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Euro-IVET: Enhancing the quality of I-VET provision for young people in urban, multicultural settings – Executive Summary



Executive summary

Erasmus+ Euro-IVET is an EU-funded strategic partnership programme which aims to develop and design a series of Vocational Education and Training (VET related developments to support those professionals delivering initial VET provision to young people in inner-city, urban and multi-cultural environments.

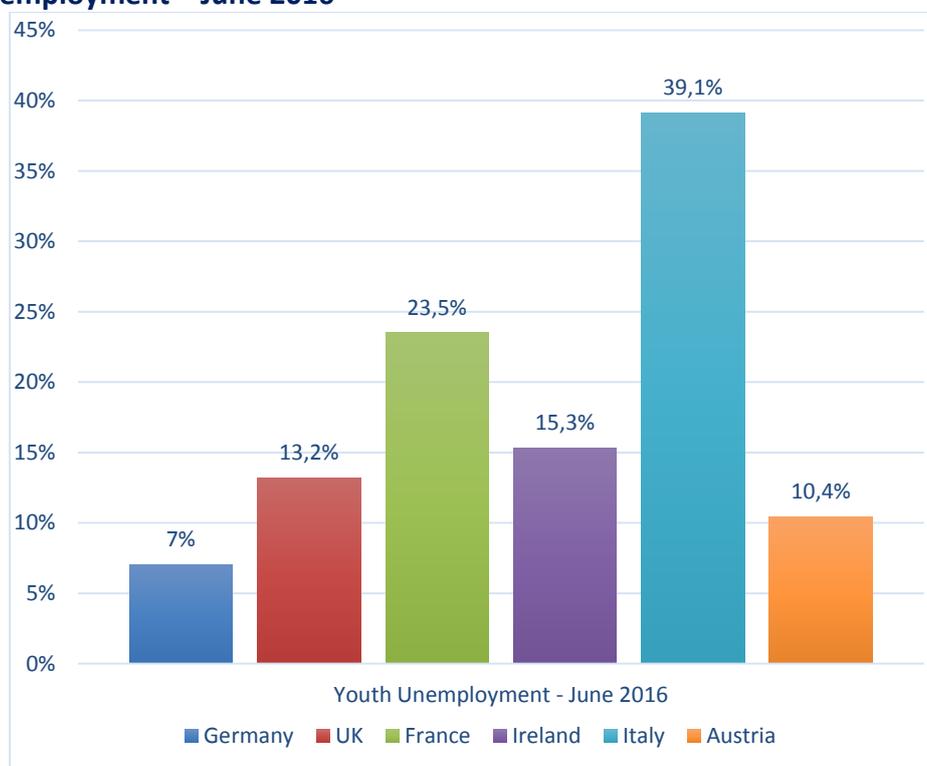
A major element of this Erasmus + partnership programme, is the The Euro-IVET Comparative Study and Needs Analysis Partnership Report which combines the Country Reports produced by partners from the UK, France, Ireland, Austria & Germany As part of their research, each Partner, not only provided a base line study of the current situation facing both employers and young people in their countries, but also sought to identify the key needs, information and training which would be required for the IVET professional in their respective country. This report identifies key information, knowledge and localised issues, which will support the development of the Euro-IVET Occupational Profile for the Euro-IVET practitioner.

Whilst, the main research has been carried out in the Euro-IVET partner countries, additional desk based research was carried out on the situation in Austria and Italy. The Partnership Report draws on both primary and secondary research and includes interviews with key stakeholders and local, regional and national research on BAME young people, especially those considered “disadvantaged” living in an inner city environment.

The research identified and has adopted the use of the term “Culture Clash”, used in this this context to describe the result of a series of differences that exist in the behaviour and beliefs of marginalised groups of young people, to those exhibited and held by both employers and many in the vocational, educational and training workforce.

A key concern, identified in each country and reinforcing the rationale behind the need for the Euro-IVET project, is that youth unemployment remains high throughout Europe. Across the whole EU, youth unemployment is currently 19.4%. (A full breakdown of statistics per country can be found in section C.1 of this report).

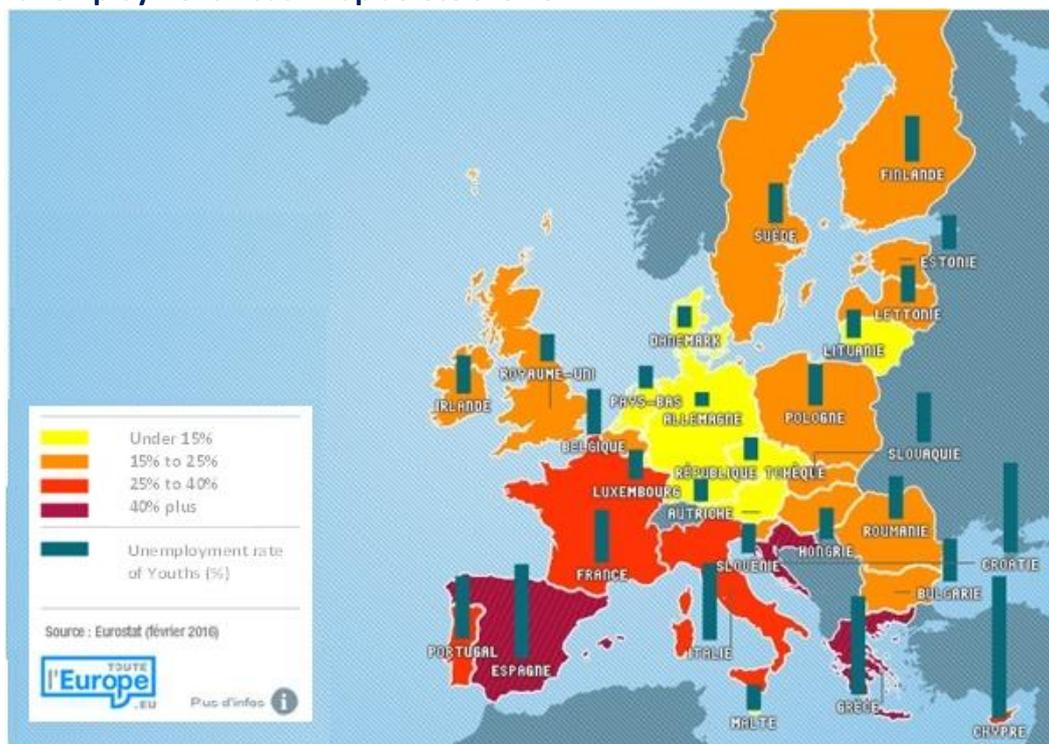
Youth Unemployment – June 2016



Source: Trading Economics – June 2016



Youth unemployment visual map across the EU



Source: Eurostat/Toute l'Europe - 2016

Moreover, within the headline youth unemployment rate, unemployment amongst BAME young people was found to be disproportionately high. For instance in Berlin, Germany, BAME unemployment is 48%. In the United Kingdom, BAME young people aged 16 to 24 were 45% more likely to be unemployed. In France, young males from BAME-Maghreb background were 2.6 times more likely to be unemployed, compared to young people with parents born in France. (The equivalent statistic for females was nearly as high at 2.2 times higher)

Research key conclusions

- Pockets of deprivation continue to exist within all cities, even in cities where there is a growing economy i.e. London. This disproportionately affects young people from ethnic minorities
- As well as poverty, BAME young people are more likely to face high unemployment, educational under-achievement and long term socio-economic barriers such as: inter-generational unemployment, higher rates of mental health diagnosis, low levels of motivation, wellbeing and confidence; criminal activity and higher levels of drug and alcohol abuse
- Young people from BAME backgrounds, especially in France, are more likely to be employed in low pay industries with limited opportunity for skills development or access to qualification opportunities, as well as a lack of long term progression route-ways
- Current IVET Practitioners, including Youth Workers, Employment Advisers, Career Advisers etc. often do not have the necessary skillset 'to build a bridge' for a BAME young people between education and employment;



- Our research did not identify existing accredited training programme in any Euro-IVET partners' country directly focused on developing the skillset of IVET Practitioners' working specifically with BAME young people in an urban multi-cultural environment.

Research on the potential training needs of an IVET Practitioner identified that:

- An understanding of the concept of the mismatch between youth/employer and educational styles, values and cultures (referred to in the report for ease of reference as "Culture Clash") was essential
- A wide and flexible skills sets was required to support young people affected by the Culture Clash
- there was a need to champion a multi-disciplinary team methodology which required practitioners to possess a range of skills such as: effective case management techniques; collaboration, influencing; mentoring; conflict management and often knowledge of a relevant second language.

The research identified some of the key basic skills and competences required by an IVET Practitioner working with young people. These included:

Communication	Inter-personal skills	Understanding work place behaviours	Negotiation
Initiative	Confidence	Enthusiasm	Commitment
Motivation	Sense of responsibility	Articulation	Integration
Emotional Intelligence	Empathy	Social awareness	Flexibility
Inter-cultural understanding	Mentoring	Conflict Resolution	Multilingualism

By first identifying the existing hurdles which currently hold back many young people, national research from Germany identified the key impact and effort which could reasonably be obtained from an effective, focused and specialised, practitioner training programme. These findings were comparable to similar research findings across the other countries:

Description of challenge presented by the young person	Impact/Effort (Ability to affect the topic through the Euro-IVET Practitioner qualification)
Perceived and/or actual discrimination	High impact, Medium effort
Gap between expectation and reality	High impact, Medium effort
Lack of appreciation for the value of formal training (and therefore low motivation)	High impact, High effort
Poor level of communication and other soft skills	High impact, Medium effort



Low level of resilience as a result of previous “knock-backs”	High impact, Medium effort
Helping the young person perceive multilingualism as a positive attribute	High impact, Low effort
Lack of knowledge of learning pathways	High impact, Low effort

As the focus for the Project is on bridging the gap between young people and employers/education, partners’ research also focused on the need for closer communication with employers. Specific research in Ireland also identified a skills deficit with VET professionals in relation to working with employers. This indicated a need for the EURO-i-VET training to incorporate an employer-focus element.

EURO-i-VET Key training units

At a minimum, the Euro-i-VET research identified the following training modules that should be included in a IVET Practitioner training programme:

- **Development of knowledge in the concept of the ‘Culture Clash’ in this context and the information professionals will need to work with Young People affected by the Culture Clash**
- **Recognition and reward: how to motivate young people affected by the Culture Clash**
- **Communication: advice, information and guidance skills – especially for young person and employer**
- **Communication: Mentoring and listening skills**
- **Understanding of the expectations of a Young People starting out on the career ladder**
- **An understanding of employers’ needs and basic work skills expectation**
- **Motivational interviewing**
- **Understanding of, and ability to use, the European CV as a tool for Euro-i-VET trainers**
- **Understanding of the European qualification framework**
- **Conflict Resolution skills**
- **Networking Skills : Working with Employers, Networks and Partnerships to support Young People affected by the Culture Clash**

Based on their research, all partners concurred that the IVET Practitioner training should be based on an empowerment approach that did not treat young people from immigrant/ethnic minority background as “defective,” “wrong,” or “problematic,” but rather addressed their needs, goals and dreams and which assisted them in their successful transition into work or training. Instead of a disciplinarian approach (“teaching young people how to behave”), the research emphasised the view that training support the IVET practitioner to deploy a supportive, informative role, which would ultimately be more appropriate when reaching out to young people affected by Culture Clash.

Conclusion

The EURO-i-VET training programme should reflect the needs identified within each partner’s country, with particular focus on building a common skillset. If done successfully, this will facilitate the IVET Practitioner to develop the skills required to ‘build the bridge’ between young people and employers, caused by the Culture Clash.

