inkey

LifeComp for the Employability of Young NEETs
State of Art and Best Practices

Transnational Research

Contents

Introduction

Over time the transition from education to work has become more complex. Today young people are changing jobs more frequently and it takes a longer time to become established on the labour market, either by choice or necessity. It has become more common for students in tertiary education to work part-time or seasonally to supplement their income. Furthermore, it has also become more common for young people who are in employment to return to education or training to improve their qualifications. As a result of this, the transition from education to work has become less clear, with a growing share of students also working and a rising proportion of people in employment also studying.

NEET is an acronym for 'not in employment, education or training', used to refer to the situation of many young persons, aged between 15 and 29, in Europe. The aim of the NEET concept is to broaden understanding of the vulnerable status of young people and to better monitor their problematic access to the labour market.

The overall share of NEETs decreased in the EU by 2.3 percentage points (pp.) between 2011 and 2021. Among the EU Member States, the largest reduction in the NEET rates (in percentage point terms) between 2011 and 2021 was by far in Ireland (-12.6 pp.) followed by Bulgaria (-7.1 pp.) and Latvia (-7.0 pp.). There were also five Member States that had increases in their NEET rates since 2011, these countries are: Luxembourg (by 2.2 pp.), Austria (0.9 pp.), Romania (0.8 pp.), Italy and Cyprus (both 0.6 pp.).

NEET rates in the EU Member States for people aged 15–29 with a low level of education ranged from 6.4 % in Sweden to 32.7 % in Romania in 2021. Looking more closely at these figures six countries had higher NEET rates than the average for the EU and these countries were: Slovakia (16.6 %), Spain (18.4%), Malta (20.3 %), Italy (23.0 %), Bulgaria (24.4 %) and Romania (32.7 %).

Among young people aged 15–29 with a medium level of education, NEET rates ranged from 4.2 % in the Netherlands up to a peak of 24.9 % in Italy. For this level of education, two countries recorded a NEET rate of 19 % or higher (Greece and Italy) while the only country with a share lower than 5.0 % was the Netherlands.

Employment, education and training status of young people, by age, EU, 2021
(%)
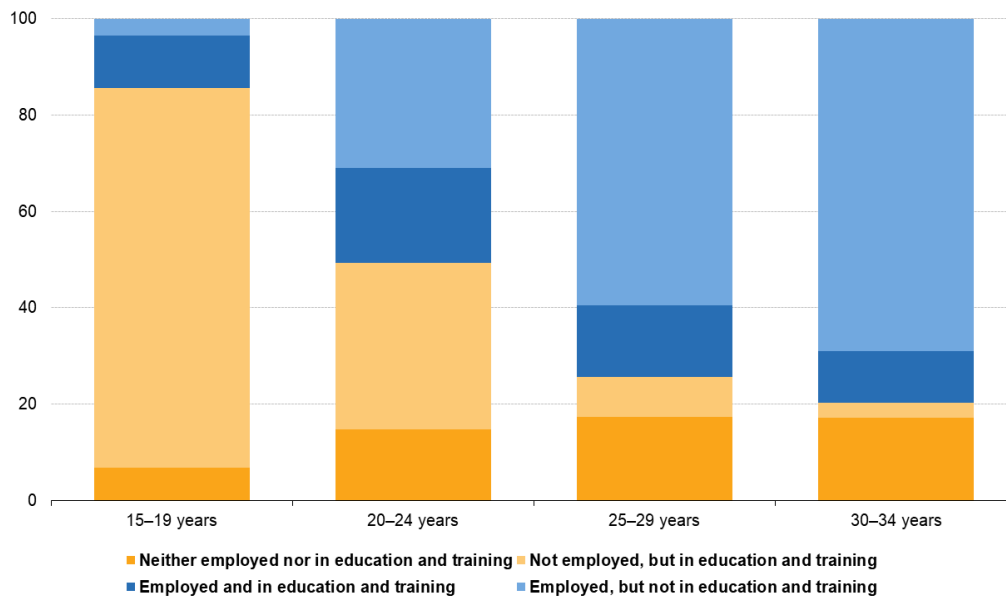
Fig. 1 Employment, education, and training status of young people in Europe (Source: Eurostat)

1. The INKEY Project

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated existing labour market vulnerabilities and disengagement among young people, leaving further behind those youngsters that have been struggling to manage their transition from education to the labour market. After reaching the lowest point for a decade in 2019, the pandemic brought the number of youth neither in Employment nor Education or Training in the EU up to 13.7% in 2020. Social distancing, restrictions, and isolation have profoundly affected the engagement, connection, and empowerment actions sought by the EU Youth Strategy, bringing young NEETs further out of the main channels through which human and social capital can be accumulated, like education and work. Innovative interventions to foster Young NEETs' personal and social development are essential to build resilience and equip youth with the skills to positively challenge themselves in a world that constantly changes its rules, and therefore reach the ambitious target of a 9%-NEETs rate by 2030, set by the EC in the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan. Personal, social, and learning to learn competencies can play a decisive role in preparing young NEETs to develop the right skills for a changing world of work. In this context, the "InKEY" project aims to offer young NEETs new motivating and stimulating programs to acquire the key competence stressed in the LifeComp Framework by developing engaging digital tools that embed game dynamics, mechanics, and components, and online communities of practice.

General Objectives

- To enhance the employability of Young NEETs.
- To increase the quality and effectiveness of the empowerment actions of the organizations and professionals working with young NEETs.

Specific Objectives

- To develop tailored learning programs to enhance young NEETs' engagement and motivation in learning.
- To increase the key competencies of young NEETs, to let them unleash their dynamic potential, self-regulate their emotions and behaviours, cope with complexity, be thriving individuals, responsible social agents, and reflective lifelong learners.
- To equip youth leaders, youth workers and trainers with knowledge, skills and innovative tools to empower young NEETs.

This first project result aims at analysing the existing status and the successful practices in the application of the LifeComp Framework in education and training programs for young people and NEETs. The report consists of the

analysis of at least 20 semi-structured interviews and a collection of best practices on the implementation of the LifeComp Framework in curricula and courses in formal and non-formal education and the conclusions of the focus groups from each participant country.

2. Youth Disengagement and Unemployment. National contexts

2.1 NEETs: numbers and geography of the phenomenon

The successive economic crises that have hit the European and global labour market since 2008 have greatly hampered the options for young people to get a job. In average, the number of NEETS in Europe dramatically raised till 2015 or 2016 and started to improve in recent years. The COVID-19 pandemic meant a new economic break and the most vulnerable sectors have once again been the most impacted by this pandemic since this time educational institutions have also been affected. Those young people with less means to study remotely or with precarious jobs have been the most affected.

The post-pandemic recovery has been affected by the war in Russia, inflation and the threat of recession have hampered growth in the European Union, which has slowed down the reintegration of less favoured groups into the labour market.

Cyprus

One of the biggest scourges that Cyprus faces is the issue of unemployment which tortures a significantly large amount of its population, especially the youth. It is noted that even before the spreading of COVID- 19, many Cypriot residents were struggling with unemployment and were even in risk of poverty. According to Grapsas, unemployment in Cyprus exists due to the country's "political divisions, which include the Northern Republic of Cyprus, a Turkish de facto state that has controlled one-third of the island since 1974, and the Southern Republic of Cyprus". Due to these political circumstances of the island, "the Cypriot government has found it difficult to track its impoverished population and provide assistance where it is needed" (Grapsas). Therefore, this issue has been difficult to handle for many years. According to the same source, one year before the advent of the pandemic, many Cypriot citizens were living in households "with disposable income below the at-risk-of-poverty line". Hence, the Cypriot government is not in position to offer the appropriate support to its citizens, thus many of them are facing financial difficulties.

Unfortunately, this situation was worsened after the outbreak of COVID-19 which made the financial condition of Cypriot citizens even more unstable than before. One of the main reasons for that, is that tourism, in which Cyprus heavily relies for the prosperity of its economy, was seriously affected, and stagnated the country's economy. Specifically, Cyprus saw a "surge in unemployment rates at the height of the pandemic" (Grapsas). According to some recent data, "unemployment rates were at a low of 6.3% in July 2019, but jumped to 10.2 % a year later, just a year after the pandemic hit" (Grapsas). Indeed, the pandemic generated an unprecedented condition in all facets of society, but specifically it has seriously damaged the workplace when it first stroke. As soon as COVID-19 emerged, the private and public sector, managers, directors, and simple employers were unsure as to how to handle the situation, and many were even convinced that a workplace cannot maintain its success or yet its functionality without physical contact. Because of this initial shock, many companies went bankrupt, and many managers/ directors made the difficult decision of firing some of their staff members to protect their businesses.

According to EUROSTAT, young people were more seriously affected by COVID-19 than older people in terms of employment. This is revealed by Eurostat's statistics, which illustrate that the employment rate of young people aged 15-19 in the third quarter of 2020 was 2.8% lower than in the pre-pandemic third quarter of 2019. Interestingly, young workers, women and people of a lower educational level represent the group that was mostly affected during the pandemic when it comes to the employment sector. Therefore, age, gender and education seem to have played a critical role in unemployment during the pandemic. At the global level, according to the digital newspaper Imerisia, youth employment decreased by 8.7% in 2020, compared to a decrease of only 3.7% of the employment of older workers. Moreover, according to Cyprus Mail, there was only minor concern regarding the impact of the pandemic on youth, which resulted in the state using existing policies that target all age groups, without introducing innovative measures targeting youth (Agapiou). As a result, the youth was left unprotected and vulnerable. Importantly, a survey which examined the extent to which the youth was optimistic regarding the future after the pandemic, revealed that Cyprus had one of the lowest percentages of young people who claimed they are optimistic about the future.

 Hence, it can be concluded that Cyprus unemployment rate, and specifically the youth unemployment rate was seriously augmented due to COVID-19.

The post-pandemic era could be considered as a period of relief for all European states when it comes to youth unemployment rates, since the

presence of vaccines provided a shield to the population which enabled the workplace and the economy to continue operating. However, the unemployment rate in Cyprus is still considered relatively high.

As it can be seen from the graph below, Unemployment Rate in Cyprus increased to 8 percent in July from 5.10 percent in June of 2022.

Fig. 2 Unemployment rate in Cyprus
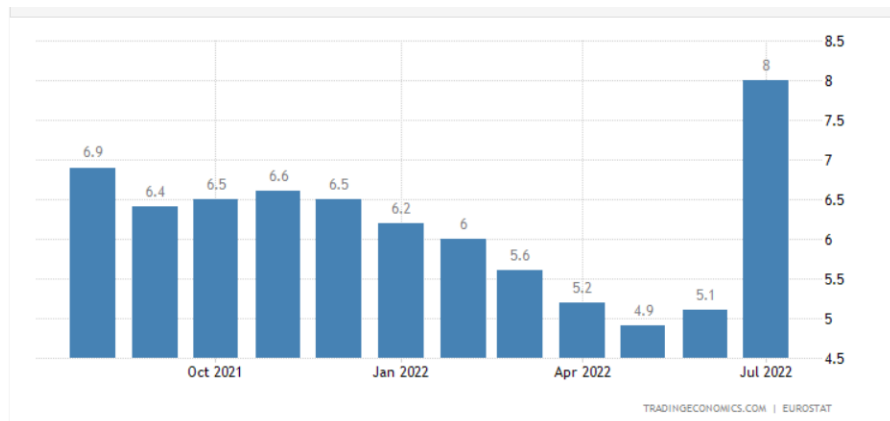
Significantly, according to Eurostat, Youth Unemployment Rate in Cyprus remained unchanged at 11.70 percent in June from 11.70 percent in May of 2022, and it is considerably lower compared to previous months ("Cyprus Youth Unemployment Rate"). This demonstrates the decline of the youth employment rate during the last couple of months, and its steadiness throughout the period April- June.
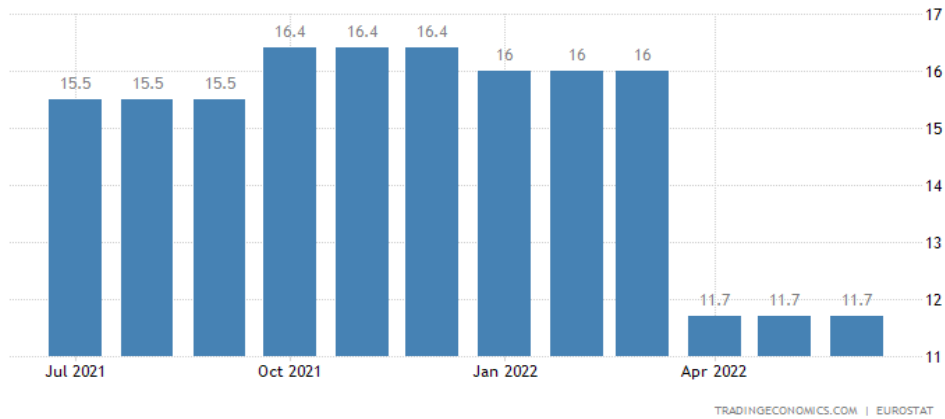
Related	Last	Previous	Unit	Reference
Unemployment Rate	8.00	5.10	percent	Jul 2022
Long Term Unemployment Rate	2.30	2.30	percent	Mar 2022
Youth Unemployment Rate	11.70	11.70	percent	Jun 2022
Population	0.90	0.89	Million	Dec 2021
Productivity	109.52	108.86	points	Jun 2022
Part Time Employment	41.00	43.20	Thousand	Mar 2022
Full Time Employment	386.90	385.00	Thousand	Mar 2022
Employment Rate	72.00	72.30	percent	Mar 2022
Employment Change	0.60	0.40	percent	Mar 2022

Initially, the term NEETs originated in the United Kingdom, and it later evolved into its current definition, classifying the category of young persons, between 15 and 24-29 years old, not in employment, education, or training system. Notably, the label NEET does not have a common international interpretation, as its definition is not yet determined.

Young people NEET (aged 15-29) in the European Union-27 countries (%)

Across the European Union, NEETs represent 13.5% of the 15–29-year-old population, as illustrated in the graph below (Menichini). The NEET rate was considerably increased when the

pandemic hit, which was followed by a continental economic crisis. It is important to examine the NEET rates in all EU countries as they were analysed in the first two quarters of 2021. As it can be concluded from the graph, the NEET rate is highest in Italy (23.7%), Romania (20.1%) and Greece (19.8%) whereas the lowest rates are detected in the Netherlands (5.9%), Sweden (6.2%) and Slovenia (7.2%). Cyprus' NEET rate is deemed somewhat high as well, as it stands at 16 %, and is one of the countries that is above the EU- 27 average. Overall, in the European Union, more than 73 million young people from 15 to 29 years can be labelled as NEET.

Young people NEET (aged 15-29) in the EU countries, Q1-Q2 2021 (average) (%)
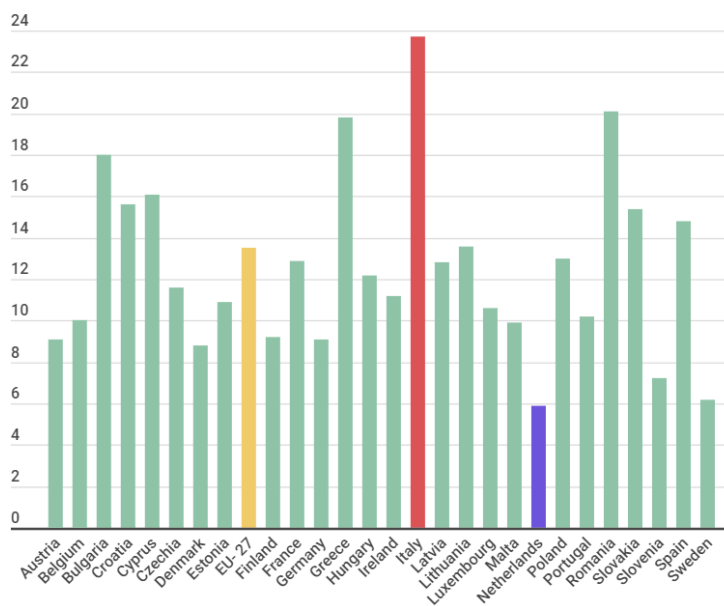
To face the high NEET percentage that was examined across the European Member States, and cope with the effects that the pandemic had on youth employment, the European Commission decided to launch the Reinforced Youth Guarantee in July 2020. It was funded by the new European Social Fund Plus, and by national investments, and it is intended that it can prevent any future youth unemployment crisis ("The role of the Reinforced Youth Guarantee in decreasing the NEET rate across Europe").

Several strategies are implemented in Cyprus to tackle this serious phenomenon. Specifically, the National Youth Strategy is "the first policy document in Cyprus which encompasses all the national policy programmes for Youth run by the governmental authorities" ("Country Sheet on Youth Policy in Cyprus"). The target group of this strategy is young people 15-29 years

old who are not in employment, education, and training. What this framework entails are measures which aim at assisting the inclusion of young people in the employment sector and measures for the improvement and enrichment of their skills, which will help them to reach their full potential professionally. It is significant to mention that there is special emphasis given to the empowerment of youth entrepreneurship. Specifically, the strategy covers the 8 areas of the EU Youth Strategy: Education & training, employment & entrepreneurship, health & well-being, participation in politics and decision-making stages, voluntary activities, social inclusion, youth & the world, and creativity & culture. Lastly, the Youth Board of Cyprus, which is active in issues concerning youth, is responsible for the coordination of the implementation of this strategy.

Italy

In 2021, **2 million and 32 thousand** 15-29-year-old youngsters in Italy were assessed to be Not in Employment, Education or Training, placing the country at the top of the European ranking of the Member States with the highest NEET rate[1]. The 2021 edition of the **BES** (*Il benessere equo e sostenibile in Italia*) Report, released in 2022 by the Italian National Institute of Statistics, highlighted the fast growth of the Italian NEET's rate in the last 14 years. Particularly, the NEET rate in Italy was 19.3% in 2008 (against 13.1% in Europe) and grew faster than in the EU average up to 2014 - at the peak of the employment crisis -, when it affected more than one young person out of four. The share of young NEETs slowly declined until 2019 and, despite it not returning to pre-crisis values, it signalled a catch-up deficit (+2.9 percentage points above the corresponding 2008 value).

The incidence of NEET status is greater among young women than among young men, and the gap between the two gender components in Italy narrowed only during the hardest years of the economic crisis, which affected young men more, and returned to being wider than the EU average in 2019.

The pandemic worsened the phenomenon. In the second quarter of 2020, during the first outbreak, the increase in young people out of education and employment, even if slightly below the European average (+1.7 percentage points compared to the previous quarter), was +1.6. However, the country still has structurally much higher values of the phenomenon and in the downward phase of the indicator continued to position itself far above the other European countries. Moreover, unlike what happened in the hardest years of

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[1] Italian National Institute of Statistics (2022). *BES 2021: Il benessere equo e sostenibile in Italia.* ISBN 978-88-458-2076-2

the economic crisis, when the two gender components had come closer, due to the greater increase among young males, during the first phase of the pandemic, 15–29-year-olds young women were mainly worse off with a sharp increase in the incidence of NEETs, which distanced them from the corresponding young males.

Regional differences are significant: in 2021, the South again recorded the highest share of NEETs (31.5%) compared to the North (17%) and the Centre (19.6%). with the highest shares in the regions of Sicily (36.3%), Campania (34.1%), Calabria (33.5%) and Puglia (30.6%). Such distances reflect the marked north-south divide characterising the whole Italian economy, with the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) pro capita being much higher in the northern regions.

Greece

The Greek NEETs is a heterogeneous, newly formed, and essentially invisible group of social vulnerability for most of the population, according to the study of the Greek NEETs which took place between 2011-2013 with the COOPERATION project "The Barometer of the Absents[1]. This is mainly due to the support provided to individuals in this category by the Greek family. An overwhelming proportion of Greek NEETs (92.30%) still lives with their parents and receive financial assistance from their extended family environment. As specified by the Eurofund's report "Exploring the diversity of NEETs: Country profiles", in 2013, only 7.1% of all NEETs were receiving benefits or other forms of financial assistance[2]. However, in contrast to other EU Member States the fact that several of their peers are in the same position as they, diminishes the feeling of social exclusion and isolation[1].

The YOUTHShare project, "NEETs in Mediterranean EEA 2008 - 2018: A Baseline Study" published in 2019, showed that in Greece, the population aged 25 to 29 has been significantly reduced from about 800,000 to 600,000, mainly because young people migrated during the socio-economic crisis; whereas, in the other age groups the decrease was more moderate. Equally, the NEET rates, particularly for those aged 25 to 29, rose from about 25% during 2006-2009 to about 40% in 2013 which further illustrates the immediate impact of the economic crisis. The most vulnerable age group is the 25–29; a group which always scores higher, compared to the 15-19 and 20-24 age groups[3]. In 2021, as reported in "Statistics on young people neither in employment nor in education or training" by Eurostat, the NEET rate for young people aged 15–29 in the EU was 15.5 % among those with a low level of education, compared with 13.1 % among those with a medium level of education, besides Greece

that recorded 19 % and 9.2 % among those with a high level of education again with the exception of Greece which reported a value as high as 26.8 %[4].

The NEET rates in both females and males present a similar pattern in Greece, with a sharp increase from 2010 to 2013 and then a gradual decrease at a small pace. The NEET rate for females is constantly about 10-15% higher than the rate for males for the age group 25-29. This is partly explained by cultural reasons, since women in Greek society are engaged traditionally in family-caring roles[2].

Regional differences are significant: In 2021 as reported by Eurostat in the "Unemployment statistics at regional level" report, the second highest youth unemployment rate after Spain was recorded in the two Greek regions East Macedonia, Thrace (45.1 %) and West Macedonia (42.3 %), as well as the regions of Central Greece (Sterea Ellada) (38.9 %) and Thessaly (36.7 %), which are also in the top 10 regions with the highest unemployment rates for young people aged 15-29. By contrast, five of the top 10 regions with the highest decreases (in percentage points, pp.) in the unemployment rate for young people aged 15-29 between 2020 and 2021 are the Ionian Islands (-14.1 pp.), Epirus (-13.9 pp.), North Aegean (-11.4 pp.), Central Greece (Sterea Ellada) (-9.2 pp.) and Western Greece (-8.5 pp)[5].

Fig. 3. Top 10 regions with the highest youth unemployment rates, age 15-29, 2021 (in % of the labour force) Source: Eurostat (lfst_r_lfu3rt)

Portugal

Considering NEETs, young people between 15 and 34 years old who are not studying, working or in professional training, since 2013, the rate of NEETs in Portugal was in decline, going from 17.1% to 13.2% in 2016, showing a reduction in the effects of the crisis period of 2010. However, with the emergence of the SARS Covid-19 pandemic, it is estimated that 11% of 18- to 29-year-olds have lost their jobs. According to Eurostat, youth unemployment increased by 2.7 percentage points, from 14.9% in March 2020 to 17.6% in September 2020, while among the adult population (aged 25 and over), it increased by 0.8 percentage points from 5.7% to 6.5%.

When analysing the difference between genders, the data shows there's no significant difference in Portugal, as NEET women (11.1%) are approximately the same as NEET men (11.0%), but there's a substantial difference when focusing on the place of birth: NEET's that were not born in Portugal are 14,5%, while the national-born NEETs remain at 10,8%. Besides that, in the year 2021, it is observed that there is a difference in the rate for Portuguese residents of cities (9.4%), towns and suburbs (10.4%) and rural areas (11.3%). This reveals that young people in certain territories are more vulnerable to becoming NEETs due to lack of opportunities in education and work.

Also, one could expect that the NEET's would decrease as they grew older, as they have been supported by several initiatives and programmes (Youth Guarantee), however in Portugal the data shows that the number of NEET's grow with age[2]:

NEETS incidence rate according to age group
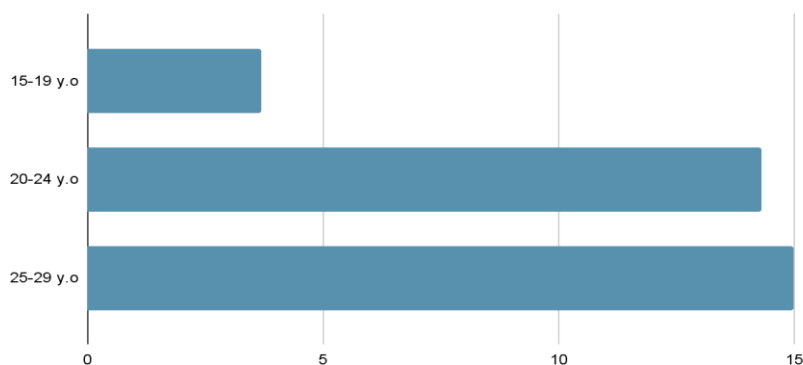
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http://www.gep.mtsss.gov.pt/documents/10182/80545/AEJ_NotaT%C3%A9cnica_NEET_final.pdf/c30cd302-9925-4a02-a6a2-64b0e4216bb3

It was also found that, in Portugal, unlike other European Union countries, NEETs have a higher rate of schooling, bringing to light the lack of mechanisms for listening to young people and making them largely invisible in the design, implementation and evaluation process of the Monitoring System. The data also show that for many there is no institutional support of any kind (employment centre or other public entities associated with the employment service or educational institution), being normal to find employment mainly through family networks, by direct contact with the employer and in response to advertisements (Oliveira et al, 2018).

Regarding the NEETs impact in the society, it is seen that their consequences can be in two aspects: economical and personal/social. The OECD (2013) reports that long periods of unemployment have harmful effects on old age, especially on NEETs, by lowering income levels in the future, the acquisition of skills, contributing to job dissatisfaction and low levels of health. Also, individuals with low capital and skills are exposed to low-quality and unstable jobs and possibly social exclusion. It is estimated that young people who became NEETs in their youth are more likely to have difficult relationships, drug and substance abuse, involvement in criminal activities and disengagement from life and society.

Spain

In 2021, in Spain the rate of young people of 15-29-year-old youngsters that are registered as Not in Employment, Education or Training according to the Ministry of Education and Eurydice was of 14.1%. [3]

This group of young people without a job and who are also not studying has been decreasing continuously for four quarters, placing it at the lowest level of this record. The greatest drop occurred in the second quarter of this year compared to the previous one probably because of the labour reform, which has incorporated more young people into the labour market.

By regions, some of them are above the national average, the regions with higher rates are Ceuta and Melilla (24,1%), Islas Canarias (19.6%), Andalucía (17.3%), Islas Baleares (16.4%) and Extremadura (16.1%). On the other hand, Cantabria (7.8%) and Aragón (9.5%) are the regions with the lower rates.

The incidence is larger in men than in women, with a 14.4% and 13.8% respectively, even is some regions the incidence is larger in women than in men. Regarding the employment profile, it should be emphasized that the

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[3] https://www.educacionyfp.gob.es/mc/redie-eurydice/sistemas-educativos/contexto/tasa-ninis.html

problem of the high rates of NEETs in Spain is associated with the high rates of unemployment, and not because inactivity affects it in a special way. This inactivity rate is closely linked to rate of young people that only finalizes the mandatory education and does not get a title in technical or third-degree education. In other words, more than one in four young people only have the title of ESO (Mandatory secondary education). This is double the OECD average, which drops to 14%, and is at levels like those of Colombia (25%), Italy (23%) or Turkey (36%).

However, the highest educational level has increased considerably in the last two decades. If in the year 2000 barely a third of young people had a tertiary education level (university degrees or Vocational Training degrees), in 2021 participation reaches almost half of Spaniards between 25 and 34 years old (49%). A figure that also places Spain above the average of the OECD countries (46.9%) and of the 22 countries of the European Union (EU) considered in the study (45.9%).

2.2 The labour market: current scenario and forecasts

In general, growth in the labour market is observed in all countries, the expected growth is more pronounced in Italy, which leads the expected growth in the participating countries, while Cyprus lags.

In all the participating countries, the sector that will lose the most workers are the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing Sector, while in general the new vacancies will open up in professional services, education or sales.

Cyprus

Importantly, Cyprus has undergone a mild economic crisis that began in 2008 which was easily confronted, but then the island was severely affected in a major economic downturn in 2012. According to CEDEFOP, the statistics showcase that the unemployment and NEETs rates of the Cypriot population are one of the highest in the European Union, well above the EU average. Because of its predominantly service-based economy, Cyprus' most important sectors are tourism, financial services, and shipping. According to the same source, the Cypriot employment sector is expected to have a respectful growth until 2030, and "the most employment growth will be detected in professional services, transport & storage and education", whereas the professions that will have the fastest growth will be "those requiring medium-level qualifications: office associate professionals and sales workers".

As it can be seen through the graph, the more job openings between 2020-2030 will be in Service and sales workers, while the less job openings will be for jobs in Farm and related workers.

Associate professionals
New/lost jobs — 15,600
Replacements — 29,000

Clerks
New/lost jobs — 14,900
Replacements — 21,500

Elementary workers
New/lost jobs — 12,900
Replacements — 35,500

Farm and related workers
New/lost jobs — -100
Replacements — 7,100

Managers
New/lost jobs — 14,100
Replacements — 9,900

Operators and assemblers
New/lost jobs — 1,500
Replacements — 10,200

Professionals
New/lost jobs — 22,200
Replacements — 27,800

Service and sales workers
New/lost jobs — 16,300
Replacements — 41,200

Trades workers
New/lost jobs — 3,700
Replacements — 20,400

CEDEFOP

Italy

Italy has mostly recovered from the economic recession and the unemployment rate is decreasing. According to the latest European Union Labour Force Survey (2020), the top three occupations in Italy are *office associate professionals* (7.8%), *sales workers* (7.3%) and *office clerks* (5.9%), while the lowest employment shares were registered for *forest and fishery workers* (0.1%), *food preparation helpers* and *street services workers* (0.4%).

The Skills Intelligence Team of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) estimated[4] a future employment growth

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[4] Cedefop, *Skills Intelligence*, consulted on 07 September 2022.
https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/skills-intelligence/countries?sector=&occupation=&country=IT#2

average in Italy, over the period 2020-2030, at 1.7. As highlighted in Fig. 1, it will be driven by *administrative services*, *accommodation and food*, and *wholesale and retail trade*, with *hospitality* and *retail managers, construction workers* and *office associate professionals* being the fastest growing occupations.
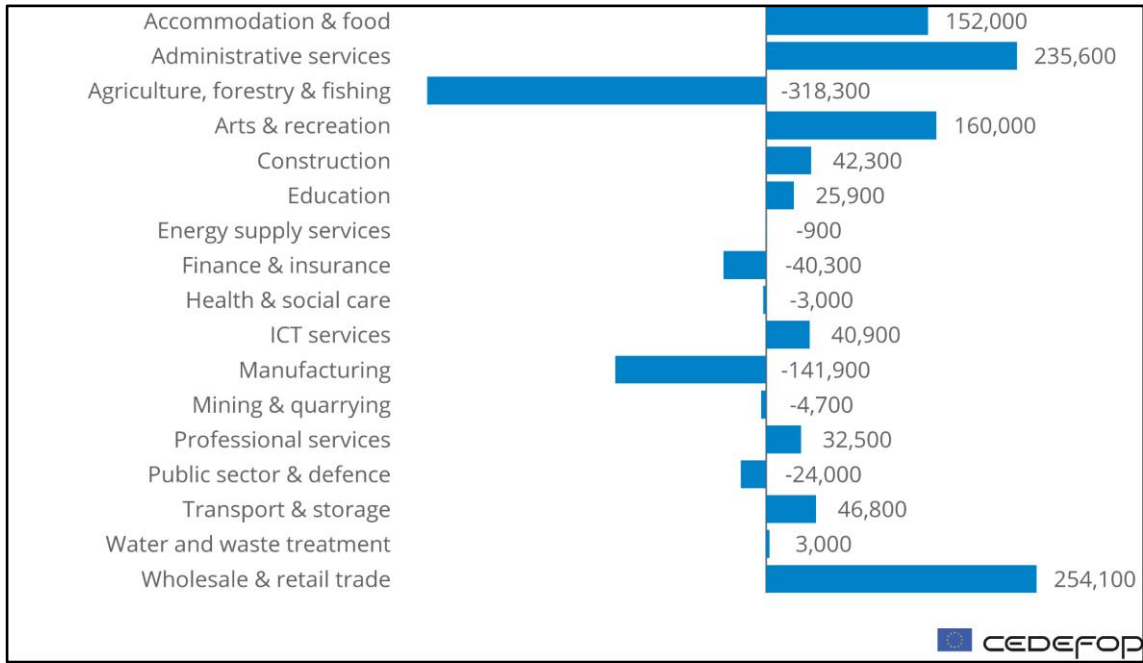
Fig. 4 Future employment growth (in %) in Italy in 2020-2030 across sectors (Source: Cedefop)

Managers exhibit the highest value equal to 39.6, followed by professionals (11.9), and associate professionals (7.3), while the lowest value was estimated for Farm and related workers (-23.1), preceded by elementary workers (-7.6), service and sales workers (-5.3), clerks (-3.5), operators and assemblers (-2.9) and trades workers (-0.7).

Cedefop's Skills Forecast also highlighted that the changes the Italian labour market will experience in forthcoming years will determine millions of new job openings, especially to replace workers who will have changed jobs or left the labour market, such as retirees. As highlighted in Fig. 2, the maximum number of total jobs opening is for *Replacements* in the *Professionals* category, while the minimum is for *New/lost jobs* in *Service and sales workers*.

Fig. 2 Future needs (total job openings) by occupation in Italy in 2020-2030 (Source: *Cedefop*)

Associate professionals
- New/lost jobs: 327,500
- Replacements: 1,949,900

Clerks
- New/lost jobs: -107,400
- Replacements: 1,414,300

Elementary workers
- New/lost jobs: -217,600
- Replacements: 1,246,200

Farm and related workers
- New/lost jobs: -123,600
- Replacements: 285,700

Managers
- New/lost jobs: 419,400
- Replacements: 680,900

Operators and assemblers
- New/lost jobs: -47,500
- Replacements: 610,100

Professionals
- New/lost jobs: 445,500
- Replacements: 2,115,300

Service and sales workers
- New/lost jobs: -240,200
- Replacements: 1,645,400

Trades workers
- New/lost jobs: -23,000
- Replacements: 1,213,200

CEDEFOP

Greece

Agriculture, the maritime industry and tourism are important sectors of the Greek economy, which recovers slowly from long and deep recession. According to the latest European Union Labour Force Survey (2020), the top three occupations in Greece are Sales workers, Farmworkers and gardeners and Personal service workers.

Employment in Greece as forecasted by the Skills Intelligence Team of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), is to increase over the period 2018-30 at a faster rate (8.5%) than the EU-27 average (4.4%). The growth average over the period 2020-2030 is estimated at 5.9. Employment growth in Greece is expected to be faster than the EU-27 average over the whole of the forecast period. This will result to a total of 2.5 million job openings. 90% will cover replacement needs and 10% will be new job openings. The fastest growing sectors during 2018-2030 are construction and non-marketed services driven partly by health and education. On the other hand, the highest demand occupations will be sales workers, personal service workers and market orientated skilled agricultural workers. A reflection of this can be seen in table 1.

Associate professionals
New/lost jobs — 107,600
Replacements — 130,500

Clerks
New/lost jobs — 20,400
Replacements — 167,200

Elementary workers
New/lost jobs — 13,400
Replacements — 145,700

Farm and related workers
New/lost jobs — -75,400
Replacements — 257,300

Managers
New/lost jobs — -8,400
Replacements — 16,900

Operators and assemblers
New/lost jobs — 27,500
Replacements — 111,200

Professionals
New/lost jobs — 107,300
Replacements — 320,700

Service and sales workers
New/lost jobs — 56,100
Replacements — 478,400

Trades workers
New/lost jobs — 45,100
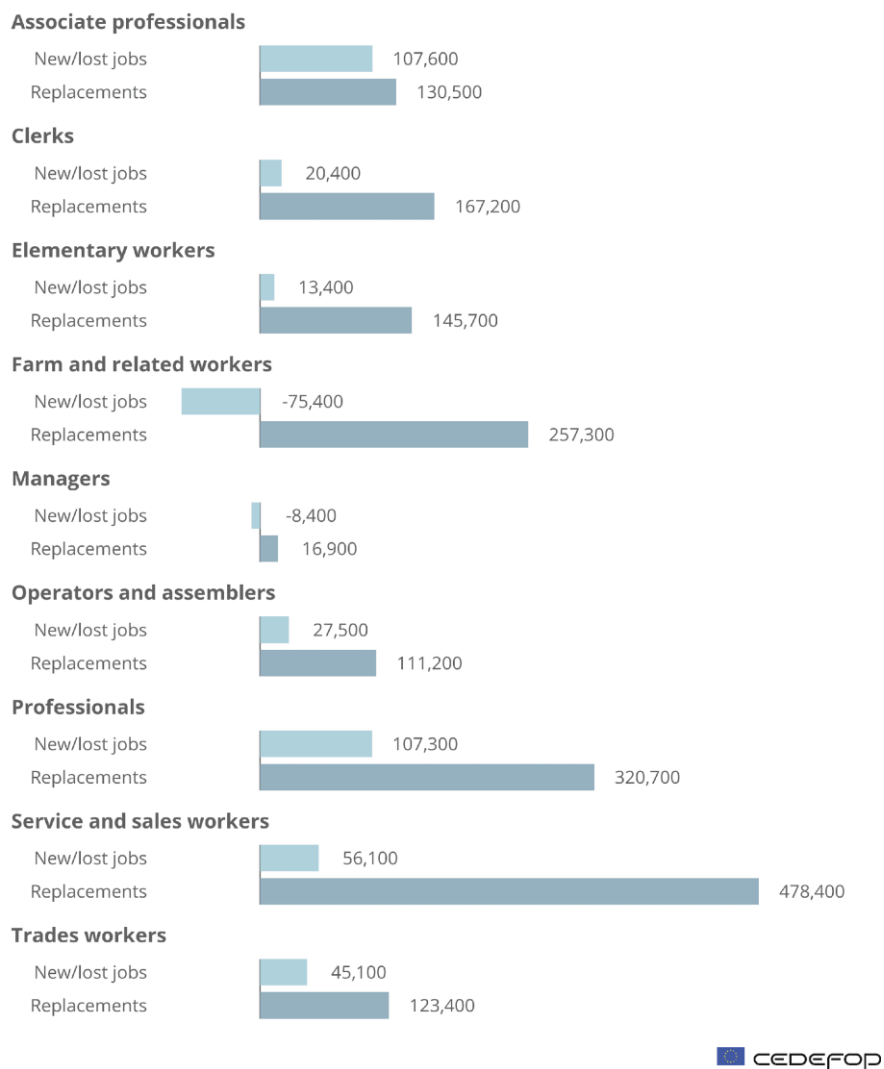Replacements — 123,400

CEDEFOP

Fig.5. Future needs (total job openings) by occupation in Greece in 2020-2030 (Source: Cedefop)

Portugal

In the last two decades, Portugal has faced the challenge of seeing its young population decrease, delaying a progressive decline. This has led to a reconfiguration of the demographic structure with a growth in life expectancy outcomes, a low fertility rate, as well as an exodus of youth, especially during the post-2008 economic and financial crisis (Vieira et al., 2017). During this post-crisis period (2008-2014), Portugal underwent profound changes such as the austerity program imposed by international creditors (loan program) and a strong impact on the patterns and dynamics of its labour market, marked by high levels of unemployment, especially among young people. (COST, 2020)

Portugal's labour market has characteristics that distinguish it from other European Union countries. Most of the productive structure is carried out by micro, small and medium-sized companies, many of which have a standard for hiring human resources. In addition, despite the extension of compulsory education in 2009, Portugal remains among the European countries that have lower educational levels among the active population, making the country vulnerable to conjunctural factors. (Ferreira and Vieira, 2018).

According to the European Labor Force Survey, before the Covid-19 pandemic, Portugal's activity rate was 75.8%, higher than the EU-28 rate of 74.2%. For the second half of 2020, there is a drop in this number to 72%. Besides that, at the end of June 2020, there was a 36% increase in the number of unemployed registered in the employment centre, compared to the same date in the year 2019. (Eurostat, 2020)

When looking at youth, according to Eurostat, individuals aged between 15 and 24 are the most affected by unemployment both in Portugal and in the EU27. From 2019 to 2021, unemployment rates rose again due to the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic, growing by up to 5.1 percentage points in 2021 than in 2019. When looking at the age group from 25 to 29 years old, it is presented an unemployment rate lower than the 15 to 24 age group, however, always above the general unemployment averages. Analysing the total unemployment rate, measured by the population aged 15 to 74, there is an inversion of the values of Portugal's rates compared to the European Union 2018, where Portugal is above the European average.

Also, the rate of underutilization of work in 2022, an indicator composed of "unemployed population, underemployment of part-time workers, inactive people looking for a job but not available and inactive people available but not looking for a job" stood at 11 .5%, minus 0.1 p.p. than in the previous month, 12.4% in July 2021. (INE, 2022)

For the future scenario in the labour market, some things are relevant such as population ageing, the growing demand for education and technological development. According to CIP (Confederação Empresarial de Portugal) , the ageing of the population will create a demand for additional health services, especially home care and health expenditures. In response to this condition, it is estimated that this will lead to the creation of 120,000 new jobs. With the increase in income in the economy, it is also expected that there will be an increase in expenditure on education. This implies high enrolment rates, particularly at secondary and tertiary levels, and a drop in the student-teacher ratio as the quality of education improves. As the population is ageing over time, there will be a limited increase in the demand for labour in the education sector due to fewer students.

In addition, robotics, artificial intelligence and machine learning will play an increasing role in the economy, causing companies to increase demand for specific workers such as software engineers, mathematicians and electronics technicians. It is estimated 97,000 new jobs are created due to automation.

Spain

Battling the deepest recession in decades, Spain has returned to economic growth only in 2014. The country's unemployment rate is still high above the EU average and employment declined during the period of 2011-2016. The labour market continues to pose several challenges for the education and training system; VET policy measures have been taken to improve employability (and self-employment in particular) of young people and the long-term-unemployed by improving their skills and qualifications.[5]

Spain is on track to improve in forthcoming years. The employment is expected to grow substantially till 2030, driven by financial services, education, and construction. Occupations in services shall also rise strongly: customer clerks, legal & social associate professionals and office associate professionals are expected to have most new jobs openings. Almost half of total job openings (including replacements for vacated jobs) till 2030 will need high qualification level. Spain still offers a lot of job opportunities for people with low qualifications; however, these will shrink substantially in forthcoming

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[5]https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/skills-intelligence/countries?sector=&occupation=&country=ES#1
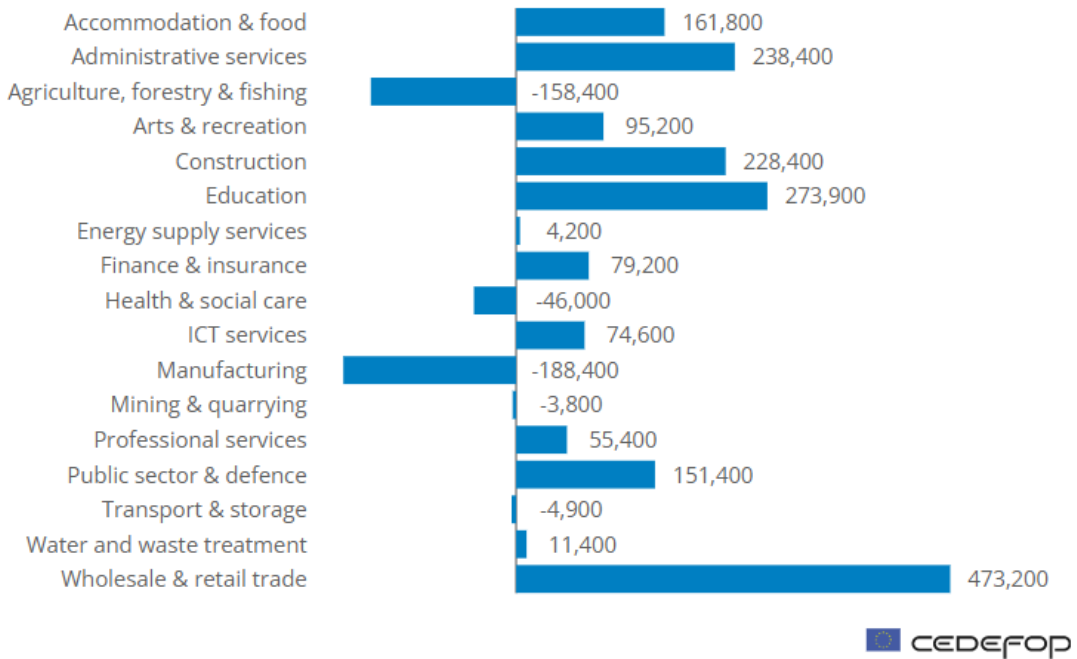
years.

Fig. 6 Future employment growth (in %) in Spain in 2020-2030 across sectors (Source: Cedefop)

Service and sales workers exhibit the highest value equal to 20.3%, followed by professionals (19.8%), and elementary workers (12%), while the lowest value was estimated for farm and related workers (2.2%), managers (4%), along with operators and assemblers (7.8%).

Cedefop's Skills Forecast also highlighted that the Spanish labour market will continue growing till 2030, and most of the openings will be in the Associate professionals field, while Farm and related workers will concentrate most of the lost jobs.

Associate professionals

New/lost jobs — 562,600

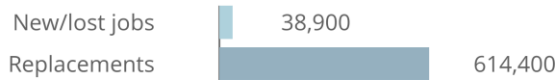Replacements — 1,055,300

Clerks

New/lost jobs — 221,600

Replacements — 673,700

Elementary workers

New/lost jobs — 200

Replacements — 1,155,600

Farm and related workers

New/lost jobs — -65,000

Replacements — 241,100

Managers

New/lost jobs — 40,800

Replacements — 406,400

Operators and assemblers

New/lost jobs — 38,900

Replacements — 614,400

Professionals

New/lost jobs — 299,400

Replacements — 1,538,000

Service and sales workers

New/lost jobs — 341,500

Replacements — 2,011,500

Trades workers

New/lost jobs — 9,400

Replacements — 1,035,700
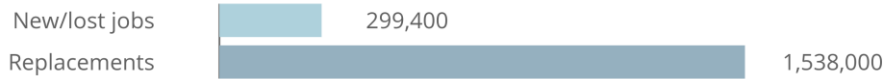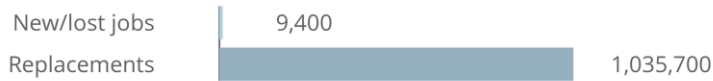
Fig. 7 Future needs (total job openings) by occupation in Spain in 2020-2030 (Source: Cedefop)

2.3 The national skills systems

All the countries participating in InKey project are ranked on the top bottom of the European skills index. All participant countries show a bad performance on the skills matching system, this stresses the need of InKey project in providing key skills to young people. The project is aimed at contributing to close the existing gap on the participant countries and at the same time helping young NEETs.

Cyprus

According to the European skills index, Cyprus has one of the lowest scores in Europe for 2022. Specifically, according to this source, Cyprus "ranks 28th in the 2022 release remaining at the same position as in 2020 and thus, still belongs to the 'low-achieving' group of the 31 countries" ("European Skills index"). This demonstrates that Cyprus has problematic performances in skills development and skills matching and has average performance in skills activation. Specifically, when it comes to skills development, Cyprus has a weak performance in "reading, maths & science scores", "recent training" for which it ranks 29th and "VET students," for which it ranks 31st. Importantly, whereas Cyprus has an average performance ins skills activation, as it ranks 18th in 2022, it has a relatively positive ranking in "activity rate (aged 25-54)" and in "activity rate (aged 20-24)" . Lastly, Cyprus ranks 28th in skills matching ("European Skills Index").

Italy

The **Italian skills system exhibit the lowest score in Europe** for the 2022 European Skills Index (ESI)[6], Cedefop's composite indicator measuring the performance of EU skills systems, particularly countries' "distance to the ideal" performance in three domains:

- skills development, representing the education and training activities of the country and the immediate outputs of that system in terms of the skills developed;

- skills activation, including indicators of the transition from education to work, together with labour market activity rates for different groups of the population;

- skills matching, representing the degree of successful utilisation of skills and the extent to which skills are effectively matched in the labour market.
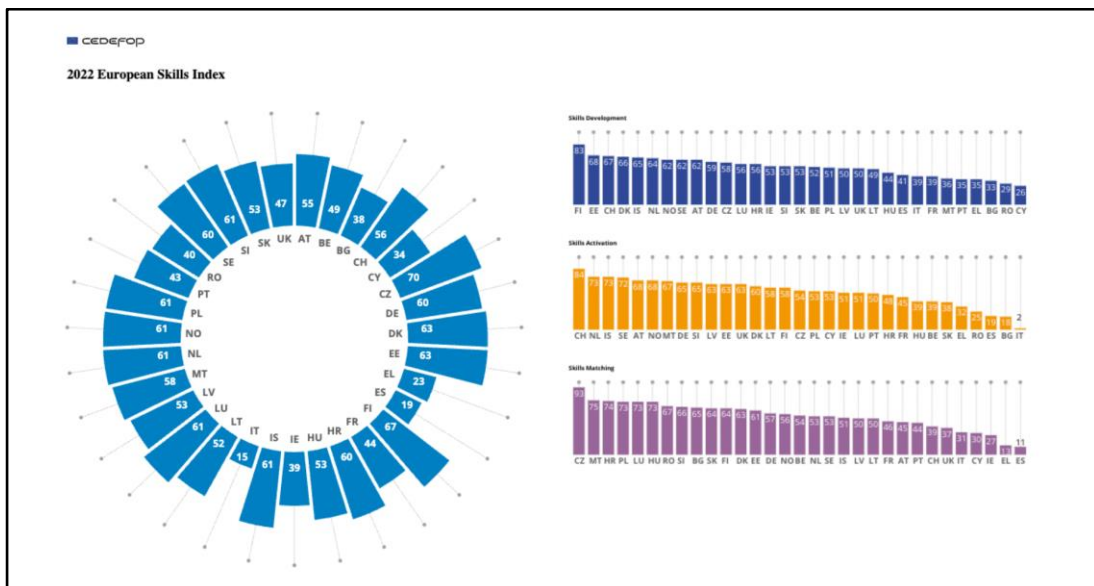

Fig. 8 2022 European Skills Index (Source: Cedefop)

Greece

Greece ranks 29th in the 2022 release of the European skills index, remaining at the same position as in 2020. **The** European Skills Index (ESI)[7], Cedefop's

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[6] Cefedop, 2022 European Skills Index, consulted on 7 September 2022.
https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/european-skills-index
[7] https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/european-skills-index

composite indicator measuring the performance of EU skills systems, particularly countries' "distance to the ideal" performance in three domains:

- skills development, representing the education and training activities of the country and the immediate outputs of that system in terms of the skills developed;

- skills activation, including indicators of the transition from education to work, together with labour market activity rates for different groups of the population;

- skills matching, representing the degree of successful utilisation of skills and the extent to which skills are effectively matched in the labour market.
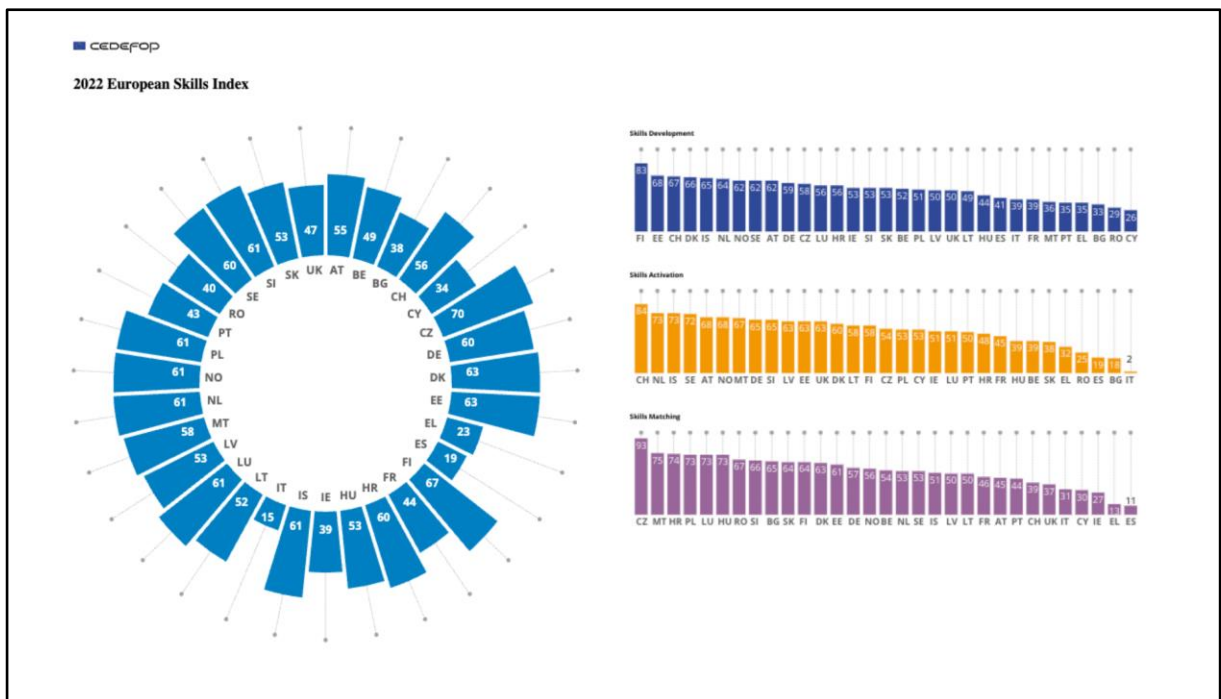

Fig. 9 2022 European Skills Index (Source: Cedefop)

Portugal

The Portugal ranks 24th in the 2022 release remaining at the same position as in 2020 and occupying the last position in the "middle-achieving" group for the 2022 European Skills Index (ESI)[8], Cedefop's composite indicator measuring the performance of EU skills systems, particularly countries' "distance to the ideal" performance in three domains:

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[8] https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/european-skills-index

- skills development, representing the education and training activities of the country and the immediate outputs of that system in terms of the skills developed;

- skills activation, including indicators of the transition from education to work, together with labour market activity rates for different groups of the population;

- skills matching, representing the degree of successful utilisation of skills and the extent to which skills are effectively matched in the labour market.

Portugal ranks 27th in skills development, with an average performance in the training and tertiary education sub-pillar, where the best result is obtained in both "reading, maths & science scores (aged 15)" and "recent training" (rank 16th). The worst score is in "upper secondary education (and above)" where Portugal ranks 31st.

Portugal ranks 21st in skills activation. It obtains a very good score for the activity rate of the older cohort (25-54), where it ranks 5th, but the other indicators are in the lower half of the ranking (the lowest ranking being 25th in "recent graduates in employment").

Portugal ranks 24th in skills matching. It has a good score in "low-waged earners (ISCED 5-8)", ranking 6th, but it ranks in lower positions than 16th in all the other indicators in this pillar.
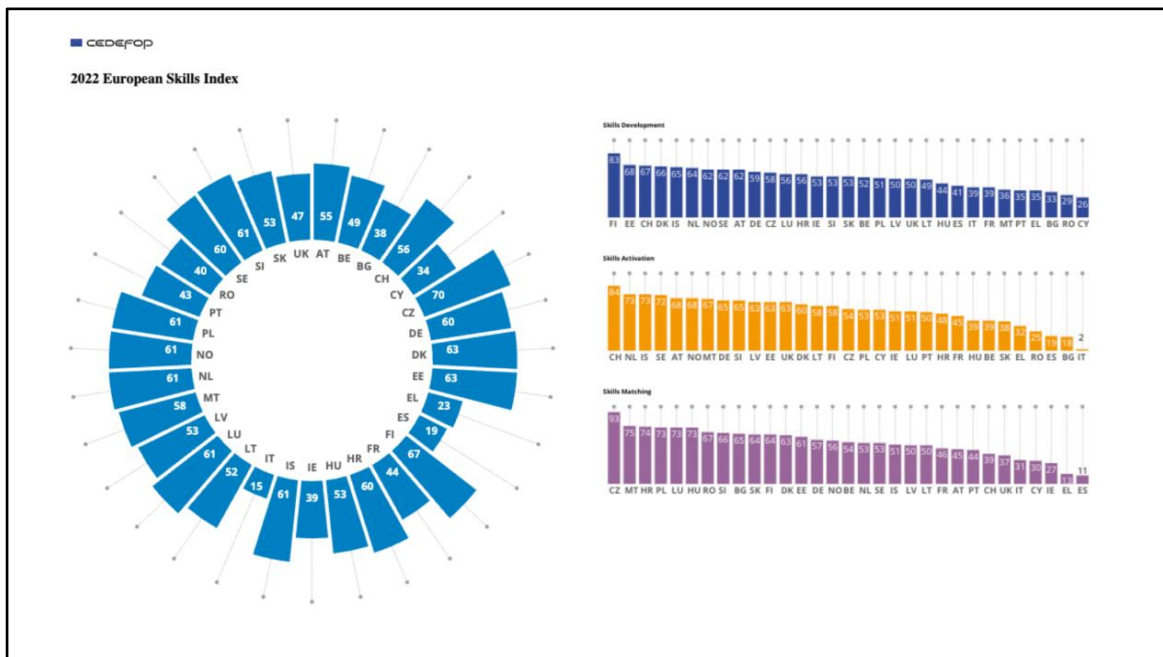
Fig. 10- 2022 European Skills Index (Source: Cedefop)

Spain

The **Spanish skills system exhibit the lowest score in Europe in the skills matching section** for the 2022 European Skills Index (ESI)[9], Cedefop's composite indicator measuring the performance of EU skills systems, particularly countries' "distance to the ideal" performance in three domains:

- Skills development, representing the education and training activities of the country and the immediate outputs of that system in terms of the skills developed.

- Skills activation, including indicators of the transition from education to work, together with labour market activity rates for different groups of the population.

- Skills matching, representing the degree of successful utilisation of skills and the extent to which skills are effectively matched in the labour market.

Spain ranks 30th in the 2022 release remaining at the same position as in 2020, still scoring low in all three pillars. The low scores place Spain in the "low-achieving" countries group at EU level.

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[9] https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/european-skills-index

For the skills development pillar, Spain ranks 23rd, with a low performance in "upper secondary education (and above)" (rank 28th). However, Spain does perform better in the proportion of the population with "high digital skills" (13th).

For the skills activation pillar Spain ranks 29th, with a low performance in the transition to work sub-pillar (30th). Among the indicators of this pillar, Spain's performance ranges from rank 31st in "early leavers from training" to rank 23rd in "activity rate (aged 20-24)".

For the skills matching pillar Spain ranks 30th. In this pillar, Spain ranks towards the bottom in all indicators. In "overqualification rate (tertiary education)" indicator ranks last (with Greece and Cyprus).

Fig. 11 2022 European Skills Index (Source: Cedefop)
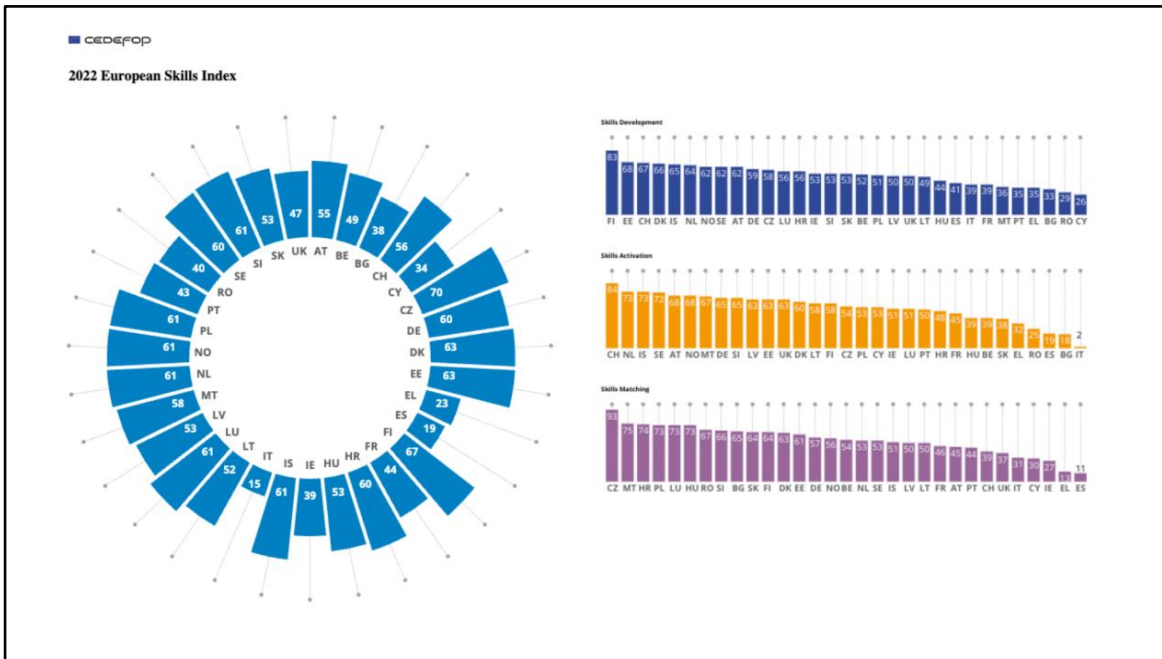
3. LifeComp: State of the Art

3.1 The *personal, social and learning to learn* key competence in the formal education system: recent evolutions of the Countries' educational policies

We can observe a tendency in many European countries to update their educational systems to include the so-called soft skills or life skills in the official training curricula.

In this sense, the countries that are currently making more adaptations inside the educational system and it is including the soft skills in a way that follows the structure of the LifeComp are Spain and Italy. Portugal has also included a wide range of soft skills that exceeds the LifeComp in some parts and does not include skills from LifeComp. The educational systems of Greece and Cyprus are slightly behind in this sense and soft skills are trained mostly in non-formal education, while the formal education needs to be reformed.

Cyprus

According to the European Commission, LifeComp is a European framework that promotes soft skills development, and its purpose is to assist individuals in becoming lifelong learners that can cope with the fast-paced reality. The LifeComp describes nine competences that can be learned by everyone in formal, informal, and non-formal education. These competences are the following: self-regulation, flexibility, wellbeing (**personal** area), empathy, communication, collaboration (**social** area), and growth mindset, critical thinking and managing learning (**learning to learn area**).

The LifeComp framework is considerably vital in education, since it can assist students develop new skills that can help them thrive in their life.

These competences are deemed necessary in personal development, in learning how to co-exist with other people, achieving personal fulfilment and learning how to adapt in many professions.
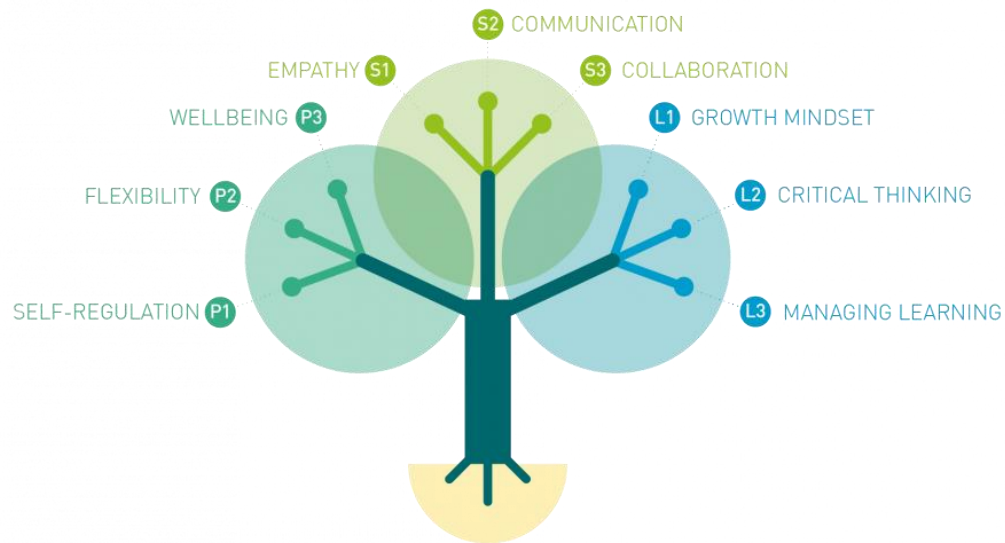
Italy

In the last ten years, Italian policymakers have tried to incorporate and implement the indications of the European Union about learning skills and abilities for the society of the future and, in particular, key competencies for permanent learning defined by the European Parliament and by the Council of the European Union (Recommendation of 18 December 2006).

Since primary and lower-secondary school, the National Indications of the Ministry of Education, University and Research for 2021[10] highlighted that the Italian school system assumes as a "reference horizon" the European framework of key competencies for lifelong learning. Then, the 2018 Indications[11] defined the social, civic, metacognitive and methodological competencies as "indispensable key competencies" for the "correct and profitable coexistence", "conscious and critical access to information", as well as for "facing and solving problems, making decisions, planning and designing, intervening on and modifying reality". The document stresses, among other things, the importance of learning environments centred on

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[10] Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research - MIUR (2018). *Indicazioni nazionali per il curricolo della scuola dell'infanzia e del primo ciclo d'istruzione.* https://www.miur.gov.it/documents/20182/51310/DM+254_2012.pdf/.

[11] Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research - MIUR (2018). *Indicazioni nazionali e nuovi scenari.*
https://www.miur.gov.it/documents/20182/0/Indicazioni+nazionali+e+nuovi+scenari/

discussion, **communication**, **cooperative work**, **contextualization of knowledge** into reality, **empathy** and responsibility, the **learning to learn** competence and the related abilities and skills, such as self-regulation, the ability to manage the time of one's work, priorities and the organisation of spaces and tools, as well as the self-evaluation of one's own limits, resources, and possibilities.

In the context of the second cycle of education and training, since 2005, the *Educational, cultural and professional profile* (*PECUP*), introduced by legislative decree on 17 October 2005, n. 226, has defined the competencies, skills and knowledge that students must have at the end of the final two-year period of compulsory education, identifying, in addition to basic and technical-professional skills, the needs for citizenship competencies and **soft skills** that enable individuals to face new and unpredictable situations in organisations' environments (e.g., diagnosis, problem-solving, decision making, communication, teamwork, project-based and network-based work). For the final three-year course of the second cycle, more recently, in 2018[12], the Ministry introduced the "Pathways for Transversal Skills and Orientation" (*Percorsi per le Competenze Trasversali e per l'Orientamento - PCTO*), previously called "School-work alternation" (*Alternanza scuola-lavoro)*, making soft skills an educational goal. These paths aimed to implement a skills-centred approach, improving basic skills and investing in the skills necessary to ensure students' resilience and adaptability, to prepare them for the changing nature of modern economies and complex societies. The Personal, social and learning to learn competence is placed as the first column in the matrix of transversal competencies to which the ministerial guidelines expressly refer, in line with the EU Council Recommendation on Key competencies for lifelong learning. Such competence is defined as follows:

The personal and social competence and the ability to learn to learn consist of the ability to reflect on oneself, to manage time and information effectively, to work constructively with others, to remain resilient and to manage one's own learning and own career. It includes the ability to cope with uncertainty and complexity, learn to learn, foster one's physical and emotional well-being, maintain physical and mental health, as well as to be able to lead a health-conscious and life-oriented life. future, to empathise and manage the conflict in a favourable and inclusive context.

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[12] Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research - MIUR (2018). *Percorsi per le Competenze Trasversali e per l'Orientamento. Linee Guida*.
https://www.miur.gov.it/documents/20182/1306025/Linee+guida+PCTO+con+allegati.pdf

Greece

The term **key competence** is neither used in legislative texts nor in related policy papers. The closest Greek educational terminology gets to the notion of key competence is by referring to the intellectual and physical capabilities (dynatotites). Law 1566/85 states that the main aim of primary and secondary education is to 'contribute to the complete, harmonious and balanced development of the intellectual and physical capabilities of pupils in order to enable them to evolve into well-rounded personalities able to lead creative lives.'[1]

It is thus imperative for future educational reforms to integrate the 2018 revised recommendation of the European Parliament and of the council on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, labelled "Personal, Social, and Learning to Learn"[2].

At present the Greek reform initiatives for education focus on the upgrading of Vocational Education and Training with the 4763/2020 Law. As proposed in the **Strategic Plan for Vocational Education Training, Lifelong Learning and Training, Learning and Youth,** released in 2021 by the Ministry of Education, the reform is based on an integrated strategy for vocational education, training, and lifelong learning.

In the field of Lifelong Learning, it is necessary to link employment, economic prosperity and the full participation of the individual in society. Lifelong Learning refers to all forms of learning activities throughout a person's life, aimed at the acquisition or development of knowledge, skills, and competences, which contribute to the formation of an integrated personality, to the professional integration and development of the individual, to social cohesion, to the development of the capacity for active citizenship and to social, economic and cultural development. It encompasses formal education, non-formal and informal learning[3].

Although these are significant steps, validation of non-formal and informal learning is not yet as developed in Greece as in other EU countries. Even though informal and non-formal learning is gaining importance, such learning is still not adequately valued and recognized in society. A cultural shift would also be required in favour of learning outcomes, to support steps towards recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning[4].

The personal, social and learning to learn competence is defined as follows[2]:

> The personal and social competence and the ability to learn to learn consist of the ability to reflect on oneself, to manage time and information effectively, to work constructively with others, to remain resilient and to manage one's own learning and own career. It includes the ability to cope with uncertainty and complexity, learn to learn, foster one's physical and emotional well-being, maintain physical and mental health, as well as to be able to lead a health-conscious and life-oriented life. future, to empathize and manage the conflict in a favourable and inclusive context.

Portugal

The Exit Profile of Students[13] finishing mandatory schooling is, under these assumptions, a reference document for the organisation of the entire educational system, contributing to the convergence and articulation of decisions inherent to the various dimensions of curriculum development.

When considering and substantiating what is relevant, adequate and feasible in the context of the different decision levels, it is possible and desirable to find significant guidelines in this profile. It constitutes, therefore, the matrix for decisions to be adopted by educational managers and actors at the level responsibility for educational policies and educational establishments. The purpose is to contribute to the organisation and management of the curriculum and to the definition of strategies, methodologies and didactic pedagogical procedures to be used in teaching practice.

The document assumes a comprehensive, transversal and recursive nature. The scope of the Student Exit Profile respects the inclusive and multifaceted character of the school, ensuring that regardless of the educational paths taken, all knowledge is guided by explicit principles, values and vision, resulting from social consensus. The transversality assumes that each curricular area contributes to the development of all areas of competence considered in the Student Profile, with no place for a strict indexation of each one of them to specific curricular components and areas. The scope and transversality contribute to the recursive nature of this document, which consists of the possibility that, in each school year, its content and purposes are continuously summoned.

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[13] Direcção Geral da Educação, Ministério da Educação (2017) Perfil dos Alunos à Saída da Escolaridade Obrigatória in https://www.dge.mec.pt/sites/default/files/Curriculo/Projeto_Autonomia_e_Flexibilidade/perfil_dos_alunos.pdf
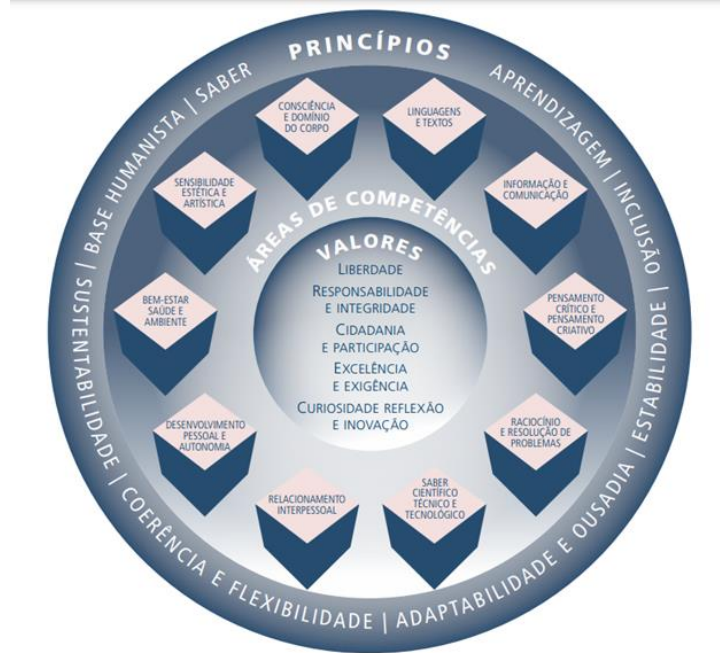
Fig. 12 - Framework for the Student's Exit Profile for the mandatory schooling system in Portugal

The framework for the Student's Exit Profile is structured in 3 main areas: Principles, Skills, and Values, as shown in the following translated table:

Principles	Skills	Values
Learning	Languages and texts	Freedom
Inclusion	Information and Communication	Responsibility and Integrity
Stability	Critical Thinking and Creative Thinking	Citizenship and Participation
Adaptability and Daring	Reasoning and Problem solving	Excellence and Exigency
Coherence and Flexibility	Scientific, technical and technological knowledge	Curiosity
Sustainability	Interpersonal relationships	Reflection and Innovation

Humanist basis	Personal development and Autonomy	
Knowledge	Well-being, Health and Environment	
	Aesthetic and artistic Sensibility	
	Self, Conscience and Mastery of own Body	

This framework has been implemented nation-wide, and the transversal nature of its content originated a new nomenclature for the group of skills now named "Transversal Skills". As its implementation and execution in Portugal involved all levels of school and VET, all subjects and courses, there's a wide use of the "transversal skills" nomenclature when referring to "Life Skills" or "Soft Skills".

The Personal, social and learning to learn competence is placed as the first column in the matrix of transversal skills to which the ministerial guidelines expressly refer, in line with the EU Council Recommendation on Key competencies for lifelong learning. Such competence is defined as follows:

The personal and social competence and the ability to learn to learn consist of the ability to reflect on oneself, to manage time and information effectively, to work constructively with others, to remain resilient and to manage one's own learning and own career. It includes the ability to cope with uncertainty and complexity, learn to learn, foster one's physical and emotional well-being, maintain physical and mental health, as well as to be able to lead a health-conscious and life-oriented life. future, to empathize and manage the conflict in a favourable and inclusive context.

As the Portuguese Education Ministry spread the Student's Exit Profile framework instead of LifeComp, most education providers in Portugal use the national document instead of the EU LifeComp framework as basis for their work.

On one hand, the fact that all levels and all education providers aim for this framework, provides consistency and continuity of the educational progress for each young person. However, the fact that the Transversal Skills or Life

Skills aren't considered in the evaluation of a particular group of subjects or levels of education/ training, they are often overlooked as teachers and trainers are pressured to prioritise goals and skills considered within the evaluated grids.

Spain

On May 22, 2018, the European Council Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning was published. This document reconceptualizes the competence of learning to learn, renaming it personal, social and learning to learn competences. This new perspective is incorporated into Spanish educational legislation, as we see in Organic Law 3/2020, of December 29, which modifies Organic Law 2/2006, of May 3, on Education (LOMLOE), in the that the key competences are collected as described in the 2018 European document.

The eight key competences stablished by the LOMLOE for lifelong learning are:

- Literacy competence.
- Multilingual competence.
- Competences in math, science, and engineering.
- Digital competence.
- Personal, social, and learning to learn competences.
- Citizen competences.
- Entrepreneurial competences.
- Competence in awareness and cultural expressions.

One of the main novelties of this law is that the key competences must be trained in all mandatory levels, from early education to post-graduate education.

The LOMLOE defines the key competences as the performances that are considered essential for the students to be able to progress with guarantees of success in their training itinerary and face the main global and local challenges and challenges.

LOMLOE also introduces the student exit profile, which identifies and defines the key competencies that students are expected to have developed by completing their training itinerary.

It is the foundation of lifelong learning and the benchmark for internal and external evaluation of student learning. It starts from a structural and functional vision of the key competences, whose acquisition by students is considered essential for their personal development, to solve situations and problems in their lives, to create new opportunities for improvement, as well

as to achieve continuity of the training itinerary and to facilitate and develop their insertion and active participation in society and in the care of people, the natural environment, and the planet.

3.2 Experiences from the field: interviews with teachers and trainers

The partnership of InKey project conducted 101 interviews with teachers and trainers working at youth organisations, VET schools, VET providing companies, adult education, Universities and NGOs.

It is verified that the publication of LifeComp is recent and there is great ignorance within the educational sector about its existence and its uses in the educational sector.

Once its existence was known and when its structure and the key competencies included in it have been explained to them, interest has been detected in delving into the subject and incorporating it into their teaching practices.

The skills that are, in general, pointed as more important to train and develop in young people are **communication, teamwork, collaboration, digital skills, problem- solving, critical thinking and flexibility skills**. Many of the above-mentioned skills are already part of LifeComp Framework and will be part of the training materials and activities of the project.

When asked participants about the materials they will find more interested in having access to, to implement the InKey results inside their respective institutions. There has been a great agreement among participants and most of them would like to have access to already developed **activities**, digital **materials**, and theoretical **methodologies**.

When asked about their own experience in working with young people, training programs in soft skills and other related experiences, most of the participants agreed that they recommend such programs to be in blended or face-to-face mode, as the programs that are 100% online miss an important part of the benefits of socializing have in the skills development of young people.

Cyprus

To assess the usage of the LifeComp framework in Cypriot education, Center for Social Innovation (CSI), conducted twenty interviews with Cypriot trainers and teachers, who were selected based on the experience they possessed in

the field of soft skills development. The interviews were organized to evaluate the extent to which the trainers and teachers were familiar with the areas of the LifeComp framework, and the extent to which they applied the framework. Moreover, the interviews tried to collect the interviewees' experiences and obstacles while implementing soft skills development in their professions.

Composition of the group

The group was composed with no. 4 trainers, and 16 teachers working for youth organizations (20%), and formal education (80%). Their target groups are young adults aged 20-35 years old (20% of the respondents), kids and teenagers 7- 18-year-old (80%).

Significantly, none of the respondents were familiar with the LifeComp Framework, but all of them had a basic knowledge of the areas of the framework and have admitted applying it in their profession without knowing that there is a specific framework that entails all these soft skills.

Summary of the responses

This section summarizes the main responses collected during the interviews.

Q1	Are you familiar with the soft skills that are entailed in the LifeComp Framework? Have you applied them in any context? Were you involved in teaching or training programs that were aimed at using/ implementing the LifeComp Framework? Please name any examples that you can think of.

All respondents claimed that they apply soft skills development in their profession, even though they have no knowledge of LifeComp Framework.

- Yes, I do apply these softs skills in my profession. I apply them in lessons such as Greek, Life Education, Mathematics. Specifically, in Mathematics, I show my students different ways through which they can solve a problem, and then I let them find their own way of solving it. We also try to encourage our students to collaborate with each other, but the pandemic hasn't allowed us to do that the last couple of years.
- Yes, I am aware of them. We try to apply soft skills development in our classes, in an experiential way. Through fairy tales, theatrical games, learning about moral values, learning how to decode a text, and in Mathematics, we learn different ways through which we can solve a problem.

- Yes, I am aware of these soft skills. Through speech therapy, I try to work on the student's soft skills in collaboration with the teacher. We try to work on the student's social behaviour through stories, images. We try to help the student understand how she/he should react in a specific circumstance. But of course, it depends on the parent to tell us if the student has any problem with his/her social skills.
- Yes, I try to initiate several conversations in the classroom. I try to see how children interact with each other. We work on fairy tales, stories, scenarios. We couldn't help our students develop their social skills during the last couple of years though, due to the pandemic.
- Yes, I have participated in several Erasmus+ projects that had to do with soft skills. And through my lessons, I try to help children with disabilities develop their social skills through games and role-play activities.
- Yes, of course I am aware of them, and I do apply them in my classes. First, I respect my students, and I teach them moral values. I believe hard skills are much more easily taught, whereas for soft skills development, teachers are responsible, to show their students how they can work on their own and learn things on their own.
- Yes, I apply them during the Life Education lesson. I try to develop my students' soft skills in Mathematics and Greek. For example, in Mathematics I show them several ways with which they can solve a problem and they can start thinking different ways on their own.
- Yes, during our lessons we apply some soft skills. These are life skills and help students learn how to study on their own, how to solve problems etc.
- Yes, I apply these soft skills in my profession by personal choice though. There are not any instructions given to us by the Ministry of Education on how to do that. (Koulla)
- Yes, with each of the areas of this framework I have a different relationship, but these are skills I use in my trainings. The trainings for trainers that I attended had to do with soft skills development, and we did practice our "learning to learn" skills, our management of emotions (how to manage the participants of a training, how to work with other trainers etc.).
- Yes, I am familiar with the soft skills but not with the framework itself. In the University, we provide seminars regarding soft skills, interview skills and competences needed for today's world to be successful and happy. We call these seminars "Getting ready for the labour market". It's a blend of seminars and we give them to both post-graduate students and undergraduate students with the purpose of equipping them with skills and making them stronger and better in whatever they

want to do. We are not using the methodology as you described/ we don't have a structural framework.

- Yes, I am familiar with these soft skills. I teach informatics, and the algorithmic thinking which is one of the main tools of informatics that promotes critical thinking. Therefore, critical thinking is part of the lesson I teach. When it comes to more theoretical courses, like Greek, I guess that Greek teachers also promote critical thinking as a part of their lesson, when they are trying to analyse a text or a poem. It depends on how each professor wants to teach their lesson. However, the framework is not implemented formally in schools.

- I am aware with these skills, and I have experience in applying them. As a teacher I used to apply them in some adult trainings. The learning to learn component is taught in all lessons. In trainers' training these skills are also used. Also, in primary schools, there is a new lesson called "Agogi Zois" (Life Education). In some lessons like Mathematics, it's more difficult to implement some soft skills. As a history teacher, I tried to promote my students' critical thinking skills. There were not any instructions given to me though. There are some guidelines in the curriculum, but it depends on each teacher on how they implement them.

- I am involved with the "eight key competences" through the ERASMUS+, which is like the LifeComp framework. These eight competences are part of the youth pass certificate. What I realize, is that sometimes we don't know these frameworks; we might work on the components of a framework, but we don't know them. We don't know their unit of measurement. Within non-formal education, I work on workshops that are of limited duration, and in these workshops, we don't analyse the key competences. However, if the workshops last for more than one day, we usually tell our students that based on the eight key competences they will develop some of these competences. For example, because of the pandemic, and responding to the challenges and opportunities that young people face, the Youth Information Centers have developed and held the Student's Empowerment and Motivation Summer Schools, which were based in the development of the skills of young people. In this program we analysed the eight key competences and did some activities. After completing the activities, we analysed and discussed the competences that were developed in the activity. Moreover, during the implementation of several Key action 1 ERASMUS+ projects, we always have activities that are based on the eight key competences, and towards the end of the program, the participants receive a youth pass certificate, and on this certificate, they can write the competence they acquired. We explain it twice to them

(students) so that they can write them on their own. All these programs have to do with skills development, as participants, or volunteers or youth workers (people who work in the field of youth).

- Yes, I am familiar with these soft skills, and I do apply them in my profession. This can be done directly or indirectly. The world is evolving in a very fast pace, and this affects the professional domain but also our personal lives. I use several counselling and personal development techniques to inform people about the importance of soft skills and help them acquire these soft skills which will make them more productive and effective. I am involved in teaching programs that are aimed at implementing some of the soft skills that are involved in the LifeComp framework. I have several programs that I offer to young people (from teenagers to adults who are ready to embark on their professional journey), and these programs are focused in developing several **soft skills** such as the growth mindset, critical thinking skills, communicative skills, collaborative skills. I also collaborate with several non-profit research organizations like the Cyprus Youth Council and the Youth Board of Cyprus, or even universities like The Cyprus University of Technology and I have participated in several trainings (either as a trainer or as a volunteer) that focused on youth empowerment, soft skills development, and lifelong learning. Through the "Boost your Career" events, employability skills, "brand yourself". I have also worked with SEAL (non-profit organization), in providing several job labs, whose goal was soft skills development and career management.

- On a formal level, there is the lesson "Αγωγή ζωής" (Life Education) which is taught in primary school and is taught throughout the 6 years that students attend primary school. What I notice though, is that very few teachers care about this lesson; they mostly neglect it or do not use the manuals that were given to them by the ministry or avoid doing it at all. Personally, I do pay a lot of attention to this lesson, because I am also involved with non-formal education as a trainer.

  In some lessons, for example Mathematics, there are instructions in the exercises that tell us we should do these exercises in teams. However, now, because of the pandemic, collaborative work is forbidden. However, there are no other initiatives by the school or ministry of education to implement skills development in the lessons.

  On an individual level: In all my lessons, I try to implement critical thinking activities, and I try to cultivate my students' critical thinking skills. For example, in the first grade, I try to teach my students about gender equality through stories. Now, when it comes to non-formal education, I constantly participate in skills development programs. That is the purpose of non-formal education, to help students develop their

critical thinking skills. I also participated in seminars which had as one of their goals the development of these transversal skills. Maybe that was not the overall focus of the seminars, but we did implement them. We always have in mind the youth pass competences, and during a seminar we write down which competences were acquired throughout this seminar. There was a seminar about emotions, and how to manage your emotions. I was a trainee in this seminar. I have also run a soft-skills workshop for the purposes of the Upgradme project, and my target group was a Cameroonian community and I helped them develop some soft skills through an application, so that they can increase their employment rate. The application provided them with several scenarios, and they had to choose how to act in each scenario, they helped them take initiatives etc.

- We apply these skills in the classroom, specifically empathy, through activities, conversations, case studies. Through case studies, students think about how they would react in difficult situations. Also, through the lesson "Agogi Zois" (Life Education), we show our students short films which aim to increase the students 'empathy, to help them solve problems. We also try to develop our students' collaborative skills, through group work activities. I believe all students are aware of the importance of these skills. But the material we must cover in our lessons is quite heavy, therefore, some teachers focus more on soft skills and other teachers less.

- In theory, we do apply them. When I was studying, we had to construct lesson plans that involved soft skills development. But when it comes to applying these skills in the classroom, the huge material we must cover stands as an obstacle.

- In the analytical programmes that the Ministry gives us, these skills are mentioned. The ways through which you apply soft skills development in your class has to do with each teacher. I have also participated in training courses, and university seminars that had to do with some of the skills that are mentioned in the framework.

- I do not apply these softs skills in my classroom. This is something that I would like to do, but I don't know how. There is no guidance from the school on how to do that. I make some efforts though.

Q2	Can you tell me about any general successful approaches of this framework that you know of?

None of the respondents knew any approaches of LifeComp Framework, but some of them knew approaches of soft skills development in general. 15% of

the respondents answered that they do not know any successful approaches of soft skills development.

- I participated in an Erasmus+ project, we went to Germany, and we saw how other teachers in other countries do their lessons. Their lessons were more student-oriented than our lessons.
- I do not know any. (3 participants)
- I know about the seminars that the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute organizes that have to do with soft skills. I have participated in some, but they were not very practical.
- I know about seminars that are directed towards adults, not children.
- I have worked at the Imagine project, which what to do with the social area of the LifeComp Framework. It was about promoting communication, collaboration, and social skills in general. I have also heard about different projects that had to do with the implementation of soft skills, but I have not seen any such initiative in practice.
- Yes, I have heard of trainings within the framework of Erasmus + which have to do with capacity building and soft skills. I am also aware that many trainings are executed from different organizations that have to do with soft skills development. (Irene)
- The Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA) offers programs that are directed towards non-formal educators, or participants and they have to do with skills development.
- Yes, I have heard of many such projects. I have heard of STEAM programs. And the main purpose of these programs is to empower girls to pursue their interests in Science, Engineering, Technology and Math subjects, providing them with positive examples and possibilities to experience STEM occupation.
- The Erasmus Exchange program.
- The Ministry of Education organizes several seminars during the 2-day teacher training, and they have to do with soft skills, and we choose which ones to attend (4 participants)
- There are such efforts, but they are not very organized. There might be a seminar about this topic but if the seminar does not progress in the form of a program nothing can be done. There was a program that was called "Prothesi" that had to do with behaviour.
- I know several programs that have to do with skills development and disabilities.
- There are several seminars that are conducted by teachers. And several seminars organized by the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute.
- Seminars, Erasmus+ project called Arts in education which has to do with skills and art.

- During the year, the school organizes several seminars that have to do with soft skills.

<table>
<tr><td>Q3</td><td>Are you aware of whether this framework is implemented in formal or informal education?</td></tr>
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The respondents claimed that this framework is not implemented in formal or informal education. However, some participants mentioned that it depends on each school and the goals that each school has. Also, some of the respondents mentioned the lesson "Agogi Zois" (Life Education) that is meant to give students the necessary tools they need to become responsible citizens.

- As a school, every year we have specific goals, and critical thinking is always one of our goals.
- Each teacher chooses how they want to construct their lesson. If we notice that our students have not yet developed their soft skills and they need some help, or that the teachers are not trained enough so that they can apply them, then we take care for that. We always have critical thinking as our goal in our school, but there is no organized framework. Also, depending on the age of our students we make the necessary adjustments. For example, younger students do not need to learn as many skills as teenagers do.
- No, we don't have such a framework implemented in schools. We cannot see if our efforts to promote soft skills education were successful. We organize such things on our own.
- There are some general guidelines given to us in the analytical program, which talk about critical thinking. We don't know to what extend we apply them.
- I don't know if there is any guidance from the Ministry of Education. The head of the school supports such initiatives, and each teacher adjusts their lessons accordingly.
- There is the lesson "Agogi Zois" (Life education). But we also put goals that the beginning of each year. It depends on each teacher (2 participants).
- We always have conversations with each other, and we talk about which areas need improvement. Some of our goals might be the development of a soft skill.
- These soft skills are included in the curriculums, and they are implemented up to a certain extend. One problem we have in education in Cyprus is that there is no appropriate grading system which would provide us with feedback for the students' progress. For

example, empathy is mentioned in the curriculum but it's not a subject under examination and is not taken in serious consideration by all the teachers. it's also difficult to evaluate such skills. An important part of formal education is the Pancyprian exams, and to pass these exams, you don't really need these soft skills.

- This framework is not implemented in formal education. However, as I said before, lifelong learning one of the secondary education's main goals. Regarding informal education I am not sure.

- As far as I am concerned, this framework or any of its components are not applied in formal or informal education.

- I know that in non-formal education these skills are used extensively. Regarding formal education, as a student I saw that there were some efforts for some non-formal education tools to be implemented in formal education. In the medicine school, such kind of efforts were made, which were not as successful as in non-formal education.

- I don't know, but I guess it would be very useful. I am sure that there are some efforts done, not on a frequent/ scheduled base. That is why I took this initiative in the University to carry out some practical assistance to students to help them be prepared for their future.

- In informal education there are some initiatives. As far as I am concerned, this framework is not implemented in formal education. Formal education follows different guidelines, they haven't implemented this framework. The educators are aware of these competences, but they don't have any framework that they follow. Probably, on an individual level there are some educators who implement some skill development techniques in their lessons. There are many teachers I collaborate with who also have experience in non-formal education. I believe it is possible that they have borrowed some of the characteristics of non-formal education and have applied them in formal education.

- From my experience, formal education has some deficiencies when it comes to soft skills development. I come across with teenagers who lack of these soft skills. I can see that in non-formal education, there are more initiatives in implementing these soft skills. For example, in the Cyprus Youth Council there are many such initiatives. I do not want to overgeneralize but from what I see, formal education focuses on the development of hard skills instead of soft skills. I think that there are teachers however, who try to teach their students the importance of soft skills.

- No, this framework is not implemented.

| Q4 | Do you believe that this is an important or necessary framework and that it should be implemented in formal or non-formal education? Why? How can students benefit from this framework? |

All the respondents agree that this is a very important framework that should be implemented. They all agreed that soft skills are essential in the life of a student, and it helps them become responsible citizens who can think on their own.

- Yes definitely. These skills help young people to think by themselves, to find solutions, to collaborate, to form close bonds with each other.
- Education is more inclusive and multi-faceted if it includes soft skills development. The framework helps students become independent citizens, and it makes them capable to interact with other people, to form their own opinions, to accept other people's opinions, to organize their professional and personal lives better. It can help you adjust to different circumstances and adapt to the fast-paced reality.
- These are not only social skills, but they are life skills. They can help the student professionally as they can help him/her analyse their thoughts, think critically, socialize etc.
- Soft skills development always helps. It can help students become responsible future citizens, who are capable to think by themselves and do not just accept what they hear.
- It forms the personality of a student.
- Soft skills development helps young students become fulfilled people and helps them gain values which help them in their future lives.
- These skills can help young people learn how to sustain their relationships, and how to make friends and important connections.
- Yes, I think it's an essential framework. When students graduate from high school they are mostly equipped with knowledge and not soft skills. They are not taught the necessary soft skills that they need to develop as citizens and professionals, such as communicative skills. This is certainly problematic.
- Yes, I think it would be very useful. It provides people with some tools that are essential in working with other people and yourself and developing your own skills. Therefore, I think it should be applied both in formal and non-formal education. I know that in formal education it's more difficult for such frameworks to be implemented, because there are other factors that play a significant role, but I do thing that such soft skills are essential for everyone.

- I think it would be very useful because it would be standardized. I think that the instructors would benefit, because they would have the framework to work with, they would have a standardized method, which would produce solid results for each student. Therefore, it would be easier for the instructors to lay out educational seminars like this. It would be easier to evaluate students who participate in this seminar to see their progress. whatever is standardized is much more useful. I think every academic institution should have a framework like that to work with.

- Yes, I do think that could be very helpful. Any such action can be useful. I think it would be more effective if such a framework would be implemented officially instead of unofficially. However, I think such a framework would be more successful if it were implemented outside of the classroom environment, in trainings, since school time is very limited, and the material teachers must cover is a lot. And because of all this material and the lack of the appropriate time, many teachers neglect soft skills development and focus on covering their material. Maybe such a framework could be applied in formal education only if there was less material to be covered for each lesson.

- There are some efforts, not on a frequent base or scheduled base, that is why I took the initiative to carry out assistance to help them be prepared for tomorrow. I strongly believe all institutions should have such a framework.

- I believe there are several frameworks that should be applied. Now, I am not sure which framework should be applied first, because I don't have a lot of experience of working with many frameworks. Many frameworks need to be implemented in educational establishments, but it is debatable which one that should be.

- Yes, that would be extremely useful. They would help them in their personal lives as well, their relationships with others and themselves, they could find balance and they would be able to easily adapt, they would be alert in fake news

- Yes, I believe it is an extremely useful framework. These are skills that help people be effective in all the domains of their lives. A person who has developed his adaptability skill for example, knows that he/she can adapt to any new circumstance in his professional life. These skills can also help people develop their communicative skills and work with people who are different than them.

- Yes of course. This framework should be implemented in many lessons. It can even be implemented in the lesson "Agogi Zois" (Life Education), and it can be more targeted. It can help the students become fulfilled personalities. It can help them learn how to collaborate with others in

the society. It can help them learn how to form arguments and have a productive conversation with people. It can also help them be respectful of other people. If we implement this framework, we can improve the next generation become more responsible.

- These are very essential skills. Hard skills are taught more easily and faster. Unfortunately, the school system hasn't improved a lot. Soft skills are much more important than the lessons we teach. It doesn't help anyone to memorize some information and perform well int tests.
- We lack these soft skills in Cyprus. Children don't know how to collaborate. Their emotions are not cultivated enough.

| Q5 | What are the skills you think contribute the most to the integration of young people into the labour market? |

All respondents agreed that there is no soft skill more important than the other. There are all interconnected.

- All the skills that are included in the framework are of equal importance.
- Some skills are more important than others in a specific period of a child's life. The one skill has to do with another skill.

| Q6 | Do you believe that if there were more programs/ projects/ workshops which could implement this framework, young people would be interested to participate? How can we motivate them to do so? |

40% of the respondents answered that students would be interested in soft skills development programs/projects/workshops. **65%** of the respondents claimed that it's necessary to motivate the students appropriately to make them interested in such initiatives (through activities, games etc.). **30%** of the respondents mentioned that we need to explain to young people the importance of soft skills. **15%** of the participants talked about the lack of free time that students have, which would make it difficult for them to attend any initiative that is implemented outside school hours.

- If we firstly convince the teacher, then he/she will influence the students. The teacher can make it interesting through games. But of course, students would be interested in such efforts.
- I believe young people would be interested. They are always interested if they do something that is helpful and beneficial.

- I believe specific students from a specific family profile would be interested. Not everyone understands the value of soft skills.
- It's not that they wouldn't be interested, but they have many things to do. The school is responsible to implement such frameworks though. And, parents need to learn such skills.
- From my experience, students are attracted by any non-formal education activity that doesn't have to do with school. For example, they consider it interesting when someone comes to talk to them. But students need to be motivated appropriately. The way with which we attract them needs to be with some sort of interactive activities, that are implemented in an online form. It needs to be something active, not passive.
- I believe that some young people are very active in social issues and youth issues therefore, these people would be available in participating. Generally, it depends. The promotion is an important part of it, how you approach people is very important. There are many EU programs. Usually, we can see that there is a specific group of people who participate in such initiatives. Therefore, I think the promotion of such an effort would be of crucial importance, because not all young people are aware of these projects.
- I think we should provide young people with attractive rewards to make them interested in participating.
- You must win them first, promote it in a way that would be attracted to them, talk to them first. They should feel they will gain from it, convince them about the benefits of seminars. Therefore, marketing is needed here to convince people. But it would be useful to students, and if it will be successful, then more young people would be interested because they talk to each other and they convince each other.
- Yes, I do believe young people would be interested to participate. I do however think that more people would participate if such programs/ workshops would be obligatory. But I don't think it's doable to force any student participate in such initiative.
- I think that we need to give them attractive rewards and motives to participate in such efforts. For example, the Erasmus exchange program interests many students, because it gives them the chance to travel to other countries and learn new things. Also, I think that such efforts should be more rewarding for the students. For example, if we give a simple questionnaire to students which aims at increasing their soft skills is not enough to motivate them. Students need to see the results of such efforts. We could offer them a free lunch maybe, or even a trip. Otherwise, it's unlikely that young people would be interested to

participate. In that case, they should have an inner drive that would motivate them to do so.

- Yes, I do think they would be interested. However, motives and rewards should be given to the students. It should also be promoted.
- You need some motivation to encourage students to participate in such initiatives. Up until now, the main way through which we convince students to attend any lesson in Cyprus is by forcing students to do something, basically telling them that it is required for them to participate in something. We also encourage students to mainly care about their grades, and this is what they end up pursuing, and students end up being afraid that they will be punished if they do not attend any lesson. Therefore, if you motivate students in the right way, then they will want to participate in such initiatives. The system is responsible for choosing what this motivation would be. Personally, I prefer it when students want to participate in something without feeling they are forced to do it.
- I believe the best motivation would come if we explained students the benefits of this framework and of any activity/program, provide them with a list of the benefits of such a program. In that way, more people would motivate to do so. In Cyprus, we are influenced by the mindset that learning and educating yourself is something someone forces you to do it. Therefore, if that doesn't change, students won't be able to understand that something can benefit them.
- I think yes. It depends on the age of these people. Young people below 18 would do it much more easily than people above 18, since they tend to do what they are told to do by their parents or teachers. On the other hand, people above 18 years old are old enough to choose what's best for themselves. And it is the authority's responsibility to show me why skills development is so important. I believe educating them about the importance of these soft skills, and explaining them what exactly these would be the best solution. Also, informing parents about this is also important
- I think that this framework should be promoted enough first so that people can find out information about it. Many people do not know what it is, and they don't know how important it is. Through educating them. But also, teachers should be informed about their importance, and of course this framework should be implemented officially so that teachers can apply it in their lessons. Moreover, teachers should learn the importance of this framework, and of course, the inspectors should be willing to apply these in the establishments.
- Yes, they are interested, but we need to explain them the process. They need to understand what the meaning of each soft skill is.

- To find it interesting, they need to understand the worth of soft skills. We should give them examples, to explain them how these skills can help them make their lives better and more successful.
- It depends on how you present a soft skill to a child. They are very interested in games for example, and in interactive activities in general. They won't be interested in a seminar.
- These initiatives should be done during the school hours, so that all students can attend them (2 participants)
- Yes, I am sure they would be interested. Interactive workshops can attract children. Also, real-case scenarios can attract them. However, our role as teachers is secondary. Firstly, it's the parents' responsibility to raise their child appropriately, so that they can understand the value of such initiatives.
- We need to make them interested through a rewarding system. Generally, young people like creativity and modern methods, not teacher-cantered lessons. And such a framework should not be implemented during the school hours since it cannot be obligatory.
- Yes, but it must be done in an interesting way, and it must be relevant to topics that attract students.

Q7	What do you think are the main barriers in implementing training programs that have to do with this framework in your field?

45% of the respondents mentioned that educators are not trained appropriately so that they can be capable of implementing such strategies, or that they are not informed about the worth of soft skills development. Also, **45%** of the respondents stated that the material that is taught in schools is problematic; it is either too heavy or outdated. **55%** of the participants state that there is a certain reluctancy in Cypriot education when it comes to change, as most of the people in superior positions are afraid to implement changes and get out of their comfort zone.

- If educators are not convinced about the worth of such skills, if they consider them a loss of time. Also, we are not taught these skills at the university, therefore, teachers and professors need to be informed appropriately. The head of the school needs to encourage the teachers to involve their students in interactive activities. Also, parents need to be informed about soft skills. If they are not informed, then there's a problem.
- Lack of educators' knowledge. Some of them don't know what empathy means. Some of them may not find the necessary time to

implement such activities, because of the heavy material they need to cover.

- Educators need to understand the value of soft skills.
- First, the material that we must cover is too much. Some of the people who are responsible to make the decisions for such issues have some regressive opinions. Also, there is funding available but not for education. Also, educators need to be trained, and encouraged to use such frameworks.
- The material that is taught needs to change. The material that we teach doesn't help for these soft skills to be developed. Also, funding is another issue. But it's not that a lot of money is needed for such frameworks to be implemented. Moreover, inactivity is a huge problem. There is no pressure from anywhere to implement such practices. Teachers need to put a lot of effort, but they need to be guided as well. The superiors should believe in the teachers.
- One main barrier in implementing training programs or approaches that have to do with this framework is the limited time that we teachers must conduct our lessons. The material we must teach is enormous and we don't have the necessary time to implement any activities that have to do with this framework. Also, I have noticed that most teachers in schools are quite old, and they are not aware of frameworks like this one. And even me, I am aware of the components of the framework, but I haven't studied it in detail, and I haven't applied it in practice. I also believe that teachers are not trained appropriately, and that the government is interested in implementing innovative educational techniques, but they are reluctant in implementing real change
- I believe that when it comes to formal education many factors play an important role in that. Changes in formal education are much more difficult to be implemented. If there were specific trainings and guidelines and (which would be obligatory for educators) that would help. Also, the government should give enough founding for such efforts to be successful. When it comes to non-formal education, I think it would be much easier for such frameworks to be implemented. Non-formal education is attracted by new frameworks and ideas. Non-formal educators are much more eager to learn more information about different frameworks and implement them.
- There are many barriers. First, we need to make sure that there is a coordinating committee from the ministry of education, not only in organizing these seminars/ educational workshops to increase the competences, but you also need to have an organizer, and evaluate the results, on a structured scale/ frequent barrier. The second barrier is that we need to be careful with the instructors. They must be people who

believe in this framework, who have the energy to teach this framework, that they transfer their expertise. Those are the major barriers.

- I don't think you need a lot of funding for such efforts. What we are doing at the university is at no cost, and we do it to help the students. You need to get some more advice to where to move and increase your ability. On the contrary, it's about the people and the coordinating committee, and of course the marketing to convince people. And here in Cyprus, our problem is that we are thinkers but not doers. We have ideas, but when it comes to implementing them, we find an excuse, or we are slow in implementing it. When it comes to institutions, they must study the framework and see how appropriate it is for the students. but I don't think we should leave it to the institutions, because things will be slow there, if they have no incentives.

- I believe that the Ministry of Education is reluctant when it comes to seeking for progress. Fresh ideas and innovative methods are mostly discussed but not implemented. I think there wasn't a lot of progress in school education the last years. Also, our educational system is constructed in such a way that a student who wants to study in the University for example, knows that he/she needs to go to school, get good marks, go to his/her afternoon lessons, perform well in the exams and then he/she will achieve this goal. And for that student, such programs/trainings etc. would maybe stand as obstacles to his goals, because they would waste some of his time.

- Also, teachers are not trained enough to teach such frameworks, and other than the Erasmus exchange program, there are no other European projects applied in schools. Lastly, the appropriate funding should be given and it's not, and there is also lack of willing for evolution.

- I think it's a matter of getting used to something. We are used to schools functioning like that. The school lessons' mission is to help you succeed in the exams. And someone can enter the university and graduate from it without having any soft skills. We follow a traditional system. It's also a matter of inactivity.

- I believe that teachers are not motivated enough, and I can see that if their job is not positively or negatively affected in any way, then they are not interested in evolving themselves professionally. I think this has to do with politics. The Ministry of Education evolves very slowly, sometimes they tend to regress backwards instead of evolving. That is why we evolve more slowly than other European countries. There is also a lot of bureaucracy involved when it comes to implementing change. There is also religion who intervenes in the educational system. There

are sometimes misinformation issues in schools. Therefore, if this framework were to be formally implemented, and if the right motivation would come along, then I believe there is some hope for the system to evolve and for the competences to be implemented in formal education. So, our education lags, and we need to work on some basic issues and then move on to the implementation of this framework for example.

- I believe it is mostly the issue of lack of awareness. Many people are not informed about the importance of these skills. Also, it is crucial for project officers to do a targeted promotion of their projects and try their best so that their projects have enough quality. And I also think that it has to do with the Cypriot culture. The concepts of lifelong learning and personal development are a bit neglected in Cyprus. And lastly, schools and universities should implement activities that would be based in the development of lifelong learning and soft skills.

- Firstly, people who are in positions of authority are not aware of the importance of this framework. They do not give emphasis in skills development, maybe because they are mostly focused on the lessons and the hard skills instead of the soft skills. Also, there is no vision for a more modern educational system. And maybe there are not many examples of this framework being applied, so that the ministry could see how effective it is. Parents are also not informed of their importance. And lastly, there are not many ways to be informed about these issues either in schools or outside schools.

- The Ministry doesn't give specific guidelines on how to implement such frameworks.

- We don't have time to focus on such issues. The material is too heavy. Sometimes we are forced to construct a teacher-cantered lesson, and we neglect other important things that are not obligatory. Also, the pandemic has brought many difficulties and has made it even more difficult to encourage students to collaborate with each other. And because of all these reasons, we end up telling students to memorize information to get good grades.

- There is not a lot of time for soft skills development. There should be enough organization for such a framework to be applied, so that we have a common goal. We should also educate the teachers (3 participants).

- There are no guidelines. The material is too heavy. There is also no time. Such frameworks should be implemented in a structured way, so that they help the teachers. Also, teachers remain within their comfort zone, and they are reluctant to find new ways of teaching.

- Time, material, no structured framework, no material, and you must implement such strategies by yourself which is difficult.
- The material needs to be updated, so that it can facilitate soft skills development. Also, teachers need to be educated.

> **Q8** In our project, we are interested in how the LifeComp can be implemented in formal and non-formal training programs for young people. What kind of training materials/ approaches you will be interested in having access to?

85% of the respondents gave emphasis on the importance of having access to specific material that showcases examples of how to implement the framework.

- I wouldn't need anything besides my book and an interactive board.
- Activities, notes, videos in which other teachers are applying the framework, and lesson plans.
- Illustrated texts online, we don't need a hard copy of something. We need some seminars; we should all have specific instructions so that we have the same goal. If we educate the teachers, then the necessary material will be constructed.
- We need specific material, scenarios, illustrated texts, conversations with teachers, the necessary time.
- Platform, online seminars and lessons, seminars that have to do with good practices.
- Lesson plans from people who have applied this framework.
- Theoretical material, activities, material, video, presentations, pictures.
- Lesson plans, guidelines with specific activities and practices.
- I believe that the development of several templates would be essential, and guidelines on how exactly we should apply this framework. These guidelines need to be specific; they need to clearly state what needs to be done for each lesson.
- I think templates, guidelines, and manuals would be necessary and some trainings that would be provided to educators.
- They should have some materials which accompany this framework, it's not difficult to find the right tools techniques and materials to be used. I also think we should find some best practices from other European countries to find help.

- I would need a template with the necessary outputs, so that we can know what is expected from us. Also, we would need to know what the expectations are, and we would need to have some tools with which to calculate the progress we would achieve. And lastly, we would need to have some manuals with specific guidelines.
- I believe teacher's trainings would be very important. I also think it should be implemented in the educational curriculum officially.
- Personally, I would do it by my own, without expecting something from the system. There is a big procedure involved when you ask for a change in education, and a lot of time is needed until change is approved. This whole procedure can be time-consuming, and mentally draining. I would take initiatives on my own because I love my profession. If things were different, I guess there are many things that the ministry could offer us educators, like seminars or workshops, which could help me develop my skills and awareness of this domain, or any manuals, guidelines, curricula.
- Firstly, teachers should be educated and trained for this framework. An expert should teach them how to implement tools that would aim at skills development. Those can be psychometric tests which evaluate a person's skills, and a discussion which would aim in developing these skills, or in detecting how people understand these skills.
- I would need guidelines and curricula with all the different units I had to teach, as well as the goals of each unit. And of course, I would like to know how I will implement this framework: would I have to implement it in a specific lesson, or in all the lessons? Will the training be circular? How will it evolve from grade to grade? And of course, seminars should be made so that teachers will be capable enough to teach this framework.
- we should dedicate some time to this framework. Also, there should be some experts who would help the teachers with this framework. And lastly, teachers should be trained appropriately through seminars etc. Also, manuals and curriculums are necessary.
- Hard copy material, videos, films, brochures, specific material that can be implemented during the lesson "Agogi Zois" (Life Education). Seminars that teachers will attend, in which teachers will share successful activities they have implemented. It must be an ongoing procedure.
- Specific activities that will be implemented in all lessons, a platform in which we could exchange beliefs and ideas. More seminars directed towards teachers.
- Specific guidelines, activities.
- Lesson plans, examples, video with best practices.

Q9 Do you think soft skills and the skills from LifeComp can be trained in blended mode?

85% of the participants claimed that blended mode is possible, and **20%** of the participants insisted that live interaction is more beneficial, but **15%** said blended mode would be possible only with older children and adults.

- Yes, of course. This was one of the benefits of the pandemic. We learned how to do online lessons. Now, students and teachers have these skills. I believe a combination would be ideal.
- Combination
- Yes, blended mode should be possible. We need to adjust accordingly so that it can be possible.
- The material is more important, and it needs to be appropriate. But blended mode is possible.
- I believe that there needs to be a combination. Digital learning can be very effective, but face to face learning is more effective in my opinion. Many people have told me that it's difficult for them to attend exclusively online trainings, and they prefer face to face training. However, many factors force us to use digital tools, and it's very important that such an opportunity exists. But I don't think it should be the one or the other, I think a combination would be more appropriate. Both digital learning and face to face learning have advantages and disadvantages. In digital learning you can have more people attending, since many people live in different countries or villages, and they can attend face to face. But physical contact can produce better results and it can make people feel more comfortable and inspired.
- Yes, I do believe the framework can be trained in blended mode, but I believe that face to face is always more effective.
- I think that now that's possible. We are getting used to the blending mode. Three years ago, he would say no. I would prefer the face to face one. There is so much more to gain from a face-to-face interaction. I would recommend the face-to-face option to be preferred. If that's not possible, then that's okay.
- I think the evolution of technology has provided us with many useful tools which we even use in face-to-face learning, and it allows us to communicate with our students 24/7 and discuss some of their questions. But I think that such a framework would be better taught in blended mode.
- Yes, I think a combination of face-to-face and digital learning is essential.

- Yes. Because of the pandemic, as a youth worker, I had to adapt to the new circumstancès and specifically adapt to the digital world so that I could help my students adapt to. Therefore, the LifeComp could be implemented digitally. Face-to face interactions would be more ideal and effective, but these skills could also be implemented digitally.
- Yes, I do believe that. The important thing is communicating the importance of these framework, and I believe this can be done in blended mode.
- A combination of the two is ideal. Lately, we do everything digitally and I am not in favour of this idea. I do believe that the internet provides excellent possibilities, but face-to-face activities are much more efficient, especially when it comes to teaching soft skills.
- Online lessons are very difficult. You cannot work on social skills online. For older kids, blended mode would be possible.
- Face-to-face lessons are more beneficial. There are things that can be done online, but online lessons are more impersonal. The internet can help you learn things, but live interaction is more important. Blended mode can work, but there needs to be a focus on live interaction.
- All teaching methods have advantages and disadvantages. A combination would be best.
- Live interaction is more beneficial. Online lessons are more difficult with younger children. Children are much shyer when they have online lessons.
- Combination.
- I prefer live interaction. Online lessons did not help at all weaker students, that means students who didn't have anyone to help them at home.
- For children, live interaction is more beneficial. For older children and adults, online can be beneficial.
- Combination with a focus on live interaction.

Italy

In the last ten years, Italian policymakers have tried to incorporate and implement the indications of the European Union about learning skills and abilities for the society of the future and key competencies for permanent learning defined by the European Parliament and by the Council of the European Union (Recommendation of 18 December 2006).

Since primary and lower-secondary school, the National Indications of the Ministry of Education, University and Research for 2021 highlighted that the

Italian school system assumes as a "reference horizon" the European framework of key competencies for lifelong learning. Then, the 2018 Indications defined the social, civic, metacognitive and methodological competencies as "indispensable key competencies" for the "correct and profitable coexistence", "conscious and critical access to information", as well as for "facing and solving problems, making decisions, planning and designing, intervening on and modifying reality". The document stresses, among other things, the importance of learning environments cantered on discussion, **communication**, **cooperative work**, **contextualization of knowledge** into reality, **empathy** and responsibility, the **learning to learn** competence and the related abilities and skills, such as self-regulation, the ability to manage the time of one's work, priorities and the organization of spaces and tools, as well as the self-evaluation of one's own limits, resources, and possibilities.

In the context of the second cycle of education and training, since 2005, the *Educational, cultural and professional profile* (*PECUP*), introduced by legislative decree on 17 October 2005, n. 226, has defined the competencies, skills and knowledge that students must have at the end of the final two-year period of compulsory education, identifying, in addition to basic and technical-professional skills, the needs for citizenship competencies and **soft skills** that enable individuals to face new and unpredictable situations in organizations' environments (e.g., diagnosis, problem-solving, decision making, communication, teamwork, project-based and network-based work). For the final three-year course of the second cycle, more recently, in 2018, the Ministry introduced the "Pathways for Transversal Skills and Orientation" (*Percorsi per le Competenze Trasversali e per l'Orientamento - PCTO*), previously called "School-work alternation" (*Alternanza scuola-lavoro)*, making soft skills an educational goal. These paths aimed to implement a skills-centred approach, improving basic skills and investing in the skills necessary to ensure students' resilience and adaptability, to prepare them for the changing nature of modern economies and complex societies. The Personal, social and learning to learn competence is placed as the first column in the matrix of transversal competencies to which the ministerial guidelines expressly refer, in line with the EU Council Recommendation on Key competencies for lifelong learning. Such competence is defined as follows:

The personal and social competence and the ability to learn to learn consist of the ability to reflect on oneself, to manage time and information effectively, to work constructively with others, to remain resilient and to manage one's own learning and own career. It includes the ability to cope with uncertainty and complexity, learn to learn, foster one's physical and emotional well-being,

maintain physical and mental health, as well as to be able to lead a health-conscious and life-oriented life. future, to empathise and manage the conflict in a favourable and inclusive context.

Composition of the group

In the scope of the INKEY project, Lascò conducted interviews with twenty Italian teachers and trainers, selected based on experience in the field of soft skills development. The interviews aimed at collecting the participants' experiences and perspectives on obstacles and opportunities for implementing soft skills development experiences addressed to young people.

The group was composed of no. 16 trainers and no. 4 teachers working for non-profit organisations (60%), VET providers (30%) and other formal education providers (5% in Higher Education and 5% in School Education). Their target groups are young adults aged 25-35 years old (for 70% of the respondents) and 18-24-year-old youth (65%), but also adults (45%), kids and teenagers (30%). Furthermore, more than half of the respondents (60%) have experience working with young NEETs.

Most of the respondents (55%) had knowledge of the LifeComp Framework, particularly basic knowledge for 35% of the interviewees and more in-depth knowledge for 20% of the participants, who declared they integrate the provision of the Framework in the design of their workshops and programs. Nine participants out of twenty did not have knowledge of the Framework prior to the interview.

Summary of the responses

This section summarises the main responses collected during the interviews to the main seven questions highlighted in section 3.2.2.

Q1	In your opinion, how do soft skills training programs enhance or contribute to the integration of NEETs into the labour market?

- Transferring to young NEETs the culture of flexibility and the culture of adaptability to complex contexts, as well as critical thinking.

- Providing youth with the skills to connect with employers and other relevant organisations in their personal and professional growth and, at the same time, building these bridges.

- Soft skills, particularly communication and teamwork, are the must-have skills for most professions, given the high dynamism of workplaces.

- Providing young NEETs with the skills to get re-engaged in society. In my opinion, programs should also create strong and long-lasting cooperation among education and training providers and labour market stakeholders. Organising meetings, orientation and information events where young people can meet and interact with representatives of different labour market sectors.

- Through prevention activities and internships/traineeships and other opportunities to be (re-)engaged in the labour market.

- Facilitating access to online learning experiences and increasing the opportunities to meet labour market representatives.

- Helping young NEETs in adapting to change.

- They're highly demanded by organisations. Furthermore, acknowledging their transferability across occupations and industries, they can support youth to adapt more quickly to fast-changing environments.

- Soft skills are the key to improving young NEETs' capacity to cope with changes and stressful situations. They're also valued by recruitment agencies.

- Providing them with the ability to relate to people and increasing their self-esteem.

- Improving their situation in life, boosting their confidence and providing them qualifications or skills that can be their gateway to gaining employment.

- Soft skills impact workplace behaviours and outcomes in business environments.

- Improving their adaptability and their resilience. Soft skills training can support the development of open-minded people who can adapt their behaviours to the needs of their colleagues and manage uncertainty and changes.

- Skills like self-awareness are crucial for growth and self-realisation: the ability to observe ourselves objectively and recognise our capabilities is fundamental for understanding what our most natural

path is, understanding when to seek help and avoiding pushing ourselves to excel in everything we are tasked with.

- Social skills are essential for conflict prevention and coordination with other workers. This has a great impact on the productivity and efficiency of organisations.

- Companies look for a workforce that can solve problems on their own, also in a stressful and challenging environment (even more now, after the pandemic). Skills like resilience, problem-solving and critical thinking are essential.

- Focusing on learning styles and integrating formal, informal and nonformal learning methods.

Q2 What are the skills you think contribute the most to the integration of young NEETs into the labour market?

Most of the respondents believe the most needed skills in the labour market are **communication** (40%), **collaboration** (40%), **digital skills** (40%) and **problem-solving** (20%). But not only: Fig. 4 groups all the skills mentioned by the participants during the interview.

Fig. 4 Skills contributing to the integration of NEETs into the labour market
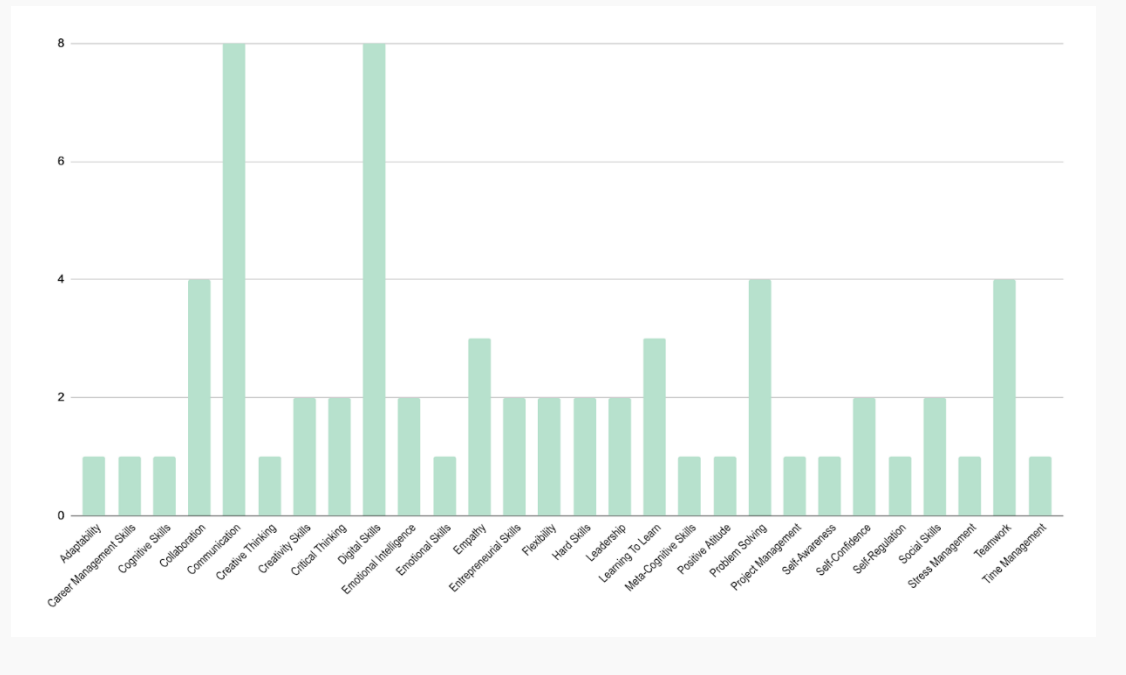
Q3	What do you think are the main barriers to implementing soft skills training programs in your field?

The responses gathered can be grouped into three main clusters:

1. responses focusing on **young people's perspectives**;

2. responses focusing on **education and training providers' perspectives**;

3. responses focusing on **mixed or other issues**;

Cluster 1 - Young people's perspectives

- Youth's reluctance to get engaged in such training.

- Lack of trust.

- Cultural barriers.

- Personal problems, financial barriers or learning environments and course content that do not meet their actual needs.

- Many youths are unable to identify the skills they need for their employment. The value of soft skills may be underestimated in my opinion.

- There is a lack of the necessary awareness and information about the importance of such training. Most youth, especially young NEETs, look for technical training, assuming it would lead them to the labour market faster.

- Low motivation from the youth side.

- I think youth's priority, once identified and acknowledge a need for training, is developing practical skills that they will later use in the field.

- Little or no focus on building and learning new skills.

Cluster 2 - Education and training providers' perspectives

- Being anchored to old purely notional and theoretical teaching and training models.

- The assessment of participants' soft skills ex-ante.

- Lack of funds.

- Assessing the individual needs to make sure the training is aligned to their starting point.

- Challenges in personalising the learning pathways for the different members of the group, so that the training is more tailored to their actual needs.

- Making learners understand the value of soft skills development.

- Designing tailored training to meet diverse needs.

- Education programs are resistant to nonformal education approaches, and there is a lack of recognition of the validity of non-formal approaches.

Cluster 3 - Mixed or other issues

- Inexistence of a strong link between education and training and the labour market.

- The skills certification gaps: there are no accredited or certified means by which young people can certify their soft skills.

Q4	How do you motivate young people to participate in soft skills development programs?

The following list gathers the individual responses collected:

- Focusing on intrinsic motivation and personalised learning styles.

- Sharing direct experiences of other youth that found their way after training (i.e., "testimonials"). Naturally, trainers should seek to build more engaging activities to support the acquisition of more complex notions more easily and with more fun.

- With unconventional learning methods, integrating non formal and informal learning.

- Building trust and supporting them in building trust with others and acknowledging their strengths.

- Internship/traineeships or perspective of future employment close to their passions and expectations after education and training.

- The high possibility of engagement in the labour market.

- Through emotional intelligence, active listening and mentoring.

- Proposing engaging learning experiences, often game based.

- Career-oriented growth objectives.

- Supporting them in understanding how the learning outcomes can support them in several personal and professional contexts.

- Interactive/engaging learning methods

- Adopting more innovative learning methods, especially through games.

- Placing them at the centre of the learning experience, trying to actively listen to their needs.

- Stress its importance for the achievement of future or current career aspirations.

- Highlighting the active learning techniques proposed.

- Providing flexible learning opportunities, such as blended or hybrid sessions.

- Addressing the importance of soft skills for their personal growth.

- Increasing their employment prospects and developing their self-evaluation capabilities.

- Linking soft skills to the market demand and to the needs of working environments.

- Inviting external guests from companies or NGOs, who share their experience related to the importance of soft skills.

Q5 What kind of feedback do you usually receive from participants? Do you think they feel that soft skills training programs are useful for them?

All the respondents highlighted overall positive feedback. Noteworthy individual responses include the following:

- *Participants want a more dynamic, less competitive and more collaborative learning environment, where the threat of voting does not loom, but can feel included and integrated into a shared learning process.*

- *I would say that they generally are challenged, but most of them acknowledge the usefulness of training in soft skills.*

- *Positive, especially when they're more practical.*

- *I experienced that the lower their perception of their skill level is, the higher will be their discouragement, and therefore their belief that the learning experience is not going to fill that gap.*

- *I've never worked with NEETs specifically. However, the interactive sessions usually receive positive feedback.*

- *Usually yes, especially when the competencies they're improving while doing something are clarified throughout the learning journey.*

- *The feedback is most of the time positive. What helps is helping participants actualize learning, such as supporting them in understanding how they can use the knowledge and skills they developed in real-life situations.*

- *Usually, the outcomes are beyond their expectations.*

- *In the last workshop I delivered to foster youth's soft skills through non formal education methods, most of the comments were related to the "energy" and "positive vibes" in the group. Participants felt empowered, but there were also some young people who felt challenged by the activities.*

- *The feedback is usually positive when youth are supported to give meaning to what they learn, and to understand the purpose and value of the learning activities they're involved in.*

- *Practical learning experiences have been way more appreciated by the target groups.*

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- *Adopting non-formal learning methods, the feedback is usually: efficacy, surprise/novelty, challenging oneself, reflective experience, and dynamic experience.*

Q6	INKEY explores how LifeComp can be implemented in formal and non-formal training programs for young people. What kind of training materials/approaches would you be interested in having access to?

- *Tools to personalise/tailor the methods and type of learning.*

- *Handbooks.*

- *Strategies and tools to improve the organisations' capacity-building efforts.*

- *Training materials, approaches and good practices shared by other experts. I would find useful a collection of lessons learned by other colleagues and maybe guidelines for tailoring existing materials to specific learning needs.*

- *Preliminary assessment tools (i.e., surveys or questionnaires) to tailor the learning path around their needs and interests.*

- *Resources and tools to implement workshops.*

- *Practical tips and activities examples to engage young NEETs.*

- *Tools for monitoring and evaluation (e.g., questionnaires, collaborative evaluation sessions, qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods)*

- *Innovative tools, like online games.*

- *Assessment tools, workshop scenarios, templates.*

- *Templates, tips, ideas for activities.*

- *Methods and template for programme/session design of the non-formal activities addressing the LifeComp competencies.*

- *Checklists or guiding documents to create workshops or sessions.*

- *Workshop scenarios, including instructions, presentation templates and other relevant reusable resources.*

- *Training resources that can be tailored for different learning styles and competence levels.*

- *Tools for the needs assessment.*

- *A community of practice with other peers.*

- *Self-evaluation tools, exercises (simulations and role-plays), apps, video lessons or MOOCs.*

- *Good practices, handbooks and toolkits (e.g., exercises, templates, printable materials)*

- *Activities (simulation exercises, icebreakers, name games, team building activities).*

Q8 Do you think soft skills and the skills set out in LifeComp can be trained in blended mode?

Nineteen participants out of twenty agreed on the effectiveness of blended learning experiences for the development of soft skills and the competencies set out in LifeComp. The main argument for the negative answer was the need to enhance human interaction. On the other hand, the arguments for the positive answers included the following:

- Online and offline training activities are very important since online activities can put people from different cultures, and nations in direct contact without effort, but I believe that offline training is also important to improve human relationships.

- The online dimension can facilitate significantly breaking the initial barriers to getting engaged in a new learning experience.

- The possibility to join online will motivate them more to start a new course or workshop.

- Hybrid learning provides both flexibility and support, balanced with the necessary face-to-face interaction moments with other peers.

- Online activities will provide a safe environment to start the learning journey, to let young NEETs build the self-esteem needed to participate also in offline activities.

- Blended learning increases participants' engagement and provides them with more autonomy over their learning.

- They're two pathways running in parallel, at least for the moment.

- Participants can learn at their own pace online, practice and improve their social skills offline.

- Participants can have more flexibility and comfort, without losing the essential human connections with other peers.

- The online training would reduce the location-related barriers, and support time management (if we're thinking of asynchronous learning with a flexible daily schedule), while traditional learning would reduce the feeling of being isolated, and therefore the impact on learners' physical and mental health.

- In the experience gained in recent years we have seen how effective it is to integrate online and offline training activities mainly to further stimulate participation (e.g., the composition of heterogeneous classes from a geographical point of view), to use digital self-assessment tools, to optimise the transfer of information, to facilitate the management of groups of courses.

Some of the participants stressed some conditions for the hybrid learning experience to work effectively:

- *Hybrid learning can work if there is a good balance between the different formats.*

- *Learners need to have support to clarify doubts and have the possibility to interact with the learning environment and/or the content in the online dimension. Young people are used to searching online to learn something they want to learn and there are uncountable learning resources on the Internet (e.g., videos/video tutorials on social media).*

- *Hybrid learning for soft skills development can work if online activities include simulations, digital role plays or something similar supporting youth to practise their skills in real-life situations.*

One of the participants also highlighted the need to consider the online and offline dimensions as integrated:

- *I believe that the training experience must be considered "Onlife", not only because online and offline are not two opposing dimensions,*

but integrated into each other, but also because today all our experiences (socialisation, purchase, dialogue, relationship) take place in hybrid mode.

Greece

Composition of the group

In the scope of the INKEY project, KEAN conducted interviews with twenty Greek teachers and trainers, selected based on experience in the field of soft skills development. The interviews aimed at collecting the participants' experiences and perspectives on obstacles and opportunities for implementing soft skills development experiences addressed to young people. Composition of the group

The group was composed of no. 7 trainers and no. 13 teachers working for non-profit organizations (30%) and other formal education (50% in Higher Education and 20% in School Education). Their target groups are young adults aged 25-35 years old (for 30% of the respondents) and kids and teenagers (70%).

Most of the respondents (95%) did not have knowledge of the LifeComp Framework prior to the interview and only one of them (5%) had study it in master level. Even though the respondents didn't know the framework they were familiar with the areas of it and the soft skills.

Summary of the responses

This section summarises the main responses collected during the interviews to the main seven questions highlighted in section 3.2.2.

Q1	How do training programs for soft skills enhance or contribute to the integration of NEETs into the labour market, in your opinion?

- Such programmes refresh their interest in learning

- They motivate the participants' behavioural skills to come up in surface, feel confidence and broaden their horizons

- By strengthening the trainees on a personal, social and educational level, they are equipped with essential skills for the labour market and there is an increased chance of finding a job compared to someone who has not attended such a

programme.

- Equipping them at educational and staff level

- Soft skills are crucial for the modern labour market. The personal and soft skills of candidates are very often valued in securing and retaining a job, depending of course on the nature of the job and the context.

- The equipment we will provide them with will clearly help them to develop all their existing skills in a multi-faceted way

- Personal and social skills

- By providing social, personal and educational skills, young people develop the skills they already have and have a better chance of finding a job.

- Experiencing real-life working conditions first-hand, students gain a wealth of knowledge and practical application of problem-solving, another soft skill that ranks very high on the list of skills sought by global giants and international organizations. Students come into contact with brainstorming processes, and you give them the opportunity to develop their own creativity and critical thinking. Through apprenticeship they practice their consistency, their reliability, they understand the value of proper time management, they learn to avoid procrastination, and gradually all these skills are strengthened and become their property.

- I think they provide confidence to young people to make a positive impression in a job interview as well such skills help them adjust better in their work environment.

- It gives them a more rounded view of the working environment, so they are not self-involved.

- It gives young people a different perspective of what they have in mind of the work environment

- I think it gives them the confidence to work better with others and express freely their thought and opinion

- Although the first thing an employer looks at is academic qualifications, however, if employees lack some soft skills, they

will not be able to function in the team, they may slowly be excluded and may even lose their jobs.

- In my opinion the participate on these programs, could be helpful for each one that taking part in some kind activities, which are informative except of specialized to life learning.

- Help them to adapt changes

- help them to increase their self-esteem

- Boost their confidence

- Improve NEETs' resilience

- Training of soft skills develop open minded young participants to adapt their behaviours to difficult situations

Q2	In your opinion, what are the skills contribute the most to the integration of the NEETs into the labour market?

- Communication skills
- Digital and communication skills
- Teamwork, cooperation, social and communication skills.
- personal and social skills, educational background
- Communication skills, cooperativeness, openness to learning
- Skills as communication and cooperation are in my opinion essential.
- Communication skills, flexibility and team spirit
- Some quite important skills are teamwork, cooperation and consistency.
- Focus, Ambition, Friendliness and manners, Self-management Skills, Confidence.
- They help people cooperate better with their colleagues and clients but as well be able to handle personal situations
- People become aware of their personality advantages and disadvantages
- It helps them understand that they work with other people that not necessarily think or behave in the same way as they do
- Teamwork and better communication
- Collaboration and communication

- The interaction, the team-working and the practice experience on the field
- Communication and teamwork skills, are the must-have skills for most professions
- Digital skills
- Problem solving skills, necessary in every profession
- Communication skills are very important in all levels and sectors
- The most important are the communication skills

Q3	What do you think are the main barriers in implementing training programs for soft skills in your field?

- Time availability of NEETs
- Non-learning culture and lack of leadership, resistance to change
- The bias towards sterile academic knowledge, the absence of experiential practices, the skills of the trainers and the motivation and motivation of the trainees.
- lack of time, trainee profile, previous negative experiences
- Lack of motivation of young people. The process-oriented nature of such programmes at times.
- The programs are not attractive to the youth
- Lack of time and the content of the programmes.
- The main obstacle is the lack of time due to the large volume of work.
- Program Focus vs Organizational Focus.
  Limited Resources.
  Resistance to Change.
  Work-Learning Dichotomy.
  Lack of Leadership.
  Non-Learning Culture.
  Short-Term Focus.
- The young people's attitude that considers technical training more important
- Convincing young people that such programs are useful to their professional quest
- They could be expensive, and the content is not very attractive
- Lack of motivation in personal development
- Generally, I think they are taken for granted and if you ask people, they think they have soft skills which may not be the case. Also,

everyone's focus is mainly on cognitive skills and soft skills are neglected.

- The patience, the hard-working and the experience on the field have the possibility to eliminate the barriers during and after the ending of one program in cooperation with the colleagues.
- Financial problems
- Low motivation
- Lack of information
- Very low awareness
- Lack of funds

Q4	How do you motivate young people to participate in soft skills development programs?

- By advising them to participate in programmes corresponding to their needs
- Via role plays and workshops
- By providing information on new labour market developments, through the personal experiences of the trainees and the use of labour market platforms.
- subsidised, direct utility, connection to the labour market
- If the programmes are of real interest and multiply enhance the personal development of young people, they may find substantial sincere motivation.
- Focusing not so much on the theoretical part as on the experiential part
- Telling them how much it will help them in their search and in the job market.
- Using the distance learning method for young people who find it difficult to attend face-to-face. Also, by using illustrative exercises and not only the theoretical part.
- Take Students' Feedback Into Account Before Beginning To Instruct. Tell Stories From The Real Life. Interact With The Audience. Organize Group Activities. Use Professional Actors. Engage And Stimulate Self-Study.
- With free and online/distant courses
- By asking them to give examples of how they would handle people and situations at work

- Inform them that it's an asset when looking for a job
- Make them understand that its essential
- I think through other programs that don't clearly state that they are cultivating soft skills. Most people want to participate in a program to get a certificate that certifies their knowledge (especially in the cognitive part). But if this knowledge were acquired through projects, through group work, through experience and contact with everyday life without them realising it, they would also cultivate soft skills. Therefore I believe that the trainer who will take on such a project is very important.
- Team working, enhance the self-empowerment and the feeling of contribution to the work community.
- By integrating non-formal and in-formal learning
- Share experiences from other young people
- Highlighting the advantages
- Building trust with them
- Create more innovative teaching methods

Q5	What kind of feedback do you usually receive from participants? Do you think they feel that soft skills training programs are useful for them?

- Usually, positive
- Usually, a wide smile and a cooperative atmosphere which is disseminated also out of the class
- Feedback is related to both the teaching staff and the content of the programme attended, as well as the participants' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the programmes they participate in.
- Separate for instructor and programme, usually the former influences the latter
- Usually, the feedback is positive, but I don't know if programmes are evaluated as useful by young people.
- Feedback depends on the trainer's action plan
- The general belief is that clearly training programmes help a lot

in the development of soft skills.

- The content of the training material whether it is interesting for young people and the way the trainer teaches.

- Negative experience.

- Personal mindsets.

- Lack of a sense of community.

- Lack of purpose.

- Distracting office environment.

- Lack of technical skills.

- Boredom

- Usually, I get positive feedback

- The feedback is good if the program meets their expectations

- It depends on the dynamics developed during the program.

- If the program was more theoretical it usually receives negative comments

- At first, they don't understand it, then I think they realize the benefits of such programs

- the interaction with the other, the relations who developed with the environment and the social circumstances

- Generally positive

- Always depending on their specific experience

- Most of the times positive

- Most of the young people understand that nowadays soft skills are very important for their career

- Most of them acknowledge the importance of training soft skills

Q6 INKEY explores how LifeComp can be implemented in formal and

> non-formal training programs for young people. What kind of training materials/approaches would you be interested in having access to?

- Training materials are always useful in the way that provide you with new ideas and techniques.

- Digital platforms, online meetings to exchange ideas and methods between educators and trainers, mentors

- Educational materials, presentations, videos and face-to-face and distance learning courses according to the needs of the learner.

- Literature, experiential learning, practical training

- Perhaps not just endless theory, but a more creative delivery of knowledge-information. In more interactive ways, videos etc.

- Subsided programmes

- Skill development

- Manuals, job aids, authoring tools, tools for in-class training.

- I think videos with real life situations would be helpful

- Real life scenarios, as role playing or videos

- I think hands-on examples are easier to comprehend

- I would be interested in more practical approaches

- Skill development

- In everything that focuses on soft skills because it is good to have access to a complete set of material so that you can then adapt it to the needs of the team you are working with.

- Self-empowerment, teamwork, role playing

- Good practices from experts

- Strategies to improve educational methods

- Tools for educational programmes

- Toolkit
- Scenarios for workshops and handbooks

| Q7 | *Do you think soft skills and the skills set out in LifeComp can be trained in a blended mode?* |

- Yes of course.

- For sure

- They could be provided but in vulnerable groups online trainings is a barrier due to bad internet connections, and lack of digital equipment.

- Yes, I think that the blended learning mode can serve such a project

- Yes

- Yes

- Yes, as it is important that young people can be able to participate in both distance and face-to-face programmes at the same time.

- All forms of learning have their advantages and disadvantages. By using blended learning methods, the best of everything can be adapted to the individual circumstances of the learners. Blended learning also ensures holistic learning – the combination of knowledge and experience, independence and social skills, and adaptability to different methods, are what creates a well-rounded person.

- It could be possible in the content of the program is well organized

- It could be, but I think programs in person probably have better results

- No, I think in person classes are more useful

- I don't know

- Yes

- I think yes. Sometimes you must be experienced with these programs and to introduce with the main purpose the improvement of your daily working

- Option to join online will motivate them to follow a new course

- Hybrid learning increases participants engagement

- It is easier for participants to follow online programmes

- Definitely it can

- It is necessary to train in both online and offline the LifeComp framework to have as much participants as possible.

Portugal

Composition of the group

The group was composed of no. 13 teachers working on formal education settings, both on traditional education system as well as VET; 6 trainers from VET for out of school and/or higher education; 4 educators from non-formal education settings, working on non-profit organisations.
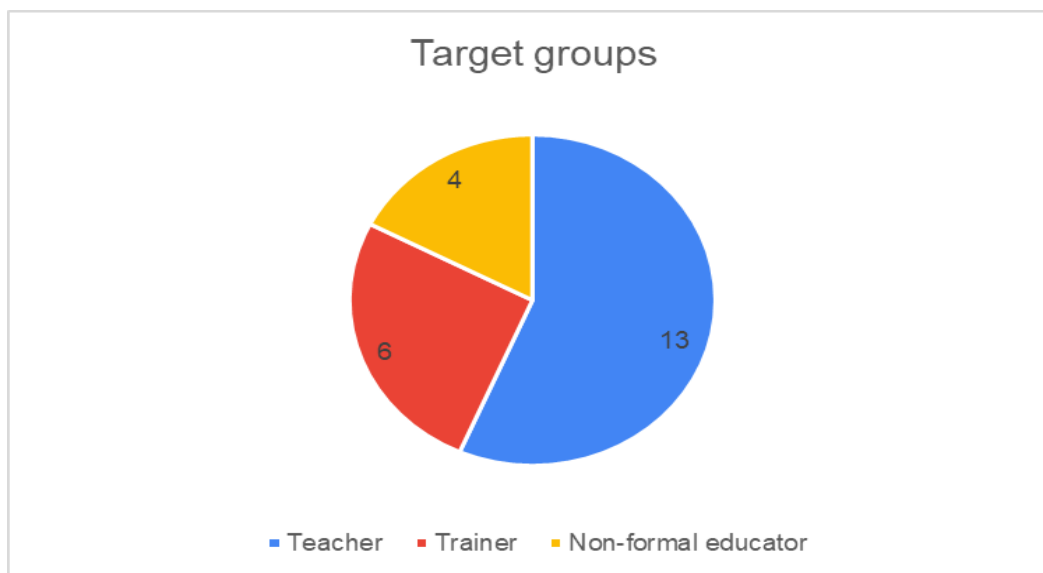
Fig. 13. Distribution of the Target group by professional profile

Most respondents stated they were not familiar with the LifeComp Tool (78%), and only 22% had previous knowledge of the LifeComp tool. Although, on further inquiries throughout the interviews, it was made clear that all

participants had vast knowledge and experience working on the development of all competences found in LifeComp, meaning that Portuguese participants are very much aware of the content but not really with the tool itself.
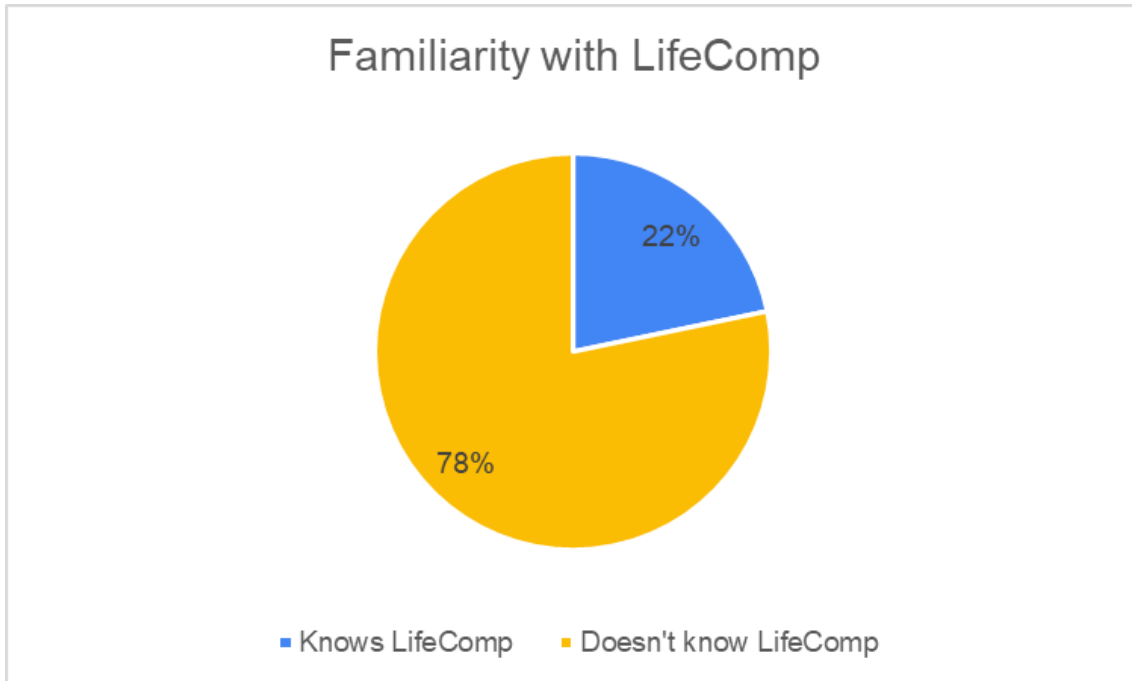
Fig. 14- Distribution of the Familiarity with LifeComp framework

Summary of the responses

This section summarises the main responses collected during the interviews to the main seven questions highlighted in section 3.2.2.

Q1	In your opinion, how do soft skills training programs enhance or contribute to the integration of NEETs into the labour market?

- More practical methodologies of teaching and training will shorten the gap between the school/education setting to the real world waiting in labour market

- Providing youth with the skills to engage with their own education programs and building a life project, promoting participatory methodologies, critical thinking and growth mentality

- Soft skills, particularly communication and teamwork, as well as

all personal skills needed to connect with employers and co-workers

- Providing young NEETs with skills to set goals and collaborate, negotiate and compromise, reinforce resilience and problem-solving skills for a better management and tolerance of frustration and adapt to change.

- Providing young NEETs guidance and counselling during the transition period and or when them already in a long-term NEET situation, offering a holistic approach to their individual case that can focus both on education and employability but also on the several issues a NEET person may face; housing, health, being a care-taker for other family members, special needs, migrant status, etc.

- Promote training programs and more practical educational programs, that involves other stakeholders like employers and policy makers, with the flexibility to adapt rapidly to labour market as well as to adapt to young people's

- Young NEETs are a very diverse group, and different NEET's show different gaps in their skillset and personal development. Providing them with a program that assesses their actual needs and is flexible enough to adapt to each subgroup of NEET's characteristics and needs would be vital to ensure the success of the integration process into labour market

- Providing young NEET's, the realities of the labour market include competitiveness, fast changing contexts that demand a life-long learning ability and capacity to embrace change.

- Non-formal education experiences, as well as internships, exchanges, and other hands-on methodologies to develop NEET's skills and put them into reality

| Q2 | What are the skills you think contribute the most to the integration of the NEETs into the labour market? |

The top 5 skills identified by respondents as the most important for NEETs transition into the labour market are: **communication** (43%); **learn to learn** skills (35%); **resilience** (26%); **teamwork** (26%); and **critical thinking** (17%).

The Fig.15 shows the word cloud built by content analysis of the responses of the interviewers, in which the size of the words corresponds to the frequency of responses.

Fig. 15 - Word cloud: Most important skills for NEETs to transition into the labour market. (size of the words according with frequency of responses)

Q3 What do you think are the main barriers to implementing soft skills training programs in your field?

The responses gathered can be grouped into three main clusters:

1. responses focusing on young people's perspectives;
2. responses focusing on education and training providers' perspectives;
3. responses focusing on mixed or other issues;

Cluster 1 - Young people's perspectives

- Lack of engagement and motivation from young NEET's to be involved in the trainings and/or programs made available to them
- NEETs are young people who are outside the system and reaching out to them is outside the scope of action of the education and VET system.
- The diversity of the NEET population is not considered. A

holistic approach for each young NEET that considers their full reality (health, housing, family context, transport, etc) and their personal choices.

- Lack of knowledge about the alternative programs available in the whole region outside of a young person's school district. When the student's profile doesn't match the program offered in a specific school district, alternatives for transport and support to enrol into other more suitable programs do not exist.

Cluster 2 - Education and training providers' perspectives

- Traditional systems for education and training too rigid and not flexible enough to adapt and keep up with the fast passe of changes in the labour market on one side, and on the other to the generational differences and new challenges young people present
- Too little space for innovation on methodologies and techniques. Fixed curriculum, evaluation system, load of administrative tasks block teachers and trainers from adapting on-demand to the emergent needs of their students/trainees and focus on transversal skills[14]
- Lack of knowledge and soft skills on the educators/teachers/trainers as well as outdated pedagogical methodologies applied to the LifeComp scope.

Cluster 3 - Mixed or other issues

- Lack of funding and/or misplaced funding: to support projects and multidisciplinary teams to work with young NEET's.
- Policy and system: more proximity with employers, and the results of this joint work and educational effort, should translate into policy and system changes to allow good practices to thrive.

| Q4 | How do you motivate young people to participate in soft skills development programs? |

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[14] Transversal skills - the Portuguese education and VET system nomenclature for Life skills.

- Using communication styles and techniques that are adequate and stimulating for young people

- Using online and digital tools bringing dynamics and involvement to the learning experience: gaming and gamification, video, social media, etc.

- Focusing on each young person needs depending on their level of demotivation the approach must be adaptable.

- Investing on positive relationships with the young NEET, using positive reinforcement and incentives especially for those highly demotivated and distrusting of the system.

- Change the rules and outside the box thinking: no testing evaluation; allow students/trainees to experience Life outside the classroom and beyond the school manuals and curriculum; non-formal education methods; informal settings.

- Empowering young people for their own educational path: incentives for participation and shared experiences between peers; international exchange programs and mobility; etc.

- Real integration of theoretical teaching and more practical real-life experiences, with paid integrated internships and other practical activities that build a proximity relationship between future employers and education providers.

- Funding the young NEETs on basic life needs: housing, health, food, transport...

Q5	What kind of feedback do you usually receive from participants? Do you think they feel that soft skills training programs are useful for them?

Only one respondent (coordinator of training programs for traditional teachers) stated to have no knowledge on this topic. Overall, the interviewed shared that the more practical programs and activities present consistent high levels of positive feedback. It was possible to distinguish three characterizations of this positive feedback:

- 17 respondents stated that VET programs, practical activities

and methodologies present high levels of positive feedback

- 4 respondents stated the continuity of the team of education providers and the program consistently allow the transformation from initial negative feedback into positive feedback (mainly the next school year)
- 2 respondents identify the more theoretical and traditional education system as the source of consistent negative feedback, that only transforms into positive when the students reach the internship and/or are presented with a real-life practical experience

Q6	INKEY explores how LifeComp can be implemented in formal and non-formal training programs for young people. What kind of training materials/approaches would you be interested in having access to?

- Group dynamic activities and exercises

- Hybrid methodologies and teamwork

- Digital tools and methodologies; gamification: quizzes, games, etc.

- Video tutorials and video testimonials from students/trainees from previous years

- Handbooks

- Alternative methodologies and a network of multidisciplinary professionals in education (youth workers, teachers, trainers, social workers, etc) to promote shared good practices and interventions

- Materials and resources to show the impact of each profession and/or job in the community

- Emotional, motivational and professional coaching methodologies

- Training for teachers and trainers from the traditional educational system, to help change from a "focus on the teacher paradigm" into a "focus on the young person paradigm", with more experienced based learning, developing

a co-creation of knowledge culture essential for the interface of a school curriculum and a professional profile.

- Training for education providers on methodologies and tools to build and maintain strategic partnerships with different stakeholders from all sectors: public, civil society and NGO's and private sector.

Q7 Do you think soft skills and the skills set out in LifeComp can be trained in blended mode?

Unanimously the respondents stated that the hybrid methodologies, blending the online and offline learning models are the most adaptable to young NEET's needs.

However, all stated that the emotional and social development of LifeComp skills will not be as successful and efficient without the in person contact and group interactions.

- Online is useful to develop an individual, personalised LifeComp program.
- Presential and group settings provide the natural human context, relationships and emotional connections needed to fully develop each young person's individual set of life skills.

Spain

In the scope of the INKEY project, Femxa conducted interviews with twenty-one Spanish teachers and trainers, selected based on their experience in the field of soft skills development. The interviews aimed at collecting the participants' experiences and perspectives on obstacles and opportunities for implementing soft skills development experiences addressed to young people.

Composition of the group

The group was composed of no. 21 trainers and teachers, most of them working for VET and long-life training providers (80%); teachers at public VET school (10%) and teachers of higher education (10%). Their target groups are workers or unemployed adults for the 80% of participants, students from 16 till 25 years old for the teachers at VET schools and students from 18 till 29 in

higher education. Around 40% of participants has worked in training programs with young people that seeks to enter on the labour market.

Only 7 (33%) of the participants had knowledge of the LifeComp Framework prior to the in-depth interviews, while 14 (67%) of participants have not heard from it prior to their participation on the research. Only 3 participants claimed they used or have used LifeComp in their training programs while 2 of them say that they have participated in training programs inspired by the principles of the LifeComp. The rest of participants never have made use of LifeComp.

Summary of the responses

This section summarises the main responses collected during the interviews to the main seven questions highlighted in section 3.2.2.

Q1	In your opinion, how do soft skills training programs enhance or contribute to the integration of NEETs into the labour market?

- It demonstrates the motivation and commitment of the person with their professional, academic and even personal development. It is also possible that companies value the active and proactive attitude of these people.

- In VET education we see that kind of training dramatically increases the employability of our students

- Training is very important. The more training you have, the better you will perform the tasks to be performed. Attitude is also very important.

- It helps them commit to themselves to achieve an end, this is also necessary both in the search for employment and in the development of actions in any job. In addition, it also sometimes allows them to get out of their specific field of work and helps them to better adapt to different circumstances and jobs.

- It exponentially improves the chances to get a new job. Each period without training is a significant loss of opportunity,

- As I mentioned in the previous answer, without it is (almost) impossible to have the necessary training for professional development, since everything changes at such a pace that permanent training is required.

- Every being must go through prior training to be employed later and be in continuous training for job improvement.

- Yes, but mainly to recycle or learn knowledge that they lack

- It allows you to face important decision-making and conflict resolution in a more effective way.

- Training equips young people with tools to face the world of work.

- Better educated young people who have degrees and have taken courses have more opportunities, but I think that is not enough. It is necessary to improve the employment market, improve access to self-employment and many other factors that do not depend on the training of young people but on the business situation of the countries where they are located

- It trains them to access certain jobs

- In my industry, very specific technical skills are required, but it is the soft skills that make a job candidate stand out from other candidates.

- It helps them stand out from other less educated young people.

- It enables them to enter the labour market with the necessary skills.

- They need basic skills to access the labour market.

- It helps them to have the skills that are in demand in the job positions

- It qualifies them for the position they are applying for

- It allows them to explore their vocation and find a job in a sector that motivates them.

| **Q2** | What are the skills you think contribute the most to the integration of the NEETs into the labour market? |

Many of the skills perceived as needed to foster the employability are the skills from LifeComp itself or are closely related. These are the skills

mentioned by the participants on the interviews:

- Permanent training and versatility.
- Critical thinking.
- Flexibility, the ability to always continue learning, empathy and effort.
- They can all influence, but it seems to me that communication and active listening are essential to understand and transmit correctly at all times.
- Currently being able to adapt to very changing scenarios, being able to be creative and innovative, new technologies in different media…
- Technical and human skills.
- I understand that "hard" skills are essential for employability, but, in a context like the current one, it is only possible to acquire them thanks to permanent adaptability and learning. Similarly, I do not understand professional practice without teamwork skills.
- There are several, but the one that I think is the most successful is to achieve satisfaction and personal satisfaction.
- Autonomy, digital skills, motivation.
- Self-knowledge, adaptability to changes, creativity, and teamwork.
- Digital skills, languages.
- Problem solving and technology skills. It is essential to learn to self-learn.
- Teamwork, communication, and problem solving.
- Teamwork, critical thinking. communication, learning ability.
- Technical competencies for the position they want to apply for.
- Learning capacity.
- Teamwork, problem solving, resiliency.
- Training, communication, teamwork.
- Wanting to learn new things.

Q3	What do you think are the main barriers to implementing soft skills training programs in your field?

Participants on the interviews have manifested a great variety of barriers they feel that prevent the implementation of soft skill training programs in their field. The following list collects all answers to this question:

- Politics.
- Incentives and facilities are scarce.

- Acceptance by the students. Today there are many young people who prefer not to work if they can get a subsidy. We should promote the culture of work.
- The lack of value by society. Most of the time these are free programs that are not valued and are often of great quality.
- Very different level in the groups. The courses should have an adaptation framework to then take off all together.
- Lack of motivation, lack of culture.
- Resistance to change and, in many cases, lack of self-confidence.
- The lack of motivation of many students.
- Lack of commitment, low expectations, technology,
- 1º. The programs are not usually carried out by trainers but by people outside this profession.
  2º. The programs are excessively theoretical.
  3º. Some programs are outdated and do not respond to current needs
  4º. The administration does not have experts in Digital Marketing and many people are unaware of these programs.
- Lack of funding.
- In a formal education classroom, they are difficult to implement; it is easier to do it through seminars or specific complementary training.
- Lack of programming in the courses.
- Lack of space for these programs in the official curriculum.
- Lack of resources.
- Lack of time.
- Time and lack of resources.
- Lack of programming within training programs.

Q4	How do you motivate young people to participate in soft skills development programs?

Some of the participants did not know what to say or how to answer this question, the following list gathers the individual responses collected that are more substantial for the research:

- I don't really think NEETs are such a problem. I think that perhaps they may be the result of an obsolete, unidirectional and rote educational system. If the education system were more focused on learning by doing, motivating students and giving workshops and knowledge on social or emotional skills, I believe that demotivation and lack of commitment would be a

lower percentage. It is also important to promote mental health to know what may be behind these people (psychological disorders, negligent habits, etc.).

- New methodologies.

- Offering them something that motivates them. From my experience, outdoors learning could motivate them. Having classes outside of a classroom, in the open air, could also be of great help. Good orientation and follow-up could also be decisive.

- Making them see that they are part of a society that they can improve through their involvement and work. - Connecting their needs and desires with training as part of their personal development. - Offering topics that connect with their interests in the form of a workshop in which they are an active part of it.

- With motivating activities, but not only with gamification. Their future is not a game, they should be programs in which they must feel important, because they are the relay and the key to the future.

- There should be negative incentives for those who start a course and then don't want to finish it.

- Trusting them and fostering their self-esteem.

- Encouraging participation in collective activities using technological means and applications of interest focused on learning,

- Attractive training, not very formal, interactive, based on practice.

- "1° Campaigns should be carried out on the social networks they use: TikTok, Twitch and YouTube

  2° They would have to perceive that the time and effort dedicated will have some type of compensation.

  3° Unpaid internships should be avoided at all costs. Why study if you are going to end up working for free?"

- They need to know these programs exist.

- Communicating success stories and seeking personal motivation.

- Many are motivated but cannot find available courses.

- By offering internships in companies.

- Emphasize the practical side and benefits of participating in these programs.

Q5	What kind of feedback do you usually receive from participants? Do you think they feel that soft skills training programs are useful for them?

All the respondents highlighted overall positive feedback, but not all participants think that the young people feel that soft skills programs are useful for them. At least 4 participants give a negative answer. Noteworthy individual responses include the following:

- Not always, but if the teacher is able to connect with them, in the end they do see it. Perhaps it would also be good to study the success stories and have the students themselves tell how and why they managed to see the usefulness of programs of this type.
- In online training normally yes, in face-to-face training I have seen many cases of students only interested in receiving a payment, scholarship or subsidy...
- I think that more and more we are realizing the need to implement this type of training in the educational curriculum to develop these skills, not only at a work level but also personally.

Q6	INKEY explores how LifeComp can be implemented in formal and non-formal training programs for young people. What kind of training materials/approaches would you be interested in having access to?

- Psychology and motivation theories.

- Online materials.

- Any kind of materials. Above all, something related to

OUTDOORS learning.

- Studies on the profile of young people who are addressed to understand their behaviour regarding the use of new technologies and their main interests, a little psychology of adolescence and young people, innovative methodologies, gamification...

- New communication strategies, new teamwork techniques, project approach...

- For the way I am, I would say everyone. More specifically, everything related to creativity, leadership and teamwork.

- It is necessary to start from the previous experiences that are had in the teaching and learning process, since this allows each person to identify the competences that they have and, in this way, make a modification of their activities, be it courses or projects accordingly. with his skills.

- Those related to Digital Marketing.

- Online training materials and methodologies.

- Methodologies and guidelines.

- implementation guidelines, activities already designed.

- Activities and methodologies.

- Activities for the classroom already developed.

- Online courses and guidance.

- Online courses.

- courses, training materials.

- Methodologies and classroom activities.

| Q8 | Do you think soft skills and the skills set out in LifeComp can be trained in blended mode? |

Nineteen participants out of twenty-one agreed on the effectiveness of

blended learning experiences for the development of soft skills and the competencies set out in LifeComp. The main argument for the negative answer is that social and collaborative skills are not properly trained in online environments.

- It may be more complicated but not impossible. With COVID we have had to adapt and while the same connection may not be created, I do not see it as a barrier to developing these skills.

- Absolutely yes, online training has tools that allow you to work on almost anything, the important thing is to have the necessary equipment on all sides and the desire to get involved with it.

- Yes, but with the support of virtual classrooms and all possible tools.

- Yes. Without a doubt.

- Yes, of course.

- yes, with more direct contact with students.

- Yes, through different approaches that would serve, in addition to strengthening technological skills, as a tool to face social crises, break down the barriers of technology and social distancing through the strengthening of soft skills.

- I guess so.

- Yes, but you must include more practical exercises on the platform and on the face-to-face sessions.

- Yes, but the quality of materials and platforms needs to improve.

- It is necessary to complement it with face-to-face sessions.

- It is difficult, if the face-to-face sessions are not many or the time scheduled for them is reduced, the students may not have enough time to put into practice the theoretical contents they learn on the platform.

4. The Personal, Social and Learning to Learn Key Competence: Best practices

The best practices collected by the InKey partnership, show a great variety of initiatives that are close to the topic of InKey project and that can be adapted or taken as inspiration to produce the next project results. From gamification to mentoring, all of them can be inspirational for teachers and educators working with NEETs.

Cyprus

Title
EKS- Entrepreneurship Is the Key To Success

| **Project duration**:
01.10.2019- 30.09.2021 | **Partners**
BrainLog (Denmark and Norway), FYG, Know & Can Association (Sofia, Bulgaria), Centrum Wspierania (CWEP) (Rzeszow), E&D Knowledge Consulting, KAINOTOMIA (Greece), Center for Social Innovation (CSI), LABC (Torino) |

Element	Guiding questions
Goals of the best practice	This project's mission is to assist in the development of high-quality skills of young adults, especially NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) in the ages between 20-35 in obtaining entrepreneurial competences and professional skills which are necessary for tomorrow's jobs. This partnership had as its ambition to empower young adults and help the unemployed ones to re-join the labour market. As the project demonstrated, entrepreneurial education can help to confront the challenges of a historical period characterized by difficult economic trends.
Target Group/Beneficiaries	• Young adults, especially **NEETs** in the age groups between 20-35 • Adult educators/ facilitators including career advisers working in the non-formal education settings

Specifically, the project targeted the following groups:

- **People with Disabilities**: people with mental (intellectual, cognitive, learning), physical, sensory, or other disabilities.
- **People with educational difficulties**: young people with learning difficulties; people who left school early; low qualified adults; young people with poor school performance.
- **People who face financial challenges**: people with a low standard of living, low income, dependence on social welfare system or homeless; young people who suffer in long-term unemployment or poverty; people in debt or with financial problems.
- **People characterized by cultural diversity**: immigrants or refugees or descendants from immigrant or refugee families; people belonging to a national or ethnic minority; people with linguistic adaptation and cultural inclusion difficulties.
- **People with health problems**: people with chronic health problems, severe illnesses or psychiatric conditions.
- **People who face social obstacles**: people facing discrimination because of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, etc.; people with limited social skills or anti-social or risky behaviours; people in a precarious situation; (ex-)offenders, (ex-)drug or alcohol abusers; young and/or single parents; orphans.
- **People who face geographical obstacles**: people from remote or rural areas; people living in small islands or peripheral regions; people from urban problem zones; people from less serviced areas (limited public transport, inadequate facilities).

EKS also addressed **adult educators** that work with young people that have fewer opportunities. This target group includes **adult vocational educators** and **trainers**, **counsellors**, **facilitators**, **coaches**, **career advisors**, **youth workers** and generally people working in **vocational education settings** and **non-formal education settings.**

Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice	<u>Resources</u>: • Funding from the **European Commission** • **Technological knowledge** and **tools/ Digital support** (For creating 3D models, MakeHuman and Blender 3D software were used)

	• Knowledge of GDScript **programming language** (Godot is a framework that will enable creating both 2D and 3D games that can be published on several different devices, including websites.) • Active participation of **NEETs** • **Stakeholder's engagement** **Skills:** • Knowledge in the status of **NEETs** on a national level • Educational skills • Communicative skills • Entrepreneurial skills • Vocational training skills • Adult education background • Computer skills • Research skills
Methodology	- A detailed **research** of the appropriate training that young adults need to be able to thrive within the field of **entrepreneurship** (complex problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, people management and coordination with others). The research was executed in two steps: - **national desk-based research** and - **field-based research** (data, research for existing policies, good practices and activities directed at NEETs, the goal of this research was to identify the current status of NEETs and find out what kind of skills they need to become entrepreneurs) and **questionnaires** (to collect information on the needs and challenges the target group faces). - With the assistance of the findings of the research, a **simulation game** was designed. Its aim was to help its users develop 5 skills and enable them to re-join the labour market. - For the creation of the simulation game, all partners worked on delivering the **scenarios** that were included in the game. The five main areas that the game covered were Creativity, Complex problem solving, Critical thinking, People management, Coordinating with others. - A **didactic handbook** for using the game was also developed with the goal of supporting and guiding participants through the game and the entrepreneurship world. - This project followed **a social inclusion strategy**. - Wide **dissemination** and **exploitation** were also necessary.

Success Factors	**External:** • **Institutional** support • Funding from the **European Commission** • Sufficient **promotion/ dissemination** (website, promotion in the project's social media platforms) • **Stakeholders' engagement** **Internal:** • The project succeeded because it enabled young NEETs to practice their entrepreneurial skills, and hence, it made them more suitable for the labour market. • The game was amusing and entertaining to play. It was also interesting enough and captured NEETs' attention. Learning through playing a game stimulates the brain and stores the information much easily. • The necessary technical support was given. • The project follows a successful method to approach NEETs. • The trainers were friendly and created a sense of respect among the participants.
Competences of the LifeComp addressed	**Learning to learn area:** Complex problem solving, critical thinking, creativity **Social area:** People management and coordination with others
Related resources /Link	**https://eks.erasmus.site/** **https://eks.erasmus.site/research/**

Title	
Beyond NEET (D) s- Integrated guidance and support for vocational education pathways for highly disadvantaged youth beyond the status of NEET	
Project Duration: Project Start: 01/09/2020 Project End: 31/12/2022	**Partners** P1: MEATH PARTNERSHIP – Ireland P2: E.N.T.E.R. GMBH – Austria P3: FACTOR SOCIAL -Portugal P4: CO&SO- Italy

CONTEXTOS   Center for Social Innovation   lascò   femxa   KEAN   ja Juventude em ação | Erasmus+

Element	Guiding questions
	P5: AKLUB -Czech Republic P6: CENTER FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION – Cyprus
Goals of the best practice	The Erasmus+ project "Beyond NEET(D)s" focuses **on supporting people who are not in employment, education, or training or even below this status through guiding them on a personal and professional level by collaborating with the labour market and VET professionals on the field of labour market and VET.** The **main goals** of the project are: a) to provide open, empowering, and low-threshold opportunities that are centred on the individual person and their needs and socioeconomic situation. b) to give them **access to VET offers and the labour market** and help them gain the necessary **confidence** and **motivation** they need to succeed in the labour market. c) to provide a **motivating and rewarding gamification approach** which attracts the target group members.
Target Group/Beneficiaries	• Upskilling NEETs • VET educators • Adult trainers • Foreign youths • Native youths • Unemployed people • Migrants/Refugees • Physically / sensory disabled • The community in general • People socio-economically disadvantaged • Women socio-economically disadvantaged
Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice	**Resources:** • Funding from the **European Commission** • **Institutional support** • **Technological tools** for the implementation of the project activities (for example, knowledge of platform creation) • Active **participation** and **engagement** of NEETs • **Stakeholders'** engagement

	Skills: • Research skills • Educational skills • Experience in adult education • Previous experience in working with NEETs • Computer Skills
Methodology	The **methodology** of the project as well as a compilation of the different **IOs** that were completed for this project are gathered and described below: **01: Beyond NEET (D) s Transnational Survey of Target Group Needs and Specifications of the project consortium (M1-M8).** • For this IO, all partners had to complete desk research, for discussing how NEETs are being defined in each country as well as for gathering existing country-specific data, statistics and national strategies that concern NEETs. • This initial desk research has helped the development of two separate **national surveys**; one for the NEETs population and one for the VET/ Labour Market professionals. • Also, the surveys were **translated** in all partner languages. • The data gathered for each country from the two surveys was included in the **National reports**, and a **Transnational Report** was compiled offering the key results and framework for the following outputs of the project. • This survey confirmed the diversity of the group of NEETs. • The findings of the survey confirmed the need for the design of an **integrated guidance model.** **02: Beyond NEET(D)s Integrated Guidance Model (M7-M28)** Afterwards, an **Integrated Guidance Model** was designed which aimed at supporting practitioners working with NEETs. It offered them guidance on how to coach NEETs, in 5 key areas: **self** (enhance NEETs' self-esteem), **context** (the personal circumstances that make NEETs struggle to succeed in their careers), employability, on-the-job (coaching NEETs on how to keep their job), communication (development of verbal and non-verbal communication between mentor and mentee). **03: The Personal Integration Map Beyond NEET(D)s (M9-M28)**

The Personal Integration Map (PIM) consists of an online platform with a gamified reward system that aims at engaging young people. It offers mechanisms that make the close monitoring and communication between mentors and mentees more effective. The platform also allows NEETs to get in touch with official bodies and stakeholders and gain status.

04: Beyond NEET(D)s Synergy Accelerator Magazine (M12-M24)
For this IO, a **magazine** was conducted, which included a political debate, several research, it gave a description of the political circumstances in partner countries, it developed synergies with existing projects and initiatives etc.

Success Factors	**External** • Funding from the **European Commission** • **Institutional** support • Sufficient **promotion**/ **dissemination** (website, promotion in the project's social media platforms) • **Stakeholders' engagement** **Internal** • Sufficient **national research** on the NEETs' status • Active participation of NEETS in the project's activities • Development of a sense of **respect** among mentors and mentees. • The project gave to this vulnerable target group the chance to develop their **skills** and get in touch with the labour market.
Competences of the LifeComp addressed	**Personal** **area:** Self-regulation, Flexibility **Social area:** Communication and Collaboration
Related resources /Link	*https://www.findyourtrack.eu/* *https://www.findyourtrack.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Beyond-NEETDs-IGM-Handbook.pdf* *https://www.findyourtrack.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Beyond-NEETDs-IGM-Handbook.pdf*

"Training Plan for the Long-term unemployed in Enterprises/ Organizations" by HRDA	
Date 1st of July 2016- 31st of December 2023	**Authors** HRDA
Element	**Guiding questions**
Goals of the best practice	The "Training Plan for the Long-term unemployed in Enterprises/ Organizations" is a plan offered by HRDA, and its purpose is to provide an incentive in the form of a grant to several employers for the employment and training of the long-term unemployed. Long-term unemployed citizens are considered the ones who are registered in the Public Employment Service as unemployed for more than 6 consecutive months and are aged less than 60 years old. If the long-term unemployed person has completed a higher education course of at least 3 years and holds a degree in a diploma of higher education, then he/she must be between 30 years of age or below. What this plan offers to long-term unemployed people is the opportunity to join or re-join the labour sector by attaining the necessary knowledge/ skills they need in a specific job position. The plan also aims at enhancing enterprises/ organizations with skilled and qualified staff.
Relevant programs (in relation with combating with unemployment and providing people (including NEETs) with	• "Training Programs for Unemployed Persons" (providing unemployed persons with training with the aim to advance their skills and provide them with specialization and knowledge to foster their integration into the labour market). • "Training Scheme in Businesses / Organizations for long term unemployed persons" (this scheme provides employment opportunities to long term seed competences required for their permanent job. • "Provision of Incentives for Hiring Recipients of Guaranteed Minimum Income Combined unemployed persons, under 60

lifelong training)	years old, who are registered as unemployed in the any of the Employment office of the Republic of Cyprus, for more than 6 months to be acquired with working experience and special with a three-month Training Period" (this scheme provides to long term unemployed, opportunities to advance their skills and offer them hand to hand experience in the workplace. • "Scheme for the Employment and Training of Tertiary Education Graduates" (this scheme provides working opportunities to University Graduates under the age of 30, to advance their practical skills and have working experience to fill the gap between university skills and work skills). • "Vocational Qualifications System" (aims to upgrade the human resources of people in Cyprus through the evaluation and certification of the candidates' professional qualifications. The project is co-financed by the EU's European Social Fund (ESF) under the Operational Program "Employment, Human Capital and Social Cohesion" during the 2014-2020 programming period).
Target Group/Beneficiaries	• Long-term unemployed citizens • Young NEETs
Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice	**Resources** • Funding from the **government** • Engagement of **companies/ enterprises/ organizations** • **Qualified staff** to facilitate the training • **Institutional support** • Participation of **long-term unemployed citizens** **Skills** • Adult education background • Training skills • Communicative approach • Interactive approach
Methodology	There is no specific methodology applied for the implementation of this practice. The **process** of the plan is as follows: **1st stage**: Submission of an application by the employer to participate in the plan. **2nd stage:** Implementation of four months of training followed by two months of employment. **3rd stage**: Submission of an application by the employer for granting.

Success Factors	**External**
	• Funding from the **government**
	• Engagement by **stakeholders** (companies/ enterprises/ organizations)
	• Interest and participation of long-term unemployed citizens
	• Efficient **promotion** of the plan
	• Wide **dissemination** and **promotion** in social media
	Internal
	• The participants are given the opportunity to participate in a training which equips them with the necessary skills and experience, which will eventually make them capable of re-joining the work force.
	• The organizations/ companies/ enterprises that participate in the program demonstrated their work ethos, professionalism, respect towards the trainees.
Competences of the LifeComp addressed	**Social area:** Communication and Collaboration **Learning to learn:** Growth mindset, critical thinking
Related resources /Link	More information about the above-mentioned schemes and other related training opportunities provided by the HRDA: http://www.anad.org.cy/el/katartisi/ola-ta-sxedia

Adult Education Centers by the Cyprus Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth	
Date	Authors
Element	**Guiding questions**
Goals of the best practice	The Adult Education Center was established in 1952, and it is a significant program that provides general adult education in Cyprus and lifelong learning opportunities and combats educational inequalities so that the citizens of Cyprus will be successfully integrated in society. The main objective of the Adult Education centres is the general development of each adult's personality as well

	as the social, financial, and cultural development of citizens and society in general ("Adult Education Centers", n.d.).
Relevant programs (in relation with combating with unemployment and providing people (including NEETs) with lifelong training)	The Adult Education centres offer a variety of interdisciplinary courses which focus mainly on the teaching of foreign languages, arts and crafts, cultural programs, health and other issues of general interest, as well as on teaching professional and vocational skills to adults aged 15 and over. Moreover, they also implement free of charge learning activities for various target groups (people with literacy difficulties, people with special needs, mentally ill and elderly people, etc.,) and language courses to political refugees, Turkish and Greek Cypriots, etc. They also offer free Greek languages lessons to children of repatriated Cypriots and returnees and Turkish Cypriots, as well as free Turkish language courses to Greek Cypriots.
Target Group/Beneficiaries	• Young NEETs • Adults aged 15 and over • People with literacy difficulties • People with special needs • Mentally ill and elderly people • Political refugees • Turkish and Greek Cypriots
Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice	**Skills** • Educational background • Adult education experience • Commitment to NEETs and an understanding of the factors that make unemployed people or NEETs a vulnerable group that has difficulties in integrating/ reintegrating into the labour market. • Interpersonal skills and the ability to get close to this vulnerable group. • Flexibility and adaptability. • The ability to treat NEETs with respect and sensitivity, whilst remaining confidential and professional. **Resources** • **Funding** from the government • **Qualified professors** who can successfully approach and educate adults or specifically NEETs. • Depending on the needs of each lesson, **the** following might be necessary: **technical support/ tools**, blackboard, **school equipment** (chairs, desks), **appropriate educational material**

Methodology	There is no specific methodology followed for the purposes of this practice. For each lesson offered, there is a different methodology that is designed and executed by each teacher.
Competences of the LifeComp addressed	**Personal Area:** Wellbeing, Flexibility, Self- Regulation **Learning to learn area:** Growth mindset, critical thinking
Related resources /Link	More information: http://www.moec.gov.cy/epimorfotika/en/index.html http://www.moec.gov.cy/epimorfotika/engrafes_didaktra.html https://enimerosi.moec.gov.cy/d1/ek

Young Engineers Internship Project	
2018- ongoing	**Authors** Scientific and Technical Chamber of Cyprus (ETEK) European Union Cypriot Republic Structural Funds of the European Union in Cyprus
Element	**Guiding questions**
Goals of the best practice	The Scientific and Technical Chamber of Cyprus (ETEK) is the statutory of Technical Advisor of the State and organization of all Cypriot Engineers. It is a legal entity under Public Law. ETEK offers a **Young Engineers Internship Project** which aims to provide the opportunity to young graduates of the fields of Architecture and Civil Engineering, up to 29 years old, who are out of employment, education or training, to carry out the practical training required by the ETEK Law. The **purpose** of the **internship project** is to create the appropriate conditions that will enable new Architecture and Civil Engineering graduates to carry out the practice provided for by the ETEK Law, with the goal of giving them an ETEK Membership and securing them a license to practice profession of architect or civil engineer.

Target Group/Beneficiaries	• Young NEETs • New graduates of the fields of architecture and civil engineering • Companies/ Organizations of the public/private sector, or local authorities
Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice	**Resources** • Funding from the **government**, the **European Union/ European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), and the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance** • **Institutional** support • Engagement of **stakeholders** (companies/ organizations of the public/ private sector, or local authorities) • Participation of **qualified trainers** (these can be architects/ engineers/ trainee mentors etc.) **Skills** • **Educational** skills • Skills in **engineering** and **architecture** • **Communicative** skills • **Adult education** skills • Previous experience in working with **NEETs**.
Methodology	There is no specific methodology applied in implementing this practice. You can find a **description** of the activity below: To join the project, interested parties must submit the form APPLICATION, together with some supportive documents and a suitable company or organization. After evaluating the request, ETEK inform the applicants of whether they are accepted or not. The Trainee Architect or Civil Engineer will be assigned to a company/organization which will implement his/her training. The architecture and civil engineering graduates can choose or be chosen for their 12-month practice, from companies or organizations in the public and wider public sector, including local authorities which fulfil some certain criteria. The internship program includes the transferring of basic information on safety and health at work in relation to the trainee's duties in the undertaking/organization.

	The interested applicants must meet the following **conditions**: · They should apply to ETEK to have their academic qualifications recognized in the field of Architecture of Civil Engineering. · They should be below 30 years old. · They should be out of employment, education or training · Are registered as unemployed at the offices of the Public Employment Service · Reside legally and permanently in the areas controlled by the Republic of Cyprus for at least 5 years. The practicing architects and civil engineers who will join the Project will be paid a monthly training allowance of six hundred and fifty euros (€650) for the period of their practice, by ETEK. The payment of the allowance cannot be made for a period longer than the maximum duration of the practice, as defined above. The duration of the traineeship is 12 months as follows required by the ETEK Law. It is clarified that it is not possible to join the project for a period of less than 12 months.
Success Factors	**External** • Support by the **government**, the **European Union/** European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) and the **Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance** and • Necessary engagement by stakeholders (companies/ organizations etc.) • Successful interaction of stakeholders and trainees. • The program offers young NEETs the chance to register in the ETEK Membership and secures them a license to practice the profession of architect or civil engineer. **Internal** • Smooth transition of the internship process • Trainees are offered an attractive reward for participating in this internship project. • Trainees are given a reward • Trainees are given the chance to develop useful skills. • This internship program is certified and allows the participants to use it to thrive in the labour market.

Competences of the LifeComp addressed	Social area: Communication and Collaboration Learning to learn: Growth mindset, critical thinking
Related resources /Link	More Information: www.youthguarantee.org.cy and/or https://onek.org.cy/en/home-page/programs-and-service/information/active-youth-youth-guarantee/ https://www.etek.org.cy/el/ergo-praktikis-askisi-neoi-mixanikoi

Italy

4. The Personal, Social and Learning to Learn Key Competence: Italian Best practices

Lavoro di Squadra	
2018-2022	**Author:** ActionAid Italia *Partners*: Zurich, Z Zurich Foundation
Element	
Goals of the best practice	*Lavoro di Squadra* (hereinafter **LDS**) involved young people Not in Employment, Education or Training in a reactivation pathway aimed at reintegrating them into education/training or into the labour market. Through this project, ActionAid Italia sought to create an opportunity to build a solid bridge from a situation of presumed inactivity to an educational and/or work pathway. The goal of the pathway was to stimulate the desire to do and learn, enhancing skills

	and talents, to become individuals who are the architects of their own destiny and active within their community.
Target Group/Beneficiaries	The project targeted young NEETs aged 16-26 years old who, due to personal experience or socioeconomic background, stopped looking for employment or dropped out of school. During the project, the promoters outreached to 327 youth and managed to engage 187 young NEETs in the preliminary interviews to participate in the project's activities. Particularly, the beneficiaries (63,47% male and 36.52% female) were **mainly short-term unemployed** (28%), but also long-term unemployed (13%), demotivated youth (9%), unavailable due to family reasons (7%), unavailable for illness or disability (3%) and other NEETs (21%). 3% could not be profiled under a specific sub-group due to lack of information, while 7% were still in Employment or Training. The group included Italian (53,9%) and foreign citizens (46,1%), and **most of them lived in a situation of vulnerability** due to social, economic or family reasons. Particularly, 32% were in the care of social services, 30% with international protection, 23% with psychological/ psychiatric disorders, 19% unaccompanied foreign minors, 7% in care of child services and 4% with disabilities. Among the participants who have started the courses, the percentage of young people who have completed the project is on average 73% (102 youth). Among the 27% of young people who did not complete the project, 35% abandoned the path because they found training or work opportunities.
Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice	1. **A local partnership networks**. The territorial network, formal and informal, of the public administration or the private social sector, was fundamental for the success of all phases of the LDS model. Particularly, the network was essential **to intercept** young people (through the exchange of information, the partners were able to extensively promote the project and collect the applications of youth), **to implement workshops or orientation activities**, thanks to the activation of partnerships with entities who work daily in the involved territories or with young NEETs in situations of economic/social vulnerability. Furthermore, the network was fundamental **to reactivate** young NEETs, by providing work

or training opportunities, thus ensuring the continuity of the accompaniment at the end project.

2. **Mentors and coaches** to:

- design ad hoc individual and group pathways for and with each young person involved, to get to know them in depth and provide them with tailored spaces, time and competences, ensuring that each the intervention follows a common path and that, by integrating and completing each other, spaces for self-determination are created that can give the participants and the tools to build their own future;

- deliver motivational training;

- deliver career coaching, professional or educational orientation.

3. **Spaces, skills and resources for** implementing **recreational-educational activities** (e.g., sports or workshops for youth's creative expression).

4. **Digital experts** to deliver digital literacy training.

The project benefited from a significant contribution from the Z Zurich Foundation: more than 100 Zurich employees volunteered their time and skills for mentoring, workshops, training courses, company visits and participation in sports training and tournaments.

Methodology	The LDS model combines recreational-educational activities (sports, cultural or recreational), with individual or group motivation activities, through empowerment tools and co-definition of a work or training project, career paths coaching, training and work orientation, digital literacy "Netiquette" training.

Duration. The model foresees implementation cycles of about 6 months, from outreach to reactivation.

Number of participants. Each project cycle involved a group of young people, who never exceeded 17 people, to guarantee quality and active individual participation. During the pandemic the

number of participants was reduced to a maximum of 13 to ensure the quality of the intervention and a lower rate of potential drop out, given the need to carry out the activities entirely online.

Format. Before the pandemic, all the activities were carried out face-to-face, such as in classrooms, at the project partners' premises or in sports facilities. In October 2020, the activities were adapted to be implemented entirely online.

PHASES

1. Outreach and engagement. The first phase is dedicated to the outreach and engagement of young people, particularly the most "invisible" and "hard-to-reach" youth. The territorial network was fundamental for the outreach phase in LDS: 53% of the young people involved were invited by other associations, while other young people were mainly reached through Facebook, directly (13%) or through their parents (9%), word of mouth (12%) and local services (10%). The remaining young people were reached by paper promotional materials and other web channels.

The outreach activities implemented during the LDS project included offline and online activities, including the following:

- an open call for illustrators, requiring the submission of images representing the theme of women empowerment, collective work, network and collaboration to support young women in the pathway towards their future;

- an online Open Day to let youth meet LDS staff, learn more about the mentoring opportunities and test the recreational and educational activities. The organisers used collaborative and interactive tools (e.g., Miro and Mentimeter) to facilitate the involvement of the participants;

- an online Co-design meeting to develop the project pact, including the needs of the participants with respect to their socio-economic independence and expectations on the path they were about to undertake. The pact was signed at the end of the meeting by all the participants and partners;

- email and social media campaigns.

2. Case management. In the LDS model, case management means the definition and management of an ad hoc path for the young

people involved. It represents a preparatory and fundamental activity for the intervention to be effective and for there to be a connection between all the parties involved, project partners, staff and the other relevant stakeholders engaged.

3. Motivational training. This phase is the key to starting the path of young people. It requires the co-definition of a work and / or training project, starting from the exploration of needs and skills that are sometimes unknown even to the participants themselves. Motivational training works on developing dialogical, critical, intuitive and argumentative skills and on the critical thinking against certain opinions that come from outside (e.g., family, school experiences, friends' networks), favouring an attitude of growth and constructive research for the identification of what will be the sectors in which activation opportunities will be sought.

4. Recreational-educational activities. Such activities are considered one of the core areas of the project since they represent a space for young people for both experiencing teamwork, the complexity of collaborating with others to achieve a common goal, and for self-experimentation, to increase and enhance their talents and skills, knowledge and learning.

The traditional LDS model, implemented until 2020, proposed group sports (i.e., Thai Boxing and Rugby) since, in addition to being attractive and therefore supporting youth engagement in the project, allowed immediate work on the group and on the importance of respecting others and working together. During the Covid-19 pandemic, sports activities were replaced by a photography workshop that allowed the participants to practise with new techniques of expression and storytelling.

All these activities have always been accompanied by:

- a **career coaching path, professional and/or training orientation**, aimed at learning about active job search techniques, writing the Curriculum Vitae and cover letter, simulation of interviews and use of the Internet or social networks to find job opportunities, carried out by specialised partners;

	• **mentoring**, delivered by volunteer employees of Zurich, aimed at enhancing inclusive practices in the world of work, through dialogue and the exchange of experiences, to ultimately support participants in defining and implementing their personal path towards work / training placement. **5. Definition of an individual work/training project**. The final phase of the LDS model includes the development of an individual project for work or training, including the search for opportunities, including job interviews, placements in study paths or training courses, training internships or apprenticeship contracts, involvement in voluntary work or civil service experiences, as well as in other projects running in the city of Milan.
Success Factors	**1. Development and active engagement of a territorial network.** ActionAid developed a strong territorial network of relevant public and private entities, engaging them at every stage of the project. Particularly, stakeholders were involved in: • the period collection of information about the changing needs of the territory and young people before the beginning of every project cycle; • the regular provision of feedback about the progress and quality of the implementation of the activities and the project results; • the co-design and implementation of communication and outreach strategies. **2. Co-design of the activity timetable together with participants.** The collaborative writing of the project agreement, the activities and the calendar made it possible to meet the expectations, commitments and desires of the young participants. **3. Implementation of mentoring paths.** LDS involved mentors to support youth throughout the interventions, also engaging companies. **4. Case management**. The case management activities enabled the development of personalised career/training projects, guaranteeing an integrated and multidisciplinary pathway. ActionAid highlighted the importance of the selection of the case managers for the effectiveness of such activities: a case manager should know well the

territory and the services it offers, have experience with groups of young people in vulnerable situations (who knows how to create trust and mutual respect and esteem) and skills in orientation for work and training.

5. Promoting collaboration among peers with different backgrounds. During the different editions of the projects, a co-design workshop with young NEETs and university students was implemented to encourage the exchange of experiences and perspectives. Cooperating with schools, universities and youth associations can support peer learning and the promotion of role-models among peers.

6. Integration of recreational-educational activities. The recreational activities with educational purpose (e.g., the photography workshop) proved to be engaging for youth and, at the same time, supported the development of youth's soft skills.

7. Including civic activation initiatives. The project included actions to favour youth's civic activation and protagonist in the design of projects or interventions addressed to themselves and other peers. Such actions supported the development of their transversal, technical and relational competences, brought them closer to their communities and gave them the space to let their voice be heard.

Competences of the LifeComp addressed	The main competence developed by this practice is collaboration among peers. Teamwork allowed the creation of shared spaces for self-determination and learning, as well as to enhance individual talents through collaborative work. The group has a transformative and generative role in this project that promotes **empathy** and mutual understanding, creating a driving force capable of reactivating individuals. The practice also contributed to the development of participants' **self-regulation** and **growth mindset**, supporting them in being aware of their emotions, thought and behaviours, and believing in there and others' potential to learn and progress continuously, through empowerment activities, mentoring, coaching and orientation. The project provided young people with spaces and opportunities for self-determination and individual growth towards

	developing autonomy and the ability to recognize themselves, their aspirations and needs (e.g., through the dialogue with the case manager and mentor, the engagement in designing their own career or training project or through introspection with photography). During this process, the young people have worked a lot on building self-confidence: if before they started from a condition of low recognition of their abilities and potential, the project supported them in acquiring a greater awareness that has allowed them to slowly build that confidence. Youth were engaged in a process of growth and development, through a path of rediscovery and exploration of themselves through listening, support, promotion and orientation towards the world of society, education and work.
	The **communication** skills of the young participants were also improved thanks to the professional orientation activities through which young people were instructed on how to conduct a job interview, know how to introduce themselves, as well as manage critical issues in states of anxiety or fear in relationships with others.
	ultimately, LDS also contributed to develop the participants' **wellbeing** competence, thanks to the integration of sports activities, enhancing the care for their physical, mental and social health.
Related resources /Link	Project website: https://www.actionaid.it/progetti/lavoro-di-squadra 2022 Project Report: https://actionaid-it.imgix.net/uploads/2022/06/LDS_report_2022.pdf

Father and Son	
April 2017	**Author:** National Archaeological Museum of Naples (MANN)
Element	
Goals of the best practice	Father and Son are the first video game published by an archaeological museum. Father and Son is a new form of storytelling: a new way of describing the museum. The game's

objective is to involve users in the discovery of the history and collections of the Museum. Thanks to a very engaging narrative dimension and refined and elegant graphics, the playful experience perfectly aligns with the learning objectives. The game enables users to explore sites far away in time and space, manipulate an ancient and fragile object without risk of damage, benefit from multimedia learning information, and create connections with the content itself. This gaming environment engages the public in an active state of learning, where users are motivated to create their knowledge. It is about creating interactive content by exploiting the dynamics of digital storytelling to give effectiveness to the game. The game turns out to be a real immersive experience in various historical eras. The game also helps improve users' emotion management and develop creativity through problem-solving, accepting failure as part of growth, and having confidence in one's own abilities. The narration supports the increase of the cultural sensitivity of the users, enhancing the cultural heritage.

Target Group/Beneficiaries	The game is addressed to 10-18-year-old youngsters, but it would be suitable for adult players too.
Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice	To replicate the practice both in online and offline learning environments, youth workers and trainers can reproduce the core dynamics, mechanics and components of the game-based experience, listed below.

Missions. The game's main objective is to complete multiple missions by exploring various museum collections in the National Archaeological Museum of Naples. Through their in-game avatar, the player is required to enter the Museum and choose the section to visit. In each section of the Museum, there will be different works, each of which corresponds to a specific mission to be completed by exploring different historical periods.

Unlocks. Some sections with the respective works that are part of it are unlockable only if they visit the museum through their mobile phone with the geolocation service. There is a "check-in" functionality that enables a connection between the digital content of the video game and the museum's physical space. The system will automatically recognize the presence of players and unlock new content such as new character outfits and a new game location.

Consequently, the game cannot be completed except by integrating the offline experience with a direct visit to the museum.

Appoint Dynamics. The experience starts with the player being in the protagonist's home and tasked to reach the museum. Once he reaches the museum, he will be able to choose the section to visit and complete the related mission. After the daily mission is completed, Michael will be catapulted back to his home, ready to get back to the museum to discover new sections and start new missions.

Narrative. The player will constantly be faced with choices to make, shaping the story with their decision. They are required to answer the various questions asked by the other characters they meet throughout the game, choosing the option that best suits their personality.

Exploration. In addition to visiting the various collections present inside the museum, the protagonist crosses different historical periods during the experience: from Ancient Rome to Egypt, from the Bourbon age up to today's Naples, players are enabled to increase their knowledge and awareness of the main thematic nuclei present in the MANN collections: the Pompeian, the Farnese and the Egyptian ones. Furthermore, the game unfolds through different temporal levels, from the days preceding the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 AD until modern times in the ruins of the Roman city.

Progress and Status. The player's growth and development path are defined by exploring and fulfilling the various missions in different historical periods, empathising with the game's protagonist, and getting closer to the truth about his father through interaction with the other ten characters in the game.

Methodology	Father and Son is a free side-scrolling 2D narrative game made in English and Italian. The game's protagonist is Michael, a boy on the trail of an archaeologist father he never met. Michael, the protagonist of the game, goes to Naples, to the National Archaeological Museum, after receiving a letter from his father to learn more about his parent's life and the teachings he left him. Stories and eras follow one another, exploring the streets of a city full of characters with whom to dialogue, interact, with experiences in which he must dig and investigate.

"What begins as a story of a son that never knew his father - the MANN writes on the game's official website -, becomes a universal and timeless story where the present and the past are a set of meaningful choices". In fact, the player/Michael will be required to make choices throughout the game, interacting with the story and shaping it with its decisions. The game includes high-quality aesthetic elements: all the graphics used have been designed by the English artist Sean Wenham. Among the graphics, there is an accurate representation of the Neapolitan Archaeological Museum and 3 kilometres of the city of Naples.

Father and Son is a new form of storytelling: a new way of describing the museum. The game's objective is to involve users in the discovery of the history and collections of the Museum. Through their in-game avatar, players are required to enter the Museum and choose the section to visit. In each section of the Museum, there will be different works, each of which corresponds to a specific mission to be completed by exploring different historical periods. The game enables users to explore sites far away in time and space, manipulate an ancient and fragile object without risk of damage, benefit from multimedia learning information, and create connections with the content itself. This gaming environment engages the public in an active state of learning, where users are motivated to create their knowledge. It is about creating interactive content by exploiting the dynamics of digital storytelling to give effectiveness to the game. The game turns out to be a real immersive experience in various historical eras. The game also helps improve users' emotion management and develop creativity through problem-solving, accepting failure as part of growth, and having confidence in their own abilities. The narration supports the increase of the cultural sensitivity of the users, enhancing the cultural heritage.

Success Factors	**Storytelling**. The practice relies on a strong narration. "What begins as a story of a son that never knew his father - the MANN writes on the game's official website -, becomes a universal and timeless story where the present and the past are a set of meaningful choices". In fact, the player/Michael will be required to make choices throughout the game, interacting with the story and shaping it with its decisions. The game includes high-quality aesthetic elements: all the graphics used have been designed by the English artist Sean Wenham. Among the graphics, there is an accurate representation

	of the Neapolitan Archaeological Museum and 3 kilometres of the city of Naples.
	Online-offline balance. The practice successfully managed to balance the online and offline dimensions of the game-based experience.
	Emotional engagement. The game creates a deep connection between the protagonist of the game and the users who feel directly involved in Michael's growth path by having to make difficult choices at significant moments.
Competences of the LifeComp addressed	The main competence addressed by this practice is **empathy**. The game explores feelings such as love, dreams, fear, through a son's journey to discover an archaeologist father he never knew. The player is enabled to fully empathise with Michael's personal experience, identifying themselves with the boy. Moreover, the game allows players to get immersed in different historical times, stepping into the shoes of the personalities of the various eras who had to make difficult choices in challenging moments. In fulfilling these hard choices, Father and Son foster a great sense of empathy between the player and the protagonist of the videogame Michael.
Related resources /Link	

Officina del Benessere	
2021	**Author:** Save the Children Italia
Element	
Goals of the best practice	*Officina del Bonasera* (literally, *The Well-being Workshop*) is a free online multimedia platform created with the aim of raising awareness on issues related to young people's psycho-physical well-being. The platform collects and disseminates multi-

	disciplinary material to strengthen prevention and response factors to the pandemic crisis and its effects on children and young people.

The platform also aims to improve and develop the observation and listening skills of adults, as well as to promote the skills of the adults about sharing the emotions and experiences of young people, strengthening peer relationships and supporting the future planning and ambitions of young people. |
| **Target Group/Beneficiaries** | *Officina del Benessere* targets parents, teachers, educators, third sector operators and young people from 6 to 19 years old. |
| **Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice** | Youth workers and trainers can make use of the resources available on the platform both to gain knowledge on the topics, approaches and activities proposed, and can integrate webinars, video-pills, activities and tips into their daily work with young people. All resources are available free of charge and without the need to register. |
| **Methodology** | The platform is structured around five main thematic areas:

- **Observing, listening and understanding**: this section is primarily directed at adults and focuses on observation, active listening and understanding of their moods, which is indispensable in all educational and recreational activities with children and teenagers. Through the careful observation of all physical, emotional and psychological signals, it is possible to identify needs and any signs of malaise, thus establishing an empathic relationship that allows us to understand youth's state of mind.

- **Sharing experiences**: this thematic area focuses on recommendations, pieces of advice and activities aimed at developing the listening, inclusion and participation capacities of individuals.

Among the activities included in the section:

- **Strengthening relationships**: this thematic area focuses on strengthening the relationships among peers and among young people and adults. Particularly, under this |

area, the platform gathers useful tips and activities for adults to offer the support that is essential for re-establishing relationships and improving friendships among peers, as well as cultivating interests and talents.

- **Planning for the future**: this area focuses on strengthening resilience to work on planning, reacting to adversity and restarting by appealing to and improving young people's sense of security, self-esteem and sense of self-efficacy, which should be experienced in a full, positive and complete way, to initiate a process of envisioning one's future that responds to the ambitions, talents and dreams of each young person.

- **Taking care of ourselves**: this section collects resources for adults, educators and youth workers for taking care of themselves, their health and their emotions, to also be able to effectively support young people. *Officina del benessere*, in fact, highlights how the way adults react to a situation also influences youth's thoughts, feelings and reactions to fear and stress. When adults are anxious or frightened, children/young people can be influenced by this. Children react better when the adults of reference appear confident, calm and reassuring.

All the platform's content is divided by:

- Age (from 6 to 19 years old);

- Type, such as webinar, tips , video pills and activities;

- User profile, such as trainers, youth workers, parents and young people

- Duration, such as less than a minute, 1-5 minutes, 5-10 minutes, 10-30 minutes, more than 60 minutes.

Success Factors	The platform offers users **flexible opportunities** to browse, also via thematic paths, content such as webinars, training, useful tips, activity sheets, in-depth information and much more. The user can choose, through the navigation filters, the content that best suits their interests. Furthermore, *Officina del Benessere*, addresses, with a multidisciplinary approach, both young people

	and adults that are reference points for youth (i.e., parents, educators, youth workers), providing practical tools
Competences of the LifeComp addressed	The competence that is most addressed by this practice is undoubtedly the **well-being** competence providing resources and activities to strengthen prevention and response factors to the pandemic crisis and its effects on young people.
	The use of the platform can also allow the development of **self-regulation** skills, as those who decide to start one of the thematic paths can decide for themselves which activity to follow, the way in which to carry out the activities and the time in which to complete them.
	Officina del Benessere also offers content and activities to support the development of **collaboration** skills, through actions and resources aimed at promoting the strengthening of adolescents' peer and adult relationships.
	Finally, the platform also collects multiple resources to develop, in both young people and adults, the **communication** skills needed to connect more effectively with others and with the emotions of others, and to support young people in overcoming fears and insecurities.
Related resources	Project website: https://benessere.savethechildren.it/

NEET Equity	
2018-2021	**Author:** UNICEF Italia
Element	
Goals of the best practice	NEET Equity is a UNICEF project selected by the Italian Department for Youth Policy and Universal Civilian Service under the public call for proposals "Prevention of and fight against youth distress". The project, from May 2018 to January 2021, had the overall objective of improving the capacity of territories in building participatory active policies in favour of the inclusion of young NEETs. The project aimed to reactivate

the capacity of young people to be active citizens and to deconstruct a collective narrative that often prevents them from recognising in their city and in the spaces dedicated to them, first and foremost the school, opportunities for growth and opportunities to see their dreams realised.

Ultimately, NEET Equity worked for:

1) Increase the degree of knowledge and information on the NEET phenomenon in the three pilot territories involved (i.e., Napoli, Taranto and Carbonia);

2) Intercept young NEETs and reactive their participation, through the experience of social volunteering;

3) Activate "territorial concertation spaces" in which the different stakeholders, including youth, can design, in a participative way, local active policy plans for the inclusion of young NEETs.

Target Group/Beneficiaries	The project targeted 300 young people, between 16 and 22 years old, in the delicate phase of transition from secondary school to the world of work. Particularly, the main target group was the so-called "disengaged" NEET group. It aimed to impact on their ability to reactivate, if they have been expelled from education and have failed to enter the labour market, or if they are at risk of exclusion.
Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice	
Methodology	Two of the main components of the project are hereby analysed: [1] the **Urban Participation Workshops**, and [2] the **Local Forums**. 1. **Urban Participation Labs 4.0**. The Urban Participation Labs (or *Laboratori Urbani di Partecipazione*, **LUPs 4.0**) are virtual

	spaces for listening to and engaging young people, through training in social volunteering and organising actions in the city, based on the skills of the adolescents and young people involved. The project adopts social volunteering as a means of reactivating the potential of young people and an opportunity to see those talents that are sometimes inadequately exploited and/or recognised. Taking charge of a collective action, identified and planned with young people themselves, is an opportunity for them to measure themselves and tell their stories to the city and to bring out their own point of view on their city. Therefore, the Labs space becomes a place where youth can act collectively, to build a counter-narrative on their own future, on their talents and on the city itself. LUPs are project communities, which focus on the wellbeing and future of youth and cities. The Labs placed the young generations at the centre, gathering their ideas, proposals, ideas and needs for the valorisation of their own potential and the potential of their territory.

The theme of the Labs implemented in the three pilot areas in 2021 was "Ideas for a Restart": the Labs aimed to stimulate, activate and reactivate the creativity of young people during the emergency period due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The participants were invited to participate in a "Call for ideas", and therefore to document and narrate through different types of products (photographic storytelling, videos, podcasts, through the creation of posters) THEIR IDEAS for the reactivation and restart of the territory, i.e., to identify the actions necessary for the full participation of young people in city life. The participants had the opportunity to propose products as individuals, as a group (teams of a minimum of 2 up to a maximum of 5 young people) or, in the case of the involvement of a school, even as a class.

2. **Local Forums**. The Forums are moments of consultation, designed with young people, addressed to institutions with the aim of finding together active measures and territorial networks that are committed to including young NEETs in the economic and social fabric they belong to. |
| **Success Factors** | The project has effectively implemented a multi-stakeholder approach for the co-development of common spaces of |

	consultation - in which active policies can be defined and the future of young people in an area can be collectively taken care of - and participation, where young people have a voice and can be directly listened to, and in which they are personally involved in actions to design a possible future in their city.
Competences of the LifeComp addressed	• **Self-regulation**, since youth are invited to reflect on and express their personal values, goals and desires, and nurture their sense of purpose by thinking about the goals that are important to them; • **Communication**, since it required young people to participate in discussions with their peers and other territorial stakeholders, but also to express their ideas through storytelling; • **Critical thinking**, since youth were invited to develop creative ideas to solve problems of their territories; • Flexibility, since youth can increase their ability to manage transitions in their personal, social and educational/work life, as well as to manage uncertainty and face challenges.
Related resources	https://www.unicef.it/diritti-bambini-italia/poverta/neet-equity/

Piazza dei Mestieri (Crafts Square)	
2004	**Author:** Fondazione Piazza dei Mestieri Marco Andreoni
Element	
Goals of the best practice	**Piazza dei Mestieri** (or *Crafts Square)*' offers young people, unemployed or not, an alternative training offer through a balanced alternation of theoretical and practical courses. The environment created by the 'Piazza dei Mestieri' aims to make

	learners feel understood, supported and valorised, through a place of aggregation where young people can experience a positive approach to reality: from learning to work, from the way they use their free time to the valorisation of their talents. The main mission is to involve, enthuse and help young people to find their own way, so that everyone's talent can be put to full use.
Target Group/Beneficiaries	The practice targets mainly young NEETs between 14 and 18 years of age, young people who are sliding towards forms of social exclusion, who tend to drop out of school and who experience marginality with respect to the social fabric. VET students from both the first and second cycle of education who wish to learn a new art or a new trade in parallel with state courses can also benefit from the privileges of this project, as can unemployed young people and adults.
Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice	The practice can be replicated in a more or less similar way by associations or individual youth workers/trainers who can provide a facility in a place easily accessible to young people. Defined spaces must be created and designed according to the activities that take place in them, with continuous coordination of the many functions present. It is also necessary to make available to the young participants orientation desks with operators in the sector who can show the young people how to identify and develop their aptitudes, desires and match them with the labour market. Also of great importance is the presence of stakeholders who contribute financially to the activities undertaken.
Methodology	Crafts Square consists of 3 main branches each with specific activities: • The Foundation - manages and organises vocational training projects, including social projects, school-to-work alternation, integration and openness to the world • The Association- organises cultural events taking place in the square (school) • The Cooperative- manages all production-related activities (workplace)

	The project seeks to follow the alternation model, through concrete experience on the one hand and theoretical knowledge on the other, enabling the learner to acquire the ability to transfer what he or she has learned in practice into different situations. The aim is to bring about an interaction between knowledge learned in practice and knowledge learned in school courses. Crafts Square is committed to teaching young people crafts related to handicrafts, traditions and services to people, as well as alternating cultural activities through music, theatre, cabaret, poetry and filmmaking with creative leisure activities such as sports, for which a gymnasium and a large, equipped terrace are made available. The workshops are of great importance for the success of this project as they tend to recover handicraft figures present in the area that are being abandoned; the young people are assisted in their learning by professionals and artisans who also act as tutors. Specifically, workshops have been identified to recover ancient Piedmontese trades related to gastronomy and catering, but also linked to trades with a strong potential for job placement, such as in the field of aesthetics and typography.
Success Factors	The following success factors are based on the testimonies of Project participants interviewed for the Cedefop study (2016): • Direct connection with the labour market; students no longer have the feeling that the labour market is a daunting place to enter after their studies, on the contrary they get used to it naturally • Sense of community; the way classes are organised allows students to bond with their trainers and fellow students. They feel part of a larger community and can open and feel more confident in their abilities • Customised vocational training paths; students are given the opportunity to customise their own programme to ensure that they take as many courses as they wish, while maintaining the right balance between work and school • Benefits for the entire community; the school has shops, bars and restaurants open to the public, as well as

	numerous cultural and recreational activities for both students and the public
Competences of the LifeComp addressed	Thanks to this project, transversal competences are strongly developed for all three areas of competence of LifeComp:
	 • Growth mindset - through all the activities provided by the project, young people can have a direct approach to the labour market right from the start, perceiving it as a place to enter with enthusiasm and passion. The young people are also helped to develop and express their aptitudes, their dreams and to combine them with the labour market, school and training… In this way, the young people begin to feel useful and to play an active role in society, starting to increasingly believe in their own potential in a path of continuous growth.
	• Managing learning - students can customise their programme by following only those activities in which they are interested, maintaining a balance between work and school. They can thus plan and customise their path within the project, alternating theoretical lessons with practical activities such as craft workshops.
	• Collaboration - the Piazza dei mestieri was created as a meeting space for young people in their free time. The pub is run together with the young people, who can meet theirs in the afternoons or evenings. At least two evenings a week, music, food and wine events and debates are organised with the participation and collaboration of everyone. The workshops themselves also provide for a continuous exchange of information and techniques both between the professionals and the young people but also between the young people themselves.
	• Self-regulation: from a young age, young people can manage their emotions and behaviour by having professionals at their disposal to guide them on the right path to follow through guidance counters that help them realise their ideas. Through compliance with a few clear

	rules, students learn from an early age dictate that will be useful to them both in their training and in the world of work
Related resources	https://piazzadeimestieri.it/ https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/neets/resources/crafts-square-0

Greece

CLOE- Creative Leader of Europe	
2021-2023	
Element	
Goals of the best practice	The CLOE project enhances cultural skills in youths work, unleashes the creative potentials of youths and develops a network of young Creative Leaders Of Europe By involving youths in an edutainment (education through entertainment) transnational process, made of creative distance co-creating LABS that result into a concept street musical and several online contents, the project develops SKILLS and ensures inclusion through creativity and arts; It demonstrates how young creative people can lead Europe from the new normal to a future where no one is left behind. Distance-labs unlock barriers between countries caused by covid 19, exploit the potential of the web to work transnationally and allows to test new model of "virtual mobility". CLOE provides young participants with creative digital skills and increases capacities of young creative professionals to develop social enterprises, capable of shifting from physical places to digital spaces and vice versa. CLOE project aims at - nurturing young talents, - developing entrepreneurship capacities of youths especially in the domains of creative social enterprise, - raising awareness on societal inclusive development, by means of an edutainment distance process which results into significative cultural products.
Target Group/Beneficiaries	- youths aged 18-30 - youth workers - artists and creative young people and organizations

Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice	Resources: - Stakeholders' engagement - Funding from European commission - Active participation of young people - Digital support Skills: - Digital skills - Experience in art - Entrepreneurial skills
Methodology	The 1st line SKILLS includes the tasks: - elaborating the guideline and the methodology to set up and develop transnational distance-coproduction Labs - Developing the pilot TRANSNATIONAL experimental LABs for distance-cowriting Deliverable SCRIPT- - Developing the pilot TRANSNATIONAL experimental LABs for the distance-composing. Deliverable soundscape - Developing the pilot TRANSNATIONAL experimental LABs for the distance - Choreographing. Deliverable Choreographies tutorial - defining the Hybrid Creative BUSINESS Model, with the collaboration of stakeholders and associated partners. - organizing distance rehearsal for musicians, singers and dancers - selecting places for staging and planning rehearsals schedules - developing general rehearsal on site, staging and shooting the musical in Greece - developing general rehearsal on site, staging and shooting the musical in Italy - developing general rehearsal on site, staging and shooting the musical in Portugal - coordinating the editorial team of young participants within an edutainment process during with they will produce video, papers, vox pop, etc The 2nd line AWARENESS includes the tasks: - sharing and defining the path to convey the MESSAGE of the CONCEPT STREET MUSICAL: "Creative youths will lead Europe from the new normal to the future leaving no one behind". - making video shooting and post producing a short docu-film

	- designing and sharing the architecture of the magazine web platform - post editing, reviewing contents created before publishing on the platform and manage publication and managing publishing of the contents - promoting the enlargement of the CLOE network - - co-elaborating the CLOE roadmap for follow up and the report on the LESSONS LEARNT from the Edutainment process to transfer the results.
Success Factors	- Funding from the European commission - Stakeholders' engagement - Sufficient promotion/ dissemination (website, promotion in the project's social media platforms)
Competences of the LifeComp addressed	- Digital skills - Communication and collaboration - Growth mindset
Related resources /Link	https://cloeplatform.eu/

"Accelerator of the Circular Economy of the Municipality of Heraklion: EKODI"	
2021-2022	
Element	
Goals of the best practice	The project "Accelerator of the Circular Economy of the Municipality of Heraklion: EKODI" aims to create and strengthen organic links between the Cooperative and Circular Economy. In this context, an innovative process of combined use of indoor space and processing of reusable and recyclable materials is introduced, which will be implemented in a space provided by the Municipality of Heraklion Attica.
Target Group/Beneficiaries	The procedure was implemented by the members of the target group, which are the 845 beneficiaries of the Social Grocery of the Municipality (people/households residing in the Municipality where the structure operates, who cannot cover their needs in basic goods).

Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice	Resources: - Funding from the Green Fund - Qualified staff for the trainings Skills: - Interactive approach
Methodology	The objective of the project is to develop a grid of Actions, organized in Work Packages, for the members of the target group to develop skills so that they can create environmental, social and economic benefits from the operation of EKODI both during and after the completion of the project. - Organisation of four (4) Training Workshops with the members of the target group on the possibilities that can arise from the development of circular business activities and the creation of the first circular products and services - Organisation of one (1) Seminar to train the members of the target group in the management of the "Digital Circular Space" and the possibilities of informing them about the available products. - Organisation of one (1) pilot training excursion in the Municipality of Heraklion Attica, to increase the pool of materials to be reused and recycled. - Development of one (1) Digital Best Practices e - handbook from the information received by the trainers.
Success Factors	- Funding from Green Fund - Participation of unemployed citizens
Competences of the LifeComp addressed	Self-regulation Flexibility Communication and Collaboration Critical Thinking Growth mindset Managing learning
Related resources /Link	https://ekodi.gr/

Supporting Volunteer Fire Fighter Groups in Greece	
2021	
Element	
Goals of the best practice	The project objectives result from this initial situation:

	1) Volunteer fire fighting groups enhance their ability to alert and extinguish wildfires. 2) Volunteer fire fighting groups improve their ability for self-care and for working with communities that experienced traumata.
Target Group/Beneficiaries	60 firefighting volunteers in Attica, Evia and Thessaloniki. Indirect: Population of municipalities that experienced devastating wildfires.
Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice	- Funds from NGOs - Equipment (protection equipment, first aid kit etc) - Professional firefighter
Methodology	1. Volunteers receive training by a professional firefighting officer and basic equipment. a. Training in fire extinguishing methods tailored to the regional needs and circumstances. b. Training and sensitisation to wildfire prevention measures. c. Connecting the respective group with the municipal authorities and the official fire department. The duties of a volunteer firefighter span beyond putting out fires and rescuing animals from trees. Volunteer firefighters perform a multitude of important tasks to keep others safe, maintain their equipment, and ensure the department can continue serving their community. Some of the most common duties include: Fire emergencies Emergency medical services Search and rescue Traffic Incident Management (TIM) and highway safety 2. Community awareness raising for bushfire prevention and the protection of the environment. a. Raising awareness on the danger of wildfires through illegal trash disposal. b. Raising awareness on the need of protecting the burned areas from people and (domesticated) animals to enable a recovering of nature. c. Learn about "land clearing without using fire" to open their land for agriculture. 2) Volunteer fire fighting groups improve their ability for self-care and for working with communities that experienced traumata. 1. Psychosocial Support as a measure for an enhanced self-care a. Enhancing volunteers' psychological resilience by teaching coping methods to handle potentially traumatising experiences in the event of an emergency. b. Appointing a person of trust as a PSS focal point in the group

	2. Psychosocial First Aid (PFA)
	a. Teaching the volunteer groups methods of low-threshold PFA for people affected by an emergency.
	b. Raise awareness among volunteer groups of the signs of urgent psychological support for traumatised people affected by a catastrophic event and refer them to specialised service providers.
Success Factors	- Funding from NGOs - Professional firefighter - Experienced Psychologist - Specialized doctor
Competences of the LifeComp addressed	- Collaboration - Critical thinking

Related resources /Link	

Workshops for Digital Coding Skills for girls	
2012-2018	
Element	
Goals of the best practice	KEAN in collaboration with the EIT (European Institute of Innovation & Technology), within the framework of the European Union's Horizon 2020 programme and the wider European Union Digital Single Market Strategy, promoted the implementation of code-learning (programming) workshops for children with emphasis on girls aged 12-17, in countries where there is a greater need to enhance digital skills. These workshops, started in Greece. During the summer months, 50 students from schools in Attica and other municipalities had the opportunity to experience the magical world of digital coding and got basic principles of creating code! KEAN trainers, in collaboration with Google, the BCA College and the Athens Tech Technology College, together with the Municipalities The digital code learning workshops give young participants the opportunity to get to know the magical world of digital programming and learn basic principles of manipulation, thus taking their first steps in programming and code creation. Through a series of interactive lessons, they will first be introduced to the basics of Code and the secrets of Algorithm and then design and implement simple mobile applications
Target Group/Beneficiaries	- Female students from 12 to 18 years old.
Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice	- Funds from European Commission - Specialized trainer - Network of schools
Methodology	-Promote positive role models and enhancing digital and entrepreneurship skills among girls that help to tackle the gender gap and boost female participation in science, technology and business -Inspire female students to consider careers in technology, entrepreneurship and innovation -Organise a series of workshops on digital and entrepreneurial skills throughout Europe for girls in primary and secondary education (up to 20 000 girls by the end of 2020), with a particular focus on EIT RIS countries.

	-Active participation in key Women Leadership and Entrepreneurship events across Europe. -Participation and sharing of content with select online women leadership and entrepreneurship platforms -Support and promote the Women @ EIT initiative
Success Factors	- Funds from European commission - Specialized trainer - Technical equipment - Network of schools
Competences of the LifeComp addressed	- Digital skills - Communication skills - Collaboration skills
Related resources /Link	http://girlscoding.eu/

Community Manager for Inclusive Development of Vulnerable Areas based On Heritage	
2019-2022	

Element	**Guiding questions**
Goals of the best practice	The project develops around cultural heritage recognized in specific context: mountain, (semi-)peripheral and rural area. These areas are vulnerable contexts due to the demographic, social and economic changes that they are facing. The presence of cultural heritage offers opportunity, but the marginality of the area prevents the community to benefit from it. These areas need specific hybrid competences (merging heritage expertise, community building skills, business modelling, design thinking, new media and social networks, system thinking) aimed at mobilizing community members to make use of their common resources and promoting cultural heritage focusing on the community and with a dynamic approach. In this view, heritage is understood as a catalyst not a barrier, and especially valued for its contribution to the social innovation process for its creative and innovative capacity, identity and attractiveness generation capacity, and catalysation capacity. Specific Objectives

	- To create economic development opportunities, giving value to cultural heritage (VALUE) - To renew motivation of local communities, promoting participation and entrepreneurial approach (ENGAGEMENT) - To promote inclusive local development, enhancing social and cultural diversity (INCLUSION)
Target Group/Beneficiaries	- Community managers and leaders in rural areas - Vulnerable groups - Local inhabitants
Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice	- Funds from European commission - Collaboration with local authorities
Methodology	The methodology of the project in detailed activities: Training - Good practices collection - 3 training activities in mobility - 2 peer-to-peer training/country - 1 practical workshop, to create ways of hiding geocaches (O2) Digital resources: - 1 Guide - 1 GeoTrail online/country - 1 Toolkit - 1 collaborative platform - 1 project website INCLUSION OF VULNERABLE PERSONS, ENGAGEMENT OF LOCAL COMMUNITY, OPEN INNOVATION With Participatory processes: - 1 world café with community leaders/country - 1 focus group with experts/country - 1 guided GeoTrail with local community/country - 1 hackathon on entrepreneurial ideas/country
Success Factors	- Funds from European commission - Collaboration with local authorities - Support from the region
Competences of the LifeComp addressed	- Digital skills - Communication skills - Collaboration skills
Related resources /Link	https://common-heritage.eu/

Portugal

Oficina Mar Vivo	
2020-2022	**Author:** Fundação António Aleixo
Goals of the best practice	Oficina MarVivo (OMaVi) aims to implement a pilot to combat the problem of youth unemployment in the parish of Quarteira, through the implementation of a set of social training actions, where the participants acquire interpersonal skills through experiences groups, having as a vehicle of integration the nautical carpentry and related activities in the fishing port of Quarteira. This aims to build mixed group works (including women), in a series of initiatives to promote the discovery of collective skills, through the construction of learning communities.
Target Group / Beneficiaries	- Unemployed youth and adults; - NEET, in English, "not in education, employment, or training"; - PIEF: Programa Integrado de Educação e Formação - "Integrated Education and Training Program"; - DLD: Desempregados de longa duração - "Long-term unemployed"; - Unemployed registered with the employment centre.
Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice	The Parish Council of Quarteira, as a social investor, provides support, not only through the logistics of transport and packaging of materials, raw materials and tools, as well as in the promotion and dissemination of the Oficina Marvivo.
Methodology	**Learning Communities** RESIDENCES - Twice a week participants acquire shipbuilding skills with tutoring from a shipbuilder. VISITS - Conducting visits to different shipyards in the national territory to get to know other realities and ways of working. 8 WORKSHOPS - Carrying out different training actions such as: Introduction to carpentry; fiberglass arrangements; boat painting; basics of locksmithing; basics of soldering; woods and finishing; use of carpentry tools and machines.
Success Factors	OmaVi is a project of the António Aleixo Foundation (FAA), a private institution, committed to contributing to the development of the Municipality of Loulé, pursuing social, cultural, artistic and scientific objectives.
Competences of the	Collaboration (Engagement in group activities and teamwork acknowledging).

LifeComp addressed	● Flexibility (Ability to manage transitions and face challenges); ● Managing Learning (the planning, organising, monitoring and reviewing of one's own learning).
Related resources /Link	Facebook: www.facebook/CarpintariaNautica

Mud@ki E8G	
2016 - Now	**Author:** DOINA - Associação de Migrantes no Algarve
Goals of the best practice	Mud@ki E8G aims to promote social integration, transversally supporting children and young people between 6 and 25 years old and their families, from vulnerable social contexts, residing in Almancil council, through the promotion non-formal training, training and acquisition of knowledge with a view to encouraging and promoting school success and facilitating civic and community participation, for 2 years, involving 160 participants
Target Group / Beneficiaries	Children and young people between 6 and 25 years old and their families, residents in Almancil, coming from vulnerable social contexts.
Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice	1) High number of students with risky school careers - school failure, absenteeism and indiscipline in the Almancil School Group. Also, the high rates of early school leaving in secondary education, accentuated by the absence of secondary education in the parish of Almancil. 2) Weak participation and responsibility of parents in the educational process of their children and lack of opportunities for parental training. 3) Low civic and community participation on the part of children and young people, barriers to intercultural dialogue and weak social cohesion, exacerbated by the cultural and linguistic barriers of immigrants and the large inflow and outflow of immigrants (turnover

	of the immigrant population), difficulties in think and act as good citizens in terms of community spaces and respect for others. 4) Lack of adequate responses to the social, cultural and economic context of children and young people, adjusted to the needs of families.
Methodology	Regarding the pedagogic methodology used on the planning and implementation of the non-formal activities, we have the Escola Moderna method as an inspiration, assuming as central values of creativity, reflection, respect for individuality, autonomy, the use of technology, fun and collaboration. The activities we promote are the following: support for study, speaking Portuguese, do u speak english?, challenges and games, online study, Mud@ki comunica, Digital world, intercultures, volunteering, coaching, mindfulness, youth circle, sport, youth assembly, make your music, family-school-community mediation, criativ_art, liberta-te, vocational guidance.
Success Factors	Internal: Communication style and interpersonal relationship with beneficiaries, access to artistic material (music studio, painting, dance), space organised by participants, active participants in planning activities and feedback.
Competences of the LifeComp addressed	We approach the 9 personal, social and learn-to-learn competences.
Related resources /Link	Facebook and Instagram https://www.instagram.com/projeto.mudaki.e8g/

#StandOut	
2021 - Now	**Author:** Associação Sê Mais Sê Melhor
Goals of the best practice	The social problem that the present project intends to intervene in is the employability and professional integration of young people in a situation (or at risk) of social exclusion, with a priority focus on combating the difficulty that these young people have in entering the labour market and in having consistent, regular and lasting professional experiences. The #StandOut aims to be an informal space open to the young community where the focus is on the young person, their uniqueness and needs with the purpose of developing a

	personalized intervention and training plan that enhances their confidence and skills with a view to employability
Target Group / Beneficiaries	Young people between the ages of 16 and 30 in a situation (or at risk) of social exclusion in the municipality of Faro.
Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice	The promotion of the #StandOut project is based on a previous survey of needs and realities about employability, based on two perspectives on this issue: the perspective of young people and the perspective of region/locality. From the perspective of young people between the ages of 16 and 30 in a situation (or risk) of social exclusion, when talking about employability it is important to highlight: ● Characteristics and challenges inherent to this age group. ● Situations of marginalization and discrimination. ● Multiple deprivation situations. ● Non-existent or precarious family and social support network; ● Difficulty in accessing information, services and social responses. ● Beneficiaries of RSI or other social benefits and covered by the Social Action of the County. ● Low levels of self-esteem and personal identification. ● Life paths marked by delinquency, criminality and others deviant behaviours. ● Difficulty in integrating the labour market and the existence of precarious professional experiences. From the perspective of the Algarve region and the Municipality of Faro, it is important to reflect on the following elements: ● Risk of poverty or social exclusion rate in the Algarve area is above the national average. ● Increase in the number of young people in the region and in the Municipality. ● Increase in migratory flows and in the immigrant population in the region and in the Municipality. ● "Young NEET" phenomenon. ● Alternative teaching modalities with records of failure, retention and school dropout in the Municipality. ● The CPCJ of Faro is one of the Commissions at regional level with the highest procedural volume global. ● Existence of social houses and peripheral communities in Faro; ● Conditionalisms and dynamics inherent to the reality of the municipality "Urban vs. Rural". Thus, given the difficulty that young people in a situation (or at risk) of exclusion have in entering the job market and in having

	professional experiences consistent, regular and lasting, the proposed solution aims to reduce the risks and the dynamics inherent to their social situation, provide support, guidance and monitoring and facilitating experiences in the employability field.
Methodology	#StandOut foresees 3 intervention phases: **1) #Reach_Out:** the first moment of contact between the young and the project, this can be done on its own initiative or through a referral by a partner entity. This first phase includes a screening of the needs and expectations of the young person and an individual assessment of its singularities, which allows later to define an employability project and design a personalized intervention plan with strategies and actions suited to your profile. **2) #(Em)power_Up**: after defining the intervention plan, a new phase in the process that will go through the training and empowerment of the young, using the non-formal education methodology to acquiring skills and confidence needed in the field of employability. To this end, the intervention will be based on the training of Soft Skills, on the dynamization of Coaching and Vocational Guidance, in the realization of Workshops for the Employability (focusing on essential aspects from the creation of a curriculum to the preparing for a job interview) and facilitating experiences and offer for Training, Job Shadowing, Volunteering and Mobility. These activities will have an individual component as well as to be carried out in a large group with other accompanied young people, that is, not only of the inherent characteristics of each activity, but also of the needs of each young person and their level of acquisition and/or development of certain skills. Nevertheless, whenever possible, efforts will be made to dynamize moments of meeting and sharing between the young people being accompanied, from the perspective of mentoring, peer education and motivational group. **3) #Go_n_Keep_Up**: considering the young to be empowered and bringing together the strategies needed for employability challenges, the third and final phase intervention implies the facilitation of a matching between "Youth - Entity", helping the youth to enter the job market (considering the different modalities of insertion in active life, such as training, mobility, volunteering, employment, internships or other employment support and incentives) and accompanying them on an ongoing basis until a process is established considered sustainable in the context of their employability. In view of the problem presented and the proposed solution, it is considered as an indicator as a result the number of young people involved in training, mobility experiences, opportunities for volunteering or in the labour

	market (considering the different modalities of insertion into active life, such as employment, internships or other support and incentives for employment).
Success Factors	#StandOut is a project included in the +COESO Employment Program - Social Entrepreneurship (GAL), promoted by Sê Mais Sê Melhor- Association for the Promotion of Human Potential and co-financing by CRESC Algarve 2020, Portugal 2020 and European Union - European Social Fund.
	It takes place from Monday to Friday, at the Bairro Office, with the transfer of these facilities by the Municipality of Faro. At the same time, the project has been to promote sessions also at the Pinheiro e Rosa Secondary School and at the Escola João de Deus Secondary School, with a view to accompanying young people inserted in school context.
	In terms of the technical team, this is made up of a multidisciplinary team (1 Social and Organizational Psychologist, who also assumes the role of Coordination from the project; 1 Clinical Psychologist; and 1 Social Worker) with experience and training that facilitate the development in young people of skills, confidence, motivation and stimulation necessary for them to succeed in their professional life.
	The focus on young people and their singularities and potential, the proximity to the community regarding the location of the project, extended working hours, continuous monitoring, the use of strategies such as Peer Education and the use of Non-Formal Education methodology are the things that stands out as innovative aspects of this project.
	Emphasis is also given to partnerships, whether with institutions and services in the social, as with private and public entities. By involving different agents of the society in the construction of the training and employability path of these young people, it is not only possible to raise awareness of issues of social exclusion, but also enhance the success of these courses, creating opportunities, as well crediting and valuing these young people in society and in the job market.
Competences of the LifeComp addressed	It is considered that all LifeComp competences involved in the 3 areas (personal area, social area and learning area) are addressed by the #StandOut, as it intends to be a holistic project that sees the young in uniqueness and needs, while developing skills that allow it to successfully deal with the different challenges inherent to the employability and all the changes that the job market and the professional experience suffer. Likewise, LifeComp's typology of "Sensitize-Understand-Act" may be, in its essence, correlated with the

	3 intervention phases of this project (#Reach_Out; #(Em)Power_Up; and #Go_n_Keep_Up).
Related resources /Link	Facebook / Instagram: @standoutsemaissemelhor Website: https://cutt.ly/dMttvNE Examples of project presentation at events: - https://www.cmfaro.pt/upload_files/client_id_1/website_id_1/CLAS%20Faro%20standout.pdf - Associative Technical Conferences (IPDJ): https://regiao-sul.pt/sociedade/ipdjalgarvepromove-jornadas-tecnicas-associativas/559888 Examples of project disclosure news: ● https://www.sulinformacao.pt/2021/11/projeto-standout-surge-para-promoverpotencial-dos-jovens-de-faro-em-exclusao-social/ ● https://jornaldoalgarve.pt/faro-projeto-standout-vai-promover-a-empregabilidadejovem

Skill'IT	
2020 - 2022	**Author:** TESE – Associação para o desenvolvimento pela Tecnologia, Engenharia, Saúde e Educação
Goals of the best practice	"Skill'IT" works as a digital bridge between young people and experiences to develop key competences for employability. Designed as a digital platform, accessible online, it brings together and makes available information on skills development opportunities. It also concentrates and disseminates information, which is dispersed now, about local experiences made available by different entities and to which young people can access to develop certain competences. Its general objective is to improve the employability of young people, through the following objectives: ● Increase the access of 352 young people to local formal and non-formal learning opportunities. ● Promote the development of key transversal competences by 70 at-risk NEET youth. ● Increase the appreciation and recognition of transversal skills by 40 local public and private actors.
Target Group / Beneficiaries	The priority target population is young people aged between 16 and 29 years old, who are NEET or due to their socio-economic situation, are at risk of becoming NEET. However, as this is an online solution,

	free access, the platform has been used by other types of publics. Regarding indirect beneficiaries, it's considered the Entities that register in the Skill'IT to be able to disseminate through the platform their experiences of development of transversal skills to reach more young people. From the point of view of territorial scope and given the high numbers of the youth unemployment in the Lisbon Metropolitan Area, during this pilot phase the platform has focused its action on this territory, mapping local responses for the development of transversal skills and assuming a more local dissemination strategy.
Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice	Skill'IT was designed to respond to the difficulties of sustained transition from education to the labour market of young people at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training). Young people in the NEET situation have been one of the main priorities of the European Union (EU) and Portugal (PT) in terms of employment and education/training policies (cf. Portugal 2030; horizontal objective II). Portugal implemented the EU recommendations through the National Plan for Implementation of a Youth Guarantee (PNIGJ, 2013), recognizing it as a "investment in the young population and as an important contribution to the reduction of social and economic costs that youth unemployment entails for individuals affected, their families, their communities and the country as a whole". The International Organization Labour on the Strategy for Signalling Young People in Situation of NEET recognizes the importance of developing "pre-Youth Guarantee" responses (i.e., non-formal and informal nature) with a view to reinforcing the motivation of young people and providing them with necessary tools and skills so that they can later take advantage of the formal measures of the Youth Guarantee. In 2019, when the project proposal was designed, this investment, despite of the economic recovery experienced at the time, was justified considering: ● 1 in 10 young people in Portugal (PT) did not study, did not work and they were not in training (9.9% rate; INE, 2018). ● The proportion of young people in the NEET situation in the inactive condition presented a growth trend in relation to unemployed young people, indicating that the number of young people further away from formal employment and training systems remained high and represents an increasing share of NEET youth. ● the youth unemployment rate (20.3%; 15-24 years old; INE, 2019), even though it had decreased, it was almost 3 times above the value for the general population (7%; INE, 2019).

	In the post-pandemic period that we are experiencing and a deep economic regression, these data are even more expressive and the continuity of this intervention even more relevant. The permanently transitory nature of the NEET situation and the greater vulnerability of young people to the phenomenon of unemployment, fit into a wider context of constant change. Today, young people face unprecedented challenges, socially, economically and environmentally, driven by increasing globalization and technological advances. In this scenario of uncertainty, it is essential to provide them with transversal skills that are equipped with tools to overcome these challenges and foster their future employability (OECD, 2018), namely through the development of technological skills, but also of "soft skills" and specific employability competences (Recommendations of the EU on young people and the future of work, 2019). Alongside this need, it is also noted that there is a diversity of entities and organizations that promote activities and experiences that propose the development of transversal competences, but these activities do not always bring together the number of participants that would be expected/desirable. That is, despite the existence of so many opportunities for skills development, there was no resource that aggregated this information, finding this information very dispersed. Thus, motivated by the relevance of the problem and the absence of a similar answer, TESE drafted the Skill'IT project proposal, applying for Portugal's Social Fund "Partnerships for Impact".
Methodology	We explain below the operating logic of the platform. To determine the tracks published on the platform, the responses are being mapped with public and private institutions in the territory related to pre-identified transversal competences. Once the entities that are promoting this type of experience are identified, they are challenged to register on the platform, to be able to post information about their experiences. The experiences are given the name of "tracks" that correspond to an opportunity tending to be free of an informal or non-formal nature and of short or medium duration (examples: workshops, volunteer opportunities, exchanges, sporting and artistic activities, support for vocational guidance, Open Days for contact with companies, etc.), depending on the offer of territories. The person will have information about these answers and will be able to attend them "on-site" or online, according to the modality of the experience. The platform is organized into 4 groups of transversal competences, adapted to from the guidelines of the European Commission: • Personal and Social Skills/Soft Skills;

	• Employment and Entrepreneurship Skills; • Digital Competencies; • Other general technical skills. From the user's point of view, the platform allows a very personalized use, promoter of self-knowledge and empowerment. As an example, the "path" of a young user in the platform. 1. **Registration and login to access your profile on the platform**. According to your goals and preferences (indicated in the initial registration on the platform), the person selects the skills that wants to develop and through which experiences (tracks), creating your own employability playlist. In inspiration, you can follow recommended playlists or view playlists from other users with similar preferences. There is no limit to the number of experiences a user can access, allowing each young person to redefine or complement their "playlist" throughout the time. 2. **Participate in an experiment = complete a "track"**. By autonomously participating in each experience, the entity responsible for its dynamization by signalling its presence on the platform, confirming its participation. Every time a certain "track" is completed, the user earns digital badges, which allows you to advance in the level of development of your skills and recognizes the development of a certain competence. Each badge corresponds to one skill set and can have up to 4 levels. • Badge = skills development experience/opportunity • Playlist= set of badges of the same topic It is considered that a proposal can generate impact through the experiences that are available, since they enable the development and recognition of key transversal competences for employability. In turn, the development of soft skills can: • Create the user to enrol in a training that allows him/her to deepen/professionalize acquired skills; • reinforcing the personal and social capital of the NEETs, turning the profile more appealing for potential alternatives and promoting the search for professional contexts more suitable for them.
Success Factors	Internal conditions: • Appealing textual and visual communication aligned with a young audience; • Gamification logic experienced by the platform user;

	- User experience on the platform to allow an autonomous and personalized choice of experiences you want to attend depending on your interests and goals; - Quality and diversity of the experiences that are presented External conditions: - Interest and registration on the part of entities promoting the platform experience; - Development of transversal skills for young people; - Registration of experiences on the platform by these entities, to make the same appeal to users/young people; - Existence of a significant number of user/youth registrations, to make the use of the appealing platform for the entities.
Competences of the LifeComp addressed	The platform includes a set of transversal skills chosen based on various reference frameworks, namely the EC. Among these are the following LifeComp competencies: - Empathy. - Communication. - Collaboration. - Spirit of Growth. - Critical Thinking. - Learning Management. - Flexibility. - Self-Regulation.
Related resources /Link	Platform website: www.skillit.pt Teaser: https://www.facebook.com/skillit.pt/videos/179285957496489 Pre-launch event: https://www.facebook.com/tese.ongd/videos/2844488765864512

Work in Progress (WIP)	
2019 - 2021	**Author:** Agência Piaget para o Desenvolvimento (APDES)
Element	
Goals of the best practice	The main objective of "Work in Progress" was to promote personal and professional success paths in young people sheltered, ex-sheltered and young NEET, residents of the Grande Porto, contributing for their life autonomy and, consequently, inclusion. The main objectives: - To train NGOs to adopt participatory processes and democratic management. - Promote the integration into the labour market of young people with autonomy of life and young NEETs.

	● Empower a promoting entity for organizational improvement.
Target Group / Beneficiaries	The direct beneficiaries of the project were young NEET, autonomy young people, ex-sheltered residents in the age between 18 and 29 years old. The project also involved in a direct way the Rede Proteger (informal network made up of 6 institutions that are supporting protection and childhood in the municipality of Vila Nova de Gaia. This was the target of intervention through training, to capacitate regard to participatory processes and democratic management. The main indirect beneficiaries are the children and young people who live in the shelters of professionals who are part of the Proteger+ Network and who have attended the training.
Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice	According to Social Security Data, in 2016, 8175 children and young people were in foster care, with most of this population being over 12 years old. The districts with the highest percentages are Lisbon (18%) and Porto (17%). In 2016, 2396 children and young people were integrated into alternative care, while 2126 children and young people ceased that care.

Despite the indications of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021) for the adoption of measures that favor the sharing of information and networking, and for the improvement of the quality of care with an emphasis on selection processes, training and supervision of caregivers/professionals, several limitations have been identified with regard to the preparation of the young people's autonomy process like the deinstitutionalization, in the specialized institutional support after leaving the reception, in the establishment of norms at national and in the dissemination of good practices. According to Carvalho & Cruz (2015), there is a need for adequate responses to the needs of the young in alternative care, lack of knowledge and technical quality of professionals, and absence of a structured intervention model in the preparation for autonomy and autonomy in life.

Therefore, the young report not feeling prepared for autonomy in life and that they do not receive enough support in this process (ISCTE, 2005). In addition to the insufficient preparation for an autonomous adult life, these young people face additional challenges in this transition, crucial for their life course, compared to the general population, such as greater difficulty in accessing employment and housing and greater difficulty in dealing with feelings of loneliness, and abandonment, perpetuating situations of social vulnerability. In this sense, and in line with international recommendations, the objective of this project is to promote successful social and professional paths in young people who are welcomed and ex- |

	welcomed, aiming at their autonomy in life and, consequently, social inclusion. This objective will be achieved through: 1. Training of informal groups, one made up of former sheltered youths and the other by professionals from shelters for participatory processes, democratic management and the execution of an action plan suited to the needs of each organization. 2. Intervention with young people in autonomy of life and young NEET, to promote life management and professional/career path.
Methodology	Work in Progress is a project defined and implemented considering transversal principles of institutional cooperation, empowerment, participation, empowerment and sustainability, with the aim of promoting involvement and co-responsibility in the development of successful social and professional paths for young people at risk. The project includes a set of strategies that aim to empower young people in autonomy, adopting a methodology that follows the proposed conceptual structure by the Center for Democracy and Governance (US Agency for International Development), which defines three essential components for an integrated and sustainable strategy: (i) the empowerment of citizens, (ii) the strengthening of civil society and (iii) the exercise of political influence (Fox&Helweg, 1997). In this way, the training component aims to increase the capacity of young people to organize themselves collectively, seeking to promote their involvement in existing social structures; the Intervention Component aims to make young people more informed about their rights and duties as active citizens in the development of their own social and professional life projects, as well as about the mechanisms and instruments available. Therefore, considering that trained individuals are in a better position to defend their own and others' rights and to develop mechanisms that promote true autonomy and inclusion, the actions developed aim to work and develop democratic and participatory skills in young people, giving rise to true autonomy and ownership of rights. In addition, participatory methodologies advocate an intervention consistent with the principles inherent to community intervention, promoting the involvement of target groups in all phases of project implementation needs assessment, priority setting, design, implementation and evaluation of the intervention. Thus, the project will also follow a participatory model giving for young the opportunity

	to express their opinions, facilitating communication, creating spaces where young people can be heard and implementing, where appropriate, their ideas (Lundy, 2007). In short, all project activities will be defined and implemented through participatory methodologies, with the support of the Young Experts informal group, to achieve sustainable and sustainable results and adapting to its needs.
Success Factors	● Training grant and support (sub. transport and meals) for young people who attend the training; ● Partnerships with other entities that, by virtue of their work, meet the target audience and/or previous fieldwork with the target audience. ● Financial capacity to support the high costs associated with developing an app.
Competences of the LifeComp addressed	● Flexibility ● Wellbeing ● Collaboration ● Communication ● Critical Thinking
Related resources /Link	https://apdes.pt/pt/portfolio/work-in-progress/ https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyFABRDqd94P3Tq0uW-FUFA https://www.instagram.com/reel/CT22X6do4HM/ https://www.facebook.com/apdes/videos/409398380580220

Spain

MEET-Uvigo	
Mentoring for newcomer students	
2015/on-going	
Goals of the best practice	The MEET-UVigo consists of the students of the last years of the degree acting as a mentor to the first-year students. To carry out this work, the mentor student receives intensive training in transversal skills. The idea is to coach students at last year of Bachelor level, or studying any year of Master level, to work as mentors of new arrival students at Bachelor first year. Both mentors and mentees have clear and strict education programs, and in fact it is a win-win process: the mentors increase their soft skills, which employers appreciated very well, and the mentees have references and help during their first year at the University, which provides a soft landing on this new chapter of their lives.

Target Group/Beneficiaries	The direct beneficiaries of the practice are: - Students on their last year of their studies (master or degree). - Newcomer students. Indirect beneficiaries: - Companies that hire the recent graduates that have received training in professional and transversal skills. Number of participants per year: | Profile	Number	Age	Gender
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Mentor	15-17	22 to 26	Around 50% of each gender
Mentees	75	18 to 21	Around 50% of each gender	
Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice	First-year students are immersed in a key transition process: the move from secondary to higher education. The change supposes the appearance of different difficulties that can have unforeseeable consequences such as causing the abandonment of studies. Among the needs encountered by first-year students are ignorance of the demands made by the university, inadequate development of specific skills regarding the type of degree taken, aspects of an attitudinal nature, continuous postponement of responsibilities or the disappearance of control tutor exercised by secondary education teachers.
Methodology	The coordinator selects mentor candidates among volunteer students during the second semester of the academic year prior their activity as mentors. For two weeks in June, and one additional week in September just before beginning the classes at the University, candidates join different workshops to train skills, grouped in four branches: • Tutoring skills: mentoring. • Intrapersonal skills: self-knowledge, emotional management and emotional intelligence. • Interpersonal skills: leadership, teamwork, social intelligence and motivation and communication.

	· Instrumental skills: methods and time management. The lecturers in charge of such education plan are volunteer professors of the Universidade de Vigo who have been previously trained in soft skills by psychologists, heads of human resources from companies, specialists in mentoring or in motivation, and so on, for several academic years. These professors joined five groups to prepare sessions with complementary contents, and they conducted the sessions with the future mentors by pairs.
Success Factors	From the mentees, the university observed: · a high satisfaction level, much higher than analysed when we used to have a tutoring program based on direct interaction between lecturers and new arriving students; · a good compromise, as they majoritarian attend all or almost all meetings and plenary talks; · and even an improved academic result, compared to those students not enrolled in the Mentoring Program. The mentors are also a key element in the Program. From the first year, we received interesting feedback from them: they felt fulfilled doing this task and helping their younger mates, but they also tell us that during in job interviews they received several questions about their training and experience as mentors. Company staff contacted us to confirm that they consider very well this soft skills knowledge and practice, as they are perfect complements to the technical skills expected in a new engineer.
Competences of the LifeComp addressed	- Self-regulation - Flexibility - Wellbeing - Communication - Collaboration - Critical Thinking - Managing learning

Related resources /Link	https://www.uvigo.gal/es/estudiar/organizacion-academica/planes-accion-tutorial/meet-uvigo-modelo-tutorial-basado-mentoria

Lanzaderas de empleo (Employment shuttles)		
Labour orientation		
2008/ongoing		
Goals of the best practice	It is a free job orientation program to help 20 unemployed people to reactivate their job search with new techniques, according to the new labour market, for which they have the advice of a specialized technician. Each group is made up of twenty unemployed people with different ages, training profiles and work trajectories, who meet for several months to train a new job search: innovative, proactive, organized, and supportive.	
Target Group/Beneficiaries	Any unemployed person from 18 till 65 years old. 730 Employment Shuttles throughout the country, throughout all the Autonomous Communities. More than 19,000 people have participated in all of them, of which nearly 60% have improved their employment situation: they have found work as an employee, they have started their business, they have extended regulated training, or they have completed Certificates of Professionalism with labour practices.	
Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice	In 2013, the "Employment Launches" program was born, with an innovative methodology based on several fundamental pillars: team + collaborative approach + change of attitude + proactivity = new results. The job search is planned as a team so that the unemployed person overcomes the loneliness and apathy associated with unemployment and regains motivation. But it must be a varied and heterogeneous team, with men and women of different ages, backgrounds, and work backgrounds, so that there is no competition between them, but rather a culture of solidarity and collaboration.	

Methodology	The calendar of activities must include various themes to provoke a change of attitude in the participants, a personal and professional transformation; a reinforcement of transversal and digital skills; and an improvement in their employability. They attend the program voluntarily and free of charge. With the support and advice of specialized technicians, they follow a complete calendar of activities to reactivate their job search: emotional intelligence dynamics to learn how to develop a job prospecting plan; updating resumes and simulations of job interviews; employability maps and contacts with companies, among others.
Success Factors	Conditions needed: - Meeting space to host at least 21 people. - Computers: at least one for every three people. - Internet connection. - Guideline of the methodology and activities to be implemented. Nearly 60% of participants have improved their employment situation.
Competences of the LifeComp addressed	- Self-regulation - Wellbeing - Communication - Collaboration - Managing learning
Related resources /Link	https://www.lanzaderasdeempleo.es/programa-lanzaderas

FOLM	
From outdoors to labour market	
2017/2022	Authors
Goals of the best practice	The FOLM project (From outdoors to labour market) is a model of education that will help to activate 990 people not in employment, education or training in three European regions: Cantabria (Spain), Varmia and Mazuria (Poland) and Mid-West (Ireland). The project is free and can be used by people between 18 and 29 years old

Target Group/Beneficiaries	The project is for everyone who meets three criteria: age 18-29, does not study or work, and lives in the Mid-West Region (Ireland), in Cantabria (Spain) or in Varmia and Mazuria (Poland).

Number of participants	Age	Gender
990	18-29 years old	Male: 49% Female: 46% NA: 5%

Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice	FOLM addresses the main challenge of youth who are disengaged in education, training or employment, by providing a stimulating and innovative means for them to recognize their strengths/talents, strengthen soft skills, build self-esteem/self-awareness and fortify attitudes for employment.
Methodology	The project follows a blended methodology. Once participants are recruited, they must register on the online platform and complete the theoretical part of the training program. Once they complete it, participants go to the mountains with one instructor to complete the outdoor training activity. FOLM's main expertise comes from Venture Trust and the University of Edinburgh's using their "Model for social and personal growth through Outdoor Learning".
Success Factors	The participation of public entities in the FOLM endows the initiative with transformative capacities that are impossible for private institutions to achieve (for example, the change of that regulation so fundamental for the success of the Project). But it also involves certain difficulties, because in contracting a public administration is subject to procedures that guarantee public interests, but do not allow the flexibility in contracting required for the execution of a pilot Project that a private entity does have.
Competences of the LifeComp addressed	- Wellbeing - Self-regulation

	- Flexibility - Empathy - Collaboration - Growth Mindset - Managing Learning
Related resources /Link	https://www.folmweb.com/

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<tr><td colspan="4" align="center">UNIFORS 2020
Universities for future work skills 2020</td></tr>
<tr><td align="center">2018/2021</td><td colspan="3" align="center">Authors</td></tr>
<tr><td align="center">Element</td><td colspan="3" align="center">Guiding questions</td></tr>
<tr><td>Goals of the best practice</td><td colspan="3">UNIversities for Future wORk Skills 2020 brings together a strong partnership (5 universities from Poland, Romania, Belgium, Spain and Portugal and two SMEs one from Spain and one from Greece) aiming to increase students' chances for a faster and better insertion on the labour market by improving their soft skills. The project will investigate employers, students and teaching staff perspective on specific soft skills gap and collect existing best practices in the field at EU level. The project has been funded under the Erasmus+ program (2018-I-PL01-KA203-050809).</td></tr>
<tr><td>Target Group/Beneficiaries</td><td colspan="3">The direct beneficiaries of the program are 80 students (16 per university) that have participated in the training sessions inside their institutions and 40 of them (8 per university) that have attended to the International Summer camp event.

Training program	**Number of participants**	**Age**	**Gender**
Blended training	80	19-22	Male: 46% Female: 52% NA: 2%

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</table>

	International Summer campus	40	19-22	Male: 42% Female: 55% NA: 3%
Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice	The program seeks to improve the employability of newly graduates by training them in soft skills demanded by the labour market. The project performed several surveys to detect the most demanded soft skills by companies and sectors. In total have participated in the surveys 179 business companies and 527 students from the participant universities.			
Methodology	The training curriculum bases on the results of the research conducted in the framework of the project, along Intellectual Outputs 1 and 2, and conducts to a blended course of 125 hours (20 hours face to face, 36 hours - e-learning) completed by individual study, ensuring 5 ECTS to the participants.

The objective is that students take consciousness that the individual and collective development of their professional and personal life is based on both technical skills related to their professions and soft skills related to their way of interaction. This leads to two fundamental ideas:
1. The society, i.e., people that conform it, have problems that professionals can solve using their knowledge (technical skills) but detecting them by non-technical (soft) skills: by resolving or mitigating problems of the Society in which he/she frames, not to create new ones.
2. The professional activities have direct influence in the own society, in how people live or in how they relate. This influence must go accompanied of ethical responsibility. | | | |
| **Success Factors** | The implementation of the practice requires an intensive involvement of teachers from HE institutions, along with administrative arrangements to recognize the 5ECTS to the participants on the training. | | | |

Competences of the LifeComp addressed	- Collaboration - Critical thinking - Communication
Related resources /Link	http://www.uwm.edu.pl/unifors2020/index.php/about-unifors/

Aprender trabajando Learn by working	
2021/on-going	**Authors**
Goals of the best practice	'Learn by Working' is an employment training initiative aimed at unemployed young people between 18 and 30 years of age in social difficulty, which alternates theoretical training with practical training in real work environments.
Target Group/Beneficiaries	A total of 139 training projects have been carried out in 41 different cities in 14 autonomous communities, with 2,859 participants between 18 and 30 years old, and 61 collaborating companies. In the design of "Learn by Working" measures have been implemented to try to ensure that the participation of young Roma women is at least 50% and never less than 40%. Finally, the initiative has had a high female participation (48%).
Resources and skills needed to carry out the best practice	This training and employment initiative, part of the "Acceder" program of the Fundación Secretariado Gitano (FSG), aims to increase the employability of young Roma people through a training experience in collaboration with leading companies in their sector. The main objective of improving the possibilities and employment opportunities of young Roma people excluded from the labour market is achieved by: - Providing basic and professional skills to vulnerable young people, training them in occupations related to professional qualifications with real possibilities of insertion.

	- Actively involving companies in carrying out theoretical and practical training, incorporating these people at risk of exclusion into their organizations. - Providing them with financial aid during the training phase in the company that helps their families (in situations of serious economic difficulties), allowing them to fight against poverty. - Experiencing a work situation where attitudes, habits and skills necessary to exercise a profession in a job are trained and put into operation. In this way gain real work experience. - Preparing these young people to obtain the title of Compulsory Secondary Education.
Methodology	The methodological model of 'Learn by Working' is based on two training phases lasting six months (840 hours) with different central contents: PHASE 1: Training in transversal skills, approach to the activity sector and the selected occupations. Basic competencies for the position. PHASE 2: On-the-job training. Theoretical and practical training related to different jobs within the same sector, with continuous reinforcement of basic skills. Throughout the process, tutoring and accompaniment are essential; and, on the other hand, the involvement of companies, committing themselves throughout the learning process so that it becomes a real door to social inclusion.
Success Factors	The "Acceder" employment program has focused on the fight against poverty and discrimination against the Roma community through their access to training and employment. Although this initiative has been aimed, since its inception in 2000, at Roma people over 16 years, no specific work had been done with young people, except for specific programs such as the Workshop Schools or the old social guarantee programmes. In 2013, when the project was launched, there were more than 30,000 young people in some 50 cities. The work on personalized employment itineraries has made it possible to carry out a diagnosis of the situation and needs of these young people. Over time, it can be seen how the younger Roma population has experienced

	changes compared to their elders, especially in terms of improved education (the illiteracy rate has been drastically reduced and enrolment in primary education is practically total) .
Competences of the LifeComp addressed	- Self-confidence - Learning to learn - Communication - Collaboration - Growth mindset
Related resources /Link	*https://www.gitanos.org/que-hacemos/areas/empleo_y_formacion_profesional/programas/127944.html.es.*

5. Integrating LifeComp in Youth Work

The main aim of the last part of the research has been to organize focus groups with at least 20 participants in each country and to gather the opinion and needs of youth workers while being involved in activities with young NEETs and how will they integrate LifeComp in their daily activities.

5.1. Activity objective

To gather the Target Group needs in the youth sector regarding providing support to young people neither in employment nor in education and training.

5.1.1. To understand the challenges of youth workers and project managers, their pains in their current training practices and jobs-to-be-done, and possible gains deriving from the InKey platform.

5.1.2. To have a good view of the current situation of youth organisations working with young people and how they can be more effective in supporting NEETs and to create Tailored Training programs for them in R2.

5.2. Focus Groups participants' profile

The profile of participants will be defined in advance and appropriate to the purpose of the research. This means the participation of youth workers, youth leaders, trainers and educators and representatives from youth organisations since the combination of both will enrich the perception by adding to the pedagogical objectives the value of the user experience.

The profile of participants will be defined in advance and will be appropriate to the purpose of the research. We recommend that the participants be a combination of youth workers and trainers that work with young people to prevent them from abandoning their studies. Since the definition of youth worker may vary from each participant country, for the purposes of the InKey project, the consortium will adopt the definition of youth work from the Council of Europe:

*Youth work is a broad term covering a wide variety of activities of a **social, cultural, educational, environmental and/or political** nature by, with and for young people, in groups or individually. Youth work is delivered by **paid***

*and volunteer youth workers and is based on **non-formal and informal** learning processes focused on young people and on voluntary participation. Youth work is quintessentially a social practice, working with young people and the societies in which they live, facilitating young people's **active participation and inclusion in their communities and in decision making**.*

5.3. Conclusions from the focus groups:

Many of the participants suggested to introduce cultural activities or non-formal workshops to complement the training curricula as the most effective methods to develop soft skills in young people. Among the barriers they find to implement such methods is the lack of space inside the official curricula in formal education and at the same time their own lack of time to develop activities for the classroom.

Many of them think that soft skills training requires live interaction among participants, so are reluctant to do training programs that are 100% online as young people have been severely impacted by restrictions during pandemic and they are craving social interaction.

Among the skills to develop and train are creativity, teamwork, cultural activities, creativity, flexibility, and communication.

Cyprus

Organization	Center for Social Innovation
Date of the activity	11.10.22
Format	☐ Online x In-person ☐ Hybrid
Participants	Number: 9 Profile: *no*. 9 high school educators
Facilitator/ Observer	Despiana Christofidou
Results	

Q1	**Have you heard about the LifeComp Framework or soft skills development before this focus group?** In responding to this question, one of the teachers claimed that they were not aware of the term "soft skills", and the other teachers mentioned that they are familiar with areas of the frameworks.
Q2	**Do you have any experience applying the LifeComp in training programs for your people? If yes, could you share some examples?** All participating teachers answered that they do apply some of the LifeComp soft skills in their profession. Two of the teachers pointed out that these skills are highly used during Greek and History lessons, and the rest of the teachers added that all lessons require the use of soft skills. Two of the teachers mentioned that the exams that students need to take two times a year, in which the answers they must give are specific, make it even harder for them to focus on soft skills development in their class. Therefore, the exams in combination with the limited time they have available, make it difficult for them to develop fruitful conversations during the class even though they themselves and the students want it. Two of the teachers stated that students do not think they benefit from soft skills development, and that is why they sometimes hesitate to focus on it. Some of the teachers said that soft skills development depends on student's discipline and level. One of the teachers mentioned that he tries to teach his students about puberty, sexual awareness, gender issues through developing an interactive conversation. Overall, the teachers agreed that the Covid- 19 pandemic has had a negative impact on students, since they appear to be unmotivated and absent-minded.
Q3	**What do you think are the possible methods, approaches, and tools to develop the competencies set out in the competence areas of LifeComp?** All the participating teachers focused on the challenges in applying the methods, approaches, and tools

	that are suggested to them by the ministry. One of the teachers, however, stated that she thinks **improvisation** and **role-play technique** are useful techniques that can be implemented in the class and help students develop their soft skills. But she added that such tools/ methods can be applied very rarely, since there is no time to do that more often. Also, one of the teachers mentioned that **Psychology and Philosophy lessons** (which are not taught anymore) had the potential to transform students into multi-faceted citizens through developing their critical thinking skills and their growth mindset. Moreover, one teacher mentioned that the **visualization** the lessons (using digital tools) is very beneficial for students and helps them remain engaged. Also, one of the teachers suggested to unite students from different classes, and through team-work techniques, help them develop conversations.
Q4	**What, in your opinion, are the challenges in applying the identified methods, approaches and tools?** All teachers agreed that time is a limited factor which makes it very hard for them to use any methods, approaches, and tools to develop the competences set out in the competence areas of LifeComp. The material they must cover is excessive and stands as an obstacle to soft skills development. Also, all teachers recognize that throughout primary school and gymnasium, students do not have the chance to develop these skills as much as they should, and that makes their task in high school even more difficult. Interestingly, all teachers agreed that students have some weaknesses in expressing themselves, and they are having difficulties in expressing their opinions and disagree with each other in a healthy way. Also, two times a week, there are 8 teaching periods a day, and this decreases the amount of time they have available for their lessons. They all agreed that the fact that the educational system in Cyprus is exam-centred means that the lessons must mostly focus on the exams, instead of soft skills development. They mentioned that the exams

	need to be modified to make it possible for the lessons to become more soft skills oriented, instead of hard skills oriented. One of the teachers stated that there are many student-centred and practical teaching methods that are suggested to them by the ministry, but the excessive material and the limited time they have available stand as an obstacle. Also, the teachers agreed that there are too many students in each class, and that makes it even more difficult to have a student-centred approach in class. Moreover, one teacher mentioned that there are many students from different cultures, and that the lessons are not designed in a way that are suitable for all cultures. Further, all teachers agreed that there are many teaching methods, tools, approaches that work in theory, but in practice, they cannot be applied. Further, teachers mentioned that parents are not aware of the importance of soft skills development, and they cannot help their students understand it either. Lastly, the teachers mentioned that many students to not pay a lot of attention in class, and mostly rely on their afternoon lessons which help them succeed in the exams. This, in effect, deprives students from their free time, and makes them uninterested and exhausted.
Q5	**What resources and tools could support youth professionals in overcoming such challenges?** The participating teachers could not think of any resources and tools that could help them overcome such challenges. They insisted that the inclusion of soft skills development in education does not depend on them, and that the only thing that could be done to improve this is to minimize the material they need to cover and increase the time they have available.
Additional notes/ Concluding remarks	• High school educators are convinced that the material they need to cover in their lessons is more than they can handle, and they agreed that they have no time to help students develop their soft skills.

	• The teachers insisted that the Ministry suggests many teaching methods/ techniques, tools which cannot be applied in practice.
	• The teachers emphasized the fact that students are not offered the opportunity to develop their soft skills in primary school, or gymnasium, and as soon as they reach high school, it is already late for them to be able to develop their critical thinking skills, growth mindset etc.
	• The educators agreed that the pandemic had a negative effect on student's drive and motivation, and it has made it even more difficult for them to be disciplined.
	• The teachers focused more on the problems they experience, instead of possible solutions.
	• The teachers insisted that to apply soft skills development in class, the students need to be mature and capable enough of doing this.

Organisation	Center for Social Innovation (CSI)
Date of the activity	10/10/22
Format	x Online ▢ In-person ▢ Hybrid
Participants	**Number:** 11 **Profile**: no. 4 youth workers, and no. 5 youth project managers 2 teachers.
Facilitator	Despiana Christofidou
Results	

Q1	**Do you think soft skills development can affect youth employability? And what do you think about soft skills development in Cypriot education?**
	In responding to this question, one youth worker mentioned that these are necessary skills for young employees nowadays. A project manager raised the issue that there's mostly an emphasis on hard skills development in Cypriot education instead of soft skills. Another participant who is both a trainer and a primary school teacher stated that there are two lessons in primary school focusing on soft skills development, "Life Education" and "Health education", but she admitted that teachers are not trained appropriately so that they are capable of teaching soft skills to their students. A youth worker mentioned that possessing soft skills is what make a work candidate stand out and provides him/her with more chances to be employed. She added that even though there is no adequate soft skills development in public schools, in the Cypriot Youth Council there is a special focus on soft skills, and efforts that aim to include soft skills development in public schools. One educator also mentioned that there is a tendency in schools to follow a traditional educational program which focused on hard skills, and was used many years ago, and is not beneficial for students anymore. She also stated that there are some efforts to include soft skills development in several lessons, but she admits that that such efforts are discussed in theory and not really applied. Another educator who was also a principal for many years, mentioned that teachers are aware of the importance of soft skills, and make efforts in using them in their class. However, he thinks that sometimes there is more emphasis in hard skills development and soft skills development is neglected. Another youth worker also mentioned that teachers do not have the necessary resources to teach soft skills to their students. A project manager stated that there are many teachers who try to implement soft skills development in their classes. Another project manager mentioned the benefits of game-based learning which he thinks is the most effective methodology when it comes to soft skills.

Q2	**Do you have any experience applying the LifeComp in training programs for young people? Or any of the soft skills within LifeComp framework? If yes, could you share some examples?**
	One of the project managers mentioned that these are skills they are trying to promote throughout most projects. Another project manager mentioned that one of the projects she is managing has to do with gaming, and throughout this project they have developed 6 different games, each one focusing on developing a specific soft skill when it comes to the employment sector. One of these skills they are trying to develop is emotional intelligence, which is one of the most important skills in her opinion and is very related to LifeComp. A youth worker mentioned that he is working with eight key competences, which are very much related to LifeComp framework. Another youth worker mentioned who works at the Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus, mentioned that in his organization, they offer several projects who are sponsored by companies and training institutions that aim at developing young people's soft skills. The participant who used to work as a principal, mentioned that in primary education, children are often instructed to perform groups activities, in which they must think of solutions for a specific problem, and he stated that these are tasks that develop the critical thinking skills of students as well as their social skills. Another social worker mentioned that there are training opportunities offered to educators that are sponsored by the Erasmus + in Cyprus, through organizations such as the Youth Council and the Institute for the Management of European projects (IDEP). These initiatives aim at training teachers on how to teach soft skills development in all their classes.

Lastly, when it comes to game-based learning, a project manager mentioned that many people are not properly aware of the benefits of these technique, and they underestimate it. |

Q3	**What do you think are the possible methods, approaches, and tools to develop the competencies set out in the competence areas of LifeComp?**
	One of the project managers mentioned that one methodology she can think of is **peer evaluation**. According to her, this methodology can help students work together to share their creative work with peers for constructive feedback, and they can use this feedback to revise and improve their work. Another project manager suggested the use of **debates** in class, which can help students learn how to support opposing opinions.
	Another idea was the use of **teaching platforms/ capacity building programmes** by the teachers, which could train teachers on how to develop the students' soft skills. Moreover, a youth worker suggested the use of non-formal education tools. Further, she mentioned that career counsellors should be trained to be able to promote their clients' soft skills which could help them find a competitive job position.
	In addition, a youth worker mentioned that students should practice their **meditation skills** through mindful sessions to improve their wellbeing. She also added that students should have freedom of expression in class, and they should have more personal time in the afternoon. She also added that role-play technique can be very useful for students.
	Another participant suggested the use of **reflective practice** in schools, which can consist of methods and techniques that help individuals reflect on their learning experiences and provide their feedback.
	He also mentioned the use of **interactive/ group activities** between students from different schools, even different schools in several European countries. He also suggested the **student evaluation of teaching (SET) methodology**, which could enable students evaluate their teachers.
Q4	**What, in your opinion, are the challenges in applying the identified methods, approaches and tools?**
	When it comes to peer evaluation, a participant commented that it may be difficult for students to handle peer evaluation,

	since they may feel judged by their students, or some students may say negative comments to the other students instead of constructive comments. She added that teachers should monitor this activity in a way that it will help students develop a sense of respect with each other. Another challenge that was mentioned by an educator was the limited time teachers have in their availability, and the excessive material they are instructed to teach. Moreover, another participant mentioned that teachers are not trained on how to teach soft skills to their students, and she emphasized the importance of educating teachers on how to do that. A challenge that was mentioned by a youth worker was the limited time a young person may have available which may stand as an obstacle to them participating in a training programme. Also, some of the projects that are offered by ANAD require the participant to pay some money to participate, and some people may not be willing or able to give this money. Another challenge that was mentioned was the difficulty in performing group work activities due to COVID-19.
Q5	**What resources and tools could support youth professionals in overcoming such challenges?** - **Mentoring** for both students and teachers. - The development of more sponsored programmes which are offered to participants with no charge. - Systematic **evaluation of teachers** - Invite **non-formal education teachers** at schools to educate children and students - Implementation of a specific framework in schools (such as LifeComp) which could have a designated time and specific resources. - Use of Simulations - Implementation of focus groups between students
Additional notes/ Concluding remarks	The second focus group featured a combination of youth workers, project managers and teachers. All participants agreed that generally, youth people haven't cultivated their soft skills as much as they should, and they do not have many opportunities to do so, especially in the context of education. They agreed that when it comes to public education, youth

	professionals as well as the Ministry of Education are more hesitant to implement changes. However, most participants agreed that initiatives that are offered by semi-governmental organizations or non-formal education institutions, are more progressive and beneficial to young people.

Organisation	Center for Social Innovation
Date of the activity	19/10/22
Format	x Online ▢ In-person ▢ Hybrid
Participants	**Number**: 4 **Profile**: no. 1 project manager and 3 teachers
Facilitator	Despiana Christofidou
Observer/ Facilitator	Despiana Christofidou
Results	
Q1	**Have you heard about the LifeComp framework before this focus group?** Three of the project managers were not familiar with LifeComp Framework, but all of them were familiar with the soft skills that are included in the framework. One of the teachers has heard this framework before.
Q2	**Do you have any experience applying the LifeComp in training programs for young people? If yes, could you share some examples?** One of the participants mentioned that while working as a teacher, she focused a lot on her student's **wellbeing**, and she was trying to help them on how to manage their emotions

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	and their behaviours. Also, she mentioned that she was using many **group activities** in her lessons, which helped students develop their social skills and their empathy.

The project manager mentioned that she has applied communication skills, teamwork skills and critical thinking skills before for the purposes of her projects.

One of the teachers mentioned that she used many **collaboration** and **team building activities** in her lessons. She also tried to give her students texts that talk about different cultures, to help her students, develop their growth mindset skill. She also encouraged her students to form conversations in English, which had to do with social issues, to enlarge their critical thinking skills. With younger kids, she always used games to help her students engage in the class.

Another teacher mentioned that she also tried to help her students develop her communicative skills by encouraging them to work together in several activities, in which they had to share their opinion and respect the opinions of others. Moreover, she tried to cultivate her students' empathy by letting her students know that not all kids have the same abilities, and do not think in the same way. That way, they learned to respect each other. Lastly, she tried to develop her students' critical thinking skills by allowing them to adapt some grammatical rules of the English language. |
| **Q3** | **What do you think are the possible methods, approaches, and tools to develop the competencies set out in the competence areas of LifeComp?**

One of the participants suggested the use of **Montessori method,** which is based on self-directed activity, hands-on learning and collaborative play. This method requires the teacher to trust the student's abilities and encourage him/her to perform an activity by themselves. This method respects the child's personal freedom, his/her rhythm, and his/her interests. However, she added that the tools used in the Montessori method are not very contemporary.

The project manager mentioned that such skills should be developed in a playful and creative manner. She suggested the game format, which provides the opportunity to fully engage people throughout the learning activity and foster |

	interactions among them, allowing the activation and further development of communication and teamwork skills. A teacher mentioned the wellbeing evaluation technique. And she also mentioned the use of games in class. Lastly, another idea that was mentioned was the addition of cultural-awareness activities, which could help students develop their growth mindset skills.
Q4	**What, in your opinion, are the challenges in applying the identified methods, approaches and tools?** One challenge that was mentioned in relation to the game format technique, was reduced engagement of the youth, and difficulties in validating learning. Another teacher mentioned that some of the students' parents are not aware of the importance of soft skills. Another challenge that was mentioned was the difficulties in applying the gamification method. One of the difficulties she mentioned was that children may not be disciplined enough to perform this activity without creating a chaos in the classroom, and some parents may not be open-minded enough to understand the importance of such activities.
Q5	**What resources and tools could support youth professionals in overcoming such challenges?**
Additional notes	- Innovative teaching techniques that can make Montessori method even more contemporary. - Regarding game format, some resources that could be used are follow- up activities, reflection upon action (Reflecting on the methods/exercises and their impacts etc.), the creation of different educational settings, and the use different non-formal education methods (role play, simulation games, exercises etc.) to keep people engaged. - Employment of psychologists at schools which could help students with their wellbeing.

Italy

To gather the needs of youth professionals in the field of the integration of the LifeComp in youth work, each partner organisation of the INKEY project implemented two focus groups, engaging a total number of 24 youth professionals, such as youth workers, youth leaders, trainers, educators and youth project managers.

All the partner organisations adopted a common questioning route:

Tab. 1 Focus Groups' Questioning Route

Main topic	Questions (Qin)
Knowledge and experience with LifeComp	**Q1**. Have you ever heard about the European Framework for the Personal, Social and Learning to Learn Competence ("LifeComp Framework") before this focus group? **Q2.** Do you have any experience applying the LifeComp in training programs for young people? If yes, could you share some examples?
LifeComp in action: opportunities, challenges and support for youth professionals	The set of questions aims at collecting the participants' opinions about: • possible methods, approaches and tools to develop the competences set out in each competence area of LifeComp (opportunities); • challenges in applying the identified methods, approaches and tools (challenges); • resources and tools that could support youth professionals in overcoming the challenges (support). **Q3**. What do you think are the possible methods, approaches and tools to develop the competencies set out in the competence areas of LifeComp?

	Q4. What, in your opinion, are the challenges in applying the identified methods, approaches and tools?
	Q5. What resources and tools could support youth professionals in overcoming such challenges?

In Italy, Lascò implemented the two focus groups online in October 2022, engaging 13 youth workers and 11 trainers working in the Youth field. The key discussions and conclusions for each question are presented in the paragraphs below. Please, note participants were assigned an individual number (P#) to simplify the transcription and analysis of the results, and maintain anonymity and confidentiality.

In relation to **Q1** and **Q2**, assessing the knowledge of the LifeComp Framework and the experience of the participants in applying the LifeComp in training programs for young people:

92% of the participants had never heard about LifeComp before the focus groups, while 8% had heard about it in the context of their work with European projects, but **none of the participants reported having specific experience in using LifeComp** as a basis for the development of curricula or learning activities.

With regards to *Q3*, *Q4* and *Q5*, the major results of the discussions are reported per each competence in the following pages.

Personal	**Self-regulation**
Opportunities	

1. **Mindfulness**. Practising mindfulness can encourage youth's growth, emotion regulation, self-awareness, and understanding of feelings, thoughts and behaviours.

2. **Journaling**. Creating and maintaining a journal can give young people an opportunity to create thoughtful introspections and converse with themselves. Among the examples shared by the

participants, there are mood journals, learning diaries and goal tracking journals.

3. **Goal setting**. Supporting young people in setting and assessing their goals stimulates self-reflection and self-efficacy and reinforces growth mindsets. P14 highlighted the importance of visual tools and artefacts showing progress toward goals or targets, while P3 reported using goal-setting worksheets to support their target group (18-25-year-old youth) in setting their SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound) and goal achievement strategy, detailing the actionable steps to achieve their goals, the means of verification and assessment methods.

4. **Simulations and role plays**. Simulation and role playing can support young people in experiencing how different environments and situations affect their emotions, feelings and behaviours.

5. **Debriefing**. Debriefing helps participants in a learning experience deconstruct the activity and connect it into their mental models.

6. **Reflection groups**. Gatherings in small groups of participants to discuss and share training processes and learning outcomes can facilitate individual and group learning and stimulate self-reflection through guided discussions with peers.

7. **Coaching**. Coaching can support young people in identifying their natural skills and their values, helping them to fully understand who they are.

Challenges

1. **Time** and **spaces** needed to implement mindfulness practice were reported by one of the participants (P24) as being one of the main barriers for engaging youth in practising mindfulness, along with the **demotivation** and **scepticism** some youth show for these practices.

2. The **lack of motivation** and **know-how** was identified by some of the participants as a challenge for youth in maintaining a journaling habit.

3. Youth's **ability to break their goals down** in smaller, realistic action steps affects the effectiveness of their attempts to set and achieve their goals. On the other hand, as stated by P6, even if young people, with youth workers' support, can manage to set a realistic pathway

towards their goal, "[…] the fear of failure, self-sabotage and discouraging thoughts are significant barriers in pursuing their goals".

4. To support youth in experiencing how different environments and situations affect their emotions, feelings and behaviours through simulation-based learning experiences and role playing, among the challenges mentioned by individual participants, youth workers should be able to overcome:

- young people's fear of peers' judgement;

- young people's resistance to play roles that bring them out of their comfort zones;

- the challenges - experienced by youth workers - related to properly designing an effective simulation-based learning environment, especially in digital contexts.

5. The **facilitators' skillset** was identified as the main success factor for implementing debriefs and reflection groups. One of the main challenges for youth workers - as identified by the participants - is the development of the right skills to properly assist young people in their self-discovery and critical reflection process, encouraging them to express their thoughts and concerns, as well as to intervene to depersonalise discussions when needed. Furthermore, as highlighted by P3, **participants may feel vulnerable and exposed** during debriefing and reflection groups: a challenge in implementing such activities is setting the stage for participants to feel safe and overcome the fear of judgement from their peers or from the facilitator.

6. **Difficulty in building trust** and **connecting with the coach** (P5), assessing young people's needs and competences (P1) and maintaining frequent contact with the coachee (P22) were reported as the main challenges for the implementation of structured coaching processes with young people.

Support

1. **Ideas and good practices for outdoor and nature-based activities** could support youth workers in creating a more stimulating environment to practise mindfulness.

2. **Guided journaling exercises and prompts**, especially on electronic devices (i.e., mobile phones, tablets or laptops), could support young people to start and build their journaling habit.

3. Developing **goal-setting worksheets** to support young people in setting their SMART goals and prompts for their goal achievement strategy, guiding them to detail the actionable steps to achieve their goals, the means of verification and assessment methods.

4. Equipping youth workers with **guidelines and workshop scenarios for simulation-based learning** activities.

5. Training opportunities, **knowledge sharing events and community of practices** for youth workers to foster their facilitation, mentoring and coaching skills.

Personal	Flexibility
Opportunities	

1. **Fostering creative thinking**. Developing the ability to use creative thinking can allow young people to better understand situations, options, projects and persons, i.e., in a way that is more responsive to reality, supporting young people in maintaining an open mind that facilitates better communication and relationships.

2. **Problem-based learning**. Problem-based learning can help young people to break down, decode and analyse the elements of a context from a problem to be solved, thus strengthening their ability to see contexts and problems as sets of simpler parts.

3. **Creative problem solving**. Fostering creative problem-solving skills can support young people in being more flexible in the way they think about situations. Regardless of the problem young people are facing in life, creative problem solving can give them a broader view of the situation and find creative and flexible solutions to meet their goals, even when problems appear.

4. **Peer learning**. Acquiring knowledge and skills through active help and support among peers, without a "knowledge authority", supports young people in becoming aware of and adaptable to the accuracy

of the feedback they receive, prompting discussion and reflection on interpretation.

5. **Experiential learning**. Experiential learning experiences can support young people in adapting to constantly changing circumstances and adjusting the application of knowledge, skills and abilities to different contextual realities.

Challenges

1. **Cognitive rigidity**. Cognitive rigidity, such as the difficulty in changing mental sets, was identified as the major barrier to developing the flexibility competence.

2. **Reluctance to step outside the comfort zone**. Building flexibility requires facing challenges out of one's comfort zone. The fear of uncertainty, losing control or failing can represent a significant barrier to developing flexible mindsets.

3. **Decision making driven by past experiences, value structure, attitudes and skills**. Automatic and unconscious overuse of analogous thinking, driving people to make decisions based on their past experiences, value structure, attitudes and skills, and ultimately to transform reality according to their dominant point of view.

Support

1. **Activity plans** that require young people to challenge and reframe their thoughts, including workshops aimed at making youth aware of the existence of cognitive biases that may influence their reasoning.

2. Learning experiences that allow young people to **transfer what they've learned into different contexts**, requiring them to create connections between networks of knowledge and think more creatively.

3. Ideas for periodic challenges and **checklists** requiring young people to take gradual steps out of their comfort zone.

Personal	Wellbeing

Opportunities

Four main dimensions were addressed during the focus groups:

1. physical well-being;

2. mental well-being;

3. spiritual well-being;

4. socio-emotional well-being.

The following paragraphs collect the main development opportunities identified for each of the four dimensions.

[1] **Physical well-being**. Increasing young people's awareness about the importance of building and maintaining healthy habits (e.g., healthy food, physical activity and resting). Among the proposed solutions, there are sports-based or outdoor non-formal education activities.

[2] **Mental well-being**. Participants addressed both the need to foster young people's resilience (e.g., promoting self-esteem or offering social support) and the need to act upon the social, environmental and economic factors that can affect young people's mental health.

[3] **Spiritual well-being** helps young people connect with themselves and their value system. To support the development of spiritual well-being, activities based on the use of music (to relax and reflect, to activate and cooperate, or to promote learning) or nature (outdoor experiential activities that allow individuals and groups to experience the harmony and rhythm of nature) could be helpful.

[4] **Socio-emotional wellbeing**. Strengthening young people's emotional intelligence, empathetic communication, creative cooperation and coping skills can help foster their socio-emotional wellbeing.

Challenges

[1] Many youth workers are not experts in sport or outdoor learning, and they may not be aware of sport activities which could benefit their target groups.

Furthermore, they may not have access to the appropriate facilities or equipment for sports or outdoor activities.

[**2**] [**3**] Major stressors deriving from life-changing events or addictions could require specialised support that organisations may not always have inside. In addition, activities fostering mental and spiritual well-being require time, especially to build the needed trust and connection between the beneficiary and the facilitators of the activities.

[**4**] Young people with fewer opportunities may face unique barriers like poverty, marginalisation and social exclusion.

Support

[**1**] Information and practical tips for youth workers and youth educators to help them **design and use sport and outdoor activities as an educational tool** in their work with young people, especially with young people with fewer opportunities.

[**2**][**3**] Strategies and support tools to develop **cooperation structures** with multiple relevant stakeholders who could support the intervention upon the social, environmental and economic factors that can affect young people's mental and spiritual well-being and integrate youth workers' activities with relevant expertise. In addition, one of the participants highlighted the benefits of supporting youth in practising **positive affirmations** to foster their positive thinking and self-empowerment.

[**4**] Equipping youth workers and educators with **Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) strategies**.

Transversally for the four dimensions and challenges, the participants also addressed the need for **training and mentoring youth workers and youth professionals** for developing their wellbeing competence, considered to be essential to promote youth's wellbeing.

Social	Empathy

Opportunities

1. **Strengthening the ability to recognise the emotional state of oneself and others**. To understand and manage one's own and

others' emotions, it is necessary to be able to recognise, name and measure them. Tools such as Plutchik's emotion wheel - which highlights some of the main emotional states we experience - can be useful to support the correct identification of emotional areas in the first place.

2. **Cultivating youth's moral imagination.** Helping young people cultivate their moral imagination means supporting them in visualising and trying to understand possible scenarios, interests, and values of another person, foreshadowing the feeling or emotions that might arise from the interaction with objects, people and contexts.

3. **Global Citizenship Education** (GCE). GCE allows the development of attitudes of care and empathy for others and supports the recognition and appreciation of multiple and diverse identities.

4. **Role playing**. Role plays stimulate understanding and evaluation of others' feelings. Through scenic representations of real situations, in which participants are invited to play an assigned role, young people can critically reflect on their own role and behaviour in the real world, training and managing their emotions.

5. **Developing cultural awareness**. Supporting young people in understanding how cultural beliefs, values and personal identity shape people's social and emotional lens and behaviours.

6. **Design Thinking**. Engaging young people in design thinking processes to design human-centred innovations for societal or environmental issues can support the development of their empathy competence. Particularly, in the first step of the process, namely "Empathise", participants are called to discover the needs of the users and understand people on the cognitive, emotional and functional levels.

7. **Service Learning**. Service Learning, by combining learning processes and community service, can motivate, inspire and strengthen empathy and citizenship competences.

8. **Building youth's intercultural empathy**. Intercultural empathy is about placing ourselves in another person's cultural background and being able to communicate our understanding of that cultural world effectively. Intercultural empathy "leads us not only to experience the feelings of another but also to reflect on those feelings and compare them to our own". Youth workers can support the development of

youth's intercultural empathy by fostering their ability to apply knowledge about their own and others' cultures and consciously shift into a different culture. In this way, young people can empathise with people from different cultures or take other people's perspective to understand others and be understood beyond cultural boundaries.

Challenges

1. **Cognitive biases** clouding the ability to empathise.

2. Assessing and **measuring** empathy. One of the reported difficulties in developing youth's empathy competence stem from the difficulty of measuring subjective qualities. Although it is certainly possible to develop a rubric to assign a numerical value to the components of the competence, it is fundamentally difficult to measure the development progress.

Support

1. **Skills and tools for emotional recognition**. Developing youth workers' abilities to recognise and measure negative emotional states within groups and, at the same time, providing assessment tools (e.g., individual or group exercises and tests) for recognising one's own or others' emotional state (e.g., in response to an object, person or situation).

2. **Active listening exercises**. Exercises (e.g., peer interviews) requiring participants to listen to a member of their group recount their own direct experience, noting facts, perceived emotions, critical issues and identified needs.

3. **Journaling**. P8 proposed the introduction of an 'emotion notebook', where individually or in groups, young people can keep track of the emotions they have experienced and give a new name or visual representation to the emotions they cannot describe.

4. **Peer and intergenerational interviews**. Engaging young people in interviewing peers or representatives of different generations to discover key needs, pains and frustrations at a deep, emotional level to understand the choices that people make and why they make them. It requires putting aside their own judgements and beliefs to relate to the person's individual needs and frustrations.

Social	Communication

1. Increase young people's **knowledge** of different communication types (e.g., verbal, nonverbal, written or visual), model (sender-receiver or interactive) and methods (e.g., pull, push or interactive) and **how to use them** to articulate thoughts and ideas effectively in different contexts and environments.

2. **Supporting young people in using communication for diverse purposes** (e.g., to inform, describe, convince or tell a story), including:

- Identifying and analysing targeted audience(s);

- defining the communication objective, style and tone;

- selecting the right communication channel;

- tailoring the message for different audiences and different channels.

3. **Strengthening visual communication skills**. Today, we are surrounded by visual information, online as well as offline. Developing the skills to share thoughts, ideas or insights in a visual form (e.g., infographics, presentations, videos or images) can support them in communicating clearly and concisely, and make complex or abstract concepts easier to understand.

4. **Training active listening skills**. Training active listening skills, where listeners actively participate in the communication process, facilitates effective communication, and deciphering meaning, knowledge, values, attitudes and intentions.

5. **The Golden Circle method**. Simon Sinek's Golden Circle method helps frame communication around three key dimensions, the *why*, the *how* and the *what*, matching the way in which our brain is structured (the "what" is our neocortex and rational thinking, while the "why" and "how" are the limbic part of the brain).

6. **The Four Ds of Disconnection**. The Four Ds of Disconnection, theorised by Jim and Jori Mansk, Certified Trainers in Nonviolent Communication (CNVC), and based on the work of Marshall Rosenberg,

Ph.D., and Lucy Leu, CNVC Certified Trainer, represent four disconnection forms that should be avoided for a Non-Violent Communication:

- *Diagnosis* (labelling, criticising, putdowns, insults, shaming);

- *Denial of responsibility* (denial of choice or capacity, victimhood, blaming, attributing the cause of one's feelings or actions to someone else or circumstances)

- *Demand* (threat of blame or punishment for lack of compliance);

- *Deserve* (judging who is right or wrong, and thus has "earned" punishment or reward).

Jim & Jori Manske (2016), The Four Ds of Disconnection

Challenges

1. In the reality of social networking and instant messaging, where communication has become simpler, instantaneous and shorter, there are two main challenges:

- **online communicators**, especially on social networks and instant messaging platforms, **tend to prefer efficient communication over empathetic communication**;

- **misunderstandings are more frequent**, since we have fewer elements to evaluate the emotions behind a message (e.g., the signals offered by non-verbal communication) compared to offline communication.

2. **Cultural differences**. The beliefs, habits, and behavioural norms with which people identify influence the way they communicate. People with different cultural backgrounds communicate in different styles, have different attitudes toward conflict or disclosure, and use different language, words, gestures and behaviours. Being unaware of how culture influences the way individuals communicate and others may interpret their words can cause misunderstandings.

Support

1. **Activity plans or workshop scenarios** to increase young people's knowledge of different communication types, models, methods and channels and how to use them to articulate thoughts and ideas effectively in different contexts and environments.

2. Exercises and support tools to **practise visual communication**.

3. **Visual design tools** to be used before a speech or presentation to support young people in identifying the target audience, their objectives, preferred language and communication needs, and ultimately organising their presentation.

4. Developing youth's ability to **interpret online communications**, and therefore to reconstruct the intentions and context of an online communication and interact with it with awareness.

5. Developing **culturally sensitive communication**, promoting effective interactions based on mutual understanding and respect of each other's values, beliefs and preferences.

Social	Collaboration
Opportunities	

1. **Cooperative learning - Jigsaw Method**. The Jigsaw process encourages listening, involvement, empathy, giving everyone an essential part to play in the learning activity. Young people are required to work together to achieve a common goal and each person depends on the others. This cooperation is determined by the design itself and facilitates interaction between participants, leading them to value the contributions of others as a common task.

2. **Team charters**. A team charter is like the statute of a team, collaboratively developed by the group members. The document defines a team's goals, values, mission statement, ground rules and operational guidelines (e.g., decision-making process or conflict management). It supports the creation of shared vision, clear direction, and alignment: a powerful tool to empower a group of

people to define the norms upon which they will work and grow as a team.

3. **Co-creation**. Youth-led, collaborative initiatives leading to collaboratively created outputs (e.g., activity proposals, project ideas or multimedia content) fosters active and experiential learning, and facilitates youth engagement, helping young people practise creative thinking and develop self-confidence.

4. **Project-based learning**. Project-based learning activities that promote collective problem-solving can help young people to confront misconceptions with peers, cooperate with others in finding solutions and develop communication skills.

5. **Online collaboration tools**. By learning the basics of remote working (e.g., organising conference calls or co-developing online documents), young people can gain the core technical and communication skills needed in the current workplace.

Challenges

1. **Pressure to conform to the majority**. Some people may feel pressured to conform to the opinion of the majority within their group to avoid conflicts.

2. In **online environments**, collaboration is affected by a greater difficulty in establishing trust among peers, as well by the level of digital competence of the team members and the limited possibility of interactions offered by the relevant platform.

3. **Unbalanced participation**. Some participants may be quieter and more introverted than others, thus less keen on actively expressing their ideas and thoughts within a group, while others may dominate the discussions. Furthermore, some participants may rely too much on others to complete the work and do not adequately contribute to the activities.

4. **Personality conflicts**, fuelling reluctance to work together.

5. **Providing more individualised support in group activities**. Difficulty in providing more individualised educational responses and any additional learning support tailored to participants' different learning styles.

Support
1. **Guidelines and tools to support youth workers in fostering positive interdependence in their groups**, supporting cooperation mechanisms between young people so that no one can succeed individually in a specific task without the whole group's success, with coordinated efforts and contribution.
2. **Cooperative learning strategies** to keep groups engaged and equally involved also in online environments and **evaluation tools** to assess the quality and effectiveness of the group dynamics, processes and results.
3. **Guidelines to structures and manage co-creation processes** with young people.
4. **Ideas of project-based learning activities** requiring collaborative problem solving on issues related to Sustainable Development Goals, including tools that can be used in online and offline learning contexts.

Learning to Learn	Growth Mindset
Opportunities	
1. **Fostering proactivity.** Developing proactivity and, therefore, the awareness that they have responsibility and control over their behaviour, which are conscious choices based on personal values and not random products of situations they must experience passively, and they can cultivate their qualities through their efforts.	
2. **Developing personal growth planning skills**. Equipping young people with the skills needed to draw up a personal growth plan that identifies personal mission statements, goals and outcomes they want to achieve and to plan the actions, milestones and time to achieve them.	

3. **Fostering time management skills**. Supporting youth in organising and prioritising the actions of their growth plan, helping them distinguish what is important, not important, urgent and not urgent.

Challenges

1. **Fixed mindset**. People who have a fixed mindset believe in talent and innate abilities: in their perspective, their qualities and characteristics are fixed and, therefore, cannot change. This can lead to avoiding challenges and giving up easily when faced with the natural difficulties on their growth path.

2. **Impostor phenomenon**. The "impostor phenomenon", such as the psychological occurrence driving young people into doubting their skills, talents or achievements, can be a barrier to the development of a growth mindset, leading to reluctance to join new challenges and self-sabotage.

3. **Fear of change**. The fear of losing the illusory security in what we have, versus the enormous uncertainty that awaits us outside our comfort zone, can be a significant barrier to the development of a growth-oriented mindset.

4. **Lack of self- or group confidence**. People are highly likely to resist change when they believe they, or their group, cannot competently manage change.

Support

1. **Practising proactive language**. Supporting young people in using proactive and non-reactive language concerning contexts, problems or situations, thus helping them to become aware that they have control over their actions and the ability and responsibility to choose their own reactions.

2. **Demystifying failures.** Increase the awareness that setbacks and failures are necessary to learn and grow, and therefore are natural components of a learning journey.

3. **Engaging and motivational activities** (e.g., artistic or sporting activities, youth exchanges, outdoor or nature-based community activities) to support individual and collective growth plans.

Learning to Learn	Critical Thinking
Opportunities	

1. Developing young people's **questioning mindset**, and their ability to go beyond the surface of things by frequently asking questions.

2. **Case methods**. One of the focus groups' participants proposed the "Incident case method", which consists of reading to learners a situation in which conflicts are about to erupt, and decisions need to be made quickly. The participants then must gather information to help them decide on the actions to undertake. This method encourages participants to analyse a problem from multiple perspectives and think critically about possible opportunities and solutions.

3. **Challenge-based learning**. Challenge-based learning activities can be an opportunity for young people to actively construct knowledge while solving real-world challenges, supporting participants to develop the mindset that makes them accustomed to think critically.

4. **Discussion techniques**. Discussion techniques, like brainstorming, guided discussion or T-group, consisting in the exchange of experiences and opinions in a group, can support young people in assessing information and arguments to support reasoned conclusions and develop creative solutions. Another discussion technique that could be useful in developing creative thinking is exploratory discussion, which supports young people in sharpening their skills in analysing scenarios from the real world to identify alternative explanations.

5. **Building diverse teams** to represent multiple perspectives, skills, talents, and experiences.

6. **Problem-based learning**. Problem-based learning is a learner-centred approach in which young people learn about a subject by working in groups to solve an open-ended problem. A well-designed PBL project can offer participants the opportunity to develop their teamwork, project management, critical thinking and analysis skills.

7. ***Six Thinking Hats* by Edward De Bono**. A "thinking hat" is a metaphor for a certain way of thinking. By mentally wearing different hats, youth workers can engage young people in looking at a problem or a solution from different perspectives (e.g., logic, optimistic, emotional, creative or pessimistic)

Challenges

1. **Cognitive biases**. Cognitive biases can prohibit critical thinking because they prevent people from being fair and open-minded and having a questioning mindset.

2. **Social conditioning.** Assumptions and stereotypes - often we are unaware of - blind people's ability to think outside of a social spectrum and realise they are being conditioned to think a certain way.

3. **Algorithms, fake news and filter bubbles**. Changes in information in the digital age have made it more complex to assess the veracity of the content of texts, images or videos. Moreover, the so-called 'filter bubble', which is the result of the ever-increasing personalisation of information and advertising on the Internet, by displaying content according to user preferences, risks influencing people's behaviour, polarising opinions and locking users into a 'bubble' made up only of opinions and beliefs like their own.

4. Many people are used to thinking in ordinary ways and **unconsciously navigate their habits.** Developing critical thinking requires time, and, in group activities, there may even be conflicts over different perspectives.

Support

1. Activities to increase young people's **awareness of the existence of cognitive biases** and the way they can influence their thinking and equip them with the **tools to learn how to control them** as much as possible.

2. **Activity plans and instructions** for facilitators to engage young people in challenge- or problem-based learning experiences, and to stimulate self-reflection and metacognition.

3. **Inquiry-based learning activities** to engage young people in exploring topics, issues or problems through high-level questioning, asking questions to themselves and others to get multiple perspectives and draw conclusions.

4. Increasing young people's **awareness of the risks of misinformation, disinformation and intellectual isolation** related to fake news and filter bubbles on the Net and equipping them with the tools to analyse and evaluate sources of news and information, and all types of media.

Learning to Learn	Managing Learning
Opportunities	

1. Fostering a **positive learning identity**. Helping young people in acknowledging their role as lifelong learners, supporting them in adopting a lifelong learning attitude and understanding how they learn.

2. **Recognising learning strategies**. Supporting young people in understanding their learning strategies, and therefore how they gather, organise, interpret and store information and how they come to conclusions.

3. Developing young people's **learning flexibility**. Supporting youth in adapting their learning style in response to different contexts and situations.

4. **Ownership of learning objectives**. Supporting young people in setting and planning their own learning objectives, to foster the ownership and perceived control over the learning journey.

5. **Developing curiosity**. Curiosity is a great driving force for learning. We start learning when we are curious about something, and we want to understand how things work.

6. **Developing the ability to organise one's own learning**. Supporting youth in planning and managing their time for learning and structuring their learning path.

7. **Fostering self-monitoring and reflection skills**. Supporting young people to question their knowledge level, plan, monitor and evaluate their learning, and ask for support when needed.

8. **Enhancing group learning**.

Challenges

1. **Motivation to learn**. Motivation to learn can be affected by a variety of cognitive and social challenges, including young people's prior knowledge, experiences and learning strategies, as well as group dynamics that may hinder learning.

2. **Tailoring educational activities to different learning needs**. Designing and delivering learning activities that consider that every person learns differently and may require different learning support.

3. **Top-down objectives**. When learning objectives and expected outcomes are pre-defined by youth workers or trainers, the young people benefiting from the action may find them irrelevant and disconnected with their wishes and needs. .

Support

1. **Participatory design**. Engaging young people in the co-design of activities and learning experiences.

2. **Journaling**. Learning journals and reflection diaries could support young people to keep track of their learning processes and outcomes, identify patterns and, ultimately, be more aware of their learning strategies.

3. **Assessment tools**. Tools for educators to assess the "Learning to learn" competence level as well as self-assessment tools for young people to autonomously evaluate how they learn.

4. **Strategies and activities to foster effective learning groups** and create a safe and stimulating atmosphere where people can learn together.

Greece

Organisation	KEAN – Kyttaro Enallaktikon Anazitiseon Neon
Date of the activity	12.10.2022
Format	■ Online ▢ In-person ▢ Hybrid
Participants	**Number:** 12 **Profile:** no. 5 educators no.7 youth workers
Facilitator	Sonia Maravelaki
Observer	Athina Abatzidi
Results	
Q1	**Have you heard about the LifeComp Framework or soft skills development before this focus group?** Of the 12 participants, 3 of them had encountered this concept before in their work and had dealt with these competences in more detail, 7 of them had simply encountered it during their training and 2 of them had never heard this definition before.
Q2	**Do you have any experience applying the LifeComp in training programs for your people? If yes, could you share some examples?** 3 of the participants have encountered the concept of LifeComp before in a training course they attended during their postgraduate programmes and have carried out a pilot application in their department
Q3	**What do you think are the possible methods, approaches, and tools to develop the competencies set out in the competence areas of LifeComp?** Initially, the approach of the methods can be done both through an online and a live approach to facilitate access for as many stakeholders as possible. The way of teaching should be interesting and engaging enough (e.g., interactive methods, experiential workshops) to keep the participants engaged and motivate others to attend. In addition, it is very important that the programme and materials are tailored to the needs of the participants.

Q4	**What, in your opinion, are the challenges in applying the identified methods, approaches and tools?** Some of the biggest challenges/obstacles faced are: - Wrong motivation of trainees (they are more interested in obtaining certificates than in actual learning, they give priority to subsidized programs to make a monetary gain) - Young people in this category are highly influenced by their environment, so if their social circle does not motivate or support them to develop such skills, it is even more difficult for them to decide to participate - The previous experience they had in similar programmes, if they were not satisfied and disappointed, they will certainly not be interested in participating again
Q5	**What resources and tools could support youth professionals in overcoming such challenges?** By implementing training and mentoring programmes for youth professionals, it helps them to discover new tools and improve the methods they use.
Additional notes	

Organisation	KEAN – Kyttaro Enallaktikon Anazitiseon Neon
Date of the activity	21.10.2022
Format	■ Online ▢ In-person ▢ Hybrid
Participants	**Number:** 12 **Profile:** no. 9 educators no.3 youth workers
Facilitator	Sonia Maravelaki
Observer	Athina Abatzidi
Results	

Q1	**Have you heard about the LifeComp Framework or soft skills development before this focus group?** Of the 12 participants, 2 of them had encountered this concept before in their work and had dealt with these competences in more detail, 3 of them had simply encountered it during their training and 7 of them had never heard this definition before.
Q2	**Do you have any experience applying the LifeComp in training programs for your people? If yes, could you share some examples?** 2 of the participants have encountered the concept of LifeComp before in a training course they attended during their postgraduate programmes and have carried out a pilot application in their department
Q3	**What do you think are the possible methods, approaches, and tools to develop the competencies set out in the competence areas of LifeComp?** - Teamwork - Social skills - Motivation - Communication and collaboration - Creativity
Q4	**What, in your opinion, are the challenges in applying the identified methods, approaches and tools?** Some of the biggest challenges/obstacles faced are: - limit of time young people have available for such trainings - if the programme is available only online it may exclude young people from vulnerable groups - lack of knowledge of digital environment
Q5	**What resources and tools could support youth professionals in overcoming such challenges?** - Use of more innovative tools - Create more interactive methods - Make an awareness campaign for this target group
Additional notes	

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Portugal

The results are presented below with the respective date, location, meeting format, participants and answers for each question.

Organisation	Associação Juvenil MOJU (Olhão)
Date of the activity	24/10/2022
Format	In-person
Participants	**Number:** 7 **Profile:** Youth Workers
Facilitator	Marta Costa Lima
Observer	Sofia Aurora Rebelo Santos
Results	
Q1	All participants were not familiar with LifeComp.
Q2	All participants know and apply life skills strategies and techniques that are included in LifeComp. Examples: ● non-formal education methodology with all the skills presented in LifeComp ● Practical activities and exercises.
Q3	- Conducting field trips and out-of-school practices usually helps to motivate young people (Peddy Paper, visits to museums). - Support: Psychological, psychoeducational, cognitive training. - Reinforce and improve personal relationships between students/teachers/technicians to create bonds of trust. - Sharing of experiences between the youth technician and young people. Development of interpersonal relationships, flexibility of the context and of the educator himself to identify what is happening with young people; Importance of creating a 1 to 1 relationship, gives children and young people more emotional trust.

	- Constant positive reinforcement, give positive feedback to young people for all achievements and support in failures/frustrations; Active listening; - Opportunity to acquire and use new technologies to learn in groups and motivate young people; - Use board games to turn into a challenge; - Learning with others "outside the Virtual World";
Q4	- Requirement of norms and regulations in project applications (objective numbers) that they must fulfil and sometimes do not suit individual needs and can have a huge negative impact on young people. - Difficulties in motivating young people. - Qualifications of the physical space of the Association, there are times when there is a high number of young people in the space with different ages that sometimes influences the execution of tasks. - Young people look for immediate gratification when they work or play. - Few human resources to work with young people, which influences their accompaniment. - Establishment of boundaries in young people. - Absence of physical spaces to welcome young people when it rains, there is a need to change work strategies and methodologies. - Weak public transport network for travelling with youth groups. - Adjust curriculum vitae for students and young people according to what they already know and like (already assigned competences) to motivate; adjust to needs and potential. - The education system is very rigid, not very flexible; teachers' tiredness, the existence of a rigid evaluation method makes individual approaches difficult; very high workload for students that makes relationships with parents difficult, and they are unable to perform other activities they would like. - Lack of youth life goals, lack of self-regulation and organization, growth mindset (perhaps to blame for parents who continue to support a sedentary lifestyle).
Q5	- Physical limitation of closed spaces.

	- Need for outdoor recreational spaces (gardens, parks, skate park, etc.); More Public transport. - Need for more Human Resources; - Human Resources' well-being and mental health care; prevention of technician burnout; - Need for external support for technicians. Team Building, happy managers. - All members of the educational community must be on the same page about student/youth learning; networking; focus on youth goals; creation of a multidisciplinary team working on the youth's life project; - Integrate non-formal education in schools and use other learning strategies at home.
Additional notes	

Organisation	Escola Profissional de Alte; Agrupamento de Escolas Tomás Cabreira (Faro) e Agrupamento de Escolas Dr. Francisco Fernando Lopes (Olhão)
Date of the activity	25 /10/2022
Format	Online
Participants	**Number:** 4 **Profile:** *Trainers and teachers.*
Facilitator	Marta Costa Lima
Observer	Sofia Aurora Rebelo Santos
Results	
Q1	All participants were not familiar with LifeComp.

Q2	All participants know and apply life skills strategies and techniques that are included in LifeComp. Examples: ● non-formal education methodology with all the skills presented in LifeComp ● Practical activities and exercises.
Q3	- Use of active methodologies: games, videos, practical/dynamic activities. - Creating informal situations and contexts helps to gain young people's trust in teachers and vice versa, as well as students' self-confidence. - Praise young people to gain motivation and believe in themselves. - Conducting sessions with course tutors, in informal contexts, such as inviting former students with a successful path as a good practice and provoking motivation from other young people; - Exchanges between young people and other institutions.
Q4	- Launch personal challenges for recognition of their own abilities and skills; - Do individual tutorials/specific follow-up; - Fewer students per class to help capture everyone's attention; more concentration and better group work; - Technical and discipline-specific materials to facilitate practical classes;
Q5	- Less bureaucracy in schools and in the classroom; - Conduct exchanges between young people; sharing experiences; - Better vocational assessment to prevent young NEETs; - Create marketing strategies to promote professional courses; - Sharing of good practices between technicians/teachers/trainers.
Additional notes	

Organisation	Instituto PIAGET (Silves); Agrupamento de Escolas Pinheiro e Rosa (Faro)
Date of the activity	26/10/2022
Format	Online
Participants	**Number:** 2 **Profile:** *Teachers and youth trainers*
Facilitator	Marta Costa Lima
Observer	Sofia Aurora Rebelo Santos
Results	
Q1	All participants were not familiar with LifeComp.
Q2	All participants know and apply life skills strategies and techniques that are included in LifeComp. Examples: ● non-formal education methodology with all the skills presented in LifeComp ● Practical activities and exercises.
Q3	- Be empathetic and friendly with students, show/give importance to students; - Emotional management work and support; - Working together; group and individual/independent work; - Do practical activities outside the classroom; - Improvement of the training of teachers and trainers; be more sensitive to human and student issues; - Modern School Movement; Pedagogy of José Pacheco; Paulo Freire, Waldorf, Democratic Schools (summerhill).
Q4	- Unfamiliarity of other educational activities (non-formal education); - Classes separated by subject sometimes hinder general learning in each activity, for example on a study visit students can work/learn material from several subjects; - Very bureaucratic educational system;

	- Resistance to change on the part of teachers, technicians and young people themselves; - targeted educational policies with better representation/execution on the ground.
Q5	- More follow-up time for young people; - Mentorships, - Create and carry out a new vocational test at the end of secondary education to lead to a new life project; - Use of practical methodologies that promote critical thinking, such as: Group reflections, "street classes", outings, walks, study visits; - Internships throughout the school year and after completion of secondary education; - Conducting youth exchanges to promote the sharing of experiences with other young people, "with, by and for young people" - Articulation between different levels of education.
Additional notes	

Organisation	Fundação António Aleixo (Quarteira), Associação Vicentina (Monchique)
Date of the activity	27/10/2022
Format	Online
Participants	**Number:** 3 **Profile:** Youth Project Managers.
Facilitator	Marta Costa Lima
Observer	Sofia Aurora Rebelo Santos
Results	
Q1	All participants were not familiar with LifeComp.

Q2	All participants know and apply life skills strategies and techniques that are included in LifeComp. Examples: ● non-formal education methodology with all the skills presented in LifeComp ● Practical activities and exercises.
Q3	- Being and creating empathy with the young people and the target group to create trust bonds; - Give voice to the young people, make them responsible managers of their own life project; - Give and assign personal challenges for self-motivation; - Promote the action of young people in their own life context; - Active school/civic/social participation; - Promote study visits and practical outings; - More practical and less theoretical intervention in classrooms; - Hold debates to promote critical thinking; - Promote the practice of youth and community associations.
Q4	- Involve the young people in the change and in their own life change; - "People don't belong to us; we must give them autonomy" - Attracting young people to participate in the developed actions; - Make communities sensible to the importance and value of young people about their own community; - Break down prejudices against young people; - Empathy/trust/involvement.
Q5	- More support/union on the part of the municipalities on the actions promoted by the different entities that intervene directly with young people; - Culture and art as a way of knowledge and a motor for the intervention of young people in society; - Sharing and networking/direct contacts with institutions/services; - More involvement of companies to welcome young people in a professional practice.
Additional notes	

Organisation	Associação Sê Mais Sê Melhor; SPEAK Faro; ECOS; Contextos; Núcleo de Juventude de Vila Real de Santo António.
Date of the activity	28/10/2022
Format	In-person
Participants	**Number:** 8 **Profile:** *6 Youth Workers and 2 Youth Project Managers*
Facilitator	Marta Costa Lima
Observer	Sofia Aurora Rebelo Santos
Results	
Q1	Most participants were not familiar with LifeComp. Only 2 already knew the tool. Filipa Fonseca - became aware during a European training that took place in the pre-2018 LifeComp development period Sofia Justino - she knew all the domains and skills but didn't know the tool itself.
Q2	All participants know and apply life skills strategies and techniques that are included in LifeComp. Examples: ● non-formal education methodology with all the skills presented in LifeComp ● Practical activities and exercises. ● Volunteering.
Q3	- More non-formal education, examples: exchanges, volunteering, activities and projects developed by young people. - Educator/teacher/youth coach as a facilitator and representative of young people with decision makers and funders but giving young people the power to decide on the development of their educational project and on the development of LifeComp skills in peer relationships; empowerment and empowerment of young people.

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	- Gamification techniques.
	- Transferable participatory methodologies and alternatives integrated into curricula program and other educational programs
	- Communication techniques: such as storytelling for example, editing and creation of media content such as video and photography
	- Labour market integration methodologies:
	    1) job shadowing
	    2) Internships
	    3) Create an innovative intermediate model that allows young people to experience in a short period of time, more than a profession related to a certain course or area of study. To allow the student to know different real applications of the same academic or professional training, but before taking on a commitment as serious as an internship. In case the student, at the end of the experience, concludes that after all that course is not what he imagined, given the opportunity to restart the process with other professional areas and other courses.
	- Training of education professionals (educators, teachers, youth technicians): in all the references mentioned above; in communication (video and photography); in interpersonal relationships and emotional intelligence; digital literature; affections; self-assessment and self-diagnosis;

Q4	- The concept of success is outdated and distorted: fighting prejudices and outdated notions of success linked to the university academic path and the notion of "Dr". Involve multiple stakeholders, including the media, for the dissemination and awareness of multiple successful educational paths other than the traditional ones; valorisation of professional technical courses. Local, regional and national campaigns to change this notion of success of ''being a doctor'' and promote the realistic appreciation of young people who complete an educational path. - Reconciling personal life with work and studies: developing these skills among young people, and in education professionals.

	- Break the generational cycle of failure. - Barriers and obstacles to the transition from education to the labour market are too persistent and remain even beyond the age limit of the NEET definition.
Q5	- Building a community of practice: multidisciplinary groups of professionals who present cases of young people and who, as a team, seek solutions and alternatives beyond the available offers of the school where the student is. - Online platform that allows professionals to share resources, cases, information; create support groups/multidisciplinary teamwork. - Digital tools: games and quizzes that present different educational paths and different ways of entering the job market; gamification of simulated practices or case studies; - Funding and support for youth technicians who establish a relationship with young people even before they leave school and have the objective of transition and integration into the job market: Office of Support to Transition. - TIME: more human resources; less administrative burden, more availability to be with the young. - Dissemination of online opportunities, less restricted to the geographic radius of the school where the young person is enrolled. - Training of employers for the integration of young people.
Additional notes	

Spain

Organisation	Femxa Formación SLU

Date of the activity	10TH October 2022
Format	Online
Participants	**Number:** 15 participants **Profile:** - 1 coordinator of labour insertion projects for young people. - 12 youth workers involved in labour insertion projects for young people. - 2 project managers of innovation in training projects.
Facilitator	Almudena González Costas
Observer	Irene Ojo Mars
Results	
Q1	**Did you know or had you heard about the European Framework LifeComp before participating in this workshop?** 100% of participants said it was the first time they heard about the LifeComp. This answer changed a little bit the dynamic of the focus group, so instead of moving on to more questions, the facilitator presented a summary of Lifecomp in Spanish to give participants a deeper perspective of the Framework and to allow them to better understand the goals and purpose of the focus group activity and the aim of InKey project itself.
Q2	**Have you been or are you involved as a teacher in training programs that use LifeComp as a framework?** 100% of participants said they have never been involved in any training program that use LifeComp as framework. One of the participants took the opportunity to present a program of her organization, named Programa Inserta, from Fundación ONCE.

	Programa Inserta is aimed at large companies. Fundación ONCE offers its collaboration in the development of projects that promote the employment of people with disabilities and improve their quality of life. These projects generate competitive advantages and the Inserta companies thus optimize all the opportunities for innovation, differentiation, and value creation that they represent. The Inserta companies are strategic partners of the ONCE Foundation to achieve its goals.
	The program combines training activities with direct intervention with the candidates to be inserted on the companies, from training activities to coaching sessions to work on specific skills and competencies demanded by the companies.
Q3	**What do you think are the possible methods, approaches and tools to develop the competencies set out in the competence areas of LifeComp?**
	What skills do you think need to be trained and incorporated to the training programs to support young people to return to education or being incorporated into the labour market?
	For this question we used an IT tool to allow participants to write down their impressions without being influenced or biased by the answers of other participants. They could write down more than one answer. Participants without prior knowledge of LifeComp declined to comment on challenges teaching methods etc.
	This table summarizes all skills mentioned by the participants and how many times that particular skill has been mentioned:

Teamwork	4
Communication	3
Social skills	2
Digital skills	1
Flexibility	1
Transversal skills	1
Learning capacity	1
Motivation	1
Initiative	1
Responsibility	1
Proactivity	1

Q4	**In our project we are interested in how LifeComp can be implemented in formal and non-formal training programs for young people. What kind of training materials/approaches would you be interested in having access to?**
	For this question we used an IT tool to allow participants to write down their impressions without being influenced or biased by the answers of other participants. They could write down more than one answer.
	The table summarizes the materials that are of most interest for the teachers and trainers participating on the focus group:

Methodologies	4
Activities	4
Online courses	2
Activities for the classroom	1
Coaching materials	1
Group dynamics	1
Digital resources	1

Q5	**What, in your opinion, are the challenges in applying the identified methods, approaches and tools?**
	In your experience, do you think that skills can be worked through digital environments (e.g., e-learning platform)?
	During this last question many participants claimed they had no experience in working with young people in digital environments, as almost all the work with them in face-to-face activities.
	Only three participants wanted to give their personal point of view in this topic, the answers were:
	Participant 1: Face-to-face workshops are the most effective way to train soft skills in young people. Our organization tried digital workshops during the pandemic, results have not been the same, and in all cases the digital workshops need to be synchronous, and the teacher/facilitator plays a key role on them.
	Participant 2: Our institution organised online workshops for job search and key competences with young people and we achieved a good rate of success.

	Participant 3: If you program only online training activities, those activities do not reach all young people. Due their profile, vulnerable youth is left behind when the programming is 100% online, face-to-face activities are always needed.
Additional notes	N/A

Focus Group 2:

Organisation	Femxa Formación SLU
Date of the activity	11TH October 2022
Format	Face-to-face
Participants	**Number:** 10 participants **Profile:** - 10 teachers and trainers of non-formal and VET education.
Facilitator	Almudena González Costas
Observer	Irene Ojo Mars
Results	
Q1	**Did you know or had you heard about the European Framework LifeComp before participating in this workshop?** 90% of participants said it was the first time they heard about the LifeComp, while 1 participant knew about it from the dissemination activities made to disseminate InKey project.

	Based on the previous experience with Focus Group 1, so instead of moving on to more questions, the facilitator presented a summary of Lifecomp in Spanish to give participants a deeper perspective of the Framework and to allow them to better understand the goals and purpose of the focus group activity and the aim of InKey project itself.
Q2	**Have you been or are you involved as a teacher in training programs that use LifeComp as a framework?** 100% of participants said they have never been involved in any training program that use LifeComp as framework, but at the same time almost all of them have some experience as trainers in soft skills programs or in key competences for employment programs. All participants work in national funded programs or in Norway Grant's funded projects.
Q3	**What do you think are the possible methods, approaches, and tools to develop the competencies set out in the competence areas of LifeComp?** **What skills do you think need to be trained and incorporated to the training programs to support young people to return to education or being incorporated into the labour market?** This time to change the dynamic of the focus group, participants were asked to give their opinion by voice, so many of the results are quite similar and at the same time go in line with the results obtained in face-to-face interviews and on the online focus group. The methods mostly suggested by participants are workshops with dynamics and group activities, along with individual mentoring sessions. The skills mentioned by participants are: - Teamwork. - Communication. - Critical thinking. - Adaptability. - Resilience. - Creativity

Q4	**In our project we are interested in how LifeComp can be implemented in formal and non-formal training programs for young people. What kind of training materials/approaches would you be interested in having access to?**
	Participants on this focus group gave very similar answers of participants during face-to-face interviews and on previous focus groups. All participants on the research activity showed great interest on the methodologies and materials to be developed under InKey project and are expecting to have access to materials already prepared and ready to be implemented in the classroom.
	The main materials mentioned are:
	- Methodology. - Group dynamics and already developed activities.
Q5	**What, in your opinion, are the challenges in applying the identified methods, approaches and tools?** **In your experience, do you think that skills can be worked through digital environments (e.g., e-learning platform)?**
	The main concern about the application of InKey results and the usability of the materials relies on the doubts about how to train such soft skills in digital environments.
	Many of the participants think the main challenge is to motivate young people through the digital environment the InKey project proposes and how to ensure the soft skills are properly trained in digital environments.
	The logistics and funding for blended activities inside their respective organizations is the second main source of concern.
Additional notes	N/A

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