

## THE ROLE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL ON TRANSITION TO EMPLOYMENT

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**Abstract:** *Employability is a dynamic process. Constant changes in the world of work and occupations require increasing adaptability of an individual, since there are more and more factors that an individual must recognize and exploit for the realization of his/her career opportunities. Career development is a lifelong process of creating and exploiting contacts for the purpose of better employment opportunities both in the sphere of work and learning. To maintain employability and to utilize faster transitions into employment, it is necessary to possess the knowledge and the access to the recruitment channels. Since the boundaries between private and working life are getting increasingly blurred, the utilization of information and job opportunities gained through use of social contacts is gaining importance.*

*Social capital encompasses resources, knowledge and information that are available only within the network of relationships [1]. Since realization of personal goals and interests is above all related to a conscious motivation of an individual, each tie is not equally effective and useful. Above all, the weakness of the social network represents an obstacle in maintaining employability. Thus, in particular, the different levels of connections reflect a different role in the speed of transition to employment as well as in attaining other benefits during the course of a career.*

*The purpose of the research is to identify the role of social capital in the transition to employment of unemployed persons registered at the Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS). First, we plan to measure the level of social capital in the sample of unemployed persons. Next, we will check in three six*

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months time points the outflow of these persons from the register of unemployed. With the analysis, we will examine the differences in the speed of transition from unemployment to employment depending on level of social capital development. We will also examine differences according to different levels of ties that are identified as different forms of social capital. These are strong bonding ties of family and friendship ties, weak bridging ties, with people of varied opportunities features and expand access to different sources and vertical ties, which form different power relations arising from the position of power in different social strata. We will also separately observe the dimensions of social capital according to the structure, which includes the size and diversity of the social network and the quality, which contains trust, norms and reciprocity. Applying the propensity score matching analysis we will statistically observe and control the influence of other variables, which also affect the speed of the transition into employment. In this respect we plan to consider personal (age, gender, degree) and demographic (place of residence) variables as well as variables that affect the career development of the individual (years of service, duration of unemployment).

On the basis of the empirical findings, as well as other relevant empirical research, a set of guidelines for unemployment counselors will be outlined aiming to exploit the growing importance of the role of social capital in the transition into employment. Above all, the purpose of study is to highlight which aspects of social capital should be strengthened according to different groups of unemployed and to adapt the ESS tools and measures accordingly.

**Key words:** Social capital, social ties, employment, employability.

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