



Supporting the Transition from Education to
Employment of Youth at Risk

IO1 – Task 2: Training and Youthpass certification framework

Project Information

Project acronym:	STEER
Project title:	Supporting the Transition from Education to Employment of Youth at Risk
Agreement number:	2016-1-CY02-KA205-000749
Project Reference Number:	
Sub-programme or KA:	Key Action 2: Supporting the Transition from Education to Employment of youth at Risk
Authoring partner:	Four Elements
Date of preparation:	21.11.2016

©STEER– Supporting the Transition from Education to Employment of youth at Risk 2016

With the support of the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.

Disclaimer:

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

STEER project ref. no. 2016-1-CY02-KA205-000749

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This presentation reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein

Contents

<u>1.Youthpass Framework:</u>	3
<u>1.1Key Competences:</u>	5
<u>1.1.1 Communication in the mother tongue:</u>	6
<u>1.1.2 Communication in foreign languages:</u>	6
<u>1.1.3 Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology:</u>	6
<u>1.1.4 Digital competence:</u>	6
<u>1.1.5 Learning to learn:</u>	6
<u>1.1.6 Social and civic competences:</u>	7
<u>1.1.7 Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship:</u>	7
<u>1.1.8 Cultural awareness and expression.</u>	7
<u>2.Youthpass and STEER:</u>	9
<u>3.References</u>	12

1. Youthpass Framework:

In May 2006, the Council of the European Union adopted a Resolution on the recognition of the value of non-formal and informal learning within the European youth field. In this resolution, the Council states that **“the work and achievements of young people and those active in youth work and youth organisations deserve greater recognition in order to enhance their value and visibility, and should be given due consideration by employers, formal education and civil society in general”**. The Council also invites Member States and the European Commission to get involved in the development of youth-specific recognition tools **“for identifying and recognising the skills and competences acquired by young people through non-formal and informal learning”**.

This direction led to different learning pathways in the youth sector by providing opportunities for training and complementary learning in the formal of youth work and non-formal education. In order to overcome the national obstacles and of “recognized” work and to create a basis for acknowledging informal learning, Youthpass created as the basis. Youthpass is a part of the European Commission’s strategy to foster the recognition of non-formal learning. It is available for projects funded by Erasmus+: Youth in Action (2014-2020) and Youth in Action (2007-2013) programmes. The Youthpass provides a description of the activities undertaken together with the learning outcomes and the competences gained for the participants firmly based on principles of non-formal education and learning.

It provides a valuable tool for youth workers and for young people in general that encourages involvement in society; space for learning; and enhances the contribution of informal education to the learning process bringing together resources, people, tools and methods. Moreover, Youthpass helps in strengthening the social recognition of youth work providing a Europe-wide validations instrument. In addition, youth work and informal learning plays an integral role in young people’s lives by increasing employability opportunities, encouraging active citizenship contributing as such to personal development of individuals. Young people can gain experience through interaction with different actors

and people and can develop their soft skills and empower them to have an active role in the society and in the labour market.

Documenting the acquisition of key competences for increasing employability for young people is not the only advantage of Youthpass. The main benefits are the participation of young people in youth activities that help them in gaining more self-confidence and develop self-awareness. For some social groups is a way for fighting discrimination and work on social inclusion. Besides, it supports social inclusion and active European citizenship in general for young people and youth workers.

Apart from that, Member-States need to adapt to the continues changes to their national economies and labour markets by modernising their education systems and create new mechanisms that can help young people in developing more transferrable competences preparing them for adult life and further learning. Different approaches are required to learning that will be delivered from outside the formal education environment that need to take into account the different settings and learning processes as well as education systems in different EU countries. In this respect youth work has an active role to play due to fact that contributes towards personal fulfillment, active participation, employability and the social integration of young people.

European countries need to adopt to the changing economic landscape and the high youth unemployment levels which particularly affect NEETs making their integration to the labour market a difficult task. Tackling youth unemployment and facilitate social inclusion of social groups at risk such as youth is a top priority for the strategy Europe 2020. That signifies that youth work has a great potential in reducing the gap of transition and increasing their employability skills and active participation.

Some interesting facts & figures:



1/5

of under 15-year-olds attain only the most basic level of proficiency in reading



almost 15%

of 18–24-year-olds left school prematurely



only 77%

of 22-year olds have completed upper secondary education



almost 1/3

of the European labour force is low skilled but by 2010, 50% of newly created jobs will require highly skilled workers and only 15 % will be for people with basic schooling

In that respect, Youthpass, functions as a reference tool for policy makers, education providers, employers and learners themselves to facilitate progress at national and European level.

1.1 Key Competences:

The need to provide equal opportunities to learning and a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes, the “key competences” that every European citizen should have, led to the “*Key competences framework*”¹ which promote personal fulfillment, social inclusion, active citizens and employment:

1.1.1 Communication in the mother tongue;

Communication in the mother tongue is our ability to express thoughts, feelings and facts both orally or in writing (listening, speaking, reading and writing), and to interact with other people in an appropriate way in education and training, work, home and leisure.

1.1.2 Communication in foreign languages;

Communication in a foreign language is closely linked to communication in our mother tongue: it is based on the ability to understand and express thoughts, feelings and facts orally or in writing at work, home, leisure, education and training — according to our wants or needs. Communication in foreign languages also calls for skills such as mediation and intercultural understanding.

1.1.3 Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology;

Mathematical competence is our ability to use addition, subtraction, multiplication, division and ratios in mental and written arithmetic to solve a range of problems in everyday situations. Process and activity is as important as the knowledge itself.

1.1.4 Digital competence;

Digital competence involves the confident and critical use of Information Society Technology (IST) for work, leisure and communication. It is underpinned by basic skills:

¹ Source: Youthpass in Context, see [references](#)

the use of computers to retrieve, assess, store, produce, present and exchange information, and to communicate and participate in collaborative networks via the Internet.

1.1.5 Learning to learn;

'Learning to learn' is the ability to organise our own learning. It includes effective management of time and information, both for ourselves and in groups. We should also be aware of our learning process and needs and identify different opportunities available to learn. It means gaining, processing and assimilating new knowledge and skills as well as seeking and making use of guidance. Learning to learn encourages us to build on prior learning and life experience.

1.1.6 Social and civic competences;

These competences might be the most important ones for the youth field. Many of them can be acquired by active engagement in any kind of youth work or volunteering. They cover all forms of behaviour we might need to participate effectively in our social and working lives.

1.1.7 Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship;

These competences refer to our ability to turn ideas into action which is particularly important for youth work and youth initiatives. It includes creativity, innovation and risk-taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives.

1.1.8 Cultural awareness and expression.

Appreciation of the importance of the creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions through a range of media, including music, performing arts, literature, and the visual arts.

A needs assessment of individual learners' needs, prior experiences and aspirations as well as the learning environment and employment policies should be taken into account, in order to modernise national education systems' and to develop learning processes which will respond to the market needs and will fill certain policy gaps. Besides that, non-formal learning activities should be based on types of learning that take into consideration the role of young people in societies nowadays and in Europe in general. The development of the "European" identity has enriched intercultural principles which support learning and

STEER project ref. no. 2016-1-CY02-KA205-000749

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This presentation reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein

communication between young people from different backgrounds as well as sharing of experiences and practices.

This learning processes should be encouraged and achievements of young people and youth workers should be praised and recognised in order to function as the locomotive for active participation in the labour market, education and society. Participation in youth activities facilitates this engagement and creates opportunities for further development in many personal and social competences. Similarly, youth activities in local and national level with the involvement of different actors can facilitate the development of entrepreneurial thinking, social and entrepreneurial skills, motivation and to increase self-esteem which functions as the stepping stone to transition to the labour market and to entrepreneurship particularly in times when job creation is limited.

Likewise, people of disadvantaged backgrounds who face discrimination in education or labour market can overcome those obstacles through informal learning. Particular social groups with high school drop-out levels who do not hold the necessary qualifications to access the labour market and face long term unemployment such as NEETs and young people with lower qualifications need a new approach that can integrate them to the economic production factor both for their personal development and for active labour participation in to the labour market. Therefore, new policies need to reinforce the efficiency of education and employment strategies which will combine all forms of learning which will facilitate easier access.

Young unemployed people need new learning approaches which will combine typical non-formal education approaches which will combine the typical methods such as mentoring, guidance and counseling that can provide career pathways. This new approach can be proved systematic in tackling youth unemployment and prevent the mismatch of qualifications and the labour market gaps, reinsuring smoother transition from school to work especially for young people with lower qualifications.

2. Youthpass and STEER:

Youth work has an important role to play in supporting young people's learning and transition from education to work and reintegration in the labour market, providing opportunities for gaining new skills and social inclusion. The European Pact for Youth identifies employment and social inclusion as key concerns and major priorities for active participation of the youth in the European societies. Informal learning widely contributes to the personal development, social inclusion, active citizenship and employability of young people. Youthpass is based on key competences which marks progress towards a more comprehensive recognition of learning outcomes for the youth at EU level.

In this respect, STEER project aims to design a comprehensive training programme for youth workers in transition planning of NEETs and unemployed youth. Through the project will be identified the main challenges related to youth unemployment and opportunities for career guidance aiming to influence directly the youth and policy makers in the youth field. Besides that, STEER's training programme will be based on courses proposed through a needs assessment report based on primary research on unemployed youth that could facilitate their transition to the labour market.

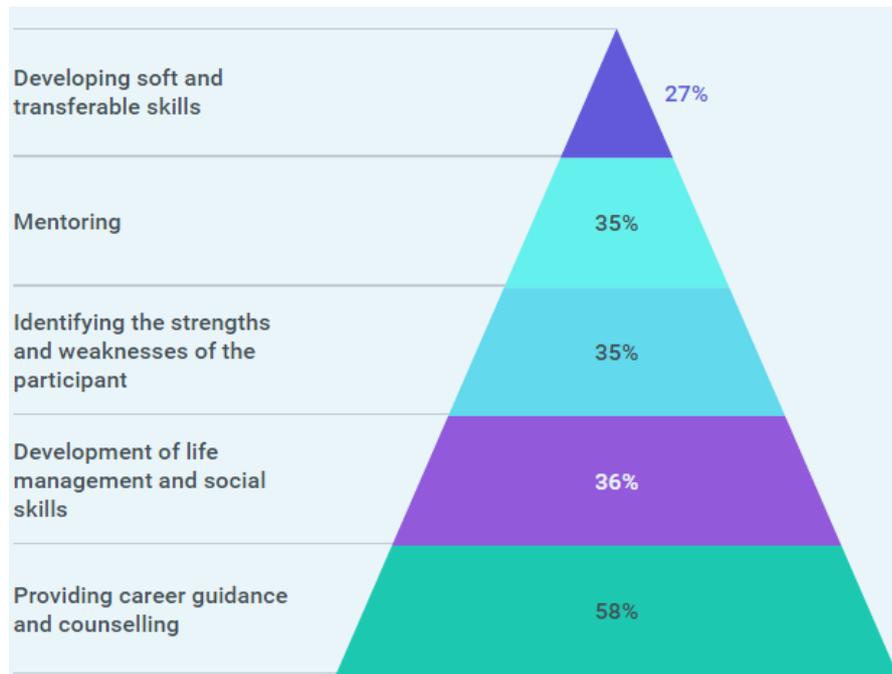
So far, the research that has been carried out through STEER shows that a large number of young people has never participated in youth work activities, and a percentage of them could not define the involvement in such activities. Therefore, most of the young people consider that youth work can play a role in finding work and particular course can help in reintegration in the labour market. Particularly the courses that have been perceived as the most important was:

- *Career guidance and counselling*
- *Development of life management and social skills*
- *Identification of the strengths and weaknesses of the participants*
- *Mentoring*

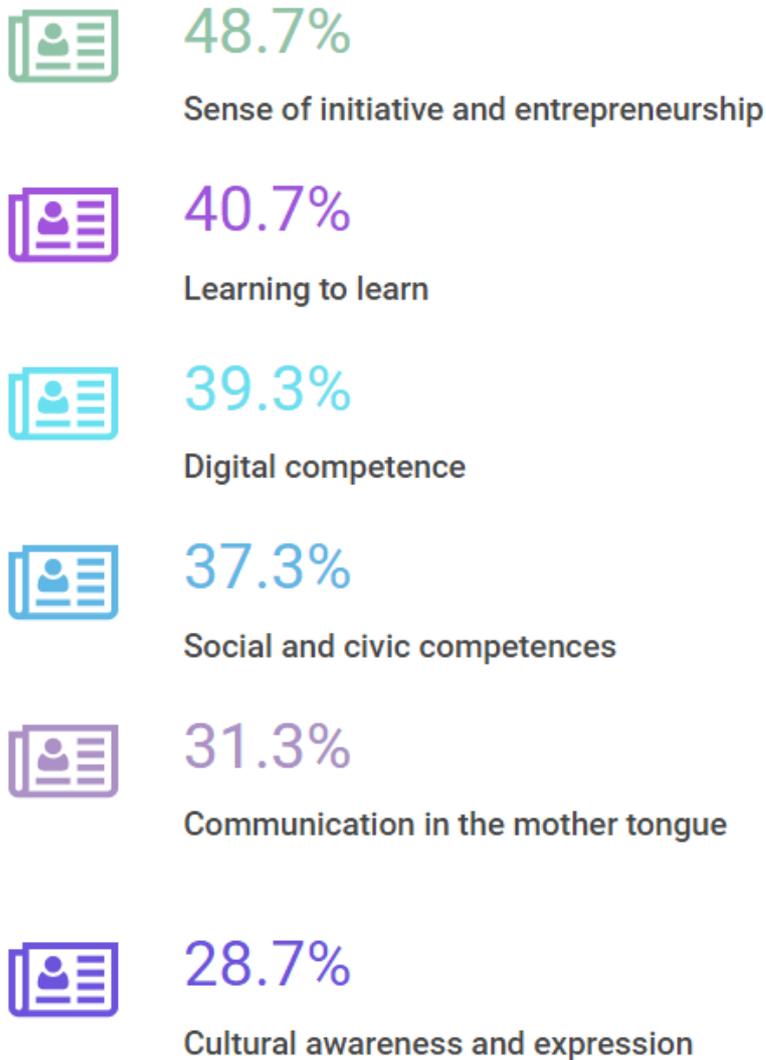
In fact, young people need external support for career prospects, training and regular advice when seeking employment. Career orientation is considered poor during transition phase from education to work.

STEER project ref. no. 2016-1-CY02-KA205-000749

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This presentation reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein



Finally, youth workers which be prepared to assist during the STEER project in mentoring sessions and other activities, should be qualified in different competences according to Youthpass classification. What is mostly needed is youth workers to have *sense of initiative and entrepreneurship*, and the ability to learn. Moreover, *digital and social and civic competences* can help youth workers in the transition training due to the fact that digital competences are highly required in the labour market together with abilities in networking, cooperation and team-working.



To conclude, participation in mentoring sessions which will be accompanied by Youthpass certification will be very helpful for young people, particularly NEETs and other social groups at risk of exclusion. In that framework, STEER is expected to develop innovative methods using the Youthpass tool to facilitate the transition of young unemployed and NEETs to the labour market; reduce unemployment levels and the risk of social exclusion for the target groups and to train youth workers in offering tailor-made transition and planning to those in need.

3. References

“**Youthpass-in context**”, <https://www.youthpass.eu/downloads/13-62-34/Youthpass%20A4.pdf>

Commission, <http://www.youth-partnership.net/youth-partnership/publications/Coyote/11/Index>

Learning in youth work, Coyote, issue 11, Partnership of the Council of Europe and European Commission, <http://www.youth-partnership.net/youth-partnership/publications/Coyote/11/Index>

Markovic, D. (2006): **A step towards the recognition of non-formal education in Serbia and Montenegro**, Coyote, Issue 11, Partnership of the Council of Europe and European Commission, <http://www.youth-partnership.net/youth-partnership/publications/Coyote/11/Index>

Partnership of the Council of Europe and European Commission (2004): **Pathways towards validation and recognition of education, training and learning in the youth field**, working paper

Presidency Conclusions of the Lisbon European Council, 23-24.3.2000. http://www.consilium.europa.eu/cms3_fo/showPage.asp?lang=en&id=1296&mode=g&name=or_Memorandum_on_Lifelong_Learning, http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/comp_en.html#2 or the chapter A4

Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the recognition of the value of non-formal and informal learning within the European youth field, published in the Official Journal of the European Union, 20.7.2006.

Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the recognition of the value of non-formal and informal learning within the European youth field, published in the Official Journal of the European Union, 20.7.2006.

Schild, H.J., Von Hebel, M. (2006): Milestones for formal and social recognition of non-formal and informal learning in youth work, **Coyote, issue 11, Partnership of the Council of Europe and European Commission**, <http://www.youth-partnership.net/youth-partnership/publications/Coyote/11/Index>

Titley, G., editor (2002), **“You hold the keys to Lifelong Learning”**: **T-kit Training Essentials**, Partnership of the Council of Europe and European Commission, Strasbourg, http://www.youth-partnership.net/youth-partnership/publications/T-kits/T_kits