

Helena Štimac, PhD

Full professor
Faculty of Economics in Osijek
E-mail: helena.stimac@efos.hr
Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3699-2112>

Karla Bilandžić Tanasić, mag. oec.

Assistant
Faculty of Economics in Osijek
E-mail: karla.bilandzic@efos.hr
Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9990-949X>

COMPETENCIES AND SKILLS: GAP BETWEEN HIGHER EDUCATION AND LABOUR MARKET

UDK / UDC: 331.5:378

JEL klasifikacija / JEL classification: I21, I23, J20, J24

DOI: 10.17818/EMIP/2023/2.15

Pregledni rad / Review

Primljeno / Received: 14. studenoga 2022. / November 14, 2022

Prihvaćeno / Accepted: 21. veljače 2023. / February 21, 2023

Abstract

Achieving synergy between market demands and knowledge, competencies, and skills offered by higher education is a great challenge and represents a responsibility that most commonly resides with educators. The aim of this paper is to investigate the gap between the offered competencies and skills provided to students after they complete their higher education and the demands of the labour market in the area of marketing. In order to define the features of the gap, qualitative research was conducted using the group interview method (focus group), after which the results showed that the competencies and skills offered on the higher education market correspond to a certain extent to the competencies and skills demanded on the labour market. However, it was determined that the gap existed, and it was necessary to reduce it. Further adaptations and changes in higher education are necessary, but it is all held back by slow development, administrative overload, and inertia, both in higher education institutions and among its stakeholders.

Keywords: labour market, higher education, competencies, skills, marketing, focus group

1. INTRODUCTION

It is widely established (and may be concluded from simple observation), that the communication market changed significantly with the appearance of the Internet and Web 2.0, and considering that the communication market has a direct effect on the marketing market, a simple conclusion may be drawn that marketing and marketing activities have experienced major changes caused by this disruptive change brought about by the Internet. Social networks are just one of the examples of changes in the method of communication, which had a direct (and powerful) effect on marketing practices. And as marketing practices changed, the demands of the jobs market shifted to knowledge, skills, and competencies that are expected from those future employees who will be implementing those practices. Marketing has always changed quickly and such changes are still happening quickly (a good example is TikTok, which rapidly became popular among its users, attracted new users in record time and thus became a new communication channel used by brands), while on the other hand, the changes in education take place (too) slowly when compared to the changes on the market. Hence, educational programmes lag behind in introducing theories about new technologies and media. However, brands have their demands and requests, and they often cannot wait for the education system to offer employees who meet those requirements regarding knowledge, competencies, and skills. This means that the implementation of social networks into the communication channels used by brands happened before students with such knowledge entered the labour market. Furthermore, social networks have taken a large share of the marketing budget. Sharma and Verma (2018) have stated that “brands have started allocating a significant portion of their marketing budgets to social media marketing (SMM)”. Therefore, they are not only keeping up with the trends, they believe in those trends and they are relying on those trends with their budgets and business plans – because if they fail to take advantage of the opportunity offered by the new communication channel, their competitors will. That is why the demand on the labour market is extremely important and merciless toward the supply. When comparing marketing with some other branches of economy, a conclusion may be drawn that marketing experiences change most frequently and the speed of those changes is highest. Changes in macroeconomy still require time. The situation in marketing is different, it is completely reliant on the behaviour and habits of the consumers, which is why changes happen (or at least must happen) very quickly. All of this ultimately represents a problem for education, which is not as flexible.

In order for changes in education to even take place (regardless of how quickly they happen), it is necessary to know which aspects should change, i.e. to identify the knowledge, skills, and competencies which are in demand on the labour market, but which are also not offered or are insufficiently offered by the education as part of their educational programmes. This is why it is extremely important to have a two-way communication regarding supply and demand, practice and theory, business entities and educational institutions. This is the exact reason why various

types of research are conducted, and one of those types includes focus groups, which use interviews to discover the extent of the gap.

The information presented above was used to ask the following research question:

RQ1: Are competencies and skills offered on the higher education market related to the competencies and skills demanded by the labour market?

For the purpose of answering the research question, a group interview was conducted (via a focus group), with the goal of investigating the gap between the labour market and the higher education market. Therefore, the question is whether the higher education institutions “produce” the “products” that satisfy the demands of employers in the area of marketing, with the emphasis on skills and competencies. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] (2005), competencies are a multidimensional concept that consist of personal components (knowledge, cognitive abilities, motivation, attitude, and emotions), social components (context knowledge), and conducts (activities, behaviours, initiative) used in specific situations or contexts. On the other hand, skills refer to technical activities – components required to complete a job (Pinto, Doucet & Fernández-Ramos (2008) according to Denecker (2003)). The mentioned “technical activities” refer to the learned or the acquired part of behaviour. In simple terms, competencies are related to the intellect and skills are related to manual knowledge.

The paper includes several sections. In the section Higher education market, a theoretical overview will be used to describe the current state of the higher education market, what the possible threats are and why and how the market has changed. Next, in the section describing the labour market, the already mentioned gap between education and demand for competencies and skills will be explored - what is demanded and what is offered. The description of the research carried out and the results obtained for the purpose of this work will be presented in the Research and Research results sections, while the Discussion and Conclusion will connect the theory and literature review with the research results obtained.

2. HIGHER EDUCATION MARKET

According to Eurostat (2021) data, in 2020 there were 17.6 million students in the European Union, i.e. all those who will enter the labour market in the following years (or who have already entered it) and who will face the challenges posed by the commitments, responsibility, negotiations, and the practical application of knowledge. The higher education market will put forward 17.6 million new employees, and the size of that market speaks about the difficulties of harmonising educational programmes and ultimately knowledge, skills, and competencies, with market demands. A larger market means less flexibility. Lower flexibility means that the required competences from the market will incorporate more slowly into educational programmes. According to Masten and Coastworth (1998), competencies may be defined as “a pattern of effective

adaptation in the environment. Broadly defined in terms of reasonable success with major developmental tasks expected for a person of a given age and gender in the context of his or her culture, society, and time. It carries the dual meaning, that there is a track record of such achievement (competent performance) and also that the individual has the capability to perform well in the future. It refers to good adaptation and not necessarily to superb achievement.” Braun and Brachem (2015), according to OECD (2013), have stated that “in the sense of employability and with regard to the European qualification frameworks, generic competences are seen as central learning outcomes of higher education, which graduates and job holders must possess to master the modern working environment.” And finally, Stringfellow, Ennis, Brennan and Harker (2006), after they completed their research and analysed their results, have offered the following conclusion: “Our discussions with practitioners further suggest that greater levels of cooperation and consultation should take place between academic institutes and employers in order to achieve a tighter balance between theoretical knowledge and vocational skills and aptitudes.” However, Crews and Stitt-Gohdes have noticed in 2012 that there is an increased effort to connect theoretical with practical knowledge in formal marketing education, which would mean that changes have certainly already started happening.

Different authors have approached the gap research in different ways, and these can be separated into two approaches – one focusing on employees and the other on employers. However, both approaches have yielded similar conclusions in terms of defining competences that should be incorporated more extensively into the educational programmes.

In Braun and Becham’s (2015) research from 2013 and 2014 among 10,511 German students, they defined eight areas of job-relevant required skills and competencies, which, if featured more prominently in education, could help narrow the gap. According to them, these include: planning and organizing of work processes, promoting others, leading, dealing autonomously with challenging tasks, information processing, number processing, communicating in foreign languages and physical performance. Little (2007) defined the ten necessary competencies in the business environment: using time efficiently, performing well under pressure, working productively with others, coordinating activities, rapidly acquiring new knowledge, while Arthur defined the following in 2006: analytical skills, social skills, management skills, communication skills, the ability to learn, presentation skills. Research conducted in 2006 and 2007 in 16 European Union states defined five competencies essential for the success of future employees who were then attending the final year of their study programmes. These are: professional expertise, functional flexibility, innovation and knowledge management, mobilization of human resources, and international orientation (Allen & Velden, 2007). Benešova and Tupa (2017) touched on industry 4.0, which brought major changes to the marketing market as well. Competencies were mentioned previously, and their statements make it clear why those competencies are necessary: “Using the Internet of Things, the Internet of Services and the Internet of People will make the connection: machine-machine, human-machine or

human-human, and at the same time an enormous amount of data will be obtained.” This is supplemented by the new role of Human Resource Management, which is no longer only tasked with selection, staffing and dismissing, it must also develop employees and their skills and competences, as well as ensure their continuous education (Becker, 2013).

Nicolescu and Paun (2009) have developed several more conclusions, apart from competencies, which may serve as guidelines for the development of the education market by those who shape that market:

- “Students’ expectations are rapidly changing along with the emergence of consumer service orientations resulting from political, economic, and social changes.
- Providers of higher education services should consider both the opinions of students at graduation and employers, as main beneficiaries of higher education, in order to be able to improve their offers and activities and compete successfully.
- Institutes of higher education and employers need to develop a more strategic relationship in order to better coordinate their needs.
- Institutes of higher education have to create new models of curriculum, teaching, and student evaluation strategies, in order to develop transferable skills in students, along with operational competencies, to ensure their survival in new changing workplaces.”

Based on everything stated above, a question arises regarding the expectations of students and whether those expectations are realistic, considering that most of them have not encountered the labour market and the demands of that market. Higher education institutions should certainly fully adapt their programmes to the labour market. However, the emergence of the Internet (even social networks) has resulted in significant changes in marketing, for which the educational system is simply too slow. The programme and the curriculum of the educational system change slowly, the procedures for accepting new programmes are long, which results in the misalignment between the educational system and the labour market.

3. THE LABOUR MARKET

The labour market crashed during the global crisis in 2008, and apart from the fact that many people lost their jobs, the gap between education and the labour market has widened during that period. As mentioned by Carnevale, Smith and Strohl (2013), looking back at the mentioned crisis – the jobs returned, but not everyone was ready. The education market simply did not offer a sufficient number of future employees which would meet the labour market demands. There was a disbalance between the demands of the market and the supply from the education system, and the disbalance was not in the context of skills and competencies, but instead, the education system was not organised in a way that would allow future

students to be directed toward those areas which are in demand on the market, instead of directing them toward those areas which were already saturated with employees. This is also connected to the evolution of the Internet into Internet 4.0, which has a significant effect on marketing. Regarding the process of upgrading higher education in the area of marketing to meet the market demands, one thing often mentioned is the need for (better) development of quantitative skills and knowledge (big data, analytics, mathematics, etc.) (Deloitte, 2017; Aggarwal, Vaidyanathan and Rochford, 2007). Schlee and Karns (2017) have conducted research exclusively related to competencies required for marketing jobs, and their research has led to the conclusion that “oral and written communication top the list of most frequently requested applied/transferable skills, followed by working in teams, working independently, being detail oriented, time management, making presentations, multitasking, and being a problem solver” are the most important general skills (with the exception of skills related to the knowledge of marketing as a profession), as well as personal attributes for employment after university in the area of marketing.

The mentioned gap on the market, regarding *demand* and *supply*, has specifically caused the appearance of a sort of competition which may be observed as a threat to higher education. This “competition” comes in the form of various courses, webinars, YouTube video instructions, and various e-brochures that offer *fast* knowledge about narrow aspects of marketing, but due to their focus on a narrow topic, they are unable to offer the ability to think in the context of marketing or provide the full picture of marketing and marketing theory. Fundamental changes in education are the consequence of technological development (Katsarova, 2015), which, in the context of marketing, particularly refers to digital marketing. Nevertheless, because these offer fast solution to acquire knowledge, they are sought after on the market. Even though this type of acquisition of (additional) knowledge is always desirable after formal marketing education, it should not replace formal education. Formal education in marketing offers numerous benefits. Hunt, Chonko and Wood (1986) have pointed out that comprehensive marketing education acquired during MBA education is connected to higher salaries at a marketing job.

4. RESEARCH

As part of this qualitative research, the group interview (focus group) method was used to reach conclusions, on the basis of a discussion on the research topic. The focus group was used to test attitudes and previous experience, to identify problems, and to offer proposals for further action on the education market. The reason for using the focus group was that the question requiring an answer was “why?”, not “how much?”.

Compared to the studies in the literature review, this one was conducted in Croatia. One of the reasons for that is a lack of data regarding the gap between higher education and labour market in Croatia. Other explanations are given in the paper limitations. In any case, Croatian experts do not have enough information for making decisions that would lead to positive changes.

The focus group consisted of 8 participants, marketing experts or persons employing marketing experts (HR). Skoko and Benković (2009) said that focus groups most commonly consist of 6 – 12 participants, which is the optimal number that provides enough space for all the participants to present their opinion and position without causing division within the group, i.e. enabling the moderator to conduct a quality discussion. The criterion of homogeneity was observed during the selection of participants. To provide a better understanding of the respondents' backgrounds, the table 1 below includes a brief profile of each respondent.

Table 1.

Sample description

Participant	Work experience (years)	Position	A place of higher education	Job industry
Participant 1	21	Managing Director	Croatia	Hospitality
Participant 2	11	Head of Human Resources	Croatia	IT / Creative industry & Marketing
Participant 3	5	CEO	SAD	IT / Creative industry & Marketing
Participant 4	19	Head of Business Development	Croatia	Advertising
Participant 5	20	CEO	Croatia	Advertising
Participant 6	21	CEO	Croatia	IT
Participant 7	24	CEO	Croatia	Manufacturing
Participant 8	20	CEO & Marketing Director	Croatia	Advertising

The goal of the research was to detect the gap between the demands of the labour market, i.e. between employers and marketing experts, and the higher education market, i.e. those that “produce” marketing experts. The research was aimed at examining whether the students completing higher education in the area of economy meet the criteria and requirements set by those conducting the employment procedure and employers, with the emphasis on competencies and skills. The focus was on marketing, which is ubiquitous in all spheres of business today.

The implementation of the group interview showed certain advantages, but certain deficiencies appeared as well, which proved to be a limitation for this research. An advantage of the group interview was spontaneity, considering that the participants were familiar with the research topic and they had a free and open conversation about the topic discussed, the interview was monitored, it was moderated by two persons, and it was recorded, which facilitated data analysis. The

avalanche effect was observed, considering that comments, proposals, and notes related to the topic being discussed encouraged comments, proposals, and notes from other people, new discoveries were presented, new areas were discovered, not only by the moderators, but also by the other participants. The observed deficiencies included the length of the interview, a specific participant stood out as the leader at a certain point, resulting in them unconsciously dominating the discussion, and of course the sample. Considering that the groups participating in group interviews do not constitute representative samples, this is a limitation. On the other hand, a smaller group offers advantages because it can cover a larger area of interest and have a more detailed discussion about the topic of the interview. Specifically due to the mentioned limitation, future research will move toward increasing the number of participants, in order to be able to generalise the results.

The results were analysed based on transcripts, notes, and by monitoring the non-verbal communication between the participants.

5. RESEARCH RESULTS

The following shows the expectations of the labour market, the problems detected, and the proposals for better bridging the gap between the labour market and the higher education market.

The results have shown that employers expect the students graduating from marketing school to be communicative, open, to think critically, to be proactive (“try, then say I do not know”), to be organised and responsible, creative, reliable and conscientious, to have a breadth of knowledge (keeping up with trends and current events, general knowledge), to be familiar with processes, drafting and finding offers (market knowledge), to have good written communication, business ethics, to be able to find their way around the digital information environment, approach a problem appropriately, to have presentation and negotiation skills, and to take initiative.

Participants, i.e. employers detected the problem of laziness among students who arrive at their companies for professional practice or those who apply for a job at their companies. They believe that a part of the issue is upbringing, but also that today’s generation of students is used to receiving everything “on a silver platter”. They explained that that is because “they grew up with technology that gives them the answer to any information at any time”. Therefore, they have placed the emphasis on the fact that teachers should affect change, be stricter, demand more, and identify those who are ambitious and who want to learn more, and offer more. Furthermore, the participants have said that the students are tasked with the obligation of writing seminar papers which yield no results and that the students should be taught to summarise everything by using clear and summarised information.

Decision making is a priority. A student will know how to find information and make a comparison, but the challenge is making a decision. They have access to an abundance of information, but they do not know what to do with it. They do not have experience and do not know the essence of the issues. The

greatest deficiency they have detected with graduated students who apply for a job is analytics and operational thinking. Therefore, the emphasis should be on those courses with the focus on processes and projects. Previously, students who graduated were lacking initiative and familiarity with idea generation techniques, as well as methods for efficient gathering and evaluation of ideas. Most of the students entering the labour market say in their job interviews that they want to work with social networks, mostly because they do not know that marketing is much more than that. Most of the students coming to job interviews are underprepared and they do not study marketing, i.e. they do not keep up with the marketing trends.

The participants have proposed the mandatory professional practice to be introduced throughout the graduate study programmes, more emphasis placed on “practical” literature, and moving away from the theory as it is obsolete, while marketing is a dynamic category. Furthermore, the students lack proactive thinking, which is partly the result of the technology they grew up with and their acceptance of other peoples’ thinking, but also the result of students being allowed to learn from classrooms, literature summaries, and notes, instead of being “forced” to study the literature themselves before class and to prepare for classes themselves (do some research and then discuss). The teachers should motivate the students to study and learn outside of the teaching period. This would solve the existing problem, which is the expectation that they will be given a “template” (like at university). The employers want them to think of something, make something, and present something themselves. Everyone in the marketing business must be ready to learn and develop professionally (through various activities like seminars, conferences, books and articles, videos, blogs...).

The participants have concluded that the students who complete higher education programmes are partially ready to work on the labour market. Namely, it is important to introduce as much practical knowledge to the courses as possible, and general knowledge, which is not necessarily related to marketing, certainly should not be neglected (e.g. financial literacy, writing offers, and the like). The participants have suggested making connections with businesses and creating project tasks during which students will contribute to solving actual problems. This is already being practiced in part, but the suggestion is to introduce more of it.

6. DISCUSSION

In order to answer the research question (Are competencies and skills offered on the higher education market in the area of marketing related to the competencies and skills demanded by the labour market?), it is necessary to create an overview first and compare the competencies and skills offered on the higher education market and those required on the labour market (based on previous research), and the competencies and skills offered by the higher education marketing programme dominant in the geographical area where the research was conducted, and those required on the labour market (based on the conducted group interview). This has been presented in Table 2.

Table 2.

Display of competencies and skills on the higher education market and on the labour market

Previous research		Author's research (group interview)	
Higher education market	Labour market (area of marketing)	Marketing programme in higher education	Labour market
<p>Processes, promoting others, leading, dealing autonomously with challenging tasks, information processing, number processing, communicating in foreign languages (Braun and Becham, (2015)</p> <p>Using time efficiently, performing well under pressure, working productively with others, coordinating activities, rapidly acquiring new knowledge (Little, (2007)</p> <p>Analytical skills, social skills, management skills, communication skills, the ability to learn, presentation skills (Arthur, 2006)</p> <p>Professional expertise, functional flexibility, innovation and knowledge management, mobilization of human resources, and international orientation (Allen and Velden, 2007)</p>	<p>Oral and written communication, working in teams, working independently, being detail oriented, time management, making presentations, multitasking, being a problem "solver", knowledge of marketing (Schlee and Karns, 2017)</p>	<p>The students majoring in marketing will acquire knowledge required to systematically observe and solve problems in the area of marketing. They will become familiar with tools and models used by modern marketing experts to analyse and solve problems in the wide business area which includes making decisions in the area of products, prices, distribution, and promotion.</p> <p>Skills developed by students attending this major: creativity, teamwork, presentation skills, research, analysis, systematic approach.</p>	<p>Communication, openness, critical thinking, proactivity, organisation, responsibility, creativity, reliability and conscientiousness, breadth of knowledge, familiarity with processes, good written communication, business ethics, orientation in the digital information environment, approach to the problem, presentation and negotiation skills, decision making, and taking initiative.</p>

The table offers the following conclusions:

- Competencies and skills offered on the higher education market (based on previous research) are similar to the listed competencies and skills offered by the observed marketing programme, considering that heavy emphasis is placed on problem solving, analytical skills, presentation skills, and teamwork (the mentioned activities are conducted as part of the marketing programme with students through project tasks, where the students are directly exposed to the problems and challenges of the labour market).
- Competencies and skills on the labour market (based on the group interview) are identical to the competencies and skills on the labour market from previous research. The parts worth noting are the approach to the problem and solving it, as well as the presentation skills.
- When observing the competencies and skills offered on the higher education market and the competencies and skills in demand on the labour market (based on previous research), a conclusion may be drawn that there is a connection through communication and presentation skills, teamwork, time management, and resolving challenges.
- The higher education marketing programme used to observe the competencies and skills of students mostly offers those components

required by the labour market (research via the group interview). The common focus is on creativity, presentation skills, research and broader knowledge.

The competencies and skills offered on the higher education market are connected to the competencies which are required on the labour market, both on the basis of previous research and the one conducted by the authors, using a group interview. A subsequent question may be related to the extent to which higher education institutions through their programmes deliver the competencies and skills listed in their brochures and websites, and to the method they use (on the one hand, this part is a limitation, while on the other hand, it is a proposal for research in the future).

7. CONCLUSION

The research results, as well as the conclusions from the theoretical review, show that formal education in the area of marketing definitely should undergo certain changes. The recommendation is to primarily focus on changes which may be implemented without significantly altering the system of education, which means that it would take longer to see the results. These changes, which may be implemented by the teachers for their courses, imply changes in literature (newer literature, case studies...), encouraging additional interest with students, resulting in them studying additional literature and additional educational practices during their free time, a programme of professional practice which the teachers may implement (on a voluntary basis) as part of their courses, and insisting on completing the tasks correctly and on time in order to emphasize organisational skills and responsibility. As the results of the research show, the education system should focus on building the soft skills of students almost as much as the knowledge about marketing and marketing activities. It is skills that are mentioned above, but also communication skills, creative thinking (problem solving), curiosity, presentation skills, negotiation, and those that the young workforce lacks, as stated by the research respondents. In addition, the educational program should include learning general business activities such as making proposals, basics of invoicing and other considered as general knowledge by the respondents. Teachers, who are able to introduce changes, must be aware of the problems, so they could adapt their lesson plan and demands, so they could affect change for the benefit of synchronising the demands of the market and the offered education.

The first limitation of the paper is primarily related to the sample, which is not representative, but the number is optimal considering that it was a group interview. The results cannot be generalised, but they can help with further research and with observing the problem, i.e. the gap, from another angle. Considering this limitation, the authors plan to expand their research and include other stakeholders from higher education. Teachers may provide insight into the provision of services and how flexible they may be regarding changes to the curriculum and the programme, the extent to which the theoretical part is connected with actual problems from the practice as part of their courses, and whether the demands of the labour market are being harmonised with the implemented programme.

Furthermore, it can be investigated how prepared the employees are to accept the changes demanded by the market. On the other hand, students as the stakeholders of higher education have to be investigated as well. The goal of the research should be to determine the attitudes and opinions of the students regarding the current offer at the higher education institution, how harmonised it is with the labour market (this requires research into students who are employed and who are a part of the labour market), and what their expectations are from the study programme in the area of marketing. The next limitation is related specifically to the mentioned study programme in marketing, considering that only this major was the focus of research. Future research may be directed toward including other majors from the area of economy, which could be the way to determine if there was a gap, for example, between the students who completed the study programme in finances/logistics/entrepreneurship and other areas, and the demands of the labour market. Future research should move in the direction of recognising certain new areas of focus and proposing new areas of study, depending on the demands of the labour market and the trends on the market. The third limitation is related to the method of gathering information. The first limitation included the problem of the sample in reference to the selected method, but other deficiencies appeared as well, as the research was being conducted (the leader who inadvertently dominated the discussion, the effect of the answers on other participants, apprehension about different opinions, and other). With this in mind, a larger number of participants in future research and the use of another investigation method is advisable (e.g. a survey).

Based on everything stated above, in view of the research goal (detecting the gap between the labour market and the higher education market), it may be concluded that there are elements which require work in order to harmonise the demands of the labour market with the programmes offered by higher education, but the largest problems are slow development, inertia, and a narrow perspective, which do not allow opportunities for implementing changes. Previous research, but also the results of the group interview have shown that there is a connection and a motivation to adapt, and that avenues are being found to connect the practice and theory with the goal of developing competencies and skills required on the labour market. Harmonisation of competencies is increasing but further research is required, along with a stronger connection between higher education and the labour market.

REFERENCES

- Aggarwal, P., Vaidyanathan, R., & Rochford, L. (2007). The wretched refuse of a teeming shore? A critical examination of the quality of undergraduate marketing students. *Journal of Marketing Education*, 29, 223-233. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0273475307306888>
- Allen, J., & van der Velden, R. (Eds.). (2007). *The flexible professional in the knowledge society: General rules of the REFLEX project*. Maastricht, The Netherlands: Research Centre for Education and the Labour Market, Maastricht University.
- Arthur, L. (2006). Higher education and the area of work: Issues, challenges and responses in Norway and Germany. *Research in Comparative and International Education*, 3(1). <https://doi.org/10.2304/rcie.2006.1.3.241>

- Becker M. (2013). *Personalentwicklung - Bildung, Förderung und Organisationsentwicklung in Theorie und Praxis*. 6th ed. Stuttgart: Schäffer - Poeschel.
- Benešová, A., & Tupa, J. (2017). Requirements for education and qualification of people in Industry 4.0. *Procedia manufacturing*, 11, 2195-2202. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.promfg.2017.07.366>
- Braun, E. M. P., & Brachem, J.-C. (2015). Requirements Higher Education Graduates Meet on the Labor Market. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 90(4), 574-595. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0161956X.2015.1068086>
- Denecker, C. (2003). *Les compétences documentaires: des processus mentaux à l'utilisation de l'information*. Presses de l'ENSSIB, Villeurbanne.
- Carnevale, A. P., Smith, N., & Strohl, J. (2013). *Recovery: Job growth and education requirements through 2020.*, Center on education and the Workforce, Georgetown University
- Crews, T. B., & Stitt-Gohdes, W. L. (2012). Incorporating Facebook and Twitter in a service-learning project in a business communication course. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 75, 76-79. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1080569911431881>
- Deloitte. (2017). GE's CMO on digital transformation. *The Wall Street Journal*. Available at <https://deloitte.wsj.com/articles/ges-cmo-on-digital-transformation-1485752539>
- Eurostat (2021). Almost 76 million pupils and students enrolled in the EU. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/ddn-20210427-1>
- Hunt, S. D., Chonko, L. B., & Wood, V. R. (1986). Marketing education and marketing success: Are they related?. *Journal of Marketing Education*, 8(2), 2-13. <https://doi.org/10.1177/027347538600800202>
- Katsarova, I. (2015). *Higher Education in the EU: Approaches, Issues and Trends*. Brussels: European Parliamentary Research Service.
- Little, B. (2007). *Labour market issues and international employability*, Employability seminar, Sheffield Hallam University.
- Masten, A. S., & Coatsworth, J. D. (1998). The development of competence in favorable and unfavorable environments: Lessons from research on successful children. *American Psychologist*, 53(2), 205-220. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.53.2.205>
- Nicolescu, L., & Păun, C. (2009). Relating Higher Education with the Labour Market: Graduates' expectations and employers' requirements. *Tertiary education and management*, 15(1), pp. 17-33. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13583880802700024>
- OECD (2005). *The definition and selection of key competencies*. Executive Summary. Available at <https://www.pisa.oecd.org/dataoecd/47/61/35070367.pdf>
- OECD (2013). *The state of higher education 2013*. Paris, France
- Pinto, M., Doucet, A. V., & Fernández-Ramos, A. (2008). The role of information competencies and skills in learning to abstract. *Journal of information Science*, 34(6), 799-815. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0165551507088308>
- Schlee, R. P., & Karns, G. L. (2017). Job requirements for marketing graduates: Are there differences in the knowledge, skills, and personal attributes needed for different salary levels?. *Journal of Marketing Education*, 39(2), 69-81. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0273475317712765>
- Sharma, S., & Verma, H. V. (2018). *Social media marketing: Evolution and change*. In *Social media marketing*. Palgrave Macmillan, Singapore, 19-36. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-5323-8_2
- Skoko, B. & Benković, V. (2009). Znanstvena metoda fokus grupa - mogućnosti i načini primjene, *Politička misao: časopis za politologiju*, 46(3), 2017-236
- Stringfellow, L., Ennis, S., Brennan, R., & Harker, M. J. (2006). Mind the gap: The relevance of marketing education to marketing practice. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 24(3), 245-256. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02634500610665718>

Dr. sc. Helena Štimac

Redovita profesorica
Ekonomski fakultet u Osijeku
E-mail: helena.stimac@efos.hr
Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3699-2112>

Karla Bilandžić Tanasić, mag. oec.

Asistentica
Ekonomski fakultet u Osijeku
E-mail: karla.bilandzic@efos.hr
Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9990-949X>

**KOMPETENCIJE I VJEŠTINE: JAZ IZMEĐU
VISOKOG OBRAZOVANJA I TRŽIŠTA RADA*****Sažetak***

Uspostaviti sinergiju između potreba tržišta i znanja, kompetencija i vještina koje pruža visoko obrazovanje velik je izazov i odgovornost koja je najčešće na onima koji rade u obrazovanju. Cilj rada je prepoznati jaz između ponuđenih kompetencija i vještina koje student dobiva završetkom visokog obrazovanja i potreba tržišta rada u području marketinga. Kako bi se utvrdio jaz, provedeno je kvalitativno istraživanje putem metode skupnog intervjua (fokus grupe). Rezultati su pokazali kako su kompetencije i vještine koje se nude na tržištu visokog obrazovanja povezane s kompetencijama i vještinama koje se traže na tržištu rada. Ipak, nužna su daljnja prilagođavanja i promjene u visokom obrazovanju, ali sve koči sporost, administracija i inertnost, kako institucija visokoškolskog obrazovanja, tako i njihovih dionika.

Ključne riječi: tržište rada, visoko obrazovanje, kompetencije, vještine, marketing, fokus grupa.

JEL klasifikacija: I21, I23, J20, J24.