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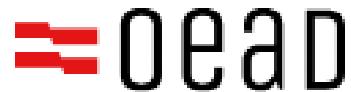
Austrian Euroguidance Conference “Skills for the future – Strengthening competences through career guidance”

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WORKSHOP 5:

TRANSVERSAL SKILLS AND COMPETENCE ASSESSMENT IN CAREER GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

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STRUCTURE OF OUR PRESENTATION

1. Theoretical background/overview

Introduction

- 1.1. “Future skills” in a changing global labour market
- 1.2. Competences acquired by international mobility experiences: “transversal competences”
- 1.3. Examples of “good practices” in an international frame
- 1.4. The role of CGC in the assessment of the transversal competences

2. *Transval EU project: an example of mobility resources for guidance practitioners*

3. Final conclusions and further discussion

Introduction

- Today's society is characterized by economic globalization, social and political changes, digitalization, variations in the world of work...
- National societies have changed, people move to other countries searching for new employment opportunities, further training pathways, improve the quality of life..., leading to an increase in migratory cross-country movements in this changing world.
- These changes, which has been caused to a large extent by the internationalization of markets, global competition, digitalization, contemporary policies..., has led to some individuals, especially for the younger generations, having to reorganize their lives and constantly wonder about their increasingly uncertain future.
- **Career Guidance and Counselling (CGC) and PES** play a key role in addressing these challenges providing individuals with a set of tools and resources to help them develop ("transversal") skills and competences for an optimal career development.
- **Training and updating in CGC concepts and approaches by practitioners** is therefore essential in order to respond to the needs of individuals and to support them in acquiring these set of competences in the face of the new challenges posed by today's society.

“Future skills” in a changing labour market (I)

European Commission diagnosed **unemployment and the discordance between the competences acquired in training and those required in the workplace** as one of the most pressing issues facing the in-depth transformation of most production systems.

Work-Based Learning (WBL) for improving the skills and competences acquired through training and pivoting them to companies' real needs.

- Improvement in young people's VET is achievable through a system that includes an in-company internship as a work situation (**dual learning system**).
- WBL happens in a **real work environment**, so the technological tools needed to fulfil the profession are used in a real organizational setting that facilitates the **full skills acquisition** required for efficient and productive professional performance.

Acquisition of skill sets not strictly related to the work sector in which the learning takes place, i.e., **transversal competences** applicable to different work situations in a variety of environments.

- Importance of **transversal competences** as a new feature of the labour market; its progressive **internationalisation** within the frame of an increasingly interrelated **global marketplace**.
- This requires transversal competences linked to internships, but also a type of **training that prepares young people to face the globalisation of markets, internationalisation and the interrelation of procedures**.
- Young people can **acquire these competences through mobility and training in different countries** where they must face and solve situations in a foreign cultural environment. This helps them learn to adapt to situations and **strengthens their transversal capabilities**.

“Future skills” in a changing labour market (II)

New scenario for young people in training

Training in work centers

- The confidence that apprentices acquire from training-related **transversal competences** must be guaranteed in any action developed.
- The **organization of international mobility**, however, requires complex logistics. Attention must also be paid to a multiplicity of elements to secure a successful outcome.
- Transversal competences cannot be developed if left to the improvisation of **learning processes**.
- A **detailed plan**, dedicated **protocols** and appropriate **methodologies** are required to achieve the pursued goals and ensure **quality transversal-competence learning**.

Mobility for training

- To design, organize and implement the **instruments needed to successfully develop the transversal competences acquired through international mobility** requires the cooperation and teamwork of both professional training centers and companies, along with regional institutions responsible for training and structures at a municipal level.
- Vocational training centers often lack the means to deal with the complexity of learning transversal competences in an international context. There is a need to develop **training curricula for learning transversal competences**, to build international consensus for this to be applicable and to organise efficient mobility logistics.
- Cooperation between institutions is needed to ensure that **mobility periods abroad take place in conditions that are suitable for the trainees**.

Both help to enhance **skill sets**



*What do we mean
by transversal
competences?*

What do we mean by “competences” and “transversal competences”?

Competence is a combination of three elements necessary to the accomplishment of an action: Knowledge, Aptitude (skills, know-how), Attitude (knowing how to behave).

Being competent means, “I know what to do and how to do it in a given context”

Transversal competences typically apply to a wide variety of situations belonging to different spheres of life (professional, social, personal).

In a professional context, they are useful in many professions and professional areas

TRANSVERSAL COMPETENCES

Transversal competences are equivalent to generic competences, i.e. they are directly related to basic knowledge or behavioral, cognitive or organizational competences

French Centre for Strategic Analysis, Centre d'analyse stratégique français. Note d'analyse n°219. Compétences transversales et compétences transférables: des compétences qui facilitent les mobilités professionnelles, 2011.

Key competences for lifelong learning belong to the category of **transversal competences**, defined by the EU as a transferable, multifunctional package of knowledge, skills and attitudes that all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, inclusion and employment

European Community Recommendation 2006/962/EC, dated 18 December 2006.

Transversal skills and competences (TSCs) are learned and proven abilities which are often considered to be necessary or valuable for effective action in virtually any kind of work, learning or life activity. They are “**transversal**” because they are not exclusively related to any particular context (job, occupation, academic discipline, civic or community engagement, occupational sector, group of occupational sectors, etc.)

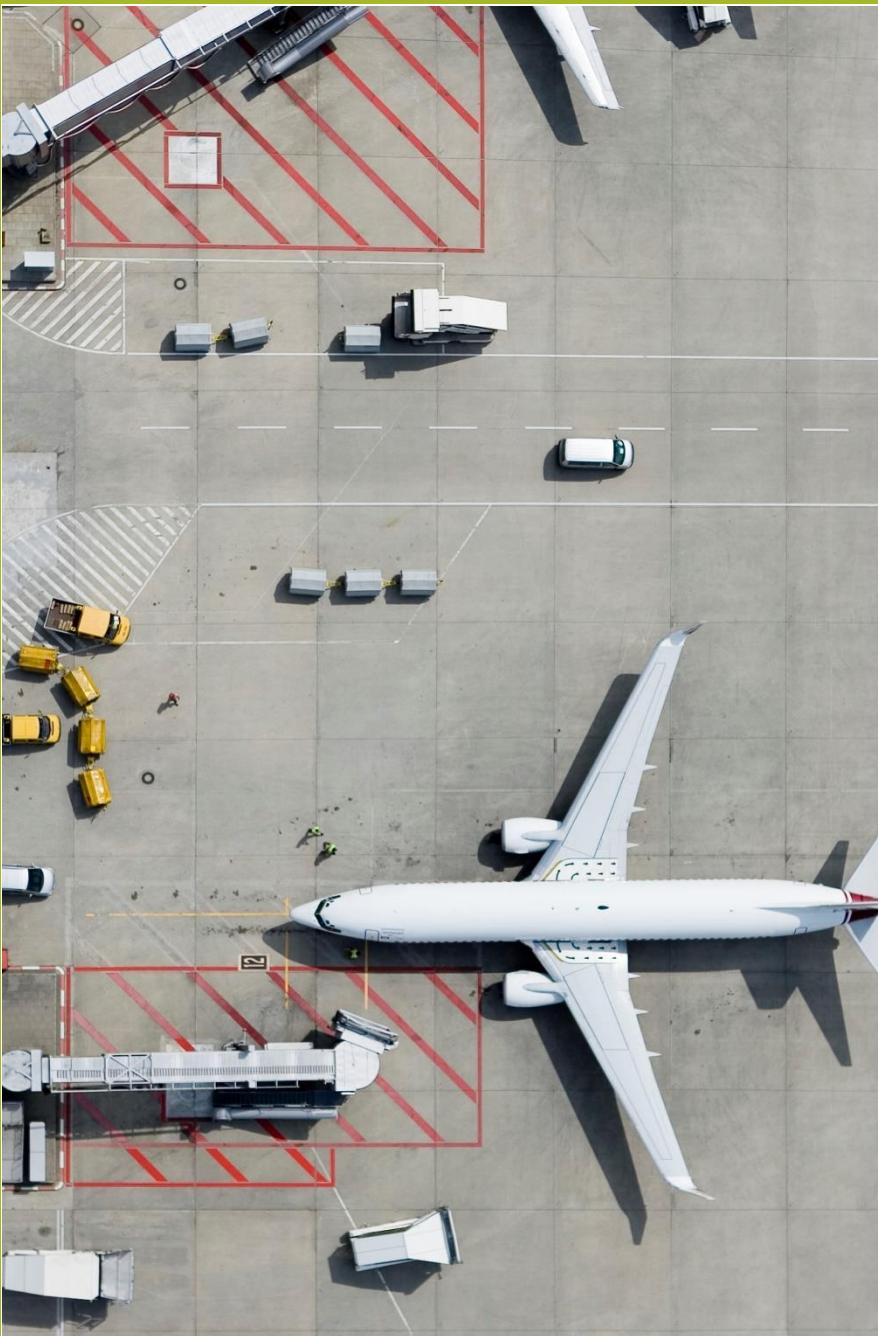
CEDEFOP, 2021



*What do we mean
by transversal
competences
within
international
mobility settings?*



*What do we
mean by
international
mobility?*



Different mobilities...



Ways

Physical mobility
Mobility inside one country
or across borders
Virtual mobility



Reasons

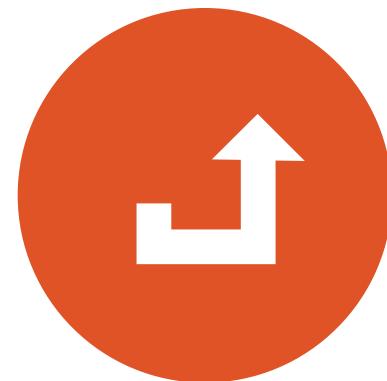
Tourism
Migration



Purposes

Labor market
Learning mobility

International mobility experience entails a monitoring/guiding process



BEFORE



DURING



AFTER

International mobility

- *Going abroad for learning and training is a good opportunity to obtain new skills and competences, to broaden one's horizons, to expand one's social networks, to become acquainted with a new country and the locals there.*
- *Many young people take a semester or two at a university abroad or embark on a voluntary work experience in another country. An increasing number of students take their whole degree at a foreign university.*
- *For guidance practitioners that are already working, there are opportunities for professional development, for example, international study visits and training courses (training opportunities= Academia mobility experience = **The Academia Network**) .*



COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 28 June 2011
‘Youth on the move’ —promoting the LEARNING
MOBILITY of young people

LEARNING MOBILITY (transnationally, regionally or online) as mobility undertaken freely and voluntarily for a specific period of time, consciously organized for educational purposes, to impact on the local community or to acquire new competences (knowledge, skills, attitudes or values). It encompasses a wide variety of project formats and activities and can be implemented in informal or non-formal education settings.

*TRANSNATIONAL MOBILITY for the purpose of acquiring new knowledge, skills and competences, is one of the fundamental ways in which young people can strengthen their: future employability, intercultural awareness, personal development, creativity active citizenship.
It can also strengthen Europe's competitiveness by helping to build a knowledge-intensive society.*



What does international mobility
bring us?

Reflect on and select some experiences acquired by an international mobility...



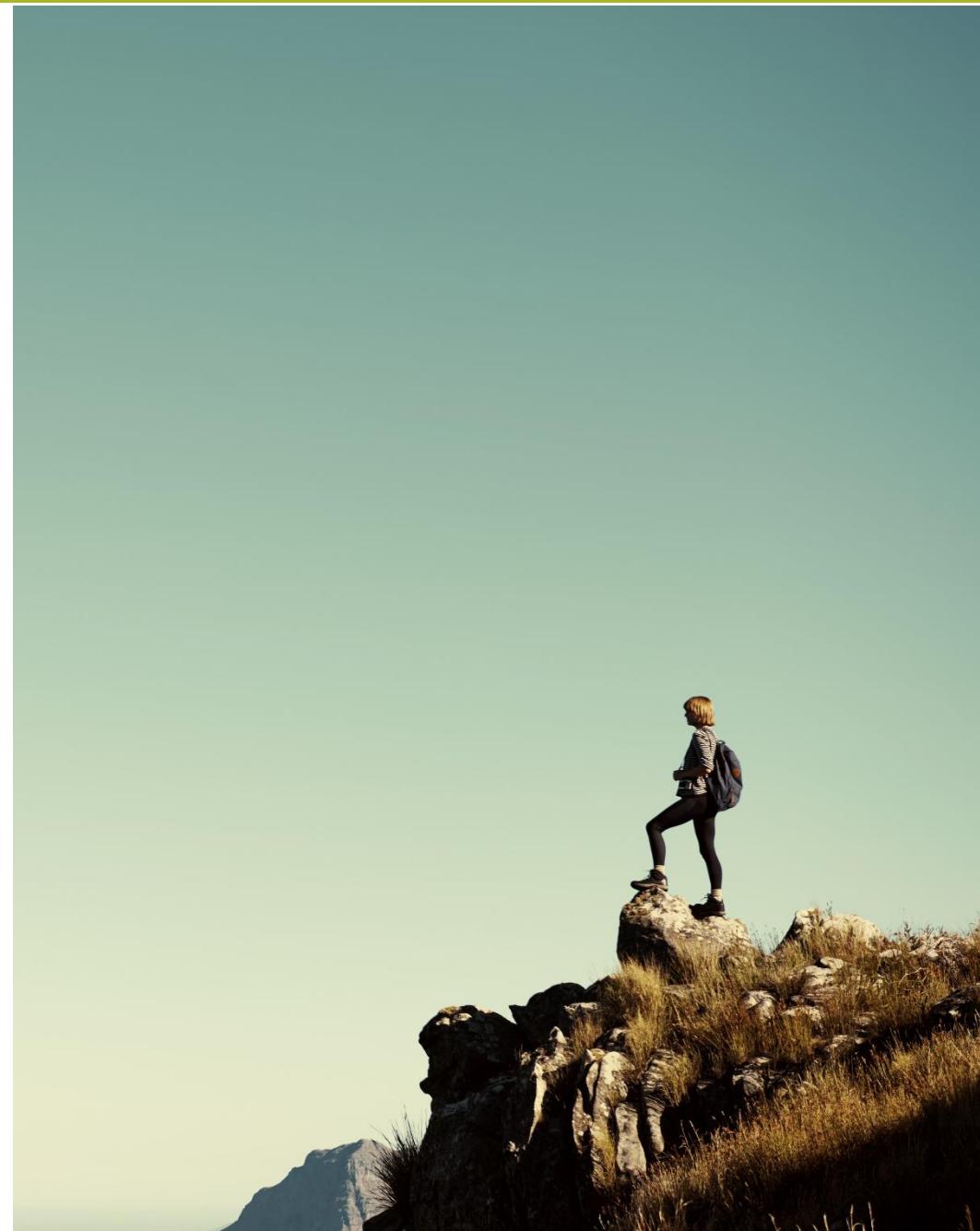
Adventure



Emotion



Discovery/
Learning



Some benefits of international mobility: Personally, institutionally, nationally, globally, etc.

- International mobility experience places the participants in a new dynamic and allows for the development of certain competences.
- Mobility experience prompts the participants out of their day-to-day reality to venture away from their comfort zone by modifying their habits. Openness to the world, to others and their differences..., lays the grounds for citizenship and community-cultural awareness, international cooperation...
- Technical competences, whether specific or linguistic, can be formalized with reference to a professional skills base or on the CEFR. The task is harder when it comes to transversal competences, such as the ability to adapt or the ability to get involved in a group...

Personal development

- Expands a person's options for shaping their career and supports self-fulfillment -satisfaction with school and work.
- Positive impact on the development of 21st century skills, including flexibility, adaptability, self-confidence and self-awareness, communication and problem-solving skills.
- An effective source of knowledge, experience and inspiration that helps people adapt and makes them more competitive in the labor market.
- Reduced risk of long-term unemployment, higher salary and greater responsibility in working life.
- New ideas and innovative tools
- ...



Digital competence
and digitalisation



Self-awareness and
personal
development



Collaboration and
organisation



Creativity and
entrepreneurship



Environment and
sustainability



Communication and
active participation

Larini, M. & Rammo, M. (2023). *Multiculturalism for guidance practitioners: focus on learning mobility*. Euroguidance Estonia.

Several classifications on skills and competences developed
through an international mobility experience

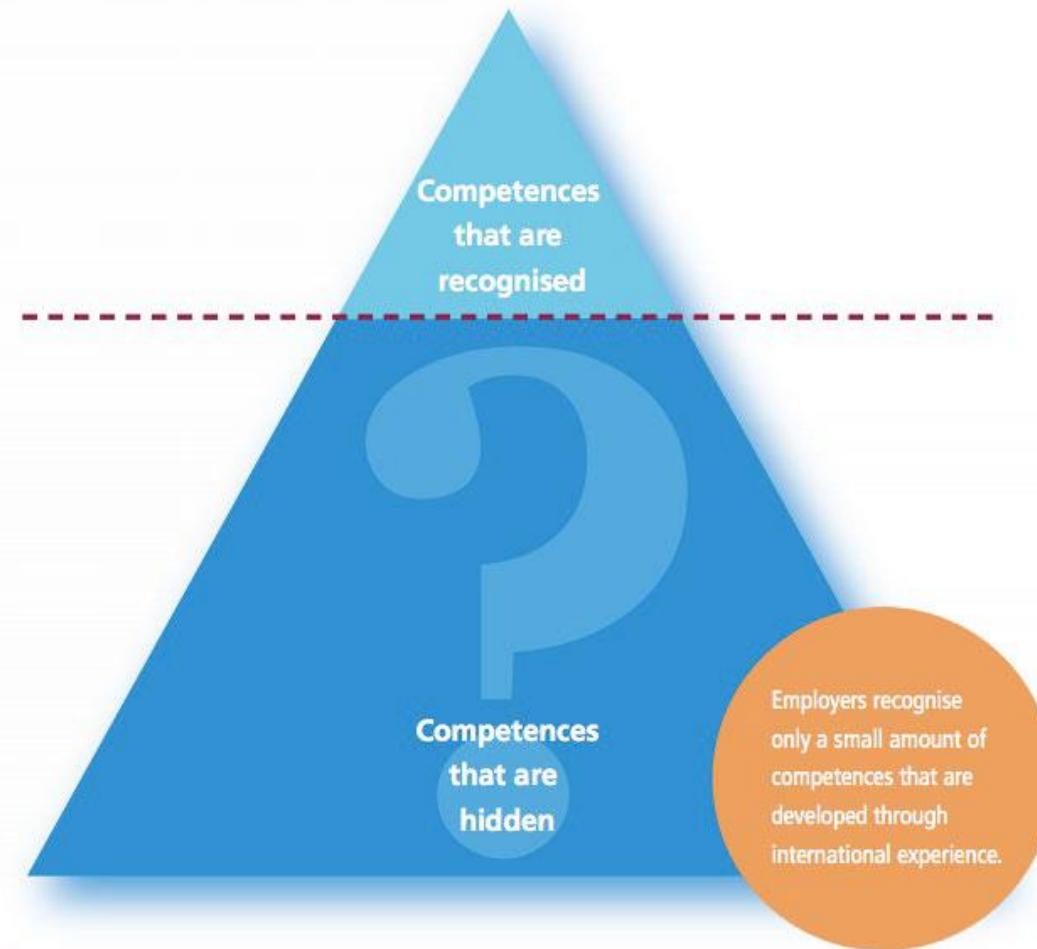
Five transversal competences acquired in international mobility experiences

(Classification by “KEYMOB” and “AKY” EU Projects)

- The **five AKI competences acquired in international mobility experience**, outside of school and university curricula, will likely be appealed to in social or professional contexts.
- The study identified a number of **transversal competences**, especially those developed during an international mobility experience with a view to facilitating the socio-professional integration of young adults.
- The common goals are to help participants gain **awareness of the competences they acquire and to enable employers to better recognize the impact of international mobility experience in terms of transversal competences**, such as self-confidence and a sense of responsibility.



Hidden Competences



Kansainvälisen liikkuvuuden ja yhteistyön keskus
Centret för internationell mobilitet och internationellt samarbete
Centre for International Mobility

CIMO (2014). *Hidden competences, facts and figures*. Centre of International Mobility

CIMO (2014). *Hidden competences, facts and figures*. Centre of International Mobility



Examples of “good practices” in an international frame (I)

EUROPEAN PROJECTS

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

AKI Identification and recognition of transversal competences. EU+ Youth Program (2014-2017)
<https://www.aki-mobility.org/en/project/>



- The assessment and recognition of non formal competences acquired by young people in the framework of mobility projects in order to serve their integration into society and employment.
- Contributing to the identification and recognition of **transversal competences** acquired in international mobility experience, outside of school and university curricula, by young adults aged 18 to 30 years old.
- The project addressed a common task of making these **competences more visible and fostering their relevance on the labour market and society**.
- **AKI Guidebook Five transversal competences** acquired in international experience: Assessment and recognition of transversal competences, acquired by young adults in international mobility projects, as a means to facilitate their socio-professional inclusion.

KEYMOB EU+ Program: Key Competences for Mobility (2018-2021) [KEYMOB: Key Competences for Mobility \(2018-2021\) | EARLALL](#)



- **Transversal competencies in mobility situations.** The aim of the project is to develop cooperation among training centres, companies, and regional and municipal governments to develop curricular tools and the logistical and organisational agreements required for the development of transversal competences by apprentices in a context of international mobility.
- The Keymob project started with a question asked: **How to recognise and validate the role of mobility in the acquisition of transversal competences by VET Students?**
- **Outputs:** 1-Transversal competences in mobility situations, 2-Curriculum of Transversal Competences in the context of transnational mobility and 3: KEYMOB - Guidebook for the development of transversal skills in transnational mobility actions.

Erasmus Skills. Competences gained through Erasmus+ mobility. EU+ Program (2018-2020) [Home | erasmusskills.eu](#)



- An innovative project in Europe to **measure the competences acquired during the mobility period abroad**.
- To support students participating in international mobility programs to reflect on and become aware of the **transversal and specific competences** they develop, so that they can make the most of and communicate their experience in terms of learning, personal development and European citizenship.
- Aimed at various interest groups: 1. **Students**, providing tools to support them in their personal and professional development, in their self-knowledge and self-reflection on their Erasmus experience. 2. **University employees, both teaching and research staff**, to train them and make them aware of the importance of the added value of mobility programmes, as well as to evaluate the competences within their teaching guides and take into account this international profile. 3. **Employers and society**, as a whole, are a fundamental axis of the project.
- Developed a set of tools aimed at guiding and fostering a process of self-reflection among students before, during and after participating in an international mobility program. Focused on the development of several IOs, the 1st being a **Guide for Professionals** from different HEI which provides general information on how to support students in the development of competences (especially during mobility periods).
- A **questionnaire** was developed to enable students to self-assess their competences before going abroad and upon their return. It uploaded on the **Erasmus + App** with the aim that all students participating in an Erasmus program can measure their competences, reflect on their learning progress, and obtain a certificate that they can use to promote their personal and professional development for future employment.

Examples of “good practices”. A Spanish case study

ANOTHER NATIONAL EXPERIENCES

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Development of graduates' transversal competences thorough Transnational Youth Mobility Programme: Galeuropa: [Galeuropa \(xunta.es\)](http://Galeuropa(xunta.es))

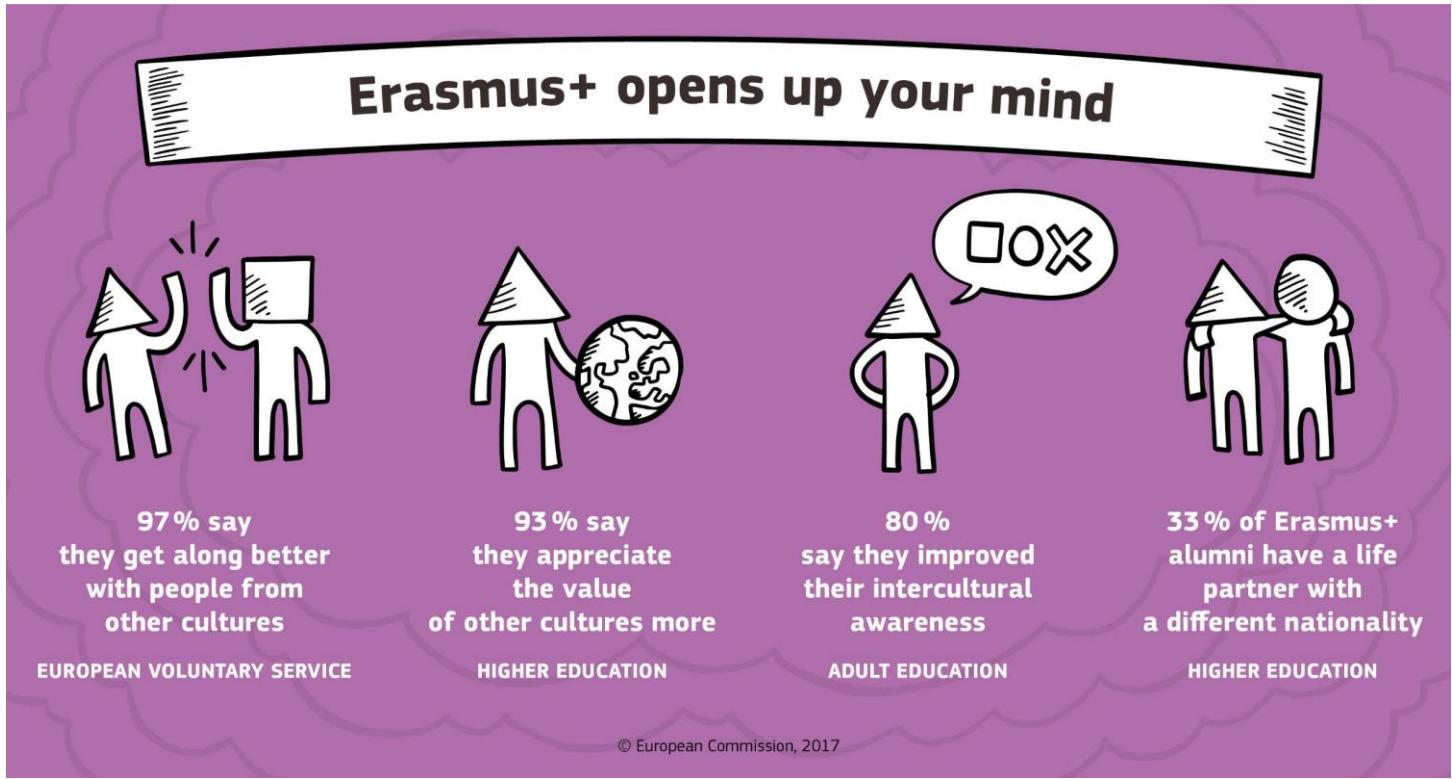


- **Galeuropa program:** an initiative of the regional government in Galicia in Spain (Xunta de Galicia). It started in 2012 with the aim of strengthening the mobility of young people aged between 18 and 30 with university or vocational degrees, facilitating the discovery of cultural diversity and richness, and promoting the acquisition of knowledge, competences and qualifications, which would contribute to their training and subsequently to their finding employment. The objectives of the project include improving participants' general competencies, their employability (especially for those who are not in education or training) and strengthening vocational training programs as a complement to the personal and professional development of the youngest participants.
- **Objectives of the study:** determine whether university students' participation in a mobility program (*Galeuropa*) helped them to improve their transversal skills which are fundamental for employability. It also aimed to identify the profile of university students who benefit the most from participation in this program. A questionnaire was applied to 439 young people (graduates participating in Galeuropa and final year university students). The results showed that the participants in the program demonstrated the greatest development of transversal competences (proactivity and personal adaptability, intercultural competence, and leadership). Non-formal education (particularly in mobility programs) helps reinforce academic education, especially in terms of youth employability.

Lorenzo-Moledo, M., Ferraces-Otero, M. J., Mella-Núñez, I., & Núñez-García, J. (2023). Development of graduates' transversal competences: the mobility program Galeuropa. *Journal of Education*, 0-0.



*How do these
transversal
competencies matter
in today's changing
labour market?*



The Erasmus programme remains the flagship of the European Commission, offering opportunities for students to move from one country to another for part of their studies or work experience. Many of us have participated in this and other types of international mobility experiences during our university studies, and almost all of us agree that it was a great experience in which we got to know new horizons and learn about Europe, about the world and about ourselves.

However, perhaps when we returned home, we found it difficult to reintegrate. We had changed a lot, but we were not able to put into words all the experiences we had had and all the learning we had gained so that we could explain it clearly to our family and friends. Even in the job interviews we had; we may not have been able to show the added value of our international experience. And yet, many employers value candidates who have participated in this type of programme very highly, but how can we measure the knowledge, skills and attitudes we have developed during our time abroad? (European Commission, 2017).

International mobility and transversal competencies development: “an issue of employability”

- The increasing economic globalization and job instability that describe today's society require **individuals to adapt their skills and competences to adjust to the expected changes in their career paths**. European citizens, particularly younger ones, face increasingly complex challenges to their career development.
- Intercultural cognitive, social and affective **skills favour the career development** of young people and are of great importance in **mobility processes** (cultural empathy, intercultural communicative competence, linguistic competence, etc.)
- **Lifelong guidance** has a crucial role in the development of new skills and competences, including **transversal competences**, supporting young people in their personal, professional and career management development, in order to adapt successfully to the changes and demands of today's society, favoring higher rates of employability and accessibility to the labour market in Europe.



*What is the
role of CGC in
the assessment
of transversal
competences?*

Coordinating guidance and validation

- In a society in which individuals change jobs more often, and the pace of innovation and ICT keeps increasing, **individuals need to be prepared for repeated transitions and adaptation to change**. Flexible, continuous and more adaptive learning is needed to ensure skills remain relevant to today's labour market. In addition, all learning might become relevant at some stage in one's life, with non-formal and informal learning becoming as important as formal education in maintaining an adequate level of skills. **Lifelong learning is a necessity**.
- **Validation and guidance are two important tools** to assist individuals, organizations and Member States in adapting to the new reality and creating real **lifelong learning systems**.
- **CGC** play a major role in managing people's transitions, while **validation** can assist in fulfilling people's full potentials by making visible and providing value to all learning an individual has acquired. Both concepts are increasingly important in European policies and strategies and are usually connected in policy documents.
- Cedefop' study (2019) aims at exploring in what way **career guidance and Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning (VN FIL) can better be linked**, examining specific selected practices. The purpose is to understand the necessary conditions, synergies and benefits of linking VN FIL with CGC services. The study contributes to increasing our understanding of these two important policy areas and moving towards a more holistic and coherent approach to the development of truly **lifelong learning systems**.

CEDEFOP (2019). Coordinating guidance and validation. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Cedefop research paper; No 75. <http://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2801/801290>

Guidance and validation of transversal skills and competences in VNFI

- **Guidance and validation practitioners** have an important role to play in helping individuals **identify and further develop transversal skills and competences** that are important in their work and daily lives.
- **Practitioners need to develop their own competences** to engage in open dialogue with learners as part of this process, to identify, document and assess the transversal skills and competences learners have developed in different areas of their lives, and to identify potential pathways for further education and training.
- At the policy level, it is important to ensure that the frameworks, tools and approaches to support VNFI are aligned. At the **practitioner level, investments in training and other forms of professional development** are needed.

Looney, J., & Santibañez, B. (2021). Validation of transversal skills across Europe. *European State of the Art Report*. European Institute of Education and Social Policy (EIESP). TRANSVAL-EU project partners.

Investing in the training of guidance practitioners and other forms of professional development

- There is a need to reflect on **the role of CGC and the challenges to be faced by counsellors in the development of new competencies** for their **professional development** and practice.
- **Guidance practitioners** should be prepared to network with other European organizations and to communicate within culturally different contexts, supporting individuals towards a social inclusion, considering the cultural diversity and particular circumstances in the host country, etc., (**develop their own transversal competences**).
- To prepare citizens for current challenges and to support them in the progress, "**competent" career practitioners are needed** (qualified, trained, with the competences and knowledge required in their professional development, etc).
- The development of common **European Competence Standards (ECS)** for the academic training of career practitioners in Europe and how to implement and establish such competences in the practice is required.
- **Quality standards of guidance services and the professional profile of guidance practitioners** should be framed according those ECS for the academic training of career practitioners (NICE, 2016).

Some international training experiences for guidance practitioners

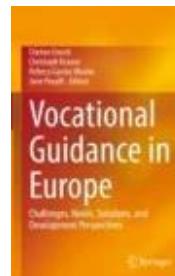
INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCES

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

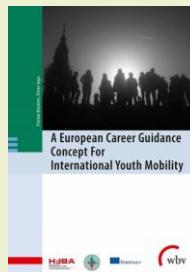
An academic e-course for career practitioners on mobility in Europe since 2017, Estonia



Academia+ EU Project (2018-21): Counsellors' Study And Training Exchange Program for Key Challenges of European Labor Markets And Societies
<https://academiaplus.eu/>



"Guide My W@y! A European Career Guidance Concept for International Youth Mobility". Erasmus + Program (2014-16)



Multiculturalism, learning and work mobility in the context of career development (4 ECTS) to expand understanding related to international mobility and multiculturalism to gain knowledge for working with people who want to go to study or work abroad, and who have come to Estonia from abroad and need further career guidance. Great cooperation: Eures, Europass, Euroguidance, YFU and universities.

Cedefop et al. (2021).Digital transitions in lifelong guidance: rethinking careers practitioner professionalism: a CareersNet expert collection. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Cedefop working paper; No 2.<http://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2801/539512>

To **develop and pilot three research-based counsellors' study and training exchange programs (C-STEP)** for career guidance professionals from across Europe. Academia+ enabled career counsellors to take part in one-week training C-STEPs in different partner countries.

Each of the C-STEPs combines theory, research and practice. In addition to providing state-of-the-art information, a strong focus of the C-STEPs is to give participants a deeper insight into host country approaches, i.e. in the form of study visits (e.g. to employment agencies, VET providers, companies, chambers, etc.).

Due to the COVID-19, the 3 face-to-face C-STEPs were changed into an online training. In the 1st year of the project the thematic focused on "counselling for migrants and refugees", in the second on "future jobs" (Work 4.0) and in the third year on "demographic change".

To provide targeted support to training and career advisors (EURES, national, regional and local advisors) with regard to advice on professional mobility for teenagers and young adults. The focus of the project was the **development of a European consulting concept for international and circular mobility of teenagers and young adults as well as the provision of corresponding online materials and tools**. Together with scientists and EURES consultants from the partner countries involved in the project the following measures and products were developed and offered:

- A European advisory concept for training and career advisors that covers the basics of advisory methodology as well as central content of international youth mobility advice.
- An interactive online portal through which the target group of training and career advisors has access to the advisory concept developed as part of the project, an online course and a virtual classroom.
- Further education and online training for training and career advisors using the online tools developed as part of the project, such as the virtual classroom. In addition to teaching the basics of the consulting concept itself, participants will be able to use online tools as part of their work.

Some conclusions and future challenges (I)

- Guidance practitioners need to improve their competences in order to face properly the issues concerning international mobility. The **design and implementation of training proposals designed for guidance professionals from different EU countries, offer strategies and resources for action and intervention** to help young people who wish to continue their learning or career path abroad.
- Counsellors are not the only ones dealing with learning and/or labour mobility issues (i.e. EURES advisers, Euroguidance, Guidance Practitioners working at international departments...) **but also those practitioners** working with the national employment centers, PES, who face increasingly with new socio-economic situations (immigrants, refugees, ...)
- Practitioners should be able to facilitate a **proper CGC for international mobility improving the guidance services they provided and deliver a higher quality of counselling** (on learning and employment trends and labor market in Europe and providing individuals with a set of **tools and resources to help them develop ("transversal") skills and competences for an optimal career development**).

Some conclusions and future challenges (II)

- International mobility projects are gaining importance and generating training, cultural and social exchange needs among young Europeans. They encourage professional insertion in a wider context of free movement of workers both in the EU and in the global world, while requiring **adequate guidance services and qualified professionals**.
- It is important to raise awareness of stakeholders to encourage them taking the right measures when planning public policies in labour, education and guidance fields, both when **designing training courses for guidance practitioners and when implementing already developed mobility tools and methodological models within the public services they manage** (Kraatz & Ertelt, 2011).
- The reference context for guidance services and practitioners should be Europe with offering quality information and counselling on training and working opportunities at international level (European Strategy, 2020).



Questions
and
further
discussion



Thank you very much
for your attention!

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