

Young Entrepreneurs Support Network

Country seminar in Slovakia

According to the project plan VOKA has prepared the national country seminar which was held on October 4, 2007 in Banska Bystrica.

About 50 participants from several youth supporting organizations from the entire country were invited. The program of the seminar was prepared and disseminated to all invited participants on September 25, 2007. Due to the busyness of the targeted group of people during this period, only half of them could confirm their participation. The participants were from several organizations and institutions dealing with youth within their activities (AISEC, Centre for employment development, EDUKOS, Information Centre for Youth, KABA, Kumakokra, Local partnership for social inclusion, Integra foundation, Youth Council, Joint secondary school of trade and services, Top Centre of women entrepreneurs, Bureau of labor, social issues and family, YMCA).

The stress of the conference was laid on the complex report of "Position of Young Adults Living in Rural Areas at the Slovak Labor Market and Their Business Opportunities", which was elaborated and presented by external organization GIMMA. The presentation was divided into four parts including many concrete samples and statistical data:

- Characteristics of rural areas in Slovakia
- Position of young adults on the labor market
- Education of young people
- Entrepreneurship possibilities for young people

In the frame of the conference, another and no less important contributions were presented, bearing on the problematic of young unemployment.

- The new Program of rural areas development for the years 2007-2013 from the view of youth support policy, especially young farmers was introduced by Mrs. Adriana Verešpejová, MVDr. from the Union of collective farmers. She has also turned the attention towards the statistical comparison of young adults on the labor market in Slovakia and European Union.
- Ing. Arch. Viera Juricová – Melušová from the Nitra's self-government bureau has introduced the new Operation program Employment and Social Inclusion in the frame of the National Strategic Reference Frame. Based on this reference document, there will be provided the assistance in the program period 2007-2013 in the areas: human resources development, employment growth, increasing of social inclusion and capacity building. The assistance will be provided through European Social Fund as well as the Estimates of Slovak republic. Beforehand she has concentrated on the subsidies concerning young people.
- The contribution on the topic "Employment of young people on the European and global level" was presented by Ing. Elena Dikáčzová from the Slovakia Youth Council. She has introduced the Lisbon Strategy from 2000 as a common initiative of EU member states. The Lisbon European Council set Europe a new strategic goal for the new decade: "until 2010 to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-driven economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion". She has also introduced the „European Pact of Youth" from 2005, which serves as a tool of Lisbon strategy goals implementation, its priorities and implementation in Slovakia.

The second part of the conference was practical - paying regard on the project activities. Through the workshops the participants got the opportunity to share and exchange their ideas and visions about the network functioning and at the same time about the YESN project continuation.

The workshops were aimed on networking between NGOs dealing with youth unemployed. Two separate workshop groups were prepared on the following topics: creation of the network - mission, activities, goals and outputs of the network functioning and the second one about management and financial operation of the network, number of members, decision making, authorities, job delegation

competences. Since most of the participants could not participate on this last part of the conference, there was made a decision to make one common brainstorming group talking about both topics.

The outputs of the first part can be recapitulated as follows:

- carry the common conception in the field of employment
- creation of a database of NGOs working with youth and vacancies portal
- information system creation for young people and problems identification
- exchange activities for involved NGOs, good practice transferring
- enlightenment in the field of employment and entrepreneurship in schools, backward reaction from schools
- harmonization of the networks activities – inspiration and complementation of its members, common schoolings, avoiding competition among NGOs
- methodology of the work with youth creation, workshops and internships organizing
- functioning PR to relevant topics

Concerning the management and financial functioning of the network, the participants have identified themselves, that it will definitely depend on its structure - if there will be created a formal or informal organization. It will mostly depend on the will and mind of its particular members, which will show the future.

The most desirable outcome of the national seminar was to attract organizations for the participation in the network and to develop a scheme of the network and to define fields of activities that the network should be focusing on in its future work.

To some extent the outcomes of the conference have filled up these expectations, the only one visible insufficiency was a low number of participant due to the very busy working period of the most invited organizations. VOKA will do its best to attract also those organizations in the future project activities that could not take part on the conference.