



MEASURING THE PROFESSIONAL INSERTION OF GRADUATES. A CASE STUDY – TRANSILVANIA UNIVERSITY OF BRAȘOV

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Abstract: *Following the professional career of graduates represents an important issue for the educational institutions. In accordance with the national and European requests, universities are interested in finding punctual information regarding the professional career of their graduates. This article presents the results of a research revealing the way that Transilvania University of Brasov is measuring data regarding its graduates, in order to determine indicators related to the labour market insertion and also, to establish the needed strategies to improve the graduates professional insertion.*

JEL classification: I21, C83, F62, J24

Key words: professional insertion measurement, employment/unemployment rate, market integration.

1. CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING THE EVALUATION OF PROFESSIONAL CAREER

Measuring professional insertion of graduates gives to universities the possibility to evaluate the effectiveness of their educational programs (Richițeanu-Năstase, 2015). Insertion of graduates represents, also, a key concern of economic and social environment actors (Stăiculescu, 2015).

In this regard, it is important to know what are the needs of the labour market and, in the same time, how the universities are responding to these needs, as the universities represent the link between the educational system (graduates) and the economic and social environment (companies and organizations).

At the same time, social and labour market integration reflects an uncertain process, especially when we talk about young people, graduates of universities, most of them at the



first job (Juarez, 2014). Usually, graduates have high expectations when they enter the labour market, and they are not able to link their competencies with the companies requests (Alvarez, 2014).

There is a common approach between the member states of European Union regarding education. In 1999 The Bologna Declaration established the premises for creating The European Area of Higher Education (EC, 1999). In 2000 the Strategy of Lisbon was launched, with the main purpose of creating the European economy based on knowledge. After 5 years, the Strategy was improved – The Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs, with focus on education, research and innovation. The Lisbon Strategy was followed by The Europe 2020 program.

Now, the graduates from all over Europe have the possibility to get jobs all over our continent.

2. METHODOLOGY

After one year from the graduation, Transilvania University's graduates may get their diploma from the faculty. At this moment, they are invited to fill a questionnaire, as a part of a survey that university is undertaking from 5 years.

The main objective of the study consists in the analysis of the occupational path of the Transilvania University's graduates and the creation of a long-term monitoring system of the socio-professional insertion of the graduates.

The specific objectives of the study were established in order to identify the main aspects regarding graduates employability and university entrepreneurial orientation, the transition from school to labour market and the future intentions of graduates regarding their jobs, as it follows:

- to identify the degree of employability (by evaluating the number of graduates in the field of work) and the degree of unemployability;
- to analyze the transition process from school to labour market (the moment of first employment, the number of jobs after one year from graduation, the connection between the specificity of the job and the graduated school);



- to identify the types of employers and the sectors/areas where the graduates are working (the employer field activity, the employer type – company with private capital, public institution, foundation/association);
- to determine the future intentions of graduates regarding their possible employment in other country than Romania.

The study is based on the data collected following the completion by graduates of a questionnaire (occupational route questionnaire) at the time of the study diploma (i.e. at least one year after graduation). The questionnaire is designed for all study cycles (bachelor, master and PhD), according to the communication procedure with the revised graduates, and the collection of data is fully computerized.

The confidentiality of the answers has been ensured and the agreement on the use of personal data has been obtained. The data collection process was continuously over the period envisaged. The survey is undertaking from five years. A number of 5675 questionnaires were filled, as it follows:

Graduates number	Bachelor	Master	PhD
5675	3943	1724	8

Fig 1 Number of questionnaires filled by graduates

The time of completion of the questionnaire has been chosen in such a way as to ensure graduates both the time required for labour market integration and a reasonable time for an assessment of their own experience in the labour market.

3. RESULTS

The results were analyzed only at the bachelor level, in concordance with the research objectives, considering that a deeper analysis at the other study levels will be realized in the future, when more data will be collected.

The first objective was to appreciate the situation of graduates regarding their situation on labour market – if they are employed or not, or if they work in their own company.



The employability rate analysis reveals a growing trend, with values over 70%, with the exception of the time before 2013.

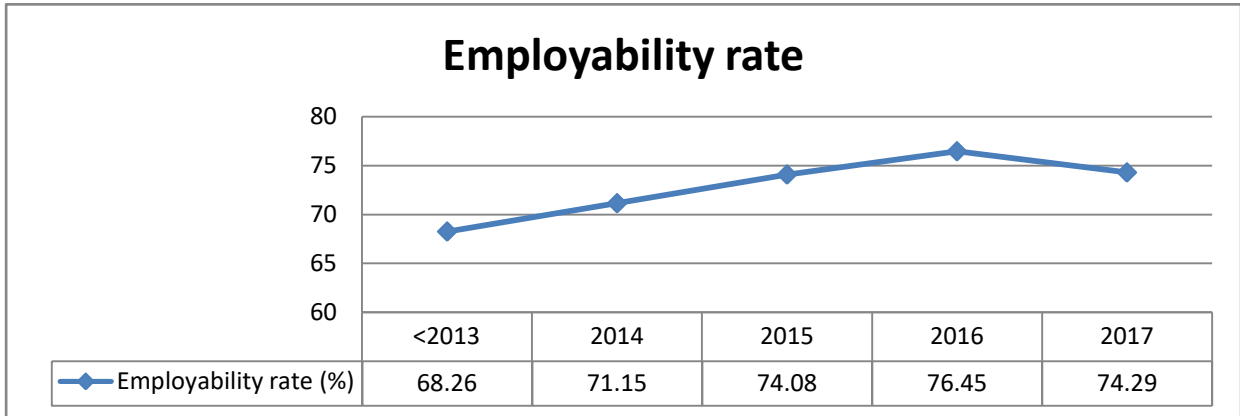


Fig 2 Employability rate

The unemployment in the last 5 years rate, represented by the percentage of graduates who were unemployed, had an increasing trend and reached the maximum value in 2017.

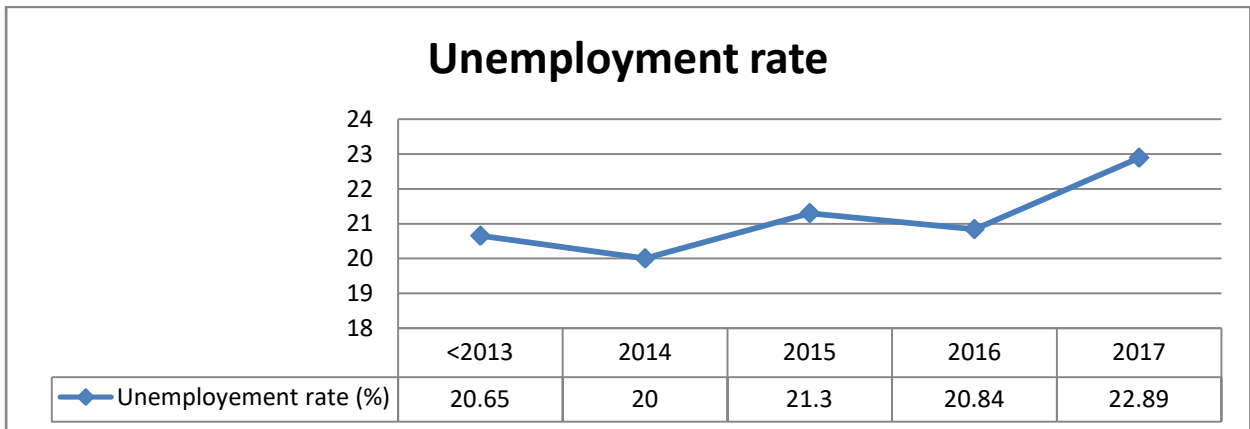


Fig 3 Unemployment rate

The graduates companies – an indicator that measures the entrepreneurial skills of graduates – was decreasing.

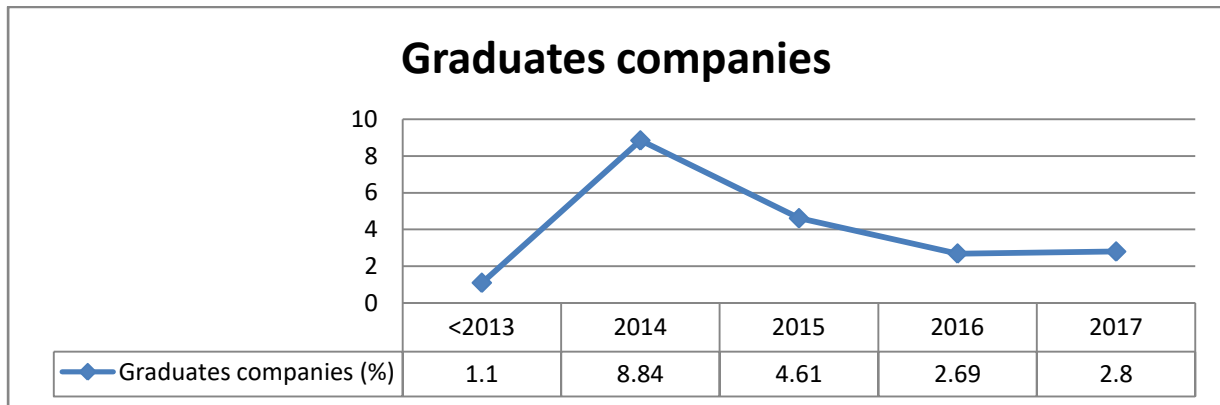


Fig 4 Graduates companies

The moment of first employment is an indicator that measures the way that graduates are accomplishing the transition process from school to labour market. For the analyzed period the situation reveals that there is a significant number of graduates that are working from the time of bachelor studies.

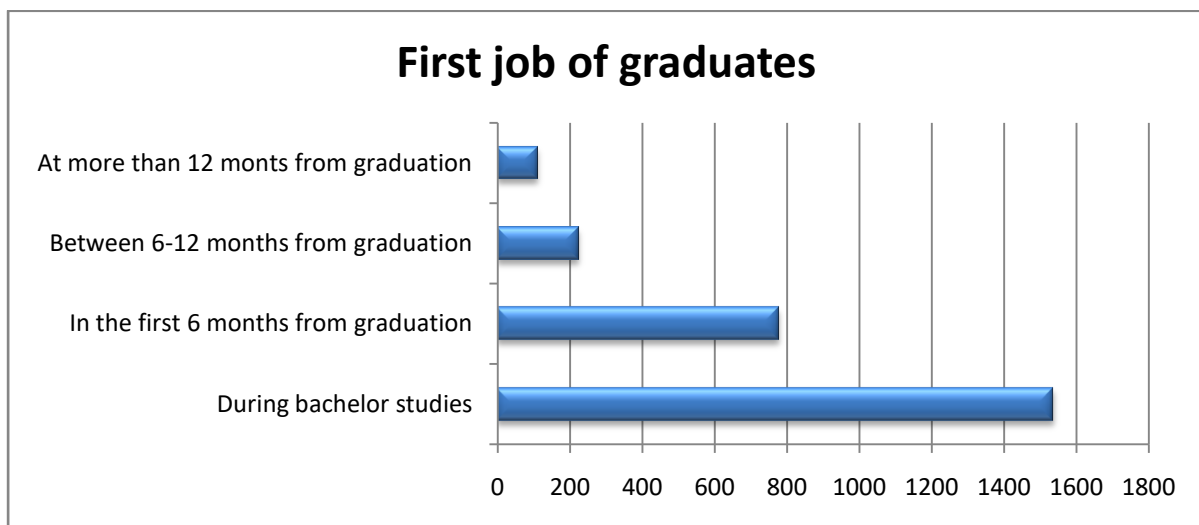


Fig 5 First job of graduates

A percentage of 65, 52% appreciate that there felt a connection between the specificity of the job and the graduated school.

The research gave information about the types of employers and the sectors where the graduates are working.



Year	Graduates in private companies (%)	Graduates in public institutions (%)	Graduates in other institutions (%)
2014	72,97	19,46	7,57
2015	67,76	26,56	5,68
2016	71,9	21,8	6,3
2017	52,83	41,82	5,35

Fig 6 Employability and the type of organizations

As the results reveal, there is a certain trend among graduates to work in public institutions, the percentage of these graduates is increasing (from 19,46% in 2014 to 41,82% in 2017).

To identify the future intentions of graduates regarding their possible employment in other country than Romania, 80,82% of graduates intend to work in Romania, 14,96% would like to work in a country from European Union (other than Romania), 4,21% would like to work in an extra-EU country.

CONCLUSIONS

Universities are the major elements that link the educational system with the social and economic environment. In this regard, they become more and more preoccupied about measuring the impact of their educational programs in the sense of getting a successful professional insertion of their graduates.

Transilvania University of Braşov built its own measuring system to find information about its graduates professional routes.

After 5 years of data collecting, the main conclusions regarding the professional insertion are:

- the employment rate follows an increasing trend, with percentages more than 70%;
- the unemployment rate is, also, increasing, probably as a consequence of the decreasing the percentage of graduates that own companies;
- a significant number of graduates started to work during bachelor studies, but there are not enough information to find what kind of jobs they had;
- more than 50% of graduates appreciate that the curricula was in accordance (so, it was useful) with their job;
- there is an increasing trend of graduates to work in the public system;
- there is a strong orientation of graduates to get a job in Romania.



Starting from this point, it is interesting for the researcher to establish some new future research directions - to deepen the research on graduates motivation on choosing their job, analyzing the reasons why graduates choose to be employed rather than to have their own companies and what are the reasons that determine graduates to work in the public system in a high percentage.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND PLAGIARISM: The author declares no conflict of interest and plagiarism.

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