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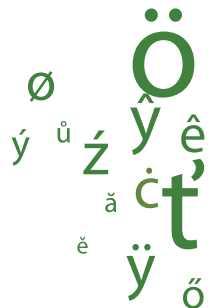
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Career counseling in primary, secondary and higher education



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“For some people this is the best of times.
For others it is the worst of times.
The rules of the game change, with no announcement,
with no warning.
We need to be prepared!”

Charles Dickens



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Term	Description
Skill ¹	Ability to apply knowledge, perform tasks and solve problems. Skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, creative and intuitive thinking) and practical (manual work and the use of methods, instruments, tools and materials). Skill is one of the stages and is a prerequisite for acquiring a habit.
Employability	Possession of certain formal and informal qualifications that constitute the person's potential for finding, maintaining and changing the workplace.
Lifelong learning	Learning of the individual over the course of their life, aimed at improving knowledge, skills and competences for personal, civil, social or professional reasons. It includes all forms and types of learning activities: formal, non-formal and informal.
E – learning / electronic learning	Learning conducted with the use of electronic media, usually via the Internet. It can include different forms and hybrid methods: the use of software, learning management platforms and systems, CD-ROMs, online learning or any electronic or interactive media.
Vocation	represents a set of labor and labor tasks (jobs) which in terms of their content, organization and technology are so related and interconnected that they can be performed by one actor who possesses the appropriate knowledge, abilities and skills. ²
Staying informed on the labour market	is an activity that is usually incorporated into more complex career guidance and counseling and career planning. This usually involves analyzing and presenting trends in the labor market and analyzing specific occupations and jobs in certain industry sectors.
Career	It represents a unique phenomenon that is built according to the choice of the individual. It is a dynamic construct that spans the entire duration of a life and includes not only vocations, but harmoniously integrates work and other social roles such as family, community, and leisure. ³ (Herr and Cramer, 1996)
Career counseling	The process of achieving maximum compatibility of the resources, demands, aspirations or interests of an individual and the real offer in the field of education, training and social and professional integration. ⁴

¹ <https://www.e4e.mk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/poimnik-za-strucno-obrazovanie-i-obuka.pdf>

² http://www.poslovniforum.hr/about/nkz_3.asp

³ Sourced from: GCDF (2009), Module 1

⁴ Most commonly used definition in EU strategies and policies for career counseling



Career guidance	Refers to services designed to assist people, of any age and at any stage of their lives, in making choices about education, training and occupation and managing their careers. ⁵
Career advancement	A continuous process where teachers and professional associates participate in various activities and fill out their portfolio with evidence, all in order to acquire conditions for advancement and obtaining one of the higher titles.
Career information	refers to all the information necessary for planning, obtaining and keeping a job position, regardless of whether it is temporary or permanent employment. Informing includes collecting, structuring and providing data on occupations, skills, possible career paths, learning opportunities, labor market trends and conditions, educational programs, educational and training facilities and institutions, governmental and non-governmental programs and services, and employment opportunities. Informing is the basis and condition for all other career guidance services.
Competencies	A set of specific knowledge, skills, attitudes and ability to apply them in a standard and/or changing work situation. A transferable multifunctional package of knowledge, skills and attitudes that an individual needs to perform a specific task within their vocation, personal fulfilment, development and inclusion.
Distance learning	Transfer of knowledge and skills where the student and teacher are exclusively or predominantly spatially separated, and the teacher or their representative monitors learning success. Their relationship is established using technology. Qualifications can be obtained through distance learning, but individual educational goals can also be achieved in both general and vocational education, following the philosophy of lifelong learning.
Career education	Includes a systemic effort to influence the process of career development among students/adults by introducing specific labor market concepts into the curricula, by organizing special career information classes, inviting specialists as guests to speak about careers, by organizing themed visits and trips and by learning through work during schooling and internships in various institutions.
Labor market	It represents a framework where the supply and demand for employment dynamically interacts with the supply and demand for labor.
Career coaching	A service provided in order to support clients in their professional development efforts, and to identify opportunities for internal professional development and advancement. It is a practice common in the industrial/commercial sector and involves efforts by career guidance counselors to facilitate an employee's career development.

⁵ Harmonized definition according to publications issued by the OECD and the EU



Profession	is an intellectual or manual activity that is carried out in the form of a permanent vocation and serves as a source of regular income to cover living expenses, and for which a certificate is usually required, i.e. degree from an appropriate school, title. ⁶
Professional orientation	refers to the services for the unemployed and other persons seeking work, for choosing a vocation or employment through testing, conversation and information about the needs of individual vocations as well as employment opportunities. Professional orientation also includes individual counseling when choosing a vocation according to the wishes, interest and abilities of persons for a certain vocation and the needs and opportunities of the labor market. ⁷
Job placement	Directing people to suitable job positions. Most of the time, mediation is carried out by government institutions and private mediators in the free market. Some secondary schools and university institutions also offer such services to their pupils and students.
Employment counselling	A process that helps people define their immediate employment goals, understand and access opportunities for further training and the acquisition of additional skills needed for employment, and acquire skills for seeking and keeping a job (e.g. writing a resume and cover letter, preparing for an interview, etc).
Career center	A place where students are informed about the possibilities for further education, how to best present themselves at a job interview, how to communicate and develop cultured speech, that is, how to discover their best potential. It provides services to students and other interested parties for improving competencies through trainings, seminars and consultations. It conducts labor market research and cooperates with the business sector.

Introduction

Over the entire course of development of human society, the characteristics of the world of labour are also changing in parallel. These changes are conditioned by various global, national and local economic conditions and significantly influence the shaping of the professional and personal identity of individuals. In the last few decades those changes, as well as the demands arising from them, have significantly changed the essence of the models of organized aid for individuals to face challenges in their professional and personal development.

The modern characteristics of labour set certain requirements, creating new needs in regards to the professional and personal development of individuals. Thus arises the necessity of developing competencies for managing one's own career.

⁶ <http://www.hrleksikon.info/definicija/profesija.html>

⁷ <http://www.zvrm.gov.mk>



Dramatic changes are also occurring in the understanding, conceptualization and implementation of educational policies meant to enable the development of competencies for managing one's own career. Following the changes in the world of labour and the different positioning of people in relation to the world of labour, interventions range from the creation of new educational policies in formal and non-formal education to specific programs that are mostly intended for and adapted to certain target groups.

Countries that see career development as a long-term profitable investment invest in the advancement of the career counseling process and continuously expand the concepts that support it. In these interventions, they recognize preventive actions upon the later negative effects in the professional life of adolescents. That's why career counseling is introduced into the educational system at an early age for students, first as a concept that they should get used to thinking about, to be able to separate and use the information they face in everyday life, and to later make decisions about their own professional development.

To understand what kinds of demands are placed on education and how it can respond to those demands, this publication will explain the relationship between education and career counselling/guidance, in the context of building career management skills. Emphasis will be placed on the influence of career counseling on career indecisiveness and self-efficacy in relation to the process of making career decisions among adolescents and youth. Opportunities to develop career planning skills at all levels of formal education will be considered. We start from the fact that one of the main tasks of adolescents / young people over the course of their education is the formation of their professional identity.

Keywords: career, career counseling, career guidance, secondary education, adolescents, career indecision, career planning, self-efficacy in relation to career decision-making.



1

FOUNDATIONS OF CAREER COUNSELLING AND GUIDANCE

1. The terms “career” and “career development”

To understand the meaning of and need for career counseling, let's first clarify the term career, from different perspectives over time.



The meaning of this term has changed several times. In the 1970s, a career was seen as a concept associated exclusively with the professional aspects of an individual's life. It was synonymous with individual advancement in the organizational hierarchy or in a profession. Today, the term career has a wider scope and describes the path of learning/lifelong learning, working, and the style of social living of the individual.

“The career⁸ can be defined in brief as the individual’s path over the course of their education and labor. In the past it was normal for an individual to choose a single profession for an entire lifetime. Due to rapid changes in the labor market, this is no longer feasible. People are much more frequently faced with the need to change job positions and vocations. Due to this, the term “profession” became too static to be used in career orientation and has been replaced by the term “career” which describes the individual’s path in the process of education, labor, and social living.”

The contemporary understanding of the career concept implies that:

- everyone has a career - it's not only the elite in society,
- careers are dynamic and have their ups and downs,
- a career is more than the work we do, it includes education, roles in society, family and free time,
- the career lasts almost a lifetime - it does not start with employment, nor ends with retirement.

Periods of education, training in a certain field of activity, unemployment or maternity leave are stages in a person's career development.

Career development is a lifelong process that involves planning/managing learning, labour and transition in order to progress and strive towards a specific, individually desired future. An individual's career development is driven by the individual themselves. Therefore, they must master the skills of career management.

1.1. Theories of career development

Career development theories began to develop in the twentieth century within two disciplines - psychology and sociology, which explained, from specific perspectives, the role of individuals in making key life decisions. Within psychological theories, given the fundamental scientific questions they try to answer, structural and developmental theories are recognized.

1.1.1. Structural theories

The fundamental question regarding professional development at the basis of structural theories was formed at the beginning of the twentieth century (Parsons, 1909; Savicki, 2009):

- *How to achieve compatibility between the characteristics of the individual and the requirements of a certain profession?*

⁸Handbook by MyCareer, Skopje, Enhancing Youth Employment (EYE) programme funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and implemented by the consortium of HSIK - HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation Kosovo and MDA - Management Development Associates.



Frank Parsons, who first described the approach based on matching the personality to the profession, assumed that a quality professional choice is the result of an accurate understanding of one's own characteristics, knowledge of job positions and the labour market. Here, as a key point, he emphasizes the objective assessment of the relationship between one's own characteristics and the offers on the labor market. These postulates represent the core of later theories on matching personality and occupation.

Among these theories, John Holland's Theory of Career (1959, Nauta 2010) stands out, maintaining a strong influence on the development of career counseling practice until today. According to Holland, when choosing a profession, people prioritize jobs where they can use their skills and talents, openly express their views and beliefs, and where they will be surrounded by people like themselves.

According to this theory, most people fit into six personality types: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional. Each type constitutes a set of specific interests, beliefs, attitudes, favorite activities.



Figure 1 John Holland's theory of personality types and working environments

In a later elaboration of his model, Holland abandons the definition of one dominant personality type that excludes other types, but recommends that the analysis of the individual be based on a profile founded upon the order of all six types. An important concept in his theory is the notion of identity, which refers to the clarity of the notion of one's own inclinations, talents, beliefs, attitudes.

Since the behavior of people at work is determined by the interaction between the person and the work environment, Holland hypothesizes that people who work in an environment suitable for their personality type will be more successful and satisfied at work. He also assumes that people with similar

personality types, working together, will contribute to creating a stimulating and pleasant work environment. The concept of identity is also applied in the analysis of the work environment where it refers to the extent to which the work environment has stable and clearly set goals, objectives and methods of organization.

1.1.2. Developmental theories

From the development theories, we will single out the theory of Donald Super (1980). He is the founder of the developmental approach, whose study of professional career development lies upon on three basic propositions:



- The first proposition implies that professional development is a lifelong process of development and realization of the self-concept in the field of work. Job satisfaction is determined by the degree to which they managed to realize their professional self-concept.
- The second proposition is that professional development takes place through several developmental stages. The individual progresses through the developmental stages towards the realization of the "self-concept" in the professional domain.
- The third proposition states that the transition from one level to another will be successful if there is a willingness of the individual to face the specific requirements of a certain level.

The characteristic that determines success in making career decisions is the maturity for choosing a profession or "readiness for occupational choice".

Readiness for occupational choice is defined as a person's ability to successfully cope with the demands of a certain stage of professional development. Super and Thompson (1979) identified 6 dimensions of readiness for occupational choice:

1. awareness of the need for planning
2. knowledge of sources of information
3. decision-making skills
4. general ideas for career development
5. general information about the occupational domain
6. specific information about desired occupations

In the context of this, Super's team has developed a career development inventory (Career Development Inventory, Super, Thompson, Lindeman, Jordaan & Myers, 1981) for the purpose of determining the individual's ability to make quality educational and professional decisions.

Super's concept of the relationship between the life roles of the child, the student, the worker, and the host/parent is shown in the so-called life rainbow⁹ model. According to this model, life satisfaction derives from an individual's ability to satisfy the tasks of individual roles in certain life stages.

1.2. General characteristics of career counselling/guidance

From the above, it can be concluded that today the career is seen as the result of human activity in business, family and social life. It represents an individual's development in learning and working throughout their life.

Career development services have changed over time to adapt to societal changes. If we look chronologically at the services that are and have been offered by career counseling, it is clear that they have gone through a process of evolution, adapting to the demands of the labor market. They began as a support service that helped immigrants integrate into the American labor market in the early 1900s. It was gradually developed as a service that places greater emphasis on counseling, career planning and job search preparation. Today we are in a period aimed at developing awareness and self-initiative for

⁹ <https://www.careers.govt.nz/assets/pages/docs/career-theory-model-super.pdf>



investing in one's own career development and soft skills to adapt to global changes in every sphere of life.

Career counseling / guidance has undergone significant changes in the 21st century due to a number of factors:

- the continuous emergence of modern digital technologies;
- emergence of new careers / job positions;
- rapid changes in the labor market;
- globalization;
- increased mobility;
- the rise of lifelong learning;
- increased amount of available information, etc.

In the entire dynamic process of adapting to social changes, people go through specific stages of life when they are faced with the need to make key life decisions. It is a period when they face a significant life change, known as the transition period. The decisions to be made arise from different needs in different life situations and may be related to the personal development, career and life of the individual in general, in order to ensure individual satisfaction. When the problem is related to career development or planning, career counseling appears as support. It covers a wide range of professional activities aimed at helping people overcome the challenges they face during periods of transition and making career decisions.

Career counseling is recognized worldwide as a system that:

- enables individuals to plan their education, training and work;
- helps educational institutions motivate individuals in taking responsibility for their own education and work;
- contributes to the development of the local, regional and national economy by developing the workforce.

According to the glossary¹⁰ for vocational education and training in the Republic of North Macedonia, career counseling is seen as: "Services that help people define their own goals and aspirations, understand their identity, conduct research to make correct decisions. Counseling encourages people to take action and change and helps them manage their professions and careers."

"Career counselling¹¹ is a domain of counselling focusing on aiding individuals or groups in discovering their proper career path in a period when they are making attempts to reach a career decision or planning their career".

This can be considered as a general definition describing the role of career counseling. Basically, there is no strictly accepted definition of career counseling in the world due to cultural, conceptual and linguistic differences in the interpretation and understanding of this term. As a result, the term counseling is often interchanged with the terms direction, guidance, management or orientation.

¹⁰<https://www.e4e.mk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/poimnik-za-strucno-obrazovanie-i-obuka.pdf>

¹¹<https://www.brainwonders.in/career-counselling.php>



But no matter what it is called, the focus of career counseling is: self-knowledge and research in the context of labour and education, career decision-making, career planning, career change and other issues related to the broader concept of career.

1.3. The role of the career counselor in the process of career counseling

Professional career counseling/guidance includes activities that are coordinated and implemented by a certified career development counselor, in the direction of providing help and support to people in transition. Such help can be in the field of vocational and career development, the field of employment, the process of making career decisions, career planning, resolving conflicts related to career development, etc.

The origin of the word counseling, "consult" or "counsel" is the Latin word "*consilium*", which has various meanings, but essentially describes a two-way dialogue between a client and a counselor. In Latin "*sileo*", as well as "*consilesco*" means "*to be silent and listen to the interlocutor*".

“Career counseling is a service through which, with the aid of a counselor, you reach decisions on career goals and make career decisions.”

Therefore, the counseling process relates more to careful listening by the counselor than their presenting or imparting knowledge to the client. Career counselors are professionals who work together with their clients in a systemic framework that is adjusted in the counseling process in accordance with the counselor's assessments and the client's needs or interests.

Clients in the process can be people from different age groups, such as: teenagers/adolescents exploring career fields and opportunities, young people in the process of career transition, experienced professionals facing sudden changes and interruptions in their careers and in general all people seeking employment or change of job position.

The role of the career counselor in career planning for high school students is essential in all phases of career counseling in high school and has a key role in the professional development of the student at this age. Therefore, career counselors need to possess professional and interpersonal skills that they use to provide effective career counseling sessions, which are conducted as group or individual sessions.

The process of career counseling is described as a process of support, in which it is necessary for the students to make their own decisions and actions. The process itself can be sublimated into three of its specifics: interaction, process, change (IPC).

The interaction between the career counselor and the student, in which the counselor has a significant encouraging role, is one of the factors in ensuring success or change in students. In order for the process to take place, it is necessary for the participants to interact, no matter how different their personalities, with different attitudes, thoughts, education.

The counselor is the one who establishes the relationships and creates the climate for building mutual relationships of respect and trust with the student. In that direction, the counselor's skills play a key role in setting specific goals and activities that will enable the entire process of career counseling to run smoothly.

Essentially, the counseling process, as an interaction between the counselor and the client, extends through several stages:

- establishing a relationship of trust between the client and the counselor,
- assessment of the situation regarding counseling,
- determination of goals, interventions and
- drawing conclusions.

The process that takes place between the career counselor and the student is much more than a series of discussions and noting of concrete facts. It is characterized by a sequence of phases, which are well thought out and defined in a specific cycle. The success or failure of a career counseling process also depends on how closely the sequence of stages in the career planning cycle is followed.

The first stage in counseling is building trust. This stage is crucial to the overall counseling process, as it builds the relationship between the student and the counselor. Here the main tasks of the counselor are: to develop trust and mutual respect, to set rules and boundaries, to emphasize the level of mutual responsibility involved in the process, to encourage the active participation of the student in the process, to awaken their interest in the process of counseling, to show that the counselor is an informal counselor who will analyze the reasons why the student needs support, to improve the student's self-confidence regarding their career choice.

One of the fundamental features of the career counseling process is flexibility; arriving at a solution in a wise and creative way, always keeping in mind the client's interest and the goals set prior to the beginning of counseling. These are skills that are built, upgraded, perfected in the long term with the counselor's commitment to his own professional development and work experience.

The ultimate goal of the career counselor is the change they will cause in the student or the making of concrete decisions by the student, which is seen as development with a certain clear, consistent direction that has been built through the process of working together. The decision is primarily the result of the student's deliberation, their understanding and taking into account of the results of the entire process.



2

CAREER COUNSELING IN THE FIELD OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

2. The need for career counseling/guidance in primary education



We are living in a time of enormous changes which are drastically affecting the labor market and vocations. As a result, everyone who works in the education sector faces the huge challenge of educating generations of students who, upon leaving the education system, will face a labor market that will look dramatically different from today's.

As a result of automation and artificial intelligence, all individuals entering the labor market must adapt very quickly to new changes. They need to make informed decisions and constantly work on developing soft skills in order to remain competitive in the labor market. All of these abilities are developed from an early age, but does the education system allow children to develop these skills from an early age?

This is precisely the topic of this part of the publication, which will elaborate key topics related to career counseling within the framework of primary education, these being:

- The basics of career counseling and guidance
- Examples and good practices from elementary schools in our country
- Techniques for career counseling and guidance of students
- Useful tools for career counseling and guidance for students
- Career counseling and guidance for students with disabilities
- Pros and cons of career counseling and guidance
- Recommendations for the work of professional services

All of these topics will be discussed through the prism of the statistical data obtained as a result of the research carried out in primary schools across the country where class and subject teachers as well as representatives of professional services were surveyed.

The purpose of this part of the publication is to bring career counseling and guidance closer to all concerned persons who are part of the educational system and work with students from primary education and to motivate them to carry out activities related to career counseling and guidance with their students.

2.1. What does career counseling and guidance in primary education entail?

You must be wondering why it is important to think about career counseling and professional guidance from primary education. Is it necessary for children to think about a career from such an early age?

In order for students to be able to make an independent choice for education and career later in life, it is crucial to share tools with which they can learn about themselves and their interests. It is equally important that they discover how to independently explore the opportunities offered by the educational system and the labor market, learn how to make the right decisions and create a plan of action that they will then implement.

Depending on the age of the student, the steps remain the same, but the tools we will use with each student change and adapt to their developmental abilities. Therefore, it is important to analyze the stages which the student goes through in the process of career counseling and guidance and to analyze the professional orientation measures that are currently practiced in primary education.



2.2. Measures for career counseling and professional orientation of students in primary education

There is no formal program within our country addressing the professional orientation of students from the I (first) to the IX (ninth) grades in primary education, but there are several measures mainly intended for students in the VIII (eighth) and IX (ninth) grades.

2.2.1. The Law on Primary Education

Professional orientation is mentioned in several articles of the Law on Primary Education¹² (“Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia” no.161/19 and 229/20), these being the following:

- Article 47 – Professional orientation of students

(1) The school provides assistance for students and parents i.e. guardians in selecting a secondary school, in accordance with the students’ characteristics, skills and affinities.

(2) In order to monitor the individual affinities of students and provide assistance to students and their parents, i.e. guardians in selecting the secondary school, the school psychologist, i.e. the pedagogue uses tools to determine the abilities, interests and possibilities of students and implements a professional orientation program for the students in the eighth and ninth grades, which is determined by the minister upon proposal from the Bureau.

- Article 49 – Planning the work of primary schools

(5) Planned within the yearly working program is also:

- professional orientation for students

- Article 126 – Tasks of the head of the grade i.e. class

The head of the grade, i.e. the head of the class implements the lesson program for the grade community, analyzes the educational and teaching results of the grade, addresses the educational and teaching problems of individual students, takes care of the progress of students with special educational needs, prepares and /or participates in the preparation of the individual educational plan for students with disabilities, cooperates with the parents i.e. guardians and the professional associates of the school, proposes and decides on educational measures, assists in the professional orientation of the students and performs other tasks established in the statute of the school.

According to the law, professional associates and heads of grades and their classes should be involved in the process of professional orientation and career counseling for their students. In addition, it would be useful if every interested class and subject teacher occasionally conducted activities related to the

¹²Law on primary education



stages of career planning. Proposed activities will be elaborated in the section Examples and good practices and recommendations for career counseling, within the publication.

2.2.2. Programme for Professional Orientation

The Programme for Professional Orientation¹³ for students in the eighth and ninth grades of primary schools was created on the basis of Article 47 paragraph (2) of the Law on primary education. It also makes up part of the Annual work programme of primary schools and is implemented by the professional associate psychologist/pedagogue together with the students.

The stated results of the training are:

- Increased readiness of students to make decisions about further education and future profession
- Expanding students' interests for different types of professions
- Greater student awareness of the competences required for certain job profiles

The programme for professional orientation is implemented in three main stages:

1. Self-knowledge. Each student identifies their own strengths and weaknesses, abilities, potentials, attitudes, beliefs, interests, personal goals, values and skills in order to be adequately informed about the various possibilities regarding the choice of further education and profession.
2. Professional information. Students are trained to independently search for relevant information about opportunities for further education, research on various professions on the labor market.
3. Decision making. In the final stage, the students are already familiar with their abilities and interests, but also with the possibilities for further education and career, so that in this stage they can make an independent decision to continue their education in the chosen high school.

2.2.3 Educational assistants

As per the Rulebook on the procedure for requesting an educational/personal assistant and the method of selection and choice of an educational/personal assistant¹⁴, that is, Articles 2 and 3 of the Rulebook, students have the right to a primary education assistant to support them in the process of learning and acquiring the lesson material. It would be useful for the career counselor to cooperate with the educational assistant in order to provide even better support for the student during career counseling sessions.

¹³Programme for Professional Orientation

¹⁴[Rulebook on the procedure for requesting an educational/personal assistant and the method of selection and choice of an educational/personal assistant](#)



Article 2

The provision of educational and personal assistants is for the sake of providing learning support for students with disabilities, in accordance with their individual needs, in order to enable their participation in the educational process on an equal basis with other students.

Article 3

An educational/personal assistant is provided for a student with disabilities regardless of what grade of primary education the student is currently enrolled in.

Educational and personal assistants are employed by the schools with resource centers for a determinate duration, at most until the end of the school year.

The funds for educational/personal assistants are provided from the Budget of the Ministry for Education and Science.

2.3. Trainings on professional orientation for teachers and professional associates conducted through the Bureau of Education

A large part of the teachers and professional associates who participated in the research conducted for the needs of this publication emphasized that the professional orientation trainings organized by the Bureau for Education Development were particularly useful for them. This training for teachers and professional associates provides the foundations for the professional orientation of students and how important it is for students' self-knowledge and their further career development.

The training includes all stages of career planning, including self-knowledge, information on vocations, careers and educational paths as a basis for decision-making, the process of making informed decisions and creating an educational and career plan, cooperation between teachers, professional associates and parents, as well as professional orientation for students with learning difficulties.

All of these measures help the students build their student portfolio which is then discussed with the professional associate pedagogue or psychologist in order for the student to reach a decision on further education.

Based on the research in primary schools in our country and the consideration of career counseling and guidance programs in more developed countries in Europe, it is noted that it is necessary to start the process of career research and career information even earlier.

According to the May 2022 World Economic Forum report¹⁵, as many as 60% of the jobs that existed in 2018 did not exist in 1940, which indicates how quickly the labor market is changing, and today those

¹⁵*Jobs of Tomorrow: The Triple Returns of Social Jobs in the Economic Recovery*



changes are even faster. As we live in an era of huge technological changes that require young people to adapt very quickly to changes in the labor market, it is necessary to develop these abilities to adapt and make informed decisions from an early age.

3. Research conducted at the primary school level across the territory of the country

In order to examine the thinking of teachers and representatives of expert services regarding career counseling and guidance of students in primary education, a survey was conducted that included primary schools from all over the country. Over 3000 teachers, professional associates and employees in primary education were surveyed.

Within the framework of the research, schools from all planning regions were included, namely Pelagonija, Vardar, Skopje and its municipalities, East, South-West, Polog and North-East almost equally, which made it possible to realistically perceive the problems and challenges in the different planning regions. It was determined that the schools in the Skopje and Pelagonija regions are the schools where the most professional orientation and career counseling activities are carried out for students.

Most of the respondents within the framework of the research are class (38.8%) and subject (46.4%) teachers, and the remaining respondents work within the expert service at the school (pedagogue, psychologist, special education teacher, career counselor, social worker). They believe that the activities for career counseling and professional orientation should be carried out to the greatest extent by an expert whose primary job will be career counseling of the students. Some of the respondents pointed out that already existing human resources in schools can be used to implement career counseling for students. These would be the teachers who do not have a full fund of classes and have qualified as career counselors in order to undertake part of the activities related to career counseling of students.

Most of the respondents (64%) believe that it is necessary to open a career center within their school, which will be the driver for the implementation of activities related to career counseling and professional orientation of students. More than half of the respondents (56.2%) fully agree with the statement that it is necessary to practice career counseling and guidance when working with students in order for them to be able to make independent and informed decisions about further education and profession. While 56.4% of respondents believe that career counseling will help students choose where to continue their education.

Within the framework of the research, the personal desire and motivation of the teachers and professional associates for the implementation of activities related to career counseling and guidance of students was examined. A good part of the respondents completely agree (42.3%) and partially agree (38.2%) with the statement that they would like to implement activities related to career counseling and guidance of students. This indicates that most respondents would like to get involved in the realization of activities related to career counseling, and for those activities to be implemented, it is important to enable appropriate programs and trainings that would help them acquire the appropriate competencies



necessary for the implementation of such activities. Some of the respondents answered that they would carry out such activities if they received additional monetary compensation for it.

A large part of the respondents fully (44.9%) and partially (32.4%) agree with the statement that a career counselor should be employed to provide career counseling and guidance to their students. Part of the respondents fully (26.6%) and partially (38.4%) agree with the statement that the parents of their students consider it necessary for the school to implement activities related to career counseling for their children, which indicates to us that it is necessary to increase awareness among parents about what career counseling is and why it would be useful for their children.

It was also investigated how much the respondents think that parents want to get involved in activities implemented by the school that help their children get to know different professions and career paths. 27.9% of the respondents completely agree with the fact that parents would like to get involved in such activities, while the most numerous are those who partially agree with this statement and that is 45.3% of the respondents. The percentage of respondents (51.9%) who partially agree with the statement that parents help their children discover their interests and explore different professions is similar. Only 25.5% of respondents completely agree with the statement that parents help their children discover their interests and explore different professions. This indicates that if the school does not provide adequate measures for students to be able to learn about themselves and explore educational and career opportunities, and they do this with the help of their parents, students are left to their own devices in the process of making important decisions for their future from an early age.

Respondents largely agree that cooperation with parents is necessary for career counseling and guidance activities to be successful, with 59.7% completely agreeing, and 29.6% partially agreeing. This points to the fact that parents are a necessary factor and one of the main actors needed for the successful implementation of activities for career counseling and guidance of students.

Within the scope of the research, it was further analyzed how many hours within each working week a respondent is ready to set aside for the realization of activities related to career counseling and guidance of students. Most of the teachers are prepared to set aside from 1 to 3 hours per week to carry out activities related to career counseling and guidance of students. If a detailed career counseling program were to be created in the primary education, covering students from the first to the ninth grade, it is important that the weekly activities do not exceed 3 hours in order for the majority of teachers and professional associates to join in the implementation process.

An interesting fact was that about half of the respondents, ie 44.4% partially agree with the statement that they can independently implement activities for career counseling and guidance of students, and 17.3% are already prepared to implement such activities. In order to increase the competences of all participants in the process, it is crucial to organize trainings that will increase the competences of teachers and professional associates for working with students.

Finally, it was investigated whether the respondents considered that their school has the conditions for technical support of the implementation of career counseling activities for persons with



disabilities. Out of all the respondents, only 15.6% believe that their school has conditions for technical support and implementation of career counseling activities for persons with disabilities. It is important to detect which schools are lacking the conditions, and to provide them, in order to make career counseling available to all students.

In addition to these questions, two more open questions were covered, these being:

- If activities related to career counseling of students were organized in your school, what kind of activities were realized?
- We would appreciate it if you could share your ideas and recommendations on how you think the process of career counseling in primary education should be carried out..

The responses to the first question are summarized in the section of this publication titled “Good practices”, whereas the responses to the second question are covered in the section titled “Recommendations and conclusions”, and they are supplemented with general recommendations for which activities and tools could be implemented in the field of professional orientation for students in primary education.

4. Foundations of career counseling and guidance in primary education

The process of career counseling and guidance is generally included in the Programme for Professional Orientation for eighth and ninth grade students, but it does not cover first through sixth grade students. This group of students could be involved in a number of activities related to career information and research of potential careers, as well as activities related to the development of certain soft skills that will be a support in their "readiness for professional choice".

The professional orientation program includes the first stages of career planning and self-knowledge, professional information and decision-making. While it's important for students to make their own final decision about which secondary school they want to continue their education in, it's equally important to make a plan that includes their educational goals for the upcoming term. This step is particularly important because it stimulates students to think about the importance of setting goals and making a plan for how those goals will be realized. Setting and realizing the goals from the created plan lets the students know that most of their goals are achievable if they are SMART:

- Specific – described in specific parameters such as numbers, %, etc.
- Measurable – we can measure whether we have achieved them
- Achievable – they have the potential to be achieved
- Relevant – only set goals which are relevant to our long-term goals
- Time-limited – to be completed in a determined period of time

Poorly set student goal: Get a good grade on the next homework assignment.



SMART goal set by student: Get an A in the English language essay I need to turn in next Friday.

- Specific – I was given an essay due next Friday in the subject English language and I want to have a better grade, as I had a B grade on my last essay
- Measurable – The measure of success is a grade of A and higher
- Achievable – With enough effort and following of the advice I received for my last essay, I can improve my grade
- Relevant – receiving an A on the essay improves my chances of receiving an A at the end of the school term
- Time-limited – The essay is due in a week

5. Examples and good practices for career counseling from the primary schools in our country

In order to implement career counseling and guidance from the primary education level, and as efficiently as possible, we have taken into account

- The time resources available to teachers and representatives of expert services.

Here we take into account all of the activities meant to be implemented by all stakeholders involved in the process of student education within the primary school they are employed in. We are aware that teachers, regardless of whether they are class or subject teachers, have many administrative obligations besides teaching classes and preparing for them. This is why we want the chosen examples and good practices to be suitable for easy integration into class plans or as additional activities after classes have finished, if this is in the interest of students. Most of the activities, good practices and primary education recommendations we will be discussing require relatively little time to prepare, but they will have a positive influence on students and their views on careers.

- The interest of teachers and representatives of expert services in implementing activities for career counseling and guidance.

The idea is for teachers to implement and integrate these activities within their lessons and to connect them with the topic that is being worked on in that specific lesson, but also within the framework of free activities that could be organized outside of regular lessons and the curriculum. According to the research, most teachers and representatives of professional services (68.8% of the respondents) are prepared to set aside between 1 and 3 hours within a week for the implementation of activities related to career counseling and guidance of students, therefore the included activities are expected to be implemented in those time frames.

- Material resources of schools on the entire territory of the country



For this purpose, we have chosen activities and tools that would be available to most schools, and most of them require very little material resources.

Out of all the answers we received to the question "If activities related to career counseling for students have been organized in your school, what activities were implemented?" in the questionnaire sent to all primary schools in the country, we singled out some of the activities that teachers successfully implement with their students and we want to highlight them as good practices that can be implemented in other schools as well. For this purpose, we have divided the activities depending on the stages of professional orientation that they cover.

Stage	Activity or workshop
1. Self-knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Painting in the art education class on the topic "My future profession" • Written exercise in the Mother tongue and foreign languages class - "Standing before the open door of my future profession." • • Self-portrait "Who am I" - valuing one's own characteristics and traits, personal identity and which factors influence the formation of identity • Activity "My family tree" through which they think about their roots, traits, abilities, interests as well as the careers of people in the family • Conduct a RIASEC interest assessment • Educational workshop "My future profession" - in which it is worked out how the students think the work in a certain profession looks like • Application of a set of questionnaires for self-assessment to determine the abilities, interests and opportunities of the student (tools from the professional orientation training conducted by career counselors through the Education Development Bureau) • Creating a personal SWOT analysis • Workshop "Me in 10 years" where students will be able to speak about how they imagine their life in the future • Stimulating and developing creativity through writing poetry, prose, speaking, acting, singing • Each student presents themselves in front of the class and speaks about their strengths, challenges, hobbies, etc. In that way, the students get to know each other even better • Activity "I can find a job in the field of..." with each student discussing the topic
2. Professional information and opportunity research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploration of professions by students • Getting to know the Application for enrollment in secondary schools in the RNM

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of work programs of secondary vocational schools and vocations that would be of interest to students, what is studied in each vocation and the prospects for further work and improvement • Conducting a survey "Where will you continue your secondary education" • A tribune where parents will be the speakers and will answer students' questions about their professions • Visiting factories, banks, theaters, artisans, business companies and other various institutions in order to acquaint the students with the widest possible range of professions where they could find themselves • Workshops for the development of skills that are needed in a certain profession • Attending of the "Open Day" of the secondary schools by the students of the ninth grade • Informing students about the network of secondary schools in our country and the vocations they offer • Conversation and discussion with students about which professions are current and in demand on the labor market • Getting to know the professions and schools that exist in our and neighboring municipalities, as well as in the country • Organizing workshops with parents from different professions who each speak about their field • An inspiring workshop where people who are experts in their field will speak and students will be able to ask them questions • Day of success stories in the school (visits from former students who have a success story in a certain area) • Obtaining specific information about certain professions through practical monitoring of work in certain professions (job shadowing)
3. Decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the results obtained from the tests and surveys in order for the student to make an independent decision • Creation of a career development plan for each student that includes the student's goals and an action plan for how each of those goals would be achieved • Individual and group counseling of students • Individual and group counseling for parents on how to help their children make independent decisions¹⁶

¹⁶[Parents guide](#) – Be your child's career counselor, produced by the Association of career development counselors



Over the course of this process, the professional associates gather the following documentation to be entered into each student's file:

- Monitoring the achievement of students in certain subjects
- Follow-up through the prepared social anamnesis of the student and their family, which includes the education and profession of the parents, the professional competences acquired by the parents and how they are transmitted to the family, how the student utilizes their leisure time, what are the skills of the student

Regarding the existing measures, the primary focus is on work with students from the eighth and ninth grades, and the most numerous activities are those related to self-knowledge, opportunity research and professional information. This process is mainly carried out by the expert services, and some of the activities are led by teachers and class heads within the lessons of a certain subject or within the homeroom class.

6. Challenges faced by professional associates during career counseling of students in primary education

In conversation with professional associates in primary education, it was determined that they face a huge number of challenges when implementing the Programme for Professional Orientation in Primary Education. This section elaborates some of the most common challenges as well as what can be done to overcome them.

Challenge	How to address it
Students struggle making an independent decision about their further education and career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizing workshops that will help students learn how to make independent decisions • Talking with students about previous experiences when they made decisions and how they reached them • Application of self-knowledge tools • Thorough research of the labor market • Informing about different career opportunities and professions
Parents have a large influence over their children's decisions on further education and career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversations between professional associates and parents about how they can support their child when choosing further education/career • Organizing trainings for parents on the topic "How to be a career counselor for your own child"



<p>Students are insufficiently informed about their educational and career opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizing a workshop to assist students in learning how to search for information sources and decide which ones are relevant and accurate. • Talk about where they can get relevant information about certain career paths and educational opportunities • Presentation of secondary schools and the career opportunities that open up to students upon completion of the specific secondary school
<p>Students are insufficiently motivated to research different career options and are mainly motivated by the “popularity” of a certain profession</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizing a career fair where different professions will be presented • Informing students about changes in the labor market and how technology affects the reduction of the need for certain jobs and the need to create new professions • Organizing classes where students could meet professionals from different professions and ask questions • Each student does individual research about what their ideal profession would be and what the life of a person working in that profession looks like (sharing experiences with other students in class) • Subject teachers could discuss the different career opportunities offered by different science disciplines

7. How can the process of career counseling for primary school students be organized?

Although professional orientation and career counseling is partially represented in primary education with the Programme for Professional Orientation, it is mainly aimed at working with students from the eighth and ninth grades and does not include the Fantasy stage which, according to Super, is one of the key stages for the further choice of education and career in children.

The best way of organizing the process of career counseling in primary education is by creating special programs and activities depending on the age of the students. To this end, we will use Super's theory to divide the activities according to the maturity of the students and the stage of their career development.

It is also important to use the career planning cycle and organize activities from each stage of career development (the stages that are also included in the Programme for Professional Orientation), these being:



1. Self-knowledge - the student learns their strengths and weaknesses, interests, values, skills, ambitions.
2. Research opportunities - the student researches secondary schools, various vocations, industry trends, the labor market.
3. Setting a goal and making a decision - the student learns how to make a decision, set goals, make a career plan
4. Taking action - the student enrolls in secondary education and makes a plan for further educational goals (this step is especially important at the end of primary education, i.e. during the first career transition, but it is good to discuss it earlier than that)

**Set goals and make decisions -> Take action -> Know yourself -> Research opportunities
(schools and vocations)**



Figure 2 Cycle of career planning

7.1. Activities which can be implemented in the various developmental stages of children

<p>1. Fantasy stage (6 -10 y.o.)</p>	<p>During this period we mainly focus on encouraging children to find out their skills and strengths. To encourage their curiosity to explore a variety of professions. This is also a period when giftedness can be recognized in children, but also when certain obstacles in development can be detected, and therefore it is important for teachers to be in constant contact with professional associates regarding the children's progress.</p>
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Activity	Implementation
Roleplaying and reading stories	Children love to hear stories and identify with the characters they read about. By reading stories about real professions you can encourage children to think about different professions such as teacher, doctor, firefighter. Then each child can choose a certain profession and present how they imagine it to be like.
Artistic activities	Art offers an extraordinary opportunity to explore different interests and values in children. Encourage them to think about what they want to be when they grow up and draw it. Or maybe make a collage of several hobbies they like to do in their leisure time.
Career quiz and games	Digital technology and the internet allow us to use a variety of interactive tools for children to explore different professions and their interests.
Organizing field trips	You can organize trips to different places around the city where children can directly observe how a firefighter, doctor, architect, journalist, beautician, etc. works.
Organizing career days	All of the children can invite their parents and organize a career day within the class where each parent will present their profession.
2. Interest stage (7 – 11 y.o.)	In the stage of developing interests, it is necessary for students to get even closer to the world of work and the exploration of different careers. Provide them with an environment in which they can explore both their skills and the labor market in more detail.
Mapping interests and skills	Creating an interests and skills map is a great way to fit all of your students' interests in one place. Ask each student to write their interests on one sheet of paper and their skills on another sheet. Then at the grade level, group students who have stated similar interests and skills and encourage them to think about careers in which they can apply the skills.
Guest speakers	Invite guest speakers who are professionals in their careers to a homeroom class and ask them to explain their profession. Before class, encourage students to prepare questions for the guest.
Career research	Assign each student to research a career they find interesting. Provide specific directions for the research and ask the students to research what the job duties are for the specific occupation, what education or training is required to be completed to work in that occupation, etc.
Attending a typical work day	If you notice that one of the students is demonstrating interest in a certain profession, connect them with someone who already works in that profession. Arrange for the student to spend a day with that person and see what a typical work day looks like.

Career fair	Organize a career fair at the school level and invite parents and celebrities to speak about their careers.
3.Capacity stage (12 – 14 y.o.)	This stage is the most crucial due to the fact that the period is approaching when students have to make a decision about where they will continue their education. In the earlier stages, more focus is placed on group work and group research. At this stage, it is extremely important for students to learn how to make independent decisions. It is also necessary to carry out individual career counseling sessions so that students can analyze their interests in more detail and discuss their dilemmas and challenges with an expert - a career counselor.
Self-knowledge	Help children discover their interests that would further connect to different career paths. The RIASEC test is a great tool to help you do that, and so is a personal SWOT analysis.
Defining goals	Help students create SMART goals that are related to their choice of further education
Researching career paths	At this age, students are even more prepared to explore different careers. Ask them to find detailed information about a particular profession, interview a professional, research what the working conditions are for a profession, and then present the research to the class.
Decision-making workshop	Organize a workshop on "Making informed decisions". In the workshop, discuss ways in which a decision can be made. Ask your students if they make independent decisions and if someone influences their decision. Additionally, encourage a discussion about whether the student should make the decision about their future education and career on their own.
Trial work experience	Give interested kids a chance to experience a typical work day and connect them with a professional who would like to hire them as an assistant or helper for a week during summer vacation.
Visits to secondary schools	Organize visits to local secondary schools in order to encourage children to think about which school they will be continuing their education in.

8. Career counseling and guidance of children with disabilities in primary education

According to the adopted 2021 Concept for Primary Education¹⁷, inclusivity in primary education is fundamental for exercising every child's right to education, and is guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of North Macedonia. Inclusivity in primary education enables every child aged 5 years and 8 months to be able to enroll in primary education and realize the right to education.

¹⁷ Concept for Primary Education

Each child is a unique individual with unique qualities, abilities, ideas and thoughts, so it is important to keep this in mind when working with any child, whether or not they have a particular disability.

Before you begin structuring the career counseling process, it is important to have an assessment of the child's degree of disability. Most children with mild disabilities are included in regular classes, while the children with more severe disabilities study in primary schools with a resource center. Within these schools, the person who will work on the professional orientation and career development of the student will be able to collaborate directly with the rest of the professional team working with the student in order to create an integrated strategy.

On the other hand, in regular schools, an educational assistant works with children with disabilities and an inclusive team that works with the child and is assigned by the Ministry of Education. In accordance with the Law on Primary Education, this team creates an individual educational program or a modified program that is adapted to the abilities and needs of the child.

- **Work with deaf or hard-of-hearing children**

This includes children with hearing impairment whose impairments can range from mild to more serious. In order to help them communicate on a daily basis, they can use a number of strategies, such as lip reading, hearing aids, note taking and sign language interpreters. You will need to determine the correct method of communication before you begin career counseling.

- **Work with visually impaired children**

Visually impaired children see partially or have completely lost their sight. If they have lost their sight completely, they usually use Braille to read and write. Once you have taken this into account, you may continue with your standard career counseling techniques and methods and adapt them to the child's needs.

- **Work with children with intellectual disabilities**

Children with intellectual disabilities may have certain limitations when it comes to communication, social skills, ability to work in certain jobs and other difficulties depending on the type and severity of the intellectual disability. Before starting career counseling sessions, you should get information from a licensed professional about the severity of their condition so that you can determine the correct strategy for the counseling sessions.

- **Work with children with physical disabilities**

Children with physical disabilities may have impairments in their physical functioning including problems with mobility, dexterity, endurance, etc. This disability can be temporary or permanent. Parents of children with physical disabilities usually know how much their disability affects their daily functioning, so you will be able to consult with them about the best way to work in the sessions.



- **Work with children with autism spectrum disorders**

The term "autism" is used to include people with autistic disorder, Asperger's syndrome, and atypical autism, which Disorders on the autism spectrum are conditions that affect how information is stored in a person's brain. As a result, children with autism spectrum disorder may have difficulties with social interaction, verbal and non-verbal communication, sensory sensitivities, and even some repetitive behaviors or decreased interest in certain activities. Depending on their situation, you will need to work with a licensed professional to create a strategy tailored to their needs during your career counseling sessions.

Assessment of the degree of disability

In order for the career counseling sessions to have the desired result for the child, it is crucial to learn more about the degree of disability from experts. For these children, career counseling usually takes place within the framework of individual sessions so that the pace of work can be adjusted to their individual needs.

Support system

An integral part of the career counseling process is for the child to have a support system made up of family members, friends or professionals who will provide support throughout the process. Although the individual motivation of the child is key, it is good when the child has someone who will be by their side constantly and help them increase their confidence as well as strengthen certain skills.

Determine expectations

As before any other career counseling session, the first thing you will need to do is to establish trust with the child and discuss their wishes, dreams, interests, and only then begin to move on to the implementation of the session activities.

Create a personal profile

During your first session with the child, it is good practice to open a file in which you will note all the key information that the child shares with you. Some good information to include in the file is:

- Interests and personal values
- Information about their background and education
- List of skills and areas of competence
- Career opportunities that the child would like to explore
- The challenges they face
- Anything else they think they should include

Collaborate with the psychologist and pedagogist when collecting information for the child's file, in order to obtain a wider picture.



How to create a career counseling plan for children with disabilities

The career counseling plan and program for children with disabilities is truly individual and should be tailored based on the needs of each child. When developing the plan, it is important to cooperate with the professional associates, as well as with other professionals (defectologist, speech therapist, physiotherapist, psychotherapist, etc.) with whom the child may work in order to get the complete picture.

Just as children with disabilities have an individual educational plan, they should also have an individual career plan, since each child is unique and has different needs. It is important to work on self-knowledge and detect the strengths and challenges that each child faces so that you can then approach researching different professions. An individual approach is important when practicing career counseling with any child, and it is especially important when working with children with disabilities.

A common problem for children with disabilities is that they do not have access to information about various educational and career opportunities. That is why you're here - to help them find relevant information that will open their horizons and encourage them to think about their abilities and how they might excel in a particular profession later in life.

Finally, focus on discovering the talents and interests of children with disabilities because they are crucial for the child to be able to choose a profession that will bring them satisfaction, success and the possibility of independent functioning. And while doing so, provide a friendly environment during each meeting so that the child feels safe, accepted and wants to open up and discuss with you.

Skills that the career counselor needs to possess when working with children with disabilities:

- Patience - remember that the whole process is a marathon, not a short sprint.
- Empathy - children do their best and need to be able to rely on you, and for that you need to empathize with them.
- Ability to listen actively - active listening is just as important as all the other tips we've already mentioned, if not the most important. Make sure you pay close attention to every piece of information the child shares with you, as this small piece of information may hold the key to figuring out exactly what help they need to find their dream career.

Although career counseling for children with disabilities has many aspects to consider, the success of the process will allow the child to be able to explore their interests, further their education and build the career of their dreams.

9. Career counseling and guidance of gifted children

Primary education is also a period in which giftedness can be noticed in certain students. Early recognition of a gifted child can help them develop their potentials even further and help them pave their



way in a certain profession from an early age. In order to be able to perform career counseling for gifted children, it is important to know the theoretical background of what constitutes a gifted child. For the purposes of this part of the publication, we refer to the theories analyzed in the book "The Gifted Child"¹⁸.

1. Recognizing a gifted child

When it comes to career counseling of gifted children, detection, i.e. recognition, is the first and key segment in working with gifted children. Recognition is done by the teacher who notices that the child is manifesting some kind of giftedness. The teacher shares that information with the professional associates in order to be able to proceed to the identification process, which will make it possible to determine if the child is gifted and what kind of giftedness it is.

According to Koren, giftedness is a set of traits based on which an individual is capable of consistently achieving exceptionally high results in one or more areas of human activity.

2. Identifying a gifted child

To identify a child as gifted, it is necessary to assess giftedness through three main categories:

- Assessment of the child's abilities

In the first stage, it is necessary for the child to make a self-assessment of their abilities, an assessment to be made by the teacher, the child's parents and classmates.

- Measuring the degree of development of abilities

In this phase, standardized tests are used with established metric characteristics and in order to find out the level of the child's abilities. Some of the standardized tests used are intelligence tests, tests of special abilities (test verbal, spatial, perceptual, mechanical, mathematical, etc. abilities), creativity tests (measure the degree of development of creative abilities), personality tests (determine character traits) and achievement tests.

- Assessing the child's spiritual and material creations

In order for a child to be considered gifted, it is important to assess the works that the child has created. An indication of a certain giftedness is a child's work that is original, unexpected and can be compared to the work of a mature creator.

The most frequently encountered types of giftedness are elaborated in terms from professional literature in the following part.

¹⁸"The Gifted Child" – Violeta Arnaudova, Ph.D and Elena Achkovska, Ph.D, Skopje, Faculty of Philosophy, 2000



- **Multi-giftedness**

Multi-giftedness is characterized by the ability to produce high results in several areas simultaneously. These are people who excel in several different fields, such as Leonardo da Vinci, who was simultaneously a painter, sculptor, architect, scientist and inventor.

- **Mathematical giftedness**

Great scientists, philosophers, chemists, physicists and biologists have an affinity for mathematics. The foundation of this giftedness are the following abilities:

1. Numerical ability - that is, the ability to understand and operate with mathematical symbols and numerical relationships
2. Ability to remember and plan
3. Spatial representation ability - understanding of spatial relationships and geometry
4. Ability for logical reasoning and perception. Ability to solve certain problems and derive certain conclusions from them

- **Verbal giftedness**

Verbal giftedness is most often manifested as giftedness in literature and/or giftedness in languages. Giftedness for literature appears from the age of 10 - 12 and can be expressed as the ability to write unusual poems, short stories or other written works. Giftedness for languages appears from 5 - 8 years old and in these children, it is observed through the rapid progress of learning foreign languages, good pronunciation, rich vocabulary, etc.

- **Giftedness in the arts (visual, musical and performing arts talent)**

The scope of giftedness in the arts includes the following types of giftedness:

Artistic giftedness is characterized by visual memory, aesthetic intelligence, creative imagination, ease of perception, exceptional oculomotor coordination and constant motivation.

Musical giftedness is characterized by the ability to make harmonic assemblages, the ability to identify pitch and tone color, sensitivity to changes in loudness, and sensitivity to rhythm, tempo, and duration.

Giftedness for the performing arts can be noticed even in preschool age and includes giftedness for acting and ballet. Gifted acting is easily identified because the child has the ability to tell and interpret fictional stories that attract attention. Talent for ballet appears at about 3 years of age and is manifested through rhythmic movements stimulated by music.

- **Giftedness for sports**

Sports giftedness is made up of a child's physical and mental constitution, fitness, extroversion, mental acuity, orientation, and the fit between a child's emotional stability and intelligence.



- **Giftedness for leadership**

A child who is gifted for leadership typically has the following qualities: above average intelligence, the ability to think abstractly, self-confidence, decision-making skills, adaptability, enthusiasm, the ability to clearly express themselves verbally, etc.

How to implement career counseling for a gifted child?

When we work with gifted children, it is important to create an individual educational plan from an early age (the age when giftedness is identified) and to work together with the professional associates to provide a stimulating environment that will allow the gifted child to realize their potential. A career counselor should help the child find mentors who can further help them continue to develop into careers in which they can realize their giftedness.

10. Techniques for career counseling and guidance of primary school students

In the work of career counseling for students, you may use the following techniques and practices:

- **Conducting professional orientation tests and interest research.**

These tests and questionnaires will help students identify their interests, talents, values, needs and will help them go through the stage of self-knowledge. It is a good idea to keep these tests in the student's file and to further discuss them with the professional associates and the children's parents, especially in the period prior to choosing secondary education.

- **Organizing activities which will help students learn how to make an informed and independent decision.**

A key part of the career counseling process is the decision making process. Before they are in a decision-making situation, it is important to enable students to make independent decisions.

- **Assigning a mentor to each student**

It would be good for each student to have a designated mentor to whom they could turn if they had any challenge, dilemma, problem or specific topic they wanted to discuss privately. Professors of subjects in which a certain student shows a particular interest can be appointed as mentors.

- **Introducing career counseling into the curriculum**

Until career counseling receives a special place in the curriculum from the beginning of education, the process of professional orientation will not be able to be integrated as a process parallel to the educational one.



- **Introducing career counseling into the framework of projects worked on by students**

Very often, techniques and tools used in the career counseling process can be integrated in the work of a certain project on a certain subject. It would be useful if the students, working on a specific project, manage to define or discover some of their interests or discover a new profession.

- **Integrating digital tools in the career counseling and information process**

The Internet provides access to numerous websites, blogs, social media and forums where students can get information about different careers and opportunities offered in the labor market.

- **Employing a career counselor in every school**

Hiring career counselors in schools will ensure that each student can work with a professional who will be there to help them explore their interests and analyze the labor market and opportunities. The career counselor will be able to create annual career counseling programs and organize professional development activities.

- **Development of student skills**

Organizing various workshops, trainings and courses to help students develop their talents and skills.

- **Introducing volunteer programs**

These programs will help interested students get in touch with certain professions more easily, learn more about them and acquire working habits.

11. Collaboration – a key segment for success in the professional orientation and career counseling of students

Career counseling of primary school students could not be implemented successfully without collaboration between the key actors involved in the educational process.

- **Collaboration with parents**

Collaboration with parents is the most important factor for a successful career counseling process, as parents have the greatest influence on the lives of their children. They know their children best, want the best for them and can be their support in the process of selecting their further education and future vocation. Parents can encourage their children to think about what they do well, help them cope with the stress of decision-making, and offer support when children make their own choices about future



education or careers. Parents, together with teachers, class heads and professional associates are the main triangle for successfully guiding students to success.

- **Collaboration within the school**

Collaboration within the school greatly influences how successful the career counseling process will be for students. If there is successful collaboration between teachers, grade heads and professional associates, students have constant support at every moment of their career development. This type of collaboration enables an integrated approach when working with students and they have greater opportunities to discuss their decisions regarding the choice of school programs, access to information about the labor market, development of certain competencies and creation of a plan that will allow them to achieve their goals more easily.

- **Collaboration with other primary schools in the region and country**

Collaboration between primary schools provides access for students to more resources and information about career opportunities. It also contributes to the exchange of experiences, good practices, ideas and preparation of students for further education, as well as for the expected changes in the labor market after they have completed their education. Furthermore, the collaboration gives students access to a variety of practical experiences in companies and organizations that help students improve their skills and prepare them for successful careers in the future.

- **Collaboration with other institutions**

In terms of providing opportunities for growth, development and progress to gifted students, and allowing students with disabilities to expand their horizons regarding the various career and educational opportunities opening before them. Since the ultimate goal of career counseling is to prepare students to find their dream career in the future, collaboration with different institutions can open up additional opportunities in terms of additional resources, scholarships and opportunities for other types of financial aid. All of that help enables these students to realize their potential and to actualize themselves in a profession they love.

12. Tools for career counseling and guidance of primary school students

Some of the most widely used tools for career counseling and guidance of primary school students include:

- **Career testing**

Using standardized tests that help students identify their strengths, interests, values, challenges, etc. Tests such as the RIASEC interest assessment test find wide application in working with students. This test divides interests into six categories: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Entrepreneurial, Conventional.



- **Self-knowledge tools**

The SWOT analysis is a useful tool which, if used as a tool for self-knowledge, can assist the student in discovering what internal factors might affect their career later on, i.e. Strengths and Weaknesses – and what external factors might affect their career, i.e. the Opportunities and Threats of the labor market.

- **Resources for career research**

The career counselor may share resources which will help the student research various professions.

- **Internet platforms**

Platforms and social networks such as LinkedIn, Glassdoor and CareerOneStop offer students the opportunity to learn more about the qualifications, skills and education needed to build a career in a particular profession.

- **Interviewing students**

The interview process prepares students to learn to talk about themselves, their skills, abilities, interests, thoughts. It is a key skill that they will be expected to have mastered by the time they start looking for work. Therefore, it is useful for them to practice it as early as possible so that they can perfect it when the time comes to enter the labor market.

- **Tools for creation of a digital CV such as Europass and Canva**

These tools allow students to enter their interests, skills and abilities in well-known forms that will benefit them in further education and in the job search process.

12.1. What can help in the process of career counseling

- **Workshops and events organised by local non-governmental organizations in the field of career development**

Career development, professional orientation and developing an entrepreneurial spirit is a major focus for NGOs. As a result, they often organize workshops for making CVs and cover letters, but also trainings for developing leadership and entrepreneurial skills.

- **Virtual career fairs and events**

These types of events allow students to come into contact with different careers and industries, find out what the demand is in the labor market and keep abreast of changes in the global labor market.



- **The National Euroguidance center and other Euroguidance centers**

Euroguidance centers are a key link in the career counseling process at the European level. Their existence is particularly important in countries that do not have a specific program dealing with career counseling at all levels of education. Therefore, the main goal of the Euroguidance centers is to provide information about career opportunities, trainings for career counselors, share information about new activities, methods and practices of career counseling that are implemented in different countries across Europe.

The Euroguidance center in our country collaborates with primary schools and provides the following services:

- Organizing information sessions and workshops for teachers, students and parents and informing about the necessity and importance of career counseling.
- Provision of materials for career counseling and career information in cooperation with the Euroguidance ambassadors for the Republic of North Macedonia. These online resources are specifically designed to help students and anyone interested in the career counseling process gain more information about educational paths, industries, and various occupations.
- Collaboration with schools, non-governmental organizations and everyone interested in the career counseling process.

13. Upsides and drawbacks of career counseling and guidance of primary education students

The benefits of career counseling and guidance of students in primary education are:

- Providing an environment in which students can identify their interests, talents, skills, values and everything that makes them special. This significantly facilitates the choice of further education and profession.
- Improvement of student learning achievements as students realize how important learning is to achieving their long-term goals and success in their future profession.
- Increasing students' self-confidence as they learn how to make independent and informed decisions and make the right career choices for them.
- Obtaining the necessary knowledge about the functioning of the labor market, the job opportunities that are open to them, but also monitoring world trends and changes in the labor market.

Although career counseling has many advantages, it also has certain drawbacks:



- Limited resources - this means that a large number of schools do not have the resources necessary to implement a career counseling process for their students.
- Career counseling is susceptible to influences - The initial idea behind career counseling is to provide an environment that will allow students to make independent and informed decisions. But the fact is that these decisions are often influenced by parents, teachers, peers, and sometimes even professional associates if they are not careful during the counseling process.
- Career counseling sometimes puts too much focus on making a decision and choosing a career path. - This means that some students are sometimes in a situation where they have to make a decision quickly, but they are not sufficiently informed or prepared to make it. Career counseling can sometimes turn the education process into a process whose only end goal is getting a job.

14. Recommendations and conclusions regarding career counseling and guidance for primary education students

Career counseling is a key process that enables self-knowledge, exploration of educational opportunities and self-realization starting from primary education. Although it partially exists in the process of primary education, it is necessary to create a formal program that will specifically deal with professional orientation, career counseling, career research and analyzing the interests of students from an early age.

Until such a program is created, it is necessary to work in equal measure with the professional associates and with the teachers, as well as provide them with support in creating activities that will help students from the earliest age to get to know different professions, to put them in different roles, to get to know themselves and build their own attitudes about vocations, all within their schools.

Based on the conducted research, the following conclusions were reached:

- Most of the surveyed teachers and representatives of expert services in primary education believe that career counseling is necessary from primary education and that the career counselor is exactly the person to lead this process.
- The respondents believe that it is necessary to have a career counselor working within the career center, who would be a professionally qualified person with a career counseling certificate and would organize the entire process within the school, work on improving and advancing the tools used for the purpose of following global changes and trends in the field of vocations and will be the person who can individually discuss career challenges and opportunities with each student.
- A large number of teachers believe that they would allocate a part of their time to realize this type of activity, but they have very little time left for it after realizing their regular activities, and the best thing for the students would be to have an individual approach during this process,



especially at the end of primary education when every student has to make a decision about choosing a secondary school.

Lastly, it is important to mention the key recommendations for the successful implementation of career counseling in primary education:

- Increasing awareness of the need for career counseling and all activities related to it from the earliest age of children.
- Creation of a special program for career counseling at the national level, by the Education Development Bureau and the Ministry of Education and Science.
- Employment of career counselors in all schools who will manage career centers and the career counseling process in schools.
- Training of teaching staff and professional associates on how to assist with the career counseling process.
- Within the framework of the special program for career counseling, it is necessary to distinguish between the abilities of students of different ages and thus to divide the activities that will be covered with the students. It would be best to plan and organize the activities in the following groups:
 - Students from the I (first) to the III (third) grade with whom we will work on researching different careers and roleplaying,
 - Students from the IV (fourth) to the VI (sixth) grade with whom we will work on more detailed research about the world of vocations and how they imagine that a certain profession is realized.
 - Students from the VII (seventh) to the IX (ninth) grades, with whom much more work will be done on researching educational and career opportunities, the process of making an independent and informed decision and making a career and educational plan.
- Adapting the program for special schools and adjusting the activities of the program for each student.
- It is particularly important to utilize the complete documentation that is maintained for each student in order for the student to be able to make an independent and informed choice for further education and career. This will be additionally enabled by using the documents that all teachers already fill out to monitor the progress of students and their skills. They can further help in the early detection of gifted children and children with special educational needs in order to provide them with the best opportunities for further success in education and the vocation they choose.
- Use of digital resources for career counseling and adapting them to be used in our schools.
- Cooperation with parents as they are a key factor that influences children's decisions, informing them about the career counseling process so that they may support their children and not make the decision themselves about where their child will continue their education.



- Collaboration between the teacher who knows the children's interests best, the professional collaborators and the career counselor (if there is one in the school) in order to create an integrated approach in the career counseling process.
- Encouraging students to think about the world of vocations, about the changes happening in the labor market and to approach analytically when thinking about vocations.
- To provide means and conditions for the inclusion of students from rural schools to the nearest city so that they can attend all major events and activities for professional orientation that are organized.
- To organize more free activities within the school, with the help of which students can explore their interests instead of overloading the schedule with a huge number of classes.

Only through continuous work and focus on improving all aspects of education can we help educate future generations who will build dream careers and be drivers of change in society. Career counseling and professional orientation in primary education will make this possible if they are successfully integrated into the education system.



3

CAREER COUNSELING IN THE FIELD OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

Career counseling of students in secondary education

In order to facilitate the consideration of career counseling for students in secondary education, it is important to consider the opportunities that open up to them after completing secondary education. The scheme shows the different types of secondary education in the Republic of North Macedonia, their duration and vertical accessibility to higher education or the labor market.

LABOR MARKET

INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Post -secondary education

Vocational exam | Final exam | State exam | School exam | School exam

^

One-year|Two-year <Entrance exams> Three-year <Entrance exams> Four-year <Differential exams>|Four-year <Differential exams>|Four-year

^



VOCATIONAL EDUCATION | HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION | SECONDARY ART EDUCATION



Figure 3 Movement pattern of students who have completed secondary education

In every transition to a higher level, students are faced with the need to make an appropriate choice and make a decision where they need professional support and readiness for a professional choice. For that reason, career counseling should be seen as an extremely necessary activity that can facilitate these periods of transition and encourage their confidence in decision-making. For this to be effective, secondary schools should enable students to think about their:

- Skills, abilities and interests;
- Personal priorities;
- Training and education;
- Life experience.

15. The current state of career counseling in secondary schools in the Republic of North Macedonia

For the purposes of this publication, and in order to understand the current situation with career counseling and the need for its more comprehensive implementation in secondary schools in the Republic of North Macedonia, a survey was carried out that included secondary school students from III and IV

(third and fourth years), professional and high school education. The survey included schools from all eight planning regions, i.e. the cities: Skopje, Pehchevo, Berovo, Strumica, Gevgelija, Sveti Nikole, Prilep, Krushevo, Veles, Negotino, Ohrid, Struga and Gostivar. This made it possible to perceive the problems and challenges in schools in the different planning regions.

According to the topic of the survey: Assessment of the need for career counseling/guidance among secondary school students, a questionnaire was designed that provided data on several important aspects of career counseling among the secondary school population, namely:

1. Assessment of general career awareness among secondary school students and the possible benefits of career counseling.
2. Assessment of the degree of difficulty in making a career decision.
3. The key influences in making a career decision, including the impact of contradictory information, the emergence of conflicts and pressures.
4. The approach of support by secondary schools when making career decisions among secondary school students.
5. Assessment of "Lack of information" or "Inconsistent information", which refer to questions about the ways of obtaining information, and using it in the process of deciding for oneself and the appropriate vocations.
6. Assessment of the development of competencies for career planning in order to make an appropriate decision about what they will do after completing secondary education.
7. Trust in the person who can help them in making decisions (career advisor, teacher, parent, close friend...)

The online questionnaire was distributed on two occasions during the month of March 2023, to a random selection of students in secondary schools in the mentioned cities. A total of 670 secondary school students answered the same question, of which 78% are students in vocational education, and 22% are students in high school education. About 52% are students in the III (third) and 48% students in the IV (fourth) year of secondary education.

For the purpose of the research, the hypothesis was set that: Secondary school students from the final years (III and IV years) of vocational and high school education, who have support in the process of making career decisions, define their career path more easily compared to secondary school students who do not receive any support.

15.1. Research findings

The first part of the questionnaire referred to the assessment of general career awareness among secondary school students and their current thoughts.



In response to the question: "What after finishing secondary education?", 61% of the total number of respondents declared that they plan to enroll in university, but only 29% of them had made the choice of university they will enroll in. The percentage of secondary school students who plan employment after completing secondary education is about 15%, and 24% of respondents have not yet reached any decision.

In relation to the possibilities they are considering after completing secondary education, six possible choices were offered, and the following results were obtained:

studying in our country	36,7%
study abroad	15,1%
employment in our country	12,7%
going abroad for work	11,4%
still not considering	16,9%

The rest chose the option "other" and gave some thoughts:

- I want to work from home,
- To be a professional athlete,
- To have my own business,
- To complete an internship and then start my own business, etc.

To the question "I have a certain decision about:", with the possibility to choose between:

- the university I will enroll in
- the work I want to do in the future
- the area / field in which I want to build my future professional career
- what I want to achieve in a professional plan
- none of the above

I have already mentioned that 29% of them have made a choice of the university they want to enroll in. But it is interesting to note that about 18% of secondary school students think about and consider the decision about the job they want to do in the future to be certain, and 23% know the field in which they want to build their future career. About 18% of the respondents do not have a certain decision for any of the listed solutions, but they do not indicate any other certain decision, which can be considered as a group in which the vision for a future profession should be awakened. *The data points to thinking that at least a certain number of secondary school students have a certain career vision, which is one of the basic guides in career planning. This may point to the fact that there is a certain foundation that needs to be built on with specific planning skills.*

In order to allow an assessment of the degree of difficulty in making a career decision, secondary school students were asked the question "For me, making a decision about my future career is:"

The largest percentage of secondary school students rated it 5, on a scale from 1 (very easy) to 10 (extremely difficult). As many as 42% of the respondents decided on a score of 5, which significantly affects the average score for difficulty in deciding which is 5.1, which means neither very easy nor very difficult. *This leads us to consider indecision or resignation among high school students, which likely*



stems from insufficient awareness to make an assessment, so they choose the middle as the easiest option.

To assess the type of information secondary school students need to make career decisions, the following were offered:

- information on university faculties,
- labor market information,
- information on sought-after vocations,
- decision-making skills,
- career planning skills

and given the opportunity to choose answers:

- I don't need them
- I need them somewhat and
- I need them a lot.

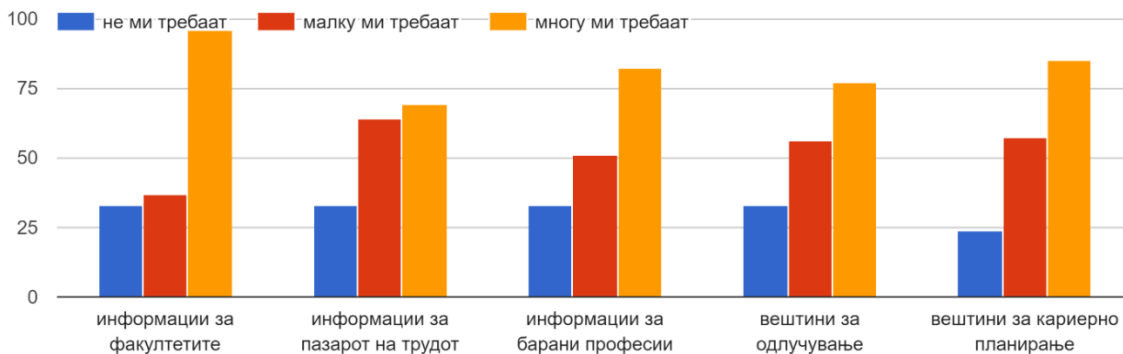
All types of information offered were rated by *secondary* school students as very necessary. *This leads to the conclusion that they have an awareness of the information that should be used when deciding on their future career.*

5. In order to reach a final decision on “What after completing secondary education?” I need

blue=do not need red=need them somewhat yellow=need them a lot

information on faculties / labor market information / information on sought-after vocations – career planning skills

5. За да донесам конечна одлука “Што после завршување на средното образование?”, ми требаат



But as for the fact, how much the schools bring this information or the access to career counseling services to the students as support in the decision-making process, they were given the opportunity to express themselves about the activities that are implemented in their schools. The largest number of secondary school students declared that in their school:

- no events are organized where career development / choice of profession is discussed
- there is no opportunity to participate in career counseling sessions
- there is no opportunity to talk to a career counselor about the dilemmas surrounding the career choice
- there are no classes on the subject of professional development.

Most of them, a high 96%, declared that in their school there are no classes discussing their professional development. The percentage for non-implementation of all other offered activities, ranges from 70% to 80%. What they rated as something that was more accessible to them in schools in the past period is that:

- they filled out questionnaires for self-assessment of interests, values, personal characteristics and
- had organized visits to companies in order to get to know different job positions and their tasks.

This data can be evaluated as expected, because most of the respondents are students in vocational education, who, within the framework of the mandatory subject Learning through work with an employer, conduct classes in companies, factories, institutions, etc. *The data resulting from these student responses makes it clear that very little is being done in schools to raise awareness of professional development, career choice and career counseling.*

The basic career competencies of the respondents can also be assessed at an average level, according to the answers given to the question: "Rate how many of these skills apply to you:", with the option to choose:

- not at all,
- partially,
- completely.

The students' perception is that they can assess their strengths and weaknesses relatively well, they are partially aware of the skills they need to build a certain career path, they have an incomplete picture of the environment in which they want to work, but most of them do not have a written career plan. The process of career counseling and the creation of an individual career plan is known to only 0.6% of high school students, who have undergone it through projects in informal education. This points to the fact that career decisions are most likely made through non-systemic and unstructured processes, which make them susceptible to environmental influences.

Regarding awareness of career counseling and its benefits, the majority of secondary school students declared that they are aware of the specific characteristics. But if this is compared to their statements about career planning skills, it can be concluded that they have only a basic understanding of career counseling, that is, it is about things they have heard about and seem familiar to them. This points to the fact that students are not sufficiently presented with the opportunities and benefits they can get through professional help in career planning.



The influences to which secondary school students are exposed during career choices are analyzed through the question: "The greatest influence in making a decision to choose my future career path is (you can choose more than one answer)".

The results showed that the following categories have the strongest influence in making career decisions:

- The belief that the vocation will provide them with a good/well-paid job (220 answers).
- Parents or another adult (217 answers)
- Their great passion for the vocation they desire (100 answers).

The large number (over 75%) of high school students who declared that a conversation with a career counselor will have little or an unknown amount of influence in the making of a decision about their future career path is concerning, *which again points to the fact of little awareness of the benefits of career counseling and the support they can get from a career counselor.*

Only 0.6% of secondary school students declared that they had already received support from a career counselor before. This picture points to the fact that young people are left to themselves or to unprincipled influences from the environment when making education and career choices.

To the open question: "What do you currently need to decide where to continue your education on the way to the ideal vocation for you?", about 20% of secondary school students explicitly stated that they need professional help to make future career decisions or advice from experienced adults on any of the components of career counseling / guidance - self-awareness, information, research, etc.

The rest of the answers are dominated by:

- Resignation - "I don't know what I need" or "it's too early / I don't want to think"
- Motivation and confidence
- Foreign passport, information about living and studying abroad.

It is a pleasing fact that there is an interest among secondary school students in getting involved in career planning activities. 41% of them declared that they wanted to fill in questionnaires for professional orientation, and 46% that they would participate in career counseling workshops, which would help them get more information, make a choice and plan their career path.

The final conclusions and recommendations that emerged from the research are given in the final part dedicated to secondary education.

16. Specifics that shape and advance the process of career counseling in secondary education

We are all aware of the current and rapid changes in the world of labor, which are much more than changes in the form of business activities taking place in the labor market. They entail the need for a complete restructuring of the already outdated "concept of occupations", which for centuries has also shaped the foundations of educational systems. Today, so-called "atypical" careers require much more flexibility in the transition between school and the world of labor. Everything moves at high speeds and



creates a very dynamic environment in the labor market, which initiates the need for a wider range of competences, quick adjustments and specific (soft) skills among the young population.

For that reason, career planning today is very different and more complex compared to the past. Today's students need to be prepared to face the constant changes in the economy and rapid technological development in order to be competitive in the global labor market. To be aware that they will probably change several jobs during their working life, they will be valued and paid according to their engagement and according to the contribution to the achievement of the company's goals, not according to past work or according to the qualifications. That's why young people, during the period of education, are up against the challenge of facing the opportunities brought on by the new era and planning their own career. In the modern world of work, the four pillars on which an individual's career is based are clearly defined:

- competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes),
- experience (and appropriate information on how to acquire it),
- engagement and
- attitude towards the environment / others.

Such challenges also affect educational systems, which for a long time were oriented towards a rather rigid concept of formal education. Such a concept should be replaced with a much more flexible approach, that is, with education aimed at acquiring competencies for employability. This change is possible by introducing elements of career counseling, which entails a changed approach to teaching and learning.

16.1. Career counseling in secondary education

If the view that a career spans a lifetime is accepted, then career planning and management is a continuous process that applies to all professional and personal decisions of the individual. Of course, there are also moments when adolescents are faced with the choice of enrolling in secondary school or university, when they need professional support in the form of career counseling and information.

Choosing a vocation/profession is one of the most important decisions of every person. Spontaneous and hasty choice of vocation/profession can have negative consequences: dissatisfaction with schooling and work, dropping out of school, poor employment opportunities, frequent transfers, insecurity, job dissatisfaction, lost self-esteem, etc.

In all modern education trends, career counseling as a developmental process is recognized as a tool of employment policies. It emphasizes its mediating role between educational supply and demand on the labor market, that is, the outcome of education with the requirements of the labor market.

Intervention processes, related to career counseling during education, represent a protective component and preventive action of later negative effects in the professional development of adolescents. For these reasons, the school should have the role of driver in the processes for supporting career choice and planning. Through realistically feasible and sustainable activities at the school level, the number of students who will make informed decisions on a professional level should be increased. For that, it is necessary to build an appropriate climate and culture for professional development and career



counseling in schools, from all stakeholders of the educational process. At the basis of these activities lies the theory of readiness for vocational choice.

If we analyze the role of career counseling in education, we can freely characterize it as a process that helps students identify career opportunities and understand the relationship between their education and career goals. It can help them to:

- identify their strengths and weaknesses,
- understand which factors influence their career choice,
- explore different career options,
- make informed decisions about their own professional development
- develop strategies for achieving their own career goals.

This can be useful at any stage of life, but is especially useful for adolescents who are making their career choices or just entering the job market. For that reason, the process of career counseling should be brought to them as an option during their secondary education.

From the very beginning, career counseling, as a process of providing help to solve the issue of professional development, has changed, developed and taken form up to this day. These changes were always in accordance with the tasks and goals of education. In that context, the field of career counseling changed its essence, relying more and more on learning processes and mastering skills for career planning and management.

Following the career counseling/guidance development process, which has been covered by many authors (Osipow, 1973; Guzina, 1980; Oljača, 1987; Herr, Cramer 1992; Athanasou, Van Esbroeck, 2008; Amundson et al., 2010; Zunker, 2012), we can talk about several stages undergone by the relationship between education and career counseling.

Table 1. Education and career counseling

I period	II period	III period
<i>Purpose of education</i>	<i>Purpose of education</i>	<i>Purpose of education</i>
To develop an individual ready to respond to the tasks of the world of labor	To develop a individual ready to respond to the tasks of the world of labor and to their own requirements for professional development	To develop an individual who will manage their career independently
<i>Tasks of education</i>	<i>Tasks of education</i>	<i>Tasks of education</i>
Occupational preparation Vocational education	Occupational preparation, decision-making skills, research labor market	Occupational preparation, skills, making decisions, researching the labor market, developing a positive attitude towards lifelong learning and education

<i>How?</i>	<i>How?</i>	<i>How?</i>
Information Vocational education	Information Vocational education Career counseling	Information Vocational education Career Counseling Self Study (or: self-directed learning related to the world of labor)

OECD experts¹⁹ believe that the application of the concept of education for professional development and career counseling includes three basic elements:

1. education for professional development as an integral part of school curricula,
2. a developmental approach that implies the continuous implementation of content for professional development and career counseling, adapted to the developmental level of the students,
3. a teaching approach based on interactive and experiential learning in schools and outside the school environment (OECD, 2003).

Some prominent features of secondary education related to the career development of students, which should be present in schools, consist of the following (OECD, 2004.a):

- Orientation of the school as an organization for the professional development of students (guidance-oriented school).

The school emphasizes in its strategy a commitment to education for career development. The school promotes the cooperation of teachers, professional associates and external experts for career counseling as well as connection with parents and the local community and shows a high degree of flexibility in including education for career development in curriculum planning.

- Education for career development as the responsibility of all stakeholders in the school

Education for career development can also have different modalities, that is, to integrate it into the form of teaching content included in all teaching subjects, to combine it with thematic extracurricular workshops and classes of the class community. Some forms can be organized in the optional subjects, in the classes for learning through work and in the organized form of working practice in secondary vocational education. Possible components are also extracurricular activities such as visits, field trips or school projects in which all students collaborate (e.g. visiting companies, factories, institutions or participating in career fairs, professional fairs, etc.). Students who themselves seek advice related to career choices are provided with individual counseling by trained career counselors (external or from the

¹⁹OECD – Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development



school). Accordingly, teachers, as well as other school personnel, should receive professional support for acquiring the appropriate competencies needed to implement career development education.

■ Building connections with the world of labor.

Classes organize different forms of direct contact with the world of labor, from meetings with representatives of various professions as guests of the school to direct contact with the world of labor, from visiting organizations in order to get to know different working environments and gain direct experience in the form on "rehearsals" for performing safe and simple tasks and work practice in secondary schools.

■ Using the services of external career guidance experts.

Schools maintain regular contacts with professionals from the community in order to provide individual or group information and/or advisory support to students, especially in the phase of transition to a higher level of education, that is, when entering the world of labor.

■ Support of professional development through portfolio implementation.

A portfolio in which students will systematically integrate on an individual basis the knowledge, skills and attitudes they have acquired in different subjects during schooling at different levels of education. An insight into the collected achievements and experiences in various fields, contributes to setting realistic goals for learning and their achievement, clarity in career plans and help in connecting professional and soft skills with the needs of the labor market.

In connection with these five recommendations, in the secondary schools of the Republic of North Macedonia, over the past ten years, activities have been implemented to strengthen the capacities of schools which relate to the professional development and career counseling of the students. What still stands as a challenge is how to ensure sustainability and quality in the delivery of activities.

16.2. Process of career planning among secondary school students²⁰

It has already been mentioned that the decision to choose a career should be a process that extends over a long period of time to enable secondary school students to choose education and occupation consciously, reasonably, independently and in accordance with their development. In that process, of course, the independent activity of each individual plays the most important role.

To introduce them into the process, we begin by envisioning. The segment when they need to awaken within themselves the desires of what they want to be in the future, where they see themselves in professional, private and community life. What do they want to achieve to feel successful?

This part can be achieved by discussion. In the appendix: Questions for discussion, questions are listed that can guide students through the process of envisioning.

²⁰<https://acsss.wisc.edu/career-and-educational-planning/career-planning-process>



CAREER DEVELOPMENT: get to know yourself -> explore options -> reach a decision, set goals -> take action



Figure 4 Career planning process

The career planning process applied in career counseling consists of four basic stages:

- Stage of self-assessment or self-knowledge.
- Stage of researching educational and career opportunities.
- Decision-making stage and
- Stage of defining steps for action.

With the realization of these interrelated and dependent phases, the client creates their own individual career plan (ICP), which is their guide in realizing the plan.

16.2.1. Self-assessment stage

One of the main steps in the career counseling process is the self-assessment of students. It is a process in which the student goes through activities that allow them to build an image of themselves and become aware of their desires, interests, values, abilities, weaknesses and strengths. Self-knowledge plays a key role in planning future steps for one's career, in which one will emphasize and use one's strengths, and build on and develop oneself to reduce or eliminate weaknesses. The results of the student's self-assessment are taken as a starting point in identifying different types of work positions that are or would be of interest to them.

The process consists in identifying:

1. Values, which give an answer to the question:
What is important to me?
2. Interests that lead to:
What do I like and don't like to do?
3. Personal qualities/characteristics, which will describe:



What are my strengths and weaknesses?

What am I as a person?

How do I approach the circumstances?

4. Skills, which show:

What can and can't I do?

A number of self-assessment tools can be used in this process that allow the student to think more deeply about themselves and identify these four sets of characteristics. The tools are available as formal and informal and can be administered by a career counselor who is trained to interpret the results. But they can also be found by searching the internet, however, they are mostly available in a foreign language, and should be used with great care.

16.2.2. Research stage

Research is the stage that allows familiarizing with the possibilities that are offered as a choice and can include:

- Occupational research:
What are the job duties? Where are you working? What training or education is required?
- Labor market research:
Which industries are growing? What are the open jobs in my area? What are the most sought-after jobs? Understanding employers' requirements in terms of required competencies.
- Researching educational opportunities:
What educational programs are offered for certain occupations? What courses, trainings, academies enable the acquisition of work skills??

16.2.3. Stage of making decisions and setting goals

The information gathered in the self-assessment and opportunity exploration stages is used in the decision-making and goal-setting process. The final decision within the career counseling process should be made by the client themselves. In that process, one connects one's own interests, values, skills, affinities with the specific requirements of a certain vocation or job position.

Obstacles that may appear in the decision-making process are:

- Awareness factors: lack of information, inadequate or imprecise information, excess information.
- Personal and social factors: lack of experience in decision-making, lack of knowledge or lack of confidence in decision-making skills, anxiety; conflicting values, interests and abilities; lack of self-confidence; lack of skills needed for the implementation plan; too many or too few professional interests.

The creation of goals requires special attention in the career planning process and they are viewed in the short or long term. One of the most commonly used methods is the formulation of SMART goals.

In the attachment: Worksheet for SMART goals, guidelines are given that can be used in creating goals



16.2.4. Action planning stage

This is the stage in which steps are defined in order to help achieve the planned goals. It is a mistake to think that one should have a firm career decision before taking action. Steps are taken even though the outcome is not known or certain, because it further refines career plans.

In this phase, the advisor supports the client in creating activities that they will undertake in a precise time frame, in order to be sure, they he will reach the desired workplace.

16.3. Secondary education aimed towards acquiring competencies for employability

"The introduction of elements of career counseling in teaching is not a reform in itself. It should encourage a different approach to teaching and learning. In the learning process the teachers, but also the students themselves, should be oriented not only towards the achievement of the goals in the curriculum, but also the goals that should make the students successful in the labor market. The orientation towards the acquisition of competencies for employability, and especially the competencies for career development, will cause the school to open to the outside world, the world of labor. The target orientation will modify the teaching methodology and enable employability competencies to be part of the curriculum. In doing so, these contents will be intertwined with the thematic content of the subject being studied. Applying teaching content in a practically applicable, interdisciplinary context will fundamentally advance the entire learning process." (Module 4: Career counseling at school, 2013).

It is often assumed that secondary school students who have chosen vocational education have already chosen an occupation or career and that they do not need additional support with a career planning process. If this thinking is accepted, it means that the career planning process is dedicated only to supporting students in choosing a vocation. This may result in those students who do not intend to enter higher education not needing career planning assistance at all. But such considerations are fundamentally wrong, because career planning has a much wider scope of action and does not consist only of choosing a vocation or a profession. This includes the strengthening of skills for labor market research, discovering one's own strengths and weaknesses and comparing them with the profession of dreams, adaptation skills that will ensure a flexible transition from secondary vocational education to the labor market and its rapid changes.

If this is at all a dilemma, then one must start from the fact of what it is employers are looking for. Employability skills, which are key to entering the labor market today, are expected by employers from all potential employees, regardless of whether they have completed secondary or higher education. For that reason, it is very clear that career counseling and the process of career planning in vocational education should also be oriented towards building competencies for employability. That is, secondary education needs to be oriented towards acquiring competencies for employability, regardless of whether it is vocational or high school education.

The challenges related to this orientation could be:

- The number of staff to provide career counseling in schools is often not sufficient to meet the needs of students.



- Teaching staff in schools who provide career counseling do not have the status of career counselor, but combine these activities with other mandatory work tasks.
- The teaching staff knows little about the labor market, about the demands of employers and about the specifics that are an integral part of different jobs.
- There is little cooperation between secondary schools and the Employment Agency.
- Career development education is often considered the sole responsibility of trained career counseling staff, rather than the shared responsibility of all stakeholders in the educational process in secondary schools.
- Every year the need for career/job fairs where groups of employers share information with high school students increases.
- The lack of workshops for building concrete skills for employability in formal education, to be supplemented with specific programs for building concrete skills that arise from employers.
- The services of teaching staff who provide career counseling in schools have not been audited, and users have little opportunity to show satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the services received. No data is collected on the satisfaction of students, teachers, parents or employers with the career counseling service.

16.4. Strategy of vocational education and training for adaptability to the labor market

Vocational education and training is a system that has been under strong pressure for modernization during the last decades in the Republic of North Macedonia. In addition to globalization processes in the economic and political spheres, technological innovations have caused rapid changes in the type of jobs and the content of labor in the national economy, with permanent changes in the demand for qualifications and new skills; the open market has caused an expansion of the possibility of individual job placement both nationally and internationally, and the complexity of the demand for new skills in the labor market dramatically determines the structure, organization and content of vocational education and training.

The existing system of vocational education and training in our country showed weaknesses both systemically and in terms of programme. The large number of people lacking qualifications, the problematic relevance of existing curricula and programs, the unattractiveness of vocational education and training for young people and adults, the weak cooperation of educational institutions and the business sector, the need for new profiles and skills for continuing education and/or successful transition into the labor market and the European integration processes necessitated the need for modernization of vocational education and training in the country.

The high rate of unemployment, technical progress and globalization, on the one hand, and the reorganization of production processes, on the other hand, have significantly modified the demand for skills over the past few decades. As a result of these long-term trends, it is not certain that the skills and qualifications acquired in the education system will be able to meet current and emerging needs, meaning that there is a possibility of further imbalances and gaps in the supply and demand chain for skills and competent workforce in the market.



In order to rise to these challenges, a strategy²¹ was developed in our country that will contribute to vocational education and training becoming a key actor in the development of the workforce. This strategy and the measures foreseen in it enable vocational education and training to strengthen its own attractiveness, relevance and quality. It should offer young people more varied and flexible learning opportunities to acquire the skills they will need for their career development.

The reform of secondary vocational education, according to the strategy, is proving to be successful and this is confirmed by the numbers of enrolled students, which are growing year by year. The goal of the Ministry of Education and Science is to increase the employability of young people and produce personnel with appropriate skills and competencies, which are needed by companies, and to enable young people, after completing secondary vocational education, to successfully enter the labor market or, if they want to continue with higher education.

16.5. Dual education – a benefit for the vocational training system

The improvement of the quality of vocational education and training in the Republic of North Macedonia is also being worked on through further expansion and deepening of the concept of learning through work in companies. Such a concept is aimed at reducing the discrepancy between the skills acquired in the educational process and the skills required in the labor market. This gap leads to high unemployment among young people and hinders the competitiveness of the economy. The main component to which great attention is paid at this moment, in order to act on these challenges, is dual vocational education, as one of the components through which the Ministry of Education and Science continuously strengthens secondary vocational education.

Dual education is a system in which internships in a company are combined with school classes in a vocational school. The implementation²² of this system began in the school year 2017/2018, and it intensified in 2020 with the social dialogue "Learn smart, work professionally", through which every year companies, secondary vocational schools, chambers of commerce and local governments review the needs for the opening of new educational profiles and classes in schools, the need to redesign part of the curricula and the improvement of the practical training of students. As a result of the intensification of activities in the academic year 2021/2022, dual education was implemented in 97 classes in 46 vocational secondary schools, and 1,486 students were enrolled, who cooperated with 210 companies. This academic year, dual education is implemented in 225 classes in 61 vocational secondary schools, with 2,763 students enrolled and in cooperation with 450 companies.

This is of great importance because such a combination contributes to the development of quality practical skills, acquired in a real work environment according to the requirements of employers. The idea of introducing dual vocational education is to combine education and the economy and to train personnel needed by companies. In this way, the path to employment will be made easier for young people who complete secondary vocational education.

²¹https://csoo.edu.mk/images/vet%20strategy_mac%20-%20final.pdf

²²<https://vlada.mk/node/32973>



Within the framework of the reform of vocational education and training and the revival of the dual system, steps are being taken in two key areas in our country. The first area is functional public-private partnership and social dialogue. The second area is the integration of professional pedagogy in the world of labor. In the initial stages of implementation, the greatest attention is paid towards approaching the company to the student in order to feel the spirit of labor and understand the reality of the term employer.

Within this system, companies have the obligation to organize practical training for students directly at the workplace, for which they must provide appropriate conditions - working environment, equipment and machines. Realization of practical education in companies is led by mentors and currently more than 1000 mentors are certified. Students who enroll in the dual model of education realize curricula and programs with an increased number of hours spent with an employer.

Although we are aware that the full establishment of the dual system in vocational education in our country will be a long-term process, we still need to consider the benefits it will bring on a long-term level. We will single out a few:

- modernization of the educational process and educational programs in vocational education, designed in the context of learning outcomes and skill building.
- a dynamic and flexible educational process, relevant to the needs of the real sector and the economy,
- contribution to reducing the unemployment rate
- an organized approach to practical training among employers, and thus a new approach to teaching, practical training and professional training of the teaching staff for this type of teaching
- encouraging quality cooperation between schools and the real business sector
- provides practical work experience for students, as a positive contribution towards employment.

All of this leads to qualified professional staff, competitiveness of companies, increased productivity and knowledge transfer.

16.6. Career guidance and counseling in secondary schools – obstacles in practice

Approaches to education, based on competencies and skills, have caused significant changes in the vocational education system, the labor market, and their interaction. Such approaches also require strengthening the cooperation between schools, employment agencies and career centers in order to ensure that students receive real information about the labor market and the opportunity to build employability competencies.

In this field, in our country, work has been done over the past years. Through the Career Counseling Project, implemented by the YES (Youth Employability Skills) network in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science in 2015, 75 career centers were established and equipped in the Republic of North Macedonia. Of them, 52 are located in secondary vocational schools throughout the country. The purpose of these centers was to provide support and career counseling/guidance for students in choosing and planning a future career. According to the information shared by the Center for Vocational Education and



Training²³, within the framework of the project, trainings for the development of competences for career counseling were carried out for about 200 teachers and professional associates in schools, as well as the following activities:

- a training program for career counseling was developed;
- Standards for career counselors and criteria for selection of career counselors have been developed;
- a program for free hours "Career Planning" has been prepared;
- a Manual for teachers was developed for the implementation of the "Career Planning" program during free hours;
- a Guide for parents was prepared;
- three programs have been adapted for students with special needs;
- questionnaires (BIPO) were prepared for the students for CS;
- an evaluation of the realization of the program for free hours was made.

But the lack of legislation made the implementation processes insufficiently functional in practice:

- the laws regulating secondary education did not have special provisions relating to career guidance and counseling and the status of the career counselor is not regulated;
- in some secondary schools, services are provided or activities for career guidance and counseling are organized by teachers and professional associates, based on their enthusiasm and desire to help students;
- schools that have career centers and trained teachers and professional associates for career guidance and counseling, do not have officially confirmed teams, nor an accepted program for career guidance and counseling;
- there is no continuous training system, which raises the question of the quality of services and the number of activities that are organized for students in secondary schools;
- there are no established standards for creating an accessible and quality service for career guidance and counseling in secondary schools;
- Programs for acquiring career management skills are not sufficiently represented;
- there are no mechanisms for ensuring the teachers' motivation to carry out career guidance and counseling activities.

What can be specifically singled out is that within the by-laws it is emphasized that "teachers should initiate and participate in raising the quality of educational work" while professional orientation is explicitly included in the indicators for the achievability of educational goals in the area of work of the professional associate.

Aware of the need and benefits of career counseling, stakeholders within the framework of vocational education and training reforms are drafting a new law that takes into account all of these challenges.

The new law on secondary vocational education, which is still being drafted and awaiting approval, foresees specific steps that will strengthen the role of career counseling in schools. In its content, it emphasizes the role of the career counselor and the regulation of their status as a career counselor

²³https://csoo.edu.mk/images/Bilten/Pres/karierno_vodenje_sov.pdf



position in every vocational school. Of course, the work and capacities of career centers in schools will be legally regulated and strengthened, supported by appropriate programs and conditions for the realization of activities.

16.7. Career development for students with learning disabilities in secondary schools

The goal of every educational process is the training of all students for a quality, independent and responsible life in the community, regardless of their developmental, health and/or social difficulties. The educational system in the Republic of North Macedonia is founded, among other things, upon inclusive principles for equality and accessibility to all students. One of the basic tasks is for the system to prepare all students for entering the labor market and provide them with an easier transition process. Achieving this goal among students with disabilities in secondary schools is a special challenge.

Secondary schools should be prepared to include all students in the entire educational process, including the career planning process. Practice shows that the situation in this field, in our educational system, is far from ideal. But it is clear that great efforts should be made to adapt career counseling to the needs of students with learning disabilities in secondary schools.

In order to be able to propose or find solutions, it is necessary to analyze the barriers faced by students with disabilities when looking for a job, that is =, during their transition to the labor market. They can be very different, such as:

- Physical barriers,
- Communication barriers,
- Stigma, wrong perceptions and negative attitudes,
- Lack of opportunities, etc.

The assessment of barriers should have an individualized approach, and as a result it is necessary to create a detailed "profile" for these students. In this section, it is extremely important to determine the type and degree of disability early. The student profile created in this way should contain:

- description of the type and degree of disability,
- assessment of the need for support - type, methods, purpose of support measures,
- an action plan with defined goals/outcomes, steps and their duration,
- outcome assessment method,
- parental / guardian consent.

The profile should also contain the characteristics resulting from the self-assessment phase for students with disabilities. This phase of career counseling will enable early detection of strengths and weaknesses, interests, abilities and skills, that is, better knowledge and acceptance of oneself. It will also greatly dispel their attitudes and misperceptions, putting them in a position to focus on what they can do regardless of the type of their disability.

The profile created in this way will be extremely important in the phase of exploring opportunities, because it will allow them, perhaps a narrower selection of work positions, but it will bring them



knowledge that they are not alone and that certain organizations/firms/business sectors support people with disability in employment. A key element here is the realization that they still need to prepare for entering the labor market, which will greatly increase their self-confidence and initiate commitment in mastering employability skills.

In this context, the role of the school, which needs to adjust in the organizational, professional and methodological-didactic aspects, is very significant. Therefore, teaching staff and career counselors in secondary schools should use several specific activities in their daily work with these students. For example:

- to give short and specific instructions
- to offer as much visual and obvious content as possible
- to repeat the offered content several times
- to use appropriate technologies and methodologies, adapted to the student's disabilities
- create new or adapt existing didactic materials
- to harmonize the methodology of information exchange between teachers, parents and students that will enable easier adoption of the program contents and further application of the acquired knowledge in everyday life.

17. The use of tools and digitalization of the career counseling process

The starting point in the career planning process is identifying the student's skills, values, interests and personal characteristics, that is, the process of self-assessment or self-knowledge. It has already been mentioned that it is one of the main steps in the process of career counseling of students, when they build their self-image through the prism of their own vision of the future, the things they like or don't like, what they can do and what they can't do, how they treat themselves, others and the environment, etc. For this reason, the first set of tools that will be mentioned in this section are the tools used in the self-assessment process which can fundamentally be seen as four groups:

- personality tests,
- questionnaires of interests,
- tests to assess skills/abilities and
- value assessment tests.

All these sets of self-assessment tools can be found through a career counselor or online portals. But they must be handled very carefully. Improper use can do more harm than good to students. That is why it is best to practice them in cooperation with a professional. Certified career counselors can offer a number of tools that they are trained to analyze, interpret and provide appropriate interpretation of results. At the same time, it must be taken into account that self-assessment tools will not provide the student with information about which career/occupation/work position is perfect or is the only choice for them. But they will certainly help them gain insight into themselves and make it easier for the counselor to evaluate options for future career paths. For that reason, the career counselor often uses the test results as a basis to plan and implement a conversation with the student.

This is a process in which the career counselor very carefully uses their knowledge and skills around self-assessment tools. It is our responsibility to carefully select and dose them, but even more carefully to



present the results to the student. Using too many tools can confuse not only the student but also the counselor. Inappropriate use of too many tests can discourage the student and make them passive in the career planning process.

In order to avoid negative consequences, in this process, the counselor should consider and decide on several segments or phases ²⁴:

- which instruments/tools they will use and why;
- informing the student, what the process includes and why it is significant;
- whether the implementation of the self-assessment test will be carried out in a group or individually;
- interpretation and merging of the results obtained from the different tools / instruments;
- preparation of a written report on the interpretation;
- how they will share the results of the student's self-assessment.

Of course, key roles in this are held by responsible behavior, developed skills for applying the tools and the experience of the career counselor.

Another possibility to provide tools for self-assessment are web portals that offer a huge range of specifically designed digital tests, questionnaires, career planning steps, etc. Some of them are available for free, but for most quality questionnaires you have to pay a certain amount. When using these tools, one must be very careful, because most of them are in a foreign language. It can greatly affect the incorrect understanding of the question, giving the wrong answer, which of course leads to the misinterpretation of the results.

Tools that can be used in this process are provided in the appendices of this publication.

APPENDIX: Questions for discussion with secondary school students

APPENDIX: Resources that can be used in the career planning stages for students in secondary education

APPENDIX: A tool for determining abilities by solving problem situations

APPENDIX: Dream Job Analysis Worksheet

APPENDIX: Worksheet for SMART goals

APPENDIX: Intended for teachers who plan to introduce elements of career development into regular teaching

APPENDIX: 10 examples of strengths in the workplace

Approaching the dream career, in accordance with self-assessment information, can be achieved by creating a Venn diagram, that is, finding the space where three basic characteristics overlap: the things you are good at, the things you like to do, and the things someone will pay you well to do.

what am I good at? / what will someone pay me to do? / what do I like to do?

²⁴Adjusted in accordance with GCDF (2009): Module 3





Figure 5 Venn diagram for approaching the "dream job"

17.1. Online career counseling as a digital tool

The impact of digital technology on career development services has played a remarkable role in the evolutionary process of career counseling. The opportunities provided by digital technology have opened up new vistas in the delivery of services in the field of career planning and development. Rapid access to large amounts of information has greatly facilitated opportunities to bring career development insights to a wider population. This provided conditions for faster access to opportunities for experiential learning through internships, mobilities, employment, connection with employers, quick exchange of experiences, professional networking, etc. These are just part of the wide range of opportunities that technology makes easily accessible to customers.

Career counseling has already been described as a two-way, impartial and flexible process. It responds to clients' needs as well as their desire to change their situation, supporting them in decision-making and encouraging them to be proactive. The counseling process generally analyzes an individual's characteristics, interests, skill sets, work values and experience. Specific sets of tools are used to help the individual get to know and understand themselves and the world of work to make career and/or educational decisions. The process will also provide them with knowledge and skills that will make it easier for them to make career and life decisions in the future. Career counseling can be appropriate for all individuals who are in transition, regardless of their age. It can be offered on an individual basis or as group counseling.

All of this also applies to online career counseling, as it fulfills all of these conditions. The only difference is in the way the service is delivered. Traditional counseling is done through face-to-face communication, in a space designed for this purpose and where the client has to come to each session. Online counseling can be done from anywhere, no matter where in the world the client or the counselor is, it is enough that internet access is provided. This approach significantly speeds up and facilitates the communication element of career counseling. In order to deliver quality online counseling, the counselor's competencies in using digital technology are crucial because digital platforms have become part of the everyday work of career counselors.



Career development counselors are expected to develop and upgrade their competencies through a continuous learning process. This applies to the professional skills associated with career counseling, but also to a wider range of skills needed to adapt to innovation and practice development. Of course, there are also the digital skills of applying technology in career counseling services.

The need to embrace digital technology in the career counseling process is not new and was identified as an area to be strengthened as early as 2010, but has been significantly emphasized during the COVID crisis. The need to develop digital competency in the career development sector is recognized globally. In that direction, much research has been done that highlights the challenges and opportunities of using digital technology in career counseling.

Kettunen, Sampson Jr and Vuorinen (2015), based on research conducted in Finland and Denmark, located the competencies needed to use social media to provide career development services, and grouped them into four categories:

- Ability to use social media to deliver information with an emphasis on using technology as a means of career awareness.
- Ability to use social media to deliver individual career counseling with an emphasis on using technology as a means of two-way communication.
- Ability to use social media for group career counseling sessions with an emphasis on the use of teaching and learning technologies with a collaborative approach among group members.
- Ability to use social media for joint work with an emphasis on the use of technology to enable group members to share experiences and develop common understanding and solutions for career development issues.

17.2. Digital technology and career services

Experiences have shown that digital technology in career counseling can be used in two basic ways:

1. To deliver services - directly with customers (*for example: communication technology such as email, video calls, webinar technology, etc.*)
2. To create web platforms intended for individual use by clients, such as teaching and learning activities (*for example: presentation software, collaboration and social media platforms, digital self-assessment tools, etc.*).

Web-based platforms act as a gateway to learning information, employment and career development advice. These services are available to the general public and tailored to individual users and/or specific groups. As a rule, general services are more informative and intended for self-directed use. Therefore, they do not require any specific interaction between the user and the career counselor. On the other hand, in the delivery of individualized online services, where direct interaction between the user and the counselor is expected, the need for a higher level of knowledge and skills on the part of career development counselors is also clear. As they are expected to upgrade their professional competencies related to career counseling in a continuous learning process, they are also expected to adapt to innovations and development of practice, such as digital skills.



The impact of digital technology on career development service activities is different based on the approach used to apply it.

It allows saving time and costs associated with some standardized services that can be realized in the form of teaching and distance learning, for a large number of users at the same time.

One-on-one sessions are made possible by using a large number of platforms, which enable the realization of virtual sessions. For career counselors, this is a challenge that provides them with wide opportunities for work, even at the international level.

Networking as a necessity, through which career counselors work to improve their skills by exchanging experiences, is today greatly facilitated thanks to digital technologies that allow participation in:

- Online conferences
- Mentoring programs
- Meetings with professionals in the career field
- Joint projects, etc.

Advantages of online services for students:

- Improved access to career information and services, support for a wide range of citizens;
- Information is available 24/7
- Enables searching large databases and linking resources
- Takes less time;
- People can explore different occupations, find learning paths;
- Improved awareness of the labor market through links to current statistics, analyses, trending jobs and employment opportunities;
- web forums and other online media facilitate the exchange of experiences among a wider population

It is now becoming clear that career counseling, as a process that evolves adapting to global changes, inevitably accepts and fits into social digitalization. But, of course, the challenges it faces should also be taken into account.

Challenges and limitations of online career counseling:

- The Internet is not always a safe environment (the counselor must protect the confidentiality of the student's records)
- Lack of direct face-to-face contact (which can sometimes be crucial in counseling)
- The digital competencies of advisors (the competencies should be identified and trained for their use)
- Poor implementation of ICT applications (access and operation may be slow, use of audio-visual elements may not be feasible due to bandwidth and other technical issues)
- Reduced access for certain populations.



17.3. BIPO – a battery of instruments for professional orientation as a digital tool for the delivery of career counseling services

The pandemic age opened the way for the entry of online career counseling in the career development sector in our country as well. Faced with the challenges of the new era and guided by global changes, the career counselors in our country have accepted digitization in this sector as truly necessary and inevitable. The traditional way, i.e. face-to-face communication in an appropriately designed space, very quickly began to be replaced by online career counseling/guidance. Investing in building our own digital skills, as career counselors we adapted to the needs and demands of clients. And that was a time of great challenges:

- How to identify the most secure platform?
- How to ensure data security and trust with customers?
- There are hundreds of online self-assessment tests, but they have not been officially evaluated for their validity and reliability, and most of the time they are not in the Macedonian language.

In most cases, we resolved such challenges by using the only standardized digital tool that can be used in the Macedonian language, which is BIPO (Battery of instruments for professional orientation). These instruments are intended for people over 16 years of age and can be used by career counselors from schools and employment centers during the process of counseling high school students, that is, young unemployed people. Access to the instrument is enabled with the password of the career counselor who has undergone specific training in using, interpreting and delivering results from it. The battery is a combination of three different questionnaires or assessment scales:

1. Questionnaire on professional interests - QPI
2. Questionnaire on work values - QWV
3. Type-indicator personality test - TPT

It was developed by a team of Macedonian experts from the Institute of Psychology and approved for use in 2015 by the MES (Ministry of Education and Science).

Students' access to the online questionnaires is enabled through a password generated by a career advisor. After responding, the results are received by the career counselor who interprets them and prepares them for presentation to the student in the most appropriate form - a discussion about the possible choices.

The results themselves represent a range of possible professions that would be possible choices for the student, according to their interests, values and personality type.

Several years of experience in using BIPO as a digital tool have shown really positive effects and significant facilitation of the process of selection and decision-making, which is certainly not based solely on the results of this tool. It arouses a lot of interest for completion by students in secondary schools.

It must be emphasized that online career counseling in North Macedonia is still in the development phase and faces a greater number of challenges. To build a system that will work well and meet the needs of all stakeholders in this process, joint engagement is required. Ahead of us is a time when we will need to work on providing a reliable digital space that will improve access to career information, services and support for a wide range of citizens. On the other hand, it will complement the portfolio of services that



will be a significant support for all career counselors who are ready to introduce modern methodology in the sector of career development in our country.

17.4. The Myers-Briggs indicator of personality types

One of the most commonly used tools for determining personality types is the Myers-Briggs personality type indicator. It is aimed at determining the so-called personality code, which is formed as a combination of the first letters of the psychological preferences in which the person recognizes himself. By filling out the appropriate questionnaire, a four-letter code is obtained, which leads to one of the 16 personality types according to the instrument: Myers-Briggs Type Indicator®

The preferences are given in pairs which are divided into four groups:

Favorite world ²⁵ :	Extraversion (E) or Introversion (I).
Information:	Sensing (S) or Intuition (N).
Decisions:	Thinking (T) or Feeling (F).
Structure:	Judging (J) or Perceiving (P).

The first pair of psychological preferences in this indicator is:

Individuals' Favorite World²⁶: That is, where do you focus your attention and get your energy/motivation? Do you prefer to spend time in the outer world of people and things (Extraversion), or in your inner world of ideas and images (Introversion)?

The second pair:

Information: Do you prefer to focus on the basic information you have or do you prefer to interpret and add meaning? Do you pay more attention to the information that comes through your five senses (Sensing), or do you pay more attention to the patterns and possibilities you see in the information you receive (Intuition)?

The third pair of preferences describes how you like to make decisions.

Decisions: When making decisions, do you prefer to look first at logic and consistency, or first at people and special circumstances? Do you want to place more weight on objective principles and impersonal facts (Thinking) or do you place more weight on personal concerns and people (Feeling)?

A fourth pair of preferences describes how you want to live your outer life—what are the behaviors that others tend to see?

Structure: In dealing with the outside world, do you prefer to decide things or do you prefer to remain open to new information and options? Do you prefer a more structured and decisive lifestyle (Judgment) or a more flexible and adaptable lifestyle (Perception)? This preference is also considered as an individual's orientation towards the outside world.

²⁵Adapted from Looking at Type: The Fundamentals by Charles R. Martin (CAPT 1997)

²⁶Adapted from Looking at Type: The Fundamentals by Charles R. Martin (CAPT 1997)



Attached: Resources that can be used in the stages of career planning for students in secondary education.

18. Conclusion

The problem of employment is one of the key issues of the development of every country. In this segment, education and the labor market inevitably show up as key elements that dictate the supply and demand of labor. Their continued cooperation should provide the balance that will affect the reduction of the unemployment rate.

Modern characteristics and changes that occur in the world of labor set new requirements related to the professional and personal development of individuals. From here stems the necessity of developing competencies for managing one's own career. In that context, the area of career counseling and career planning has a special function. Career planning is one of the aspects of connecting secondary schools, or rather secondary school students, with higher education institutions and the labor market.

Countries that see career development as a long-term profitable investment invest in the advancement of the career counseling process and continuously expand the concepts that support it.

Despite the efforts that have been made in our country for the past ten years, sustainability has not yet been ensured, to demonstrate career counseling in its full glory, with all its benefits. And, when they have already been mentioned, the benefits are great both for young people and for the labor market, for the business sector, for education, for the economic flows of the state, or in one word for all segments of social life.

The general conclusions, which emerged from the research done for this publication, considered from several different aspects and related to most stakeholders in the process of implementing career counseling in teaching, show that career counseling still does not "live" within schools.

Research conclusions:

1. Although secondary school students demonstrate the existence of a good starting point for career planning, the general high school population has generally insufficiently developed career awareness and career competencies. This is mostly due to the fact that students are not exposed to systematic and structured career counseling, and especially that they do not have access to individual counseling services that provide the best results.
2. Secondary school students are not sufficiently informed about career counseling and in part, do not know what they could expect from a career counselor. A large part of them did not participate in any career development or career planning activities at all. This leads to the conclusion that they do not have enough information to recognize the benefits of career counseling and the support they can receive from a career counselor.
3. The small percentage of activities that are organized within the framework of teaching, in the context of career development, is noticeable in secondary schools in almost all planning regions. This completes the picture of a lack of information or inconsistent information, which refers to



issues surrounding the methods of obtaining information and using it in making decisions about oneself and the appropriate vocation.

4. The above conditions make students susceptible to unprincipled influences from the environment (family, friends, information from inappropriate sources). It is established that environmental influences are of diverse quality and under these influences some of the young people have developed a distorted and negative image of the world of labor in general. One of the consequences of the low awareness of career opportunities is the strong desire to leave the country in the hope that other countries offer better career conditions. The desire to leave is also often based on insufficiently relevant information about opportunities within the country.
5. What high school students do know about career counseling or have had the opportunity to practice, is mostly through projects that are implemented by various organizations that support young people.
6. Despite the fact that for the past dozen years activities have been implemented in secondary schools to strengthen the capacities for the implementation of career counseling, with the support of various projects, significant changes have not yet been recognized:
 - mechanisms for sustainability after the completion of the projects are not provided,
 - no legal regulation has been made that will regulate the status of trained career counselors in schools,
 - mechanisms have not been built to guarantee the activity of the career centers, for the reason that the teams are not provided with continuous support.
7. A small part of high school students recognizes teachers, psychologists or career counselors in schools, as persons who can be of support in their choosing a career. This can arise for various reasons:
 - the number of teachers who have undergone professional training to implement career counseling in teaching is small,
 - in most schools there is usually one employee, usually a pedagogue or a psychologist who can help high school students to realize their interests and explore different courses and employment options, but unfortunately it is not enough considering the number of students in schools,
 - trained career counselors are not provided with specific conditions for work in schools and do not have a defined status that will guarantee their greater commitment to career counseling. For years now, their activity has been reduced to personal enthusiasm.
8. Another important consequence of low career awareness is insufficient motivation for learning among secondary school students, which may result from the lack of a clear connection and purpose of acquired knowledge and skills for the achievement of personal career goals.
9. The lowest career competence among students is career planning and the creation of their own individual career plan, that is, written structured plans for career and learning.
10. The fact that there is interest in being involved in a career counseling process is encouraging..

In order to provide better conditions for career counseling to secondary school students, policy makers must address the challenges in compulsory secondary education in our country. The research clearly



shows that there are challenges in accessing and improving the nature, level and quality of career guidance services in schools.

Recommendations for planning and implementing activities that will strengthen the career counseling system in secondary schools:

1. Promotion activities that will contribute to raising awareness of the necessity and benefits of career counseling. These activities should be aimed at high school students (adolescents in general), school staff and parents.
2. Strengthening the cooperation between all relevant stakeholders that can contribute to the acquisition of career management skills by secondary school students, through the continuous development of programs that will be implemented both in regular teaching and as extracurricular activities in high schools. The focus of the programs should be career development education, building career management competencies among high school students, and improved accountability mechanisms for all relevant stakeholders.
3. Developing community programs to help young people who have left school early, without qualifications, to make the transition to the world of labor or to re-engage in some form of further learning. Career counseling / guidance should be part of such programs.
4. The gaps in the approach to building career management skills, which are evident in secondary schools, should be overcome by providing sufficient human and capital resources.
5. Professional training of as many as possible well-selected and motivated teachers, pedagogues and psychologists who will be actively involved in activities that will ensure the preparation of high school students for career choice and an easier transition to the labor market.
6. Creation of legislation that will ensure systemic and sustainable quality implementation of career counseling in secondary education, regulation of the status of career counselors and improved accountability mechanisms.
7. Creating mechanisms that will revive career centers and return them to their intended role.
8. Ensuring continuous exchange of experiences between already established associations that practice career counseling and teams from career centers in secondary schools.
9. Building a climate and culture in schools that is supportive of career counseling and career development, and at the same time unites all stakeholders in the process towards specific goals aimed at preparing high school students for a flexible transition to the labor market.
10. Increasing the level and quality of career planning services in secondary education and building capacities that will revive career centers in secondary schools.
11. Strengthening of stakeholders in the process of education for professional development in providing extracurricular support (parents, peers, close people from different professions).

To ensure sustainability, the introduction of career counseling in secondary schools in our country should be seen as a legally supported and continuous activity implemented by professionals and trained teaching staff. It will be a big step to modernize the education system and adapt to the rapid changes in the labor market. These interventions will have a preventive effect on the later negative effects in the professional life of young people. This is why career counseling within the educational system should be seen, primarily, as a concept that students should get used to thinking about, to be able to separate and



use the information they face in everyday life, and later to make decisions about their own professional development.

A comprehensive career counseling support strategy is therefore necessary, which:

- Includes career counseling at every level of education;
- Ensures continuous improvement of career counseling methods;
- Creates a system of training career counselors and regulating their status in the educational process;
- Creates opportunities with which teaching staff in schools will integrate contents for career development in regular teaching;
- Builds a climate for raising social awareness of the importance of individual career planning, which would help the individual's employment in conditions of constant changes in the labor market.



4

CAREER COUNSELING IN THE FIELD OF HIGHER EDUCATION



19. Career counseling and career guidance in the field of higher education

The ability to perceive, analyze, approach and resolve the most complex tasks requires competencies acquired through education, in particular through higher education. Such an approach gives a primary role to higher education and allows it to be the main driving force of quality changes in society. The theory presented in this way requires improving the overall quality of higher education, which will contribute to improving the competencies of students for creative professional work and active participation in a democratic society. This will all have a positive impact on society as a whole, encouraging socio-economic growth and development. Thus, the defined goals should and must be in accordance with the goals defined by the EU.

Therefore, the educational process should be adapted to the acquisition of the competencies necessary for students. In order to achieve this, essential changes are necessary in the system of the higher education process, its organization, and the resources available to institutions of higher education. Further development of quality assurance mechanisms is necessary to ensure system efficiency and optimal use of existing and new resources.

In this sense, it is necessary to encourage studies that are necessary for the education of staff in vocations that are insufficiently represented in the existing system, and which are directly expected to increase employability and have a positive impact on the economy and society. In this context, the role of CAREER COUNSELING should be particularly highlighted, as an option in the development and further qualification of quality staff from different profiles through the informal education process.

We use the word CAREER in everyday communication, and thus we have the impression that the meaning of this term is known and clear to us. However, the question arises, what exactly does this term mean and what does it refer to? Here is a brief explanation:

When we talk about the career, it should be emphasized that most people have a wrong perception of the term, and they think that:

- A career means working in something particularly valuable, important or popular (eg in the field of science, politics, sports, banking...)
- Career refers only to job advancement in terms of salaries, better working conditions, ...
- Career is equated with employment or work.

However, modern interpretations of the term career include that:

- Everyone has a career - it's not just for society's elite,
- Careers are dynamic, (sometimes you will advance, sometimes your career will remain unchanged, you may be changed from the workplace or work position, but it is all part of your career)
- The career is more than a job, it includes education, your role in society, family, and leisure time.

which means that:



A career spans almost a lifetime—it does not begin with employment or end with retirement, which states that a career incorporates the following accomplishments:

- work experience
- social inclusion
- employment
- cultural actions and activities
- training
- interests
- volunteer work

It can be concluded from the above that a career is the result of a person's activities in business, family and social life. It represents the development of the individual in the process of learning and working.

That's why we say that “Career” represents a set of interrelated activities, not only job position but work experience during working life, following changes in different options, attitudes, experiences and behavior of the individual, etc. Hence, we can conclude that career management is a long-term process, which includes personal development, career planning, building a personal profile, choosing the right organization for the job and much, much more.

20. Basics of career counseling and career guidance in the field of higher education

Career guidance and career counseling helps young people consider their ambitions, interests, qualifications and abilities. It helps them understand the labor market and the education system and relate it all to what they know about themselves. Career counseling tries to teach people to plan and make decisions on work and education. It incorporates the skills of the individual with the needs of the labor market and offers an optimal solution.

Career counseling and career guidance in higher education have another dimension. It is favorable to begin implementing career guidance in the lower years of education, that is, to start in primary education and continue in secondary education. Special attention should be paid to those young people who show special interest and achieve enviable results during their education, that is, those who have affinities to continue their education in university.

All of this is in order for young people to be correctly guided in choosing their profession, that is, to begin charting the path of their career development. However, what is characteristic of career guidance and career counseling in higher education is that it aims more towards professional development and professional training of young people, that is, to help them adapt to the needs of the rapidly changing labor market, through the use of informal educational tools.



Career guidance and career counseling play a key role in the mutual complementing of the labor market and higher education in the direction of meeting common goals. This finding stems from recent research done in OECD²⁷ countries, which indicates the need for career counseling, as it helps to understand the idea of career counseling as a tool for mobility that relies on widely acquired not only knowledge and skills, but also understanding of how to use them. In this context, the mission of career guidance is expanding to become part of lifelong learning. Already, services are beginning to adapt to the new trends, replacing the traditional model that was led by a psychological approach to this issue.

One of the key challenges arising from this finding is the students' decision making on developing a wider range of career management skills. For schools, this will mean building education with career development methods included in the curriculum and connecting to the goal of monitoring the overall development of students. However, the inclusion of career development in education remains concentrated around the completion of the regular educational cycle. Whereas, at higher levels of education, services focus on immediate choice rather than personal development and wider decision-making, although this approach is also beginning to change in some countries.

In its modern forms, the career is based on a number of disciplines: psychology; education; sociology; labor, economy, etc. Historically, psychology is the oldest discipline to insert its theories and methodologies into career counseling, with one-on-one meetings and psychological testing considered its central tools for many years. However, there are still many countries where the psychological approach remains the main tool in choosing a profession. However, in most countries today, career counselors are people with a very wide range of training and qualifications. Training programs are still very much based on the development of skills to provide assistance as a one-on-one encounter. On the other hand, psychological testing is now receiving less emphasis in many countries which, as counseling theories, are increasingly directing career counseling towards individual choice and development. Theoretical research has shown that in a large number of countries, personal interviews are still the dominant tool in the field of career counseling.

Career guidance, in most countries, faces large gaps in services, particularly for students who receive limited opportunities rather than, for example, students in primary and secondary schools. Why is this?

Proper career guidance is necessary in order to have proper career development. The best results are achieved when career counseling and guidance begins at an early age. Primary education has the most responsible role for the necessity of recognizing the student's talent and work on their career guidance. Such career guidance will lead to the correct choice of secondary education, which can be vocational or general high school education. At university, students already specialize more narrowly in certain areas, and the certainty is high that this is their future profession. However, it does not mean that a person's career development ends here. Of course, we should be guided by our instinct, follow our feelings and choose what is best for us. For this purpose, the Career Centers that work within universities, have a key role in the direction of making sure students acquire the necessary competencies, assistance with studying or mastering the material and networking with the business community.

In 2020, the establishment of new administrative structures at universities in Macedonia (University "St. Kliment Ohridski - Bitola and University "St. Cyril and Methodius" - Skopje), as offices for professional

²⁷The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is a unique forum where the governments of 37 democracies with market-based economies collaborate to develop policy standards to promote sustainable economic growth



guidance and career building, was already beginning as a result of the TEMPUS project supported by the European Union (UM-JEP -15032-2000). The main goal of establishing these offices is to represent a link between higher education, students and the economy. This means that their basic mission is to establish an intermediary role - establishing a permanent relationship with the economy and promoting the university in the the labor market, on the one hand, and helping students in their professional guidance and building their own career, on the other hand.

In the Law on Higher Education published in the Official Gazette no. 82 of May 8, 2018, in chapter 7 "INTERNAL ORGANIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND FORMS OF COLLABORATION", the establishment of Career Centers at the university level is also regulated. In doing so, it is defined that the university establishes at least one career center. The Career Center must keep special records for former students (alumni), organize career fairs at each college/university where there is a career center and perform other tasks determined by the university's statute.

Today, Career Centers are an integral part of modern higher education, providing students with high-quality services in terms of their career orientation and planning, preparation, as well as for an effective partnership between students and employers.

In general, what Career Centers offer to students is sublimated in the following activities:

- Advising on issues related to the selection and development of the career;
- Information on current internship programs and vacancies;
- Strategies for looking for a job and/or internship;
- Assistance and support in the process of creating a CV, motivation letter, as well as other documents necessary for applying to job and/or internship openings;
- Useful tips for job interviews;
- Careers and students – annual forum of leading companies, which offer jobs and internships for young specialists and graduates.

Therefore, it is recommended that students use the services offered by the Career Centers because in this way:

- Their opportunities to realize their career plan are improved.
- They familiarize themselves with the labor market prior to graduation.
- They receive information about employers and open job positions.
- Develop job search and job application skills.

Career Centers offer career counseling to prospective and current students, as well as to alumni of universities who:

- Would like to increase their level of self-knowledge;
- need guidance in choosing a suitable career;
- need help making an informed choice about a new career.
- would like to know more about the conventions of writing CVs and cover letters, appropriate behavior during a job interview, etc..



21. Tools for career guidance and career counseling

Career management is the process of tracking, deploying, directing and distributing potential in order to achieve predetermined goals and desires. One should manage one's career as if it were a company. It is good to have the attitude that you are self-employed and that you need to perform every activity to the best of your ability.

A prerequisite for career management is a high level of self-confidence. It is necessary to know what are the benefits and what are the disadvantages, how to invest time and energy to strengthen the advantages and eliminate the disadvantages.

A big problem is that most people do not make career development plans, but react inertly. Such an attitude results in a poor career and extreme dissatisfaction in life. Planning is an essential part of career management, although this plan only provides a framework for making decisions about opportunities which arise by defining priorities. The more you manage your career, the more likely it is that your goals will be achieved.

For successful career development, it is necessary to follow the following steps for career management, i.e. the so-called GROW model:

- Set a career goal (Goal)
- Determine the current situation (Reality)
- Determining solutions/methods to achieve the goal (Options)
- Follow-up (Will)

Finding a job does not always provide any security. Confidence is in having competencies that make you employable and useful. It means that you are equipped with knowledge, skills, information, and you can follow trends. It should also be known that motivation is a key factor for career success.

In the upcoming times, work and educational experience acquired independently of the formal education system, especially through lifelong learning programs that are essential for career development, will be increasingly valued.

It often happens that the concept of career is equated with the concept of labor. However, between the concept of career and the concept of labor, there is one important difference. Simply put, labor is something to do to get paid at the end of the month, therefore, it is paid labor. While, on the other hand, a career is a long-term, fruitful activity that brings satisfaction. A career is defined as a path or progression through life, especially in terms of learning and employment. We should actively approach our career, plan it, lead it, follow it up, and not just wait for a job that we will do for the rest of our working life. A career is a dynamic process, which sometimes progresses quickly, sometimes slowly, sometimes one stays in one position for a long time, and sometimes the change of jobs is frequent. Already here it becomes clear that "career" is a broader concept.

Career planning includes five stages:



1. Identifying Personal Values and Needs - The first step to take is to review and reflect on what skills and abilities you possess. Also, one should think about the needs, in fact, what one wants to achieve in a professional sense, and how to realize it.
2. Setting goals - Depending on the needs, one can set the goals that we want to achieve in our career. Be sure that the goals you set now will change as your career develops. We can set the goals in a certain order, from general to specific, according to the SMART method or in any other way. Setting goals can be useful, because it can serve as a guide for work that after some time will be evaluated and see how far you have come in achieving your goals.
3. Defining the goals – This phase refers to a set of short-term and long-term decisions about what we want to achieve in the next period, i.e. in a few years. One of the preferred questions at this stage is – Where do you see yourself in the future?
4. Analysis of resources and barriers - As you need to determine your strengths, knowledge, skills and abilities that you possess, it is necessary to perceive your own shortcomings. This analysis should be realistic, and you need a good evaluation of the knowledge, skills and abilities that you lack, in order to achieve your goals.
5. Making decisions - After considering the advantages and disadvantages for the set goals and analyzing all the possibilities that we have a decision should be made about the next steps. The decision we make is not final and if you have questions, you can consult someone.

From the beginning of their careers, people change their goals, attitudes and desires. People in different periods of their lives want different things in their careers. The beginning and duration of the career depends on the nature and complexity of the occupation, the duration of the educational process and preparation for performing their profession and their interest.

In order to make the right choice, you can also do your own SWOT analysis. Usually, SWOT analysis is associated with strategic decisions of business activities, and is a form of identification of important factors that can determine the current state of an organization. It can also be used to identify factors that can contribute to personal development.

The name SWOT is derived from English words and bears the name of the acronym:

- S (Strengths)
- W (Weaknesses)
- O (Opportunities)
- T (Threats)





When we think about the different forms of analysis and the benefits that the current state of the country can bring, why not apply our own SWOT analysis and thereby improve ourselves? In this time of general rapid growth and development, we are constantly under pressure to constantly advance and improve.

How to apply your own SWOT analysis?

When thinking about one's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and potential dangers, one should first be realistic. It is important not to identify any and all strengths, weaknesses, opportunities or threats, but those that are relevant to the situation. Of course, you have other good qualities, but how important is it to have a nice smile when applying for a job? Does it matter that you have bad handwriting when creating a quote for a client? etc.

To do a real SWOT analysis of your own, it would be best to stick to the answers to the following questions.

Strengths – What is it that you are better at than others? What are you more successful at? What is it that you do well in relation to a given problem or goal? What is it that gives you an edge over other people in the category you are comparing yourself to? Why are you successful? Why are people happy with you? Why do they want to work with you?

Weaknesses - What are some areas where you are not "up to the task"? What are your limitations? Where is your limit of possibility? What don't you know? What do you think you don't know? What qualities do you need to tone down to be better? Which feature would you like to eliminate? What trait would you like people in your area to eliminate if they could?

Options - What actions could you take that could contribute to meeting your goals? What are the external factors that "work for you"? What is there on the market for what you can bring, as opposed to others who did not think of it? What are the chances of your development? What trends are you facing at work?

Threats - In what areas or situations are you particularly sensitive? Contacts with people that put you in situations where you can't control yourself? Where should you focus your efforts moving forward? What



trends in the business you are dealing with that could be detrimental to your development? Could any change jeopardize your reputation and integrity? What should you stay away from?

Ask yourself these questions first to get to know yourself and then to understand:

- How to utilize your own strengths, and the opportunities offered to you?
- How can opportunities cancel out threats?
- How might your weaknesses affect your use of opportunities?
- How can your strengths act as a defense against potential threats?

22. Opportunity for successful career development

Since education is a dynamic process that provides individual knowledge and skills, we can say that in modern society we distinguish 3 basic forms of education that will contribute to successful career development:

1. Formal education
2. Non-formal education and
3. Informal education.

22.1 Formal education

Formal education is defined as an institutional form of education and implies a process that takes place within a clearly defined formal educational system, legally, with the final result being the acquisition of certain knowledge and skills. This term covers all forms of education, from primary to higher education, including secondary vocational schools and gymnasiums, whose founder is the state or a specific institution authorized by the state, and which fulfill certain regulations in the field of education, therefore formal education is often called "certified education"²⁸.

The objectives of formal education or learning are clearly defined, they are periodically reviewed and lead to the acquisition of a diploma, which enables further education and/or admission to a particular job. This type of education is targeted and conscious, and some of its types are legally mandatory (eg primary and secondary education). In this case, lecturers must meet formal criteria, which are regulated by laws and other regulations in the field of education

22.2 Non-formal education

Informal education is a type of educational process that includes non-institutional educational activities for the acquisition of certain knowledge and skills, and participation in such activities is voluntary. Starting from the specifics of formal learning, it could be concluded that any education that takes place beyond the formal i.e. official school context and system, is informal.

²⁸ Mr. sc. Ermin Kuka , KONCEPT NEFORMALNOG OBRAZOVANJA, Sarajevo, Bosna i Hercegovina, 2011



However, there are some differences. Non-formal education is usually characterized as education independent of formal educational institutions. During non-formal education, the acquisition of knowledge and different skills happens very consciously, while achieving a specific learning goal. Therefore, non-formal education/learning can be said to take place in less formal institutions, establishments, organizations or groups.

Non-formal education offers a multitude of educational programs, which can be divided into two²⁹ broad categories and these programs are intended for a wide variety of target groups:

1. *Educational programs (for acquiring different knowledge and skills)*
2. *Programs related to education (learning attitudes and positive life values).*

The target group in non-formal education has no age limit (of course, it must be within realistic possibilities, related to the program itself). For some people it may even be the only possible and only available education because, for various reasons, the door to formal, institutional education is closed to them. It can also be of great help to people who have acquired formal education, which is insufficient for them, so in that case we define it as "learning and training adults for work, life, social activities that are not directly subject to standardization and strict verification procedures".

On the other hand, a certain person's acquired formal education can in some cases be of great practical use, but often formal education is completed after studies (undergraduate and postgraduate). And if a person follows the concept of continuous learning throughout their life, then, in addition to gaining practical and life experience, opportunities for informal education can be of great importance, even when a person is in their 30s, 40s, 50s and later years. Which means it's never too late to improve.

22.3 Informal education

Informal education implies various forms of acquiring knowledge and skills that include self-initiated or spontaneous forms of education, i.e. spontaneous forms of transfer of knowledge, attitudes, skills. Informal education takes place in situations that are not usually perceived as learning situations. When a person experiences a new experience, sees, hears or does something new, and then ponders the situation, then they inadvertently gain new knowledge and have a learned experience from such a situation.

Informal education can consist of: observing certain situations, testing, reading, using the media, practice, visiting professional fairs, exchanging experiences with other people, etc.

For these reasons, informal education is described as highly individual. It differs from non-formal because in most cases it does not represent conscious/intentional learning and is described as unsystematic learning in everyday life.

Informal education takes place in everyday situations, which are usually not perceived as learning situations. It develops from the experience that a person acquires, that is, from solving certain problems, and therefore it is not intentional, and only after thinking does the learning process itself take place.

Such education is a form of individual learning and is related to the individual. Informal learning, from the student's point of view, is learning without a clear intention and takes place in everyday life and different

²⁹ Ilić Đ., Janjić I., Ilić S. (2019) „Upravljanje karijerom putem karijernogsavetovanja,, Trendovi u poslovanju, br.14,



contexts, in the family, at work, in free time, in the community. There are results, but these results are rarely recorded, have never been certified and are not directly visible to the student. Official documents (diploma, certificate, certificate, etc.) are not awarded for the specified type of education.

23. The career development of students through the prism of the development of soft skills

The conceptualization of the term "Soft" skills is a challenge that should provide answers to important questions related to skills that should be possessed in order to achieve greater competence, which would mean greater competitiveness in the labor market. In fact, this is also the mission and the goals of the University, which measures its quality through the degree of employability of its graduates, who, in addition to the "Hard" skills that express professional readiness and are acquired in the process of formal education, should also possess "soft" skills, which help them more easily overcome obstacles in the labor market, and are acquired in the process of informal education. This means that mastering "soft" skills makes students more competent, more compatible and more competitive in the labor market.

Such an approach enables easier adaptation to the needs of the real business world and acquisition of the necessary experience for joint action and cooperation. Most universities implement trainings that are in line with the development of "soft" skills through the Career Centers, organized through appropriate programs that are prepared with the intention of developing individual and group skills among students.

The best results are achieved by establishing a combined process of trainings which encompasses the development of personal professional skills, within the educational process, as well as training programs for "soft" skills, implemented through the Career centers.

Recognizing the importance of students' skills and competencies is essential as they relate to the employability of young people. For individuals, employability depends on the knowledge, skills and attitudes they possess, how they use these important elements and how they present them to employers, as well as the context in which they seek work.

It is known that a large percentage of young people from the Western Balkans are unemployed, and they lack the knowledge, skills and competencies required for the labor market. Although the clear evidence of the effects of non-formal education on the improvement of skills that encourage the employability of young people is manifold and positive, however, the attention given to this area at the regional level is not enough.

To understand the essence of "soft" skills, it is necessary to refer to the study that was made in 1918 by the Carnegie and Harvard institution, which shows that "hard" (technical) skills, which are specific to the work process and refer to the professional and professional profile of the person, participate with 15%, while 85% are the so-called "soft" skills that share responsibility for a person's success.³⁰

³⁰Amon, S., Shamai, S., & Ilatov, Z. (2008), Influence of Socialization Agents on Leisure-Time Activities of Young Adolescents. *Adolescence*, PMB 383, San Diego, CA



Therefore, we say that they are a very important element not only for business, but also in everyday life, in general.

However, it is important to note that, "hard" skills are necessary, and represent the primary part necessary for professional development, improvement of competencies, and we consider them as a prerequisite for success, whereas "soft" skills are a tool used in the process to better transfer the knowledge acquired through the process of formal education.

"Soft" skills are personal attributes, personality traits, inherent social cues, and communication skills needed for success. They characterize the characteristics of the person, that is, how a person communicates or establishes relations with his closer or more distant surroundings. "Soft" skills, on the other hand, are the skills of developed interpersonal relationships, which are much more difficult to define and evaluate.

While "hard" skills are characterized by knowledge of the specifics of the job, "soft"³¹ skills put their emphasis on additional skills that include communication skills, listening skills, empathy, etc.

They are characterized by attitude building, communication, creative thinking, work ethic, teamwork, networking, decision making, positivity, time management, motivation, flexibility, problem solving, critical thinking and conflict resolution.

However, "soft"³² skills are important to the success of both employers and students in building their professional careers. Employers look for candidates with well-developed "soft" skills, and the reason is simple, "soft" skills are transferable skills that provide additional input into the career development of students.

So, after acquiring professional skills - "hard" skills - "soft" skills take over their role. Imagine that out of two people with exactly the same level of qualifications and experience, one has to be selected, then the emphasis is placed on the additional skills that are possessed. The view of soft skills defined in this way is especially important in career guidance and career development, because it must be taken into account that the first impression of us is formed in the first 5-7 seconds. The question arises:

What is missing, that is, which link in the chain of activities is missing for successful career development?

The answer to this question is simple, and it points to "soft" skills, and the development of "soft" skills in students is necessary for:

- Successful application of professional and practical knowledge (acquired during formal education),
- Building a quality relationship with people in the personal and business environment,
- Driving and utilizing their full potential,
- Increasing competence and competitiveness

³¹ Simeon-Fayomi B.C., Chea Tan, B.S. And Oludeyi, O.S, Soft Skills for Young Adults: Circuit In The Formal, Non-Formal and Informal Models, Tai Solarin University of Education,

³² Simeon-Fayomi B.C., Chea Tan, B.S. And Oludeyi, O.S, Soft Skills for Young Adults: Circuit In The Formal, Non-Formal and Informal Models, Tai Solarin University of Education,



According to the above, it is interesting to note that – *technical- technological development today is so fast, that it is assumed that over 50% of the jobs that would be opened in the next 6 years, do not exist at the moment*³³

The question arises: *what skills should students possess in order to acquire increased business competencies that affect the development of their career?*

We will answer this question based on the results obtained from the research and insight into foreign literature, as well as the systematization of positive experiences from practice, with the help of the European manual³⁴. Thus, the list of personal business skills that contribute to better competencies of students for a successful career development are:

- *Improving communication skills*
- *Team work*
- *Work under pressure*
- *Creativity / innovation*
- *Flexibility*
- *Ability to learn*
- *Conflict management*
- *Leadership*
- *Adaptability*
- *Continuous improvement*
- *Analytical skills*
- *Decision making skills*
- *Self-awareness*

24. Risks in career counseling

In the career counseling process, there is a possibility of risk. One of the assumptions for the occurrence of risk in career counseling is inadequate interpretation of test results. Thus, when using tests in the process of self-assessment in career counseling, there is a risk that the career counselors interpret the results of the tests in the way that is easiest for them or as they already have done. Inadequate use of tests can discourage and make them passive in the career planning process. A third variant, which can cause the opposite effect of using a test, is the desire of some students to read the results of the test in more detail, and the thusly interpreted results will threaten the objective process of self-assessment of the student.

³³Tight M (2002), Key Concepts in Adult Education and Training RoutledgeFalmer, Taylor & Francis Group: London and New York

³⁴Haselberger, D., Oberhuemer, P., Perez, E., Cinque, M., Capasso, F., Soft Skills for Young Adults: Circuit In The Formal, Non-Formal and Informal Models, p.. 12-27.

In addition, care should be taken that the results of the career guidance test are not taken lightly by students. Very often, driven by the results of the career guidance tests, they do not pay attention to the conversation with the career counselor. And the conversation is extremely important.

Some students have the excuse that they don't have time for career counseling, behind which lies a real resistance to talking about "problems." Such students insist on a quick solution and know how to convince career counselors that they should exclusively rely on the tests in the career counseling process and that they should get the results at any cost. But they are not able to independently interpret them.

Insufficient understanding of the language can also be a threat to career counseling, especially in multi-ethnic environments where it often happens that the questionnaire is answered without reading the questions, just for the sake of completing the test. They don't feel good about being tested or want to make an impression and answer the questions the way they think is right, not the way they think is real.

The student's assumption that if they have high results in a certain field of interests, they will automatically be suitable for the certain profession, can be crucial. This is where the career counselor bridges the explanation that the field of interest should only serve as guide for the student towards their aim, what to improve and what skills to build and improve. Conversely, high scores on an aptitude test do not necessarily mean a high level of interest.

25. Techniques of career counseling and career guidance

The role of the career counselor is to know how to guide the student through the process of career guidance so that they will receive the added value from this type of career counseling. But the question arises of how to be better than the rest, that is, what are the techniques for good career counseling that can set us apart from the rest?

Implementing the right techniques in the right way is critical when it comes to getting ahead in career counseling. That's why the top 10 career counseling techniques that will always keep you on top are defined.

1. Pre-counseling

The first technique is pre-counseling, that is, a stage in which basic knowledge about the candidate is obtained. It helps to get a clear idea of the candidate's needs. Similarly, a face-to-face conversation with the candidate will help identify the gap between the current state and the desired goal. This will help to decide on the further course of counseling based on the person's problem statement and expected outcome. A counseling session works best when you have a clear picture of the candidates' needs.

2. Building relationships

For communication to flow freely and clearly during counseling, it is necessary to remove all potential barriers. Smooth communication should be established. That is why it is necessary to show empathy, to create mutual trust and affinity with that person. The better the understanding, the more comfortable and effective the counseling will be for both the counselor and the candidate. Building a relationship with



them will establish mutual trust and help them open up to you. This will make the task easier. Establishing a strong healthy alliance can be invaluable in influencing candidates. They will trust you to provide the right options for them and you can trust them to listen to your advice.

3. Career assessment

This tool is designed to analyze the various skills, talents and abilities of the candidate. It's a way of learning about how variations in personal attributes can affect success and satisfaction with different career options. Different types of assessments focus on specific areas, including interests, aptitude, personality traits, knowledge, etc. Career assessment is done based on the analysis of these areas. It is recommended to follow a multidimensional assessment that provides a comprehensive and accurate analysis, which is different from a one-dimensional one.

4. 360° profile analysis

Entering a career, you are skilled at but dislike, provides little or no benefit in the long run. To address this, it is essential to find a career in line with one's life goals and values. And to achieve this, career counselors must take a holistic approach in providing the right guidance. That means considering a candidate as a whole rather than just a few specific areas. This approach focuses on the candidate's thoughts, culture, beliefs and frame of mind along with their skills, personality and knowledge. Combining these details along with inputs from pre-counseling, assessments and discussion with decision makers will help in setting appropriate career goals.

5. Setting career goals

The end point of career counseling itself is to set an optimal career goal. Setting specific goals is imperative to achieving them. By setting career goals, you set a roadmap for your career to move forward and strategize how to get there. Breaking down goal setting into short, medium and long term can help create a well laid out final plan.

- be specific and clear
- goals must be measurable
- goals must be realistic and achievable
- link specific activities to each step
- be adaptable
- relevant to the life purpose
- be positive

It is essential to include alternatives to be implemented should the need arise, as sometimes even the best laid plans do not work out as planned.

6. Develop an Action Plan



An action plan can be considered a tool that will allow counselors to develop a course of action for the candidate. This involves creating a well-defined checklist consisting of activities and steps that will help them accomplish their goals and objectives. It will include all steps necessary to implement the short, medium and long-term goals. You also need to motivate your clients to work towards the goal

7. Use of technological platforms

Living in a digitized world, the use of information equipment is a necessity that implies following technical and technological changes. Without technological platforms, the counseling process as a whole becomes boring and drawn-out. The technology interface offers end-to-end solutions, from psychometric tests to highlighting course options to educational guidance to delivering assessments and analysis reports. This helps advisors easily select reports and work on them.

8. Understanding the labor market

An effective career counselor needs to be constantly aware of how different factors influence and shape job opportunities and different careers. The labor market can rise or fall depending on the demand and supply of labor. Understanding these variations will help in providing the right guidance and career options to students based on an informed decision. In addition, the counselor needs to understand the candidates' skills and attitudes towards the ever-evolving work environments.

9. Up-to-date knowledge of career options

In this fast-paced world, we can find ever-increasing and quickly growing career opportunities. A wide variety of professions and career opportunities are springing up all around. Many of the students and their parents are not aware of the various career options available and usually end up choosing any conventional career path. Having the right information about upcoming and developing careers will help the counselor provide suitable options to the candidate. Your resources should be constantly updated to expand your practice. In doing so, you can be prepared for different types of clients with different needs and problems.

10. Post advisory support

Finally, a thorough follow-up should be performed post-counseling session. Here the performance of candidates is checked at periodic level. In this way, we get certainty that the candidate follows the recommendations and works towards achieving the goals.

26. Theoretical research on the experiences of career counseling and career guidance

Broad career guidance visibility is also an important tool for higher education. The services offered by career counselors are often underdeveloped in this sector, and where they exist, they often focus on employment or are integrated with personal counseling services.



The need for career guidance is increasing as higher education in OECD³⁵ countries operates in a more open and competitive environment, and so, as interest in higher education increases, so does the need to significantly broaden its aims beyond the preparation of students for traditional professions.

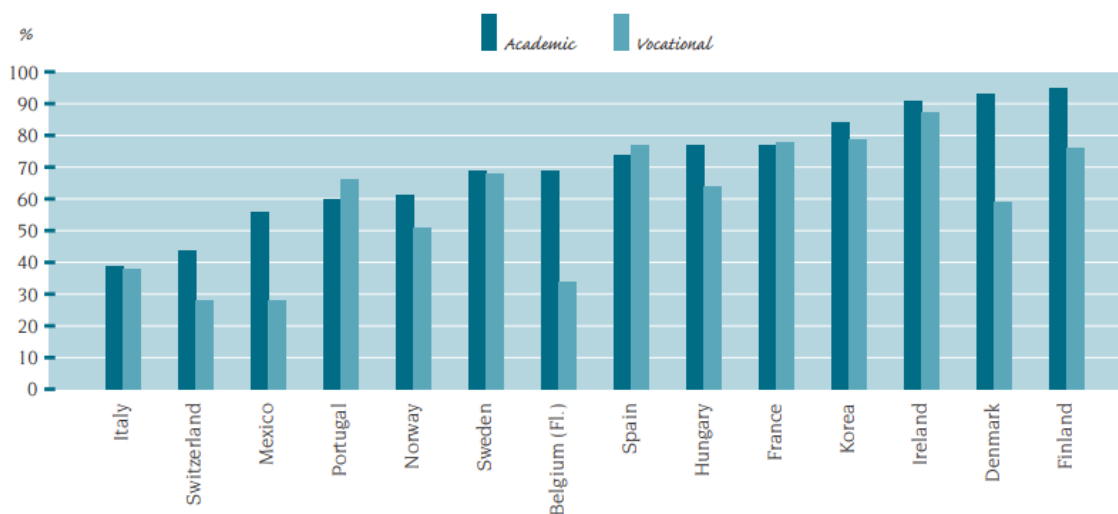
These two trends mean that students have more options. The link between certain courses of study and certain positions on the labor market is becoming less direct. Higher education institutions need to improve their tracking of their students' placements and using their employment outcomes as a key marketing tool to attract new students.

Career guidance opportunities in higher education have traditionally been much more developed in some OECD countries, particularly the UK, USA, etc., compared to other countries. However, with the rapid technological development, a rapid progress of this type of service can be noted in a large number of countries.

So for example in Spain³⁶, the career development service of the Private University of Navarre provides an employment service for graduates, organizes student learning placements in companies and organizes career fairs visiting a number of companies. In addition, the university provides a career planning and personal development service for all students on a voluntary basis.

In Ireland³⁷, Trinity College Dublin's careers service provides help through a resource centre, ICT-based tools and individual interviews. In addition, it provides a program for the development of personal and social skills in undergraduate courses. In many cases this is integrated into the normal curricula of academic departments through teaching assistants who have been trained by the career service.

Chart 1. Percentage of secondary and higher education students receiving individual career counseling, 2020



³⁵The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is a unique forum where the governments of 37 democracies with market-based economies collaborate to develop policy standards to promote sustainable economic growth.

³⁶CAREER GUIDANCE: NEW WAYS FORWARD CHAPTER 2, P.42. 2020,

to³⁷ idia

Source³⁸: International Framework, Evaluation of Career Guidance

Other research reviews, mainly conducted in the USA and the UK ³⁹ highlight a number of influences that are likely to contribute to changes in national educational goals, which will influence labor market policy. These include: increased interest in education and training; encouraging participation in formal and non-formal learning; positive effects on learning outcomes, better decision-making skills and better awareness of learning opportunities; increased research and information seeking activity; and increased motivation for job seeking.

27. Empirical research on the experiences of career counseling and career guidance

Within the framework of the empirical research done for the needs of the publication, the situation in the Republic of Macedonia was analyzed in order to detect the need for career counseling. The target group of the research was the Career Centers, their existence, functioning and development, which puts particular emphasis on the career centers of higher education institutions, as well as to the services and forms they offer.

According to the received data, a total of 36 higher education institutions were accredited by the State Statistics Office in the Republic of Macedonia in 2022, of which 7 are state universities, 28 private higher education institutions and one public-private partnership. State universities will be in the domain of our interest.

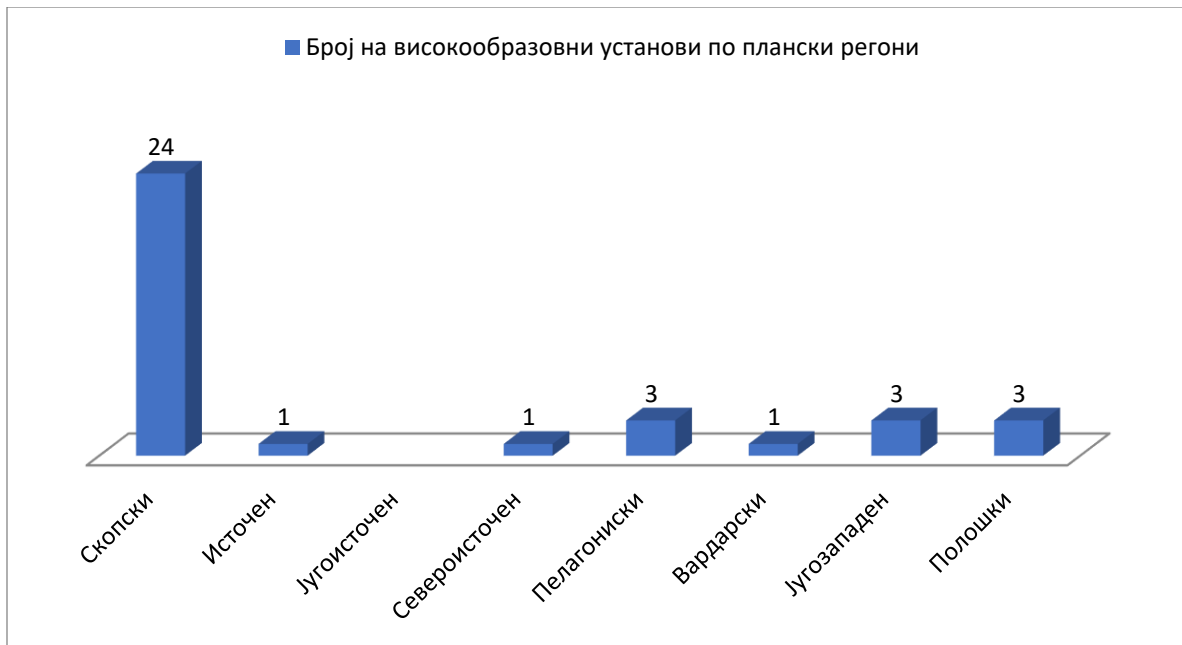
Chart 2. Number of higher education institutions per planning region

- Number of higher education institutions per planning region: Skopje | Eastern | Southeastern | Northeastern | Pelagonija | Vardar | Southwestern | Polog

³⁸ Source: OECD International Survey of Upper Secondary Schools Data for Figure 2.1, p. 57.

³⁹ (Killeen, 1996b; Killeen, Sammons and Watts, 1999; Watts, 1999; Prideaux et al., 2000),

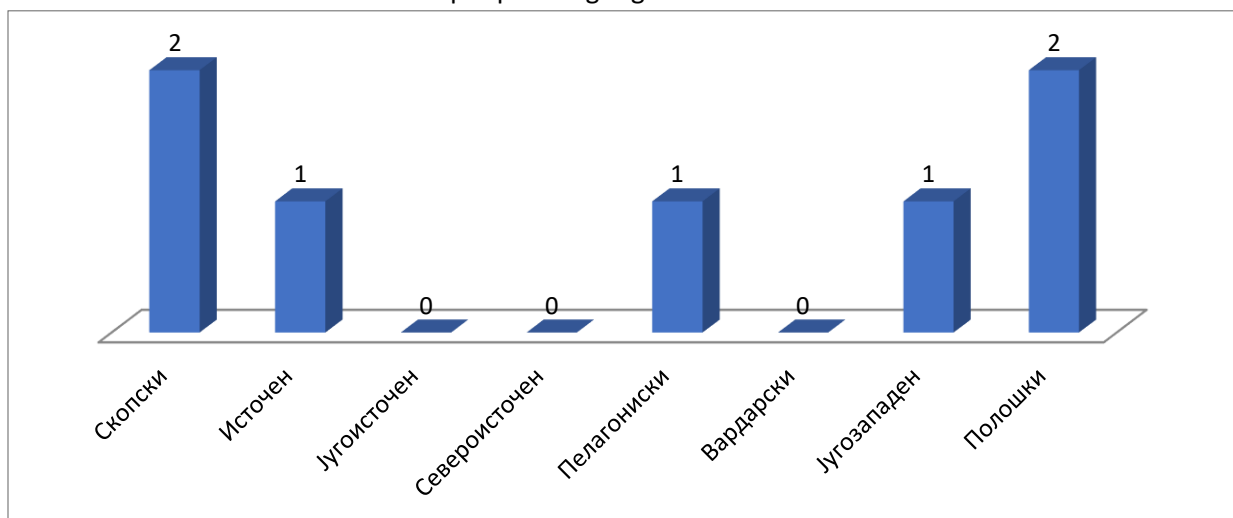




Source: Analysis of own research

Viewed according to their location in the planning regions (Chart 2), it can be concluded that they are for the most part concentrated in the Skopje planning region (24 institutions of higher education), with 3 institutions of higher education each in the Polog, Southwestern and Pelaginja regions, and one institution of higher education each in the Eastern, Northeastern and Vardar planning regions.

Chart 3. Number of state universities per planning region

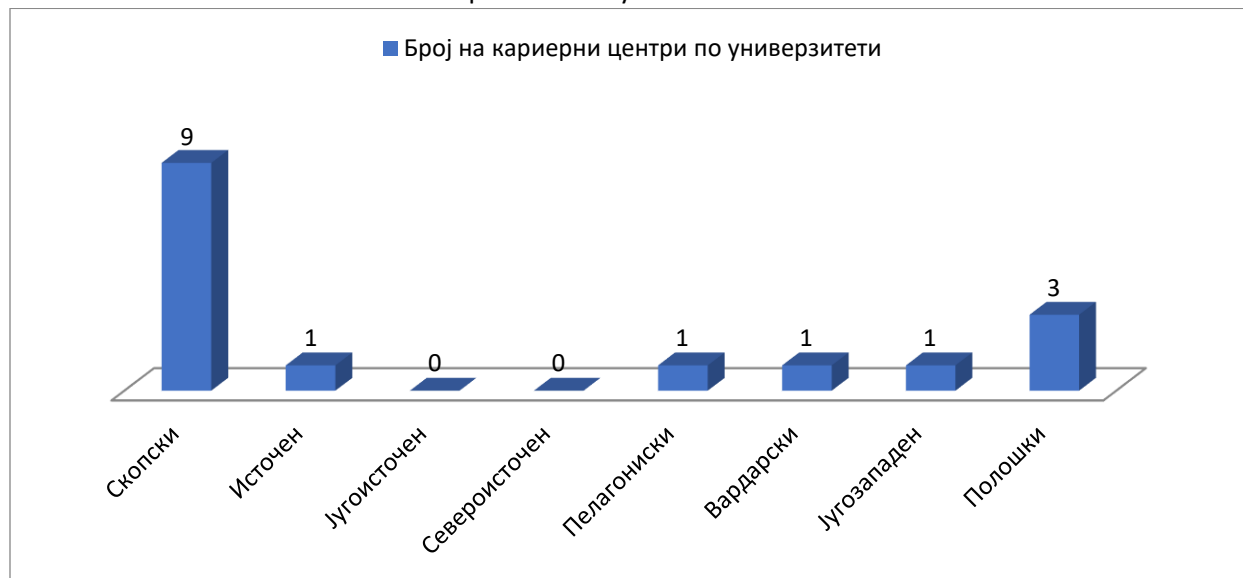


Source: Analysis of own research

As previously stated, 7 state universities operate in the Republic of Macedonia (Chart 3). According to their headquarters, the universities are distributed in different planning regions, namely: 2 state universities operate in the Skopje planning region, these being the University "St. Cyril and Methodius"-

Skopje and the University "Mother Teresa"-Skopje. The University "St. Kliment Ohridski"-Bitola operates in the Pelagonija planning region, the University "Goce Delchev"-Stip operates in the Eastern planning region, the University "St. Apostol Pavle"-Ohrid operates in the Southwestern planning region, and two state universities, namely the State University in Tetovo, and as a public-private partnership the University of Southeast Europe-Tetovo operate in the Polog region.

Chart 4. Number of career centers per university



Source: Analysis of own research

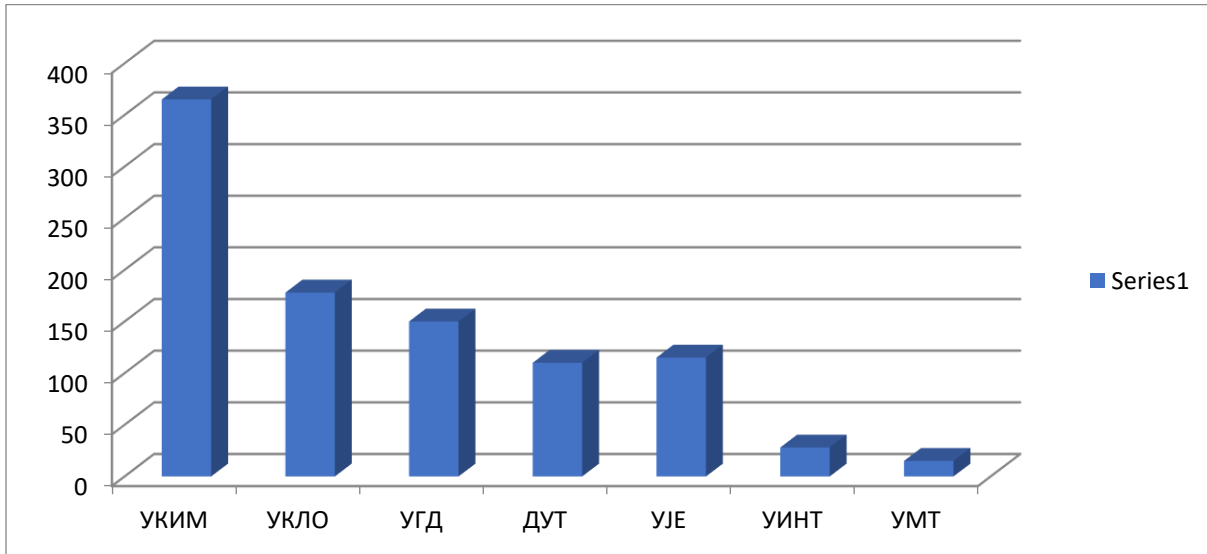
According to the telephone survey conducted for the purposes of this publication, all 36 higher education institutions were contacted. When asked if a Career Center exists and operates in their universities, 27 of them answered affirmatively, while 9 higher education institutions stated that they currently do not have one, but are in the process of establishing career centers in their institutions as well. As for the state universities in the Republic of Macedonia, the data obtained indicates that career centers have been established and are operating in all 7 universities. In this context, it should be noted that, the career centers of the two oldest universities in Macedonia, the University "St. Cyril and Methodius" - Skopje and the University "St. Kliment Ohridski" - Bitola, function as a network of such centers per departments or contact persons. Such placement of the career centers in these two universities is the result of the current internal organizational structure, which, unlike the other 5 universities under the umbrella of the state, were formed as integrated institutions, while the University of "St. Cyril and Methodius" - Skopje and the University "St. Kliment Ohridski" - Bitola function as partially integrated universities with wide autonomy of the departments.

The survey was conducted via Google Forms. 961 students responded to the survey questionnaire (Chart 5), representing all 7 state universities:

- the University "St. Cyril and Methodius" - Skopje (UKIM) - 365 students,
- the University "St. Kliment Ohridski" - Bitola (UKLO) - 178 students,
- the University "Goce Delchev" - Shtip (UGD) - 150 students,

- the State University of Tetovo (DUT) - 110 students,
- the University of Southeast Europe - Tetovo (UJE) - 115 students,
- the University "St. Apostle Pavle" - Ohrid (UJNT) - 28 students and
- the University "Mother Teresa" - Skopje (UMT)-15 students

Chart 5. Number of students who responded to the questionnaire

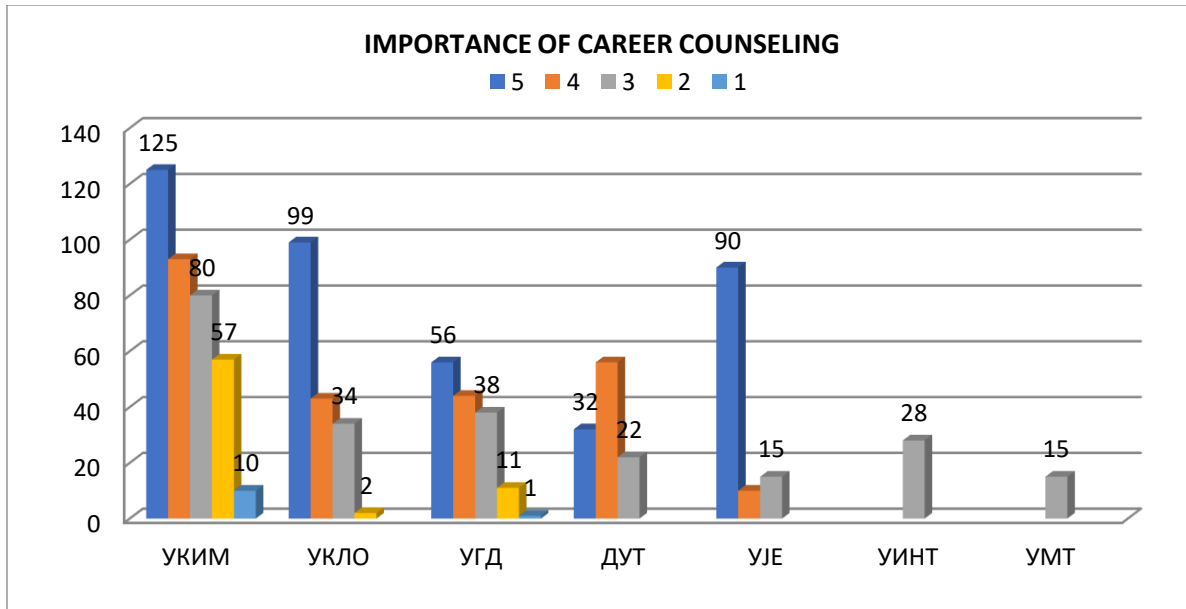


Source: Analysis of own research

961 students answered the survey question related to the importance of career counseling (Graph 6). According to their opinions on how important career counseling is for them, the following answers were received. 402 students declared that for them career counseling is very important, 246 that it is important, 232 students do not have an opinion on this issue, 70 students declared that career counseling is not important and only 10 students declared that it is not important at all.

Chart 6. The importance of career counseling





Source: Analysis from own research

If we look at the obtained results by university, they would appear so: At UKIM, 56% of students consider that career counseling is important for their career development, while 18.5% consider that it is not important for their career development. At UKLO, 74.7% of students answered the question positively, i.e. they think that career counseling is important for their career development, while only 1.1% have negative views on this question and think that it is not important for their career development. The situation is similar at the other universities, so at the UDG, to the question posed in this way, the students answered that, 66.7%, career counseling is important for their career development, while only 8% consider it not important for their career development. The highest percentage for this question was given by DUT students, where as many as 80% of students consider career counseling important for their career development, while none declared that it is not important for their career development. At UJE, 86.9% of students believe that career counseling is important for their career development, while none declared that it is not important for their career development. The answers received from UINT and UMT, where the students declared that they do not have an opinion on this issue, indicate the fact that the students of these universities are not familiar enough with the work and services offered by the Career Centers.

The conducted research has shown that the Career Centers in the analyzed universities are rising to the level of their task, and among students there is a high awareness of the importance of career counseling and career guidance.

In the Career Centers of the state universities where the research was conducted, trainings from non-formal education are generally offered, aimed at strengthening soft skills, which give added value to the hard (professional) skills acquired in the formal education system.

The question arises of why in higher education, career counseling and career guidance are implemented through trainings to strengthen soft skills among students. The answer is simple - this is the only way to improve employment skills, because at this stage of career development, the career path is already laid out and the number of students who would change their professional orientation at this stage is relatively small.

However, that is why they provide a good opportunity for trainings intended for additional training or retraining of students. In general, in almost all career centers of state universities, the training offered as a package to improve soft skills is the same or similar. Thus one can make an observation about the usefulness of these trainings among the students of the aforementioned universities.

The results obtained from the survey show various attitudes and opinions. What can be concluded is that almost half of the surveyed students are satisfied with the training offered by the center. However, the fact that a large percentage declared themselves uninterested, that is, that they do not have an opinion on this issue, should encourage us to think in more detail about the genesis of this answer. The possible reasons are that: Students are not sufficiently or at all aware of the existence of such a center, students are not interested in this kind of upgrading, or a new set of soft skills trainings should be considered.

As the largest university in the country, the University "St. Cyril and Methodius"-Skopje has the largest number of students, so the scope, that is, number of students who answered the questionnaire, was also larger. It has, or has operating within its composition a Career and Counseling Center, as a consequential activity of the career centers that were originally established in some of the departments of UKIM, such as the Faculty of Economics and the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering.

Chart 7. Satisfaction with offered trainings

University "St. Cyril and Methodius"-Skopje, "I am satisfied with the training offered"

for preparation of a CV | for cover letters | for interviews | communication skills | teamwork | presentation skills

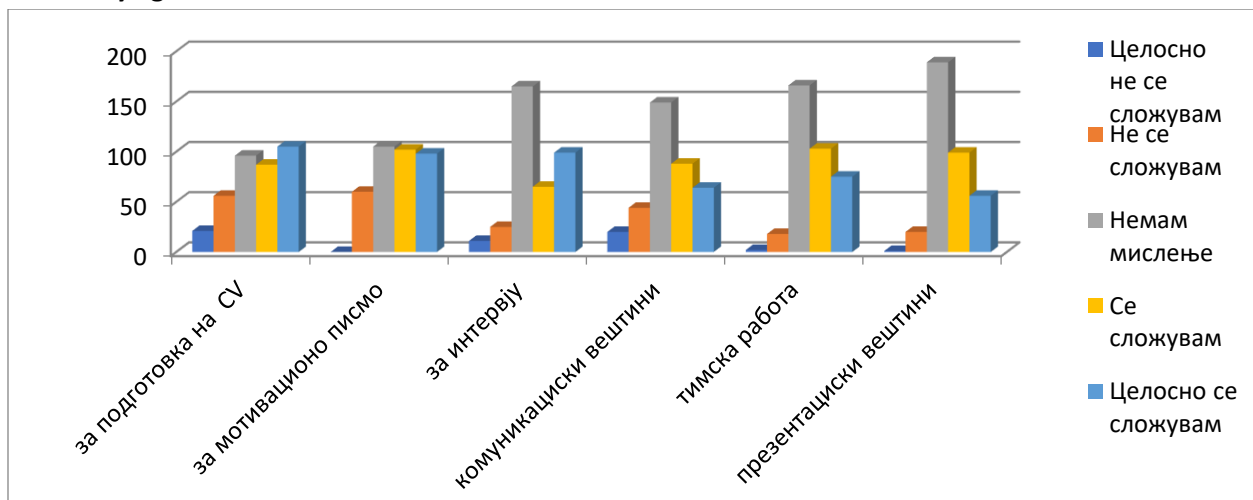
indigo: Fully disagree

orange: Disagree

grey: No opinion

yellow: Agree

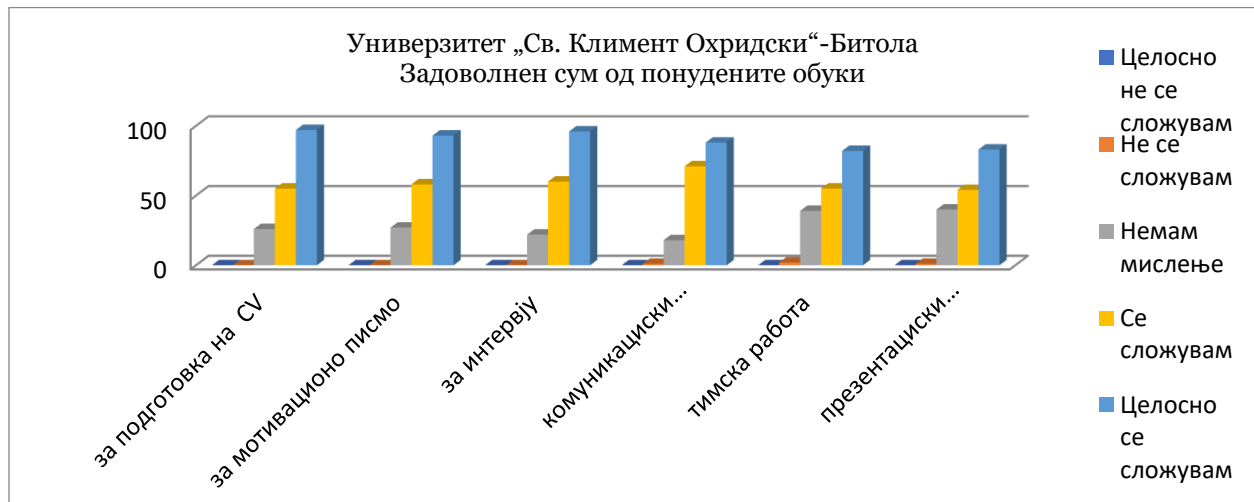
blue: Fully agree



Source: Analysis of own research

At the University "St. Kliment Ohridski"-Bitola (UKLO), the second oldest university in the country, the first steps to establish a Career Center were taken back in 2007, and since 2012 it has already been officially operating as an internal organizational unit, Center for Career, Alumni and Lifelong Learning. From the empirical research conducted by UKLO (Chart 8), the obtained results showed that a large number of surveyed students are satisfied, that is, they agree with the statement that the package of soft skills offered at UKLO corresponds to the needs of the students.

Chart 8. Satisfaction with offered trainings
University "St. Kliment Ohridski"-Bitola, "I am satisfied with the training offered"



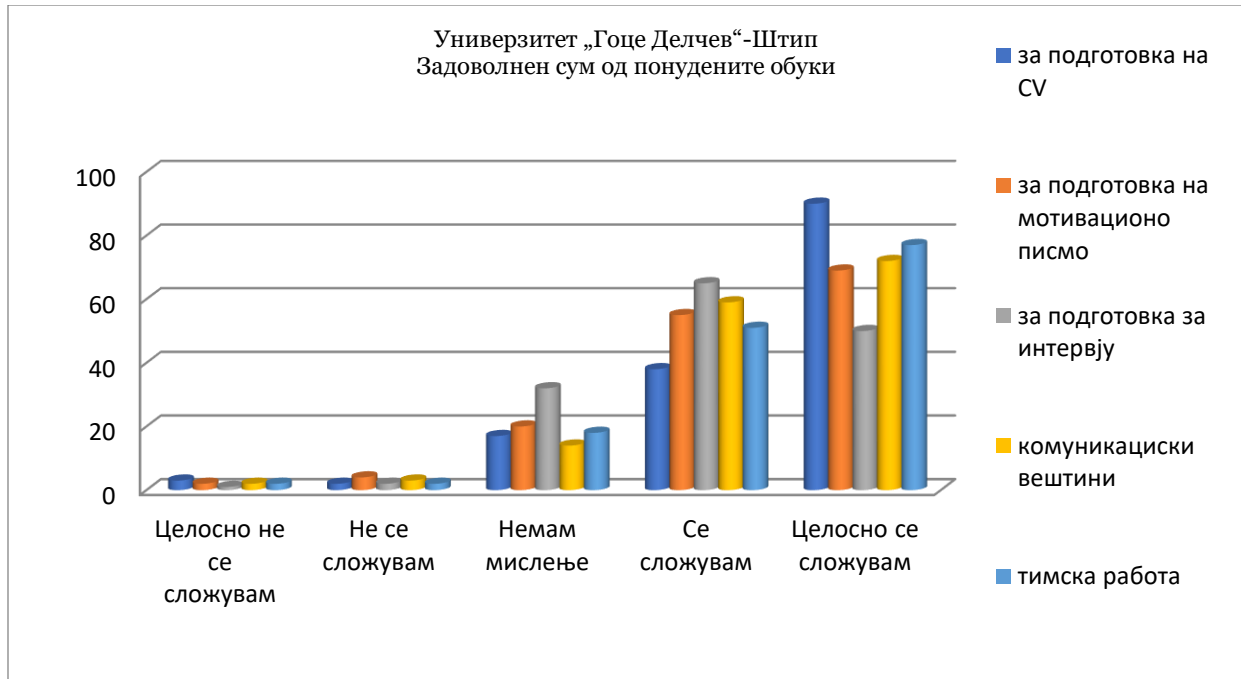
Source: Analysis of own research

If we look at the graph display, we will see that a significant number of the surveyed students declared that they do not have an opinion on this issue. Such an answer is due to the assumption that the students are not interested in learning something new, or have no knowledge of the existence of such a center operating within the university and that trainings that are offered are in the interest of the students.

It is pleasing to note that only a small number of students, almost an insignificant percentage of those surveyed, expressed themselves negatively, i.e. dissatisfied with the set of trainings offered by the Center for Career, Alumni and Lifelong Learning, which would in fact imply support for the current set of trainings offered through the center.

Chart 9. Satisfaction with offered trainings
University "Goce Delchev"-Shtip, "I am satisfied with the training offered"





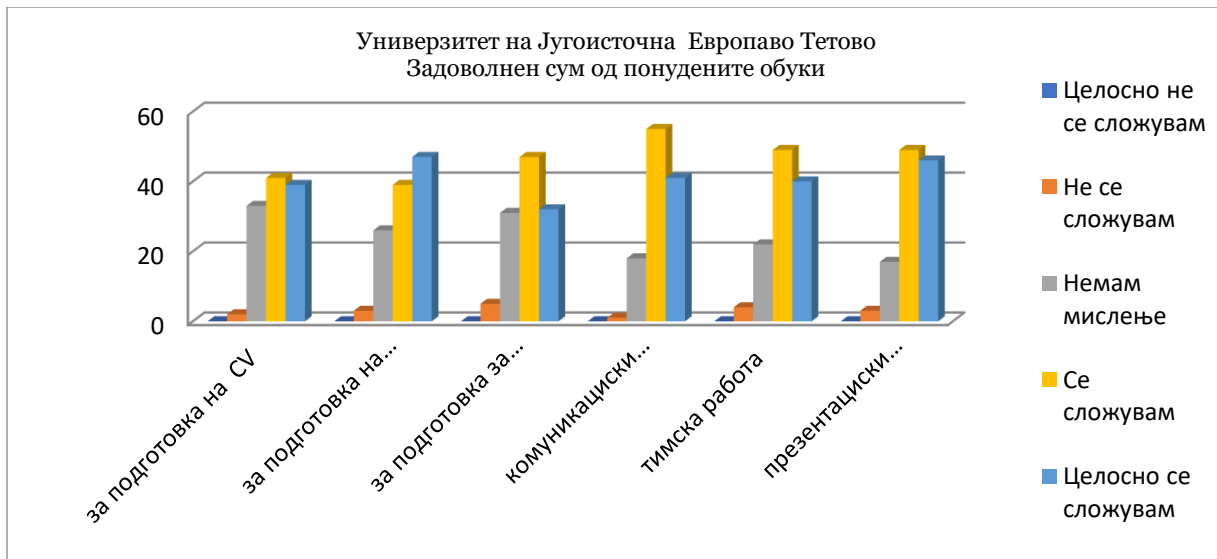
Source: Analysis of own research

At "Goce Delchev"-Shtip University (UGD), which is a relatively young university, a career office has been opened since its inception, operating integrated within the university. In terms of size and number of students, they are almost identical to the University of "St. Kliment Ohridski"-Bitola. The processing of the survey questionnaire demonstrated a similar situation as with UKLO. From the total number of feedback received in the survey (Chart 9), it can be concluded that, for the most part, students show satisfaction with the offered set of trainings, though there is also an insignificant number of students who are dissatisfied with the set of trainings. For this purpose, it is necessary to conduct additional research or discussions with the students.

As in the case of the previous two universities that we discussed, the number of students who answered this statement with "no opinion", that is, they have a neutral attitude, is significant. In the future, it is recommended to conduct new research in order to detect the issue of this condition.

Chart 10. Satisfaction with offered trainings

University of Southeast Europe - Tetovo, "I am satisfied with the training offered"

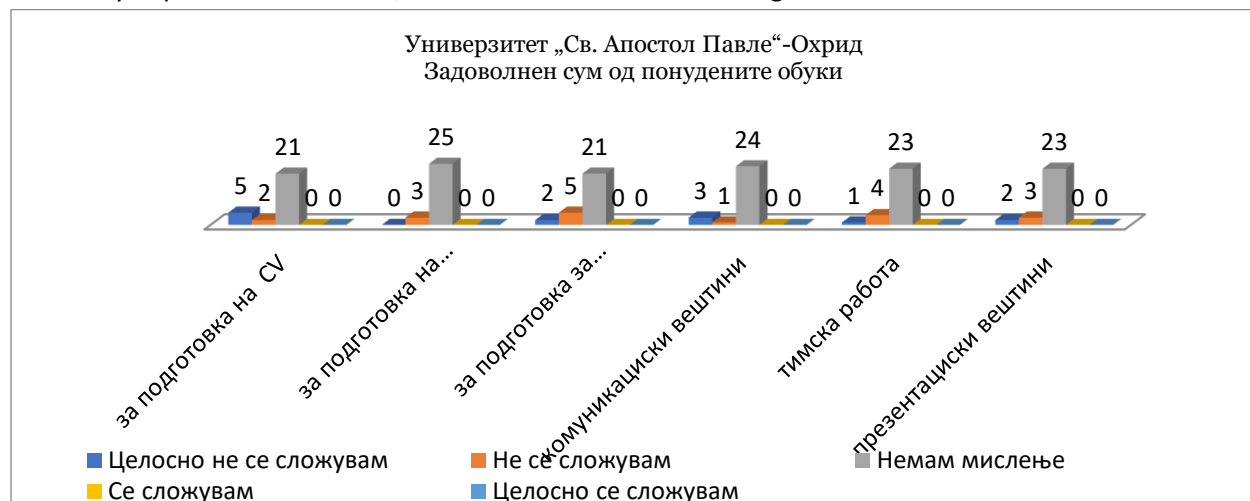


Source: Analysis of own research

The University of Southeast Europe (SEU) in Tetovo is a public-private partnership and it was founded with the support of the international factor. Since its very beginnings in 2001, the Career Center at SUE has also started working, and has demonstrated significant results in the past period. After all, the results of the survey confirm the same. Namely, in SEU, in general, on average, $\frac{3}{4}$ of the surveyed students give a positive light, that is, they responded positively to the questions from the survey questionnaire (Chart 10). However, there is a small, insignificant number of those who consider that part of the promotion of the training set does not meet their needs, which gives me a positive attitude, that things would start to improve.

Chart 11. Satisfaction with offered trainings

University "Apostol Pavle"-Ohrid, "I am satisfied with the training offered"



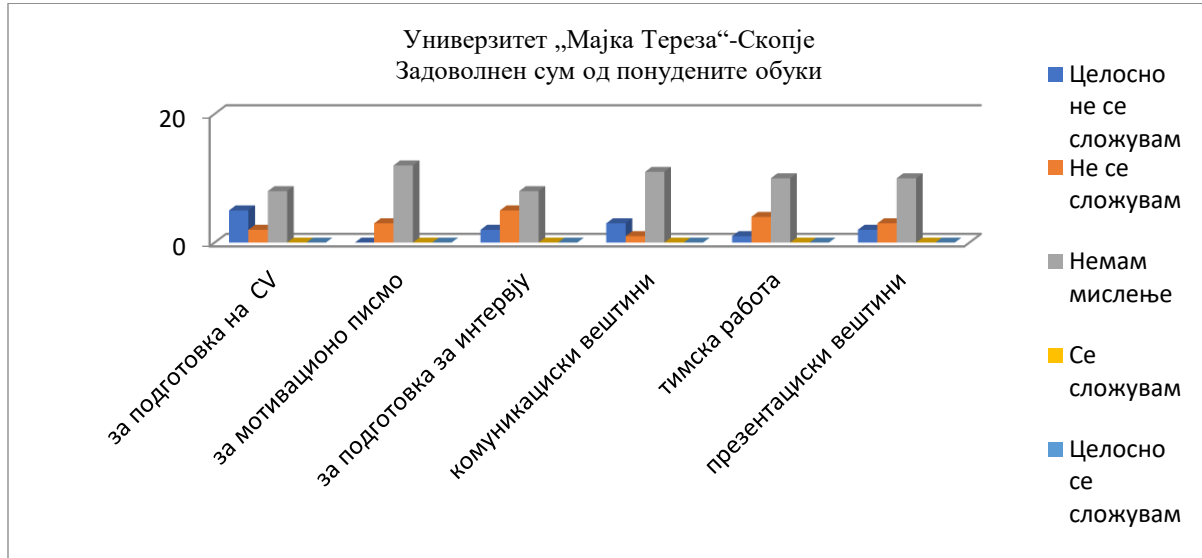
Source: Analysis of own research

The University of Information and Communication Technologies "Apostol Pavle"-Ohrid, (UICT) was established as a professional institution of higher education that should train professionals in the field of

information technology. The results obtained from the processed survey questionnaires lead to the opinion that, despite its official existence, the center still fails to deliver the required services for students. The biggest problem in this case is that the students in the largest percentage opted for the stance "I have no opinion" (Chart 11).

Chart 12. Satisfaction with offered trainings

University "Majka Tereza"-Skopje, "I am satisfied with the training offered"



Source: Analysis of own research

"Majka Tereza" University-Skopje is the youngest university in our country, founded in 2015. Only 15 students responded to the survey question, of which the highest percentage declared that they had no opinion on this issue, that is, expressed in percentages, somewhere over 53% of the respondents declared that they had no opinion on this issue. Therefore, we will not consider the resulting analysis as relevant information.

The survey questionnaire, also asked the question: Are you satisfied with the opportunities that the career center offers for you, citing the following opportunities:

- For internship
- For scholarship
- For employment
- Career counseling
- Psychological counseling

Students from all 7 state universities had the opportunity to give their opinion, and the results demonstrated:

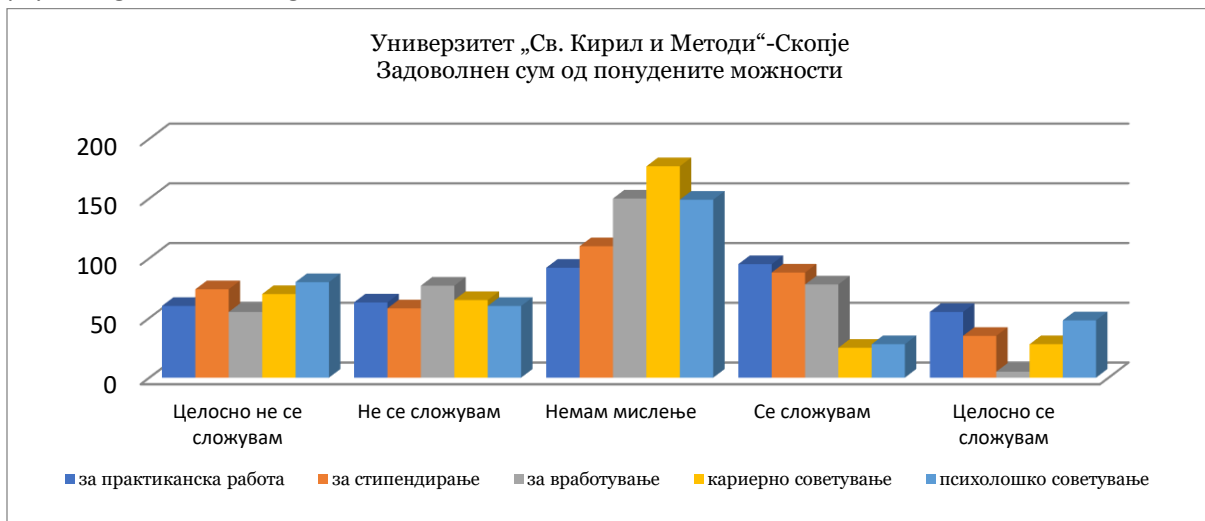
Chart 13. Opportunities at the University "St. Cyril and Methodius" – Skopje

University "St. Cyril and Methodius" – Skopje – "I am satisfied with the offered options"



Fully disagree | Disagree | No opinion | Agree | Fully agree

indigo: for internship, orange: for scholarship, grey: for employment, yellow: for career counseling, blue: psychological counseling



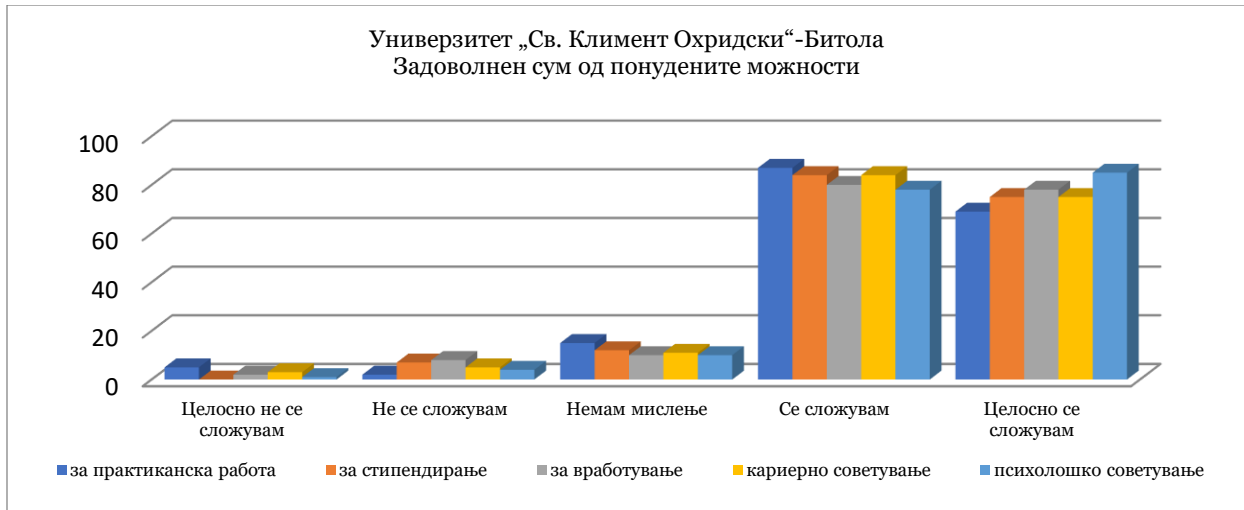
Source: Analysis of own research

At the University "St. Cyril and Methodius"-Skopje, 365 students responded to the sent survey questionnaire, obtaining very interesting results. It is an fact interesting that a large part of the respondents declared that they do not have an opinion on this issue, which points to the conclusion that students are not sufficiently informed about the opportunities offered by their career center. Taking into account the fact that the percentage of those who agree with this statement is quite high, it can be concluded that some of the students have already used such opportunities.

Interesting views regarding this question were also obtained at the University "St. Kliment Ohridski"-Bitola, where 178 students answered the questionnaire.

Chart 14. Opportunities at the University of "St. Kliment Ohridski"-Bitola
University of "St. Kliment Ohridski"-Bitola – "I am satisfied with the offered options"

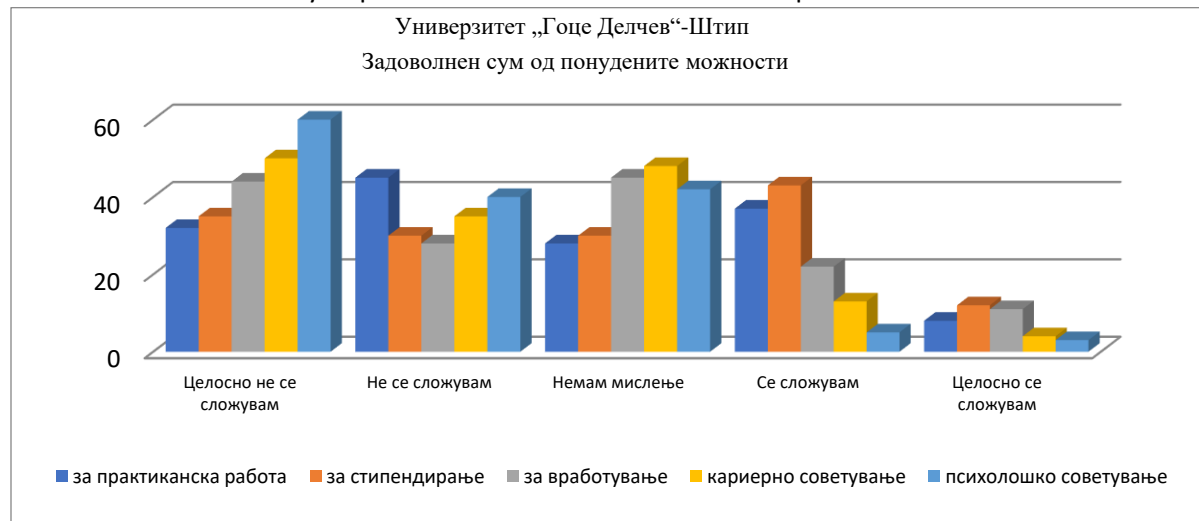




Source: Analysis of own research

From the results obtained through the empirical research, it can be observed that the students of this university are relatively well acquainted with the opportunities offered by the Career Center at this university. This conclusion stems from the review shown above, according to which, from the results obtained for the question "I am satisfied with the opportunities offered through the Career Center", 87.6% of the surveyed students fully or partially agree with the given statement, while the number of those who do not have an opinion or who fully or partially disagree with the given statement, and the same expressed in percentage amounts to 12.4%.

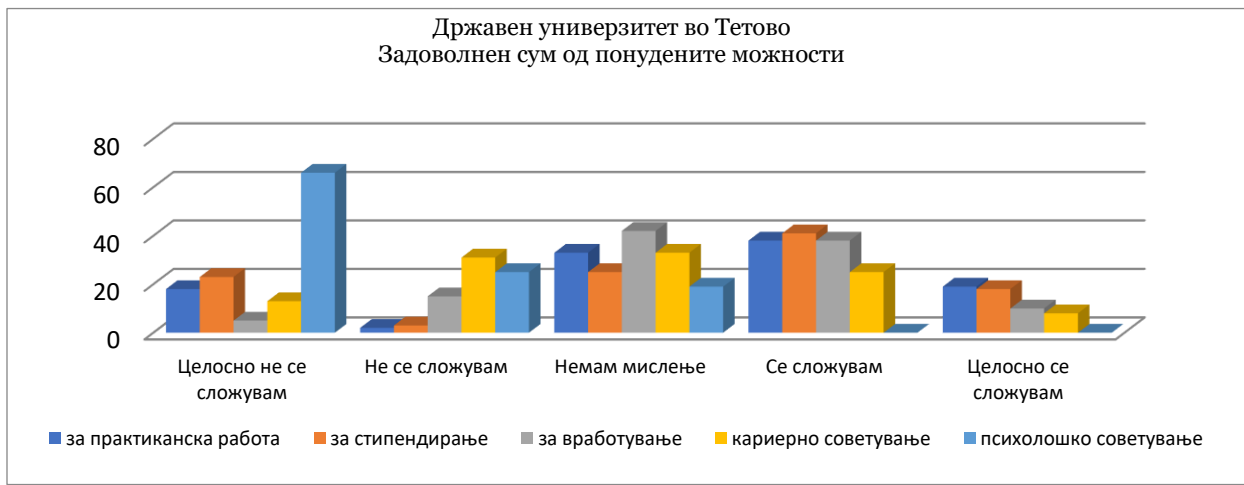
Chart 15. Opportunities at "Goce Delchev" University-Stip
"Goce Delchev" University-Stip – "I am satisfied with the offered options"



Source: Analysis of own research

The negative attitude that appears among the students of the University "Goce Delchev" - Shtip is expressed through the results obtained from the surveyed students. Regarding the current state of this university, a large segment of the respondents disagree with the question. The career center offers opportunities in the interest of students, but the number of those who fully and partially agree with this statement is not small.

Chart 16. Opportunities at the State University in Tetovo
State University in Tetovo – “I am satisfied with the offered options”



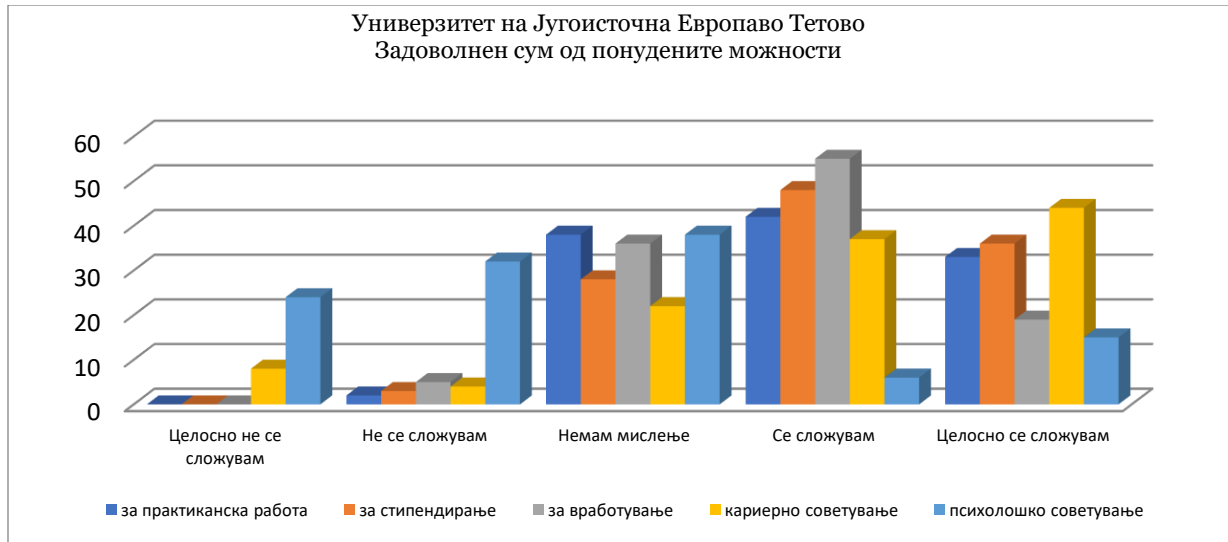
Source: Analysis of own research

The situation at the State University in Tetovo is similar, where 57 of the respondents responded positively, that is, that they are satisfied with the opportunities offered for their career development. However, at the State University of Tetovo, there is an opinion that alternative possibilities should be sought as an opportunity for career guidance. What is also characteristic of the State University of Tetovo is that the number of indeterminate answers is quite high.

At SEU, the obtained results demonstrate that the largest percentage who disagree with the given statement, 27.8%, refers to the opportunities that are offered to them as psychological counseling, and for the remaining opportunities this percentage is quite low and ranges from 1% for opportunities offered for internship work up to about 4% for opportunities offered through the career center and related to employment. This indicates a high percentage of satisfaction with the opportunities offered through the center, the estimated satisfaction ranges from 64% to 73% of the total number of surveyed students.

Chart 17. Opportunities at the University of Southeast Europe- Tetovo
University of Southeast Europe - Tetovo – “I am satisfied with the offered options”

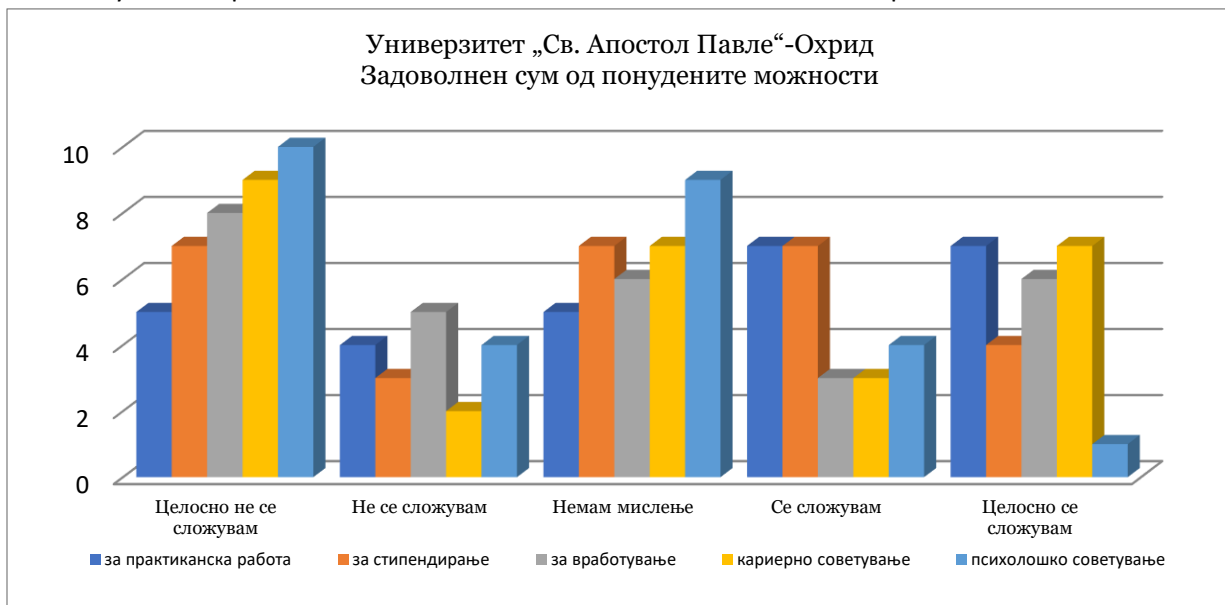




Source: Analysis of own research

At UITE Ohrid, the obtained results demonstrate identical results of satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the opportunities offered through the Career Center. Thus, the percentage of those who disagree ranges from 32% to 46%, and for those who agree with this statement, it ranges from 32% to 50%. A deviation is made in the case of psychological counseling, where it can be concluded from the obtained data that this type of support is not offered by the career center for students at UITE.

Chart 18. Opportunities at the University of "St. Apostle Paul" – Ohrid
University of "St. Apostle Paul" – Ohrid – "I am satisfied with the offered options"

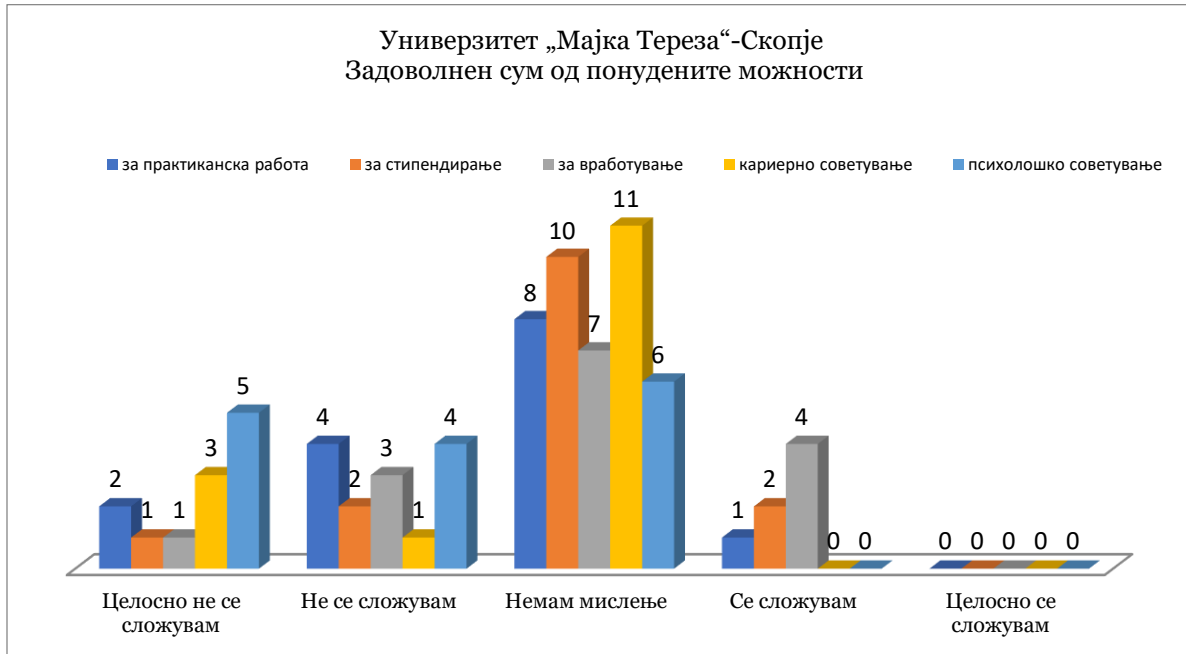


Source: Analysis of own research

The situation at the University "Mother Teresa"-Skopje in terms of opportunities that the Career Center offers for students is not very transparent, as according to the results of the survey, it can be

inferred that the students are not interested in hearing about something new. This finding results from the high percentage of indeterminate answers according to the set of offered opportunities, which ranges from 46% to 73%.

Chart 19. Opportunities at "Majka Tereza" University-Skopje
University "Majka Tereza" – Skopje – "I am satisfied with the offered options"



Source: Analysis of own research

28. Good practices

The portfolio of skills that young people should possess and that are necessary for their employment includes the results of the thus far conducted analyses of key skills that are necessary for adapting to the labor market, as well as methods for their development through the programs of the Career Centers.

Following the modern trends in higher education, the establishment of Career Centers was of essential importance for the linking of universities with the business community, that is, cooperation with economic and non-commercial entities.

Figure 1.





Promotional flyer for a workshop

Today, Universities are in constant contact with the rest of the business world in order to monitor the needs of the labor market, and the response to this activity is replicated through the introduction of trainings, workshops and other forms of training, in order to improve the competencies of students who are needed in the modern business world. Students need the development of practical abilities and skills, that is, the improvement of their competencies in order to better prepare them for the needs of the rapidly changing labor market.

Figure 2.



"Sharing real business stories"

Such trainings are the first and primary benefits of the establishment of the Career Centers at the Universities, encompassing assisting students in improving their skills when looking for a job, the establishment of contacts with a large number of companies, the presentation of the developing careers of well-known managers, through visiting persons from the business sector, the implementation of clinical teaching, the provision of a significant number of scholarships from partners, etc. In this context, it is necessary to mention the organization of summer schools to improve students' competences, career fairs through which the barrier between students and companies is reduced, as well as the organization of conferences, open days at universities, and regular assistance to students in finding opportunities to realize their internships.

Figure 3.





„Soft Skills Training“

That is why today, Career Centers are an integral part of the modern education system, and are one of the main incentives for overcoming barriers in communication between the business sector, the university environment and students. Such a partnership is crucial for bridging the gap between practice and theory that is subtle about the way universities would develop.

Figure 4.



"Innovation and creativity"

Figure 5.



Awarding certificates for successfully completed training

The main mission of the Career Centers is to help students set, plan and achieve goals in their professional development. To respond to the demands of employers and at the same time to be a bridge between the labor market - the University and the students.

From this, it can be concluded that the numerous activities that are carried out through the Career Centers can be sublimated into 5 main tasks, namely:

- helping students set, plan and achieve goals in their professional development,
- promoting innovative thinking, support of entrepreneurial spirit and business skills among students,
- responding to employers' requests,
- linking the labor market and the academic community and
- preparing students for the labor market.



This means that Career Centers are an integral part of modern education and are one of the main incentives for overcoming barriers in communication between the business sector, the university environment and students. Apart from the role they play in career guidance and career counseling, one of the main benefits is the creation of an effective partnership with employers, thereby ultimately having SUCCESSFUL AND SATISFIED STUDENTS.

However, in order to have positive practices and experiences from the functioning of the Career Centers, we will return to the importance of career counseling and career guidance in primary and secondary education. If the question arises of why exactly in primary and secondary education, the answer consists in the intention of timely guidance and counseling of young people in the directions of their career development.

As a consequence of all this, it follows that career counseling and career guidance appear as a necessity in the modern flows of social living, so their incorporation into higher education provides a new perspective to universities. The activities undertaken by the universities in the establishment of the Career Centers, which aim to help students in tracing their career development, are moving in precisely this direction.

Through the Career Centers, students are prepared by acquiring skills, thereby improving their competencies in order to get the desired job more easily. The organization of career days, where companies present vacant positions in their organizations, is also a positive practice.

From today's perspective, lifelong learning represents one of the most important directions in career development as a prerequisite for individual success. The rapid obsolescence of acquired knowledge imposes the need for continuous education. Taking that fact into consideration, emphasis is placed on non-formal education.

This means that career counseling and career guidance in higher education touches on a different specificity that is essentially different from career counseling and career guidance in primary and secondary education. According to previous experience, it is safe to say that career counseling and career guidance in higher education actually refer to professional orientation or counseling for professional orientation and employment.

29. Concluding observations

The current state of higher education does not give the impression that it is based on a developmental component. This is also confirmed by the data from the State Statistics Office, according to which, at the beginning of the 2022/2023 school year, the number of students in regular secondary schools is 69,227, which represents a decrease of 2.5% compared to the previous school year. According to the same source, in the academic year 2021/2022, a total of 51,582 students were enrolled in higher education institutions, which represents an increase of 1.4% compared to the academic year 2020/2021. This indicates the fact that almost 75% of secondary school graduates enroll in college. The largest number of students (82.6%) enrolled in state higher education institutions, while 16.8% enrolled in private higher



education institutions. If we take into account the fact that in such a small area and a population of about 1.8 million inhabitants, 36 higher education institutions are accredited, we cannot talk about a development component in higher education.

Such trends in higher education also adversely affect the work of Career Centers, whose main goal is to "facilitate" the student's path to employment through appropriate measures and training offered by the centers themselves. Also, the business community reacts to this development of events in higher education. The reason is simple, on the one hand the universities do not deliver adequate quality, and on the other hand, bearing in mind the data from the above analysis, the number of secondary school students who are professionally qualified staff is decreasing in practice, despite its necessity for the economy and the industry.

Why do we say that today's conditions in higher education do not have a developmental component? The answer lies in those 75% (according to the statistics mentioned above) of secondary school students enrolled in the universities, that is, the high entrance rate in the universities, which is not the case with the conditions in higher education in developed countries.

All of this determines the role of career centers as the main link in the process of communication between the business community and universities and students.

1. The first component of the role of Career Centers in the professional development of students is the increasingly emphasized demand for labor force, which emphasizes the need for more intensive cooperation of the business community with universities, which provides additional value to this type of cooperation.
2. In times of rapid technological development, the need for quality workforce is increasing. Employers are looking to fill vacant positions, and it is in their interest to save time and money. In fact, it is the second component of the role of career centers, the networking of students with companies and their participation in volunteer activities, joining the calls for the implementation of internships, etc.
3. The third component of the contribution of the career centers is the counseling offered to students on how to master the lesson material more easily, relieving stress when taking exams, rising to the challenges they encounter as students, etc.

According to the research that was conducted for the needs of this publication, the state of the Career Centers is not at an enviable level, yet their role in the process of counseling students is of great importance.

In order for them to be visible and more accessible to the target groups, they need to be more promotional, that is, approach the students, familiarize them with the opportunities and assistance being offered, etc.

1. One of the key challenges arising from this finding is for students to decide on a wider range of career management skills to develop. For schools, this will mean building education with career development methods included in the curriculum and connecting to the goal of monitoring the overall development of students. However, the inclusion of career development in education



remains concentrated around the completion of the regular educational cycle. Whereas, at higher levels of education, services focus on immediate choice rather than personal development and wider decision-making, although this approach is also beginning to change in some countries.

2. Second, it is a challenge to practice career guidance that will be more widely available for people over 25 years of age. Such an approach to career guidance should be developed in the direction of including unemployed persons, who in this way will adjust their competencies for easier employment.
3. Key challenges faced by students today, within the responsibility of career guidance, are aimed at:
 - developing career management skills;
 - enabling access in a wider framework, in order to make career guidance and career counseling available to everyone.
 - to help students set, plan and achieve goals for their professional development.
 - to help promote innovative thinking, support entrepreneurial spirit and business skills among students.
 - to respond to the demands of employers and at the same time be a bridge between the labor market in the Republic of Macedonia, the academic community and the Career Centers



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- [Concept for the primary education](#)
- [Programme for professional orientation in primary education](#)
- [Trainings for teachers regarding professional development and career counseling for students](#)
- [Trainings for professional associates regarding professional development and career counseling for students](#)
- <https://www.weforum.org/reports/jobs-of-tomorrow-2022/>
- [Parents guide](#) – *Be your child’s career counselor*, produced by the Association of career development counselors
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APPENDICES
WORKSHEETS



APPENDIX: Discussion questions

Questions that teachers can use to prompt discussion with students at different stages of the career planning process.

1. How would you describe your future job position?
2. Do you prefer to work alone or with others?
3. Do you like quiet or noisy environment?
4. Describe your learning methods.
5. What books do you like to read?
6. What information do you look for on the Internet? Why?
7. What are your best/worst subjects at school?
8. Why do you like that particular subject at school?
9. Have you experienced learning problems at school? If so, what are they?
10. When did you decide you wanted to go to college/work?
11. Have you ever considered alternative college/job options?
12. What job or career would you like in the future?
13. What are your favorite social and recreational activities?
14. Do you encounter problems with your peers? How do you solve them?

After completing any self-assessment questionnaire, ask the student:

15. Does this description from the interpretation describe you correctly? Do you recognize yourself in it?
16. Are there any changes you would make to this description?
17. Describe situations from your experience where you recognize the characteristics from the description.

Questions and advice for clients in the planning stage

18. Describe your goals.
19. What is most important to you?
20. What have you done to achieve your goals?
21. What time frame do you have to meet these goals?
22. What is most important to you in the workplace?
23. What skills, talents or competencies are you most proud of?
24. What makes you feel happiest and most accomplished?
25. Describe when you felt driven and motivated at work (present or past).
26. How do you overcome barriers when trying to learn something new?
27. Name one step you could take to bring you closer to your career goal. What kind of development or opportunities can you create to achieve this?
28. What can you practically do now (next week, month, 6 months, 12 months) to achieve your goal?
29. Have you told anyone about your career goals?
30. What opportunities do you currently have in your career?
31. How would you act if you were much more assertive and braver?
32. What would you ideally like your life to look like in 2, 5 or 10 years?
33. How do you want to be remembered by your classmates/peers?
34. What changes do you need to make to get your ideal job or career?
35. Define what success means to you.
36. What do you want in the future?
37. What do you like about yourself (abilities and personality traits)?



APPENDIX: Resources that can be used in the stages of career planning for students in secondary education

Online values assessment

<https://www.myplan.com/assess/values/pg1.php>

Online interests' assessment

Holland code interests questionnaire - RIASEC.

<https://openpsychometrics.org/tests/RIASEC/>

O - net interest profiler

<https://www.onetonline.org/find/descriptor/browse/1.B.1/>

<https://www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip>

Online test of personality types

The Myers-Briggs personality type indicator is one of the most frequently used tools for individual self-evaluation.

<https://www.myersbriggs.org/my-mbti-personality-type/mbti-basics/>

<https://www.verywellmind.com/the-myers-briggs-type-indicator-2795583>

Learn about the skills and abilities employers are looking for in job candidates through a video that includes examples of careers with specific skills or abilities

<https://www.careeronestop.org/Videos/SkillandAbilityVideos/skill-and-ability-videos.aspx>

Suggested links for exploring career opportunities:

- *Guide to qualifications in vocational education in the Republic of North Macedonia*
<https://www.e4e.mk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Vodic-niz-kvalifikaciite-niz-strucnoto-obrazovanie-232.pdf>
- [Onetonline.org](https://www.onetonline.org)
- [Zanimanja.mk](https://www.zanimanja.mk)
- [Vrabotuvanje.com](https://www.vrabotuvanje.com)
- [Kariera.mk](https://www.kariera.mk)
- <https://future-time-traveller.eu/future-time-traveller/>- *Exploring careers in a 3D virtual world*



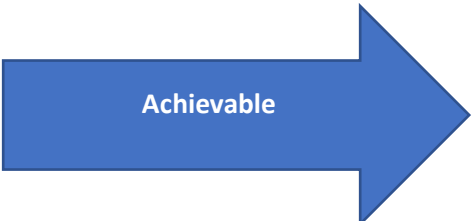


Guides for methods of career planning:

- <https://ca.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/career-planning-examples>
- <https://ca.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/career-development-plan>
- <https://ca.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/smart-goals>
- <https://acsss.wisc.edu/career-and-educational-planning/career-planning-process/>



APPENDIX: Worksheet for SMART goals

We encourage you to use the SMART technique when planning your goals. All of your goals need to be:

 <p>Specific</p>	<p><i>Respond to questions: Who? What? Where? How? With whom? You may begin with: I want to.....</i></p>
 <p>Measurable</p>	<p><i>How will I track my progress?</i></p>
 <p>Achievable</p>	<p><i>What are the realistic steps I can take to achieve my goal?</i></p>
 <p>Relevant</p>	<p><i>Is this goal worth it for me at the moment?</i></p>
 <p>Temporally determined</p>	<p><i>When will I complete this goal?</i></p>



APPENDIX: Worksheet for dream workplace analysis

Analyze every part of this flower, through the prism of what you can, want and provides you pleasure. It will help you get your dream job description.



"What color is your parachute?"

Richard Balls

"This flower has seven petals, because there are seven ways of thinking about yourself or seven ways of describing who you are - using the "language" of the workplace.

The flower chart is a complete picture of you on a single page, in terms of how you relate to the workplace. And believe me, you want the whole picture."



*APPENDIX: A tool for determining abilities by solving problem situations**1. Word-focused tasks*

problem	very difficult	difficult	both difficult and easy	easy	very easy
You participate in a game in which you have to list several words with the same meaning (synonyms) for one term. For you, this would be:	1	2	3	4	5
In class, you have to give a lecture on a topic that is very interesting to you. For you, this would be:	1	2	3	4	5
After returning from a wonderful field trip, you have to write an article for the school newspaper. For you, this would be:	1	2	3	4	5
You are to write a letter for a friend from another school, in which you will present your school. For you, this would be:	1	2	3	4	5

2. Number-focused tasks

problem	very difficult	difficult	both difficult and easy	easy	многу лесно
In the store, as you are helping your friend, the electricity goes out due to an accident and you have to do the calculation for the collection of several items quickly because the customers are waiting. For you, this would be:	1	2	3	4	5
In physics class, you learn a new formula. You are expected to explain how the result of the measurement will change depending on the numbers you enter in the formula. For you, this would be:	1	2	3	4	5
You are abroad. You need euros and you need to calculate how many dollars you need to change to get 400 euros. For you, this would be:	1	2	3	4	5
The recipe for the cake your grandmother makes is in imperial measures. You need to calculate according to a formula how much	1	2	3	4	5



those measurements are in metric. For you, this would be:					
---	--	--	--	--	--

3. *Understanding the way machines and devices work*

problem	very difficult	difficult	both difficult and easy	easy	много лесно
Your brother asks you to explain to him how an old watch with a visible mechanism works. For you, this would be:	1	2	3	4	5
Your little brother dropped part of a remote control toy. You need to find out where that part is and adjust it. For you, this would be:	1	2	3	4	5
You look at a machine with gears. You need to find out in which direction the gears turn and how the transmission is carried out. For you, this would be:	1	2	3	4	5
You bought a new swing. You need to determine how long the rope should be in order for the arc to be greater during the swing. For you, this would be:	1	2	3	4	5

4. *Comprehension of planar and spatial relations*

проблем	много тешко	тешко,	и тешко и лесно	лесно	много лесно
You are on an outing with company. You need to follow the fortress map to reach the tower together. For you, this would be:	1	2	3	4	5
You need to draw a freehand layout of the rooms in your house. It doesn't matter if the drawing looks good, but whether the layout is appropriate. For you, this would be:	1	2	3	4	5
In a store, you choose a bookshelf. You need to assess whether the shelf can fit in the free space in your room. For you, this would be:	1	2	3	4	5
You bought a disassembled table. A sketch of the table is attached. Based on the sketch, you need to assemble the table. For you, this would be:	1	2	3	4	5

5. *Dexterity with hands and fingers*



problem	very difficult	difficult	both difficult and easy	easy	very easy
Your chain has fallen off your bicycle wheel. Your uncle gives you instructions on how to set it up. For you, this would be:	1	2	3	4	5
You have a model of an airplane that you need to assemble and glue. For you, this would be:	1	2	3	4	5
A screw fell out of your sunglasses. You need to put it back. For you, this would be:	1	2	3	4	5
For the new year, you need to make paper decorations according to a template and instructions written in a magazine. For you, this would be:	1	2	3	4	5

6. People-focused tasks

problem	very difficult	difficult	both difficult and easy	easy	многo легко
Your best friend lost your tickets for the concert you've been looking forward to for months. Although you are angry, you will not show it in front of her. For you, this would be:	1	2	3	4	5
The friend you are sitting with is visibly angry. You immediately look for a way to clarify the situation. For you, this would be:	1	2	3	4	5
Your friend has confided in you about a big problem. You should listen to her and find comforting words for her. For you, this would be	1	2	3	4	5
When watching a movie, you can glean the actors' feelings even when they don't speak. For you, this would be:	1	2	3	4	5

DO NOT FORGET THAT THE RESULT OBTAINED AS A MEASURE OF ABILITY WITH THIS TOOL IS BASED SOLELY ON THE STUDENT'S OWN ASSESSMENT.



Directions: In the table below, record the averages you obtained, according to each of the ability categories.

Step 1:

Enter the averages that you received within the task of self-assessment of abilities in the table. (You calculate them by adding up the circled points after each question and dividing by the number of questions, which gives you an average score for a specific group of abilities. Each question has the same number of problem tasks.)

Abilities:	average
1. <i>Word-focused tasks</i>	
2. <i>Number-focused tasks</i>	
3. <i>Understanding the way machines and devices work</i>	
4. <i>Comprehension of planar and spatial relations</i>	
5. <i>Dexterity with hands and fingers</i>	
6. <i>People-focused tasks</i>	

Step 2:

Select three abilities in which you have the best average. This means that you will probably have the easiest time in occupations that require those abilities.

Step 3:

After the table you are given a list of suitable vocations according to abilities. Read the vocations in the three groups for which you received the highest average.

Step 4:

Choose 5 of these vocations, found in the list of those offered which simultaneously may be interesting for you. Write them down in the table of results, according to the description given in the example.

RESULTS:

<u>Student name and surname:</u>
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Groups of vocations according to ability:

1. *Ability to use words is necessary for:* translators, writers, journalists, presenters, public relations workers, psychologists, teachers, professors, educators, economists, lawyers, lawyers, tourist



guides and other occupations for which oral and written expression is important. Word skills can be developed through practice, that is, by reading and writing.

2. *Ability to use numbers is necessary for:* mathematicians, physicists, chemists, computer scientists, electrical engineers, builders, surveyors, statisticians, laboratory workers, waiters, economists, financial technicians, engineers of technical sciences, etc. Number skills can be developed with systematic practice.
3. *Understanding the way machines and devices work is necessary for:* mechanical engineers and technicians, car mechanics, electrical technicians, drivers, traffic technicians, etc. For those who love technology and are interested in this field, the ability to work with machines can be developed by learning and practicing.
4. *Understanding planar and spatial relationships is necessary for:* architects, builders, surveyors, designers, mechanical designers, dental technicians, masons, carpenters, locksmiths, tailors, drivers, etc. These are abilities that can only be developed with practice to a certain extent.
5. *Dexterity with hands and fingers is necessary for:* surgeons, dentists, dental technicians, precision mechanics, opticians, electronics, sculptors, jewelers, hairdressers, florists, confectioners, tailors, waiters, mechanics, masseurs, physiotherapists, etc. Finger dexterity can be developed with work and practice.
6. *Ability to understand people is necessary for:* educators, teachers, professors, doctors, medical technicians, paramedics, pedagogues, psychologists, recruits, curators, tourist workers, counter clerks, sellers, managers, etc. People skills can be developed by working on yourself.



APPENDIX: 10 examples of strengths in the workplace

Here are 10 examples of job-related strengths.

- Certain
- Flexible
- Self-motivated
- Team oriented
- Success oriented
- Optimist
- Communicative
- Emotionally aware
- Trustworthy
- Problem solver

Thought exercise:

- Write what these terms mean to you. Exchange opinions with others (peers, colleagues, employers) to understand if you view the terms in the same way and what they promote in the workplace.
- How do you see yourself through these terms? Do you recognize them in yourself? What do you expect the workplace to offer you in order to have all of these 10 strengths?
- Which of these strengths do you not see in yourself? Why? What can you do to turn it into a strong point?



APPENDIX: Intended for teachers who plan to introduce elements of career development into regular teaching

Areas of learning that support career development in secondary education

The following table shows areas of learning that enable building career planning skills that teachers can integrate into regular teaching in any subject.

Table: Areas of study

Areas of study	Description
Self-knowledge	Getting to know one's own personal traits, interests, abilities, skills, values, etc.
Vocational information	Researching and analyzing data about educational or vocational opportunities.
Educational paths	Getting to know the types and requirements of schools / vocations and the characteristics of the labor market Comparing your own profile with the requirements of schools or occupations
Real encounters	Getting to know interesting opportunities through direct meetings in schools / work organizations / institutions / companies / factories, etc... Encouraging experiential learning.
Decision-making	Comparing one's own profile with requirements, opportunities, interests. Acquiring cognitive and practical skills that will enable quality decision-making and achieving the desired educational and professional goals.







НАЦИОНАЛНА АГЕНЦИЈА
ЗА ЕВРОПСКИ ОБРАЗОВНИ
ПРОГРАМИ И МОБИЛНОСТ



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