



CLUSTER (C_A.3.1_0014)

WP3 – A.3.1.1 Profiling and needs assessment of NEETs and Women

Profiling Report

Cyprus Chamber of Commerce & Industry (CCCI)

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Table of Content

Introduction	2
Methodology.....	4
Data analysis and indicators	5
References.....	8

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Introduction

The report is the result of the activities relating to the project Intellectual Output 3.1 (A.3.1.1 - *Profiling and needs assessment of NEETs and Women*), implemented within the Work Package number 3 (Needs Assessment and Benchmarking of Successful Experiences and Efficient Practices).

This report is therefore the result of several different actions carried out by the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce & Industry in coordination with the WP3 leader (ARCES Association, PP1), the Project coordinator and all the project partners (PPs), namely: design and translation of the questionnaire for Profiling and needs assessment of NEETs and Women; creation of e-forms; delivery of questionnaires to interested people belonging to the project target groups (NEETs and women); promotion through social channels, websites and other tools; collection of the filled questionnaires (data collection) and analysis of collected data (data analysis).

The report is produced by following the instructions provided by ARCES Association (WP3 leader) in the so-called “Methodology Report”. It will consider all the actions implemented during the profiling phase by all PPs.

Context and overview of NEETs in Cyprus (data used 2020)

Overall, labour market conditions are improving but challenges remain. Unemployment fell sharply compared to the crisis years (7.5% in 2019 compared to 16.1% at its peak in 2014). In the medium term, Cyprus is expected to achieve almost full employment conditions. However, with the favourable labour market environment, new challenges are emerging for upskilling and re-skilling as some sectors have started to face labour shortages. Furthermore and despite progress, youth unemployment (17.2% in the third quarter of 2019) and the number of young people not in employment education or training (13.2% in the third quarter of 2019) remain at considerably high levels compared to the EU average (14.4% and 10%, respectively). This is probably due to the lack of job opportunities for tertiary graduates, low enrolment in vocational education and training and difficulties in school-to-work transition. Another factor could be undeclared work. At the same time, it is important to ensure that growth benefits all of society. Despite solid economic growth since 2015, many young people still stay out of employment, education or training and a high number of women remain out of the labour market due to care responsibilities. Strong economic growth has been reflected in positive labour market developments. However, youth unemployment and the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs), although decreasing, remain high and are above the EU average, at 20.2% and 13.2%, respectively in 2018, compared to 15.2% and 10.5% in the EU. This may weigh on current and future equality of opportunities.

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Unemployment is rapidly falling. The unemployment rate fell from 8.4% in 2018 to 7.5% in 2019. Unemployment among young people also declined to 17.5% in 2019. While unemployment is still above the pre-crisis period, there are positive signs that unemployment is set to continue falling in the near term. Outreach to young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs) and other vulnerable groups continues to be one of the key issues. Recently, Cyprus has strengthened outreach activities by mapping and profiling the population of NEETs twice a year and building partnerships with local actors as part of an action plan. The plan was set up in April 2019 and is currently being implemented, but its results are still to be evaluated. Efforts are also being made to promote collaboration between the public employment services, the counselling and career education services and other providers of Youth Guarantee interventions, targeting unregistered youth through regional partnerships and informing schools about employment and training opportunities.

Public Employment Services' operations have been temporarily enhanced but their long-term capacity is at risk. The hiring of 30 additional counsellors and the restructuring of the Services' procedures have improved the quality of tailor-made services and individualised counselling with encouraging monitoring results. Cyprus' performance on key Europe 2020 education targets and social scoreboard indicators is mixed and basic skills achievement remains a concern. In 2018, the school drop-out rate ('early school leaving') declined, with 7.8% of 18-24 year-olds leaving school early compared to 8.5% in 2017, improving its Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion The Youth Guarantee country by country - Cyprus October 2020 | 5 position in the Social Scoreboard. Tertiary educational attainment has risen further. At 57.1%, Cyprus has the second highest tertiary educational attainment rate in the EU (the average is 40.7%). Underachievement in basic skills among 15 year old remains a concern, as also flagged by the SDG 4. Modernising the education system is therefore vital to improving educational outcomes. However, education and training reforms are only progressing slowly. This makes it difficult to address challenges including poor educational outcomes, low participation in vocational education and training and adult learning, as well as lacking digital skills. **Labour market needs and opportunities, including the greening of the economy, require stronger efforts in upskilling and reskilling.**

Target groups taken into account for the purpose of profiling activities carried out by the CCCI were sourced through direct distribution of the questionnaire in electronic format to women and men living in Cyprus, most of whom were aged between 18-30 years old.

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Methodology

The methodology adopted by the CCCI for the delivery of A3.1.1 was based on the suggestions and instructions provided by WP3 leader ARCES, jointly decided and discussed among all CLUSTER project partners. The profiling phase implemented by the CCCI can be broken down as follows:

- 1) Translation of the questionnaire into Greek.
- 2) Selection of the tool for the target groups profiling, and creation of the e-questionnaire based on Google forms.
- 3) Database building with contacts of people belonging to the target groups of the project
- 4) Distribution of the questionnaire using the following communication channels:
 - a. CCCI social media accounts (Facebook and LinkedIn)
 - b. Information uploaded on the CCCI website
 - c. Targeted email campaign with NGOs, VET providers, school guidance counsellors, labor market connecting office
 - d. Personal contact with CCCI Associated Partner, the Cyprus Youth Board and dissemination through their own social media
- 5) Because of low response, distribution of questionnaire was repeated and reminders were sent to relevant target groups
- 6) After the profiling phase ended, CCCI made a quantitative analysis of the data collected from respondents
- 7) thanks to the statistics, a qualitative analysis of the collected data was delivered, with the final aim to get an overview of the needs and demands of NEETs in Cyprus.

During the profiling campaign targeting NEETs and young women, the main challenge faced by the CCCI was the low response rate of respondents. Out of more than 2500 questionnaires delivered, only the below numbers responded:

- NEETs: 6
- SEAs business operators: 6
- SEAs social actors: 5

Most probably, the reason of this low response was due to the fact that the training curricula and courses were not agreed yet by the CLUSTER consortium, so the questionnaires were not very specific except from one question only.

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Data analysis and indicators

In total the questionnaires addressed to NEETs were filled in by 6 people using the Google form. The percentage of respondents who completed the questionnaire was in fact 100% covered by women, despite the fact that it was distributed to more or less equally the same proportion of both male and female population. All respondents came from Cyprus, since project activities are addressed to the whole territory of the Republic of Cyprus.

With regard to the age of the respondents, 50% of them came from the age group of 36+, 33.3% in the 22-25 age group, while 16.7% belonged to the age group of 26-30. The majority of 66.7% had completed their undergraduate university education, 33.3% post-graduate university education.

The vast majority of them 83.3% are not studying currently. 66.7% of respondents are currently employed working 21-40 hours per week, while only 25% work 1-10 hours per week. 33.3% used to be employed but not right now, while they have been unemployed for 1-6 months.

The most difficult area they face as a young person in finding a job is lack of experience (83.3%), age related is another common factor for half of the respondents (50%), gender and qualifications are equally to blame with 33.3%.

The provision of public funds to enterprises with the aim to employ young people attracted the response of all respondents (100%), followed by the strengthening of links between the TVET system and the job market (33.3%), enhancement of employment agencies network (33.3%) and promotion of self-employment among young people (33.3%).

It was interesting to note that more than half of respondents (60%) have never joined a VET course.

Covid-19 pandemic affected negatively half of the respondents (50%) reducing as such their opportunities to find a job, for some it was related to psychological reasons while for others because of their residence area relying to a large extent on tourism badly hit by the pandemic.

Unfortunately, more than half of the respondents do not know what Circular and Blue economy mean, half of them know what sustainable agriculture means, while all of them know what Green Economy entails.

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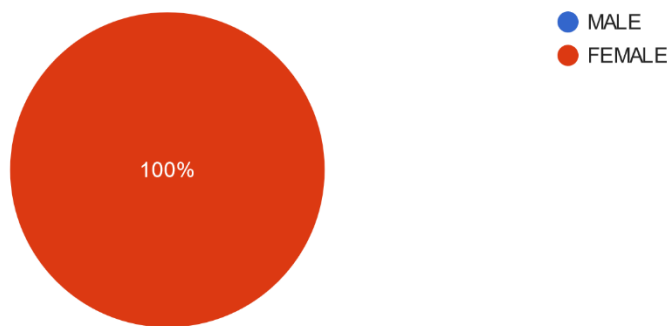
All respondents believe that Circular / Blue / Green Economy and Sustainable Agriculture will be increasingly important for economic growth, creation of new jobs and for the environment.

The two most interesting sectors for the Cypriot respondents are the Green Economy and Sustainable Agriculture, while the majority of them prefer attending a VET course in organic farming (50%). Hydroponics, Aquaponics and Sustainable food processing follow with less interest with 33.3% interest each.

Statistics and Data Charts

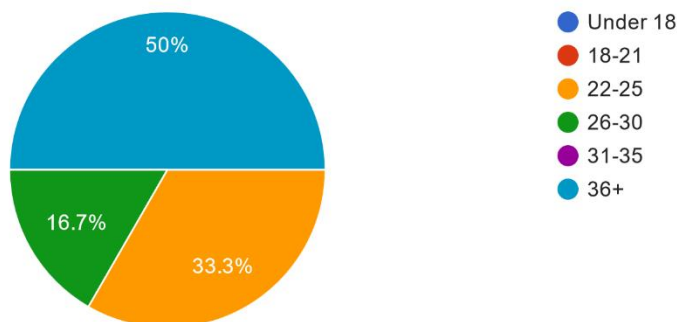
Gender of respondents

Gender
6 responses



Age of respondents

Age Group
6 responses



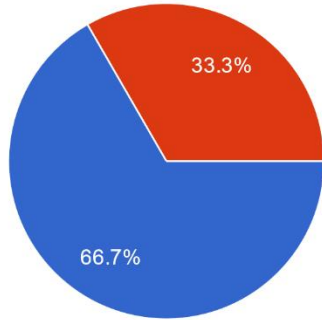
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Employment status

Employment Status

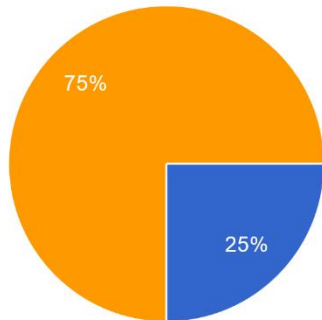
6 responses



- Currently Employed
- Used to be employed
- Unemployed, never been employed, but actively seeking work
- Unemployed, never been employed, and not seeking work

If employed, how many hours do you work per week?

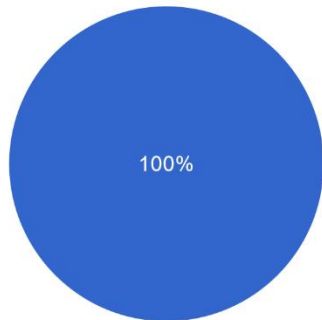
4 responses



- 1-10 hours
- 11-20 hours
- 21-40 hours

If unemployed, how long have you been unemployed for?

2 responses



- 1-6 months
- 6 months - 2 years
- More than 2 years

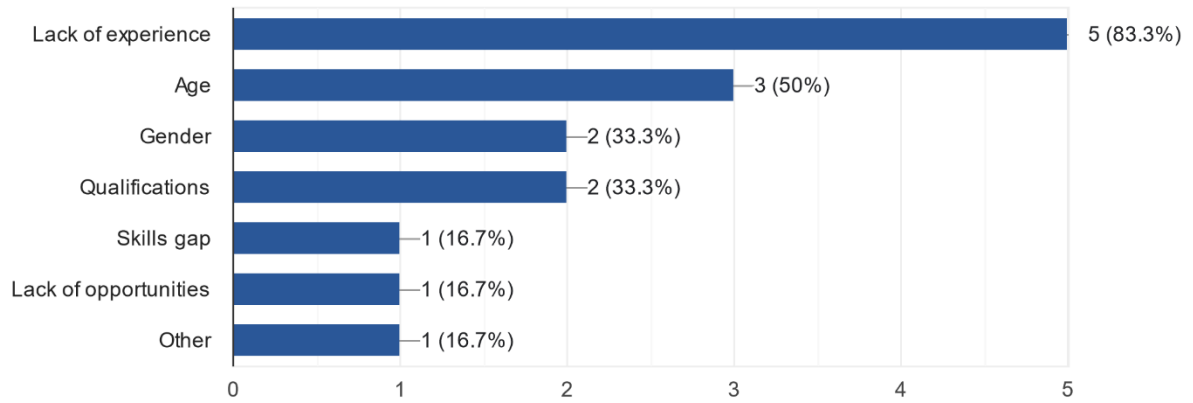
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Difficulties in finding a job

What difficulties do you face as a young person in finding a job?

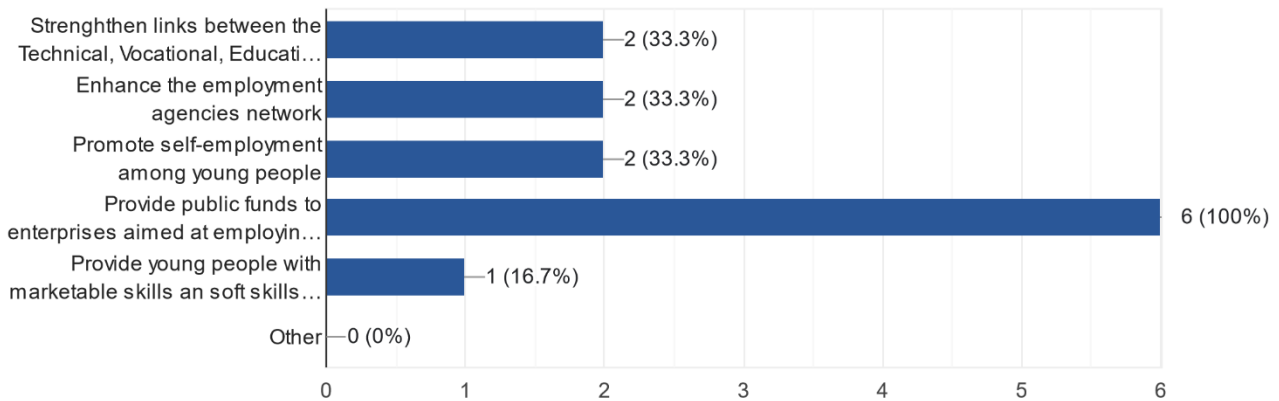
6 responses



Aid and support for young people to enter the labour market

In your opinion, what aid and support could be put in place to help young people enter the labour market?

6 responses



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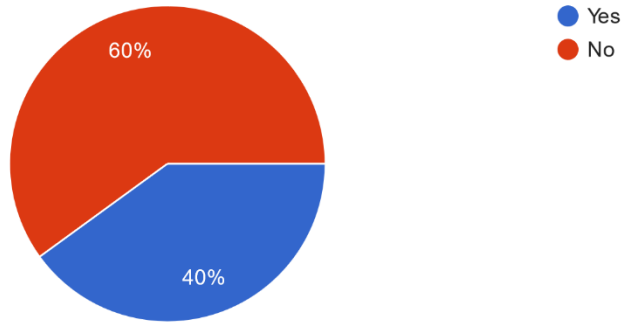


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VET Courses

Have you ever joined a Vocational Education Training (VET) course?

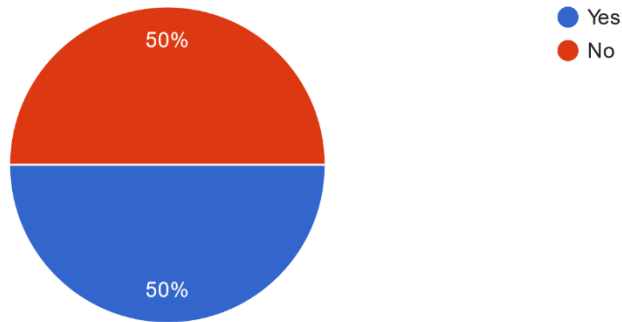
5 responses



Covid-19 pandemic effects

Do you think the Covid-19 pandemic affected your personal/professional condition, reducing your opportunities to find a job?

6 responses



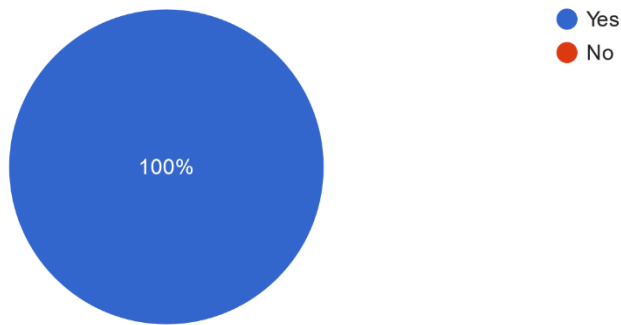
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Importance of Circular,Blue,Green Economy & Sustainable Agriculture

Do you think that Circular Economy, Blue Economy, Green Economy, Sustainable Agriculture will be increasingly important for economic growth, creation of new jobs and for the environment?

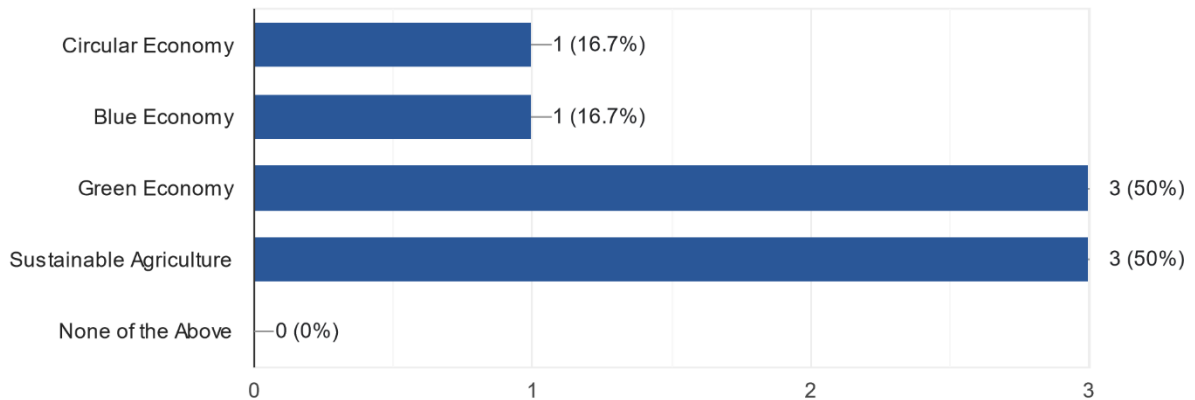
6 responses



Sectors of interest

Which of the below sectors would interest you the most?

6 responses



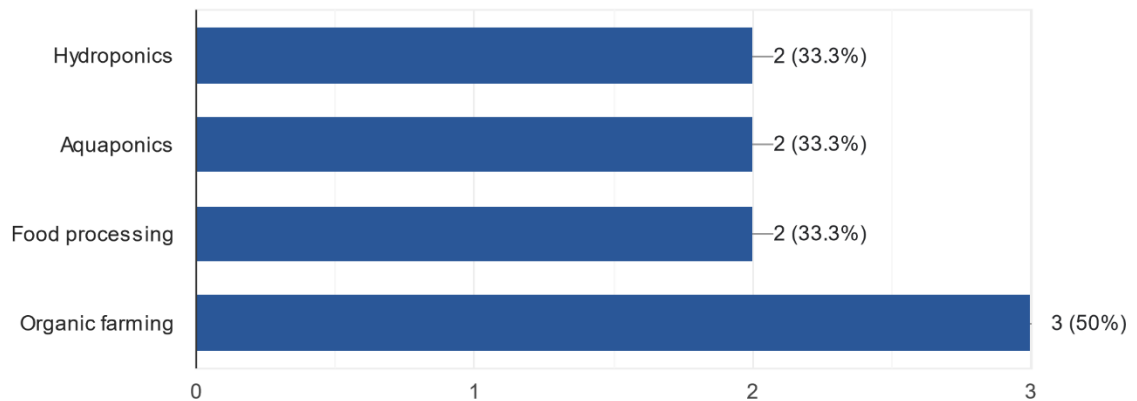
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Interest in Hydroponics, Aquaponics, Food processing & Organic farming

Would you be interested in attending a vocational education and training course in one or more of the following sectors?

6 responses



References

Internet Source:

<https://bit.ly/ClusterYouth>

<https://cci.org.cy/sustainable-economy-labor-market-needs-for-businesses/>

<https://www.facebook.com/CyprusChamberCommerceIndustry/posts/pfbid029jHtfvFaYMt3Aja9gXYoXynQUcVTrZuNCf4Ko3YFdk8HLajD3dp1y7FGKaEtsEXol>

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