UNIVERSITY OF LIFE SCIENCES "KING MIHAI I" FROM TIMISOARA
"YOUNG PEOPLE AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH IN APPLIED LIFE SCIENCES"

05-06 November 2026



THE ROLE OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND CAREER COUNSELING IN THE REINTEGRATION OF THE UNEMPLOYED INTO THE LABOR MARKET

Georgeta Angelica TOMUȚA[1], Tabita Cornelia ADAMOV*[1], Manuela – Dora ORBOI[1,2*]

1University of Life Sciences "King Mihai I" from Timișoara, Faculty of Management and Rural Tourism, 119 Calea Aradului, 300645, Timis, Timisoara, Romania

2University „Aurel Vlaicu" of Arad, The Faculty of Educational Sciences, Psychology and Social Work, 2Elena Dragoi Street, 310330, Arad, Arad

Abstract: *The reintegration of the unemployed into the labor market entails both the adaptation of professional skills to employer requirements and the enhancement of an individual's capacity for career orientation and management. This paper aims to analyze the complementary roles of vocational training and career counseling in increasing the employability of unemployed individuals and facilitating their professional reintegration. The paper argues for the necessity of integrating these two interventions into personalized pathways, grounded in an assessment of the beneficiaries' needs and cooperation with employers*

• Introduction

The reintegration of the unemployed into the labor market can be understood as a process through which individuals who have lost their jobs resume their professional activity, leveraging existing skills and developing the resources necessary to adapt to the requirements of employers. This process encompasses identifying opportunities, preparing for employment, securing a position, and adapting to the new work environment. The quality of reintegration depends not only on obtaining a job but also on the ability to retain it under suitable conditions. Reintegrating the unemployed into the labor market entails aligning professional skills and aspirations with actual employment opportunities. Losing a job can lead to financial hardship, the disruption of daily routines, and a decline in self-confidence. When a period of unemployment is prolonged, returning to work may be hindered by the erosion of certain skills, a reduction in professional contacts, and a sense of discouragement. Digitalization and shifts in the structure of economic activities are altering the demand for skills. While experience gained in a particular occupation may remain valuable, transferring it to a different field often requires additional learning and support in identifying new opportunities. Reintegration has an economic dimension—related to the restoration of income and the utilization of one's capacity to work—as well as social and psychological dimensions.

Dimension	Content	Targeted outcomes
Professional	Updating skills and identifying suitable occupations	Alignment between training and job requirements
Economic	Resumption of remunerated activity	Income and financial autonomy
Psychological	Building confidence and managing the challenges of transition	Engagement in job seeking and professional adaptation
Social	Rebuilding relationships and participating in collective life	Belonging and access to support
Organizational	Learning the tasks, procedures, and rules of the new job	Integration into the team and maintaining employment

• Material and method

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the contribution of vocational training and career counseling to the reintegration of the unemployed, with a focus on intervention mechanisms, conditions for effectiveness, and the evaluation of outcomes. The objectives include identifying the primary barriers to reintegration, synthesizing evidence regarding these two categories of services, and formulating an integrated support framework.The paper is both theoretical and applied in nature, employing a narrative review of the specialized literature, supplemented by an analysis of European and Romanian institutional documents. The findings represent an interpretive synthesis of the sources consulted and a proposal for organizing such interventions, without providing an estimate of the specific, independent effect of the services analyzed.

• Results and discussions

The literature reviewed indicates that reintegration difficulties stem from the interaction between an individual's characteristics and the structure of employment opportunities. One primary obstacle is the mismatch between the skills an individual possesses and those required by the labor market.A second obstacle concerns access to information and the capacity to utilize it. Unemployed individuals may face challenges in identifying suitable job openings, comparing training courses, or realistically assessing the potential for professional retraining.Counseling helps in identifying a feasible career path and preparing the necessary steps to pursue it. It can clarify one's occupational goal, the requirements for entry, and the gap between existing skills and those demanded by employers.Training develops the skills necessary for work, while counseling assists in selecting a learning path and leveraging one's training during the job-seeking process. This synthesis recommends an integrated approach, supported by the compatibility of the mechanisms involved; however, the sources consulted do not allow for the quantification of a universal advantage of this combined approach over individual interventions applied separately.

• Conclusions

Vocational training and career counseling can support the reintegration of the unemployed through complementary mechanisms. Training focuses on developing job-relevant skills, while counseling helps clarify options, select training pathways, and organize job-seeking activities. The relationship between the two justifies the design of coordinated services, tailored to the specific situation of each beneficiary.The quality of the intervention depends on an initial assessment, the relevance of the training for accessible positions, collaboration with employers, and the removal of barriers to participation. While counseling can help individuals leverage their own resources, outcomes remain contingent upon labor demand and local opportunities. The responsibility for reintegration must be shared among the beneficiary, service providers, employers, and the relevant institutions.