

# SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT: THE ROLE OF CAREER MANAGEMENT SKILLS

## KEY FINDING

- International policy documents (e.g. EU Council Resolution) and research point to the **need to equip individuals with career management skills** in order to facilitate orientation in complex education landscapes and labour markets of the 21st century. This concept shifts the focus towards **learning outcomes of career interventions**, i.e. the ability of an individual to identify own interests and strengths, to relate these to education pathways and the world of work, to collect relevant information, make structured educational and occupational decisions and to implement these.
- Representatives of education and labour ministries elaborated the **concept and a number of tools for implementation** in the **European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network** (2007-2015). Ideally, children and adolescents learn these skills as **part of the school curriculum** whilst career interventions at VET institutions and universities, at the workplace or in employment services could ensure that existing career competences are assessed and **updated or complemented if needed**.
- There exists a **growing body of evidence** from research that systematic and progressive **career guidance programmes** have a **positive impact on an individual's capacity to manage transitions, their learning performance and employment**. Further, many countries have developed **inspiring practices**.
- **Overall, policies to enhance career management skills are at a developmental or initial stage**. In recent **resolutions on skills policies** (2015-2017), the European Parliament sets out that career guidance must be a **core element of education and skills policies from an early stage**.
- **As way forward at European level, several lines of action could be considered**: first, to include career management skills as a key competence into the European Framework of Key Competences undergoing a review, or at least to systematically integrate these; second, to foster targeted mutual exchange in an own working group in a lifelong guidance perspective and in existing European networks (e.g. Key Competences Network - KeyCoNet; ET2020 working groups, Public Employment Services network); third, to promote dedicated projects within Erasmus+ and the European Social Fund.

## 1. INTRODUCTION: CHALLENGING PATHWAYS THROUGH LEARNING AND WORK

Managing one's pathway through learning and work has become more demanding in a world characterised by a differentiated education landscape, by more frequent transitions due to temporary employment, by re- and up-skilling due to rapid technological change, by new

uncertainties due to the changing nature of employment contracts and employee status in platform economies as well as by later retirement in aging societies. When leaving school, young people are faced with multiple routes through further education, VET, and higher education. Before entering their first paid job, millions of young people in Europe, in particular graduates from university, complete internships. More often than adults, young people are hired on the basis of a fixed-term contract: In 2015, on average 40,5 % of youth employees (aged 15-24) were on temporary contracts reaching more than 60 % in several EU countries<sup>1</sup>. For those at work, technological change requires regular up-skilling or job search in case of restructuring. Caring for children or elderly can pose challenges for career development and working longer requires adequate career planning including flexible forms of retirement.

Data demonstrate that there is a **considerable risk of dropout or of becoming trapped in unsustainable jobs**, above all for young people. According to OECD data, between 20 and 50 % of the students do not complete tertiary education. In Germany, one in three students drops out from his / her Bachelor course, many of these take up a VET pointing to earlier deficiencies in career guidance<sup>2</sup>. Half of fixed-term workers would prefer a permanent contract; many employed become trapped in temporary jobs: in 2013, not more than one in five (23.8%) temporary employees transitioned to a permanent job within a year<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore, skills mismatches and skills development remain a challenge. Cedefop's *European skills and jobs survey* has revealed that about 45% of EU adult workers believe that their skills can either be better developed or utilised at work and around one in four of EU adult employees have significant skills deficits including basic skills such as literacy, numeracy and digital skills<sup>4</sup>. Although women achieve better educational attainments than men, around 26 % are inactive. Finally, the employment rate of older workers stands at 55 %<sup>5</sup>.

This note discusses a concept that has received increasing attention in research and policy documents: **Career management skills**. Its focus is on equipping the individual with a **transversal (key) competence to better manage and develop his or her potential in education, work and life** in a given situation where many factors act together.

Thus, it continues a series of previous analyses provided by Policy Department A to support the work of the Committees on Employment and Social Affairs, Culture and Education on the New Skills Agenda:

- Briefing note: New Skills Agenda - State of implementation<sup>6</sup>
- Study: Skills development and employment - Apprenticeships, Internships, Volunteering<sup>7</sup>
- Briefing note: European Lifelong Guidance Policies, New Skills Agenda and Europass - State of Play<sup>8</sup>
- Workshop: Skills development and employability in Europe - New Skills Agenda<sup>9</sup>

## **2. POLICY DEVELOPMENT: CAREER MANAGEMENT SKILLS AS MAIN AIM OF LIFELONG GUIDANCE PROGRAMMES**

The career guidance concept has been extended over time from vocational to lifelong guidance in line with a lifelong approach to learning in policy and practice. Moreover, the **perspective shifted from an input-oriented perspective** (provision of supporting services, teaching) **to an outcome-oriented view in terms of learning outcomes** for the individual. **To equip the individual with career management skills became the ultimate goal of guidance interventions and programmes**. This is connected with a shift in attitude from *helping* to *enabling* an individual to help him- or herself as far as structural and cyclical constraints allow.

Still in 1996, the European Social Charter (1996) stated that "*everyone has the right to appropriate facilities for vocational guidance with a view to helping him choose an occupation suited to his personal aptitude and interests*". While the provision in the Charter is limited to vocational guidance, the **ILO** takes a broader perspective in its **Recommendation**

**concerning Human Resources Development: Education, Training and Lifelong Learning** (2004): Members should “assure and facilitate, throughout an individual's life, participation in, and access to, vocational and career information and guidance, job placement services and job search techniques and training support services. [...] they should “establish **lifelong career guidance services**, which must be an ongoing priority throughout the EU”<sup>10</sup>.

In the same year, the European Council adopted its **first Resolution on Guidance throughout life** (2004) setting out a concept of lifelong guidance with a view to enabling the individual: “In the context of lifelong learning, guidance refers to a range of activities that enables citizens of any age and at any point in their lives to identify their capacities, competences and interests, to make educational, training and occupational decisions and to manage their individual life paths in learning, work and other settings in which these capacities and competences are learned and/or used”. Through guidance provision individuals can “develop effective self-management of their learning and career paths”<sup>11</sup>.

The **second Council Resolution on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies** (2008) went further by introducing **career management skills as one of four priority areas** and as main aim of **lifelong guidance programmes**<sup>12</sup>. The other three priority areas are means to achieve this objective. They concern aspects of service provision and monitoring: access to guidance services / validation of non-formal/ informal competences; quality assurance / evidence base of guidance services and cooperation mechanisms.

Within the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN, 2007-2015) a working group bringing together representatives from education and labour ministries developed a **common competence-based definition**:

*“Career Management Skills refer to a range of competences which provide structured ways for individuals and groups to gather, analyse, synthesise and organise self, educational and occupational information, as well as the skills to make and implement decisions and transitions. They are therefore of value to the individual in terms of constructing and implementing a life project in which work [...] occupies a central place.”<sup>13</sup>*

Related **knowledge, skills and competences** concern three areas:

- **personal management** (e.g. self-knowledge of one's capacities and interests, social skills etc. and applying this to career planning and other life situations );
- **learning management** (e.g. understanding the relationship between self and learning opportunities, the requirements of learning pathways and links to the labour market, and applying this to career planning and other life situations);
- **career management** (sourcing, evaluating, analysing information about occupations, sectors, labour market opportunities, relating this information to one's self-knowledge and learning acquisitions and applying this to career planning and other life situations)<sup>14</sup>.

**Ideally, children and adolescent learn these skills at school during compulsory education as part of the curriculum** - thus laying a good foundation. Such a process can already start at pre-school age like in Scotland. In a resource-oriented perspective, pupils find out what their interests and strengths are; they are informed about fields of occupations, working conditions, job opportunities and expected trends in labour demand (even if these serve as general orientation given longer cycles of education). Further, career education or orientation programmes can include meetings with parents to support these in supporting their children. Another ingredient are meetings where parents, alumni or other externals discuss their own pathways, occupations and jobs with students. Visits to companies, work placements and follow-up reflections provide concrete insight into the world of work. Some programmes include visits to VET schools and universities as well as to external information and guidance centres. Entrepreneurship projects (piloting student companies, own business

ideas) can complete the picture. Finally, students know which education and training (or employment) possibilities exist, select those most appropriate for their individual situation and learn how to apply, i.e. targeted communication skills to sell themselves (CV writing, interview). All in all, one learns 'formally' to **manage one's own 'career' project**.

Once acquired at school, **career management skills need to be updated and adjusted to the specific needs of an individual** in VET, higher education, adult education, for those at work, unemployed or inactive using appropriate methods:

- **VET / higher education:**  
guidance to plan and implement learning and to avoid dropout, career services, seminars, work experience to facilitate the transition into employment;
- **Adult education and employed:**  
guidance to plan career development, to detect skills gaps, to increase motivation and to support up- or re-skilling, in particular among lower educated, validation of competences, improve matching of skills with job requirements, preparing retirement;
- **Unemployed and inactive:**  
guidance including outreach -> individual action planning, job search and application skills, selection of ALMP for labour market integration including basic and digital skills;
- **International learning / employment mobility**  
guidance to enable individuals to learn and work in another country<sup>15</sup>.

### 3. PRACTICE: POINTS FOR POLICY IMPLEMENTATION<sup>16</sup>

#### What do career management skills / career competences mean?

The term '**career management skills**' is Anglophone in origin and has to be **adapted to a country's language and context**. The first countries to develop frameworks for career management skills were the United States (end of 1989), Canada (1996) and Australia (2005). A number of **European countries** integrated acquisition of career management skills into broader strategies for "*career education*" using notions such as "*capacité de s'orienter*" (France) or "*career learning*" (Nordic countries). A recent symposium, organised by the International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy, used the notion of '*career (development) competencies*'. All approaches have in common that they shift the accent from service delivery to the outcomes in terms of skills acquired<sup>17</sup>.

In practice, **the categorisation and packaging of career management skills vary around a common core** depending on the national and regional curricula, institutional setup, traditions of guidance and policy priorities. Thus, wider integrated frameworks for schools may include learning and social skills or entrepreneurship skills (e.g. Ireland) or networking is added as a sub-set.

The **Career management skills framework Scotland** provides a **concrete example** of this, listing four areas of competencies: 1. **Self** - competencies that enable individuals to develop their sense of self within society, 2. **Strengths** - competencies that enable individuals to acquire and build on their strengths and to pursue rewarding learning and work opportunities, 3. **Horizons** - competencies that enable individuals to visualise, plan and achieve their career aspirations throughout life, 4. **Networks** - competencies that enable individuals to develop relations and networks of support.

Placing the **learning individual at the centre stage** of all interventions, the related career education standards formulate the learning outcomes as "I can" statements<sup>18</sup>:

## Career Management Skills - Learning outcomes

### Scotland: Career Education Standard - Developing the Young Workforce (3 - 18)

#### “I can” statements

For S4 to S6, college or other means of study

- I can identify the skills I have learnt across the curriculum, how these relate to the world of work and can apply these appropriately during work placements and other work-related learning.
- I can confidently access and interpret the information I need to make well informed choices about my learning options, pathways and how these relate to possible future careers.
- I can work towards achieving qualifications which support me to achieve my future career aspirations.
- I can share, evaluate and evidence my skills for learning, life and work to help me make successful future choices and changes.
- I can draw appropriately on evidence from my skills profile to help me complete application forms, create CVs and when practising interview techniques.
- I can describe all aspects of typical recruitment and selection processes and how to best prepare and manage these.
- I can consistently demonstrate the skills, attributes and behaviours needed to sustain and progress my career.
- I can identify and access support networks that will help me into a positive and sustained destination beyond school.
- I can assess the opportunities and challenges that entrepreneurship/self-employment can provide as career option including financial and legal aspects.
- I can describe the rights and responsibilities placed on employers and employees and how these relate to creating a positive, productive and sustainable work environment.

#### How to teach career competences?

At school, teaching of career management skills can be delivered either as **cross-cutting subject, as separate subject or both**. A cross-cutting approach integrating careers education into all key subjects offers advantages in terms of an integral, holistic perspective, teaching career management skills as a separate subject may, however, be easier to organise in terms of teachers' training or cooperation with external career guidance services<sup>19</sup>.

In times of digitalisation support is increasingly offered through “**blended service delivery**”, or ‘**blended guidance**’, i.e. as much as possible online information, self-help tools (e.g. personality, occupational tests) in combination with interactive e-services (chat, Skype), group sessions and individual counselling depending on the individual needs<sup>20</sup>. Group works allows for additional learning effects as others can assess one's strengths and communicative performance. Training in decision-making and problem-solving turns **career education into a field of learning and application of a broader set of transversal skills**.

#### Who teaches career competences?

In many countries, different actors are involved requiring good coordination at system and at service level. Career management skills can be trained **by teachers in schools in** cooperation with **school counsellors** combining career guidance with other tasks (learning to learn, social counselling) or with **external career guidance counsellors**, such as special

youth guidance centres (e.g. Denmark) or public employment services (e.g. Croatia, Germany). For those at work, the situation is more diverse as human resources departments also have a role to play. It is worth to note that in all countries **public employment services are a relevant actor** as they support unemployed or offer preventive services in case of restructuring. Based upon an assessment of the employability (profiling), employment counsellors prepare an individual action plan to improve skills in job search and / or technical skills if needed. Other players are NGOs or profit organisations working with disadvantaged jobseekers or inactive facing multiple problems.

### How should career management skills be assessed?

There is consensus that **systematic assessment** should include **formative assessment**, i.e. assessment procedures conducted during the learning process and involving the students, (e.g. career learning portfolios, completion of practical tasks receiving feedback etc.). **Accreditation** including **credit points, certification or awards** forms part of summative assessment at the end of a career education programme<sup>21</sup>.

### What are principles of good practice for policy development?

The **Guidelines for Policies and System Development for Lifelong Guidance** (2015), elaborated by the ELGPN, show that a number of pre-requisites are needed to promote career management skills in a given country, such as good cooperation and coordination among all relevant stakeholders, sufficient and quality service provision encompassing easily accessible and up-to date careers information (education, jobs, support services and tools), professional staff, evidence-based performance management, quality assurance systems and use of ICT for efficient blended service delivery. The network has agreed upon a number of **principles of good practice**<sup>22</sup>:

#### ELGPN Guidelines for Policies and System Development for Lifelong Guidance: What is good practice to promote career management skills?

- Support the development of a **framework** that outlines the competences a citizen needs to effectively manage their learning and work choices in a long-term perspective
- Support the teaching and acquisition of CMS in **formal education and training** settings as either specialised education programmes or as cross-curricular competences (or both)
- Support the teaching of CMS by the **public employment services** to its target groups
- Promote **staff and guidance counsellors training** in order to ensure that they are effective in assisting citizens to acquire CMS
- Favour the teaching, acquisition and development of CMS in the **workforce settings** (human resource development, retraining and interventions for unemployed as well as for groups at risk of unemployment)
- Support the **evaluation and assessment of the outcomes** of such teaching and training
- Take into account the **context of learning** (culture, education, training, retraining, curricular and pedagogical tradition)
- Make use of the **advantages of diversity** in CMS teaching and it as a source of enrichment
- Adopt a **cross-sector approach**, including the collaboration of different stakeholders to enhance the continuity of learning

#### 4. EVIDENCE OF IMPACT: POSITIVE EFFECTS OF CAREERS WORK

There exists a **growing body of international evidence** that **investments in careers work have a positive impact**:

Field	Career education / guidance: Evidence of impact
Careers work in schools	An analysis over 100 studies on careers work in schools concluded that, four main types of impacts were associated with careers work: <b>1. school's retention rate, 2. academic attainment, 3. ability to make successful transitions from school, 4. positive impact on career success.</b>
	Studies in Denmark, Portugal, Italy and UK using control groups found that such career interventions support individuals to effectively undertake career exploration, to <b>clarify their career ideas and make effective decisions.</b> In Italy, the group having received the intervention) showed <b>higher levels of continuity, hope and career decidedness.</b>
	According to the performance measurement system established in the <b>"Pathway centres" in Estonia</b> , 84 % of the respondents find it <b>easier to make education or work decisions after the counselling session</b> <sup>23</sup> .
Disadvantaged youth	The Federal programme <b>"Coaching for the Transition to Work"</b> in Germany provides a coach to help young people at risk of early school leaving. The evaluation found <b>higher attainment and more successful transitions into VET</b> <sup>24</sup> .
VET	A quantitative study in the Netherlands involving 3,499 students and 166 teachers found that personal guidance contributed to <b>motivation, decision-making and career outcomes.</b> It also demonstrated a <b>positive relationship between career management skills and career outcomes.</b>
Higher education	According to a study in the USA, 269 students participating in guidance activities identified <b>impacts on career thinking, effective decision-making and concrete career steps</b> , such as declaring a major, applying to a job or internship, or deciding on a career.
Adult education / at work	An evaluation of career centres in Norway found that the centres are often accessed by groups of adults who are in vulnerable job situations or who have limited education. More than half of the users have <b>engaged in education after receiving guidance.</b> Nearly as many have <b>changed their job situation.</b>
	When employees examine their own competencies, reflect on their career goals, and become more aware of job possibilities within their current organisations, their <b>job satisfaction increases</b> and they are <b>more likely to remain within their current employment setting.</b> This finding results from an evaluation of workplace-based guidance interventions in Canada.
Unemployed	An evaluation in Wales set out that the majority of unemployed having received guidance interventions had <b>increased knowledge and confidence in job searching and had applied for a job.</b> Around half had received an interview, and some had successfully transitioned back to the workforce.
Mobility, migration	A study on migrant women in the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany and the UK, found that access to lifelong guidance both in the home country (before migration) and in the host country (after migration) <b>supported women's self-confidence and their ability to successfully operate in the host country's labour and learning markets.</b>

Source: Own compilation, based upon ELGPN (2014)<sup>25</sup>.

As results from research show, career support prevents dropout, increases educational attainments, it helps to clarify ideas, to make effective decisions and to make concrete career steps towards employment when leaving education. For those at work systematic support for career development increases participation in lifelong learning or motivates to change the job situation, thus leading to higher work satisfaction. Targeted support for unemployed leads to higher confidence and more activity in applying for jobs. A similar effect has been observed in the context of employment mobility and migration, in particular for disadvantaged groups, such as migrant women.

Pointing in the same direction, a comprehensive **evidence-based study on the effectiveness of labour market interventions for young people** concludes that *“even more important may be earlier education system interventions to improve the school-to-work transitions.* In addition, research indicates how to design programmes to increase their impact: **progressive and programmatic career interventions** are more effective than isolated single interventions<sup>26</sup>.

## 5. STATE OF PLAY: INTENSIFIED EFFORTS AND SIGNALS OF CHANGE

Many countries have taken action as they see the need to strengthen students' career competences, in particular in situations of upcoming transitions. **Careers education has been introduced in schools in most EU countries** with the objective to enhance career management skills<sup>27</sup>:

- **12 countries integrated Career Management Skills as a learning outcome into their curricula** as a separate subject with specific time allocation: AT, CH, CY, EL, FI, HU, HR, LT, MT, NL, NO, RO, SK;
- **7 countries integrated the acquisition of CMS in other school subjects or give the schools autonomy to allocate specific hours** for this: DE, DK, EE, FR, IR, PT, SE. Four of these countries have already **frameworks for learning outcomes** for the training of CMS in place: Estonia, Ireland, Malta and Portugal.

In **Finland**, the core curriculum includes the promotion of Career management skills (**76 hours of scheduled activities** in students' timetables during classes 7-9). In addition, students are entitled to individual guidance and group counselling, and work-experience periods. Career education and guidance are integrated in other subjects. The curriculum must include a description of how co-operation with the local labour market and business community is being implemented<sup>28</sup>.

In September 2017, **Ireland** issued *A whole school guidance framework*<sup>29</sup> promoting a continuum of **support segmenting it according to the needs** into three categories: 1. Guidance for all, mainly provided by teachers, 2. Guidance for some, i.e. for specific groups, for example those close to transition including various guidance and counselling, 3. Guidance for a few, i.e. for those in need of more intensive and specific support including personal crises. The framework contains a detailed list of learning outcomes with a focus on CMS including also a broader view to learning to learning and social skills. These are specified along four levels (Acquire, apply, personalize knowledge, act).

In **Denmark**, the topic of educational and vocational guidance and labour market orientation (career education) is compulsory for pupils in primary and lower secondary school: *“Pupils should achieve a high level of awareness of their own interests, conditions and potential including informal competences, within the topic of education and work. They should also gain an understanding of how education and lifelong learning area means of achieving future vocational and occupational goals. As such, vocational aspects and insight into more practical job functions should have a central role in pupils' education”*<sup>30</sup>.

**Lithuania** has carried out an EU funded project to build up a model of career management **services for students in higher education** including their mission, vision, goals, tasks and evaluation criteria, main services and principles of provision. Services include career



education, career evaluation (personal features for career development), career counselling in case of problems, career opportunities exploration and job search<sup>31</sup>.

In November 2011, the **conference of university directors of Germany** agreed that universities should establish careers services to effectively bridge the transition from university to employment through vocational orientation. Careers services are considered a quality feature of a university. By equipping students with competences relevant for the labour market (including also a career in research and international mobility) they facilitate labour market entry. Service offer encompasses information, group and individual counselling and mentoring, activities to intensify exchange with the world of work and contact with employers. For example, at the Humboldt University Berlin, students can choose from a menu of modules including also social competence (communication). Each module is credited 5 ECTS based upon the successful execution of concrete tasks (e.g. prepare an application)<sup>32</sup>.

A number of EU countries have launched **activities in other fields**: In **adult education**, **Sweden** supports guidance courses to complete a detailed mapping of competences, often in co-operation with skilled craftsmen. Based upon a clearer understanding of the existing competences, participants can shorten the time needed to reach diploma level. To **prevent adverse employment effects in a situation of restructuring**, **Portugal** has developed a programme to develop workers' career management skills in companies undergoing restructuring. Guidance practitioners operate as a part of a wider technical team. The goal is to support worker retraining while enhancing employability. Based upon a balance of competences a plan is drawn up. As regards career management skills, this can include activities such as the development of relational skills, as well as problem-solving with a view to finding a job, information management or learning skills. Other aspects that may be targeted include attitudes towards change, and entrepreneurship or efforts to promote self-esteem and motivation<sup>33</sup>.

In **public employment services**, a **re-orientation towards enabling** can be observed triggered by a contribution of the European network of Heads of Public Employment Services to Europe 2020: "*Instead of enforcing job-to-job transitions, governments should focus on supporting workers' careers by supporting them with their development and progression. PES should enable transitions from and within work centred around an individuals' needs.*" Public Employment Services commit themselves to enable jobseekers to find employment or to take appropriate educational decisions to increase employment chances. To this end, they offer individual employment counselling (individual action planning), group activities (e.g. job clubs, training in CV writing, interviewing) and more in-depth career guidance in case of orientation towards VET or second chance education. Currently, the PES network is looking at ways to strengthen lifelong guidance and lifelong learning in their service offer<sup>34</sup>.

## 6. CHALLENGES AND WAYS FORWARD: POTENTIAL EU ACTIVITIES

Despite progress made, **in most countries, careers education in schools is at a developmental stage. In all other fields** (VET, adult education, at work, unemployed or inactive) coverage and quality of career guidance vary greatly and strategy development is **partially at its infancy or not existent** at all.

Bringing **together lessons from implementation** over several years, ELGPN members of the working group Career Management Skills stressed that introducing policies related to career management skills implies **a longer process involving many stakeholders, even if limited to schools**. It means to develop a cooperation mechanism, to find an easy to understand wording for the term career management skills acceptable for the main stakeholders. In some countries legal changes are necessary to integrate career education as subject of the curriculum. The development of a framework involving stakeholders takes time.

Most countries are **facing challenges as regards access, staffing and performance measurement**. In general, access to career guidance appears to be insufficient: 45 % of respondents indicated a lack of access to guidance as main reason for not using guidance

services in a Eurobarometer survey. Another challenge for careers education is a lack of competent staff: 42 % of European teachers expressed a high or moderate need for professional development in career guidance. In most cases, performance assessment has to be built up, as currently, **systematic performance assessment in terms of learning outcomes is utmost non-existent**<sup>35</sup>.

In a number of **recent resolutions on skills policies**, the European Parliament calls for strengthening career support. It reiterates that "*guidance and counselling which address individual needs and preferences and focus on the evaluation and expansion of individual skills must be a core element of education and skills policies from an early stage*". Further it stresses that "**guidance should be anchored in the curriculum** and must be provided in cooperation with economic actors and employment agencies"<sup>36</sup>.

At European level, **several lines of action could be considered to enhance acquisition of career management skills:**

1. **Integration of Career Management Skills into the European Key Competences Framework.** The ongoing **review of the European Key Competences Framework** could offer an opportunity to either include career management as an own key competence or to systematically integrate and reference these as a sub-category of other key competences, in particular in connection with personal development and learning to learn in connection with personal development and entrepreneurship. This can be concluded from several contributions having been submitted during the public consultation.

Currently, the Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning includes eight competences<sup>37</sup>: 1. proficiency in a mother tongue, 2. proficiency in a foreign language, 3. mathematical, scientific and technological competence, 4. digital competence, 5. learning to learn, 6. social and civic competences, 7. sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, 8. cultural awareness and expression.

A public consultation of organizations and individuals by the Commission has shown that, in addition to a clearer definition and promotion of competency assessment in some areas, some adjustments were considered useful. Some contributions highlighted, for example, a stronger focus on personal development and related competences (self-management, self-awareness). Others, mainly organisations providing career guidance to citizens, proposed a stronger focus on career management skills<sup>38</sup>.

2. **Mutual exchange at European level** with a focus on career development and career management skills. The subject could be discussed in a **dedicated European working group in a lifelong guidance perspective** as well as in a number of **existing working groups and networks** with a view to different fields in education and employment (e.g. Key Competences Network - KeyCoNet; ET2020 working groups, Public Employment Services network). These could have a continuous, process-oriented exchange on the development of strategies, good practices, success factors and obstacles for implementation.
3. European funding could have a complementing role. **Within Erasmus+ and the European Social Fund** projects with a view to enhancing career education and career competences could be promoted.

- <sup>1</sup> Youth employment: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/european-semester\\_thematic-factsheet\\_youth\\_employment\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/european-semester_thematic-factsheet_youth_employment_en.pdf).
- <sup>2</sup> OECD: [https://www.oecd.org/edu/eag2013%20\(eng\)--FINAL%2020%20June%202013.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/edu/eag2013%20(eng)--FINAL%2020%20June%202013.pdf); DE: [http://www.dzhw.eu/aktuell/presse/ganze\\_pm?pm\\_nr=1492](http://www.dzhw.eu/aktuell/presse/ganze_pm?pm_nr=1492); The Commission has recently launched a study to track university and VET graduates, see Briefing on the New Skills Agenda, endnote 6.
- <sup>3</sup> Study Precarious Employment (2016): [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2016/587285/IPOL\\_STU%282016%29587285\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2016/587285/IPOL_STU%282016%29587285_EN.pdf).
- <sup>4</sup> Skills mismatches: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/projects/european-skills-and-jobs-esj-survey>.
- <sup>5</sup> Eurostat - older workers: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tesem050&plugin=1>.
- <sup>6</sup> New Skills Agenda - State: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2017/607334/IPOL\\_BRI\(2017\)607334\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2017/607334/IPOL_BRI(2017)607334_EN.pdf).
- <sup>7</sup> Study Apprenticeships, Traineeships, Volunteering: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2017/602056/IPOL\\_STU%282017%29602056\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2017/602056/IPOL_STU%282017%29602056_EN.pdf).
- <sup>8</sup> European Lifelong Guidance Policies, New Skills Agenda, Europass: [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2017/595369/IPOL\\_BRI%282017%29595369\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2017/595369/IPOL_BRI%282017%29595369_EN.pdf).
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