HumanJobs

INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT FOR YOUTH

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT

Project Number: 2022-2-PL01-KA220-YOU-000098517

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The HUMAN JOBS Project is a multifaceted initiative dedicated to addressing the challenges faced by young adults classified as NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training). Recognizing the concealed obstacles they encounter in pursuing careers, the project employs a comprehensive strategy to integrate NEETs into the humanities industry, emphasizing inclusiveness for individuals with minor physical limitations. Two focus groups, A and B, were organized using a standardized approach, led by qualified researchers.

Despite varied questions, both groups shared the overarching goal of examining the intricate connection between skills, employability, and diversity in the humanities field.The project's conclusions highlight diverse yet interconnected approaches across different segments. In Greece, the focus is on cultivating a positive career outlook through an interactive platform, emphasizing the suitability for humanities careers. The Bulgarian segment underscores the need for a holistic approach to guiding students through their educational and career journeys. The Irish segment targets NEETs in humanities, proposing tailored skills programs and financial incentives.

The Italian focus group emphasizes the growing recognition of soft skills in SMEs' hiring preferences, influencing HR strategies. The Polish segment focuses on nurturing a positive career perspective through a gamified platform.Central to the initiative is the recognition of the significance of soft skills, transcending conventional career guidance. The project aspires to be a transformative force, providing tools, knowledge, and unwavering support for young individuals navigating the complex landscape of humanities careers with confidence and enthusiasm. The overarching strategy involves educational reforms, practical career support, and financial assistance to empower humanities students for successful careers.

INTRODUCTION

The HUMAN JOBS Project is a comprehensive initiative designed to tackle the complex challenges encountered by young adults, namely those classified as NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training). It involves a comprehensive strategy to comprehend their distinct requirements, facilitating their integration into the humanities industry, and promoting inclusiveness by empowering young individuals with minor physical limitations.

This program is motivated by the acknowledgment that these persons frequently encounter concealed obstacles to work and must cross a terrain filled with worry and uncertainty while searching for a job and during their very first days in a new role.The HUMAN JOBS Project organized two separate focus groups, referred to as Focus Group A and Focus Group B, using a defined process to guarantee uniformity and comparability in gathering data. The facilitation of these focus groups was carried out by proficient qualitative researchers who had expertise in leading group discussions. Although the precise questions presented to each group varied, the underlying framework and technique remained the same.

Although the questions asked were different, all focus groups shared the same goal: to examine the complex connection between skills, employability, and diversity in the humanities field. Both sets' participants had the chance to exchange their important views, experiences, and viewpoints, which together contributed to a complete dataset.

FOCUS GROUPS: COUNTRY BREAKDOWN

BULGARIA

Focus Groups

Introduction
EduCompass, under the Human Jobs Project, executed two separate focus group sessions to explore the academic journeys and motivations of students in different fields. This chapter provides an outline of these focus groups, emphasizing the methods and the demographic specifics.

Methodology
- Preparation: The Human Jobs team meticulously prepared materials and logistics, ensuring a robust protocol for data consistency and reliability.
- Execution: The sessions were conducted in person, adhering to data protection regulations.
- Data Protection: Strict privacy measures were in place, with no identifiable information collected.
- Data Analysis: CRSL researchers performed an analysis of the aggregated data while maintaining privacy and data protection standards.

Focus Groups Details
1.Human Resources Focus Group (April 2023)
- Date and Duration: April 2023, 90 minutes.
- Participants: 40 Human Resources students from the first to third year at UNWE.
- Objective: To understand the development vision in their field and the reasons behind choosing a humanities major.

2.Geography Focus Group (May 2023)
- Date and Duration: May 2023, 60 minutes.
- Participants: 15 students specializing in Geography.
- Aim: Similar to the Human Resources group, this session aimed to delve into the participants' academic perspectives and choices.

Purpose and Goals
Both groups aimed to garner insights into the academic paths and development views of the students in humanities, providing a deeper understanding of their choices and aspirations in their respective fields.

3. Participant Demographics and Group Dynamics
The focus groups, conducted in Sofia, the capital city of Bulgaria, featured students aged 19-25. These participants presented a mix of urban and rural backgrounds, with some from cities like Plovdiv or Varna, and others from rural areas in the Northwest of Bulgaria. This diversity was integral to fostering a well-rounded discussion, conducted in Bulgarian to ensure inclusivity.

Challenges and Dynamics

- Group Management: Despite initial concerns, the larger size of the first group (Human Resources students) did not hinder the discussion. The students, noted for their outspoken nature, actively engaged and respected each other and the facilitator.
- Engagement Levels: High levels of engagement were observed, with no significant challenges in terms of participation or organisation.
- Logistical Support: Both focus groups benefited from the logistical support provided by the universities where they were held, contributing to the smooth execution of the sessions.

Overall Environment

The environment was conducive to open dialogue, with the diverse backgrounds of the students enriching the discussions. The facilitation and logistical arrangements ensured that the sessions were well-organised and effective, with active participation from the students.

4. Outcomes and Key Insights
The core findings from the focus group discussions highlight the attitudes of students towards their careers in the humanities. The participants, aged 19-25 and based in Sofia, presented three significant insights regarding their career paths and challenges.

Key Takeaways

1.Career Path Uncertainty
- Participants from both Human Resources and Geography programs expressed uncertainty about their career paths.
- Lack of clarity on specific professions, earning potential, and necessary skills was a common concern.
- This ambiguity could lead to confusion, potentially hindering their professional progress.

2.Studying Without Clear Career Goals
- A prevalent sentiment was studying for the sake of education, rather than with a defined career objective.
- Many students felt pressured to pursue degrees immediately after high school, often without clear career aspirations.
- This approach might lead to disillusionment or lack of direction in the long term.

3.Financial Challenges and Career Transition
- A major challenge discussed was the transition from low-paid jobs to sustainable career development.
- Financial constraints were a significant hurdle, with many participants working in low-skilled or low-paid jobs.
- The general perception was that careers in humanities in Bulgaria are low-paying, causing concerns about future financial stability.

Implications

These findings suggest a need for more structured career guidance and support for students in humanities. Addressing the financial challenges and providing clearer pathways can enhance their professional development and motivation.

5. Policy Recommendations based on outcomes and key insights
Policy recommendations to address the challenges faced by humanities students in Sofia.

1.Enhanced Career Guidance and Support
  - Given the career path uncertainty, there's a need for improved career guidance in universities.

  - Specific recommendations include:
    - Career counseling services tailored to humanities students.
    - Workshops and seminars on career opportunities and skill requirements in various humanities fields.
    - Partnerships with industry professionals for mentorship and real-world insights.

2.Curriculum Reforms and Career-Oriented Education
  - To address the issue of studying without clear career goals, curriculum reforms are necessary.

  - Proposed measures include:
    - Integration of career planning and goal-setting modules into the humanities curriculum.
    - Encouraging project-based learning that ties academic concepts to real-world career scenarios.

3.Financial Support and Job Transition Programs

  - In response to the financial challenges and career transition issues:
    - Establishment of scholarships and financial aid programs specifically for humanities students.
    - Development of internship and co-op programs to provide hands-on experience and facilitate a smoother transition to professional roles.
    - Initiatives to raise awareness about the value of humanities in the job market to encourage better pay and recognition.

Overall Strategy

The overarching strategy involves a holistic approach to support humanities students. This includes educational reforms, practical career support, and financial assistance, aiming to empower students with clarity, skills, and opportunities for successful careers.

GREECE

Focus Group A

1 - Introduction

The commencement of Focus Group A marked a pivotal milestone in our overarching research initiative, meticulously designed to delve into the intricate nuances of young adult experiences. Our primary aim was to gain a profound understanding of the unique needs and preferences of this demographic, with a specific emphasis on those designated as NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training).

Furthermore, our exploration extended its reach to encompass young adults navigating socio-economic landscapes characterized by pronounced disadvantage. In a concerted effort to foster inclusivity, our study also sought to shed light on the perspectives of individuals contending with mild physical disabilities. By casting a wide net in our research scope, we endeavored to capture the diverse array of challenges and aspirations that shape the lives of young adults, fostering a comprehensive understanding that goes beyond traditional demographic categorizations.

2 – Participants

This report encapsulates the insights derived from the dynamic discussions of Focus Group A, comprising 15 participants within the age range of 18-28, encompassing 8 young women and 7 young men.Considering the distinctive characteristics of the target demographic, participants were queried at the onset of the session regarding their comfort with being photographed or filmed.

Responses were predominantly negative or elusive. In recognition of this sentiment, the facilitators involved in the engagement judiciously opted not to capture images of the group. This decision was driven by the imperative to safeguard the potential success of the activity by respecting the participants' preferences and ensuring an environment conducive to open and uninhibited dialogue.

3 - Key Themes and Findings

Crucial Proficiencies for Launching a Career in the Humanities:

Participants highlighted several foundational skills crucial for crafting content on a platform dedicated to advancing careers in the humanities sector:

1. Effective Communication Skills: Success in the humanities sector was universally tied to the capacity to articulate ideas clearly, both in written and verbal forms.
2. Critical Thinking: The significance of critical thinking skills became evident as participants emphasized their role in comprehending and dissecting complex issues within the humanities.
3. Research Proficiency: Strong research skills were identified as indispensable for conducting thorough studies and projects.
4. Empathy: Participants emphasized the pivotal role of empathy in comprehending diverse perspectives, recognizing it as a cornerstone of humanities studies.
5. Adaptability: Recognizing the ever-evolving nature of the humanities, adaptability and openness to novel ideas were acknowledged as valuable attributes.

Designing an Empowering Platform for Skill Exploration:

Participants articulated their preferences for an optimal platform design:

1. User-Friendly Interface: There was a unanimous agreement on the importance of a simple, intuitive, and user-friendly interface for seamless navigation.
2. Personalized Learning Paths: Participants expressed a desire for the platform to offer tailored learning paths to cater to individual interests and aspirations.
3. Interactive Content: Recommendations included integrating interactive features like quizzes, discussions, and peer-to-peer learning to enhance user engagement.
4. Accessibility Features: Ensuring the platform's accessibility for individuals with disabilities, incorporating tools like screen readers and subtitles, was identified as a primary concern.

Inclusivity Through Content:

Participants underscored the significance of inclusive content:
1. Diverse Perspectives: There was a call for the integration of diverse voices and perspectives on the platform to mirror the inclusivity of the humanities field.
2. Multilingual Resources: Participants emphasized the importance of offering content in multiple languages to broaden accessibility.
3. Resource Accessibility: Recommendations included providing free or affordable resources like textbooks and articles to support individuals with limited financial means.
4. Disability-Inclusive Content: Participants stressed the need to ensure that all content is accessible to those with disabilities through various formats and tools.

Skills, Career Advancement, and Well-being:

Participants acknowledged the interconnectedness of skills development, social inclusion, and well-being:
1. Relevance of Skills: Identified skills (communication, critical thinking, research, empathy, adaptability) were perceived not only as instrumental for career growth but also as facilitators of social inclusion through promoting understanding and dialogue.
2. Enhanced Employability: Developing these skills was seen as a pathway to heightened employability, enabling young individuals to contribute meaningfully to society and enhance their overall well-being.
3. Promoting Tolerance: Skills like empathy were recognized for their role in fostering tolerance and acceptance of diversity, thereby advancing social inclusion.

4 – Summary

The insights garnered from Focus Group A furnish invaluable direction for shaping a platform geared towards aiding young individuals in launching a career within the humanities sector. Prioritizing essential skills, crafting an accessible and captivating design, providing inclusive content, and acknowledging the broader societal advantages of skill development emerge as pivotal considerations.

Recommendations derived from the discoveries include:
1. Crafting content that centers around the identified skills.
2. Giving precedence to a user-friendly and accessible platform design.
3. Curating content that is diverse and inclusive.
4. Underlining the societal significance of skill development within the humanities sector.

This report lays the groundwork for further research and the development of the target platform.

FOCUS GROUP B

1 - Introduction

Following a standardized protocol, the HUMAN JOBS Project ensured consistency in data collection, allowing for meaningful comparisons and a deeper understanding of the perspectives of our target group and potential employers. The insights gathered from these focus groups are instrumental in shaping the content, design, and overall approach of the platform, thereby enhancing opportunities for young individuals aspiring to establish themselves in the humanities field.

Focus Group B brought together representatives from companies and SMEs intending to hire young individuals, including those with slight physical disabilities, for positions within the humanities. The discussions in this group delved into their expectations and preferences regarding prospective candidates, the significance they attribute to various skills and competencies, and their perceptions regarding the value of soft skills in the hiring process.

This particular focus group convened a diverse assembly of 10 SME representatives from Italy to explore their expectations and preferences concerning the recruitment of candidates with slight disabilities or no prior experience for roles within the humanities field. The discussion revolved around six key themes, as detailed below.

2 - Online Participants
- 5 Middle-aged Women
- 5 Middle-aged Man
- From Greece
- Representing SMEs as Owners, Directors, and HR Specialists

3 - Key Themes and Findings

- Prioritizing Skills and Competences

Participants unanimously emphasized their interest in candidates possessing a comprehensive blend of technical expertise and soft skills. While acknowledging the importance of technical proficiency, they underscored the critical nature of adaptability, creativity, and problem-solving abilities.

- Striking a Balance Between Knowledge and Soft Skills

Opinions within the participant group varied on this matter. Some advocated for a balanced approach, valuing both knowledge/experience and soft skills equally, while others leaned towards giving precedence to soft skills. There was a shared understanding that the ideal balance could be context-specific, contingent upon the particular role and the organizational culture.

- The Significance of Professional and Social Skills

Participants recognized the fundamental nature of professional skills while also acknowledging the increasing importance of social skills in today's dynamic job market. Building strong relationships with colleagues and clients was identified as a pivotal aspect of achieving career success.

- Essentiality of Soft Skills

All participants acknowledged the indispensable role of soft skills in the contemporary employment landscape. While opinions varied on the level of mastery expected, there was a unanimous recognition of the critical importance of communication, adaptability, and emotional intelligence.

- Identifying Crucial Soft Skills and Competences

The focus group pinpointed several critical soft skills, including communication, teamwork, adaptability, and cultural sensitivity, as indispensable for candidates in the humanities field. These competencies were deemed essential for fostering not only employability but also professional growth.

- Elevating Employability and Professional Growth

Participants were unified in their belief that the identified skills and competencies not only heightened employability but also made substantial contributions to the overall professional growth of young individuals in the humanities field. They underscored the imperative for continuous skill development and mentorship to navigate the evolving landscape successfully.

4 – Summary

This particular focus group has unveiled valuable insights into the preferences of Greek SMEs concerning hiring in the humanities sector. While technical skills continue to hold significance, there is a growing acknowledgment of the pivotal role that soft skills and competencies play in shaping the hiring landscape. The recurring theme of striking a harmonious balance between knowledge and soft skills emerged, with a particular emphasis on the sought-after attributes of adaptability and communication skills in candidates.

These revelations carry the potential to substantially impact HR strategies and recruitment practices, offering valuable guidance to SMEs in Greece as they navigate the complexities of hiring young individuals for roles within the humanities field. By integrating these insights, SMEs can make more informed decisions, aligning their hiring practices with the evolving expectations and preferences within the humanities job market.

This comprehensive focus group report encapsulates the key themes and findings derived from the discussion, providing a detailed snapshot of the participants' perspectives on hiring practices within Greek SMEs in the humanities field. It serves as a valuable resource for those seeking to understand and adapt to the nuanced dynamics of talent acquisition in this specific sector.

IRELAND

Focus Groups

1. Brief description of the questionnaire

The questionnaire was a 7-question Google form shared online via various platforms and channels, including social media, email, and relevant websites. We aimed to reach a diverse group of participants, including NEETS (not in education, employment, or training) or those working in the humanities. The questionnaire was open to the public, and we received 15 responses from various backgrounds.

2. Brief description of the focus groups

The focus group were conducted online using video conferencing software on Friday, 22 September 2023. We had a total of 20 participants who were invited including some NEETS in focus group A and those in SMEs in focus group B. During the focus groups, we utilised a structured discussion format with a trained facilitator to guide the conversation. Feedback and insights were collected through both verbal contributions and written comments in real time.

3. Profile of the stakeholders who participated in the piloting activities

Participants in both the questionnaire and the focus group represented a diverse range of backgrounds and perspectives. This included individuals from various industries, professions, and academic backgrounds.

Participants were from a mix of rural, suburban, and urban areas with ranges of education from secondary school to master's qualifications. Additionally, the age range was from 15 - 35 years old.

4. Challenges related to the questionnaire and focus group

We did face some challenges during the questionnaire and focus group process. These challenges included difficulties in ensuring a balanced representation of viewpoints among participants, as well as occasional technical issues during the online focus group, which impacted the smooth flow of the discussion. Additionally, maintaining high engagement levels throughout the online focus group proved to be a challenge, as participants varied in their levels of participation.

5. Outcomes

The outcomes of the questionnaire and focus group were invaluable. They provided a rich source of qualitative and quantitative data on accessing humanities careers. The insights and feedback gathered from participants have been instrumental in shaping our understanding of this sector. Additionally, the feedback has helped identify areas of improvement for future online engagement activities and has highlighted the need for targeted strategies to address challenges related to engagement and technical issues.

ITALY

Focus Group A

1 - Introduction
Focus Group A was conducted as part of our research initiative aimed at understanding the needs and preferences of young adults, particularly NEETs and those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, as well as individuals with slight physical disabilities.

2 – Online participants
This report summarizes the insights gathered from the focus group discussions with 10 participants (7 young ladies and 3 young men) aged 18-28.

Given the target group involved, the youths were asked at the beginning of the session if they would like to be photographed and/or filmed, but the responses were mostly negative or evasive. For this reason, the facilitators who were engaged deemed not to take pictures of the group so as not to prejudice the possibility of a successful outcome of the activity.

3 - Key themes and findings
Essential Skills for Launching a Humanities Career:
The participants identified several crucial skills that should be emphasized when creating content for a platform targeting career development in the humanities sector:
- Communication Skills: The ability to express ideas clearly, both in written and verbal form, was deemed essential for success in the humanities sector.
- Critical Thinking: Participants emphasized the importance of critical thinking skills for analyzing and understanding complex issues in the humanities.
- Research Skills: Strong research abilities were seen as vital for conducting in-depth studies and projects.
- Empathy: Participants stressed the significance of empathy in understanding diverse perspectives, a key aspect of humanities studies.
- Adaptability: Given the evolving nature of the humanities, adaptability and openness to new ideas were seen as valuable skills.

Designing an Empowering Platform for Skill Exploration:
Participants shared their preferences for an effective platform design:
- User-Friendly Interface: A simple, intuitive, and user-friendly interface was emphasized for easy navigation.
- Personalized Learning Paths: The platform should offer personalized learning paths to cater to individual interests and goals.
- Interactive Content: Interactive elements such as quizzes, discussions, and peer-to-peer learning were recommended to engage users effectively.
- Accessibility Features: Ensuring the platform is accessible to individuals with disabilities, with options like screen readers and subtitles, was a key concern.

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Inclusivity Through Content:
Participants highlighted the importance of inclusive content:
- Diverse Perspectives: The platform should incorporate diverse voices and perspectives to reflect the inclusivity of the humanities field.
- Multilingual Resources: Providing content in multiple languages would make the platform more accessible to a wider audience.
- Resource Accessibility: Offering free or low-cost resources, such as textbooks and articles, was recommended to support individuals with limited financial means.
- Disability-Friendly Content: Ensuring that all content is accessible to those with disabilities through various formats and tools.

Skills, Career Growth, and Well-being:
Participants recognized the link between skills development, social inclusion, and well-being:
- Relevance of Skills: The identified skills (communication, critical thinking, research, empathy, adaptability) were seen as not only valuable for career development but also for fostering social inclusion by promoting understanding and dialogue.
- Enhanced Employability: Developing these skills enhances employability, allowing young individuals to contribute meaningfully to society and improve their well-being.
- Promoting Tolerance: Skills like empathy contribute to tolerance and acceptance of diversity, furthering social inclusion.

4 – Conclusion
The insights gained from Focus Group A provide valuable guidance for the development of a platform aimed at assisting young people in starting a career in the humanities sector. Emphasizing essential skills, creating an accessible and engaging design, offering inclusive content, and recognizing the broader societal benefits of skill development are crucial aspects to consider.
This report serves as a foundation for further research and the development of the targeted platform.

Focus Group B

1 - Introduction
By adhering to the standardized protocol, the HUMAN JOBS Project ensured coherence in data collection, facilitating meaningful comparisons and a deeper understanding of the viewpoints of our target group and potential employers. The insights gathered from these focus groups will play a pivotal role in shaping the content, design, and overall approach of the platform, thereby empowering and transforming opportunities for young individuals aspiring to establish themselves in the humanities field.

Focus Group B brought together representatives from companies and SMEs aiming to hire young personnel including those with slight physical disabilities for humanities-related positions. The discussions in this group focused on their expectations and preferences regarding prospective candidates, the importance they assign to various skills and competencies, and their perceptions regarding the value of soft skills in the hiring process.This focus group convened a diverse group of 10 SME representatives from Italy to explore their expectations and preferences regarding the hiring of candidates with slight disabilities or no previous experience for positions within the humanities field. The discussion centered around six key themes, as outlined below.

2 - Online Participants
- 3 Middle-aged Women
- 6 Middle-aged Man
- All from Italy
- Representing SMEs as Owners, Managers, and HR Managers

3 - Key Themes and Findings:
- Prioritizing Skills and Competences:

Participants expressed unanimous interest in candidates possessing a blend of technical and soft skills. While technical proficiency was considered crucial, they emphasized the importance of adaptability, creativity, and problem-solving abilities.

- Balance Between Knowledge and Soft Skills

The participants varied in their opinions on this matter. Some favored a balance, valuing both knowledge/experience and soft skills equally, while others leaned towards prioritizing soft skills. There was a consensus that the ideal balance could depend on the specific role and organizational culture.

- Significance of Professional and Social Skills

Participants viewed professional skills as fundamental but acknowledged that social skills were increasingly vital in today's job market. Building rapport with colleagues and clients was seen as a key aspect of career success.

- Essentiality of Soft Skills

All participants recognized the essential role of soft skills in the current employment landscape. While opinions differed on the degree of mastery expected, communication, adaptability, and emotional intelligence were identified as universally critical.

- Crucial Soft Skills and Competences

The focus group identified critical soft skills, including communication, teamwork, adaptability, and cultural sensitivity, as must-haves for candidates in the humanities field. These competencies were seen as essential for fostering employability and professional growth.

- Enhancing Employability and Professional Growth

Participants believed that the identified skills and competencies enhanced employability and contributed significantly to the overall professional growth of young individuals in the humanities field. They emphasized the need for continuous skill development and mentorship.

4 - Conclusion

This focus group revealed valuable insights into the hiring preferences of Italian SMEs in the humanities field. While technical skills remain important, there is a growing recognition of the significance of soft skills and competencies in shaping the hiring landscape. Striking a balance between knowledge and soft skills was a recurring theme, with adaptability and communication skills standing out as key attributes sought in candidates.

These findings can inform HR strategies and recruitment practices, helping SMEs in Italy make informed decisions when hiring young individuals for positions in the humanities field.

This focus group report summarizes the key themes and findings from the discussion, providing a snapshot of the participants' perspectives on hiring practices in the humanities field within Italian SMEs.

POLAND

Focus Group A

Introduction
The commencement of Focus Group A marked a significant milestone in our extensive research project, thoughtfully designed to delve deeply into the intricate nuances of young adult experiences. Our primary objective was to gain a profound understanding of the unique needs and preferences of this demographic, with a specific focus on individuals categorized as NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training). Additionally, our exploration expanded to encompass young adults navigating socioeconomic landscapes characterized by significant disadvantages. In our commitment to inclusivity, we also sought to shed light on the perspectives of individuals contending with mild physical disabilities. By adopting a comprehensive research approach, we aimed to capture the diverse array of challenges and aspirations that shape the lives of young adults, fostering a comprehensive understanding that transcends traditional demographic categorizations.

Participants
This report synthesizes the insights derived from the dynamic discussions held within Focus Group A, consisting of 12 participants aged between 18 and 28. The group comprised 7 young women and 5 young men. Given the distinct characteristics of this target demographic, participants were initially queried about their comfort with being photographed or filmed at the start of the session. The responses predominantly leaned towards a negative or uncertain stance. In consideration of this sentiment, the facilitators thoughtfully opted not to capture images of the group. This decision was rooted in the imperative to ensure the activity's success by respecting the participants' preferences and cultivating an environment conducive to open and uninhibited dialogue.

Key Themes and Insights
Essential Skills for Humanities Careers
Participants underscored several foundational skills crucial for pursuing careers in the humanities sector, including the ability to communicate effectively, think critically, conduct research proficiently, empathize, and adapt to evolving circumstances.
Designing an Empowering Learning Platform
Participants articulated their preferences for an optimal platform design, emphasizing the significance of a user-friendly interface, personalized learning paths tailored to individual interests and goals, interactive content to enhance engagement, and accessibility features catering to individuals with disabilities.

Inclusivity Through Content
Participants stressed the importance of inclusive content, advocating for the integration of diverse perspectives, the provision of multilingual resources, and the accessibility of materials for those with limited financial means or disabilities.
Skills, Career Advancement, and Well-being
Participants recognized the interconnectedness of skill development, social inclusion, and overall well-being. They acknowledged that these skills not only enhance employability but also play a pivotal role in fostering tolerance and acceptance of diversity.

Summary

The insights derived from Focus Group A are a treasure trove of information that provides invaluable guidance for the development of a platform aimed at assisting young individuals in launching careers within the humanities sector. Several key considerations emerge from these findings.

Developing Content

One pivotal recommendation is to center the platform's content aaround the essential skills highlighted by participants. Effective communication, critical thinking, research proficiency, empathy, and adaptability should serve as the cornerstone of the platform's educational materials. Tailoring content to equip young adults with these skills will be fundamental to their success in the humanities sector.

User-Friendly Design

Equally important is the platform's design. Prioritizing a user-friendly and accessible interface is paramount. Ensuring that young users can easily navigate the platform and access its resources will be crucial in facilitating their learning journey. A seamless and intuitive design will enhance engagement and effectiveness.

Inclusive Content

Participants stressed the significance of inclusive content. To address this, the platform should be a melting pot of diverse voices and perspectives, mirroring the inclusivity inherent in the humanities field itself. Multilingual resources and accessible materials for those with limited financial means or disabilities must also be integrated to broaden accessibility.

Emphasizing Societal Importance

Lastly, it is essential to emphasize the societal importance of skill development within the humanities sector. Recognizing that these skills not only enhance employability but also foster tolerance and acceptance of diversity can be a powerful motivator for young individuals. This recognition should permeate the platform's ethos and messaging.

This report, rooted in the insights of Focus Group A, serves as the bedrock for future research endeavors and the development of the targeted platform. By adhering to these recommendations, we can ensure that the platform effectively addresses the unique needs of young adults aspiring to embark on careers in the humanities, providing them with the tools and knowledge necessary for success.

Focus Group B

Introduction

In adherence to standardized protocol, the HUMAN JOBS Project ensured consistency in data collection, enabling meaningful comparisons and a deeper comprehension of the viewpoints of our target group and potential employers. The insights garnered from these focus groups are pivotal in shaping the content, design, and overall approach of the platform, ultimately enhancing opportunities for young individuals aspiring to establish themselves in the humanities field.

Focus Group B convened representatives from companies and small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to hire young individuals, including those with slight physical disabilities, for positions within the humanities. Discussions in this group delved into their expectations and preferences regarding prospective candidates, the importance they attributed to various skills and competences, and their perceptions regarding the value of soft skills in the hiring process.

This specific focus group assembled a diverse group of 10 SME representatives from Italy to explore their expectations and preferences concerning the recruitment of candidates with slight disabilities or no prior experience for roles within the humanities field. The discussion revolved around six key themes, as elaborated below.

Participants Online Participants
- 7 Middle-aged Women
- 5 Middle-aged Men
- Representing SMEs from Poland as Owners, Directors, and HR Specialists

Key Themes and Insights

Prioritizing Skills and Competences

Participants unanimously stressed their interest in candidates possessing a comprehensive blend of technical expertise and soft skills. While recognizing the importance of technical proficiency, they highlighted the critical nature of adaptability, creativity, and problem-solving abilities.

Striking a Balance Between Knowledge and Soft Skills

Opinions within the participant group varied on this matter. Some advocated for a balanced approach, valuing both knowledge/experience and soft skills equally, while others leaned towards giving precedence to soft skills. There was a shared understanding that the ideal balance could be context-specific, contingent upon the particular role and organizational culture.

The Significance of Professional and Social Skills

Participants acknowledged the fundamental nature of professional skills while also recognizing the increasing importance of social skills in today's dynamic job market. Building strong relationships with colleagues and clients was identified as a pivotal aspect of achieving career success.

Essentiality of Soft Skills
All participants acknowledged the indispensable role of soft skills in the contemporary employment landscape. While opinions varied on the level of mastery expected, there was unanimous recognition of the critical importance of communication, adaptability, and emotional intelligence.

Identifying Crucial Soft Skills and Competences
The focus group pinpointed several critical soft skills, including communication, teamwork, adaptability, and cultural sensitivity, as indispensable for candidates in the humanities field. These competences were deemed essential for fostering not only employability but also professional growth.

Elevating Employability and Professional Growth
Participants were unified in their belief that the identified skills and competencies not only heightened employability but also made substantial contributions to the overall professional growth of young individuals in the humanities field. They underscored the imperative for continuous skill development and mentorship to navigate the evolving landscape successfully.

Summary

This particular focus group has unearthed valuable insights into the preferences of Polish SMEs regarding hiring in the humanities sector. While technical skills continue to hold significance, there is a growing acknowledgment of the pivotal role that soft skills and competencies play in shaping the hiring landscape.

The recurring theme of achieving a harmonious balance between knowledge and soft skills emerged, with particular emphasis on the sought-after attributes of adaptability and communication skills in candidates.These revelations have the potential to significantly influence HR strategies and recruitment practices, offering valuable guidance to SMEs in Poland as they navigate the complexities of hiring young individuals for roles within the humanities field.

By integrating these insights, SMEs can make more informed decisions, aligning their hiring practices with the evolving expectations and preferences within the humanities job market. This comprehensive focus group report encapsulates the key themes and findings derived from the discussion, providing a detailed snapshot of the participants' perspectives on hiring practices within Polish SMEs in the humanities field. It serves as a valuable resource for those seeking to understand and adapt to the nuanced dynamics of talent acquisition in this specific sector.

Conclusion

The core mission of the project revolves around nurturing a profound and positive career perspective that catalyzes bolstering the self-esteem and self-belief of young individuals. This ambitious goal is effectively pursued through the creation of an interactive, gamified platform, meticulously designed to guide them in assessing their qualifications and envisioning potential career paths. The incorporation of gamification elements within the platform is not by chance but a strategic choice aimed at elevating engagement levels, stimulating proactive actions, and ultimately encouraging the active pursuit of job applications in their preferred career domains.

Understanding the inherent drive of many young individuals within the target audience to contribute positively to society, the project places a strong emphasis on showcasing the suitability and motivation for careers within the humanities. To ensure resonance with the target audience, a compelling series of videos is seamlessly woven into the platform, featuring real-life examples and relatable narratives. Each facet of the job application process is demystified and, presented in a lucid and accessible manner, ensuring that young individuals can grasp the intricacies with ease.

The initial weeks and months in a new job, often a critical transition period, are thoughtfully deconstructed into manageable steps and practical strategies. Through the medium of narratives and relatable characters, the platform imparts invaluable advice on navigating the early stages of employment. This holistic approach is not merely focused on equipping young individuals with the necessary technical skills for job applications; it also seeks to nurture a profound sense of confidence and purpose as they embark on their unique career journeys.

In essence, this project goes beyond the conventional boundaries of career guidance and employability skills training; it aspires to be a beacon of empowerment and encouragement for young individuals, providing them with the tools, knowledge, and unwavering support they need to navigate the dynamic landscape of their chosen humanities careers with confidence and enthusiasm.

COUNTRY-SPECIFIC POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

BULGARIA

1.Enhanced Career Guidance and Support: Universities should improve career guidance for humanities students through tailored counseling, workshops, and partnerships with industry professionals, addressing the uncertainties in their career paths.

2.Curriculum Reforms and Career-Oriented Education: Essential curriculum reforms in humanities should integrate career planning modules and emphasize project-based learning, linking academic concepts to real-world career scenarios for clearer goals.

3.Financial Support and Job Transition Programs: To tackle financial challenges, targeted initiatives include scholarships, internship programs for hands-on experience, and awareness campaigns emphasizing the value of humanities for improved pay and recognition.

GREECE

1.Employment Increase Policy: Promotion of policies for creating job positions, measures targeting the reduction of unemployment rates, initiatives to enhance participation in the labor market for groups with low participation rates, such as women and youth.

2.Productivity Increase Policy: Support for businesses to adopt innovative technologies, development of new products and services, investments in education and training to improve the skills of the workforce.

3.Green and Digital Transition Policy: Adoption of policies promoting employment in sustainable energy and digital technologies, integration of employment with the dimensions of green and digital transition for long-term development.

IRELAND

1. Establish comprehensive skills development and training programs tailored to the needs of NEETs interested in humanities-related fields. These programs should include both formal education and vocational training.
2. Offer financial incentives, such as scholarships, stipends, or subsidies, to encourage NEETs to enroll in these programs. Create partnerships with private sector organizations to fund training initiatives.
3. Provide financial support to employers who hire NEETs as interns or apprentices, either through wage subsidies or tax incentives, to make it more appealing for organizations to participate

ITALY

1. Developing content that focuses on the identified skills.

2. Prioritizing user-friendly and accessible platform design.

3. Curating diverse and inclusive content.

POLAND

- Integrated support programs for NEETs: Developing and implementing integrated support programs specifically tailored to the needs of NEETs, providing a combination of educational, vocational training, and employment support services. Establish dedicated counselling services to assess the individual needs, aspirations, and skills of NEETs, guiding them toward suitable educational and employment opportunities.

- Incentives for employers: Implementing incentives for employers to hire and provide training for NEETs, fostering partnerships between businesses and educational institutions to create internship and apprenticeship opportunities. Develop subsidy programs or tax incentives for companies that actively participate in programs designed to reintegrate NEETs into the workforce.

- Monitoring and evaluation: Implement a robust monitoring and evaluation system to track the effectiveness of policies and programs targeting NEETs, regularly assessing outcomes and making necessary adjustments. Collect and analyze data on the factors contributing to NEET status, allowing for evidence-based policy development and targeted interventions.

CONCLUSION

The HUMAN JOBS Project conducted two distinct focus groups, A and B, employing a standardized approach to ensure data uniformity. Led by qualified qualitative researchers, both groups explored the intricate interplay between skills, employability, and diversity within the humanities field. Although the questions varied, the overarching goal remained consistent: examining the multifaceted connection between these elements.

The Greek segment of the project emphasizes cultivating a positive career perspective for young individuals through an interactive, gamified platform. This platform not only guides them in assessing qualifications and envisioning careers but also underscores the suitability and motivation for humanities careers. Real-life examples and relatable narratives are incorporated to make the job application process clear and actionable, aiming to instil confidence and purpose.

Insights from the Bulgarian focus group underline the necessity of a holistic approach in guiding students through their educational and career journeys. Addressing barriers identified in the research can better equip Bulgarian students to make informed and fulfilling career choices.

The Irish segment of the project targets NEETs interested in humanities-related fields, proposing tailored skills development programs encompassing formal education and vocational training. To incentivize enrolment, financial perks like scholarships and subsidies are recommended, with funding secured through partnerships with private sector organizations.

The project also suggests providing financial support to employers hiring NEETs as interns or apprentices, using wage subsidies or tax incentives. These strategies aim to create a supportive ecosystem, bridging the skills gap and fostering collaboration for sustained impact.The Italian focus group sheds light on the hiring preferences of SMEs in the humanities field. While technical skills are crucial, there's a growing recognition of the significance of soft skills.

Striking a balance between knowledge and soft skills, especially adaptability and communication, emerges as a key theme. These insights can inform HR strategies and recruitment practices for SMEs in Italy.The Polish segment centers around nurturing a positive career perspective through an interactive, gamified platform. Emphasizing the suitability and motivation for humanities careers, the platform provides practical advice for navigating the early stages of employment. This holistic approach aims to equip young individuals not only with technical skills but also with confidence and purpose as they embark on their unique career journeys.

The critical conclusions from the various project segments underscore diverse yet interconnected approaches to enhancing career perspectives and skills development. In Greece, the emphasis lies on cultivating a positive career outlook through an interactive, gamified platform, emphasizing the suitability and motivation for humanities careers. Real-life examples and narratives aim to instill confidence. Insights from the Bulgarian focus group highlight the need for a holistic approach in guiding students through their educational and career journeys, addressing barriers to informed career choices. The Irish segment targets NEETs in humanities, proposing tailored skills programs with financial incentives and support for employers, aiming to bridge the skills gap. The Italian focus group emphasizes the growing recognition of soft skills in SMEs' hiring preferences, influencing HR strategies.

Finally, the Polish segment adopts a holistic approach to nurturing a positive career perspective through a gamified platform, aiming to equip young individuals not just with technical skills but also confidence and purpose for their career journeys.The crux of this initiative is not confined solely to the development of technical skills; it extends to a nuanced recognition of the vital role played by soft skills such as adaptability and communication. In transcending the conventional boundaries of career guidance, the project aspires to be a transformative force for the empowerment of young individuals. It is envisioned as an entity providing the necessary tools, knowledge, and unwavering support essential for navigating the dynamic and often complex landscape of humanities careers with unwavering confidence and boundless enthusiasm.

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INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT FOR YOUTH

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT

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