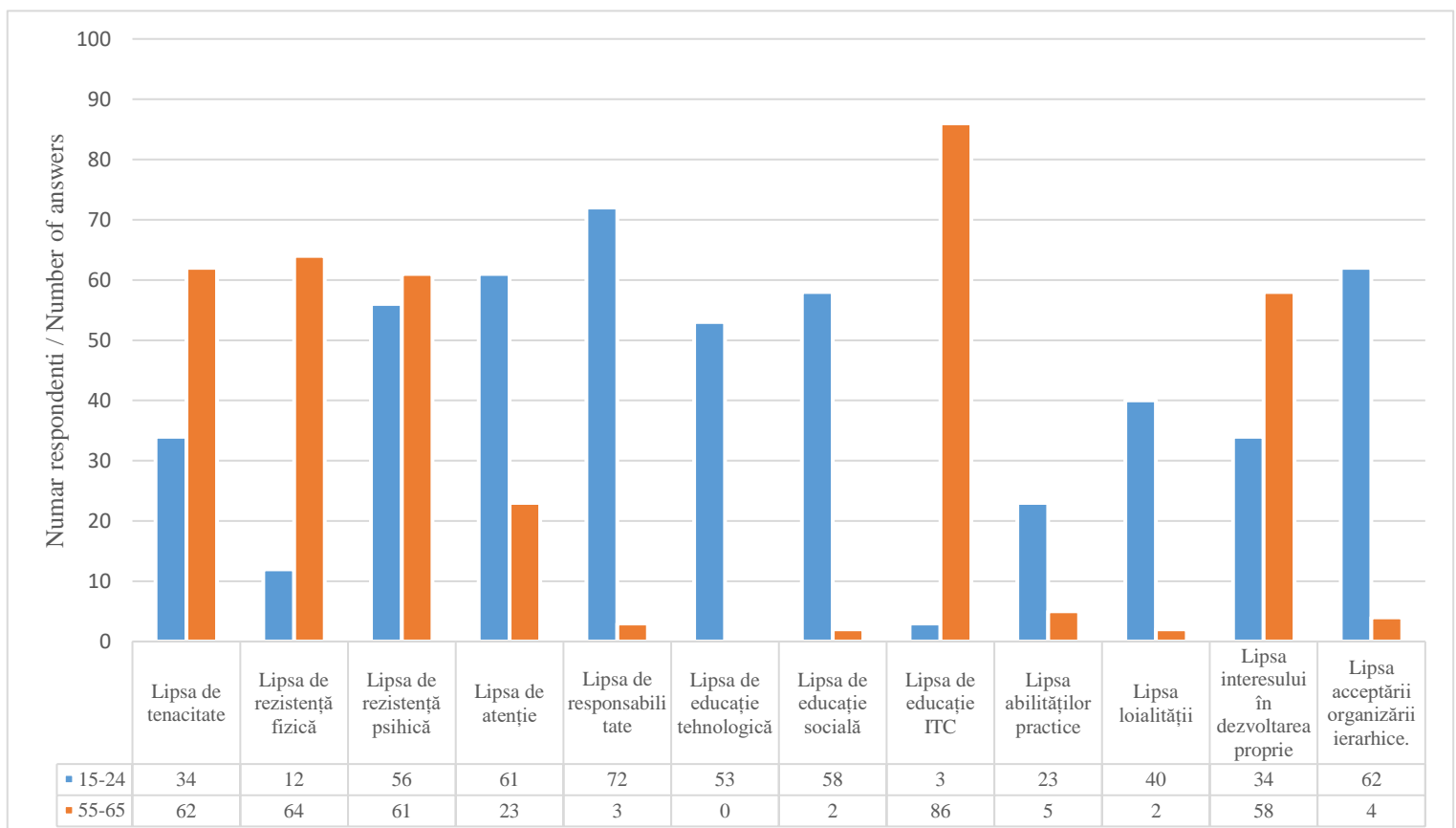
Another determinant factor in the labour offer is, also, the age. Vulnerable segments are the same, regardless of geographical location: young people aged 15-24 and adults over 55 years. The two segments show distinct reasons for vulnerability. In the case of young people, lack of interest, lack of responsibility and lack of education are the main reasons for limited access to the labour market; for adults over 55, the basic reasons invoked by employers are: resilience and tenacity towards a job characterized through high activity intensity and inconsistent incompatibility with digital systems, brutally entered into manufacturing systems. This state of affairs resulted from a survey conducted by the authors together with the Drobeta Turnu Severin and Craiova subsidiaries of the

Romanian Welding Society among its own members and among the partners (Figure 2). In this survey, specialists from 87 employers were interviewed, the evaluation criteria being imposed by the survey, as follows:

- Lack of tenacity;
- Lack of physical resistance;
- Lack of psychological resistance;
- Lack of attention;
- Lack of responsibility;
- Lack of technological education;
- Lack of social education;
- Lack of ITC education;
- Lack of practical skills;
- Lack of loyalty;
- Lack of interest in own development;
- Lack of hierarchical organization acceptance.

Figure No. 2 Reasons invoked by employers regarding the vulnerability of the 15-24 and 55-65 year-old workforce segments

Sursă: Eurostat - [Unemployment statistics, 2018](#)



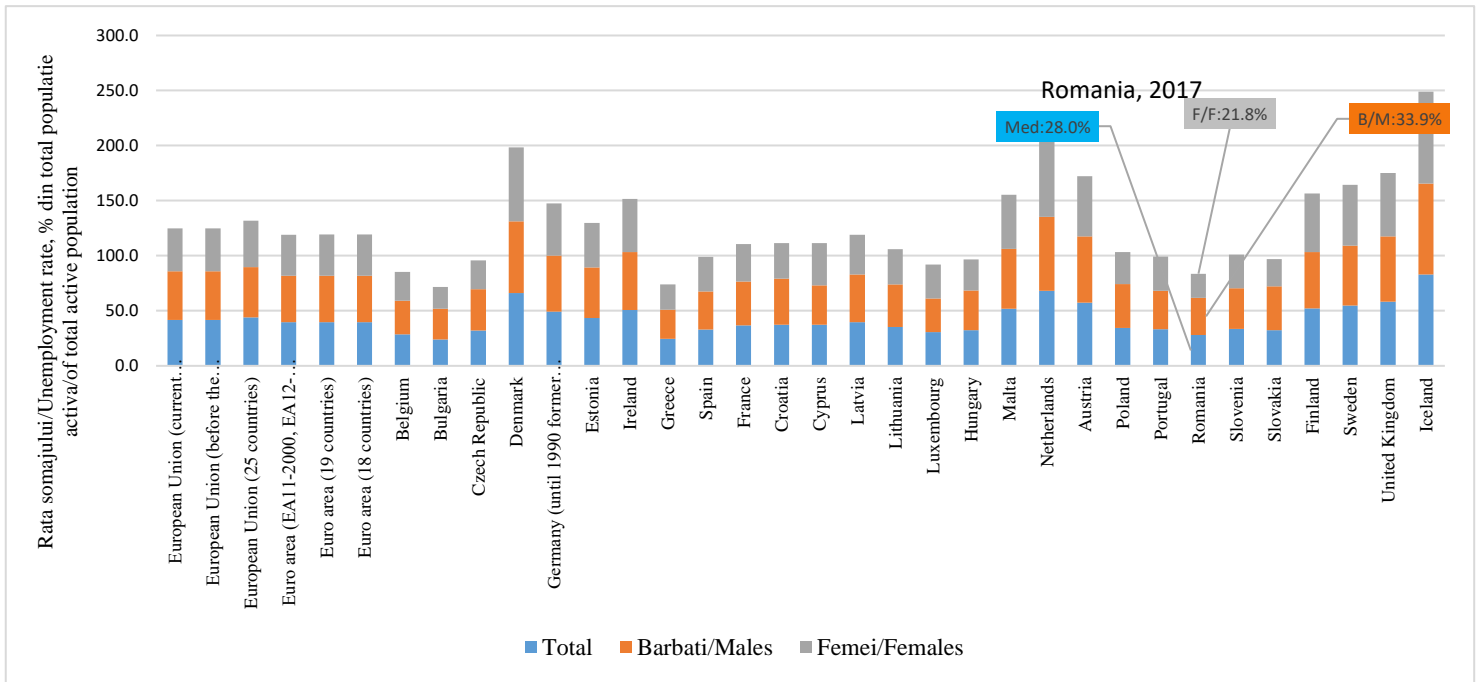
And in these two segments of active labour force, the female component is positioned around 60% of the male component (Figure 3, a and b).

Figure No. 3 Unemployment rate by age of active population (segregated segments: 15-24 and 55-65)

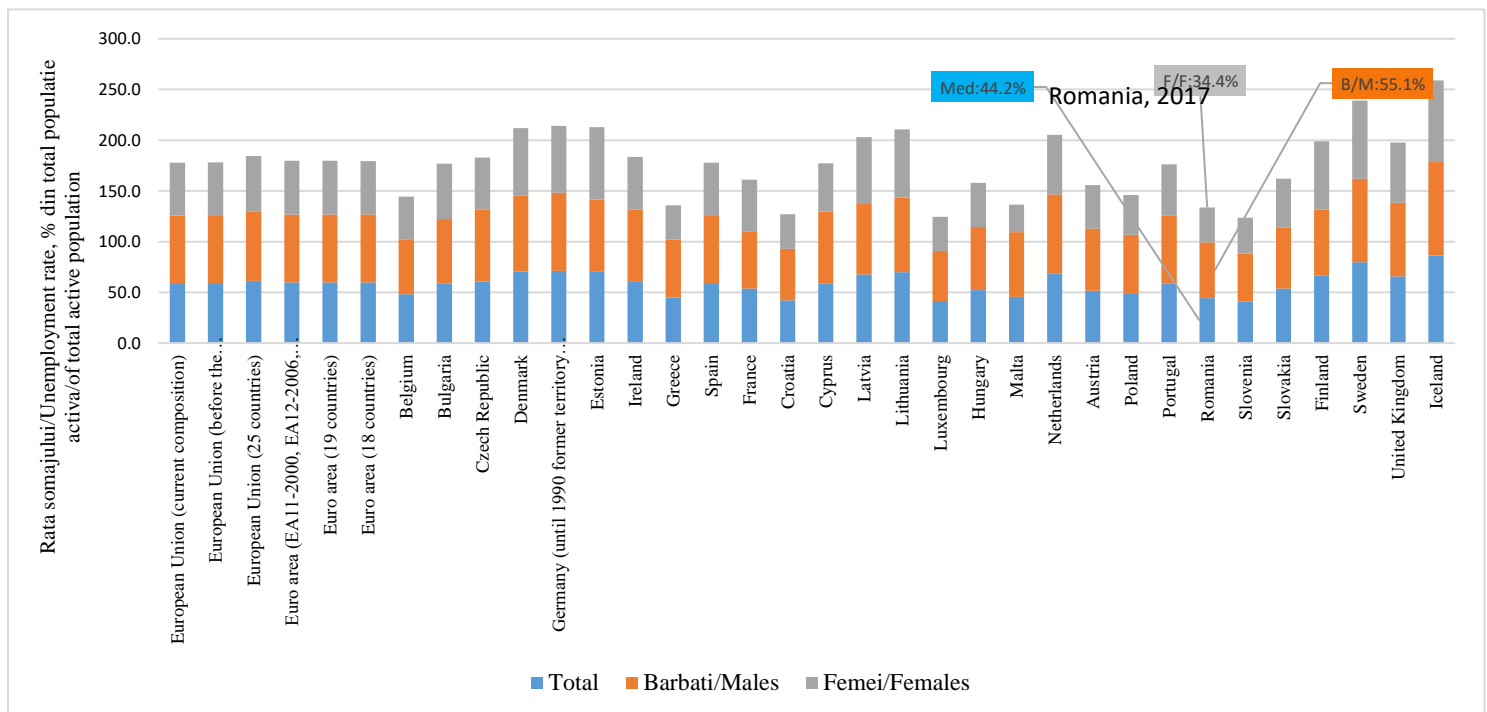
a.

Source: Eurostat - Unemployment statistics, 2018

b.



In the case of some questions in the study, the need for a detailed analysis of the



phenomenon was followed. The lack of loyalty, the desire for personal development and the lack of responsibility are components of the lack of social education. These have been introduced to reflect more accurately the employers' problems and needs with regard to the workforce. These gaps should be resolved through a correct and coherent education

in the national education system, up to the end of the gymnasium cycle. Two peaks in the answers are related to lack of skills (Savu & Savu, 2011, Savu & Domuta, 2011): in the case of young people is the lack of technological skills, and in the case of adults over 55 years the highest is the lack of digital competences. Parts of these two classes of competences are obtained in the national education system, at different levels of education, the rest being obtained through continuous training processes.

By definition, a competence reflects the knowledge, abilities and behavioural attributes required for an acceptable level of performance in terms of job performance on a particular topic (Savu & Savu, 2011, Savu & Domuta, 2011). Knowledge is acquired through direct learning in one of the agreed education systems. Practical skills are also acquired through specific training in one of the agreed education systems (Savu & Savu, 2011, Savu & Domuta, 2011). Behavioural attributes reflect the level of social education, in which, we mentioned earlier, fall within those loopholes related to loyalty, interest in personal development, responsibility or acceptance of the hierarchical organization.

If this aspect were also taken up by lifelong learning programs, adults over the age of 55 would have the possibility of a "digital literacy" that would increase their chances of remaining in the workforce until retirement age. As far as young people under 24 are concerned, it is civic competence that would bring them closer to the current forms of employers' organization and their staff requirements.

Discussions and conclusions

Consequently, the recommendations that should target the two segments of the labour force would be:

- For those who will be in the near future or are already included in the 15-24 year segment, an in-depth information taught in schools would contribute significantly to accessing a job. Accumulating through an individual study or by continuing training programs specific to the field in which you want to access the workplace will significantly increase the success rate of the employment action.

- For those in the near future or already aged 55-65, an approach with a strong interest in the digital component of everyday life, especially to professional ICT systems, would reduce the risk of job loss.

Such approaches would validate, at least at the level of an acceptable minimum, key competences defined by the European Commission, as well as employers' requirements, the two resulting from each other. An improvement in the level of skills will at any time be an increase in the quality of the workforce and the latter is what each employer seeks.

On the other hand, government decisions and existing legislation should support an increase in labour demand by creating new jobs or by supporting education to create new jobs.

Better interconnection between labour supply and labour demand can also reduce the current unemployment situation. This would contribute to a better functioning of the labour market, better support for labour market mobility, but also to a higher potential for the implementation of specific policies for optimizing employment, reducing the gaps between male and female components and between organizational segments by age.

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