

**Czech University of Life Sciences Prague**

**Faculty of Economics and Management**

**Department of Economics**



**Bachelor Thesis**

**Psychological aspects of unemployment**

**Dana Babenko**

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# **BACHELOR THESIS ASSIGNMENT**

Dana Babenko

Business Administration

Thesis title

**Psychological aspects of unemployment**

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## **Objectives of thesis**

The goal of the thesis will be to study the behavior of young unemployed people aged 20 to 27, their experience in solving this problem, their psychological state, and also to analyze the factors that complicate the search for a job: gender discrimination, racial discrimination, lack of experience, etc. The partial goal will be to describe the specifics of the work market and the possibilities of proving successful on this market in the particular region.

## **Methodology**

Method: The main used method will be the questionnaire survey. In the chapter „Results evaluation“, there will be indicated, which in advance set hypotheses were confirmed and which were refused.

## **The proposed extent of the thesis**

30 – 40 pages

## **Keywords**

unemployment, psychological impact, social impact

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## **Recommended information sources**

FERGUSSON, Ross and YEATES, Nicola. Global youth unemployment: History, governance and policy. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2021. ISBN: 978-1789900415

HULL, Fleur and KRALJEVIC, Kym. Career after covid-19; how to leverage the opportunities from the pandemic to unlock a rewarding career transformation in 2021 and Beyond. S.l.: SOZOKU PTY LTD, 2020.

NORRIS, Dawn R. Job loss, identity, and mental health. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2016. ISBN: 978-0813573809

RAO, Aliya Hamid. Crunch time: How married couples confront unemployment. University of California Press, 2020. ISBN: 978-0520298613

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## **Declaration**

I declare that I have worked on my bachelor thesis titled "Psychological aspects of unemployment" by myself and I have used only the sources mentioned at the end of the thesis. As the author of the bachelor thesis, I declare that the thesis does not break any copyrights.

In Prague on 28.11.2023

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### **Acknowledgement**

I would like to thank my supervisor PhDr. Daniel Heller for his advice and support during my work on this thesis.

# Psychological aspects of unemployment

## Abstract

This thesis is devoted to the topic of the psychological and social aspects of unemployment. The purpose is to describe and analyse the psychological, economic, and social aspects of unemployment, and to study the behaviour of the young unemployed aged 20 to 27 years. Analysis of the factors that make it difficult to find a job: gender discrimination, racial discrimination, lack of experience, etc.

This work consists of several main chapters. The first chapter is devoted to the basic concepts of unemployment and its types. The second key chapter is devoted to the psychological, social, and economic aspects of unemployment. The third chapter is devoted to factors that aggravate the job search. The practical part consists of an analysis of interviews taken from twenty-five people aged 20 to 27 who faced the problem of unemployment.

**Keywords:** unemployment, psychological impact, social impact, gender discrimination, racial discrimination, social aspects, psychological aspects, labour market.

# Psychologické aspekty nezaměstnanosti

## Abstrakt

Tato práce je věnována tématu psychologických a sociálních aspektů nezaměstnanosti. Cílem je popis a analýza psychologických, ekonomických a sociálních aspektů nezaměstnanosti, studium chování mladých nezaměstnaných ve věku 20 až 27 let. Analýza faktorů, které ztěžují hledání zaměstnání: diskriminace na základě pohlaví, rasová diskriminace, nedostatek zkušeností atd.

Tato práce se skládá z několika hlavních kapitol. První kapitola je věnována základním pojmům nezaměstnanosti a jejím typům. Druhá klíčová kapitola je věnována psychologickým, sociálním a ekonomickým aspektům nezaměstnanosti. Třetí kapitola je věnována faktorům, které zhoršují hledání zaměstnání. Praktická část se skládá z analýzy rozhovorů s dvaceti pěti lidmi ve věku 20 až 27 let, kteří se potýkali s problémem nezaměstnanosti.

**Klíčová slova:** nezaměstnanost, psychologický dopad, sociální dopad, genderová diskriminace, rasová diskriminace, sociální aspekty, psychologické aspekty, trh práce.

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# 1 Introduction

Now, the situation in the world labour market is characterized by a significant mismatch between the demand and supply of labour, which can lead to increased psychological stress for people. Youth unemployment is one of the most pressing problems in the modern world. However, it has escalated in the context of the economic crisis and affects a wide range of young people, both highly qualified university graduates and people in difficult life situations. The creation of the labour market has turned unemployment into a real social phenomenon. The problem of the characteristics of the unemployed in our society is relevant in that a group of people are affected by unemployment in its infancy. Personality features of young people arising in a situation of long-term absence of work: low self-esteem, self-doubt, lack of desire for achievements and changes, naivety, dependence on a group, inability to evaluate and adequately interact with others in a situation of failure. The problems of employment of the population rightly relate to the global problems of our time, since employment is the basis for the development and functioning of human society. Unemployment for all countries of the world is a social evil.

## **2 Objectives and Methodology**

### **2.1 Objectives**

The main purpose of the work is to gain knowledge about the unemployed, who for a long time could not find a job or lost it. Show the impact of unemployment on people's mental health. Show how many people face the problem of finding a job. To reveal the topic of job search among young people, what problems they face, and why they cannot find a job for a long time. One of the main issues of the work is gender inequality, why in the 21st-century people still face this problem.

### **2.2 Methodology**

Writing a thesis project included the following research methods: theoretical (classification, synthesis, analysis) empirical (interview, observation, questioning), analysis of the results obtained by statistical processing, and generalization.

## **3 Theoretical Part**

### **3.1 Basic concepts of unemployment**

#### **3.1.1 Definition of unemployment**

Unemployment is widely recognized as a major feature of the extreme social and economic inequalities that are characteristic features of the contemporary world order. (FERGUSSON & YEATES, 2021)

Unemployment is a term used to describe the situation of individuals who are not currently employed but are actively seeking employment and are available to work. Unemployment can be defined as the proportion of the labour force that is not currently working but is actively seeking employment. The labour force is made up of individuals who are employed and those who are unemployed.

Unemployment can have a significant impact on the individuals who are unemployed, as well as on the broader economy. When individuals are unemployed, they may experience a loss of income, a decrease in their standard of living, and a negative impact on their mental and physical health. At the same time, high levels of unemployment can lead to a decrease in consumer spending, which can have a ripple effect throughout the economy.

The active approach in labour market policy has become popular since the mid-1990s often making reference to the notion of activation. However, instances of state intervention in this field have existed before. (CLASEN, 2013)

There are various types of unemployment, including frictional unemployment, structural unemployment, cyclic unemployment, seasonal unemployment, and natural unemployment, each of which has its unique causes and consequences. Understanding the different types of unemployment is important to develop effective policies to address the issue and to support individuals who are affected by unemployment. (MAYER, MACCLUM, 2020)

#### **3.1.2 Types of unemployment**

There are several types of unemployment, including:

### 3.1.2.1 Frictional unemployment

This type of unemployment occurs when individuals are temporarily out of work as they transition from one job to another. Frictional unemployment is a natural part of the labour market and can be seen as a positive sign of a dynamic economy.

Frictional unemployment occurs when individuals are in the process of searching for a new job. This can include job seekers who are just entering the labour market for the first time, as well as those who are changing careers or seeking a better job opportunity. (MAYER, MACCLUM, 2020)

Frictional unemployment can result in a temporary loss of income for individuals who are out of work. This can lead to a decrease in their standard of living and financial insecurity. Frictional unemployment can also result in a delay in career progression for individuals who are out of work. This can harm their long-term earnings potential and their ability to advance in their careers.

In conditions of economic crises and recessions, the share of frictional unemployment is extremely insignificant, except those sectors of the economy in which there is a shortage of skilled labour. It is possible to reduce the level of frictional unemployment in the economy by improving information support in the labour market by labour exchanges.

The level of frictional unemployment depends on the state of the labour market in the country. In the period of full employment, it is frictional unemployment that accounts for a significant part of unemployment, since together with structural unemployment this type forms the natural level of unemployment in the economy. Thus, if there is only frictional and structural unemployment in the economy, then we can say that the labour force is used quite efficiently.

The calculation of the frictional unemployment rate involves dividing the number of unemployed individuals who are currently in the process of searching for a job by the total labour force. The labour force includes both employed and unemployed individuals who are actively seeking work.

An example of frictional unemployment is a recent college graduate who is searching for their first full-time job. Although these people have the necessary education and skills to work in their field of study, they may still experience a period of unemployment as they navigate the job market and search for the right opportunity. During this time, they are considered frictionally unemployed.

Another example is a worker who has decided to leave their current job and is actively searching for a new one. They may have specific requirements, such as a certain salary or location, that make it challenging to find the right job quickly. As a result, they may experience a period of frictional unemployment while they search for a job that meets their needs.

In both cases, unemployment is due to the time it takes to find a suitable job rather than a lack of available jobs or a mismatch in skills. This type of unemployment is typically short-term and is a natural part of the job market.

### 3.1.2.2 Structural unemployment

This type of unemployment occurs when there is a mismatch between the skills of the unemployed workers and the skills required for the available jobs. Structural unemployment, is joblessness that occurs when a working population is too costly to employ or is unemployable because it lacks the necessary skills or because technological change renders formerly productive people obsolete. (MAYER, MACCLUM, 2020)

Changes in the economy can result in the decline of certain industries and the growth of others. This can lead to a mismatch between the skills of workers and the skills required for available jobs.

Structural unemployment can result in long-term unemployment, as workers may be unable to find new employment in their field or acquire new skills quickly enough to remain competitive in the job market.

Structural unemployment is different in that it has a longer duration. The frictional unemployed have skills and a specialty, they have the opportunity to get a job without additional retraining, the structural unemployed sometimes need not only retraining but also a change of residence.

Both types of unemployment must constantly exist in the economy. It is impossible to destroy them or reduce them to zero. People will look for other jobs, and strive to improve their well-being, and firms will look for more qualified workers, striving to maximize profits. That is, in a market economy there are constant fluctuations in supply and demand in the labour market. (JANOSKI, OLIVER, 2014)

The calculation of structural unemployment is not as straightforward as the calculation of frictional unemployment. It requires a deeper analysis of the labour market

and the underlying structural factors that are causing the unemployment. One common way to estimate structural unemployment is to use a statistical method called the "natural rate of unemployment."

An example of structural unemployment is a manufacturing worker who has lost their job due to the automation of the industry. As technology improves and machines become more efficient, many companies are choosing to automate their operations, leading to a decrease in the number of jobs available for manual labourers. This worker may have a specific set of skills and experience related to manufacturing, but these skills are no longer in demand in the current job market.

Another example is a coal miner who has lost their job due to the decline of the coal industry. As the world shifts towards cleaner energy sources, the demand for coal has decreased, leading to a reduction in jobs in the coal mining industry. The miner may have years of experience working in the coal mines, but their skills are no longer in demand in the current job market. (PETROSKY-NADEAU, WASMER, 2017)

In both cases, unemployment is caused by a fundamental shift in the economy or in the structure of industries that result in certain skills or industries becoming obsolete. This type of unemployment can be long-term and can be difficult for workers to transition into new industries or develop new skills.

### 3.1.2.3 Cyclic unemployment

Cyclical unemployment occurs when an economy experiences a collapse in spending. All workers, young and mature alike, suffer when cyclical unemployment increases. (MAYER, MACCLUM, 2020)

This type of unemployment is associated with the business cycle and occurs when the overall demand for goods and services decreases, leading to a decrease in hiring and an increase in unemployment.

During economic downturns, there is a decrease in demand for goods and services. Cyclic unemployment is caused by the fluctuations in the business cycle, which are characterized by periods of economic expansion and contraction, which results in a decrease in the number of jobs available.

Cyclic unemployment can lead to a decrease in the standard of living for individuals who are out of work, as they have less disposable income to spend on goods and services.

Addressing cyclic unemployment is important for both individuals who are affected by it and for the economy as a whole. Policies that support the creation of new jobs and the protection of existing jobs can help mitigate the effects of cyclic unemployment and ensure that individuals can remain financially secure during economic downturns.

To calculate cyclical unemployment, economists use a method called the "output gap." The output gap is the difference between the actual level of economic output and the potential level of output that could be produced if all resources, including labour, were fully utilized.

If the actual level of economic output is below the potential level, it suggests that there is a cyclical downturn in the economy, and the unemployment rate is likely to be higher than the natural rate. The gap between the actual and potential level of output is used to estimate the level of cyclical unemployment in the economy.

For example, if the actual unemployment rate is 7%, and the natural rate of unemployment is estimated to be 4%, it suggests that there is 3% cyclical unemployment present in the economy. This means that 3% of the labour force is unemployed due to the current downturn in economic activity. (CLASEN, 2013)

An example of cyclical unemployment is a restaurant worker who is laid off during an economic downturn. When consumers have less disposable income during a recession, they may cut back on discretionary spending, such as eating out at restaurants. This decrease in demand for restaurant meals can lead to a decrease in the demand for restaurant workers, resulting in layoffs.

In this case, unemployment is caused by a decrease in demand for labour that is related to the overall state of the economy. This type of unemployment can be temporary, as the economy may recover and demand for labour may increase once again. However, during a severe economic downturn, unemployment can be long-term and can have significant impacts on workers and their families.

#### 3.1.2.4 Seasonal unemployment

Seasonal unemployment is a type of unemployment that occurs as a result of changes in demand for goods and services in different seasons of the year. This type of unemployment is most common in industries such as agriculture, tourism, and retail, where the demand for goods and services varies greatly depending on the time of year.



Seasonal unemployment results in an increase in the number of individuals who are out of work during certain times of the year, as businesses reduce the number of employees they have on payroll.

Addressing seasonal unemployment is important for both individuals who are affected by it and for the economy as a whole. Policies that support the creation of new jobs and the protection of existing jobs can help mitigate the effects of seasonal unemployment and ensure that individuals can remain financially secure during times of low demand. Additionally, programs that provide support and assistance to individuals who are out of work can help to minimize the negative impact of seasonal unemployment on mental and physical health. (REIFF, 2015)

The calculation of seasonal unemployment is based on the comparison of the unemployment rate in a particular industry or region during the peak season versus the off-season. If there is a significant difference between the two rates, it suggests that there is a high level of seasonal unemployment.

For example, suppose the unemployment rate in a tourist town is 4% during the peak summer season when many tourists are visiting, and it jumps to 8% during the winter off-season when tourist traffic slows down. In that case, it suggests that there is a significant amount of seasonal unemployment in the town's tourist industry.

To estimate the level of seasonal unemployment, economists often use data on employment and unemployment rates in specific industries or regions over time. They may also use surveys or other data collection methods to gather information on the number of workers who are laid off or unable to find work during the off-season.

Overall, the calculation of seasonal unemployment requires a careful analysis of the specific industries and regions affected by seasonal fluctuations in demand for labour.

#### 3.1.2.5 Natural unemployment

Since the existence of frictional and structural unemployment is inevitable, economists call their sum natural unemployment.

The natural level of unemployment is its level that corresponds to full employment (includes frictional and structural forms of unemployment), due to natural causes (staff turnover, migration, demographic reasons), not related to the dynamics of economic growth.

Natural unemployment occurs when labour markets are balanced, that is, when the number of job seekers is equal to the number of available jobs. Thus, full employment does not imply the absence of unemployment, but only a certain minimum necessary level of unemployment. (MAYER, MACCLUM, 2020)

Despite the different causes of occurrence, unemployment is a natural accompaniment of economic development in a competitive environment. Its presence is inevitable, and necessary for the effective development of the state economy. (REIFF, 2015)

The calculation of natural unemployment is not straightforward, and economists use various methods to estimate it. One common method is to use the non-accelerating inflation rate of unemployment (NAIRU), which is the rate of unemployment at which inflation is stable or not accelerating.

To estimate NAIRU, economists use a combination of data on inflation, wages, and unemployment, as well as other macroeconomic indicators. They also consider long-term trends in the economy, such as changes in the labour force participation rate, technological advancements, and demographic changes.

Once NAIRU is estimated, economists can compare it to the actual unemployment rate to determine the level of natural unemployment in the economy. If the actual unemployment rate is below NAIRU, it suggests that there is upward pressure on wages and prices, which could lead to inflation. If the actual unemployment rate is above NAIRU, it suggests that there is slack in the labour market, and wages and prices are likely to remain stable.

Overall, the calculation of natural unemployment requires a careful analysis of the underlying structural and frictional factors that affect the labour market, as well as an understanding of the broader macroeconomic conditions that influence employment and inflation.

### **3.1.3 Measures of unemployment**

Measures of unemployment are statistical tools used to quantify the number of individuals in a population who are without work but are actively seeking employment. Several different measures of unemployment are used to provide a comprehensive picture of labour market conditions. (ROUTLEY, 2018)

- U-3 Unemployment Rate: This is the most widely cited measure of unemployment and is calculated as the percentage of the labour force that is unemployed but actively seeking employment.
- U-6 Unemployment Rate: This measure of unemployment is similar to the U-3 rate, but includes individuals who are unemployed, as well as those who are underemployed (i.e., working part-time but seeking full-time work) and those who have given up on looking for work.
- Labour Force Participation Rate: This measure calculates the percentage of the population that is either employed or actively seeking employment.
- Employment-Population Ratio: This measure calculates the proportion of the civilian non-institutionalized population that is employed.

Each of these measures provides valuable insights into the labour market and can be used to track changes in employment over time and across different demographic groups. Understanding these measures is important for policymakers, economists, and the general public to effectively monitor labour market conditions and inform decisions about economic policies.

## **3.2 Psychological aspects of unemployment**

Our jobs are often a big part of our identities. Consequently, losing our jobs can threaten our identities, and these threats can harm our mental health. (NORRIS, 2016)

The psychological aspects of unemployment refer to the emotional, cognitive, and behavioural consequences that can occur when individuals are without work. It has long been recognized that unemployment is associated with a series of negative health consequences, both physical and psychological, which tend to grow disproportionately with the duration of unemployment. (COPPOLA, O'HIGGINS, 2016)

### **3.2.1 Mental health**

Unemployment is associated with higher rates of depression, anxiety, and stress. The loss of a job and the resulting financial insecurity can lead to feelings of worthlessness, hopelessness, and stress, which can, in turn, contribute to the development of mental health problems. (NORRIS, 2016)

### **3.2.2 Reduced sense of purpose**

Unemployment can also lead to a loss of identity, as individuals may no longer feel a sense of purpose or fulfilment from their work. This can lead to feelings of hopelessness and a sense of directionless.

Social isolation: Unemployment can result in social isolation, as individuals may have difficulty forming and maintaining relationships with others. This can lead to feelings of loneliness and a sense of disconnectedness from others. (NORRIS, 2016)

### **3.2.3 Decreased self-esteem**

Unemployment can also impact an individual's self-esteem and self-worth, as the lack of a job can lead to feelings of worthlessness and inadequacy.

As unemployment continues, a person's hierarchy of motives is broken. Such significant motives as caring for one's authority and professional competence lose their significance. Dissatisfaction with needs and violation of their hierarchy contribute to the formation of displeasure, anxiety, and other negative motives among the unemployed, up to aggression.

The unemployed go through certain stages of emotional experience in connection with the loss of a job. The typology proposed by the scientists is as follows:

1. Stage of shock and emotional upheaval. Sometimes a person experiences this stage only after learning that he is being fired. In many situations, this state is accompanied by a feeling of relief - an event that a person has long expected has happened, and the painful uncertainty for a person has ended.
2. Stage of rejection of reality. The unemployed man refuses to believe what happened to him. The refusal to accept reality becomes more acute, the more unexpected and less likely the loss of a job seems to a person.
3. Stage of anger, and resentment about the loss of work. A person is openly indignant, and this indignation can be addressed to relatives, former colleagues, and other people who surround the person.
4. Stage of depression, melancholy. This state is close to despair. The level of volitional regulation and search activity of a person sharply decreases. A person "withdraws into himself", he comes to terms with the idea that there are no prospects, and attempts to change anything in life are futile.

5. Stage of reevaluation of values. At this stage, there is a revision of the relationship of the unemployed to himself and the situation. A person develops an intention to act, a desire arises to change the situation, transform it, and break out of it. If there is no reassessment of values, then the situation for a person will not fundamentally change. A person retains a sense of hopelessness, as well as his uselessness. (RAO, 2020)

### **3.3 Overview of the relationship between unemployment and mental health**

The relationship between unemployment and mental health is complex and can be bidirectional, meaning that unemployment can impact mental health. Unemployment can be a highly stressful experience, as individuals are faced with the loss of a job and the resulting financial insecurity. (NORRIS, 2016)

Unemployment can have significant and lasting impacts on mental health. Prolonged unemployment can exacerbate the negative psychological effects of unemployment, such as depression, anxiety, and stress, and can lead to a range of negative outcomes.

Individuals who experience long-term unemployment may experience a sense of powerlessness, as they may feel that they are unable to find work despite their best efforts. This can contribute to feelings of worthlessness and a lack of self-esteem, which can impact mental health. Additionally, unemployment can lead to social isolation, as individuals may have difficulty forming and maintaining relationships with others, leading to feelings of loneliness and disconnection.

Financial insecurity is also a concern for individuals who experience long-term unemployment. Prolonged unemployment can lead to financial difficulties, such as debt, poverty, and homelessness, which can increase stress and anxiety and contribute to the development of mental health problems.

Long-term unemployment can also have broader social and economic impacts, as individuals may become disconnected from the labour force, resulting in a loss of skills, experience, and opportunities for professional development. This can further impact mental health and well-being, as individuals may feel that they are no longer able to contribute to society or achieve their career goals. (NORRIS, 2016)

### **3.3.1 The role of social support**

Social support can play an important role in mitigating the negative effects of unemployment on mental health. Social support refers to the help, encouragement, and comfort that individuals receive from others, including friends, family, and community. Social support can provide a buffer against the negative psychological impacts of unemployment and can help individuals manage stress and maintain positive mental health.

Research has shown that individuals who have strong social networks and social support systems are better able to cope with unemployment and its associated stress and anxiety. (NORRIS, 2016) Social support can provide a sense of belonging and a sense of community, which can be especially important for individuals who experience long-term unemployment and may feel socially isolated. Social support can also help to reduce feelings of hopelessness and to promote resilience and a sense of personal control.

In addition to providing emotional support, social networks can also provide practical assistance, such as help with job searching or assistance with meeting basic needs, such as food and housing. This type of support can be particularly important for individuals who experience long-term unemployment and financial difficulties.

Education and training have long been recognized as being central in determining young people's, and consequently also adults', labour market outcomes. (COPPOLA, O'HIGGINS, 2016)

## **3.4 Economic aspects of unemployment**

### **3.4.1 Decreased consumer spending**

Unemployment can lead to decreased consumer spending, which can have significant economic impacts. When individuals are out of work, they have less money to spend on goods and services, which can lead to a decrease in demand for these goods and services. This, in turn, can lead to a reduction in production and sales, potentially leading to lower profits and even business closures. Furthermore, if the trend of decreased consumer spending continues, it can lead to a recession and long-term economic downturn. (PETROSKY-NADEAU, WASMER, 2017)

The decrease in consumer spending can also have a ripple effect throughout the economy. Businesses that rely on consumer spending may reduce their workforce, leading to further unemployment and decreased consumer spending.

### **3.4.2 Reduced tax revenues**

Unemployment can also lead to reduced tax revenues, which can have significant economic impacts on governments and societies. When individuals are out of work, they are not earning income and are not paying income taxes, which can lead to a decrease in tax revenues for governments. Furthermore, if businesses are not profitable due to decreased consumer spending, they may pay less in corporate taxes or even go out of business, resulting in a further decrease in tax revenues.

Reduced tax revenues can lead to budget deficits for governments, which may result in cuts to important services and infrastructure projects. Additionally, if governments are unable to maintain their spending levels, it can lead to further decreases in economic growth, as government spending is an important component of the overall economy. (PETROSKY-NADEAU, WASMER, 2017)

To address the issue of reduced tax revenues due to unemployment, governments may need to implement policies that support job creation and economic growth. This can include investing in infrastructure projects, providing tax incentives for businesses to hire new employees, and offering training and education programs to help individuals acquire the skills needed to secure employment. Additionally, governments may need to consider increasing taxes on those who are still employed to offset the decrease in tax revenues from those who are unemployed.

### **3.4.3 Increased government spending**

Unemployment can also lead to increased government spending, which can have significant economic impacts. When individuals are out of work, they may need to rely on government assistance programs such as unemployment insurance, welfare, and other social safety net programs. These programs can be costly for governments to administer and can lead to increased government spending.

Moreover, unemployment can also lead to an increase in demand for other government services such as healthcare and social services. This can be particularly true for individuals who lose their employer-sponsored health insurance when they become unemployed. If these individuals cannot afford to purchase health insurance on their own, they may need to rely on government-funded healthcare programs.

Increased government spending can lead to budget deficits, which may have further economic impacts such as increased borrowing costs for governments and reduced investor

confidence in government bonds. To address the issue of increased government spending due to unemployment, governments may need to implement policies that support job creation and economic growth, as this can help reduce the number of individuals who rely on government assistance programs. Additionally, governments may need to consider reevaluating their social safety net programs to ensure that they are sustainable and effective in supporting those in need. (PETROSKY-NADEAU, WASMER, 2017)

#### **3.4.4 Decreased investment**

Unemployment can also lead to decreased investment. When businesses are not profitable due to decreased consumer spending, they may be less likely to invest in new equipment, technology, or expansion. Additionally, if there is a lack of skilled workers available due to high unemployment rates, businesses may be less likely to invest in training programs for their employees or to invest in new projects that require specialized skills.

Investment is a critical driver of economic growth and productivity, as it enables businesses to improve their operations, expand into new markets, and develop new products and services. When businesses invest, they create new jobs and opportunities for workers, which can help to reduce unemployment rates and boost consumer spending. Additionally, investment in research and development can lead to new technologies and innovations that can improve the overall efficiency and competitiveness of the economy. (CLASEN, 2013)

Conversely, decreased investment due to unemployment can hurt economic growth and competitiveness. If businesses are not investing in new projects and technologies, they may fall behind their competitors and become less competitive in the market. This can lead to reduced profits, lower wages for workers, and decreased economic activity.

Therefore, governments and policymakers need to encourage investment by implementing policies that support job creation and economic growth. This can include measures such as tax incentives for businesses to invest in new projects and training programs to help workers acquire the skills needed for new jobs. By promoting investment, governments can help to create new opportunities for workers and businesses, which can drive economic growth and improve overall prosperity.



## **3.5 Social costs of unemployment**

### **3.5.1 Poverty and homelessness**

Unemployment can lead to an increase in poverty and homelessness, which can have social and economic impacts. When individuals are unemployed, they may struggle to meet their basic needs, such as food, shelter, and healthcare. This can lead to an increase in poverty rates, as individuals and families may not have the resources to support themselves.

Additionally, unemployment can lead to an increase in homelessness, as individuals who are unable to pay for housing may be forced to leave their homes or apartments. Homelessness can have a range of negative impacts on individuals, including increased risk of physical and mental health issues, reduced access to education and job opportunities, and increased exposure to crime and violence. (JUNANKAR, 2016)

Research has shown that there is a strong correlation between unemployment and crime rates. Studies have found that higher levels of unemployment are associated with higher rates of property crime, such as theft and burglary, as well as violent crime, such as assault and homicide.

The impacts of poverty and homelessness can also have wider economic consequences. For example, individuals who are living in poverty may be less likely to purchase goods and services, which can lead to decreased demand and economic growth. Additionally, homelessness can lead to increased costs for healthcare, law enforcement, and other public services, as individuals may require additional support and resources to meet their basic needs.

To address the issue of poverty and homelessness due to unemployment, governments and communities may need to implement policies and programs that support individuals and families who are struggling to make ends meet. This can include social safety net programs, such as unemployment insurance, food assistance, and affordable housing initiatives. Additionally, governments may need to work with businesses and non-profit organizations to create new job opportunities and training programs that can help individuals acquire the skills and experience needed to secure employment and support themselves and their families.

### **3.6 Job search strategies and psychological well-being**

The job search process can have a remarkable impact on an individual's psychological well-being. Effective job search strategies can help individuals to reduce stress and anxiety, improve self-esteem, and maintain positive mental health. Some of these strategies include:

1. **Networking:** Building a network of professional and personal contacts can help individuals to find job opportunities and to feel more connected and supported during the job search process.
2. **Staying organized:** Maintaining a well-organized job search plan, including tracking applications and following up on leads, can help individuals feel more in control and avoid feelings of being overwhelmed.
3. **Practicing self-care:** Engaging in self-care activities, such as exercise and mindfulness, can help individuals to reduce stress and anxiety and to maintain positive mental health during the job search process.
4. **Seeking professional help:** Individuals who are struggling with the psychological impact of unemployment may benefit from seeking the support of a therapist or career counsellor.
5. **Improving skills:** Taking advantage of unemployment to improve skills and build new abilities can help individuals feel more confident and competent during the job search process.
6. **Setting realistic goals:** Setting realistic and achievable goals for the job search process can help individuals to stay motivated and to maintain a positive outlook.
7. **Building resilience:** Practicing resilience-building techniques, such as mindfulness and positive self-talk, can help individuals to stay resilient in the face of rejection and to maintain positive mental health. (JUNANKAR, 2016)

It is important to remember that the job search process can be stressful and challenging and that it is normal to experience ups and downs along the way. By utilizing effective job search strategies and seeking support as needed, individuals can improve their psychological well-being and increase their chances of finding meaningful employment.

## **3.7 Discrimination**

### **3.7.1 Types of discrimination**

Discrimination in the workplace can take various forms, including direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment, and victimization. (O'DEMPSEY, 2013)

- Direct discrimination involves treating a person less favourably because of a protected characteristic they possess, such as their race, gender, or disability. This can also apply to a protected characteristic possessed by someone associated with them or a characteristic they are perceived to possess, even if it is incorrect. Although direct discrimination can sometimes be lawful if objectively justifiable, it does not have to be intentional to be considered discriminatory.
- Indirect discrimination, on the other hand, occurs when a rule or practice is put in place that applies to everyone but could put those with a certain protected characteristic at a disadvantage. To be considered indirect discrimination, the rule or practice must apply equally to a group of people, have the effect of putting those with the protected characteristic at a disadvantage, and be unable to be objectively justified.
- Harassment involves unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating or hostile environment for them. This can include behaviour such as bullying, gossip, inappropriate comments or questions, and even exclusion from meetings or events. The victim's perception of the behaviour is more important than the intent of the harasser.
- Victimization occurs when an employee suffers a detriment because they have raised a complaint or given evidence relating to discrimination or have done anything else for the Equality Act. This can include being labelled a troublemaker or being denied training or promotion.

### **3.7.2 Discrimination and its impact on unemployment**

Discrimination can have an impact on unemployment rates, particularly for marginalized and underrepresented groups. When discrimination occurs in the workplace, it can limit job opportunities for individuals who are discriminated against and make it harder for them to secure and maintain employment. (RAO, 2020)

For example, if an employer discriminates against job applicants based on their race or ethnicity, qualified individuals from those groups may not be hired for jobs they are qualified for, leaving them unemployed or underemployed. Similarly, if an employer discriminates against individuals with disabilities, they may not provide reasonable accommodations, making it harder for those individuals to perform their job duties and maintain employment.

Discrimination can also impact unemployment rates indirectly by perpetuating systemic inequalities that affect certain groups' ability to access education, training, and other resources necessary to succeed in the workforce. For example, if a particular group consistently faces discrimination in education, they may be less likely to have the skills and qualifications necessary to secure employment.

Discrimination in the workplace not only harms the individuals who are directly affected, but it can also harm the organization as a whole. Labor should be reclaimed to generate decommodified spaces and to address the alienation of labor, which will further allow the reconfiguration of markets and companies into a fairer and more equitable place. (JANOSKI, OLIVER, 2014) Employers who engage in discriminatory practices may miss out on qualified and talented individuals who could contribute to their success, which can ultimately harm their bottom line. Discrimination can also create a toxic workplace environment, leading to lower morale and productivity among employees who feel undervalued and unsupported. This can lead to high employee turnover and difficulty in attracting top talent.

Furthermore, discrimination can contribute to social and economic inequality by perpetuating systemic barriers that prevent certain groups from accessing employment opportunities and resources. (LORBER, 2012) For example, if a particular group is consistently excluded from job opportunities, they may struggle to build the necessary skills and experience to advance in their careers. This can perpetuate a cycle of poverty and disadvantage that can last for generations.

Therefore, individuals, organizations, and governments need to work together to address discrimination and promote diversity, equity, and inclusion. By creating more equitable workplaces and societies, we can help eliminate systemic barriers and create more opportunities for all individuals to succeed, regardless of their background or identity.

### **3.8 Overview of job search challenges**

Job seekers face a range of challenges when searching for employment opportunities. Some common challenges include:

1. **Competition:** In many industries and geographic areas, there can be a large number of job seekers competing for a relatively small number of job openings. This can make it difficult for individual job seekers to stand out and be selected for a position.
2. **Skill requirements:** Many jobs require specific skills or qualifications, such as degrees, certifications, or experience in a particular field. Job seekers who lack these qualifications may struggle to find suitable employment opportunities.
3. **Geographic limitations:** In some cases, job seekers may be limited in their ability to relocate or commute to certain areas. This can make it more difficult to find job openings that are a good match for their skills and experience.
4. **Limited job opportunities:** Some industries or regions may have a limited number of job openings or may be experiencing a period of economic downturn, which can make it harder for job seekers to find employment.
5. **Discrimination:** Unfortunately, some job seekers may face discrimination based on their race, gender, age, or other factors. This can make it more difficult for them to find suitable job openings or be selected for positions.
6. **Lack of experience:** Entry-level job seekers often face the challenge of lacking sufficient experience to qualify for jobs in their desired field. This can create a cycle in which they struggle to gain experience without being allowed to do so.

These challenges can make the job search process frustrating and discouraging for many job seekers. However, there are strategies that job seekers can use to overcome these challenges and increase their chances of finding suitable employment opportunities.

#### **3.8.1 Ways for young people to find a job**

This is a common challenge that many young adults face when they first enter the job market. Without significant work experience, it can be difficult to stand out from other job candidates and demonstrate to potential employers that they have the skills and abilities necessary to succeed in a given role. (FERGUSSON & YEATES, 2021)

1. **Use online job search platforms:** Many job search platforms like Indeed, Glassdoor, and LinkedIn allow job seekers to search for jobs based on their skills and experience.

They can also set up job alerts to receive notifications when new job opportunities become available.

2. Network with peers and professionals: Young people can network with their peers and professionals in their field of interest. They can attend industry events, join professional organizations, and connect with professionals on LinkedIn.
3. Leverage college career services: College career services can offer a variety of resources and support to help young people find job opportunities. They can assist with resume writing, interview preparation, and job search strategies.
4. Apply for internships: Internships can provide valuable experience and help young people build their skills and network. Many internships are paid and can lead to full-time employment opportunities.
5. Consider entry-level positions: Many entry-level positions require minimal experience and can provide a pathway to higher-paying positions. Young people can look for entry-level positions in their field of interest and apply for those positions.
6. Utilize social media: Social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook can be used to connect with potential employers and industry professionals. Young people can follow industry leaders and engage in conversations related to their field of interest.
7. Create a personal website: Creating a personal website can help young people showcase their skills, experience, and portfolio. This can be a valuable tool for employers to see their work and consider them for job opportunities.
8. Seek out mentorship: Finding a mentor in their field of interest can provide valuable guidance and support to young people. They can learn from their mentor's experience and use their insights to navigate the job search process.

By taking these steps, young adults can gain valuable work experience and build their resumes, which can help them stand out from other job candidates and increase their chances of finding meaningful employment in a competitive job market.

### **3.9 Unemployment statistics in the Czech Republic**

Summary of Employment, Unemployment, and Economic Inactivity Trends in the Czech Republic:

**Q1 2022:**

- The average number of employed persons decreased by 76.2 thousand compared to Q4 2021.
- The number of working persons aged 15+ years decreased by 24.9 thousand compared to the previous year, mainly due to a decline in working males. However, the number of young working persons (up to 24 years) increased, especially among females.
- The self-employed decreased by 23.2 thousand persons, mainly due to a decline in the number of self-employed with employees.
- Employment decreased in the secondary sector of industry and construction, but increased in the tertiary sector of services.

**Unemployment:**

- The number of unemployed persons increased by 5.4 thousand in Q1 2022 compared to Q4 2021.
- The total number of unemployed aged 15+ years decreased by 49.0 thousand compared to the previous year.
- The general unemployment rate in the age group of 15-64 years old decreased by 0.9 percentage point (p.p.) to 2.5% in Q1 2022.

**Economic Inactivity:**

- The number of economically inactive persons aged 15+ years decreased by 84.9 thousand compared to the previous year.
- The number of economically inactive females decreased by 47.5 thousand, while the number of economically inactive males dropped by 37.4 thousand.

**Q2 2022:**

- The average number of employed persons increased by 14.8 thousand compared to Q1 2022.
- The number of working persons aged 15+ years increased by 123.2 thousand compared to the previous year, mainly due to an increase in working females and those aged 45-64 years.
- The number of employees increased, and the self-employed without employees showed a significant increase.

- Employment increased in the tertiary sector of services, especially in trade, accommodation, and food services.

**Unemployment:**

- The number of unemployed persons increased by 1.5 thousand in Q2 2022 compared to Q1 2022.
- The total number of unemployed aged 15+ years decreased by 28.7 thousand compared to the previous year.
- The general unemployment rate in the age group of 15-64 years old decreased by 0.6 p.p. to 2.4% in Q2 2022.

**Economic Inactivity:**

- The number of economically inactive persons aged 15+ years decreased by 82.9 thousand compared to the previous year.

**Q3 2022:**

- The average number of employed persons increased by 28.8 thousand compared to Q2 2022.
- The number of working persons aged 15+ years increased by 61.9 thousand compared to the previous year, with a significant increase in working females and those aged 45-64 years.
- Employment increased in the tertiary sector of services, especially in human health, social work activities, and transportation and storage.

**Unemployment:**

- The number of unemployed persons decreased by 8.1 thousand in Q3 2022 compared to Q2 2022.
- The total number of unemployed aged 15+ years remained relatively stable compared to the previous year.
- The general unemployment rate in the age group of 15-64 years old decreased by 0.5 p.p. to 2.3% in Q3 2022.

**Economic Inactivity:**

- The number of economically inactive persons aged 15+ years decreased by 25.7 thousand compared to the previous year.



#### **Q4 2022:**

- The average number of employed persons increased by 37.7 thousand compared to Q3 2022.
- The number of working persons aged 15+ years increased by 45.2 thousand compared to the previous year, with an increase in working females and those aged 45-64 years.
- Employment increased in the secondary sector of industry and construction, influenced by an increase in manufacturing, and in the tertiary sector of services, especially in human health and social work activities.

#### **Unemployment:**

- The number of unemployed persons decreased by 9.5 thousand in Q4 2022 compared to Q3 2022.
- The total number of unemployed aged 15+ years remained relatively stable compared to the previous year.
- The general unemployment rate in the age group of 15-64 years old remained almost unchanged at 2.2% in Q4 2022.

#### **Economic Inactivity:**

- The number of economically inactive persons aged 15+ years decreased by 35.2 thousand compared to the previous year.

Overall, the employment rate increased, while the general unemployment rate decreased in 2022. Employment growth was observed in the tertiary sector, with services and trade showing significant increases. The number of self-employed without employees also increased. The development of employment was positive in various age groups and education levels, particularly among young working persons and those with secondary education without A-level examination. The economic inactivity rate decreased throughout the year. ([www.czso.cz](http://www.czso.cz))

## **4 Practical Part**

### **4.1 Methodological Approach**

This section of the diploma research is dedicated to outlining the methodology employed in conducting the study. In the context of this work, a comprehensive approach was utilized, which included the use of a questionnaire and the implementation of surveys in both the real world (on the streets of the city) and in the virtual environment (through social networks). The questionnaire was translated into three languages (Russian, Czech, and English) to provide options for respondents. This part of the diploma work will describe the process of questionnaire development, data collection methodology, as well as their analysis and interpretation.

### **4.2 Questionnaire Development and Context**

In this section, the detailed structure of the questionnaire will be examined, including the questions designed to assess the impact of unemployment on an individual's psychological well-being and overall health. The process of questionnaire development, the factors considered to ensure a comprehensive exploration of the topic's aspects, and their alignment with the research objectives and hypotheses will be discussed.

### **4.3 Data Collection Procedure**

This section will provide information about the methods employed to collect data. The process of conducting surveys in the city streets and through social media will be described in detail. Important aspects such as timeframes, respondent selection, and locations will be presented with the aim of ensuring data reliability and representativeness.

This study was conducted anonymously. Conducting the research anonymously can help obtain more candid responses from respondents, especially on such a sensitive topic as unemployment. The questionnaire was distributed in three different locations: at CZU University, on Wenceslas Square, and via email. Using three different distribution locations can contribute to obtaining diverse data and account for different respondent groups.

The data collection process took two weeks. Respondents were randomly selected, and the only criterion was age up to 35 years, as the study was conducted among young people. Each question was carefully chosen to investigate various aspects of unemployment,

the difficulties respondents may face when searching for or losing a job, and the potential consequences.

Analysing all of this data will provide a better understanding of the influence of various factors on the labour market and the psychological well-being of the population. It will also identify potential problem areas that require attention and improvement in social and economic policies. The research results can serve as a basis for developing social and economic policies aimed at improving the youth unemployment situation.

#### **4.4 Research Goal and Hypotheses**

Before developing the questionnaire, it is essential to clearly define the research goals and hypotheses:

##### **4.4.1 Goals**

1. To assess the impact of unemployment on psychological well-being.
2. To identify factors influencing psychological well-being and overall health during unemployment.
3. To determine if discrimination in employment still exists and whether individuals have encountered such a problem.
4. To determine the percentage of respondents without higher education, helping to gauge its relevance in the modern world.

##### **4.4.2 Hypotheses**

1. Unemployment has a negative impact on mental health.
2. Long-term unemployment leads to a decline in self-esteem and self-worth.
3. Discrimination in employment still exists and whether individuals have encountered such a problem.
4. Unemployment contributes to an increased risk of substance abuse and addictive behaviours.

The provided questionnaire will be divided into six parts, each of which will examine different aspects influencing the job search process and the consequences of unemployment.

The first part of the questionnaire consists of personal questions such as age, gender, marital status, and the number of children. This information allows for a more detailed analysis of the results and the identification of correlations or differences in responses based on respondents' personal characteristics.

In the second part of the questionnaire, it is intended to ask questions about the participants' educational level, their current employment status, and whether they have experienced layoffs or temporary unemployment. If the answer is affirmative, it will also be interesting to know how long it took to find a new job.

The third part of the questionnaire is focused on studying the psychological aspects of unemployment. The questions in this section will address the level of stress, its frequency, the impact of unemployment on respondents' psychological well-being, and changes in their mental health.

The fourth part of the questionnaire is dedicated to analysing the influence of various factors on psychological well-being. Here, it is explored how financial aspects, social isolation, alcohol consumption, and family conflicts affect the mental health of respondents.

The fifth part of the questionnaire focuses on the following aspects: difficulties that respondents may encounter when searching for a job, their experience with professional training and employment courses, thoughts about the possibility of starting their own business, and readiness to accept any available job.

The sixth and final part of the questionnaire is dedicated to analysing workplace discrimination. Here it will be investigated whether respondents have experienced discrimination issues, whether there is gender pay disparities, and how they perceive the level of equality in their field of activity.

Overall, the analysis of all this data will provide a better understanding of the influence of various factors on the labour market and the psychological well-being of the population. It will also identify potential problem areas that require attention and improvement in social and economic policies. The analysis of psychological aspects of unemployment can be useful for developing programs and activities to support and rehabilitate unemployed individuals, as well as for determining specific needs for psychological assistance and counselling.

## 5 Results and Discussion

### 5.1 Data Processing and Analysis

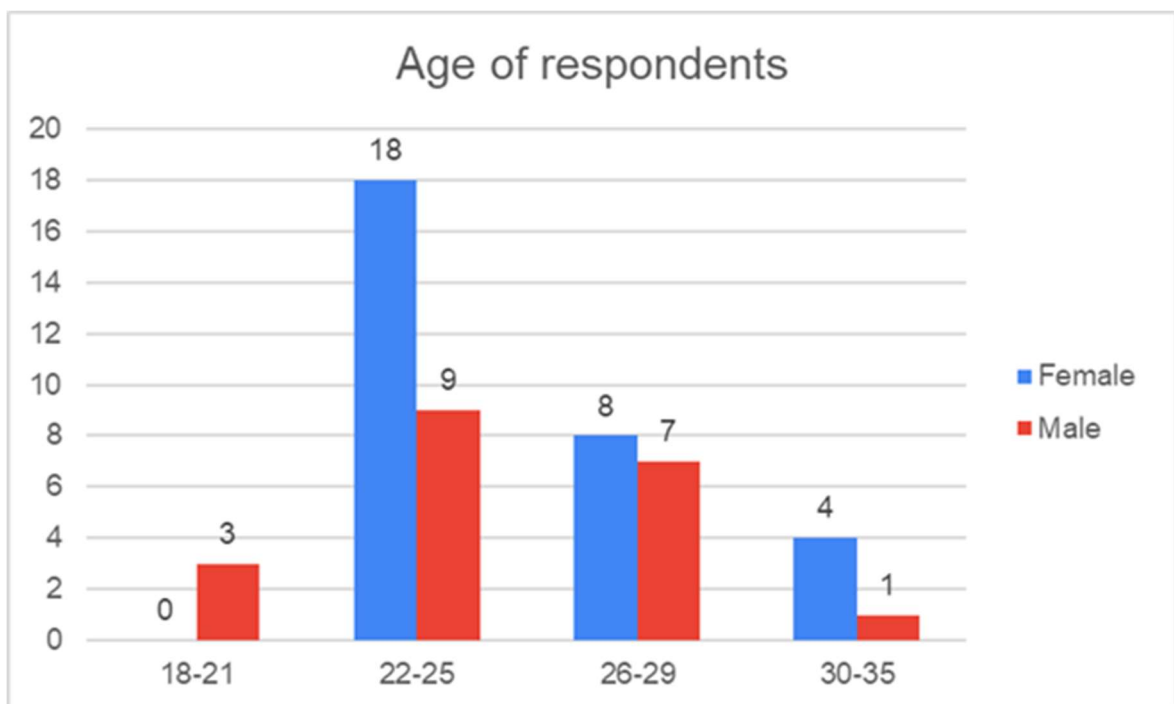
This section will describe the system used for processing the collected data. The methods employed for structuring information from the surveys and the analysis methods aimed at testing formulated hypotheses and deriving conclusions will be outlined.

Before analysing the collected data, a check for errors, omissions, and anomalies was conducted. 65 individuals were initially involved in the study; however, 12 of them declined to participate, and 3 surveys should be excluded from the analysis as they did not provide essential responses. The survey results were entered into an Excel spreadsheet. Subsequently, using Excel's tools and functions, data analysis was performed to identify patterns that could contribute to a deeper understanding of the survey results.

### 5.2 Statistics

Following this, data classification was conducted, and a naturally occurring large group of individuals aged 22 to 25 years was identified, which was one of the objectives of this research. A detailed analysis of each item in the questionnaire will be presented next.

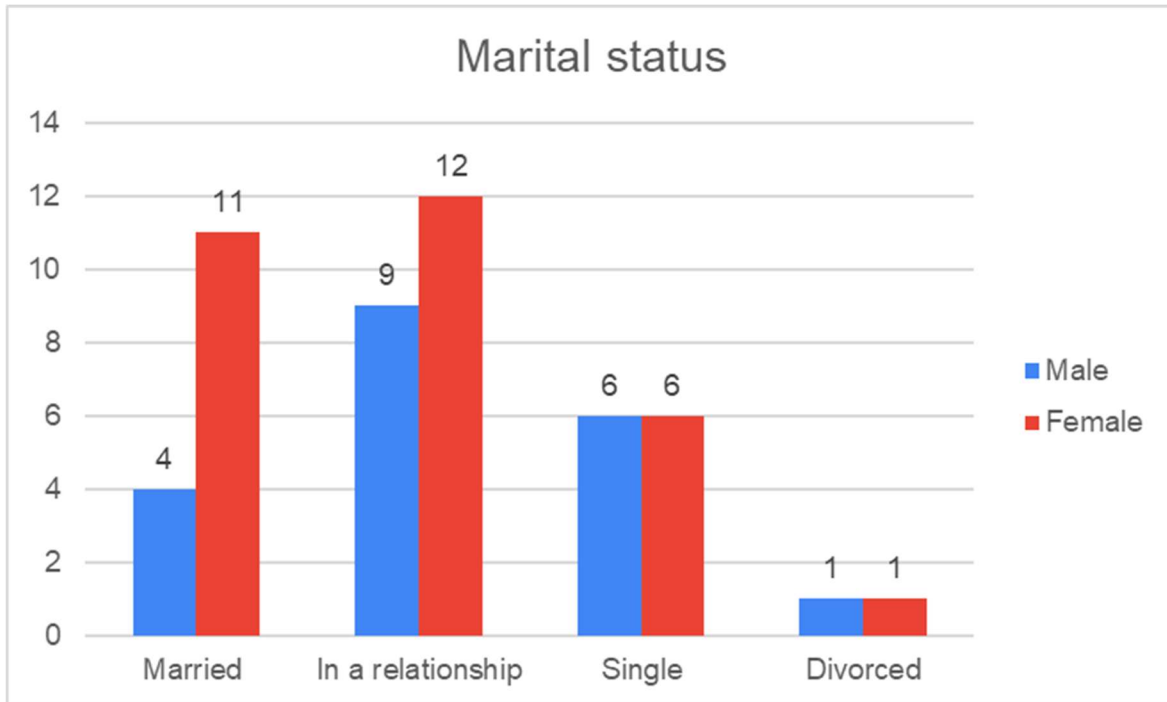
Graph 1 – Age of respondents



Source: Own research

In total, the questionnaire was completed by 30 women and 20 men. The primary demographic category consisted of individuals aged 22 to 25 years.

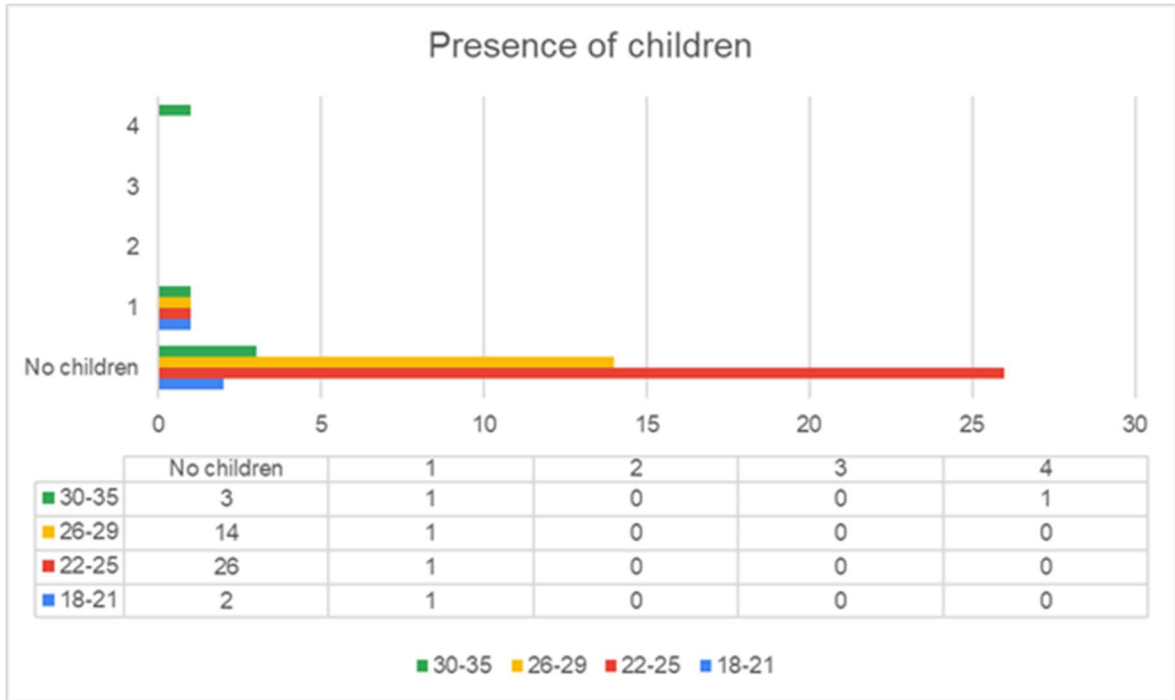
Graph 2 – Marital status



Source: Own research

As evident from the graph, the majority of respondents are either in a relationship or married, accounting for 72%. Only 4% of the surveyed individuals have experienced divorce, while 24% are not currently in a relationship.

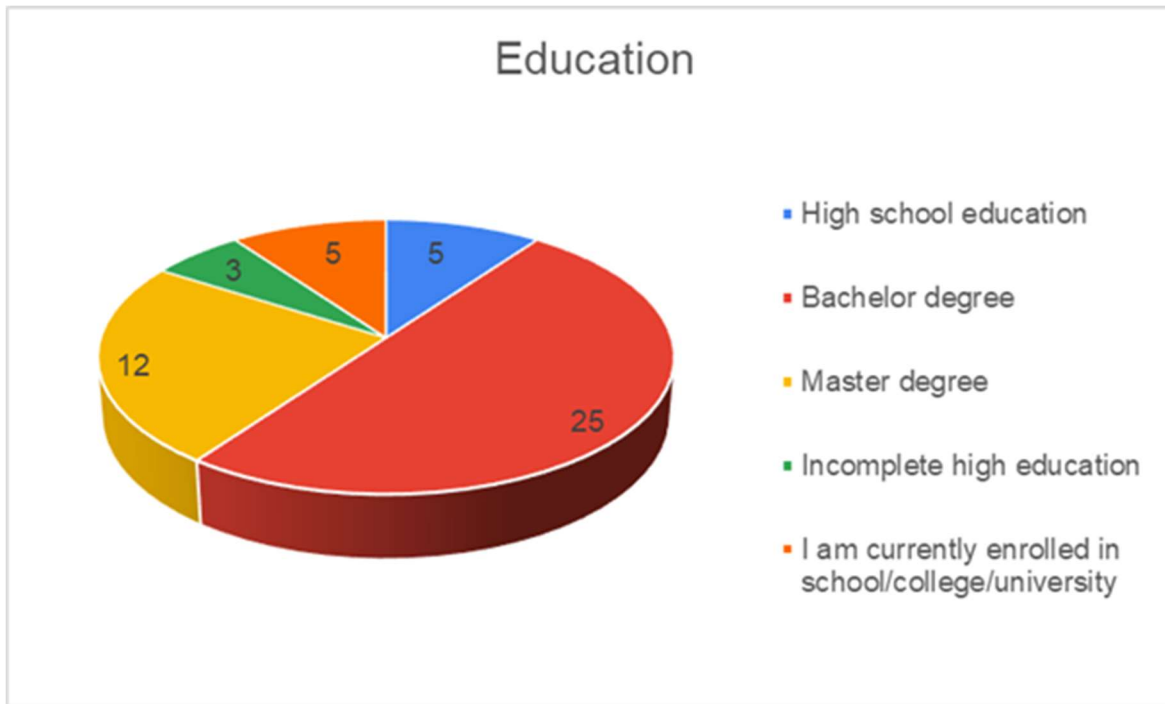
Graph 3 – Presence of children



Source: Own research

90% of the respondents do not have children, which may be related to the average age of the respondents, ranging from 22 to 25 years. At this age, many people have not yet started their family life and parenthood. 8% have one child, and 2% have 4 children.

Graph 4 – Education

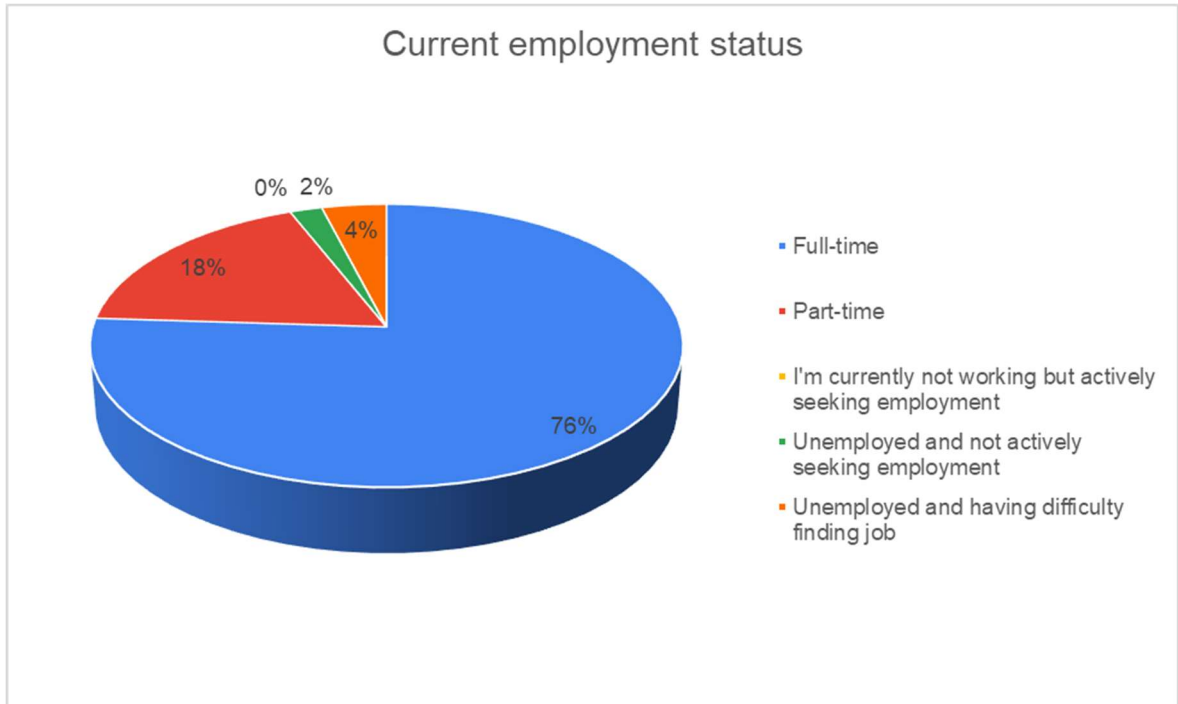


Source: Own research

Based on the results of this graph, it is evident that 50% of the respondents have completed their bachelor's degree, while 24% have pursued a master's degree. These data provide a general overview of the educational status of the surveyed individuals.



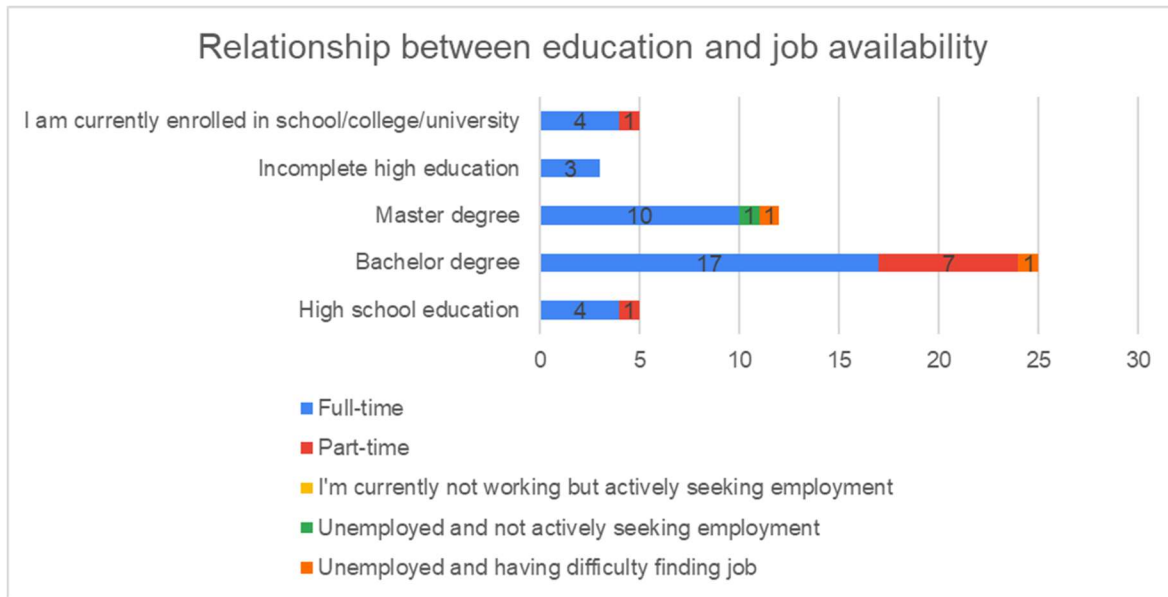
**Graph 5 – Current employment status**



*Source: Own research*

76% (38) of the respondents work full-time, 18% (9) work part-time, 4% (2) are currently unemployed and facing job search challenges, 0% are unemployed but actively seeking new employment, and an additional 2% (1) are unemployed and not actively searching for new work. This provides us with valuable information about the employment status and the labour market situation among the surveyed individuals.

Graph 6 – Relationship between education and job quality

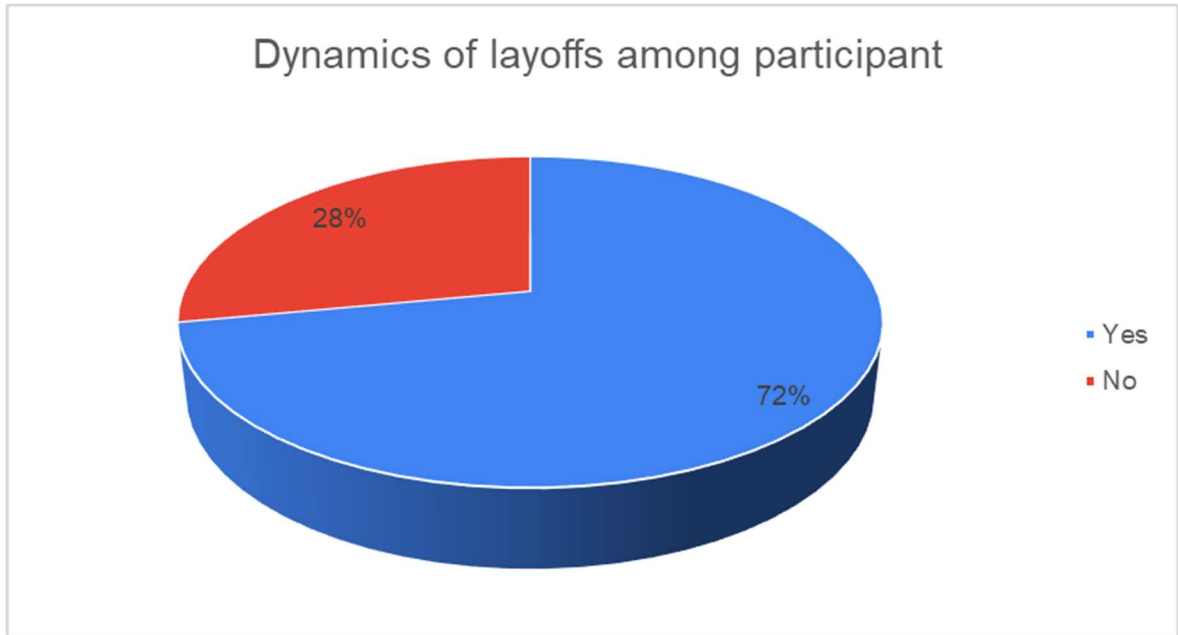


Source: Own research

The graph indicates whether there is a clear connection between education level and employment. A higher percentage of employed individuals are observed among those who have completed both bachelor's and master's degrees. Additionally, the graph shows that there is a small percentage (4%) of individuals with higher education who are facing unemployment.

10% of the respondents are still in the process of studying while simultaneously working. These respondents may be in a situation where they are actively pursuing their education at a university or another educational institution while also holding a job. This could be related to their professional development or the need to financially support themselves during their studies. Having employment during education may also reflect their aspiration for professional growth and gaining work experience even during their academic years.

**Graph 7– Dynamic of layoffs among participant**

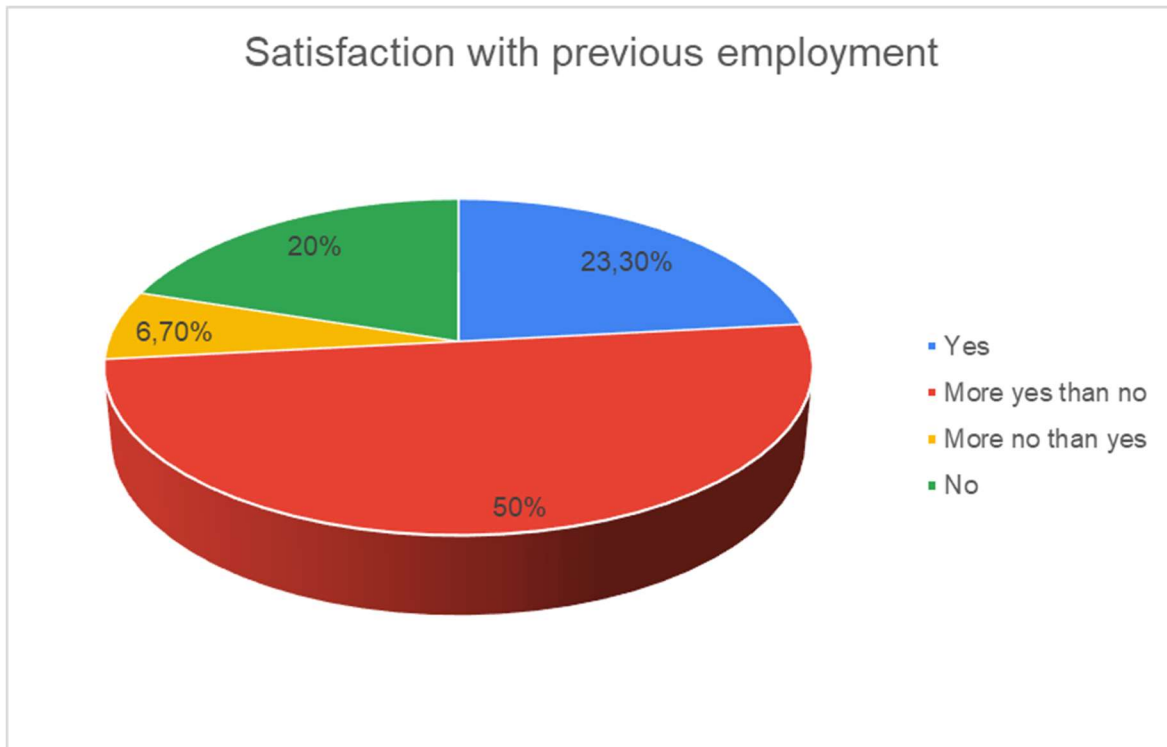


*Source: Own research*

72% of the surveyed individuals have never experienced layoffs (outside of the COVID-19 pandemic), while 28% of them have had prior experience with job loss. This is crucial information that helps to understand how many respondents have encountered job loss and how it may impact their psychological well-being and job search.

Among the 28% of respondents who have faced layoffs, 8 of them are women, and 6 are men. This could also be a significant factor when analysing the influence of job loss on different gender groups.

Graph 8 – Satisfaction with previous employment



Source: Own research

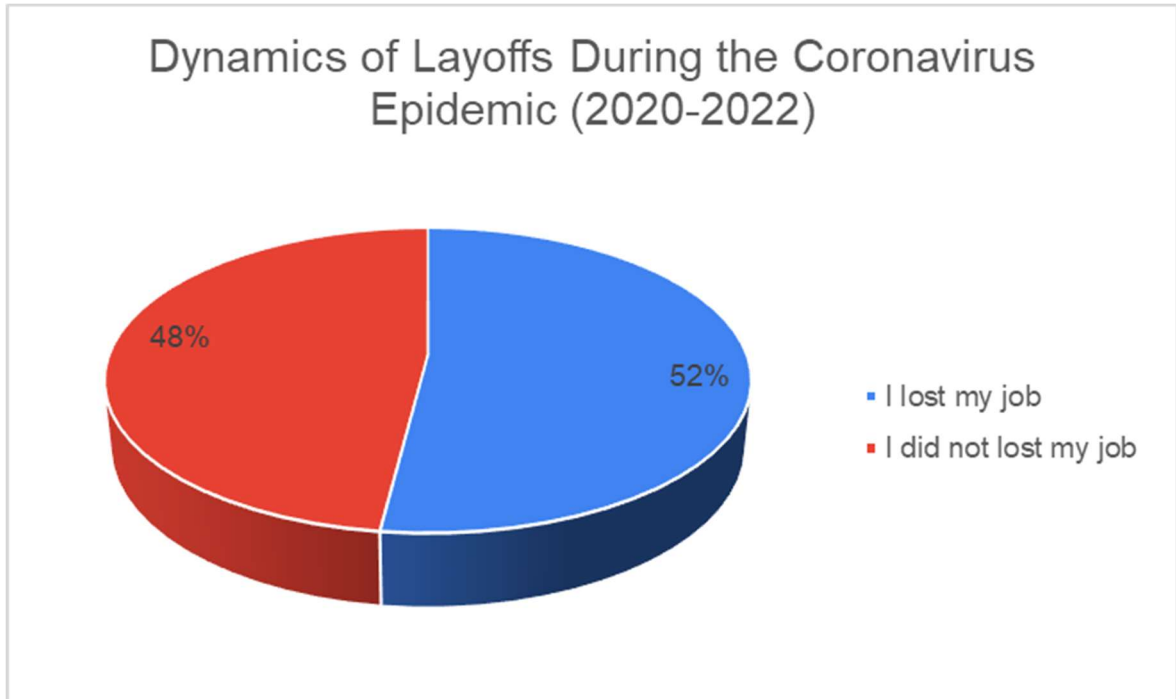
Among the 28% of respondents who have ever experienced job loss:

- 23.3% of them were satisfied with their previous job. This may indicate that despite the job loss, a significant portion of individuals still holds positive memories about their previous employment.
- 50% were more satisfied than dissatisfied. This suggests that for a significant portion of this group, the job loss led to positive changes or opportunities.
- 6.7% were more dissatisfied than satisfied. This could be related to the fact that job loss was a challenging period for them, and they may not have found a quick replacement or a job that met their expectations.
- 20% were completely dissatisfied. This may be due to various factors, such as an unpleasant work environment, unsatisfactory working conditions, or other reasons.

Job loss is a relatively common experience among the surveyed individuals, as 28% of them have ever encountered job loss (outside of the COVID-19 pandemic). These data provide information about various reactions to job loss within this group of respondents and their level of satisfaction with their previous jobs. As a result of the pandemic, you may be

unemployed, underemployed or just seeking a change, but you know that your current state cannot continue indefinitely. (HULL, KRALJEVIC, 2020)

Graph 9 – Dynamics of Layoffs During the Coronavirus Epidemic (2020-2022)



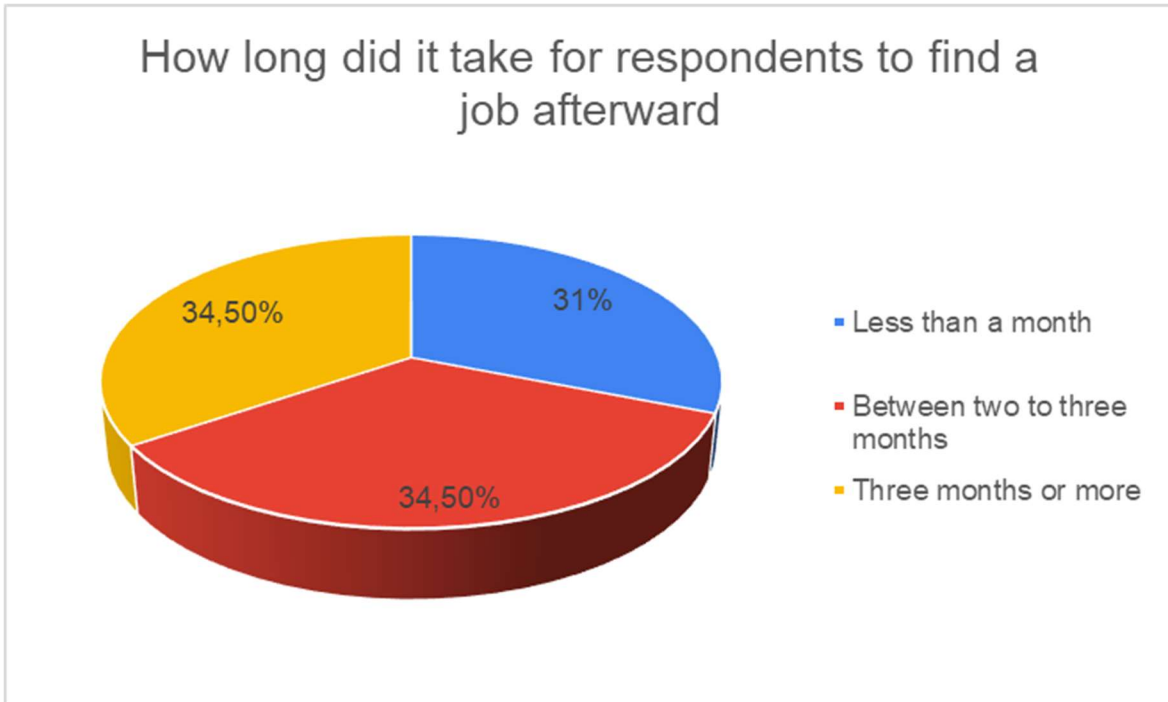
Source: Own research

Among the 50 respondents, more than half, specifically 52%, experienced job loss during the COVID-19 pandemic. This may indicate a significant impact of the pandemic on the labour market.

On the other hand, 48% of the respondents did not lose their jobs during the pandemic. This means that the pandemic had a substantial influence on employment among the respondents, leading to layoffs for more than half of them.

The danger it posed disrupted the daily routine of virtually everyone on the planet, stopped much of public life, closed schools, separated families, interrupted travel both within and between countries, and upended the world economy. (TOOZE, 2021). From strained healthcare systems to the rapid adoption of remote work, the effects of this disruptive event have rippled through various facets of society, prompting a re-evaluation of our collective resilience and preparedness for such global shocks.

Graph 10 – How long did it take for respondents to find a job afterward

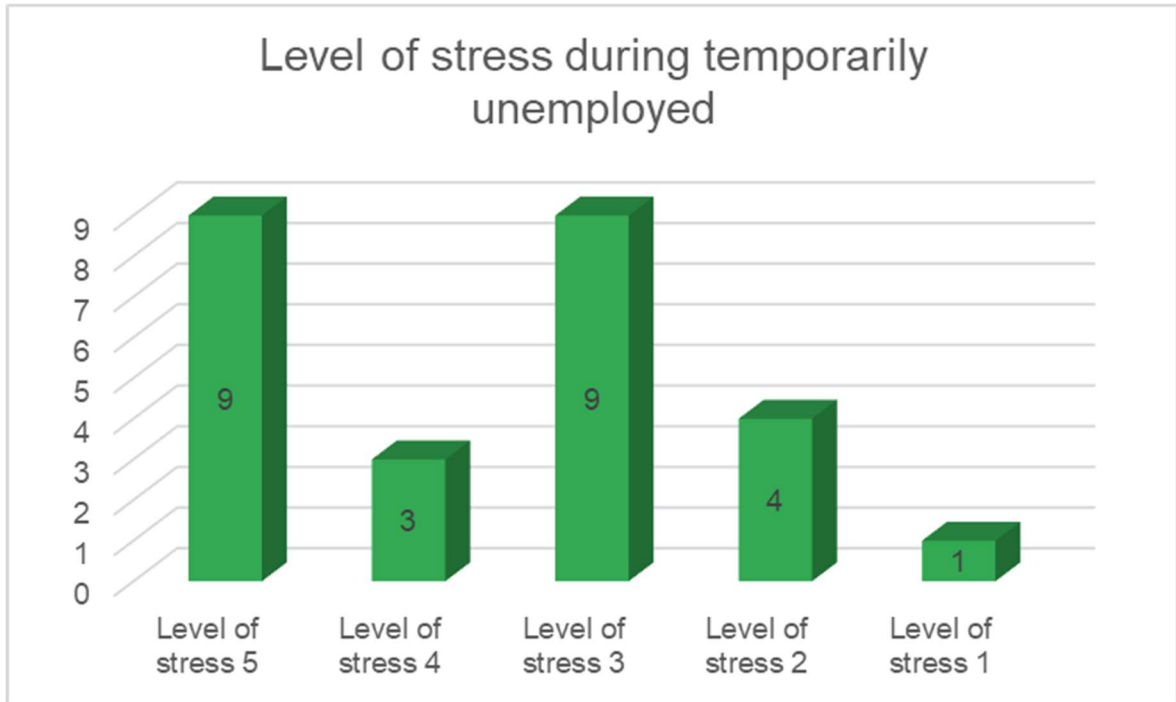


Source: Own research

- 34.5% of the respondents found a job within 2-3 months. This can be considered as the average duration, reflecting the timeframe that is typical for most respondents to successfully find employment.
- Another 34.5% spent more than 3 months in their job search. This could be related to various factors such as industry-specific challenges, economic conditions, geographic location, or the specific characteristics of their professional profile.
- 31% were able to secure a job in less than a month. This may indicate that for a significant portion of the respondents, the job market is open, and there is a high demand for their skills.

These results highlight the varying lengths of job searches among the respondents after the pandemic, which can be valuable information for analysing the pandemic's impact on employment.

Graph 11 – Level of stress during temporarily unemployed



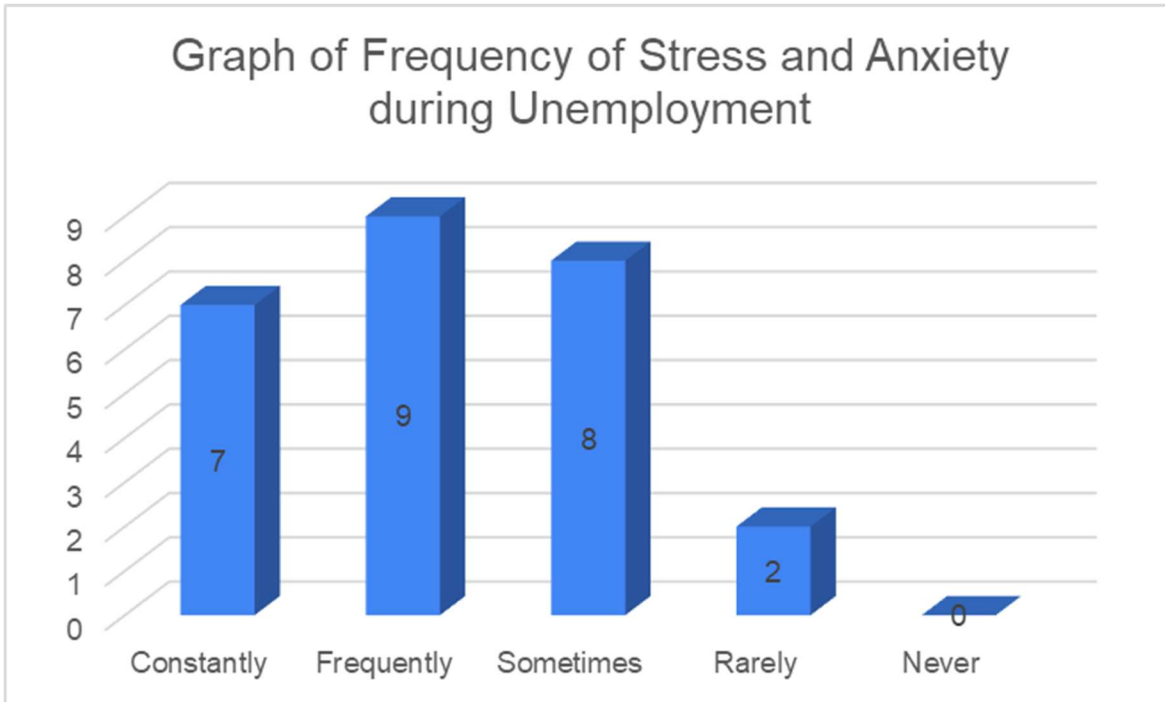
Source: Own research

Ratings from 1 to 5 indicate that people react to unemployment differently. Some experience a high level of stress (5), while others may have less pronounced emotional difficulties.

- 9 individuals rated their stress level as 5. This indicates a high level of stress and may reflect significant emotional and psychological difficulties associated with unemployment.
- 3 individuals rated their stress level as 4. This is also a relatively high level of stress, although slightly lower than those who rated it as 5.
- 9 individuals rated their stress level as 3. This may suggest a moderate level of stress, which can be common in unemployment situations.
- 4 individuals rated their stress level as 2. This is a lower level of stress, indicating that these individuals are experiencing fewer emotional difficulties.
- 1 individual rated their stress level as 1. This is the lowest level of stress and may indicate relatively minor emotional difficulties in the context of unemployment.

These findings can help better understand the diversity of emotional reactions to unemployment and identify groups that may require additional support or attention.

Graph 12 – Frequency of Stress and Anxiety during Unemployment

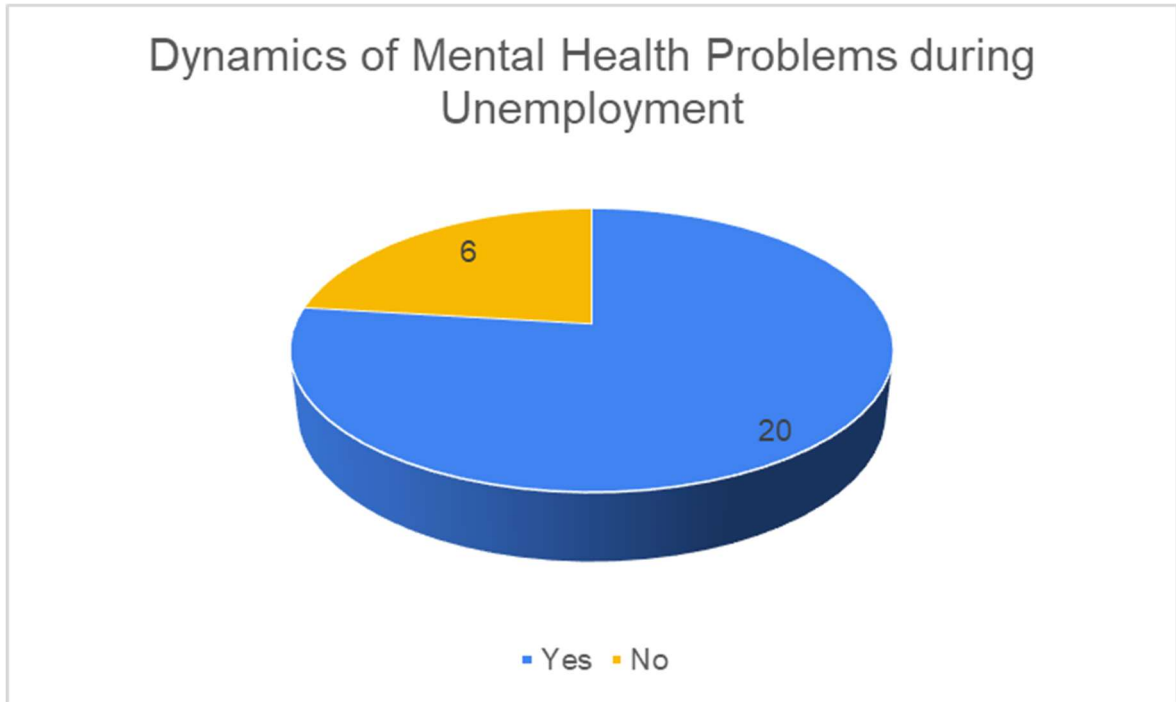


Source: Own research

Many of the respondents, including 7 individuals experiencing constant stress and 9 individuals facing frequent stress, encounter high levels of stress and anxiety during periods of unemployment. There is a diversity of responses, ranging from those who consistently experience stress to those who rarely experience it. This variability is likely related to differences in personal resources, support from family and friends, and coping abilities when faced with challenges.



Graph 13 – Dynamics of Mental Health Problems during Unemployment



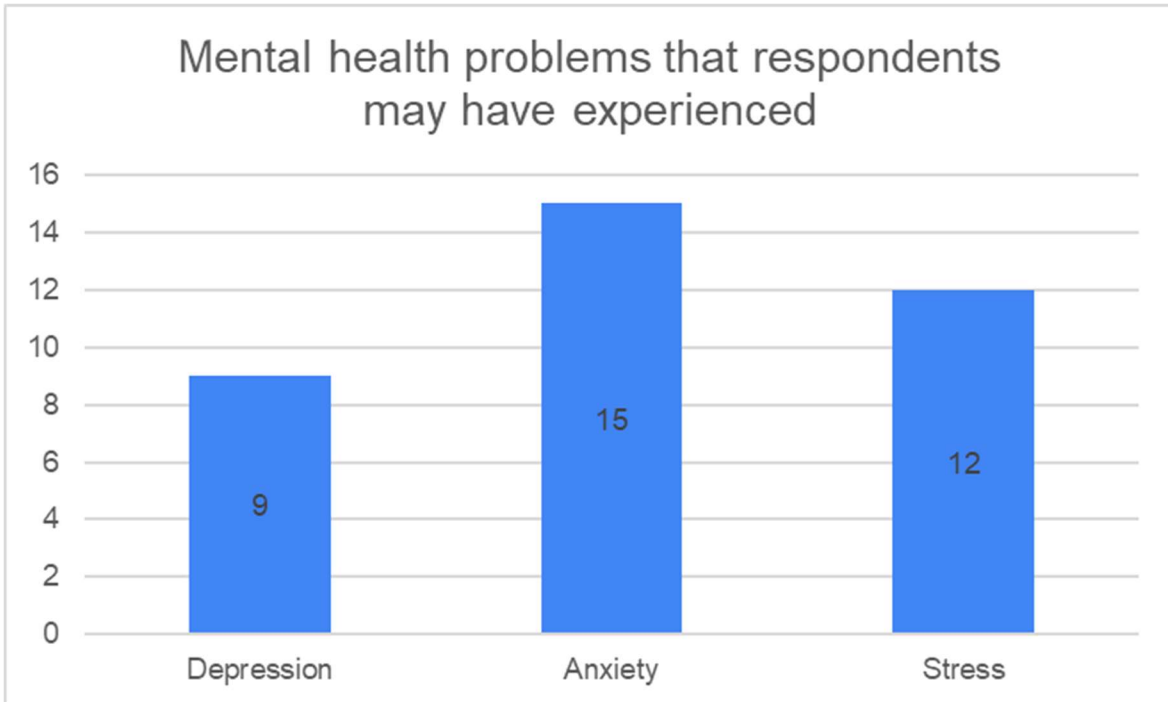
Source: Own research

This chart answers the question: Have you experienced any mental health problems as a result of unemployment?

- 20 individuals (out of 26 who responded to the question) reported experiencing mental health issues during periods of unemployment. This underscores that unemployment can have a significant impact on people's mental well-being.
- A minority did not encounter mental health issues; 6 individuals responded that they did not face mental health problems. It is important to note that this is a minority, and even in the context of unemployment, the level of mental well-being can vary.

It's crucial to consider that each individual is unique, and the factors influencing mental health during unemployment can be diverse. This may include personal resources, social support, prior work experience, and other factors.

Graph 14 – Mental health problems that respondents may have experienced

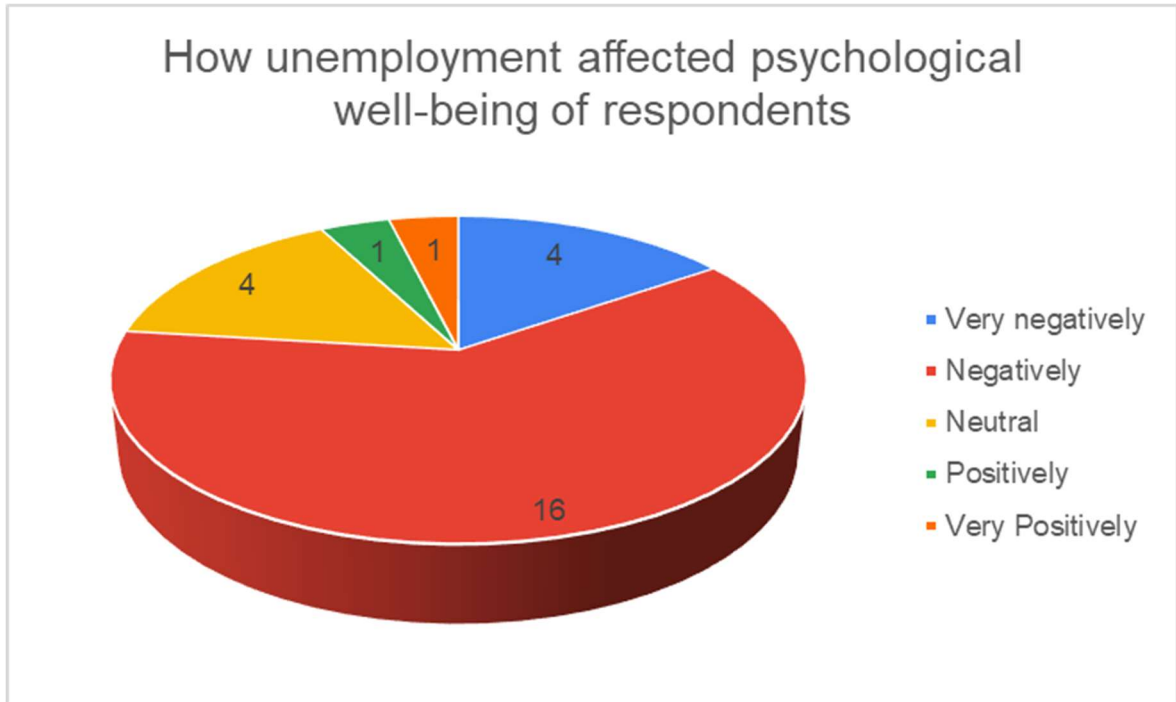


Source: Own research

- 9 individuals (out of 26) reported experiencing depression. This suggests that to some extent, the level of depression is prevalent among the surveyed individuals.
- 15 individuals faced anxiety. This is also a noticeable number, highlighting the impact of unemployment on anxiety levels among some respondents.
- 12 individuals experienced stress. Stress is also a common reaction to unemployment.

Considering that respondents could choose multiple response options, it's important to note that some of them may have faced multiple types of mental difficulties (e.g., depression and anxiety).

Graph 15 – How unemployment affected psychological well-being of respondents

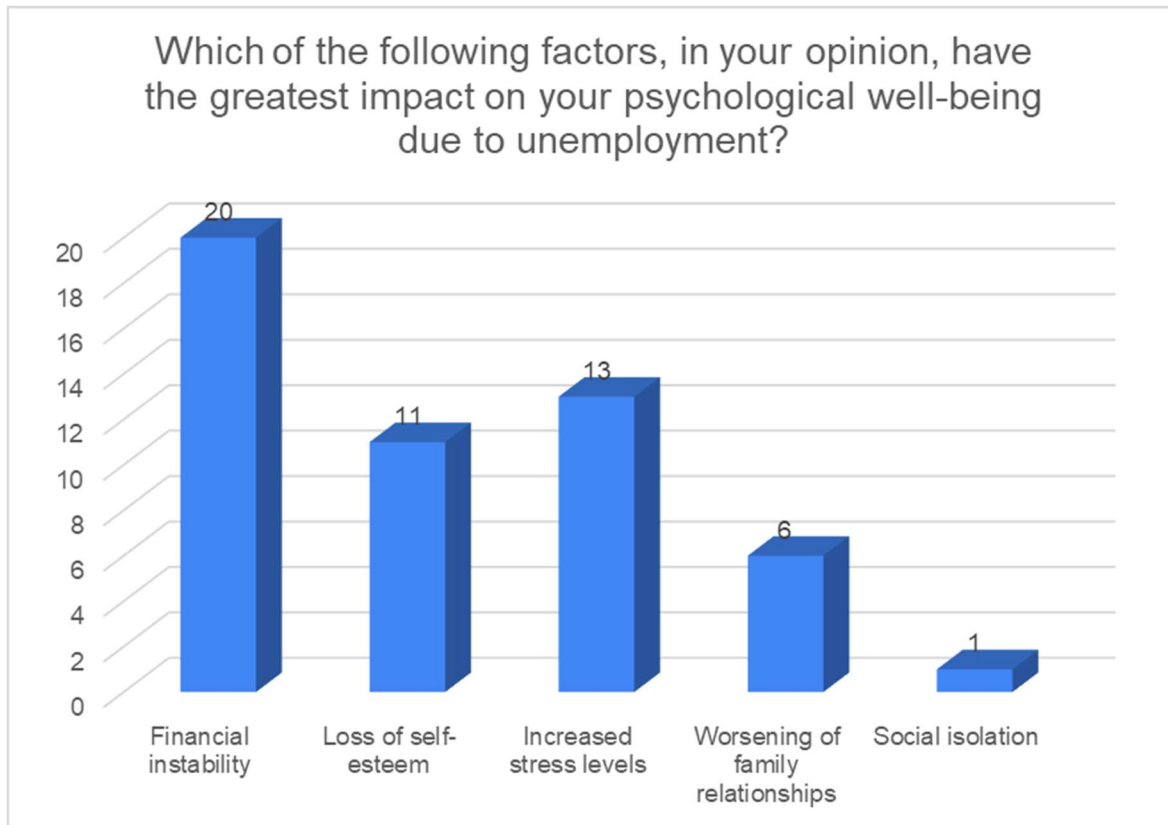


Source: Own research

- The majority of the respondents (20 out of 26) noted that unemployment has a negative impact on their psychological well-being. This indicates that for most people, unemployment is a stressful event that can have a significant impact on their emotional state.
- 4 individuals believe that the impact of unemployment on their psychological well-being is "normal." This may suggest that for them, the situation of unemployment does not trigger excessive stress reactions.
- 1 individual rated the impact of unemployment as "positive» while another rated it as "very positive."

These responses may indicate that some people see unemployment as an opportunity for positive changes, such as reevaluating career goals or personal growth.

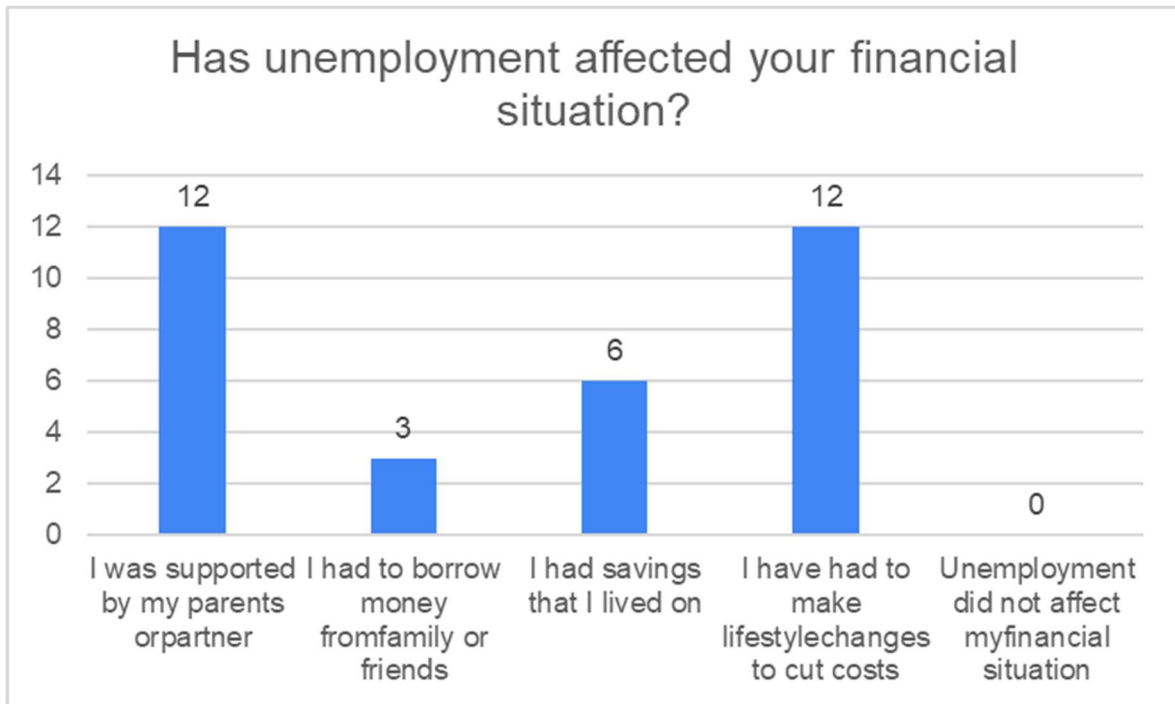
Graph 16 – Factors with greatest impact on the psychological well-being due to unemployment



Source: Own research

- Financial instability: This factor stands out as the most important for the majority of respondents (20 out of 26). Financial worries can create significant pressure on psychological well-being, including stress levels.
- Loss of self-esteem: 11 individuals believe that the loss of self-esteem has a significant impact. This suggests that for some people, job loss can affect their sense of self-worth and confidence.
- Increased stress levels: 13 individuals noted an increase in stress levels. Unemployment can be accompanied by uncertainty and anxiety, which can affect overall stress levels.
- Worsening of family relationships: 6 individuals believe that unemployment affects family relationships. This indicates that social and interpersonal aspects can be significant when analysing the impact of unemployment.
- Social isolation: One person mentioned social isolation. This could be related to the fact that some individuals facing unemployment may feel isolated from social networks and society.

Graph 17 – Unemployment effect on financial situation

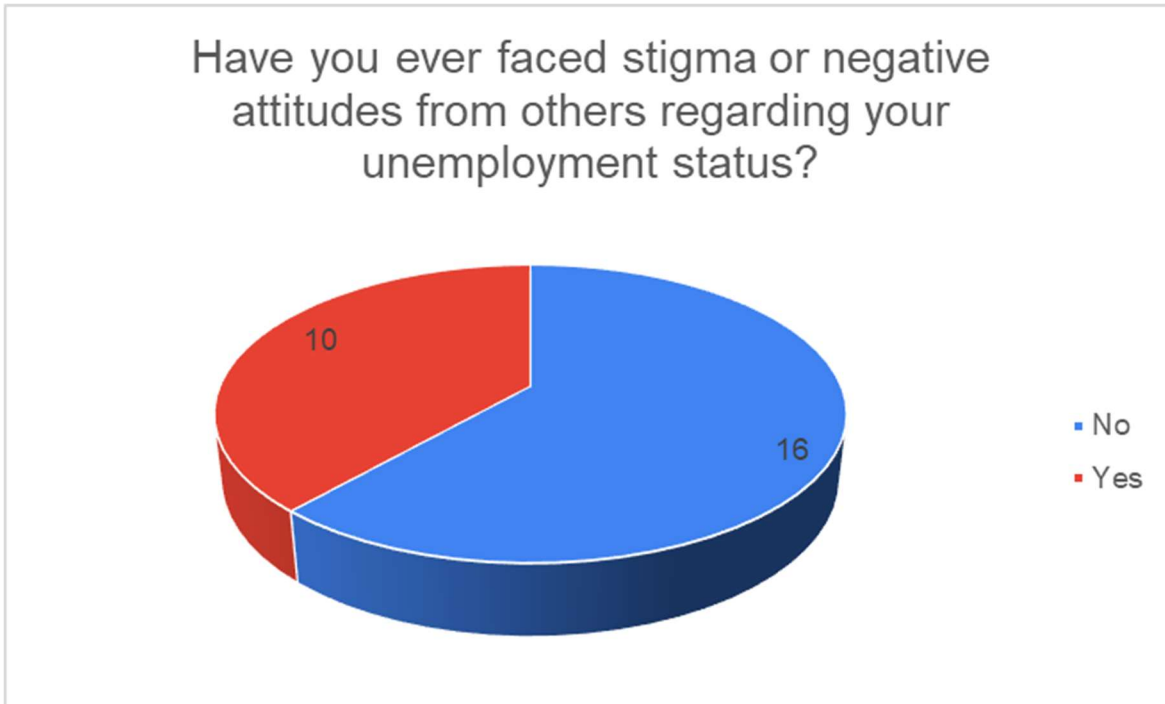


Source: Own research

- Nearly half of the respondents (46.15%) mentioned that they received support from their family or partner. This underscores the important role of social support in coping with financial difficulties during unemployment.
- Around 11.54% of respondents stated that they had to borrow money from family or friends.
- Approximately 23.08% of respondents reported having savings they could rely on. This highlights the importance of having a financial safety net.
- Nearly half of the respondents (46.15%) noted that they had to make changes in their lives to reduce expenses. This may include budget rationalization, cutting certain expenses, and so on.

According to the provided data, none of the respondents selected the option "Unemployment did not affect my financial situation." This emphasizes that unemployment has an impact on the financial situation of the majority of respondents.

Graph 18 – Stigma/negative attitude due to unemployment



Source: Own research

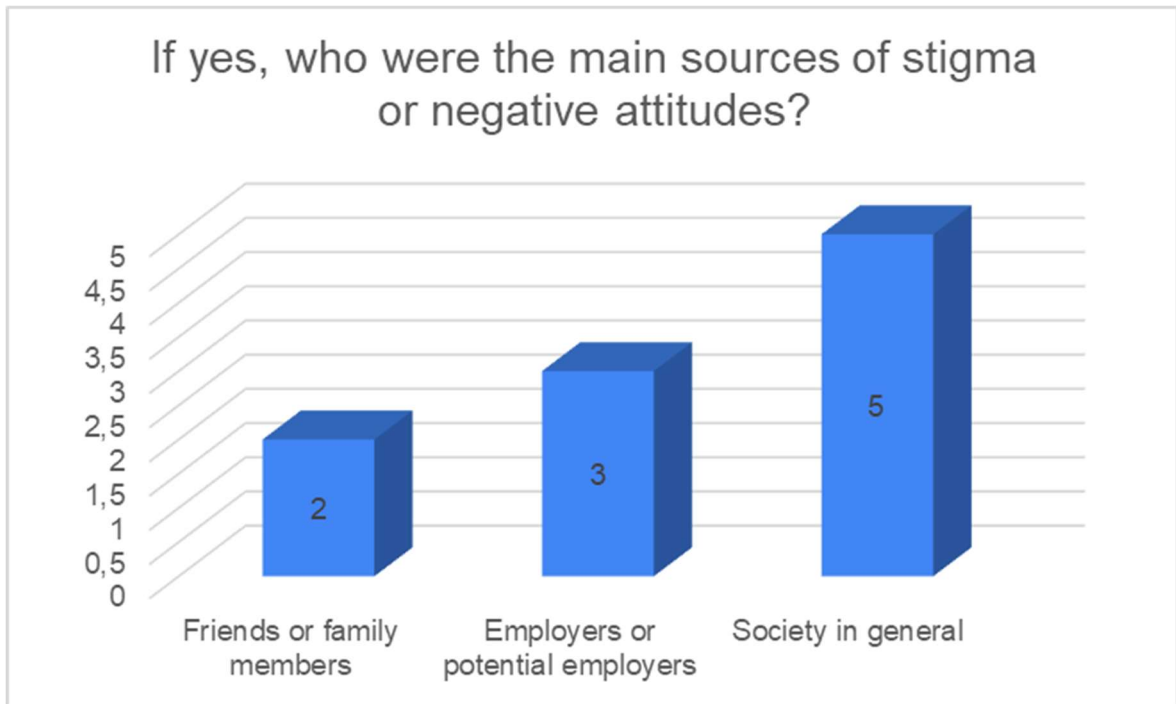
- No: 16 individuals (out of 26) stated that they have not faced stigma or negative attitudes from others regarding their unemployment status.
- Yes: 10 individuals acknowledged that they have faced stigma or negative attitudes from others in relation to their unemployment status.

The fact that 10 respondents reported facing stigma or negative attitudes suggests that there is a portion of individuals who have experienced judgment or bias due to their unemployment status.

On the positive side, the majority of respondents (16 persons) did not report facing stigma or negative attitudes. This could indicate that, for a significant portion, societal attitudes toward unemployment might be more understanding or supportive.

The experiences of individuals regarding societal attitudes can vary widely, and factors such as cultural context, local economic conditions, and personal networks may contribute to these differences.

Graph 19 – Sources of stigma/negative attitude

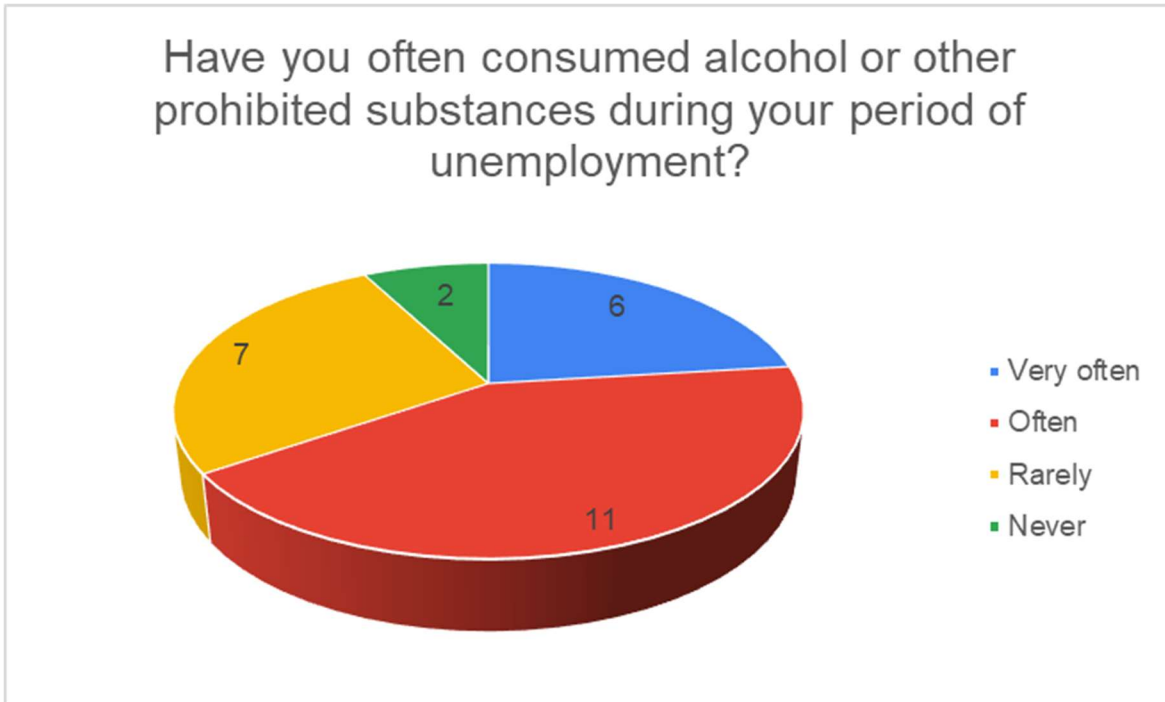


Source: Own research

- According to 3 respondents, friends or family members were identified as a source of stigma or negative attitudes. This suggests that even those close to individuals facing unemployment may sometimes contribute to negative perceptions.
- 2 individuals indicated that employers or potential employers were a source of stigma or negative attitudes. This may imply that individuals seeking employment face challenges not only in finding a job but also in dealing with biases or negative attitudes from employers.
- The majority of respondents, 5 people, identified society in general as a source of stigma or negative attitudes. This suggests a broader societal issue, indicating that negative perceptions about unemployment may be ingrained in cultural or societal norms.

The acknowledgment that society in general contributes to stigma emphasizes the importance of broader societal education and awareness campaigns. Challenging stereotypes and fostering empathy can play a role in changing societal attitudes.

Graph 20 – Alcohol/prohibited substances consumption during the unemployment



Source: Own research

The majority of respondents fall into the categories of "Very often" and "Often" which suggests that a significant number have consumed alcohol or other prohibited substances during their period of unemployment.

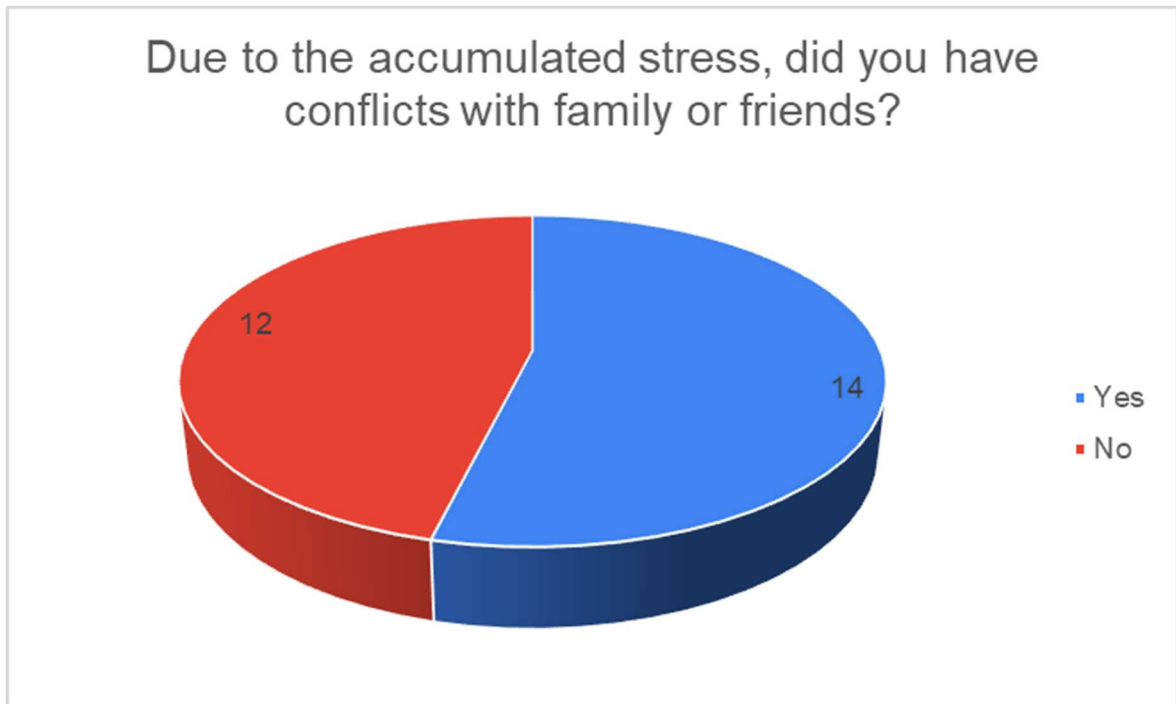
The higher frequency of alcohol or substance consumption may raise concerns about coping mechanisms during unemployment. Some individuals may turn to these substances as a way to manage stress, anxiety, or other challenges associated with unemployment.

The variability in responses, including those who answered "Rarely" and "Never" indicates individual differences in coping strategies. While some may turn to substances, others may employ alternative coping mechanisms or have healthier outlets for managing stress.

Increased alcohol or substance consumption during unemployment can potentially be linked to mental health challenges. It may indicate a need for support systems, mental health resources, and interventions to address the emotional impact of job loss.



Graph 21 – Conflicts with family or friends due to accumulated stress



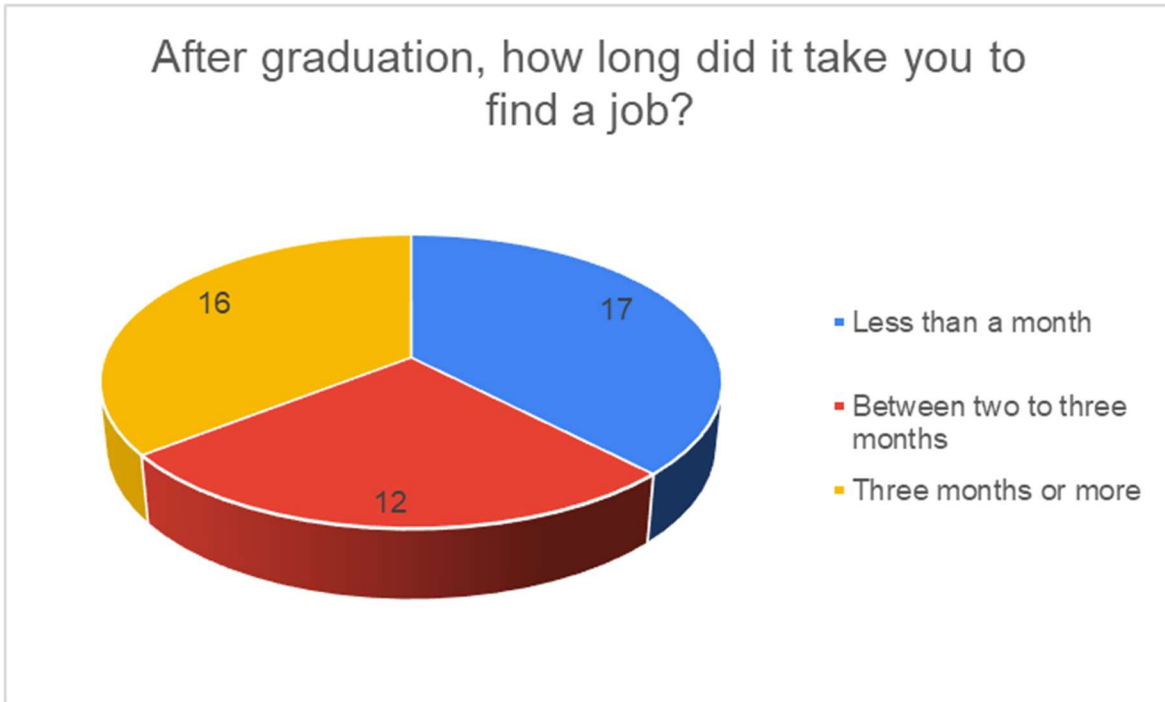
Source: Own research

A majority of respondents, 14 persons, reported having conflicts with family or friends due to the accumulated stress. This suggests that stress related to unemployment may contribute to interpersonal challenges within personal relationships.

The acknowledgment of conflicts highlights the potential impact of stress on personal relationships. Unemployment-related stress can strain communication, understanding, and overall dynamics within families and friendships.

The fact that 12 persons responded with "No" indicates that not everyone experiencing unemployment-related stress necessarily has conflicts with family or friends. Individual coping mechanisms, support systems, and communication styles may contribute to this variability.

Graph 22 – Search for job after graduation



Source: Own research

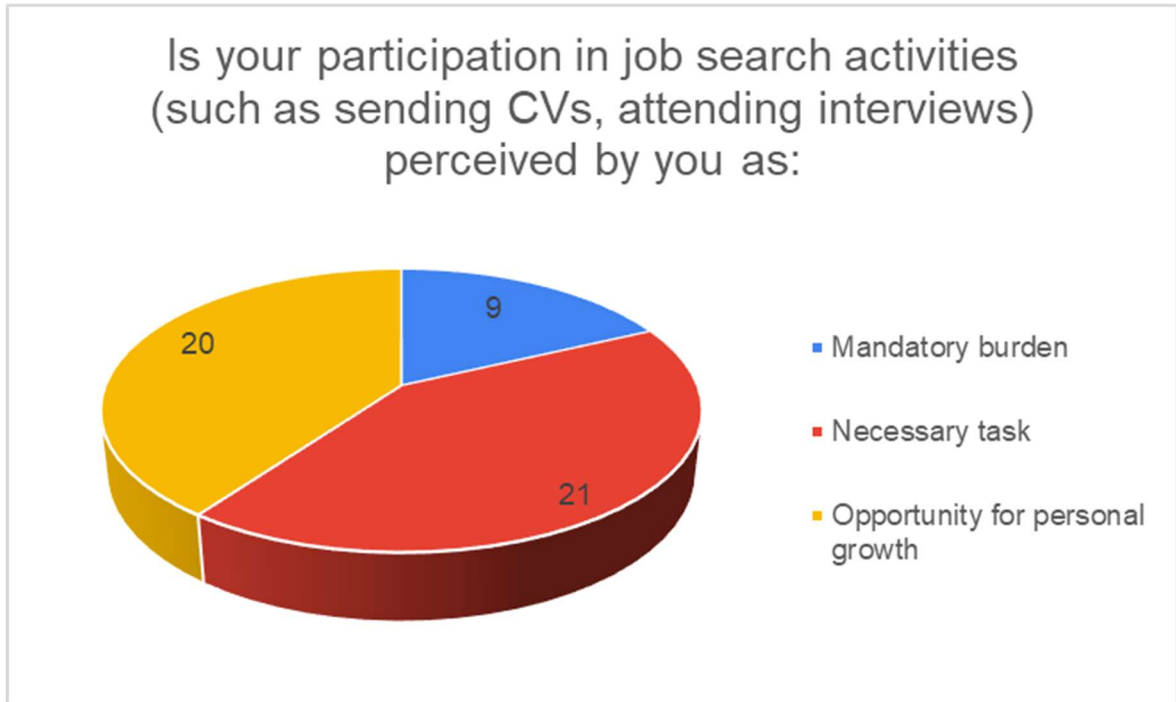
17 persons found a job less than a month after graduation suggests that a substantial portion of the respondents secured employment relatively quickly.

12 persons reported taking between two to three months to find a job. This suggests a moderate duration of job search for this group. Extended Job Search for Some: 16 persons indicated that it took them three months or more to find a job. This suggests that for a significant number of respondents, the job search process extended beyond the initial months after graduation.

The data indicates variability in the job search experiences of the respondents. Factors such as field of study, job market conditions, and individual networking and job-seeking strategies can contribute to these differences.

Individuals who took three months or more to find a job might have experienced additional stressors associated with prolonged unemployment. This could include financial challenges, emotional strain, and potential impacts on mental health.

Graph 23 – Reasons on perceiving the job search activities



Source: Own research

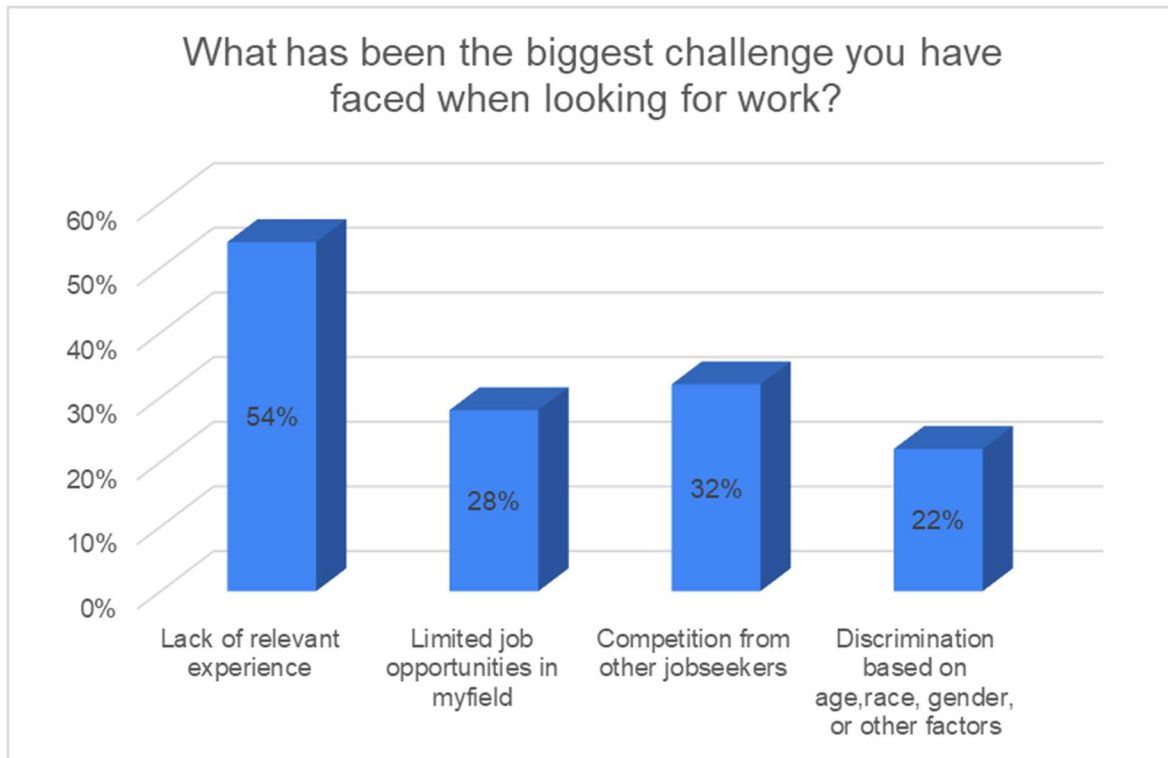
The majority of respondents (21 persons) perceive their participation in job search activities as a necessary task. This suggests that, for many, job searching is viewed as a practical requirement in the process of securing employment.

A substantial number of respondents (20 persons) see their participation in job search activities as an opportunity for personal growth. This positive outlook suggests that they may view the job search process as a chance to develop skills, resilience, or self-awareness.

Nine persons perceive their participation in job search activities as a mandatory burden. This group may find the job search process to be challenging or burdensome, possibly due to factors such as stress, uncertainty, or negative experiences.

Recognizing that some individuals find job searching burdensome, while others see it as an opportunity for growth, suggests the importance of providing support tailored to individual needs. This could include resources for managing stress, enhancing job-search skills, and promoting a positive mindset.

Graph 24 – The biggest challenge during the job search



Source: Own research

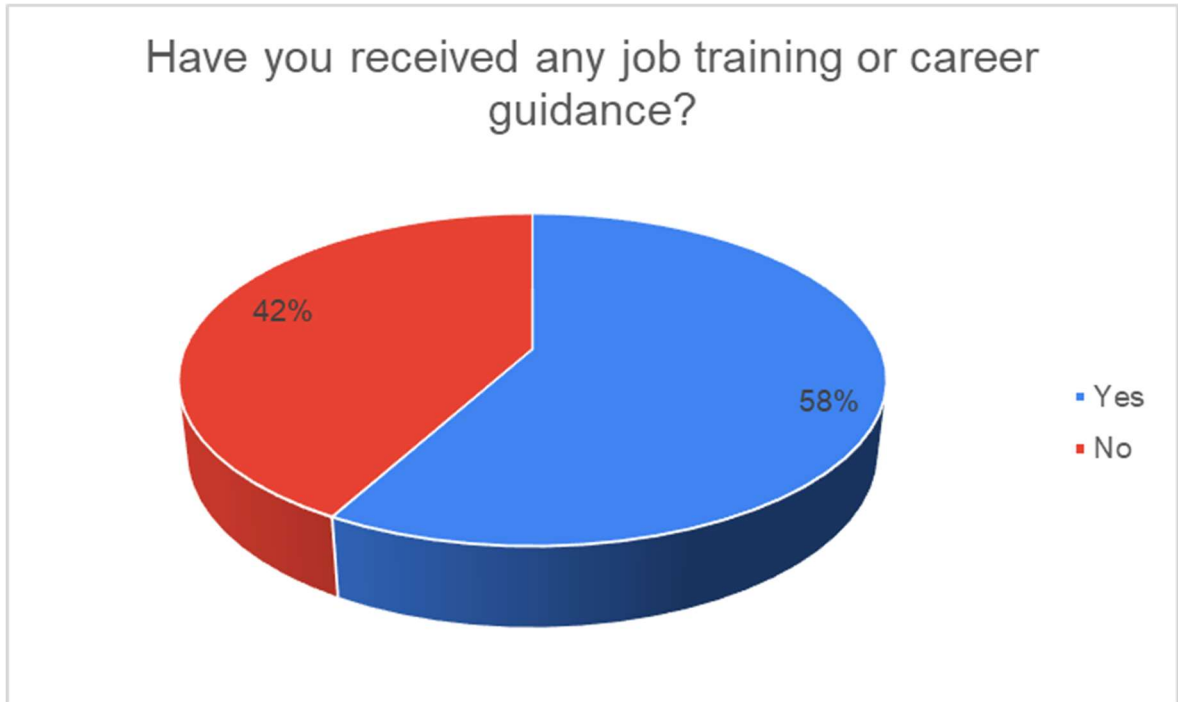
The most common challenge reported by respondents is the "Lack of relevant experience" with 54% indicating this as their biggest challenge. This suggests that a significant portion of job seekers may be facing barriers due to a perceived lack of experience in their chosen field.

A substantial number of respondents (32%) noted "Competition from other job seekers" as a significant challenge. This could indicate a competitive job market where individuals feel the pressure of competing with others for available opportunities.

Almost one-third of respondents (28%) reported "Limited job opportunities in my field" as a significant challenge. This points to the impact of external factors, such as industry trends or economic conditions, on job availability.

A notable percentage of respondents (22%) mentioned "Discrimination based on age, race, gender, or other factors" as a challenge. This highlights the persistence of discrimination in the job market and the barriers it poses to certain individuals.

Graph 25 – Job training/career guidance participation



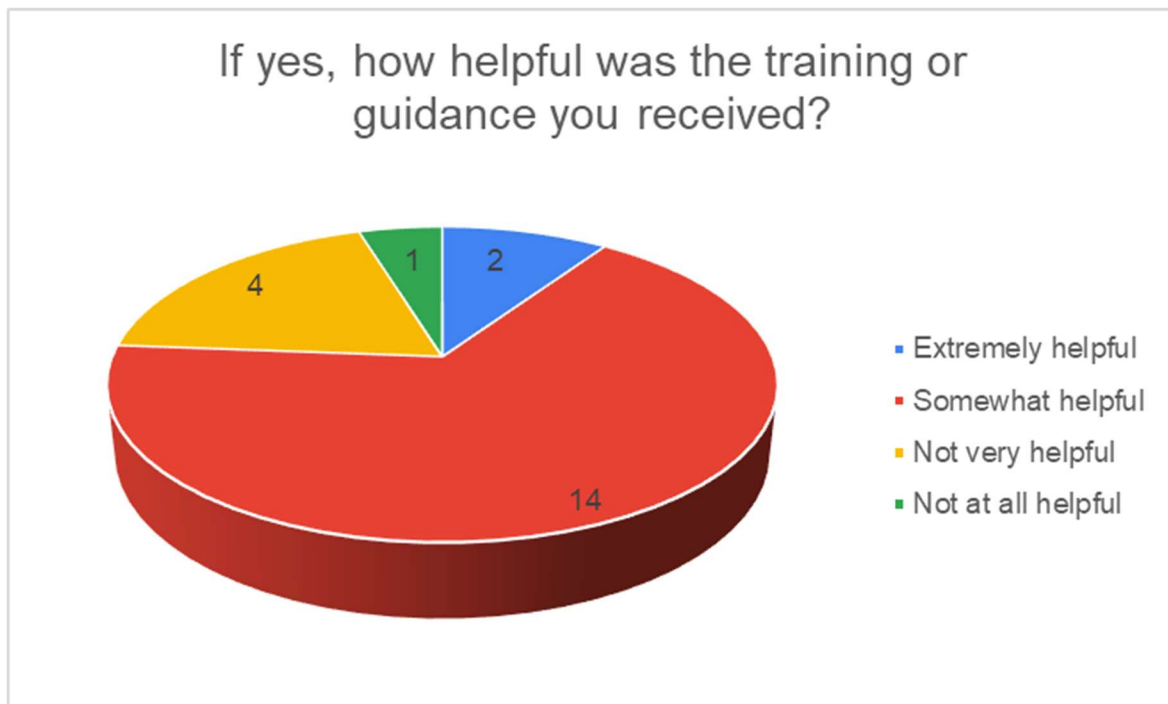
Source: Own research

The majority of respondents (58%) have received job training or career guidance. This suggests that a significant portion of individuals recognize the importance of seeking professional development and guidance in their career paths.

Despite the majority having received such support, a substantial portion (42%) of respondents have not received job training or career guidance. This may imply various factors, such as limited access to resources, lack of awareness, or individual preferences regarding career development.

The data indicates a potential divide in the level of support individuals have received for their career development. Those who have received training and guidance may be better equipped to navigate their careers and potentially progress more effectively.

Graph 26 – Benefits of training/guidance



Source: Own research

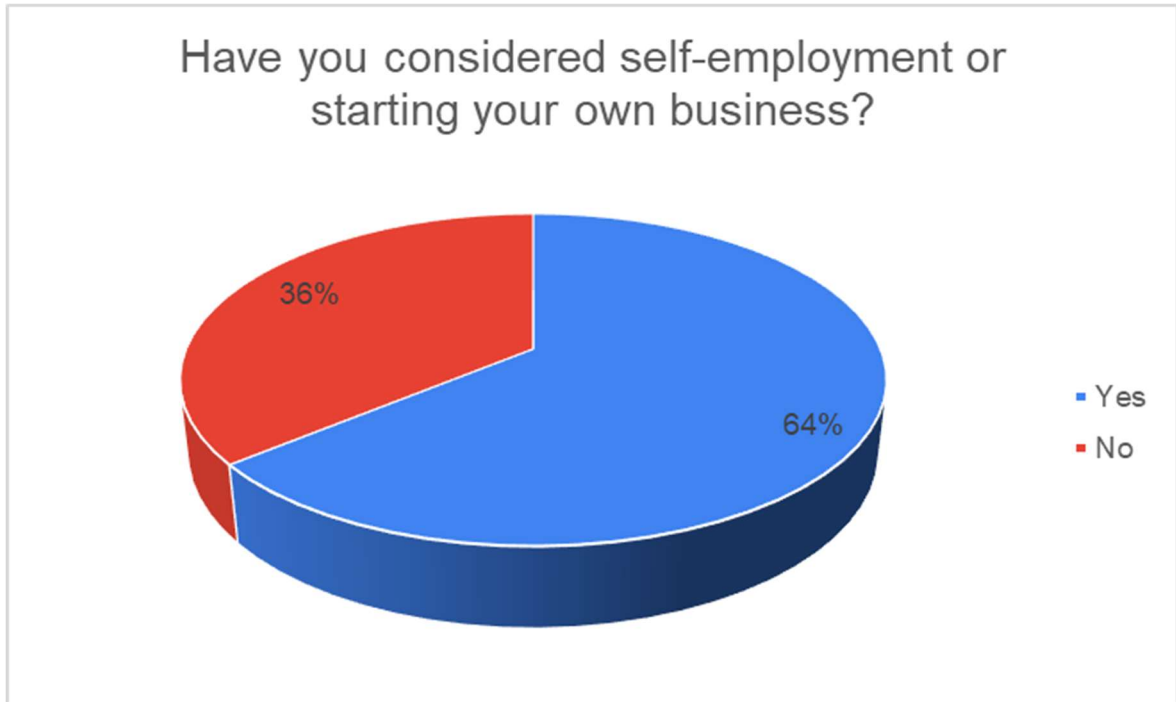
The responses reflect a range of perceptions regarding the helpfulness of the training or guidance received. While a majority (14 persons) found it "Somewhat helpful" there is variability in the degree of perceived assistance.

Two persons reported that the training or guidance they received was "Extremely helpful." This suggests that, for a small but significant portion, the support they received had a profound impact on their career development.

The fact that some respondents found the training "Not very helpful" (4 persons) or "Not at all helpful" (1 person) indicates that, for a minority, the assistance provided may not have met their expectations or needs.

The varied responses highlight the subjective nature of the perceived helpfulness of training and guidance. Factors such as the quality of the programs, alignment with individual goals, and the relevance of the guidance may contribute to these differences.

Graph 27 – Self-employment/own business consideration



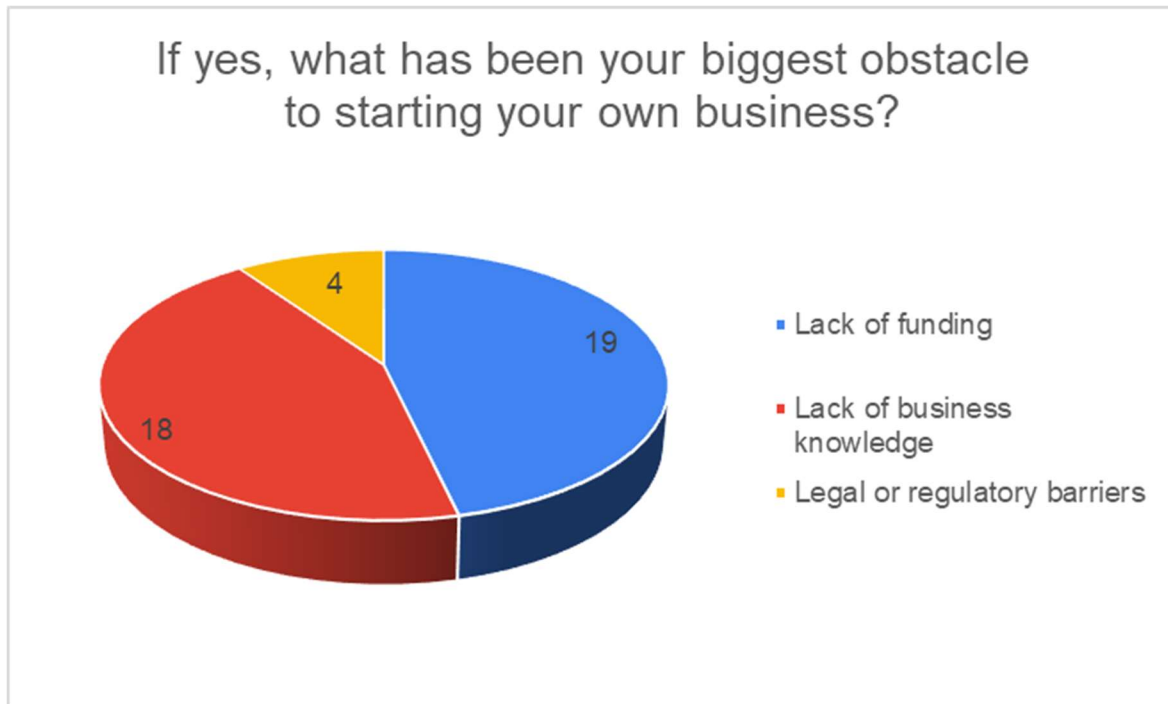
Source: Own research

The majority of respondents (64%) have considered self-employment or starting their own business. This suggests a notable level of interest in entrepreneurship as a career path.

While a significant portion is open to the idea of self-employment, 36% of respondents have not considered this option. This may be influenced by various factors, such as personal preferences, risk aversion, or lack of resources for entrepreneurship.

The data indicates that a substantial number of individuals are exploring alternative career paths beyond traditional employment. This shift may be influenced by factors such as a desire for autonomy, the pursuit of passion projects, or a response to challenges in the job market.

Graph 28 – Biggest obstacle to starting a business



Source: Own research

The most frequently reported obstacles are "Lack of funding" and "Lack of business knowledge." This suggests that aspiring entrepreneurs often face financial constraints and may feel the need for additional business-related skills.

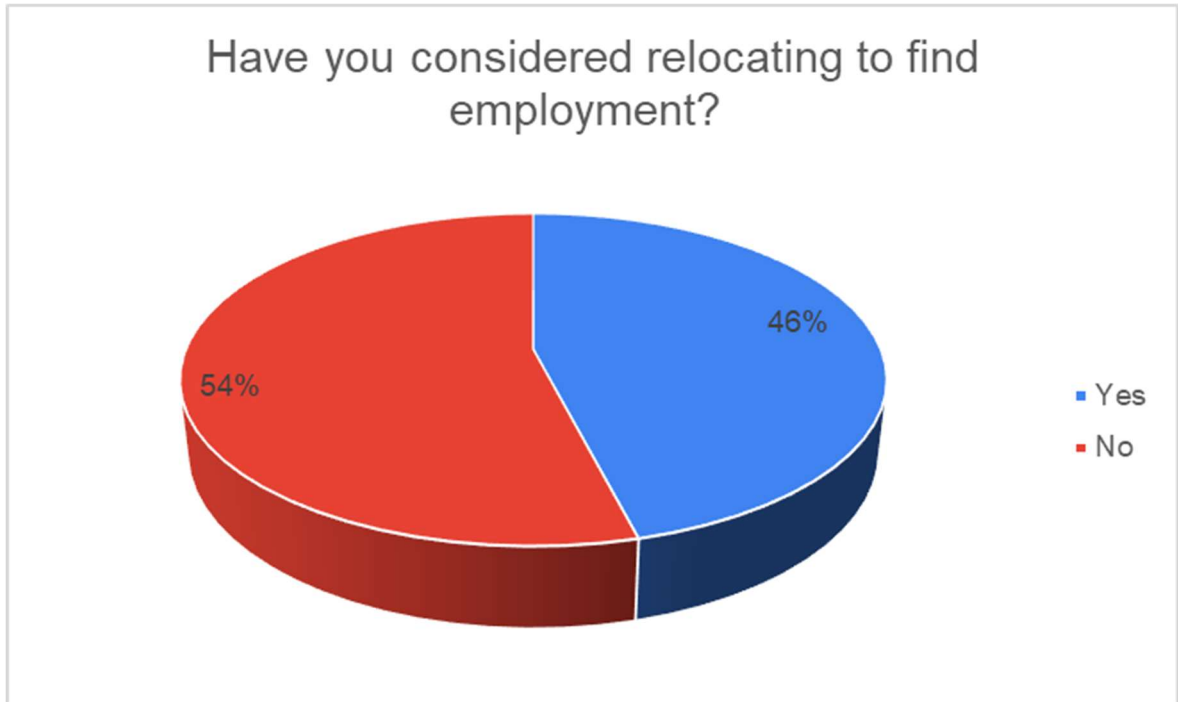
The fact that 19 persons identified "Lack of funding" as a significant obstacle indicates that access to capital is a common challenge. This aligns with a common hurdle for new business ventures, as starting and sustaining a business often requires financial resources.

The recognition of "Lack of business knowledge" by 18 persons underscores the importance of education and training in entrepreneurship. Bridging this knowledge gap can empower aspiring entrepreneurs to navigate the complexities of starting and running a business.

While fewer respondents mentioned "Legal or regulatory barriers" these can still be significant challenges that may require attention. Addressing these barriers may involve advocacy for policy changes, providing legal resources, or simplifying regulatory processes.



Graph 29 – Relocation to find employment

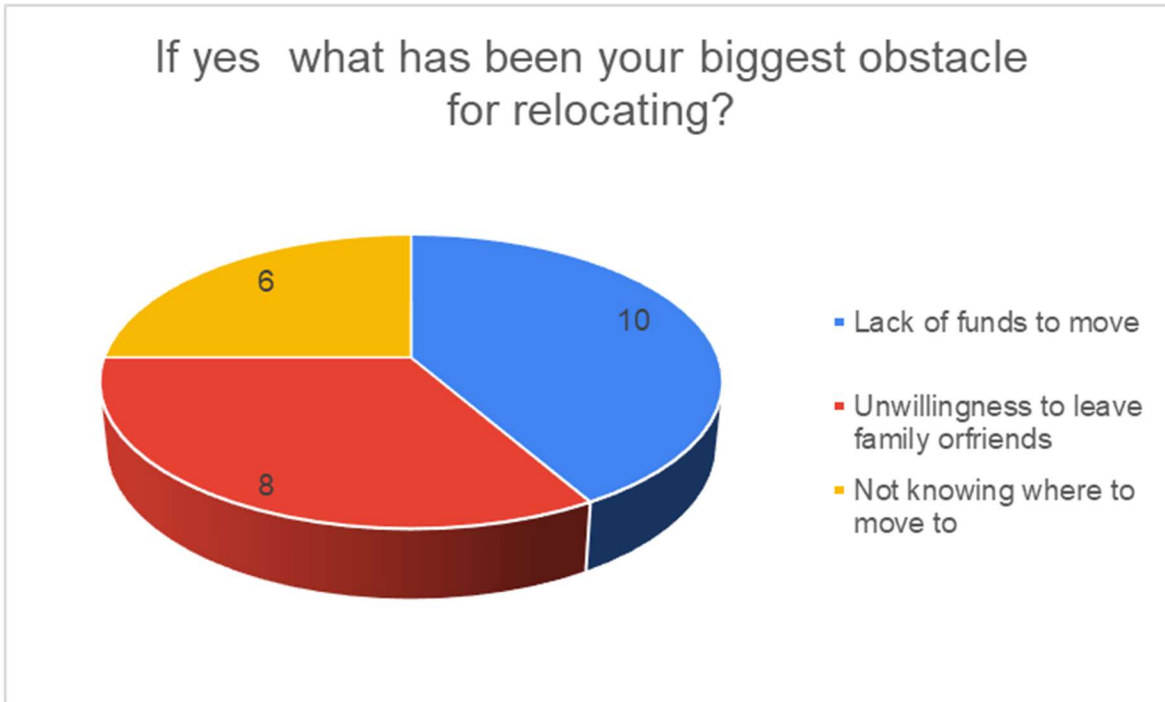


Source: Own research

A notable portion of respondents (46%) have considered relocating to find employment. This suggests that, faced with challenges in their current location, individuals are open to the idea of moving to improve their job prospects.

However, a majority (54%) of respondents have not considered relocating. This may be influenced by various factors.

Graph 30 – Biggest obstacle for relocating



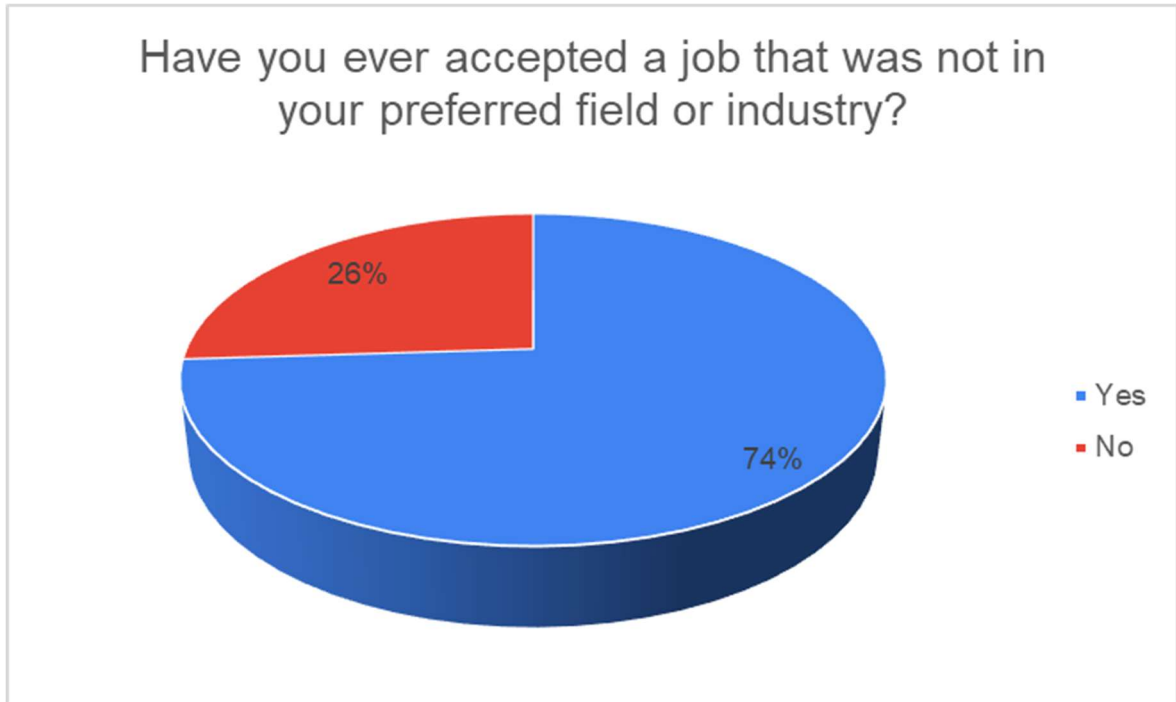
Source: Own research

The most frequently mentioned obstacle to relocating is the "Lack of funds to move» with 10 persons identifying this as their biggest challenge. This highlights the financial barriers individuals face when contemplating a move for employment.

The second most common obstacle is the "Unwillingness to leave family or friends» cited by 8 persons. This suggests that social and familial ties play a significant role in individuals' decisions regarding relocation, sometimes outweighing potential job opportunities.

Six individuals reported "Not knowing where to move to" as an obstacle. This indicates a navigational challenge in decision-making, where individuals may be unsure about which location would offer the best opportunities for employment.

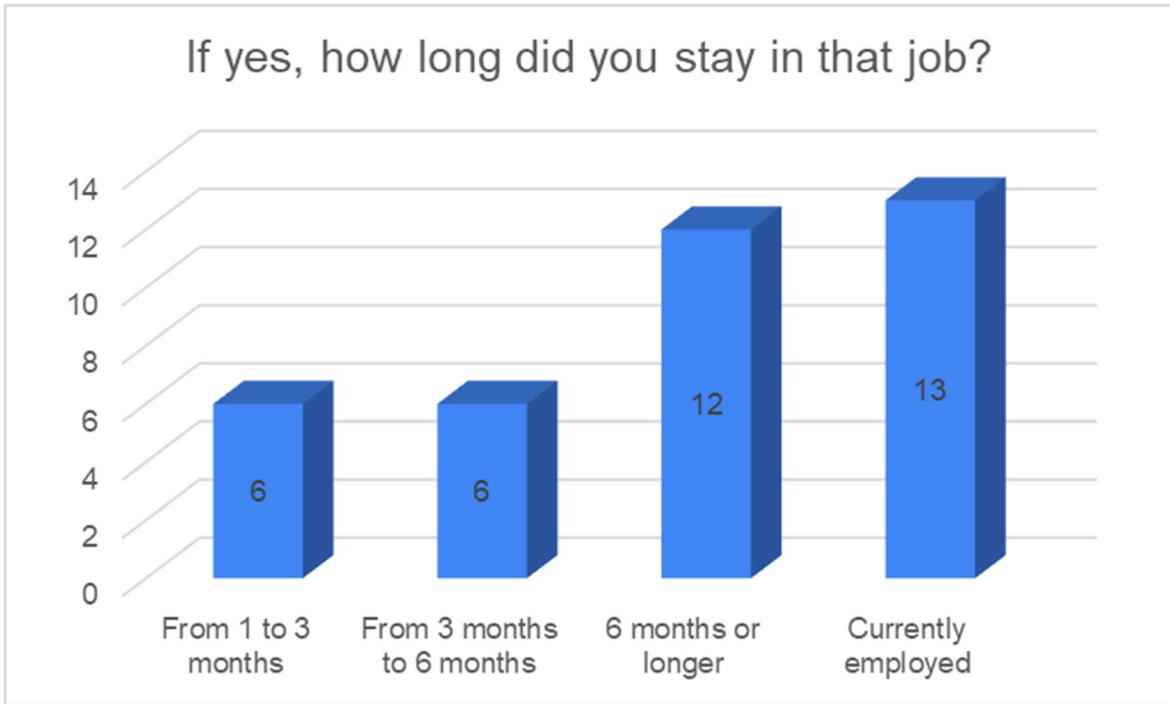
Graph 31 – Acceptance of job in non-preferred field



Source: Own research

A significant majority of respondents (74%) have accepted a job that was not in their preferred field or industry. This suggests a common experience among individuals where practical considerations may lead to job acceptance outside of their ideal career path. The high percentage of individuals who have accepted non-preferred jobs may indicate a level of flexibility in career choices. Economic considerations, job availability, and individual circumstances might drive individuals to broaden their job search criteria.

Graph 32 – Period of work in a non-preferred field

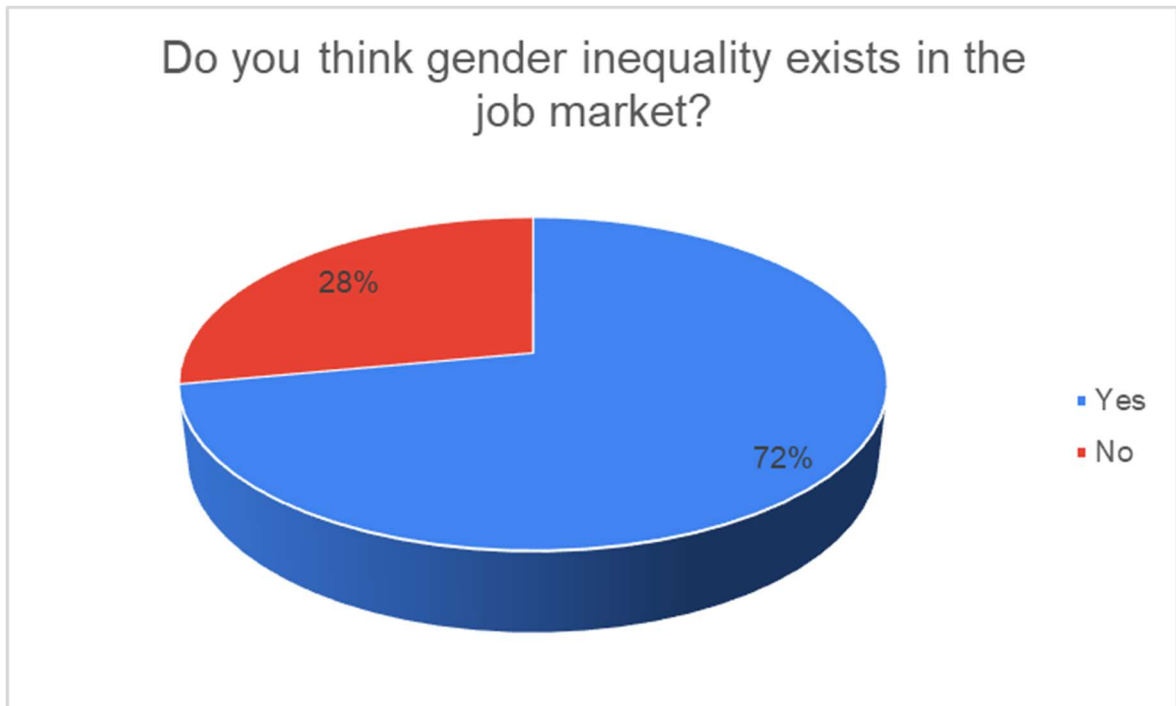


Source: Own research

A noteworthy finding is that 13 persons are currently employed in jobs that were not in their preferred field or industry. This suggests that, for a substantial portion, the initial acceptance of a non-preferred job might have led to longer-term employment or a transition to a different role within the same organization.

The willingness to stay in non-preferred jobs for varying durations indicates a degree of flexibility in career paths. Individuals may recognize the value of gaining diverse experiences and skills, even if the initial role is not in their preferred field.

Graph 33 – Statistics regarding gender inequality existence



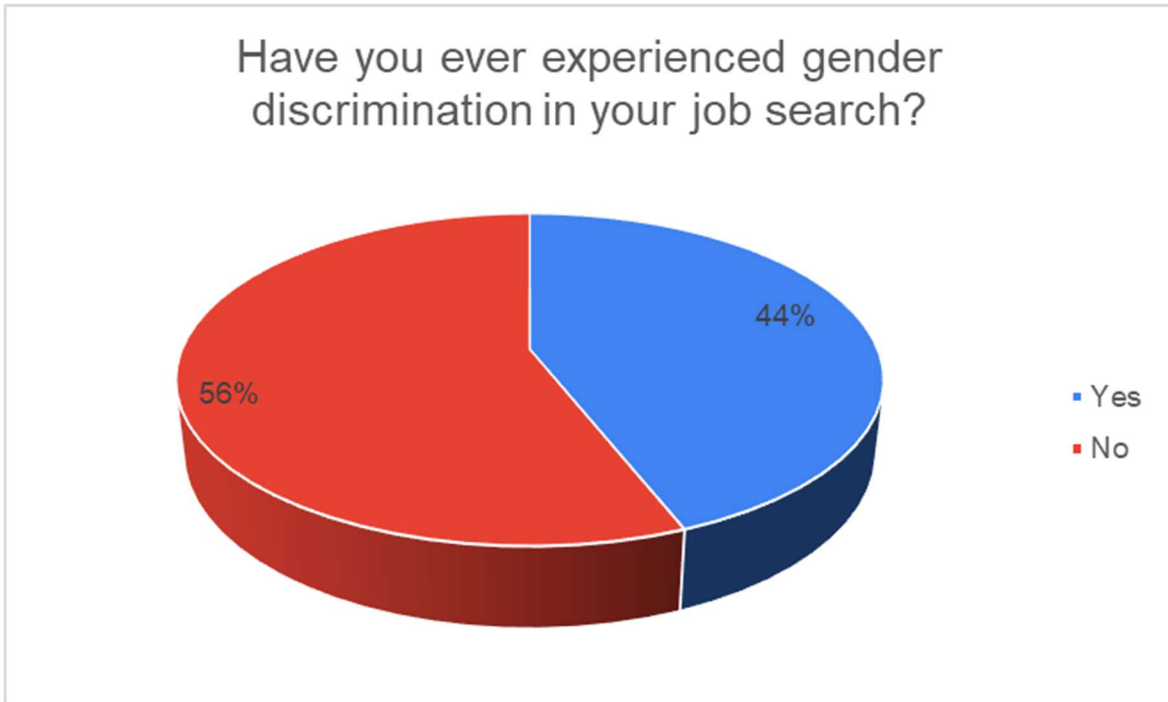
*Source: Own research*

A substantial majority of respondents (72%) believe that gender inequality exists in the job market. This suggests a prevailing perception among individuals that there are disparities or biases based on gender in various aspects of employment. The high percentage of affirmative responses indicates a widespread acknowledgment of gender-related challenges within the job market. This could encompass issues such as pay gaps, limited opportunities for career advancement, and biases in hiring and promotion.

While the majority perceives the existence of gender inequality, the 28% who responded "No" suggests that there are differing opinions on this matter. Some individuals may believe that gender equality has been achieved, while others may not perceive it as a significant issue.

The perception of gender inequality in the job market can influence individuals' career decisions. It may impact the career aspirations of women and the expectations of both men and women regarding opportunities, fairness, and inclusivity in the workplace.

Graph 34 – Statistics on gender discrimination experience



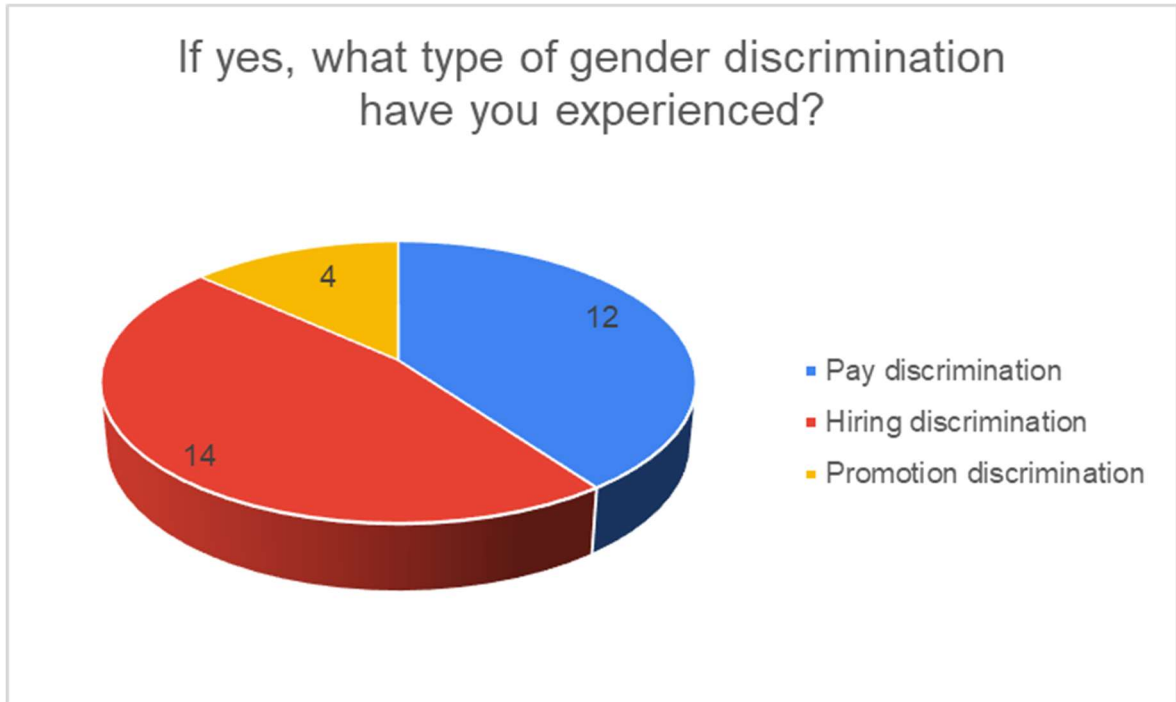
Source: Own research

Nearly half of the respondents (44%) report experiencing gender discrimination in their job search. These finding highlights a concerning prevalence of gender-based challenges and biases encountered by individuals during the job-seeking process.

The 56% who responded "No" may indicate that a significant portion of respondents did not perceive or did not attribute their job search experiences to gender discrimination. However, it's important to note that underreporting may also occur due to various factors, including reluctance to disclose such experiences.

The reported incidents of gender discrimination have implications for the overall equity of the job market. Addressing these issues is essential not only for the affected individuals but also for fostering a fair and inclusive job market for everyone.

Graph 35 – Types of gender discrimination experienced



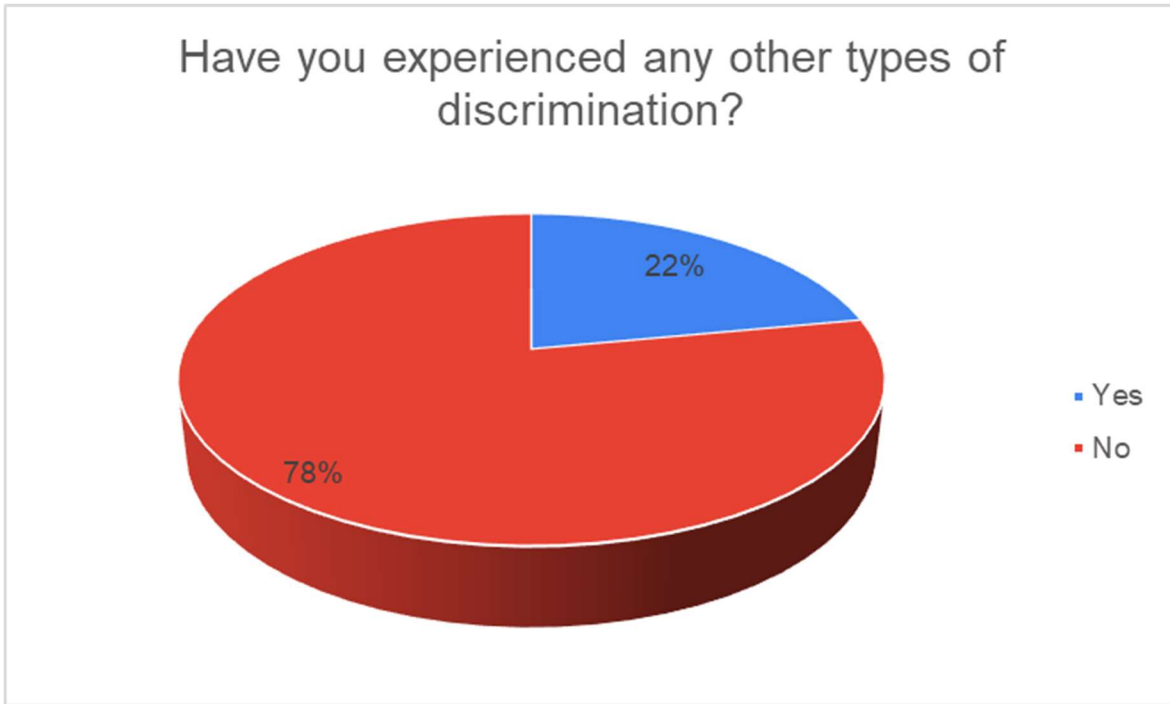
Source: Own research

Hiring discrimination is the most frequently reported form among the respondents, with 14 persons indicating that they have experienced bias during the hiring process. This suggests that challenges in the initial stages of securing employment may be particularly pronounced.

Pay discrimination is reported by 12 persons, indicating that disparities in compensation based on gender may be a notable concern. Addressing pay equity is a critical aspect of promoting gender equality in the workplace.

Although reported less frequently, promotion discrimination is noted by 4 persons. This suggests that individuals may perceive or experience obstacles in advancing their careers, potentially influenced by gender-related biases.

Graph 36 – Statistics on other types of discrimination experience



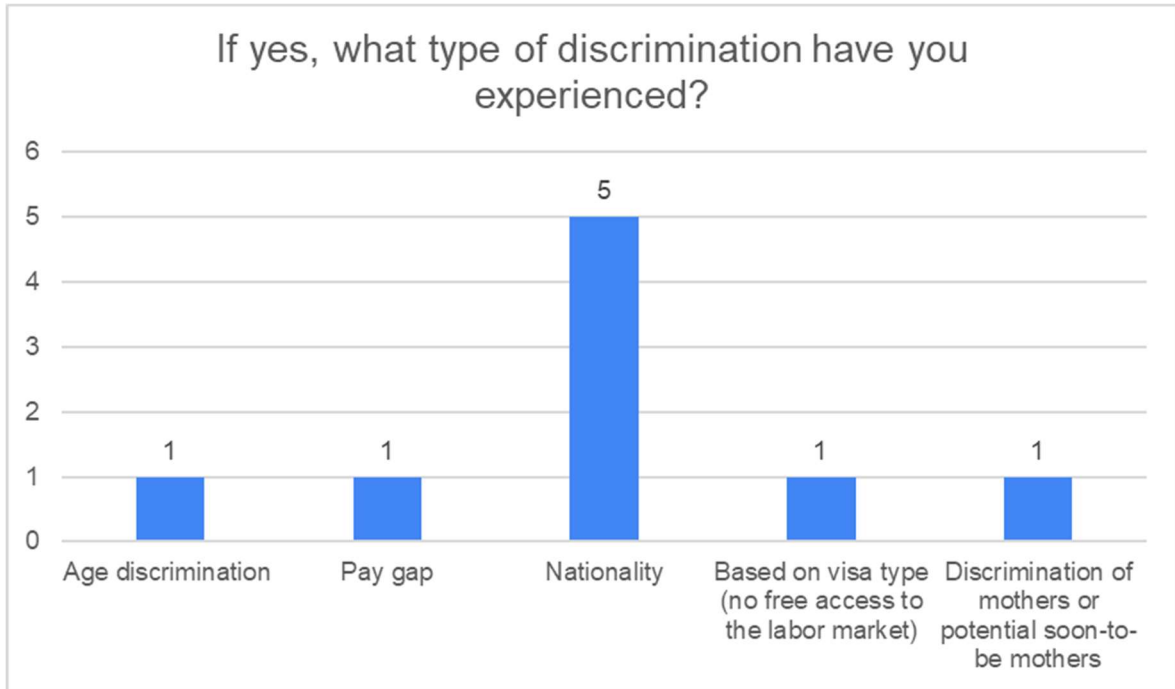
*Source: Own research*

A notable percentage of respondents (22%) report experiencing types of discrimination beyond those specified in the previous questions. This indicates that discrimination, in various forms, is a significant concern for a portion of the surveyed individuals.

Experiencing discrimination in any form can have a significant impact on an individual's well-being, job satisfaction, and overall career trajectory. Employers and organizations should be attentive to these experiences and work toward creating environments free from discrimination.



Graph 37 – Types of other discrimination experienced



Source: Own research

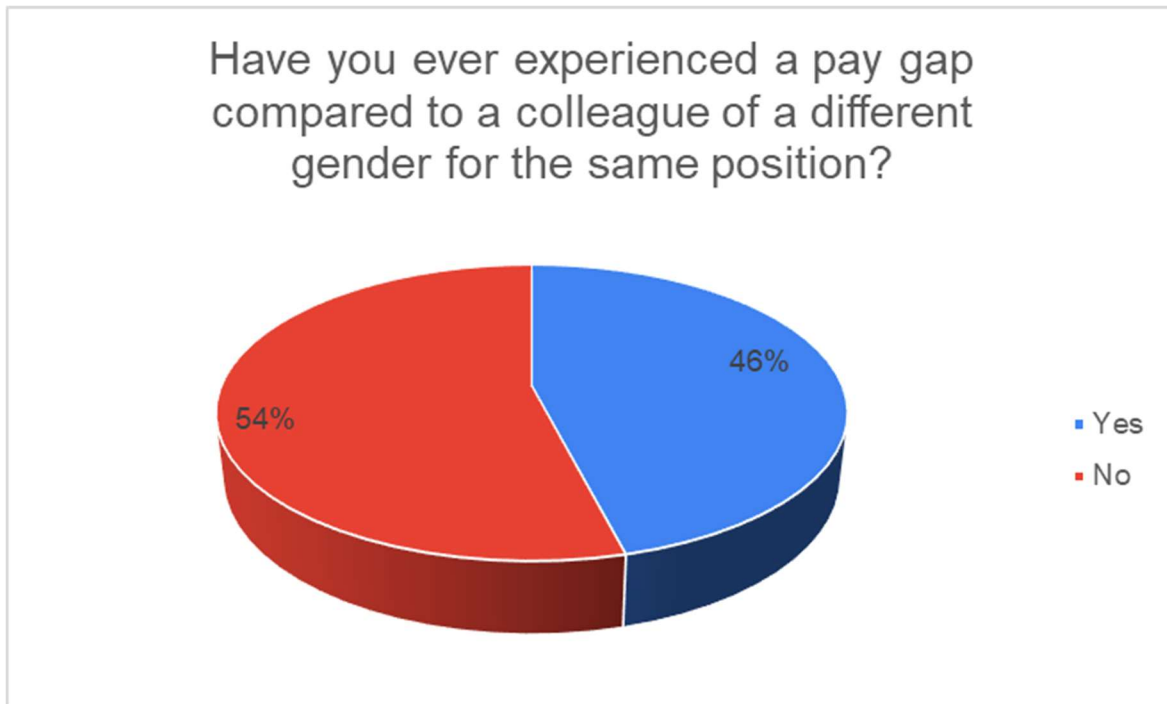
The reported types of discrimination cover a range of factors, including age, pay, nationality, visa status, and discrimination related to motherhood. This diversity highlights that individual may face bias based on various personal characteristics or circumstances. Different forms of discrimination can disproportionately affect specific demographic groups. For example, age discrimination may impact older individuals, pay gap discrimination may affect gender equity, and nationality-related discrimination may target individuals based on their country of origin.

Each reported type of discrimination points to potential systemic issues within the job market. Addressing these issues requires a multifaceted approach, including policy changes, education, and a commitment from employers to create fair and inclusive workplaces.

The reported instances of discrimination related to nationality and visa status highlight challenges faced by individuals based on their immigration status. This suggests a need for greater awareness and advocacy for fair treatment of individuals with different immigration backgrounds.

The reported discrimination related to mothers or potential soon-to-be mothers indicates challenges faced by women in the workforce. This could include bias during hiring processes, promotion decisions, or unequal treatment due to family planning considerations.

Graph 38 – Pay gap due to gender discrimination



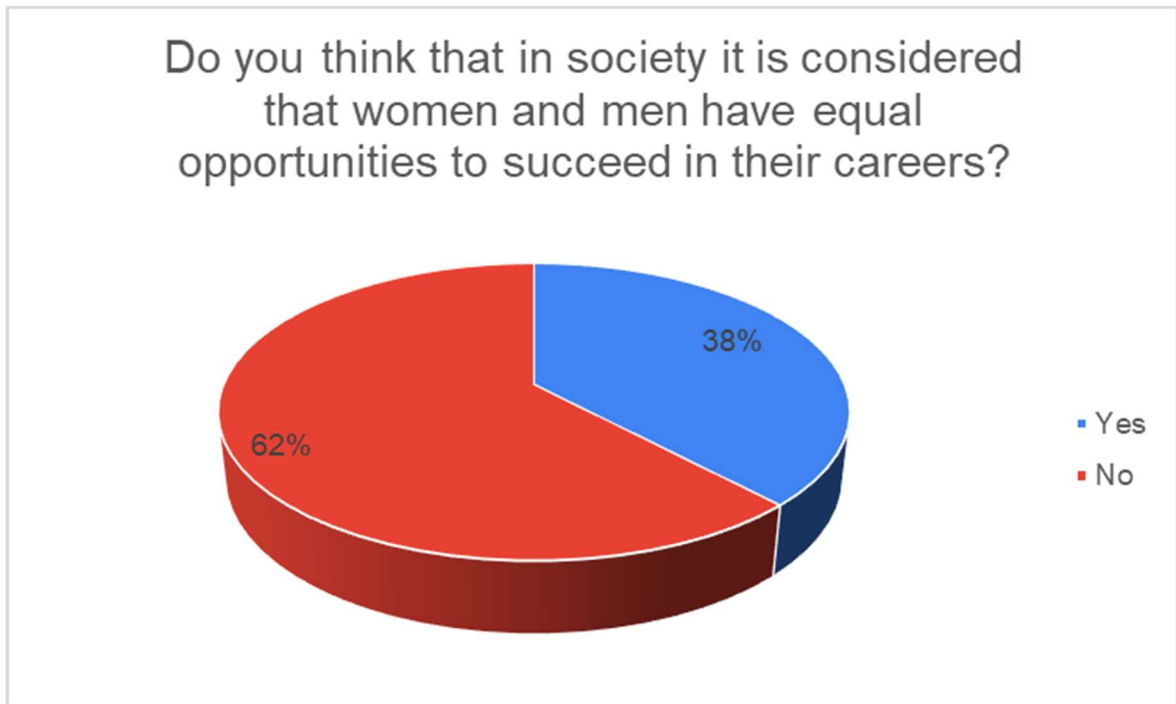
Source: Own research

Nearly half of the respondents (46%) report having experienced a pay gap compared to a colleague of a different gender who holds the same position. This suggests that gender-based pay disparities are perceived or experienced by a significant portion of the surveyed individuals.

The reported instances of pay gap underscore ongoing concerns about gender pay equity in the workforce. This issue has implications for overall workplace fairness, employee satisfaction, and the broader societal goal of achieving gender equality.

The 54% who responded "No" may indicate that some individuals either do not perceive or do not attribute their salary differences to gender-based factors. However, it's essential to consider factors such as confidentiality concerns or a lack of awareness that may contribute to underreporting.

Graph 39 – Statistics on women/men equal opportunities in career success



Source: Own research

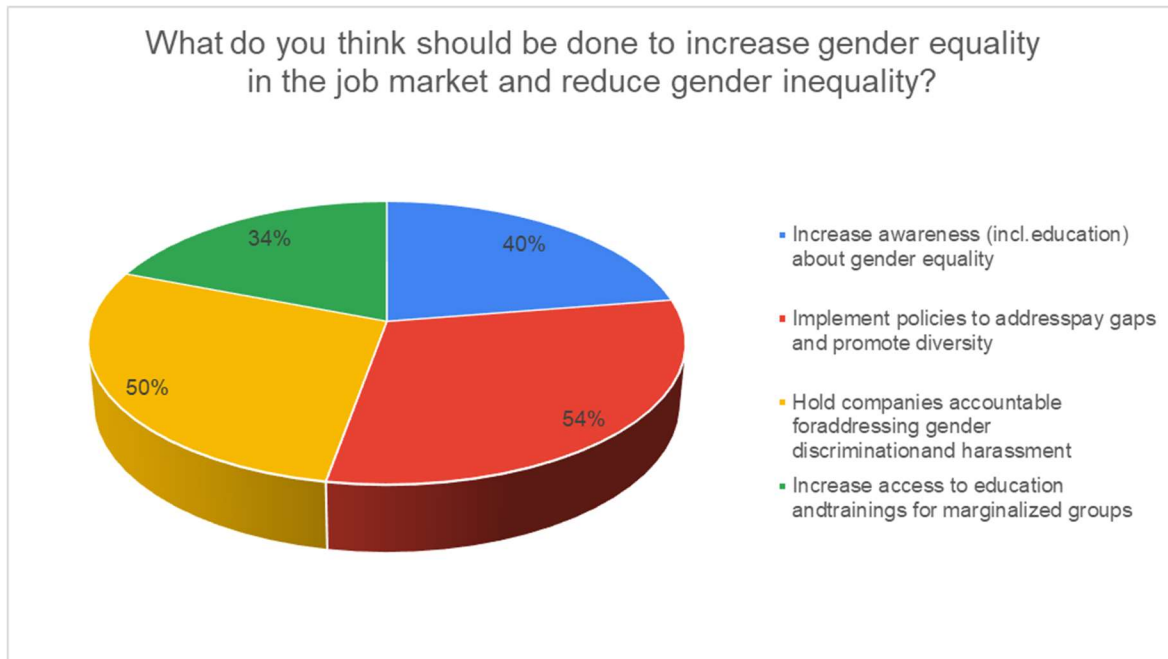
A significant majority of respondents (62%) believe that women and men do not have equal opportunities to succeed in their careers. This perception suggests a prevailing belief among respondents that gender-based disparities exist in the professional realm.

The high percentage of "No" responses indicates concerns about gender inequality in the broader societal context. This could encompass various aspects, including disparities in hiring, promotion, pay, and overall career advancement.

The perception of unequal opportunities may influence individuals' career aspirations and decisions. Women, in particular, may be deterred from pursuing certain professions or leadership roles if they believe that systemic barriers exist.

While the reported perception is discouraging, it also presents an opportunity for positive change. Acknowledging the existence of gender-based challenges is the first step toward implementing policies and practices that contribute to a more equitable society.

Graph 40 – Proposals on gender equality development



Source: Own research

Respondents recognize the need for a multi-faceted approach to address gender inequality in the job market. The suggested actions cover awareness-building, policy implementation, corporate accountability, and educational initiatives.

The majority of respondents (54%) highlight the importance of implementing policies to address pay gaps and promote diversity. This suggests a recognition of the role that systemic changes and organizational policies play in fostering gender equality.

Holding companies accountable for addressing gender discrimination and harassment is emphasized by 50% of respondents. This aligns with the idea that organizational cultures and practices significantly impact gender dynamics in the workplace.

The call for increasing awareness and education about gender equality (40%) suggests a recognition that changing societal attitudes and stereotypes is crucial. Education and awareness initiatives can contribute to challenging biases and fostering a more inclusive mindset.

Increasing access to education and training for marginalized groups (34%) is identified as a means to address broader societal inequalities that contribute to gender disparities. Education is seen as a key tool for empowering individuals and reducing systemic barriers.

Combining awareness-building, policy implementation, corporate accountability, and educational initiatives can create synergies for more comprehensive and effective efforts to address gender inequality. A holistic approach is likely to have a broader and lasting impact.

The emphasis on marginalized groups in education and training initiatives indicates an awareness of intersectionality — recognizing that gender inequality intersects with other forms of discrimination based on factors such as race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status.

### **5.3 Results of Empirical Research**

This stage involves presenting the results obtained during the research. An analysis of the collected data has been conducted, forming the basis for conclusions regarding each of the 5 hypotheses. Visual materials such as graphs and statistical tables may be used to illustrate the results.

It should be noted that one of the limitations of this study is the small number of respondents. This is due to the criterion chosen, which restricts the sample to participants under the age of 35.

The degree of success in data collection proved challenging, as not all respondents filled out the surveys correctly, and some had to be excluded. This factor introduces certain constraints in the analysis, as obtaining a sufficient number of properly completed surveys posed a difficult task. Many participants expressed unwillingness to share information, likely due to the personal and sensitive nature of the topic of unemployment. Such nuances should be taken into account when interpreting the results of the study.

One of the goals of this work was to "Assess the impact of unemployment on psychological well-being." A noticeable percentage of respondents reported experiencing stress, anxiety, and depression during periods of unemployment. This underscores the importance of considering the consequences of job loss for mental health and the need for support mechanisms.

To identify factors influencing psychological well-being and overall health during unemployment.

Many survey participants experienced persistent stress related to unemployment. For a significant number of them, this led to depression and anxiety. More than half of the respondents noted that unemployment had a negative impact on their lives. Factors such as

financial instability, loss of self-confidence, increased stress levels, disruption of family relationships, and social isolation were identified as a result of the study.

Unemployment affected the financial situation of the respondents, forcing many of them to take on debt or cut expenses. It was observed that some individuals faced issues related to alcohol consumption, which may be linked to attempts to cope with the stress and challenges of unemployment. Due to accumulated stress, most respondents encountered conflicts within their families.

To determine if discrimination in employment still exists and whether individuals have encountered such a problem.

During the study, it was found that 72% of respondents believe that gender inequality is present in the labour market. 44% have encountered this issue in their job searches. They also faced discrimination in terms of wages, employment, and promotions. Respondents reported various forms of discrimination, including gender, age, nationality, visa status, and discrimination related to motherhood. 46% experienced unequal pay compared to colleagues of the opposite gender. 38% of respondents believe that women and men have equal rights in achieving career success in our society.

To determine the percentage of respondents without higher education, helping to gauge its relevance in the modern world.

According to the survey results, 26% of respondents do not have a higher education or are currently in the process of obtaining it, while 74% have a bachelor's or master's degree. These data indicate that in the modern world, higher education continues to be significant, especially considering that 76% of those surveyed work full-time, and 18% are employed part-time.

#### 1. Unemployment has a negative impact on mental health.

- Emotional Challenges during Unemployment:

A significant percentage of respondents reported experiencing stress (38%), anxiety (35%), and depression (23%) during the period of unemployment. These emotional challenges are indicative of potential negative impacts on mental health.

- Consistent Reports of Mental Health Issues:

The data consistently reveals that a notable portion of respondents faced mental health challenges during unemployment. This includes individuals

who reported high stress levels, constant stress or anxiety, and instances of depression.

- Variability in Responses:

While some respondents did not report significant mental health challenges during unemployment, a substantial percentage did. The variability in responses reflects the diverse ways individuals may experience and cope with the stress of unemployment.

- Stress Levels during Job Search:

The responses indicating stress levels during job searches further support the idea that the process of seeking employment, which often accompanies unemployment, can be a stress-inducing experience.

- High Levels of Emotional Distress:

Individuals reported facing conflicts with family or friends, frequent consumption of alcohol or other substances, and encounters with depression, anxiety, and stress. These indicators collectively point to a high level of emotional distress during unemployment.

- Persistent Stress:

The reported levels of constant stress, anxiety, and depression suggest that for some individuals, these mental health challenges are not transient but persist throughout the period of unemployment.

While the data supports the hypothesis, it's important to note that causation cannot be definitively established without a controlled experimental design. Unemployment may contribute to mental health challenges, but other factors could also influence the relationship. Additionally, individual differences in coping mechanisms and support systems play a role in determining how individuals experience and respond to unemployment.

In summary, the available data aligns with the hypothesis that unemployment has a negative impact on mental health, as indicated by the prevalence of stress, anxiety, and depression reported by respondents during periods of job loss.

## 2. Long-term unemployment leads to a decline in self-esteem and self-worth.

- Impact on Self-Esteem:

Respondents reported challenges such as the loss of self-esteem and self-worth during unemployment. This is evident in responses indicating a decline in self-esteem (22%) and the perception that job loss led to a decrease in self-worth (20%).

- **Negative Impact on Self-Perception:**

The data consistently shows that a notable portion of respondents experienced negative effects on their self-perception during unemployment. This aligns with the hypothesis that long-term unemployment can have a detrimental impact on self-esteem.

- **Association with Mental Health Challenges:**

The reported mental health challenges, including stress, anxiety, and depression, are often associated with self-esteem issues. Mental health and self-esteem are interconnected, and challenges in one area can contribute to difficulties in the other.

- **Challenges During Job Search:**

Respondents reported stress during the job search process, which can further contribute to a decline in self-esteem. The difficulties in finding employment may lead individuals to question their abilities and self-worth.

- **Financial Strain and Self-Worth:**

Financial challenges during unemployment, reported by some respondents, may also contribute to a decline in self-worth. Financial stability is often tied to perceptions of personal success and value.

- **Variability in Responses:**

While some respondents did not explicitly report declines in self-esteem, a notable percentage did. The variability in responses reflects individual differences in how people perceive and cope with the challenges of unemployment.

In summary, the available data aligns with the hypothesis that long-term unemployment can lead to a decline in self-esteem and self-worth, as indicated by reported challenges in these areas among respondents facing prolonged periods of job loss.



3. Discrimination in employment still exists and whether individuals have encountered such a problem.

- Reports of Discrimination:

A portion of respondents reported experiencing discrimination during the job search process. This is evident from responses such as "Yes" to questions about facing stigma or negative attitudes and encountering discrimination.

- Sources of Discrimination:

The data indicates that discrimination was reported from various sources, including friends or family members, employers or potential employers, and society in general.

- Subjective Nature of Discrimination:

Discrimination is often a subjective experience, and individuals may interpret and perceive situations differently. The data reflects individual perceptions of discrimination.

To thoroughly investigate the hypothesis that discrimination in employment still exists, and to identify specific factors contributing to discrimination, a more targeted survey or analysis is needed. This would involve asking detailed questions about the types of discrimination encountered and the specific characteristics or factors involved (e.g., gender, age, race).

In conclusion, while the data provides some indication that individuals have encountered discrimination during the job search, it does not offer a detailed analysis of the specific factors contributing to discrimination. Further research with more focused questions on the nature and sources of discrimination would be necessary to draw more definitive conclusions about the existence and types of discrimination in employment.

4. Unemployment contributes to an increased risk of substance abuse and addictive behaviours.

- Frequency of Alcohol and Substance Use:

According to the data, a portion of respondents reported consuming alcohol or other prohibited substances during their period of unemployment. The breakdown includes responses such as "Very often» "Often» "Rarely» and "Never."

- **Higher Frequency of Use:**  
Notably, a combined 17 respondents reported "Very often" or "Often" consuming alcohol or other prohibited substances during unemployment. This suggests a higher frequency of substance use among a subset of individuals facing unemployment.
- **Indication of Coping Mechanisms:**  
Substance use during periods of unemployment can be indicative of coping mechanisms or attempts to manage stress and emotional challenges associated with job loss.

While the data provides indications that some individuals may turn to alcohol or substances during unemployment, it's important to note that it doesn't establish a direct causal link. Several factors, such as pre-existing substance use patterns, mental health status, and individual coping strategies, could contribute to the observed behaviours.

To thoroughly assess the hypothesis that unemployment contributes to an increased risk of substance abuse and addictive behaviours, a more comprehensive study with targeted questions on substance use, mental health, and coping mechanisms during unemployment would be needed. Longitudinal studies tracking individuals before, during, and after unemployment could provide more insights into causal relationships.

In conclusion, while the data suggests a correlation between unemployment and some level of alcohol and substance use, confirming a direct causal relationship would require a more focused and detailed investigation. The observed behaviours may be influenced by various factors, and further research would be needed to establish causation.

### **5.3.1 Critical Analysis of Results**

- **Unemployment and Mental Health:**  
The data suggests a connection between unemployment and negative impacts on mental health, with respondents reporting stress, anxiety, and depression. This aligns with existing theoretical concepts that link unemployment to psychological distress. Concepts such as the "strain theory" in sociology or the "psychosocial model" in psychology may be relevant. The stress of unemployment, financial strain, and the uncertainty of the job search process can contribute to mental health challenges.

- **Self-Esteem and Long-Term Unemployment:**  
The reported decline in self-esteem and self-worth during long-term unemployment corresponds with psychological theories related to the impact of prolonged stressors on self-perception. Concepts like "identity theory" or "self-determination theory" could be considered in interpreting these findings. Long-term unemployment may erode a person's sense of identity and accomplishment, leading to a decline in self-esteem.
- **Workplace Discrimination:**  
The reported experiences of workplace discrimination, even though the data lacks specific details on the type of discrimination, align with theories of social inequality. The "social identity theory" and "intersectionality" concepts may be relevant in understanding how individuals perceive and navigate discrimination based on various factors such as gender, age, or other characteristics.
- **Substance Use and Coping Mechanisms:**  
The data indicating some respondents turning to alcohol or substances during unemployment can be interpreted through the lens of coping theories. Concepts such as "coping theory" or "stress-coping model" suggest that individuals may adopt various coping mechanisms, including substance use, to manage stress and negative emotions during challenging times.

Unemployment has to be conceived as an enduring, structural phenomenon so that it can be efficiently addressed with simultaneous short-term and long-term strategies in various domains, from education to targeted investment and fiscal policy, at the national and international political levels. (JANOSKI, OLIVER, 2014)

## 6 Conclusion

After reviewing the surveys and conducting interviews on the topic of unemployment, it's clear that there is a sense of sensitivity surrounding this issue for those who participated. Many individuals found it challenging to discuss their experiences with unemployment and reported that it can have a significant psychological impact. Individuals may struggle with depression and anxiety as a result of being out of work. It's important to recognize that unemployment can affect anyone, regardless of their qualifications or education level. The unemployed are often stigmatized as being lazy or incompetent, but this couldn't be further from the truth. Unemployment can happen to anyone, and there are various circumstances that can lead to it. The key is to maintain a positive attitude and seek support, whether it's from family and friends or professionals. There's no shame in seeking help, and it's nothing to be ashamed of.

Along with the previously mentioned factors, it is equally important to consider the social and economic implications of unemployment. Not only do individuals face financial hardships, but society as a whole can experience detrimental changes. During periods of widespread joblessness, there is increased demand for social services, and the number of people relying on government assistance increases, ultimately impacting the country's finances.

It's important to acknowledge that unemployment can present an opportunity for personal growth and development. When individuals find themselves in this situation, they may reassess their priorities, acquire new skills, and focus on self-improvement. Educating oneself, acquiring new skills, and exploring new opportunities can play a crucial role in this transition period.

It is crucial to recognize the importance of society in creating an environment that supports those facing unemployment. The empathy, understanding, and support of the community can greatly aid in overcoming challenges and rebuilding confidence.

Therefore, it is necessary to focus not only on individual experiences but also on societal and economic factors, as well as the prospects for growth and support in this situation.

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# Appendix

## Attachment 1 - Questionnaire for examining psychological aspects of unemployment

Dear ladies and gentlemen,

Kindly take a moment to complete this survey. The questions focus on the impact of unemployment on both economic and psychological aspects. This study is anonymous, and the results will be utilized for my diploma thesis.

What is your age?

- 18-21
- 22-25
- 26-29
- 30-35

What is your sex?

- Male
- Female

Marital status

- Married
- In a relationship
- Divorced
- Single

Do you have children?

- No
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4 or more

Education

- High school education
- Bachelor degree
- Master degree
- Incomplete high education
- I am currently enrolled in school/college/university

Your current employment status

- Full-time
- Part-time
- I'm currently not working but actively seeking employment
- Unemployed and not actively seeking employment
- Unemployed and having difficulty finding job

Have you ever been fired?

- Yes
- No

If yes, were you satisfied with your job?

- Yes
- More yes than no
- More no than yes
- No

Did you lose your job during the period from 2020 to 2022 when the pandemic hit?



- Yes
- No

If yes, how long did it take for you to find a job afterward?

- Less than a month
- Between two to three months
- Three months or more

Please rate your level of stress at the moment when you were temporarily unemployed on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is no stress at all, and 5 is extremely high stress.

How often have you experienced stress or anxiety during your unemployment?

- Constantly
- Frequently
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

Have you experienced any mental health challenges as a result of unemployment?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what type of mental health challenges have you experienced?

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Stress

How has unemployment affected your psychological well-being?

- Very negatively
- Negatively
- Neutral
- Positively
- Very Positively

Which of the following factors, in your opinion, have the greatest impact on your psychological well-being due to unemployment?

- Financial instability
- Loss of self-esteem
- Increased stress levels
- Worsening of family relationships
- Social isolation

Has unemployment affected your financial situation?

- I was supported by my parents or partner
- I had to borrow money from family or friends
- I had savings that I lived on
- I have had to make lifestyle changes to cut costs
- Unemployment did not affect my financial situation

Have you ever faced stigma or negative attitudes from others regarding your unemployment status?

- Yes
- No

If yes, who were the main sources of stigma or negative attitudes?

- Friends or family members
- Employers or potential employers
- Society in general
- Other

Have you often consumed alcohol or other prohibited substances during your period of unemployment?

- Very often
- Often
- Rarely
- Never

Due to the accumulated stress, did you have conflicts with family or friends?

- Yes
- No

After graduation, how long did it take you to find a job?

- Less than a month
- Between two to three months
- Three months or more

Is your participation in job search activities (such as sending CVs, attending interviews) perceived by you as:

- Mandatory burden
- Necessary task
- Opportunity for personal growth
- Other

What has been the biggest challenge you have faced when looking for work?

- Lack of relevant experience
- Limited job opportunities in my field
- Competition from other job seekers
- Discrimination based on age, race, gender, or other factors

Have you received any job training or career guidance?

- Yes
- No

If yes, how helpful was the training or guidance you received?

- Extremely helpful
- Somewhat helpful
- Not very helpful
- Not at all helpful

Have you considered self-employment or starting your own business?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what has been your biggest obstacle to starting your own business?

- Lack of funding
- Lack of business knowledge
- Legal or regulatory barriers

Have you considered relocating to find employment?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what has been your biggest obstacle for relocating?

- Lack of funds to move
- Unwillingness to leave family or friends
- Not knowing where to move to

Have you ever accepted a job that was not in your preferred field or industry?

- Yes
- No

If yes, how long did you stay in that job?

- From 1 to 3 months
- From 3 months to 6 months
- 6 months or longer
- Currently employed

Do you think gender inequality exists in the job market?

- Yes
- No

Have you ever experienced gender discrimination in your job search?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what type of gender discrimination have you experienced?

- Pay discrimination
- Hiring discrimination
- Promotion discrimination

Have you experienced any other types of discrimination?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what type of discrimination have you experienced?

Have you ever experienced a pay gap compared to a colleague of a different gender for the same position?

- Yes
- No

Do you think that in society it is considered that women and men have equal opportunities to succeed in their careers?

- Yes
- No

What do you think should be done to increase gender equality in the job market and reduce gender inequality?

- Increase awareness (incl. education) about gender equality
- Implement policies to address pay gaps and promote diversity
- Hold companies accountable for addressing gender discrimination and harassment
- Increase access to education and trainings for marginalized