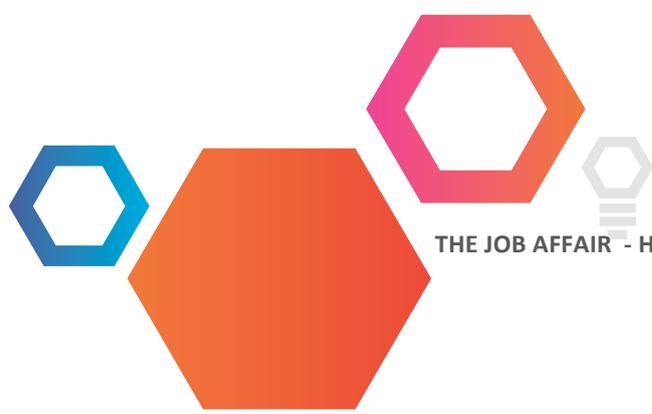




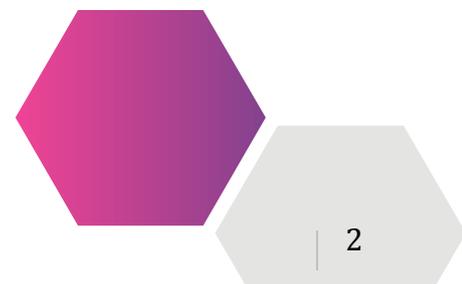
**THE JOB AFFAIR - HOW YOUNG
PEOPLE EXPRESS THEIR
COMPETENCES IN THE JOB MARKET**

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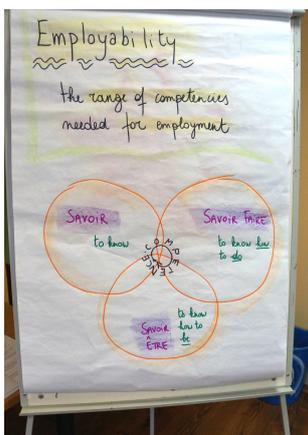
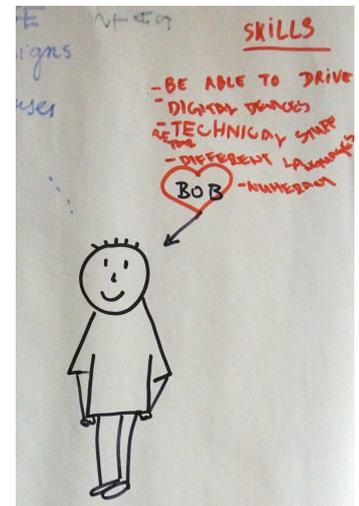
THE JOB AFFAIR

A 2-stages training course, under KA1 – Youth Workers Mobility Projects, for youth workers active on the topic of Employability.

1. Motivation

Many European countries suffer from youth unemployment for a range of reasons, and this project objective is to address this issue and look at supporting youth workers in competence development skills (for the further support of the development of competencies of the young people they work with).

There is a proved match between skills demanded by employers and skills developed in youth organisations. Out of studies, such as The European Youth Forum's Study on the impact of Non-Formal Education in youth organisations on young people's employability¹, the soft skills that employers most frequently demand include communication skills, organisational/planning skills, decision-making skills, team working skills, confidence/autonomy and numeracy. Five of these six most frequently demanded soft skills that employers require are also being amongst those skills developed to a greater extent in youth organisations, the exception being numeracy.



These soft skills are seen as a key element for successful job performance. Certain personality traits are also found to be important components of these skills and competencies, contributing to their development. For example, sense of initiative and pro-activity are traits associated with confidence/autonomy and entrepreneurship. Employers do also have a positive attitude towards young people's experience in youth organizations. Employers however stress a special emphasis on the way of presenting the skills and competences (what they present, how they present it has more impact than what is written on the paper) acquired during the participation in youth work, which is an area where there is still room for lots of improvement.

¹ https://www.jugendpolitikneuropa.de/downloads/4-20-3299/ReportNFE_PRINT.pdf

In youth work, we have the instrument of the youth pass at European level, a lot of countries have own national recognizing tools for competences, and each young person can use the European CV format (the Europass CV) for presenting the skills and competences towards employers. But only few still know, how to work effectively with it (e.g. what to present if I have already Youthpass from 6 different events).

This goes in line with the recommendation of the European Youth Forum to work further on the transitioning to employability: there is a need to greater guidance and coaching for young people so that they are better able to present effectively the skills and competences they develop in the youth sector in job applications and that they are able to better understand how these skills may be applied in working environments, and can contribute to the performance of specific job-related tasks.

Young workers should be made more aware about the value that employers place on the skills and the competencies developed in the youth work, and youth workers can be trained in how to support the young people they work with, in this topic. That is the central focus of The Job Affair training course.

2. Needs

During the preparatory meeting, the team started by listing the needs perceived in the field.

Needs of young people

- To increase self awareness of young people competencies gained, the evidences of those, and what they are lacking + self-confidence of articulating what they can, but also what they cannot: realistic self-awareness (e.g the job applicant who was the cook in a summer camp in a job interview: what did you gain that I can use as employer in my office?).
- Young people also being proud about what they did, and what they learnt, and to express that to employers or to anyone.
- People/job applicants do not have models to compare themselves with other candidates (they haven't worked yet, so they can't compare with their colleagues): they do not know (how to articulate) what they know and can; to recognize what they can, in terms of skills, self esteem, ... but this also in the frame of what is the reality.

Needs of youth workers:

- To enable young people to reveal what their talent and potential is.
- To get motivation to pursue young people to get these competences they need to reach their dreams.
- To provide concrete tools to work with it, like session layouts, methods, models of interventions, programmes for youth workers.
- Make youth workers understand the relevance of their work, in terms of the values, being proud of being able to help young people to develop in their life.

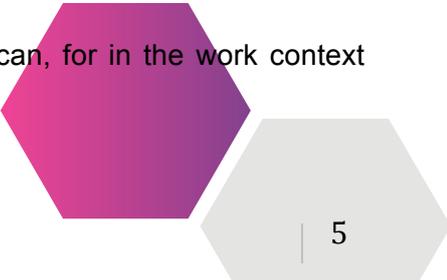
Need of the YW sector and society at large

- To shift the paradigm from 2 worlds to 1 world: YW and employers world.
- More evidence based youth work.
- Shift from prevention activities (to keep the youngsters busy so they don't do bad things) to development the potential of young people (conscious development).

Needs of the E+ programme

- Projects that would not just rename the same methods, but have new and clear approaches towards employability.
- Real change in future projects and work of participants.
- Changing attitude of the role of youth work towards employment: e.g. in EVS they get more skills, and people say that this increases employability, but what could be the extra effort to gain more out of it, to focus more towards the employer's needs? (changing perspective and looking from different angle can bring already much bigger impact)
- How to bring the Youthpass from an instrument with generic wording 8 key competencies into concrete tool relevant in terms of bridging youth work with the employment sector (and others).

Needs of the employers

- 
- To have applicants that can articulate better the competencies, not in generic wording, to articulate examples proving it.
 - Applicants to be better in promoting what they know and can, for in the work context (how can I as employer benefit from your skills you gained).
- 

3. Aims and Objectives

Aim:

- To support youth workers in enabling young people to better assess and express their competences for employment purposes.

Objectives:

- To enable youth workers to help young people to become self-aware about their competencies, to show evidence of those, and to recognise spaces for further development.
- To inspire and increase capacity of youth workers to develop activities with the focus of employability.
- To prepare youth workers to help young people articulate, adapt and transfer the description of their competencies into different working contexts.
- To provide/develop concrete tools for youth workers to use with their target group to work the self-awareness of competencies relevant for employability.
- To increase competencies about assessing impact of youth work activities towards employability.



OUR TRAINING JOURNEY

...OR HOW TO GET THE JOB DONE



First we will look at the road to **employability** (and what is our role as a youth worker on this process)



then we will discuss what are competences and how can we **measure** them.



You will experiment it **yourself** to better understand the process.



So that young people know how the things they learn in youth work can be useful for other **jobs**.



and how can we support them in understanding the **value** and gather the evidences of their abilities.



We will also discuss on how can young people express their **competences** effectively.



Basically, we want you to be inspired and to discover new approaches and concrete new **methods**,



plan how you will transfer your new skills in your daily work for the next months.

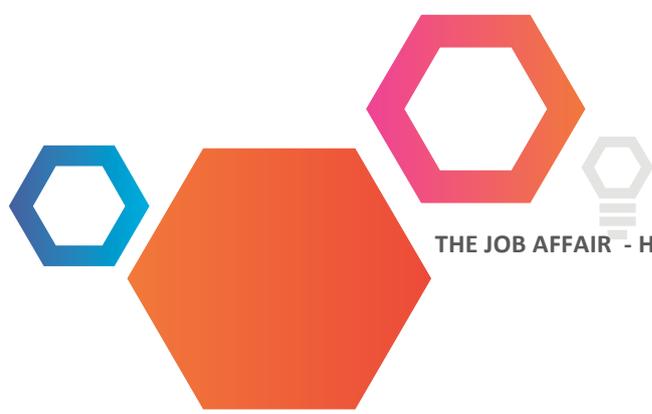


and learn how to measure your **impact**.



Go home and test it out!





4. What we found out during the training

During several sessions the group of youth workers participating in the project discovered and developed knowledge about the competences needed to increase one's employability, the European current employment situation and the role of youth workers in this context. Some of the conclusions presented by participants in different moments of the project are gathered below, namely what participants found missing in different dimensions of the employment problem, as well as the role of youth workers in this context.

What is missing in Society?

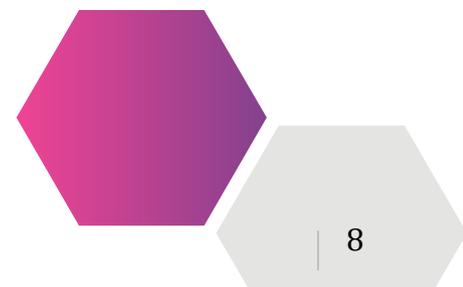
- Looking at Young people as future labour force;
- The idea that a degree is not enough to get a job;
- Policies and laws that promote Youth Employment;
- Integration;
- Support to vulnerable groups;
- Giving time and chances instead of pressure;
- Bigger budget to tackle this problem;
- Support from the family.

What is missing in the job Market?

- Tax reduction to small business to employ Young People;
- Large database of talents and competencies;
- The option to employ people with no experience;
- More Social Entrepreneurship.

What is missing in Formal Education?

- More job experiences as part of the curriculum;
- Encouraging young peoples' independent thinking;
- Linked services;
- More practice;
- More validation of competences gained outside school;
- More Mentoring.



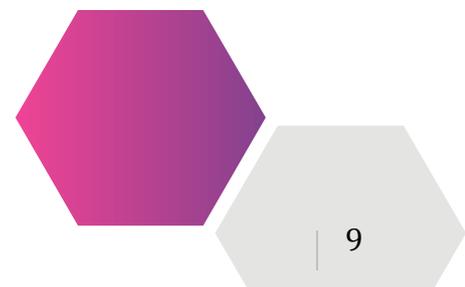


What is missing in Young peoples' Experiences?

- Clear expectations;
- Knowing yourself;
- Planning the future;
- Assessing their missing employability skills;

What is the role of Youth Workers?

- Organise creative programs to help young people think outside the box;
- Help young people find the right direction for themselves;
- Identify their needs and goals;
- Show a realistic view of the job market;
- Mentor and be supportive;
- Help them discover their potential;
- Develop further the competences young people already have;
- Develop soft skills;
- Show Young people new opportunities
- Encourage young people to overcome their fears and weaknesses;
- Empower Young people to take ownership of their lives;
- Introduce Young people to potential job pathways;
- Promote their self-confidence and the right attitude for success.



5. Let's talk about Competences

Understanding of the word Competence (A+S+K)

In youth work and non-formal education within youth work sector we work with the concept of competences which consists of three elements. Knowledge, skills and attitudes. Just take an easy example of driving a bus. To have the competence of bus driving, we need to have some knowledge. How the bus works, where to start an engine, how to operate the doors, but also knowledge about the traffic rules, time table etc. But this is not enough to drive a bus. We need also necessary skills. For example to move forward, change gears, stop at the bus stop close enough that people can get in and out and so on. But even knowing all that, it still doesn't make anyone a good bus driver. There are also attitudes linked to it. If I drive safe with the people inside the bus, if I follow the traffic rules, if I wait on the bus stop few more seconds when I see someone running to catch a bus and so on. So when we talk about developing competences all these three elements should be tackled.

It's great to have this common understanding of competences within the youth sector, but it is also important to bear in mind, this is not universal definition valid for all educational sectors. Just when we look to qualification frameworks in some countries, which is wider concept than youth work, we can see that their definition of competence means more ability to do something independently and in good quality and it is an addition to knowledge and skill.

But at the end, when helping young people to recognize their potential and name their competences, it is not that important what definition we take. Important is to use something, they will understand, and maybe something, where different tools already exists and those can make your work easier.

How to recognise competences

There are different ways how we can recognize the potential and competences young people have. If we compare with different exercise used in assessment centres, we can see many parallels in what we do with young people. Different team exercises, when you can recognize who has the leadership potential, who is more practical and can put ideas into the solutions, who is more eager to "follow orders" proposed by someone else and feels good in this position. These are all important elements which are valued in different kind of jobs. For example

accountants are typically people, who don't mind doing similar things every day, having their routine and often not having the need to interact often with other people. But this kind of work will be most probably not fitting someone who is very outgoing, creative and hates routine.

So it is more about the perspective to take when working with young people than a big changes in activities we do. Specially when we work young people on longer term, very often we don't even need special activities to see what they are good at. We might see it from different things they do anyway. But it still is very important to provide space, where young people can find out themselves as they are not often aware of this. Few of the activities as examples were also developed and piloted by our participants and are part of this booklet.

How to name Competences

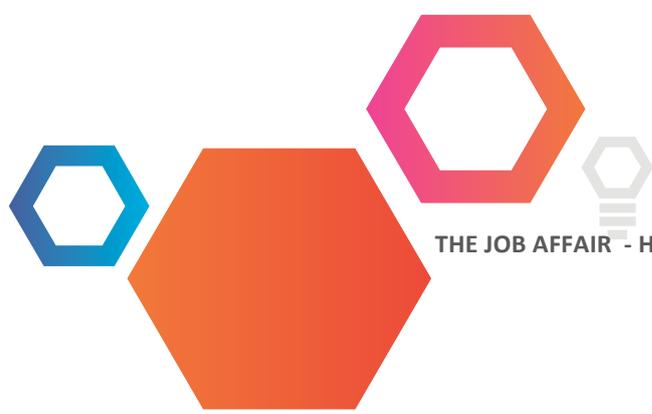
The most known tool to help you name your competences in the European youth field is Youthpass. You can find a lot about it on it's website www.youthpass.eu. But there are also different other tools which describe different competences in much more details. For example competence teamwork is in the Czech national occupational framework described as readiness and ability to be actively and responsibly involved in the group work. It is the opposite of excessive competitiveness as well as the preference for working alone. In more details it includes these sub-competences: willingness to share one's knowledge, being helpful, tolerant, respecting ideas and opinions of others, following agreed rules, following a common group objective, participating in solving common tasks, solving problems of group communication and cooperation, appreciating contribution of others and providing them with feedback, creating supportive environment, assuming of group roles and positions, accepting given tasks and delegating them.

Here are few more as an example:

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Ability to actively communicate, including presentation, active listening and argumentation skills.

Parcial competences: reflecting reactions from surrounding – ability to understand verbal and non-verbal messages, overcoming barriers in communication, accepting and working with arguments of other people, clear communication towards other people, written communication, assertive communication – expression also of disagreement, self-reflexion, adaptation of communication according audience, attract listeners, foreseeing reactions, presentation skills



CREATIVITY

This competence means actively searching for opportunities and initiate changes and new ideas aiming to rise economical growth, get higher effectivity, quality or in different way defined sucess or outcome. Creative thinking nad work includes intuition, internal motivation, creativity in producing ideas, managing risks and readiness for changes.

Partial competences: ability to percieve and critically evaluate opportunities, bringing ideas and realize them, transform own ideas into the formalized concepts and plans, taking risks, ability to iniciate and accept the changes.

FLEXIBILITY

This competence means flexibility in thinking, behaviour, approaches towards tasks and situations happening on daily basis. It is ability to change or adapt own working habits and behaviour and effectively work in new or changing situations.

Partial competences: flexible thinking, ability to accept new thoughts and approaches, willingness to change style and working methods according actual needs, alternative view, ability to use unusuall methods, innovative thinking.

SATISFYING CUSTOMERS NEEDS

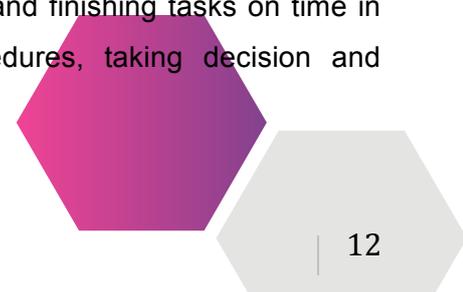
This competence means interest and effort focusing on assessment and fullfilment of clients needs.

Partial competence: getting along with customers, put onself into the needs and interests of others – empathy, ability to use win-win negotiation strategies, building and developing relationship with customers, adapting according the needs of customers

EFFICIENCY

This competence belongs to most important working competecnes. It means interest in providing good working results according high standards.

Partial competence: setting up individual aims and tasks, readiness to improve, optimize working processess, indentify priorities, keep high performance and finishing tasks on time in spite of obstacles, be precise according technological procedures, taking decision and selecting adequate approaches.



INDEPENDENCE

This competence means to work persistently and fully focused on given tasks. Independent person tries to do as much as possible without help of others, is aware of his/her strengths and weaknesses and does not need to be controlled very much.

Partial competence: being initiative, work focused, independently gather information and ways towards solution, analyze and realize them, self-management, having and expressing own opinions, being able to ask for help, decide based on own experiences, being resistant towards manipulation, estimate own capacities and being responsible for own decisions and results at work.

PROBLEM SOLVING

This competence includes ability to recognize the problem on time, name it, analyze it, look at it from different perspectives, choose right way, do it and analyze the results.

Partial competence: understanding a core of the problem, distinguish important from unimportant, seeing causes and effects, wider context of the problem, systematic solution for problems, conceptual thinking and real problem evaluation.

This detailed description is a good basis for self-reflection to see what you already know and what don't know yet. And this national occupational framework goes even further. They divide each competence into 5 different levels and in each level they describe what you need to know or be doing to reach that level. You can see more examples on their website (2).

There are also different tools with different levels, available on international level. For example youth workers portfolio (3) developed by Council of Europe. Or Level 5 which was tool developed by an international partnership and divides each competence in 5 levels but in 3 different elements of competence - knowledge, skills and attitude (4).

For the use with young people, that might be already too detailed, but if we look for inspiration there is already a lot to take, adapt and use. We used on the training as example only basic descriptions of 10 selected soft competences from the Czech occupational framework.

² <http://kompetence.nsp.cz/mekkeKompetence.aspx>

³ <http://www.coe.int/en/web/youth-portfolio>

⁴ <http://www.reveal-eu.org/>



6. *The employers' point of view*

As generic competences, employers are looking for people who have

- Communication skills
- Planning and organising skills
- Decision making skills
- Team working skills
- Confidence and autonomy
- Numeracy

Employers recognize the youth work experiences, but at the same time, they experience that youth and youth workers are not very good in articulating the experiences they gain in youth work, and how they could be in service of the (specific field of) the work of the employer.

An employer gave the example of a youth worker, who applied for a job as dispatcher. She had an experience as a (cooking) chef during the summer camp of 100 children. During the interview, the employer asked what it implemented, and she answered about cooking the meals for the children, buying the food in the market for a large group, making an extra dessert for the youth leaders in the evening after a tiring day, etc.

What she did not mention, was that she learnt the planning of the meals for large groups, the calculation of the budget. She did neither mention that kids that were a bit homesick and some kids that fell on the ground came in tears in the kitchen for a plaster and some comforting.

Coping with stress, working with deadlines (the meals needed to be served at 12h30 and at 18h30 for all people at the same time), team work in the kitchen, empathic behaviour,... were competencies that are behind this „cooking on a summer camp for 100 children“, but this youth worker did not think about promoting it in this way, while – for the job of dispatcher – these are all relevant competencies.

Youth workers need to translate more what they have learnt, into the context of a working environment. According to the employers, the learning of the necessary competencies is already

there in the youth work, but the stress on how to express what young people learn in the youth

work, should be more emphasised in terms of concrete competencies, in service for the job that people are applying for.

Employers that were present in the project did recognize the value of tools to assess competencies, but were quite critical about the youth pass: instead of making it very concrete, demonstrating with examples concrete skills, they experience that youth pass is generalizing competencies too much; young people should not learn to express themselves in abstract terminology, such as „learning to learn“.

In the training, participants worked with the „competence handbook“, which is being used by > 10'000 civil servants of the city of Ghent.

This competence handbook contains a list of 37 competencies, and each competence has a definition, different levels, depending on the responsibility of the employee, and behavioural indicators per level.

Let's take a look to one example:

The method of STAR to demonstrate your (improvement of) competencies:

- **Situation:** give a description which is as concrete as possible, of a successful situation where you improved that competence
- **Task:** give a detailed description of your tasks/role at that moment. What was expected? Which responsibility did you carry?
- **Action:** which actions did you undertake?
- **Results:** what were the results? Which effect did it had on you and on others?



Working client-oriented

Definition: *You have an eye for the needs, expectations and requirements of internal and / or external customers/clients and act accordingly. You anticipate on the needs of the customers/clients and realize a quality service.*

Sub-definition 1

Your working attitude is to provide a correct service towards your customer.

Behavioural indicators:

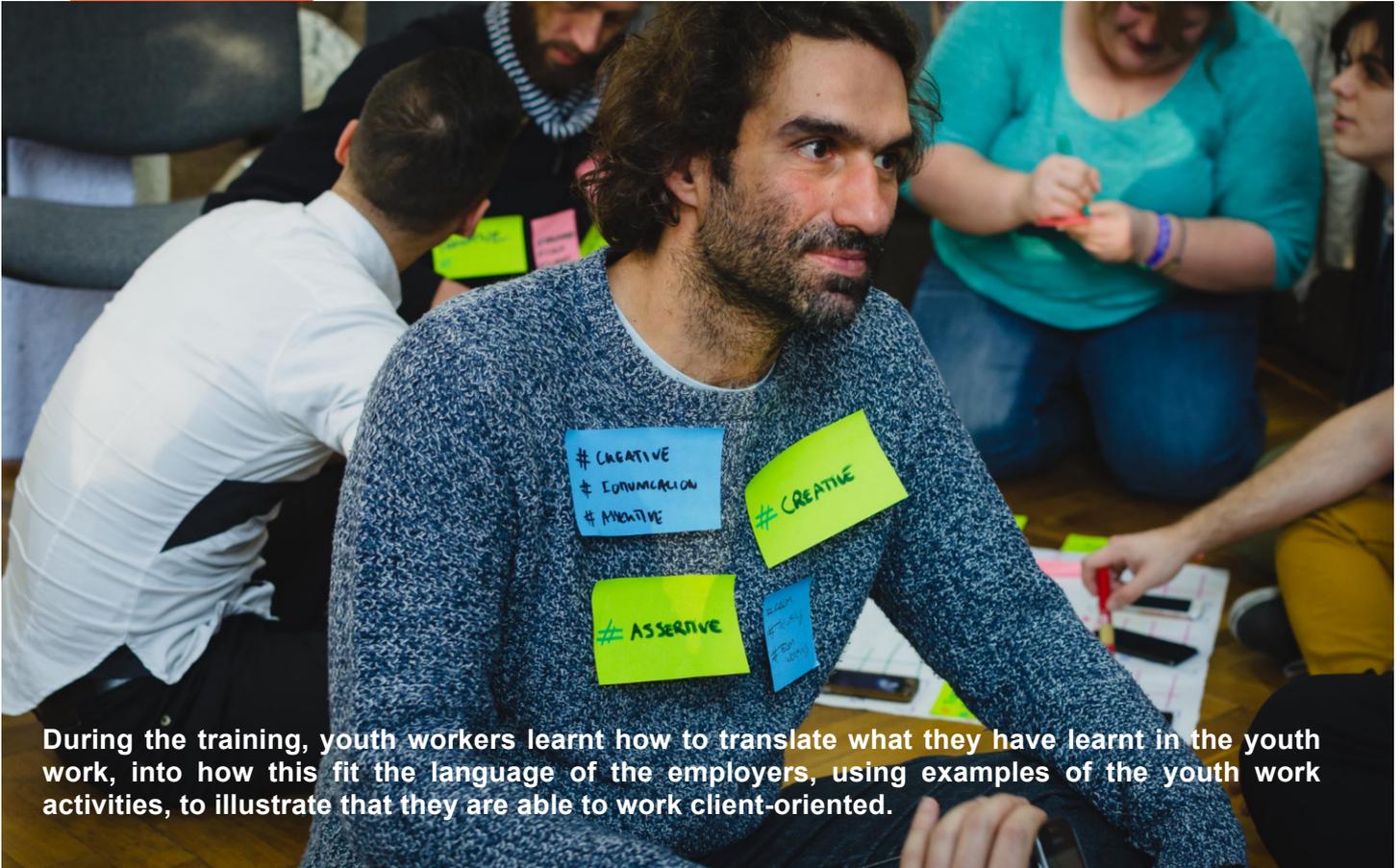
- you give complete and accurate information to customers
- you forward questions of customers correctly to the other departments if you can't answer the request yourself
- you actively listen to the questions and requests and answer them correctly and quickly
- you give information in a way that is understandable for the customer
- you treat every customer equally and ensures a discrete treatment of his requests
- you approach the customer always friendly and respectful
- you keep being polite when customers make complaints
- you see when a customer needs help and spontaneously offers to help him
- You check if you have understood well the needs and requests of customers

Sub-definition 2

You investigate (pro) actively the needs and wishes of the customer, you deal with them and you provide follow up.

Behavioural indicators:

- you treat every customer equally and ensures a discrete treatment of his requests
- you offer the customer alternatives for a problem
- you provide, within the given guidelines/framework, the information and / or service, tailored to the customer
- you adjust the planning or you provided adjusted services to the customer if necessary, while remaining within the given frameworks/guidelines,
- You verify if your work meets the agreed quality standards with the service you provide
- you investigate the requests and needs of customers systematically and discretely
- you spontaneously think *along* with the customer
- you don't limit your work to the explicit (articulated) request of the customer (but also to what's behind and around it)
- you check with the customer if the provided services are satisfying, and you process occurring complaints
- you provide follow up to the request and the provided services



During the training, youth workers learnt how to translate what they have learnt in the youth work, into how this fit the language of the employers, using examples of the youth work activities, to illustrate that they are able to work client-oriented.

Sub-definition 3

You encourage a customer-oriented approach.

Behavioural indicators:

- You show exemplary behaviour on quality service to the customer (you are an example to other colleagues)
- you treat every customer equally and ensures a discrete treatment of his requests
- you anticipate on customers' needs and encourages others to do the same
- you adjust procedures and / or processes in order to reach a more quality service and to meet customer's needs
- you undertake systematic surveys of customer's needs and customer's satisfaction
- when taking decisions, you always have the customer and his context in mind
- you approach problems and complaints as valuable information for improvement
- You set up systems to ensure a quality approach
- You embed a customer-oriented approach in a structural way in the organization
- when you cannot provide answers to the needs of the customer, you forward him actively to other services or to other specialized experts with the necessary active guidance and follow up

The 37 competencies of the competence handbook, that is being used for recruitment purposes, monitoring, coaching and evaluation of employees:

Working efficiently

You realize your tasks within the available time, resources, agreements and regulatory framework.

Working client-oriented

You have an eye for the needs, expectations and requirements of internal and / or external customers/clients and act accordingly. You anticipate on the needs of the customers/clients and realize a quality service.

Working results-oriented

You realize your tasks with motivation in a qualitative way

Coaching

You steer, take action, support and promote professional and personal development of your staff so that they are able to realize their tasks and that they can grow in their job. You adapt your leadership style to the needs of employees and to the situation.

Delegating

You specify in a clear manner the tasks, assignments, projects and / or power of decision-making/authority to employees and this in accordance with their capabilities and motivation. The ultimate responsibility remains to you.

Motivating

You succeed in making your colleagues, employees or others with whom you work with enthusiastic in achieving their missions and in achieving objectives in the interest of the (whole) organization.

Leading / coordinating a team

You coordinate a team, you give direction and guidance to a group of employees, you motivate them, you establish partnerships in order to achieve the set objectives.

Assertiveness

You defend in an appropriate way your own opinion and/or interests / vision of the organization, with respect for the opinions and / or interests of others.

Mediating

You as a third party ensures that two or more parties in disagreement / conflict / dispute come with a solution / agreement to their problem within a given time and with resources available.

Oral communication

You pass oral messages in an easy, understandable and accurate way so that others understand the content fully. You take (non) verbal messages properly and processes those as objectively as possible.

Networking

You build up a network of relationships and / or sustainable network that could now or in the future contribute to the achieving of your goals within the organization.

Negotiating

You as a person involved in negotiations, search for an agreement with other people involved with regard to the time and available resources and your objectives.

You reach a constructive agreement on complex and / or sensitive issues.



Convincing

You can justify and frame your opinion / decision / idea to others with clear and reasonable arguments.

Reporting

You give oral or written feedback or you report the progress of the tasks and assignments, comparing with the expected outcomes and/or you can report about the consequences of the decisions taken.

Collaborating & cooperating with other people

You actively contribute daily to a common result of the whole organisation, not only of your own department, and also when the subject involved is not of immediate personal interest or your direct personal assignment. You work with team spirit and respect for others.

Written communication

You write ideas, information and advices down into a smooth, understandable and correct text.

Empathic behaviour

You acknowledge the vision / needs / desires / feelings of others and you are aware of the impact this has on yourself and others. On this basis you can adjust your style of interaction towards others.

Social behaviour and openness for new contacts

You easily make contacts with others and you don't feel barriers to interact with other people

Analysing

You parses information (data, procedures, regulations, problems and / or situations) in a logical manner. You distinguish causal relations, you can look for additional relevant information and organize information.

Decision making skills

You can make choices and decisions, within a reasonable period, you can think about alternatives and you can ensure the implementation of your choices and decisions.

Conceptualizing

You access information (data, procedures, regulations, problems and / or situations), from a broader and / or theoretical context and processes useful insights into practice.

Awareness about the (working and other) environments

You hold in your actions and your decisions the different internal and external factors on it (directly or indirectly, visible or hidden) into account

Problem solving

You recognize and acknowledge a problem in all its facets. You propose appropriate solutions and realizes these.

Building an opinion

You interpret information and possible actions on the basis of relevant criteria, you can formulate based on a solid argumentation and you understand consequences.

Demonstrating engagement and involvement in/towards the organization

You demonstrate a strong interest and bond, a connection with the organisation, its interests, the problems of the organisation, the teams, and your function.

Stress resistance

You respond appropriately and continues to work effectively when you are in time or work pressure, when there is criticism or when things are not going like planned.

Dignity and integrity

You have a serene attitude in accordance with the requirements of the job and you act coherently with generally accepted social and ethical standards in job-related activities.

Working precisely (precision) and eye for detail

You implement your tasks and assignments with precision and with eye for detail.

Working in a clean and tidy way

You use documents and / or materials in a convenient and accessible way. You keep it tidy and clean, in an orderly way.

Organizing skills

In your own work, and / or in the work of others, you can prioritize appropriately, you can convert assignments to a time schedule and you can provide the necessary tools. You can perform proper monitoring of the assignments.

Working according rules and procedures

You recognize the importance of rules and procedures and respects them in the implementation of your tasks and assignments .

Working safely

You think and act in a way that your own safety and the safety of others (colleagues, citizens, etc.) is ensured in the implementation of your tasks.

Flexibility

You adapt your behavioural style of and approach to a changing environment

PC/ IT skills

You know the use and possible applications of the software, needed to perform your tasks and assignments.

Speaking languages (multilinguism)

You can speak/write foreign languages

Mastering technical skills

You master the technical skills and expertise to fulfil your tasks

Knowing the relevant legislation

You have knowledge of the legislation that is relevant to your work domain and can apply these where necessary



Recruiting by failure

Employers shared that during job interviews, they are asking applicants to demonstrate the competencies, by asking questions „what would you do if...”, „how would you react in this situation”,...

Usually, applicants tend to think that they should have solutions for each problem, while for the employer, it is the goal to see until which level the applicant is functioning. Employers are asking and asking, until the applicant is stuck. This is for them not a limitation of the applicant, neither a disadvantage, but rather the zone of potential growth; it's to estimate how a person is learning, what is needed in terms of coaching, and how the applicant could fit in the team where each person also has different competencies.

Intuition recruitment

*A SECRET SHARED
BY A JOB HUNTER..*

Did you know that 70% of the recruitment is based NOT on the (assessment of) competencies, but purely on the intuition of the employer?

It means that it's double important to articulate the gained competencies „to the point” in the the remaining 30% that applicants have impact on.

7. Implementation

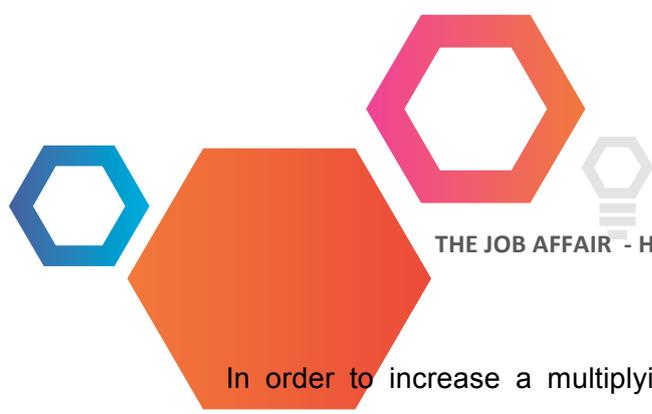
What was implemented

During the first part, the training course, we dealt with 6 main topics:

1. What is employability and what are competencies?
2. How to assess your own competencies?
3. What is the role of youth workers towards employability?
4. Methods to work on competencies with young people
5. How do employers look to competencies?
6. Developing your own activities to work it out

Afterwards, participants went back home, and tried out the activities they worked out with the young people in the local community they live in and work with. 

After 4 months, we organised a follow up meeting, the participants shared their experience and the impact they had on the youth.



In order to increase a multiplying effect and to disseminate the results further of the first activity, we invited also a lot of new participants. To have more impact on the theme, we also invited new topics (extra impact) to deal with during the follow up meeting.

We wanted to create a longer impact, impact that goes deeper and wider, so we took a look to the methods that were developed and implemented by the participants in their local context, and we improved those.

Testimonies

Here are some of our participants' opinions on the project:

The job affair is a great experience for professional youth workers, for two reasons: first it really shows the importance of competences in our society, and most of all learning to be aware and reflecting about the competences young people have (but also to be more aware of your own competences as a youth worker). The second reason is that you are made aware to think from other perspectives, for example as a youth worker, you put on the glasses of an employer, but also the glasses of the youth.

Dries Cosaert, Flemish Youth-Worker

I met a lot of great people there and the contacts really helps me in my work - together we found the volunteer for our EVS project :) And with others we are trying to do youth exchange. And what I've learned? That it is very important to celebrate small success and also that it is important to improve and focus on our strengths not only our weaknesses.

Michaela Šidová, Slovak Youth-Worker

Participating in this project was a really intense and powerful experience. Not only I learnt a lot with the great topics of the workshops (The focus on "how to do a good debrief" , "the importance of failure and competences for employability" or "how to use new technologies for interventions" was really good), but also with the team. I had the chance to talk about new practices, exercises and tools that are being used by other colleagues, and that has been very



useful for my professional practice.

Edite Amorim, Portuguese Psychologist

The Job Affair was a comprehensive and very worthwhile programme. From excellent trainers to opportunities for peer learning, it grasped the practicalities of the modern workplace for young people and also provided new advice and inspiration to those of us who have been working in the sector for a long time.

Rosalind Lowry, UK Youth-Worker

I have learned to identify competences in the young people and colleagues through energisers, games and activities; Have a clear vision of my role within my team at work and what responsibilities I should take; Be clear, concise and direct when communicating information to staff and young people; Set myself short term goals with the aim of achieving long term goals and how to teach and learn more effectively.

Leslie Saunders, UK Youth-Worker

For me participation at the second meeting was helpful - sharing experience, inspiration by variety of activities other youth workers practice taking employability into consideration... The workshop made by the HR expert helped me imagine how they see experience from non-formal learning and how to work with employers towards recognition of NFL. It seems new long-term partnerships came up from this short meeting as well, I'm really glad for it :)

Lenka Polcerova, Czech Republic Youth Worker

A couple of weeks ago we had an integration camp for the new-comers to our organization Erasmus Student Network Jagiellonian University. During the weekend we delivered a workshop about competencies based on what we have learnt during the training. Our aim was to raise selfawareness of the members of ESN, to help them develop their skills and identify their competencies, essential ones needed to future employees. We used your idea of flying plates and It was perfect! One week ago there was another training meeting in Cracow for all the sections of ESN Poland. There we provided the competencies workshop again, but this time for the members of HR Committee of ESN Poland.

All of this above was a great experience for us! We were given a huge motivational boost in Senec that made us more self confident. It opened our eyes to different approaches. It gave us a lot of energy to work and change the world around us. We discovered competencies inside us that we have NEVER thought we could have. Life is worth taking chances. Thank you!

*Karolina Rutkowska, Natasza Romaniuk and Katarzina Zyla, Polish youth leaders
(2 months after the training)*

8. Toolbox

Activity Name: Power of first impression

Aim: Increase employability among youngsters

Objectives:

- better understanding of how first impression works in contents of job seeking
- knowing the employer's perspective
- improving one's self presentation skills and awareness of body language

Target group: 18-23



Number of pax: up to 10

Session Description:

Step 1:

Short description of the session.

Underlining the meaning of 'first impression' - explain, clarify, assure them about the misleading character of 'first impression'. As a part of deeper introduction we can ask them about their first impression about us (may be using the 'black box'?)

Getting to know each other - participant's stay in a circle and everyone introduce themselves with gesture and adjective (starting with the same letter as their name, e.g. Super Simon). Each person repeat all the names, adjectives and gestures previously given Later we can underline how their word from the first exercise has influenced the second one. How very subtle signals have influenced others opinion.

Step 2:

Stickers game - Every person gets a set of stick cards and chooses the word they think best describes every group member. They put the card on the person and discuss the outcomes. This exercise should be fun and instructive, without forcing the explanations. Additional question needed (f.ex. "Do you agree", "Are you surprised", "Do you think that adjectives/gestures given in the previous game influenced the result?")

Step 3:

In smaller groups - discussing what traits should they acquire before having a job interview. Clarify the explanation; ask them how can they impress the recruiter (body language skills, outfit).

Taking the role of the recruiter - "what would you pay most attention to?" It's nice & safe to do that - focusing on what recruiter thinks (not you do)

Discussing the results

Step 4:

Job interview simulation - volunteers (max 3) are having short mock interview with the invited recruiter, rest of the group is an audience. It's important to explain that this exercise is not about one's competences or experience, but will focus on their behaviour and attitude to show the reality of job interviews and one's actions during it.

Pass the floor to the recruiter - basing on the interviews and group task, invited recruiter tell more about his/her impressions and perspective, explains the mechanism, gives tips and advices.

Group discussion - linking all the facts gained from the exercises and sharing thoughts about first impression with the facilitator and the recruiter.

Debriefing or evaluation questions:

- How do you perceive the first impression in the job market now?
- Do you think it's important to make good first impression?
- Do you now know what to avoid during the job interview?

Materials needed:

- Sticker cards
- Music in the background



Activity Name: Using Football

Aim: To improve team cooperation

Objectives: To understand that if you want to win the game you need to play with a team

Target group: 15 - 20 years of age

Number of pax: 10

Session Description:

Time 00:

Welcoming participants in a circle - explaining the purpose of that team practice on a football field is transferable to office (employment) environment.

Time 05:

"Bago" game (Robert) - to warm up - one in the middle of a circle trying to reach the ball being passed within the circle. If the one in the middle reaches the ball - changes the position with the one who passed the ball last. Start with one player in the middle then add two more in the middle – so they cooperate to catch the ball.

Time 10:

Free kick game (Wilson) - explain required positions and movements on video and paper - then realise it on field in real - at least 5 repetitions until the teams got the idea of the exercise.

Time 25:

End

Debriefing or evaluation questions:

- How did you feel as an individual?
- How did you feel as a part of a team?
- What was your role in a team?
- What are the similarities between football and employability?
- What competences did you learn/need during the activity? (the facilitator can possible options of competences.)

We can use cards with pictures. We put different pictures on the floor and said to participants to pick one of two pictures that describe their feelings about this activity. Then we use evaluating questions and participants have to answer them with explaining why they choose these pictures.

Materials needed:

- Ball 1x
- Stones 2x
- Papers 10x + Pen 10x
- Video instruction in laptop (<https://youtu.be/oByuQyzskAI>)
- Paper instruction
- Cards with pictures

Tips for adaptation:

In case that the activity is cooking, you can start with an energizer instead of the bag game. This could be the alphabet game. The facilitator starts saying the alphabet in his head, until someone says stop. Then you have a starting letter, the teams should shout vegetable, fruit, kitchen equipment's,.. that starts with that letter. If one member cannot come up with any more words, they lose the battle. You can repeat this a few times with different letters. The core activity can be replaced by a cooking activity. Learning technics to cut the onions or carrots, instructed by a video or a facilitator.

Materials needed:

- Cooking equipment
- Instruction video
- Papers
- Pen



Activity Name: #ImSelfieAndIKnowIt

Aim: Identifying Personal Competencies

Objectives:

- Reflect on identifiable competencies
- Reflect on competencies in a challenging situation
- Match personal competencies to a dream job

Target group: 16 – 18 years old (an established group)

Number of pax: 12

Session Description:

00.00h – Welcome

00.02h – Introduction Theme - “Why take a Selfie?” A) Selfie of the group B) The group present reasons and feedback

00.05h – Group divider technique (3 groups of 4 persons)

00.08h – Competency Card game : Present 10 competencies and explain each (image 1) . Distribute the 10 #cards that they are going to use to self and peer assessment. Each member picks their 3 main competences. Each team will present each team member with 3 additional competences that they think the team member has. Each member takes a Selfie with the competences cards attached to their bodies.

00.30h – Desert Island: With the same group they imagine they are stranded on a desert island and they must prepare to live there for a period of time. Explain to the groups that they have 8 tasks to perform on the island (image 2) . Each team will have a chart with an island and space to match the roles with their #competences in order to form an affective team and survive (image 3). A leader from each team (island) will present how the team will work to survive on their island. Each team member reflects on any new competencies discovered while performing their tasks.

01.00h – Dream Job: Reflecting on the above competencies and group members apply their learning to a Dream job. Each person receive a chart on where they can complete what their dream job could be and which competencies are required (image 4). Each member takes a Selfie of his or her personal profile (with the competencies required).

Debriefing or evaluation questions:

01.15h – General feedback from the group on their learning archived

Has your self-image changed?

Have you identified a new skill or competence? (image 5)

Materials needed:

- Pens, papers, flipchart, smart phones, stickers, boards, competence’s cards, the 5 images and “good” facilitators 😊 per divided group



Ideas for evaluation:

Take a selfie with your face expression showing how you found the exercise. (then share it in the social media with the hashtag (#) describe your expression and the competence that most describe you. E.g: #happy and #creative)

Tips for adaptation:

Activity could be slit in 2 days (if the group doesn't know about competences). In the 1st day we explain the competences and we do the 1st and 2nd exercises, and in the 2nd day we do 3rd and 4th exercises.

Before the 1st exercise, give the same paper (image 4) here they can write their dream job in the beginning. (This can be done so the participants can compare before and after this exercise)

Things to keep in mind:

Ask the group if they don't mind to take pictures and share them in social media. (This must be done at the beginning)





Activity Name: My Talents

Aim: Recognizing talents

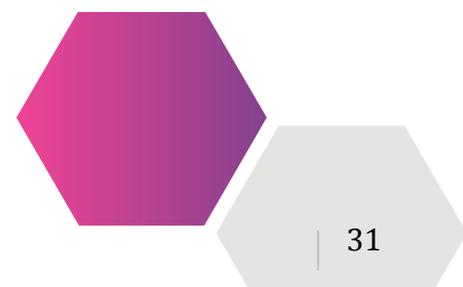
Objectives: Self reflection, recognition ones' own competences/talents and interests

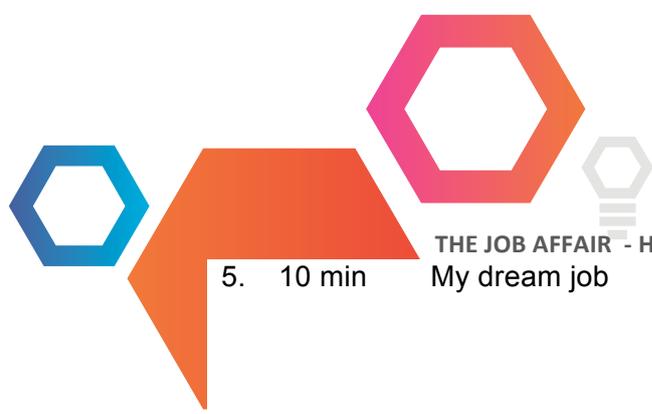
Target group: Young people 14 to 18

Number of pax: 8-12

Session Description:

Time	Activity	Description	Materials
1. 10 min	Introduction of the activity	We make quick introduction of the workshop. Every participant say how he/she feel today (we can use ball).	
2. 15 min	Subject that I like /dislike	Participants are selecting subject that they like/dislike (they have a list of subjects).	Working paper, pen
3. 20 min	"Flying circles"	Participants split the circle in 3 parts. 1 part: 5 things they enjoying doing; 2 part: 5 competences/ talents; 3 part: 5 things they want to avoid. Circles are then exchanged by throwing, so each participant get one circle. After reading, they write the advices on the other side of the circle about carrier options of the other participant (we repeat it several times). Reflection (10 min)	Paper circles and markers.
4. 10 min	Activity	# Before starting we give them examples of competences. Participants represent their talents with pantomime (in groups).	





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- | | | | | |
|----|--------|---|---|--|
| 5. | 10 min | My dream job | They are drawing pictures of their dream job or they use pictures from magazines and newspapers and make a collage. | Markers, colour pencils, pictures from magazines, newspaper. |
| 6. | 10 min | Flower for you | They get a flower printed in the paper, other participants write down their competences (positive things that they see on others) | |
| 7. | 15 min | Evaluation/reflection (feedback for team members) | Participants choose picture which represents how they feel about the workshop. We use sunny, cloudy and stormy weather. (+ questions) | Posters with pictures of sun, cloud and rain |

***Advices to improve/upgrade workshop: use music during the individual work.

Tips for adaptation:

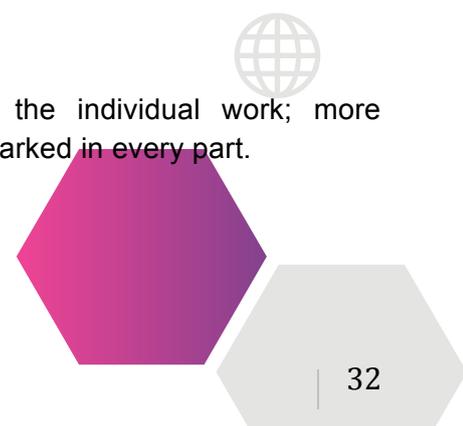
Energiser with Frisbee outdoor: everybody is standing in a circle, you throw the Frisbee towards someone and you say his/her name. If the Frisbee doesn't reach the right person, you lose an arm for the rest of the game. If the person whose name is called, doesn't catch the Frisbee, he loses an arm also. Next punishments can be: losing one leg, sitting down, turning around, ...

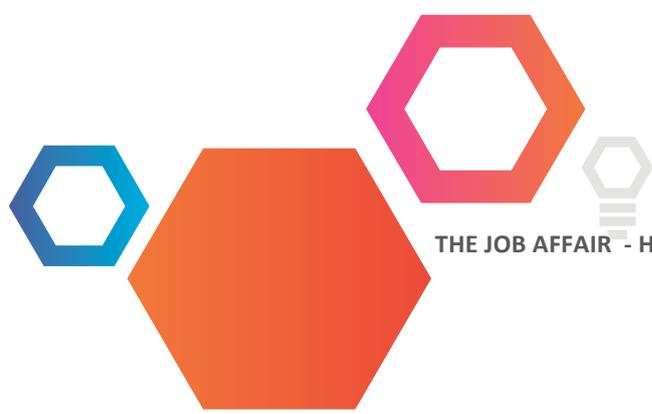
Variation on nr 4: instead of pantomime, they can draw the competence on a blackboard or flipchart.

Evaluation: in case the participants are younger, make the evaluation a game. For example fighting game...you put pillows in your room, every pillow represents a score or answer on a scale: If they hit a certain pillow, that is their answer on the question.

After the session, they get to take the plate home

***Advices to improve/upgrade workshop: use music during the individual work; more examples what are competences; prepared circles – spited and marked in every part.





Activity Name: River of Lava

Aim: to identify what young people do well (what are their existing skills)

Objectives:

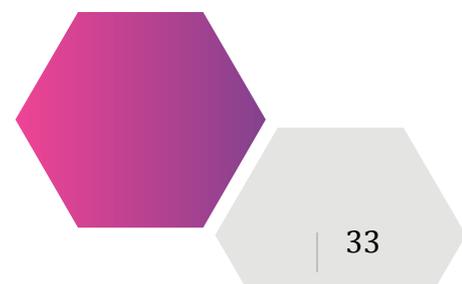
- To understand your role in a team
- To be able to articulate your skills

Target group: 14 – 18 with little existing knowledge of their competences

Number of participants: 10 – 30

Session Description:

Minutes	Main activities	Debriefing or Evaluation questions
0-2 mins (intro)	Welcome young people + explain we will start to look at employability	What do you understand by the term employability
2-10 mins (starter)	Question + answer in pairs discuss two questions What are your skills What are your weakness	Do you feel you can answer these questions fully effectively
10-25 mins (energizer)	Hum Along music activity – in groups of 4/5, invite a team on stage to hum a song out of the top 10 we have made. The other teams try to guess when all members of the team recognize it they must stand together	What did you enjoy, and also what they don't enjoy it Discuss impotence of teamwork





25-70 mins
(main activity)

THE JOB AFFAIR - HOW YOUNG PEOPLE EXPRESS THEIR COMPETENCES IN THE JOB MARKET

Lava River – in teams of 10/12 works best
 -As a team, YP must cross the river using only square ‘tiles’ to help them (see additional rule sheet)
 -Facilitators should add obstacles for the team to overcome (crocodiles, wind, blindfolds etc)
 -If YP choose to restart once it’s ok!
 -This activity can be timed or YP can be given unlimited time
 -It is important to make this activity relevant to your YP
 Other ideas could include- YP could complete other team building activities to give them a deeper understanding of their skills
 -Let some of the YP be responsible for the obstacles that the team must face

-What did you enjoy/not enjoy?
 - Did you find this activity harder than the first one? Why?
 What made your team successful?
 What role do you feel you played in the team (maybe display some ideas?)

Because of this learning experience, YP should now be able to identify their skills (at least 1).
 YP take a piece of paper and write a skill they demonstrated during the activity.
 -They then stick the paper on their back (so no one can see what they have written)
 -Each person must write something their team mates are good at on the paper.

It is often easier to identify skills in others rather than themselves
 -Don’t allow repeat answers
 -Display competence ideas, with simplified explanations, to guide YP if they need help.

15 mins
(closing activity)

YP think of their own competence and use the comments from their team mates, plus their own ideas to articulate at least one skill

-Display some sentence structure helpers
 e.g ‘I am good at....I know this because...’





80-90 mins
(conclusion)

THE JOB AFFAIR - HOW YOUNG PEOPLE EXPRESS THEIR COMPETENCES IN THE JOB MARKET

Revisit the Questions asked at the start of the session

Link these questions to the aim of the session
Use the Blob Tree to evaluate how they feel about their ability to answer these questions now

Do you find easy to identify with one of the 'blobs'?

Which do you identify with and why?

The blobs are in different positions and experiencing different situations so the YP may feel at the top of the tree, but only got there with the help of others.

Materials needed:

- Flip Chart;
- Paper;
- Pens;
- Square Tiles;
- Tape;
- Blob Tree.

Ideas for evaluation

Present the blob tree at the beginning and ask each person what position they are on the tree. At the end, do the same in the new tree. (Its good to see the differences of the beginning and the ending).

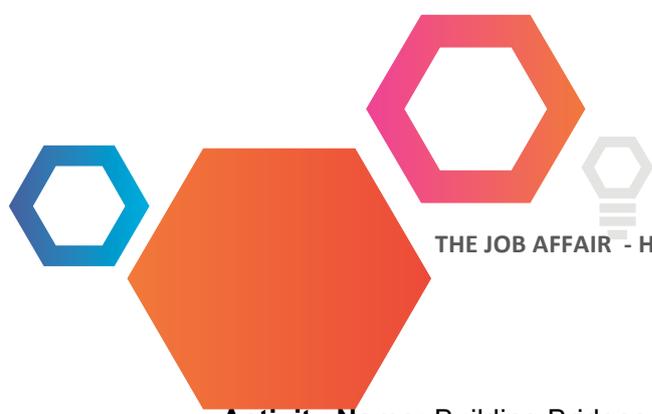
Tips for adaptation

Activity could be split in 2 parts (if the group doesn't know about competences). On 1st part: identify their skills/competencies; 2nd part do the Lava River using their competences.

Things to keep in mind

It could work better if the group doesn't know each other.





Activity Name: Building Bridges

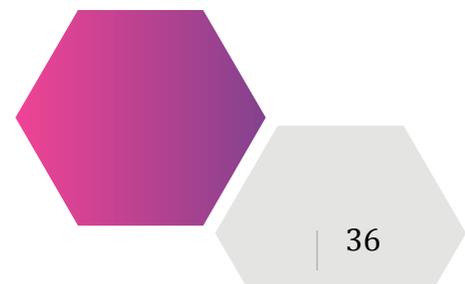
Aim: Promoting the self-esteem with better knowledge of competences for employability

Objectives:

- Recognize own competences
- Naming others participants competences
- Applying competences to a real life situations

Target group: NEET – Not in education, employment or training, Age 16 – 25 years

Number of pax: From 5 to 15



Session Description:

- We start with energizer to get to know each other's names
- Each person receives a card with a name (not their own)
- They have to stand on the rope with at least one foot all the time
- They have to do two things with non-verbal communication:
- Find a card with their name on
- Find a person whose name is written on their card

2. Presenting 10 competences and explain the meaning of each:

- Communication
- Team work
- Problem solving
- Flexibility
- Efficiency
- Leading
- You have pictures with the other 4 competences 😊

3. Split the group in four and analyse different stories (life stories of unknown people)

. First task: Each group receives a page with several life stories and they have to recognize at least three competences in each story

. Everybody shares their results and gives feedback

. Each participant writes down their own life story

Identify three competences of their own story

We collect the results for further analysis

Sometimes a person's personal competences aren't always the same as a person's competences in a group

To prove the point of our sentence we made a group task

4. Group task – building the bridge with spaghetti sticks

Every group receives a bunch of spaghetti sticks, tape, glue and rope to build a bridge between two tables.

5. Question list – analysing the competences

Make score and analyse the results

We can measure the level of each participant's competences by giving scores to the answers from 0-3.

The higher the score the more potential they have to reach that competence

The results will be matched with the competences they took out of their life stories

We will bring the results on the next session

Black box



Each group receives letter box and ten little papers for each person
They will receive the list of questions for each competence
They write answer of the question on a LITTLE paper and put it in the box anonymously

2nd session

At the second session we will analyse the results and by analysing we will find competences that are matching to our youngsters.

Debriefing or evaluation questions:

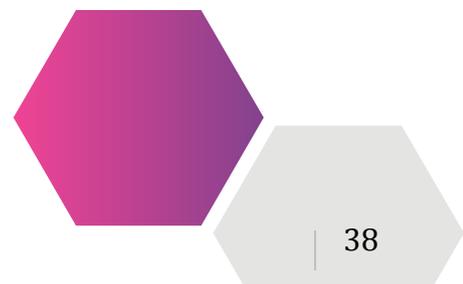
01.15h – General feedback from the group on their learning archived

Has your self image changed?

Have you identified a new skill or competence? (image 5)

Materials needed:

Pens, papers, flipchart, smart phones, stickers, boards, competence's cards, the 5 images and "good" facilitators 😊 per divided group.



This booklet was developed by the team and participants of the project “The Job Affair” that took place in Slovakia, in 2015/2016 and was hosted by Orbis Institute. The aim of the project was to support youth workers in enabling young people to better assess and express their competences for employment purposes.

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