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IO1: REVIEW OF LITERATURE, MEDIA AND RESOURCES

National report - Serbia

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REVIEW OF LITERATURE, MEDIA AND RESOURCES

1 TRENDS IN THE WORLD OF WORK SPECIFIC TO SERBIA

Some of the specific characteristics of the labour market of Serbia are related to its history as a post-socialist country, which has undergone a transition period. Certain trends are noted to be similar to other transition countries – since 2000, employment has declined in the public sector and increased in the private sector, with the overall number of employed declining and those unemployed increasing (Gligorov, Ognjenović & Vidovic, 2011).

However, within the National Employment Plan for 2020, it has been observed that the situation on the labour market measured by the basic indicators from the Labour Force Survey “indicate a significant recovery of the market during recent years - the unemployment rate is decreasing, the employment rate is increasing, the number of employed persons is growing, followed by a decrease in the number of unemployed and inactive persons”. Nevertheless, some of the key current challenges faced by employment policy that have been identified in the process of preparing the Employment Plan include high inactivity rates (one of the highest compared to EU member states), relatively high non-formal employment (with nearly one in six working persons employed non-formally, in 2018), unfavourable educational and age structure of unemployed persons and high long-term unemployment.

Data from the Ministry in charge of Labour and Employment and national Statistical Office as well as research studies and reports point to the several tendencies in the world of work specific to Serbia:

- ↑ **Significantly pronounced depopulation trend in demographics:** Analysis conducted in the scope of the National Employment Action Plan 2020, state that decreasing population numbers are attributed not only to negative population growth but also to emigration – work-capable population leaving the country, which is on the rise. This is also the conclusion of the analysis by Westminster Foundation for Democracy, 2019.
- ↑ **The increase in temporary employment:** Temporary contracts have become more common in Serbia since 2010. Data collected via the Labour Market Survey, suggest that temporary employment rate has doubled in the period from 2010-2016 (Kovačević, Pantelić, & Aleksić, 2017). In 2018, in Serbia, every fifth employee had a temporary contract (Koettl-Brodmann, Reyes, Vidovic, Arandarenko, Aleksic, Brancatelli, Leitner & Mara, 2019).
- ↑ **Increase of non-standard forms of employment:** Recent research study on digital work, i.e. remote work in which the employer is not necessarily located, or registered, in the same country as the worker (Andjelkovic, Sapic & Skocajic, 2019), states that several data sources indicate that Serbia has a large number of active digital workforce. According to one of them, the Online Labour Index, Serbia was ranked the

eleventh in the world and the fourth in Europe based on the number of active digital workforce in December 2018.

- ↑ **The fast growth of the ICT sector:** The ICT is reported to be the fastest-growing sector in the last decade in Serbia (Kleibrink, Radovanovic, Kroll, Horvat, Kutlaca, & Zivkovic, 2018). Data supporting this conclusion in the cited report are that in the period from 2013 to 2017, the total number of employees in the ICT sector increased significantly, 57% in a 5 years and that it accounts for 6 per cent of country's GDP. It is also put as a high priority on the governmental agenda in the next period.

2 REVIEW ON ACTUAL AND INNOVATIVE (USEFUL, RELEVANT) CONCEPTS AND DEVELOPMENTS OF COMPANY-BASED CAREER GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING RELATED WORK

2.1.1 *Research studies indicate a low level of career development support provided to employees in Serbia*

There are several research studies which deal with the prevalence of career development support available to employees in Serbia.

A study conducted in 2012, showed that the majority of Serbian companies do not focus on training and development activities and that they do not use methods such as formal career plans or succession plans for identifying training needs and development schemes (Venegas et al., 2015). Similarly, other research studies also show that the organisations' least developed tactics are related to retaining talent because they pay insufficient attention to career development programs for the talents (Slavković, Babić, & Stojanović-Aleksić, 2015).

More information on this topic was gathered via the international study conducted by the Cranfield School of Management (CRANET study), which among other countries, included participants from Serbia. Respondents in this study are people with responsibility for HR management in business organizations. One of the topics covered by this survey concerns methods that organizations use for the career development of their employees. Using the data gathered via this survey in the period from 2008 to 2010, authors Berber and Slavić (2014) examined the topic of the practice of career development in human resource management in depth. One of the main conclusion was that Serbia, as a transition country, **has a low level of the usage of career development techniques**. The authors attribute it to the lack of contemporary knowledge about management and organizations, accompanied by the lack of financial resources since many of the techniques are expensive for organizations to implement them. Regarding the frequency of use of methods for career development in HR, the highest frequency of use was special assignments/projects to stimulate learning and training at work, which was followed by networking and mentoring. According to the study results, in most cases, Serbian organizations lag behind the European average. This is the case when it comes to using succession plans, "High flier" schemes, experience schemes (internal movement to another department, whether in the same country or abroad) and coaching.

The CRANET study was conducted again in 2014/2015, which provides an opportunity to gain insight into more recent data. According to this study, out of 120 companies questioned (18% response rate), almost all of them provide mentoring and on the job training, about half of them provide formal networking schemes, formal career plans, coaching, projects to stimulate learning, planned job rotation and computer-based packages. A smaller percentage, between 30 and 40% of them have development centres and high-flier schemes or organize international work assignments.

It should be taken into account that all companies from the sample have more than 50 employees, and the majority of them have more than 100 employees. Given that the majority of companies in Serbia are small and medium enterprises, these results are probably not representative for all companies. However, these findings do illustrate what practices and activities are considered to be related to the career development of employees.

2.1.2 Development of career guidance and counselling for students in dual education

One specific example of a career guidance program is one provided to students in dual education. Students involved in the dual type of education spend a significant amount of time in work-based learning in companies following the curriculum. Relationship between schools, employers, and students (parents or other students' legal representative) are being governed by two types of contracts: the "Contract for dual education" which regulates the relations between schools and employers and the "Contract for the work-based learning" which regulates the relations between employer and the student (parent or other students' legal representative) (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, 101/17).

In 2017, Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Law on dual education, which obligates all participants to provide career guidance and contribute to developing career management skills of students (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, 101/17). In 2019 Government adopted the Rulebook on closer conditions, working methods, activities and composition of the Secondary School Career Guidance and Counselling Team that implements educational profiles in dual education (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, no. 2/2019). This rulebook lays down more detailed requirements for the manner, activities, and composition of the Career Guidance and Counselling Teams in secondary schools which are in charge of career guidance services provided to the students.

2.1.3 Examples of company-developed projects to support the career development of employees

There are several examples of projects developed within companies to support the career development programs of employees. They provide insight into developments of company-based career guidance and counselling related work. Nevertheless, it should be noted that this review is prepared taking into account only publically available information, and thus it is not representative of all concepts and trends in company-based career work in Serbia.

However, based on them, it can be concluded that career development programs in large companies include examples of using design thinking to establish the concept of these programs and complex and long-term initiatives to integrate coaching and talent development within companies. The examples are listed in the following text.

Using design thinking in creating career development programs¹

An example of innovative development of company-based career guidance is a project developed by an international mobile company in Serbia. In this case, design thinking was used to increase efficiency in 'onboarding' processes for first-line agents in the customer service sector.

Firstly, to gather the necessary information, they conducted research using various methods using tools such as Empathy Map, Customer Journey Map and Insights Map, but also conducting qualitative interviews. The research conducted showed that customer support agents feel safe in the company and have the support of colleagues, regardless of the sector or position they work in, but that they do not understand the process of professional development within the company. In addition, they are not sure which skills they have fully developed and which they may need to improve, so they feel uncertain when they want to participate in internal competitions and apply for other new positions within the company. They formulated problem as follows: How can first-line customer service agents learn what skills they have developed and what they need to improve?

The aim was to devise a solution that will allow them to look at their career path, so that each employee can see his or her status, how much he or she has progressed up to that point, and what his or her steps are in the further development. In this case, this meant creating a prototype of a tool called 'skilful employee journey', both online and offline, an application that guides first-line agents through a personalized career path and provides them with constant support and feedback from people with whom they work.

Development of a coaching culture in a law firm²

A law firm founded in Belgrade, who developed several programs in this area, describes one example of support to the career development of employees through coaching. One of them is intended for recent graduates, where coaching is applied regarding self-motivation, communication problems or, in general, regarding strategic legal thinking, using methods such as regular training, mentoring and supervised work. At the same time, senior lawyers – their supervisors are trained on coaching via Academy – an internal five-day program, covering several soft skill-training courses, such as using coaching methods for delegation and feedback. Coaching is also the

¹ <https://www.ictHub.rs/dizajniranje-resenja-po-meri-korisnika-primer-primene-design-thinking-metodologije-u-kompaniji-vip-mobile/>

² <https://bcoaching.online/blog/2019/04/02/the-development-of-a-coaching-culture/>

essence of their talent development programs – Star tracks. Lawyers on track for promotion set their career goals, together with coach define their areas for development, and are then provided support through mentoring or coaching.

An example of a comprehensive talent management program³

In a large energy company, there is an established comprehensive talent management program, which includes:

- evaluation of employees according to corporate competencies as the basis of an assessment of potential and further development plans of an employee,
- internal assessment and development centres to determine development needs,
- the succession planning process,
- individual approach to the development of key employees through individual development plans,
- career path models transparently showing steps and prerequisites for career advancement,
- Corporate University that prepares employees for each next level in the Company.

3 PROVIDERS OF THE SERVICES RELATED TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYEES

As summarized in Table 1 there are several providers of career guidance services to employees identified. Human resource departments in organizations deliver services related to career development support for employees. This is supported by the results of surveys who questioned people with responsibility for HR management in business organizations about their responsibilities (Berber and Slavić, 2014) and by examples of projects developed by companies in this area. It should be noted, that, based on the evidence available, these services are mostly provided in large companies.

Apart from HR in companies, numerous private agencies and individual professionals are offering services regarding career development of employees – such as coaching, assessment of competencies, creating development plans.

Employees can receive support from National Employment Service – who provide a service to employees who want to change their current job. They can receive information on world of work, education and employment opportunities, undergo assessment of their capacities and interests, and receive support in career planning and individual career counselling.

A specific type of career development support available only to VET students involved in dual education programs in companies are career guidance and counselling teams. Besides schoolteachers and professional associates, the team involves representatives of professional associations, local government units, and employers. These

³ <https://www.bizlife.rs/biznis/poslovne-vesti/u-nis-u-razvoj-talenata-kao-u-globalnim-korporacijama/>

teams can involve persons working for the employer that is implementing work-based learning for students. The team may also involve representatives of other employers and employers' associations, National employment service, local youth offices, youth organizations and civil society organizations dealing with career guidance and counselling, as well as institutions of higher education. This team prepares plans for career guidance and counselling activities every school year. It also conducts career guidance and counselling activities following the official national Standards for career guidance and counselling services.

Providers of career guidance services to employees	Short description of providers	The type of services provided	The target group to whom the services are provided
HR in companies	HR personnel employed in companies (specialists for learning and development, specialists for career development, HR generalists, HR managers or people and culture managers, talent managers, performance managers)	Coaching, mentoring, development of career plans, assessment, talent recognition, training through internal capacities, performance feedback interviews and performance improvement plans development, job rotation coordination, international assignments planning and coordination	Employees of the company New employees Talented employees Managers (mostly)
Private service providers	Agencies (local or international) or individual professionals who offer their services to companies or directly to employed people	Coaching Assessment Training	It is usually not specified. Mostly career development programs are directed toward middle and top managers.
National Employment Service	Centres for information and professional counselling	Career information Career counselling	Employees who want to change their job
Link to more information: Official website of the National Employment Service – http://www.nsz.gov.rs/live/trazite-posao/dok-trazite-posao/programi/profesionalno_savetovanje.cid250			
Career guidance and counselling teams	Teams in secondary schools who include representatives of school and company	Career information Career counselling	VET students involved in dual education programs
Link to more information: Ministry of education and sports of the Republic of Serbia, (2019). Rulebook on closer conditions, working methods, activities, and composition of the Secondary School Career Guidance and Counselling Team that implements educational profiles in dual education Beograd: Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, no. 2/2019.			

4 ANALYSIS OF ACTUAL AND INNOVATIVE LITERATURE, STUDIES, MEDIA AND RESOURCES ON COUNSELLING AVAILABLE FOR ALL KIND OF EMPLOYEES

4.1.1 Review of academic study programs

In Serbia, there is no specialized academic study program for career practitioners. Qualifications of career practitioners vary substantially, and usually they complete some of the accredited programmes for continuous professional development. The recently adopted official Rulebook on Quality Standards for Career Guidance and Counselling Services defines general and specific competencies of career guidance practitioners, which will serve as a guideline for their professional development.

There are several academic programs within higher education that may lead to employment as a HR professional. However, there is no official requirement in this area, so this review is related only to programs whose curriculums are related to human resource management (Table 2). Looking at the findings it can be concluded that the most of the academic study programs related to HR do include within the curriculum some of the courses that might be relevant for counselling of employees. Nevertheless, in some cases these are optional, not obligatory courses and the content of courses directly related to career guidance and counselling is limited.

Academic study programs related to HR	Resources on counselling of employees
<p>Organizational psychology (Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.f.bg.ac.rs/psihologija/program_studija.php?god=4&nivo=0 • http://www.f.bg.ac.rs/psihologija/program_studija.php?IDK=4312 • http://www.f.bg.ac.rs/psihologija/program_studija.php?IDK=4676 	<p>Within Bachelor studies in psychology, there is an obligatory course on <i>Career and development</i>, which covers several theories on career development. Moreover, there is an optional course on psychological counselling (based on rational emotive behaviour therapy). At the level of Master studies, there is optional course on <i>personal construct coaching</i>.</p>
<p>Organizational psychology (University of Novi Sad)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://psihologija.ff.uns.ac.rs/program/2014/nivo2/MPIOOK04.pdf • http://psihologija.ff.uns.ac.rs/program/2014/nivo1/PSOIOOK03.pdf • http://psihologija.ff.uns.ac.rs/program/2014/nivo1/PSOIOOK05.pdf 	<p>Within Bachelor studies in psychology, there are two courses on human resource management. One of the topics covered by them is <i>development and career management</i>. At the level of Master studies, there is a course on <i>psychological counselling and coaching in development of managers</i>.</p>
<p>Management of human resources (Faculty of technical sciences, University of Novi Sad)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.ftn.uns.ac.rs/575122282/menadzment-ljudskih-resursa 	<p>Master study in Engineering management contains option to specialize in human resources, including courses such as <i>talent management</i>.</p>

<p>Management of human resources (Faculty of media and communications)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://fmk.singidunum.ac.rs/kursevi/hr-konsalting-organizaciono-savetovanje/ • https://fmk.singidunum.ac.rs/kursevi/korporativni-sistemski-koucing/ 	<p>At the level of master studies, includes courses such as <i>Corporate and systemic coaching</i> and <i>HR Consulting and organizational counselling</i>.</p>
<p>Management of human resources (Faculty of Business, Singidunum University)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://singidunum.ac.rs/upis/study-programme/poslovna-ekonomija-upravljanje-ljudskim-resursima • http://predmet.singidunum.ac.rs/mod/page/view.php?id=2001&forceview=1 • http://predmet.singidunum.ac.rs/mod/page/view.php?id=2164 • http://predmet.singidunum.ac.rs/mod/page/view.php?id=2164 	<p>Includes courses such as <i>Human resource management</i>, which covers topics related to career development and career planning and <i>Development of employees</i>, within which trends in career development and career development plans are some of the topics covered.</p>
<p>Adult Education (Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.f.bg.ac.rs/andragogija/program_studija.php?IDK=4013 • http://www.f.bg.ac.rs/andragogija/program_studija.php?IDK=4491 • http://www.f.bg.ac.rs/andragogija/program_studija.php?IDK=4545 	<p>Within Bachelor studies in Adult Education, there are courses on <i>Career Guidance and Development</i> and <i>Skills of Counselling in Adult Education</i>.</p>
<p>Faculty of Organizational Sciences, University of Belgrade http://www.fon.bg.ac.rs/studije/master-i-specijalisticke-studije/master-studije/menadzment/</p>	<p>Within the module Management of Human Resources at the level of master studies, there are courses on human resource management and business psychology, which contain topics related to career development (specifically career planning).</p>

4.1.2 Continuous professional development - resources for the professionals working with employees

There are many options for continuous professional development for HR experts and professional, which include mentoring and training in the areas related to provision of career development support to employees. These are services offered by private agencies or individual consultants, and resources offered to HR professionals and more information about their content is mostly not available.

Business associations offer opportunities for professional development as well. For instance, HR Forum of American Chamber of Commerce⁴ serves as a platform for sharing HR experiences and initiating educational activities. One of the activities in 2019 was related to new trends in learning and development.

The information available on conferences, meet ups and other events aimed toward further training and networking of HR professionals, organized by various HR agencies, suggest that several topics have been recognized as trends in the field, such as:

- Digital solutions to HR challenges, including career development eLearning models, e-simulations or even gamified learning, are explored and vastly promoted within the HR community as new models of learning and development (an example of conference where one of the topics was innovative and digital HR - <https://www.hrweek.rs/innovative-hr>).
- Innovative approaches toward uprising challenges and demands of fast-paced world of work. Since it requires now more than ever that employees in most of the industries in private sector show adaptability to changes and creativity in problem solving, HR community has recognized the need to develop “internal entrepreneurs” or “intrapreneurs” concept, as autonomous innovators and independent self-managers (Aničić, 2018, Babic & Zaric, S2017). Many professional events have been promoting agility in HR and the role of HR in creating agile organizational culture (an example of a training course in this area - <https://agilehumans.city/agile-hr>).
- Talent retention challenges in some areas, especially in IT industry where the demand is much higher than supply, brings creative ideas on how to keep those with high demanded skills. Beside offerings of generous compensation and benefit packages, several concepts have emerged to track and enhance employee engagement, one of them being “Happiness at work” (<https://happinessatwork.rs/>), organized by ManpowerGroup Serbia). The difference between satisfaction (as referring to meeting the most basic existential needs) and happiness (as finding deeper meaning in own work) pushed Serbian IT company to create [Heartcount \(https://www.heartcount.com/\)](https://www.heartcount.com/), an AI powered tool, which measures happiness

⁴ <https://www.amcham.rs/platforms/excelling-professional-development/hr-forum.121.html>

at work among employees and suggest to HR what actions to take to further increase engagement and retain talents.

5 ANALYSIS OF THE THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES FOR COUNSELLORS AND COACHES TO WORK WITH/WITHIN COMPANIES

Based on the review there is limited information of theoretical and methodological approaches for counsellors and coaches to work with/within companies and company context.

The only information available is the literature used within academic programs related to HR.

Within some academic programs, there are courses specifically related to career guidance and counselling, which use the handbook translated to Serbian (Amundson, N. E., Harris-Bowlsbey, J., & Niles, S. G. (2009). Essential elements of career counselling: Processes and techniques. Pearson/Merrill; translated by Belgrade Open School). This Handbook covers career theories, including theory of John L. Holland, theory of Donald E. Super, theory of John Krumboltz and constructivist approaches.

Courses that include coaching as a topic, use approaches such as personal construct coaching, use of psychological and psychometric tools in coaching, holistic coaching, Erickson system for coaching, coaching psychology. In the recent period, there were several attempts to standardize the professional arena for coaching, such as introducing certification programs and International Coaching Federation as certification body for programs that train future coaches.

6 GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED RELATED TO COMPANY-BASED CAREER WORK

1. Coaching (*"Koučing"* in Serbian) - a process of work that has a goal of improving someone's performance, usually through work one on one, as well as reflection of the way application of specific knowledge and skills.
2. Succession planning - a process for identifying and developing new leaders who can replace old leaders when they leave or retire.
3. "High flier" schemes - a formal identification and development procedure, established by an organization with the intention to identify group of employees who are believed to possess management potential.
4. Individual development plans (*"Individualni razvojni planovi"* in Serbian) - tool to assist employees in career and personal development.

7 LIST OF REFERENCES

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7.1.3 National projects and approaches:

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