**PRO YOUTH Questionnaire BULGARIA**

**Status quo analysis and definition of scope**

1. Please define the geographical scope of the analysis (you can decide to focus on your City, a broader Region or the country, but we suggest narrowing down your geographical focus if possible, to assure that we have tangible results in the end). Please explain your choice

**Our choice for the current analysis is the whole country, because Bulgaria is a small country and statistics is difficult to find for small towns. Besides, BIA is located in the capital Sofia, but for obvious reasons the lowest unemployment rate is here and we would not want to choose Sofia as the center of the upcoming activities.**

**We plan to focus our efforts so that most of the activities are linked to the cities of Northern Bulgaria, as this part of the country is mostly affected by the problems of unemployment and NEETs.**

2. Provide statistical data specific to the chosen geographical area regarding young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs):

**Bulgaria is one of the countries in the EU that is most affected by the demographic problem. The working age population is significantly reduced, which is related to a decrease in the birth rate, the large number of people of working age who emigrate due to problems in the internal labour market and the high percentage of unemployed young people.**

a. Most affected age groups. Specify here pre-defined age groups to make the data comparable across cases. Eurostat defines NEETs aged between 20-34. You have to define the age group if you find that another age group is more affected in your country (say from 15 or from 18).

**The statistics in Bulgaria are for the 15-24 age group.**

**The unemployment rate for Bulgaria in the first quarter of 2019 is 5%, while for the unemployed young people aged 15-24 it is 9.8%. Of these, only a third are from minority groups.**

**UNEMPLOYED PERSONS AND COEFFICIENTS OF UNEMPLOYMENT OF THE POPULATION AT 15 AND MORE YEARS OF AGE IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2019[[1]](#footnote-1)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Age | Unemployed persons - thousand | Unemployment coefficients - % |
| **Total** | **165.3** | **5.0** |
| **By gender** |  |  |
| Men | 95,0 | 5,3 |
| Women | 70,3 | 4,6 |
| **By residence** |  |  |
| Towns | 101,5 | 3,9 |
| Villages | 63,8 | 8,8 |
| **Age** |  |  |
| 15-24 | 12,8 | 9,8 |
| 25-34 | 48,3 | 6,7 |
| 35-44 | 41,6 | 4,6 |
| 45-54 | 33,7 | 4,0 |
| 55 and more | 29,0 | 4,0 |
| **By educational degrees** |  |  |
| High | 25,4 | 2,4 |
| Secondary | 73,3 | 4,0 |
| Qualification gained | 42,4 | 3,9 |
| Basic (up to 8th grade) | 50,2 | 14,5 |
| Primary and lower education | 16,4 | 22,2 |

b. Highest school degree or qualifications

**The highest is the percentage of unemployed young people living in villages and those with low education, 30% of young unemployed have secondary education and 10% are university graduates.**

**Young people in Bulgaria have very high expectations when starting a job, such as high incomes and rapid professional development. There is a very large discrepancy between expectations and opportunities, as well as between training and professional experience.**

c. School leaving age

**The share of early school and education leavers from the population aged 18-24 is 12.7%**

**The relative share of NEETS of the population aged 15-29 is 18.1%.**

d. Employment (options, average duration)

**According to data oft he Ministry of labour and social policy (MLSP) in Bulgaria, there are many programmes for youngsters up to 29 years of age to start work:**

* **Young people up to 29 years of age without a work experience in the specialty who have graduated high school (diplomaed)) and are registered with the Labour Office Directorate may be interns for a period of 9 months at the state administration. The young people are part of the target group of Regional employment programmes, "Challenges" project, "Work Activity" project, "Catalogs" project, "We Can Too" project, "New Start for Work" project, "Horizons - 4" and "Successful Together - for a Worthy New Education".**
* **unemployed youths up to the age of 29 who have acquired in the last 24 months a qualification in a profession or part of a profession required to take up the post without a length of service in that profession may be trained in with an employer. The subsidized period is up to 6 months as, from the active policy budget, part of the wage resources are paid, as well as social security contributions by the employer and additional labour remuneration in minimum amounts established by the Labour Code and the normative acts on its implementation.**
* **Apprenticeship under the guidance of a mentor is also provided with a subsidy, which is suitable for young people without education and training, thus acquiring, besides working habits, also professional skills and qualifications.**
* **The Employment Promotion Act encourages employers to employ subsidized jobs for unemployed persons up to 29 years of age with permanent disabilities, including war criminals, as well as for youths from specialized institutions or with community-based resident-level social services who have completed their education.**

**The long-term unemployed are a target group of the Programme for training and employment of long-term unemployed persons. The Programme provides employment for full-time or part-time employees for up to 12 months for private and public sector employers. Opportunities to increase the employability by inclusion in training enhancing knowledge, skills and qualifications, as well as providing employment opportunities for subsidized or non-subsidized jobs, offer the following projects, which are being realised under the National Employment Action Plan in 2019: "Challenges" project, "Work Activity" project, "Catalogs" project, "We Can Too-2" project, "New Start for Work" project, "Horizons - 4" and "Successful Together - for a Worthy New Education" projects. The regional employment programs are implemented on the territory of the 28 regions in the country. They offer employment for subsidized jobs for 3 to 6 months to unemployed persons from vulnerable groups on the labour market, including long-term unemployed. All these programmes and measures provide employment for a period of 6 or 9 months.**

e. Outmigration

**Outmigration is just as much a problem for Bulgaria as the negative natural growth of the population. It is difficult or impossible to find accurate statistics for Bulgarians who leave the country every year. Preferred destinations are Germany, England and Spain. Because of the devaluation of education in Bulgaria, a large part of the graduates of secondary education strive to continue their education abroad.. How many of these young Bulgarians return to Bulgaria after acquiring Bachelor or Master degrees can not be said because there are no mechanisms for collecting such data..**

**In order to reduce outmigration from Bulgaria and stimulate the return of Bulgarians, many policies, strategies and measures have been developed by public authorities. All of them are focused on highly qualified and young people to improve the structure of the workforce..**

**According to a study conducted in 2018 and covering young people aged 18-29, this trend is changing and fewer Bulgarians want to leave the country. 61% say they do not want to leave the country and only 4% say they want to live somewhere else.**

f. Acquired skills and needs of the labour market

**According to a report by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in 2016, the survey of job vacancies declared by occupations classes shows that almost half of them are for services for the population, trade and security services (25.5% of all places on the primary market) and for professions not requiring special qualification (24.1%). Following that are the places for machine operators and installers (15.6%) and those for skilled workers and related workers (13.9%). Limited labour demand is reported for managers (only 0.4%), for skilled workers in agriculture, forestry, hunting and fisheries (1.1%), as well as for administrative auxiliary staff and for technicians and applied specialists (4.3% and 4.5% % of all requested places). Compared to 2015, labour demand growth is reported for all classes of occupations in the real economy. It is more important for the personnel employed with services for the population, trade and security (with 7,994 more seats), for machine operators and installers (by 3 541 more seats) and for specialists (by 3,226 seats more).**

g. Not documented/illegal labour market (if relevant)

**Bulgaria is one of the EU countries with the highest percentage of gray economy. Despite the tendency for gradual lightening, the level of gray economy in 2017 is 25.22%, according to data of BICA (one of the employers' organisations). Gray practices are seen in the pay mostly of low-skilled workers and young people without professional experience.**

3. Information regarding the tourism sector

**Tourism is one of the main sectors of the Bulgarian economy. The country is located at a crossroads linking the East and the West and many civilizations such as Thracians, Romans, Byzantines, Slavs have lived here. In the country there are conditions for winter and summer tourism, as well as an abundance of historical and natural landmarks, museums and monasteries scattered on relatively small but transportly accessible territory.**

**Apart from traditional forms of tourism, balneological tourism, rural tourism and some alternative forms of tourism have been developed in Bulgaria.**

**Taking into account the territorial concentration and the different types of resources, the country is divided into 9 tourist regions in order to form regional tourist products and advertise them. Unfortunately, this is only a formality that has not yet achieved its goals.**

a. Strengths

**The strengths of Bulgarian tourism are:**

* **Wide variety of tourism resources;**
* **Rich cultural heritage**
* **Geographic proximity to major target markets**
* **Mild climate and moderate temperatures;**

**There are 143 resorts in Bulgaria, of which 54 spa resorts, 55 climatic mountain and 34 climatic sea resorts.**

**The spatial distribution of the country's tourism resources is characterized by a high degree of overlap and / or territorial proximity of natural and cultural sites The total number of cultural-historical tourism resources in Bulgaria is estimated at around 40,000. By this indicator, the country ranks among the top 10 in Europe.**

b. Development potential

**The tourism industry in Bulgaria has a significant contribution to the economy, about 13% of the country's GDP and about 12% of all employed. The development of tourism is a national priority for Bulgaria. The natural and climatic conditions along with the rich cultural and historical heritage of the country are a prerequisite for a wide variety of tourist services during the four seasons of the year. 95% of the revenue from our tourism industry is generated in sea, recreational and mountain tourism. Besides the excellent opportunities for cultural and historical tourism, spa and balneo-tourism also have tremendous opportunities for development in the future. Bulgaria ranks second in Europe by natural mineral resources, with about 1600 springs of mineral water[[2]](#footnote-2)**

c. Challenges

**The efforts of the Bulgarian Ministry of Tourism are aimed at establishing the country as a year-round tourist destination with a high quality and diversified tourist product. This is a major sectoral priority while taking into account the need to take daily account of the market policy of major direct competitors and the need to maintain the level of competitiveness.**

d. Digitalization

**The Bulgarian Tourism Ministry has set itself the goal of using digital technologies as the main channel for the positioning of Bulgaria as a competitive destination. Accountable here is the use of the Internet for organizing trips and the fact that in 2018 the users of Internet are already over 4 billion and of mobile services - more than 5 billion. The Ministry highlights the leading role of online presence, that digital advertising is an irrevocable part of any promotional campaign. As a result, the Internet platform and mobile application iLoveBulgaria has been developed, which has become popular with Bulgaria. The platform contains information about tourist sites and services by areas and interests and helps them to find them in real time and place.**

**Bulgaria is among the countries with the fastest and most accessible internet, which is an exceptional advantage and impresses tourists. At the moment, the unified tourist information system is being developed as a portal for communication through protected canals in the tourist system.**

e. Share in the labour market

**11% of all workers in 2017 were employed in tourism. In a speech, the Minister of Tourism cites a total of 335,000 people employed in tourism and related economic sectors. At the same time, vacant places in the sector are about 20,000 and in 2018 seasonal workers from third countries were 7700 people. The sector occupies one of the leading places of labour consumption.**

f. Existing qualification options and the skills provided (including general education, vocational training, or short-term trainings – please specify the duration, the target group, costs and the degrees offered)

At present, there are 14 higher schools in Bulgaria where tourism is taught:

**Sofia University "Kliment Ohridski"** - Bachelor's and Master's Degree in Tourism, Recreation and Tourism Organization, Planning and Management, for the needs of tourism production and management practice

**University of National and World Economy** - "Tourism Economics", where students can develop international tourism, tour operator, agent and transport management, management of hotel and restaurant activities, management of cultural tourism, agrarian tourism management etc.

**University of Economics - Varna** - Bachelor's and Master's degree, major areas of realization are hotel, restaurant, trade, transport, communications or work in research training centers..

**College of Tourism at the University of Economics - Varna**. It offers two training courses - "Organization and management of tourist services" and "Organization and management of hotels and restaurants".

**New Bulgarian University** - specialty Tourism with the following profiles: tour operator activity, economy of tourism or cultural tourism.

**National Sports Academy "Vasil Levski"** - two specialties "Tourism alpinism" and "Tourism orientation".

**Varna Free University "Chernorizets Hrabar"** - Bachelor's Programме in Tourism Management.

**International Business School in Botevgrad** - Bachelor's Programме in Tourism and Programме in English "Management and Consultation of International Tourism", jointly with a Dutch University.

**St. Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo** - the university offers specialized courses such as cultural, eco- and balneo-tourism.

**Southwest University "Neofit Rilski", Blagoevgrad** - offers two master programmes: "Management of hotel and restaurant activities" and "Management of alternative tourism".

**Secondary education** - 85 vocational high schools, 25 secondary schools and 2 schools for hearing impaired children - two-tier training "Accommodation, restaurant and catering" and "Travel, tourism and leisure".

A state programme for training of cadres for tourism at the "Bulgarian-German Center for Vocational Training" is currently being implemented. The training is of a different duration, the longest being 6 months for the highest level of qualification. Curricula are coordinated with employers and tailored to their needs. The aim is to overcome the lack of key executives - maids, waiters, bartenders.

g. Needs of the labour market

**There is a serious shortage of staff, mainly executives - maids, waiters, bartenders and chefs. This is mostly a problem during summer and winter tourism.**

4. Please define the thematic scope of your analysis (you can focus on any field related to cultural heritage tourism for instance specific heritage sites or historic sites that are popular tourism destinations or could become one, cultural institutions, cultural or art events, customs, traditions, services related to cultural and heritage tourism).

**Gabrovo is a Bulgarian town located in Central Bulgaria, along the Yantra river at the northern foot of the Shipka part of the Balkan Mountains and in close proximity to the geographical center of Bulgaria. The town was founded 250 years ago, during the Ottoman rule it was known for its rebellious spirit and, after the Liberation, as a textile center of Bulgaria. Here is the first Bulgarian secular school, many beautiful houses, bridges, fountains were built during the Renaissance. The Gabrovians have long been known for their sparse and witty, which is why it is home to the only House of Humour and Satire in the world. It was created in 1972 on the "fake" April 1. His emblem is an earth globe with feline eyes and ears to "see and hear" the humor of the world through the senses of the symbol of Gabrovo humor - the cat.**

**The purpose of the Museum is to collect, expose and popularize the humour of the peoples in the field of visual arts, literature and folklore, cheerful holidays and masquerade traditions around the world. And it is a real palace with 9 exhibition halls, a library, a sound recording studio, a conference room.**

5. Map relevant institutions all stakeholder groups (narrow down to the chosen geographic and thematic scope). Provide the following information: name, short profile description, website, contact person, contact information, possible relevance for the project.

* 1. Employer’s organizations such as chambers, associations focusing on heritage and cultural tourism

**Bulgarian Tourist Chamber** [www.**btch.bg**](http://www.btch.bg)

The Bulgarian Tourist Chamber is the first and most popular non-governmental organization in tourism. It was registered in 1990 as a Union of Business Managers in Tourism. It was re-registered as a Bulgarian Tourist Chamber in 1991.

* 1. Training providers (see 3/f)

**Example: Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski**" <https://www.uni-sofia.bg/eng> - The oldest higher education institution in the country with more than 5000 students, more than 2000 staff, offered degrees Bachelor, Master's degree, Educational-qualification degree Doctor; cultural heritage education at different degrees, courses, and continuing education courses

* 1. Local/regional authorities, state and private institutions, NGOs managing heritage, historical, cultural sites

**Belogradchik Municipality** <https://belogradchik.bg/> is located in Northwest Bulgaria and is one of the constituent municipalities of Vidin Region. The municipal administration is managing a territory with numerous tourist sites.

**The Museum of Humour and Satire** <https://www.humorhouse.bg/enindex.html> in Gabrovo city was created in 1972 as the House of Humour and Satire. It became a museum in 2006. Team of 26 people, and mission to collect, present and preserve humorous art and culture, to delight the audience in meeting the best humour samples, to cultivate a sense of humour and to promote the role of satire in modern life.

* 1. Institutions/organizations/actors of civil society working with NEETS

The **National Employment Agency** <https://www.az.government.bg/en/pages/za-nas> and its regional labour offices across the country work with NEETS and operates relevant programmes for people out of the working life

* 1. Relevant actors of the civil society focusing on cultural heritage

**National Tourism Cluster "Bulgarian Guide"** <https://www.bg-guide.org/en/about-us/about-us> is a non-governmental organization focused on the organization of initiatives for promotion and sustainable development of the specialized types of tourism. Key development strategy of NTC BG Guide is the integration of all specialized tourism types, including culture-historical, ecotourism, mountain and hiking tourism, balneology and SPA, culinary and wine tourism, congress tourism, adventure tourism, etc.

**Cluster Tourism Bulgaria**

It is a non-profit and non-governmental organisation. The main objective of the cluster members is establishment and development of tourist services in Bulgaria, the promotion of national values, development of cultural, rural and alternative tourism, support for business initiatives in the field of domestic and international tourism. The Cluster is actively working to strengthen cooperation between municipalities, non-profit and business sectors to promote sustainable development of local communities in economically less developed regions in Bulgaria. In this regard, the cluster is actively involved in the creation and promotion of new tourist routes and products based on eco, rural and cultural tourism, paying particular attention to the protection and promotion of natural resources, environment and cultural attractions of the region.

**A View of the Ages Association** <http://www.pogledkamvekovete.org>

The Association is an independent, voluntary, public non-profit association for socially beneficial activities of individuals and legal entities to restore, preserve and promote national cultural material and spiritual values, to preserve national environment and biodiversity.

**National association ‘Bulgarian Heritage’** <https://nationalheritagebg.org/index.php>

Main goals of the association:

- work and cooperate the investigation, preserving, conservation, restoration, valorization and socialization of monuments of cultural heritage;

- cooperate with state and local institutions for preserving and conservation of the Bulgarian cultural and historical heritage and the rich natural resources;

- familiarize the Bulgarian society with the cultural and historical heritage and the rich natural resources of our country, and cooperate for its preserving and conservation for generations;

- promote the Bulgarian cultural and historical heritage, and the rich natural resources in Europe and worldwide;

- stimulate the scientific researches and investigations of the Bulgarian cultural and historical heritage, and the rich natural resources;

- stimulate and support the integration of people on an unequal footing of all age by activities connected with preserving and promoting of cultural and historical heritage and the rich natural resource.

**Association "BULGARIAN MUSEUMS"** <https://bulgarian-museums.org> – the non-profit association aims to protect the rights and interests of Bulgarian museums before state and municipal authorities and organizations, as well as to all legal and physical persons in the country and abroad; to popularize the activities of Bulgarian museums in the country and abroad; to support the development of museums and to extend the exchange of information between museums; to promote ethical and scientific standards in the field of science and the arts; to establish and develop relationships with similar organizations in the country and abroad; to develop and participate in projects to support the development of the national museum network, the preservation and presentation of our cultural heritage; to carry out activities related to the development and promotion of museum activity in general.

1. Source National Statistics Institute [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Updated National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Republic of Bulgaria 2014-2030 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)