

SECOND CHANCE

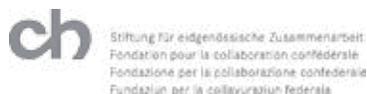
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SECOND CHANCE

Guidelines & Toolkit - English

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Introduction

All over Europe, and particularly in countries such as Germany and Switzerland (where vocational certificates are highly appreciated by the job market), risks of unemployment and marginalization in the job market are strictly correlated with a poor level of qualification; early school leavers, youngsters or adults, pay growing difficulties in finding a stable and solid job, with more than short term and temporary perspectives. These difficulties, and related risks of social exclusion, are recognized by EU policies; the midterm revision of Education and Training 2020 shall state the recovery of basic skills and the fight against early school leaving as a key priority for the next five years. The European Agenda for Skills, expected to be approved by the Council in 2016, will focus on second chance opportunities as a main goal for combating social exclusion, improving the quality of the workforce and ensuring active citizenship and cohesion. The Second Chance project represents a coherent experience, anticipating incoming priorities of the European Agenda. It aimed at valuing and transferring a comprehensive Model – Jobstarter Connect, as implemented by the specific pilot project EPRO - in order to facilitate access to lifelong learning and to a qualification of not qualified youngsters and young adults, belonging to the early school leavers, giving them a new opportunity. Young adults without a qualification deserves a specific attention, as far as they don't usually have a lot of opportunities in order to recover their condition, gaining a qualification with the support of public policies and funding. They are particularly at risks of exclusion, even if statistics of unemployment normally underestimate this phenomenon, because these youngsters often fall in a NEET condition, and in other cases they survive

alternating precarious and temporary work experiences with periods of indemnified unemployment. Marginalized in the job market, they hardly conceive training as a means for improving their employability.. The project clearly aims at providing this group at risk with adequate chances, anticipating a long-term social and professional exclusion process.

Purpose of the guideline

This guideline aims at presenting the Second Chance model as an integrated set of procedures and means, sustainable in different institutional contexts, thought to foster the reintegration of early school leavers and drop out in a qualification pathway. The guideline focuses on challenges to be faced and on actions to be undertaken to give a “second chance” to people without a formal qualification. Furthermore the guideline gives some suggestions about the competences and the skills needed by the trainers and about how to train the trainers dealing with low qualified people.



Challenges



1.1 Drop out, early school leavers, NEETS: growing risks of exclusion

Multidimensional patterns of exclusion

Terms such as “drop out”, “early school leavers” and “NEETs” have caught the attention of policymakers at the European level, as paradigmatic indicators for monitoring the labour market and the social situation of young people.

Even if there are still some discussions about such a kind of concepts and there is a lack of internationally recognised definitions, these terms have become frequently used at the European level for identifying multidimensional patterns of exclusion. Low levels of education pave the road to precarisation, unemployment, exit from the labour market and long term dependency from social security.

According to recent studies¹ early school leavers² and drop out are at greater risk of being NEET³; people with low level of education are three times more likely to be NEET compared to those with tertiary education.

In today's knowledge and information society, acquiring a

qualification at upper secondary level is a minimum requirement for reducing risks of exclusion from the labour market. At the same time, qualifications at this level form the basis for taking part in a process of lifelong learning. Young people who leave education early, either because of poor performance at school or lack of motivation, form a group that is potentially at risk of long-term unemployment and dependence on social security benefits.

“Being NEET has severe adverse consequences for the individual, society and the economy. Spending time as NEET may lead to a wide range of social disadvantages, such as disaffection, insecure and poor future employment, youth offending, and mental and physical health problems [...] NEETs are at higher risk of being politically and socially alienated. Compared to their non-NEET counterparts, NEETs have a dramatically lower level of political interest, political and social engagement, and a lower level of trust.” (Eurofound, 2012)

Some categories of population are particularly affected by the risk of marginalisation and exclusion. Data about NEETs and particularly about early school leavers show that youngsters with a migration background, belonging to the so-called “second generation”, are over represented in this component of the population. Migrant youngsters are often “drop out” from the IVET system; therefore they are clearly over represented amongst groups at risk of exclusion, due to some convergent factors:

- Difficulties to finding an apprenticeship and gaining an initial qualification (upper secondary diploma)
- Low level of recognition of prior learning outcomes and qualifications achieved at the workplace

1 Eurofound (2012), NEETs – Young people not in employment, education or training: Characteristics, costs and policy responses in Europe, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.

2 Drop out refers to the withdrawal from an education or training programme before its completion. This term designates both the process (early school-leaving) and the persons who fail to complete a course (early school leavers). Besides early school-leavers, dropouts may also include learners who have completed education or training but failed the final examinations (definition according to: “Terminology of European education and training policy”, Luxembourg: Publications office of the European union, 2014).

3 NEET: are young people “Not in Employment, Education or Training”. The definition of NEET includes unemployed persons (ILO- International Labour Organisation definition) not in any education and training and inactive persons (ILO definition) not in any education and training. NEET are often young people who have left formal education without getting a upper-secondary qualification level and who are no longer engaged in any kind of further education or training (early school leavers).



- Complexity and rigidity of qualification pathways enabling adults recover an initial Vet qualification.

Offering second chances of qualification to these people clearly represents a urgent issue all over Europe, under the pressure of new immigration flows and the need of coping with demographic changes, valuing all available human resources.

Achieving a qualification represents an important asset for young people, such as early school leavers, NEET or people with low level of qualification, suffering a high risk of exclusion. Being reintegrated in the educational system and achieving a qualification it is often the first step for a successful reintegration in the labour market. Gaining a qualification enhance self-confidence, participation to social life and employability, this also means assuring social cohesion and competitiveness to the economic system of a country.

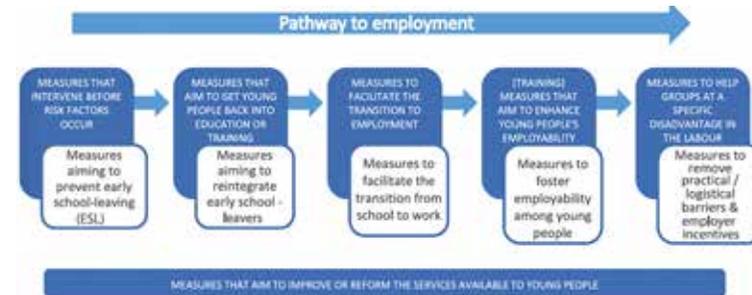
1.2 Strategies and policies to foster inclusion in Europe

Aware of the risks linked to social exclusion of youngsters and young adults, European countries seem to have acquired in recent years consciousness about the phenomenon. There is a renewed sense of urgency to develop and implement policies to bring young adults (back) into education or training to foster their opportunities on the labour market.

The policies implemented in Europe to ensure a greater participation of young people in education and employments, involve a wide range of different initiatives. These policies often

intervene at different points along the pathway to employment, which describes young people's journey through formal education and their transition into the labour market and employment.

Figure 1.2a: Pathway to employment



Source: Eurofound, 2012b

As by Figure 1.2a different measures have been undertaken in different countries during the last decades to cope with the consequences of early school leaving, most of them aiming at anticipating the risks of exclusion, providing support and guidance to the youngsters (14/16 years old) in the transition phase between compulsory school and the choice of a professional career. Usually these kinds of interventions are addressed to facilitate a quick reintegration of early school leavers in a qualification path.

At the opposite less attention has been devoted to the condition of young adults – particularly aged from 18 to 25/27, but sometimes dependent from welfare systems also over 30 – who in any case left their initial training without reaching a qualification, for many different reasons, linked to their biographies, lack of guidance or events of their lives, not easy to be foreseen and tackled.



The holistic vision of qualifications should be “tempered” by a realistic idea of how competences are built up and put in practice in the world of work. In order to tackle the consequences of being dropped-out from initial vocational education and training (IVET), we should imagine strategies giving an attractive “second chance” to early school leavers after the unsuccessful completion of an initial training. This second chance should be based on flexible and personalized qualification pathways, far from trying to bring these people “back to school”, aiming at integrating workplace learning, informal experiences and recovery of basic knowledge, skills and competences in a formal learning setting. Job experiences play a fundamental role, but normally they lead to partial qualifications, that should be taken in account when admitting learners to a training path. “Second chance” qualification pathways - often too exigent (and frustrating) for low qualified and foreign workers – should be more encouraging, for example:

- They should be flexible, based on valuation of already existing skills, preparing a whole qualification but also intermediate steps, and activating a good combination of formal / informal learning.
- They should be based on units of learning and steps of development.
- They should allow the recognition (credits to be spent for further developments or for employability) of parts of a complete qualification.

Annexes:

A01 State of the art in the partner countries

A02 Eurofound (2012), NEETs – Young people not in employment, education or training: Characteristics, costs and policy responses in Europe, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.

Annexes:
(click to open)

A01

A02



Actions



2.1 Avoid social exclusion through alternative qualification paths, recovering basic, soft and transversal skills to be ready for new VET opportunities

For many young people, pathways leading from education to employment are not straight, and those who become NEET have gone astray somewhere along the way. Policies tackling the NEET problem are therefore either preventative interventions that keep young people from leaving this pathway or interventions that tackle the issue of bringing young people 'back on track' to continue their way, develop their skills and participate actively in society.

The Second Chance model belongs to the set of active measures intervening at a later stage on the pathway to employment. There will always be young people that, despite the different policies and measure to prevent early school leaving or fostering an early reintegration in VET training path, will miss their opportunity to get a qualification through "traditional" VET pathways.

In this sense the model contributes to the implementation of the European strategic framework ET2020 and focuses on the European priority of social inclusion, fostering the wider participation to lifelong learning, in the European learning space. In this area social changes for all and the mobility of labour are strengthened by creating an EU-enhanced approach to early school leaving, through multidimensional approaches, integrating access to the recovery of a qualification, valuation of workplace learning settings and recognition / validation of informal learning outcomes.

2.2 The Second Chance Model

The Second Chance model is intended to provide vocational training opportunities to young people who failed to complete their VET programme.

Designed for fitting the reality of the retail sector, particularly looking at the Swiss context, the model is based on assumptions easy to be transferred to other contexts and other economic sectors.

Annexes:

A03 Second Chance Modular structure

A04 Second Chance Learning units

Target group

The main target group addressed by the Second Chance Model includes young people up to the age of around 26, without excluding long term disadvantaged adults fallen in a situation of dependency from social security, who did not manage to complete their vocational training and/or are currently unemployed.

Excluding young people with higher-level skills (e.g. baccalaureate school students who have interrupted their studies but tend to do well in vocational training) – it is realistic to consider young people who have encountered difficulties during the transition from lower-secondary school to an upper-secondary VET programme. This target group may be subdivided as follows:

- Young people who – despite having spent a year attending a course preparing them for enrolment in a VET programme (see transitional options in *Fig. 1.2.a*) and a subsequent motivation semester – have not managed to find a suitable apprenticeship.

Annexes:
(click to open)



Potentially, this is a target group that generally (although not exclusively) has poor scholastic performance and have underdeveloped “soft skills”;

- Young people who enrolled in a dual-track or school-based VET programme, but who subsequently dropped out. Their reasons for interrupting their vocational training may be diverse, from a lack of motivation for the given occupation, disenchantment with the chosen school, a lack of aptitude and other problems associated with the target group described above.

Since the target group is heterogeneous, before embarking on a training project, the first step of the Second Chance model consider the assessment of the competences that these young people already possess. This will enable to determine which pathway is right for each individual situation and what complementary or remedial modules might be advisable.

Aims and objectives of the training

Main aims of the Second Chance training model are:

- Help disadvantaged youths, and young adults belonging to the above mentioned target group, to enter working life
- Enable them to recover their basic skills and become self-empowered
- Allow young people to develop professional competences in a specific professional area, starting from a sustainable level of competence (in our project we focused on the retail sector, referring to basic skills of sale assistant)
- Facilitate access to training leading up to a Federal VET Certificate or Federal VET Diploma

Didactic objectives

The specific didactical pathway designed during the project focused on learning outcomes related to the professional role of sales assistant. Upon completion of the training, young people are expected to:

- Adequately present themselves to potential employers
- Receive, unpack, and replace merchandise in a manner suited to each type of product
- Display products in such a way that encourages sales
- Provide customers with basic sales advice and launch simple sales promotions in addition to or as a complement to existing sales tasks
- Use the cash register, receiving payment and providing change
- Choose and pursue a training programme that matches their aptitudes



Elements of transfer of innovation

The training programme was developed taking into account the specific features of the German model “Abschlussorientierte modulare nachqualifikation”¹ and further developed through the contemplation of the following innovative aspects:

- **Modularization** and articulation in learning units of the formal training programme (complementary to the job experience) with **partial certification** of each module;
- **Flexibility and personalization** of the training plan based on the training demands identified during the initial assessment.
- Enhancement of **the role of workplace learning** throughout the period of training.
- **Initial assessment** phase to assess soft skills and basic competences and to identify previous vocational education and job experience (If any). the lack of and the existing competences, defining needs and training demands of the trainee;
- **Basic training** phase, to empower and reinstate trainees in the educational and professional environment, giving them the opportunity to acquire basic vocational know-how and to fill in basic competences gaps.

2.2.1 Modularization and flexibility of the training path

The modularization of training pathways represents a fundamental element for making qualification procedures more flexible and coherent with learning processes in which experiential dimensions are strictly linked to non-formal and formal training. According to the experience done developing the Second

¹ German programme supported by the German ministry of education.

Chance modular training, the modularization should consider some key features and concepts:

- A consistent and homogeneous vision of what a Module represents: as the basic elements of a modular system, modules are a component of a learning path always leading to a comprehensive competence, enabling a person to perform, at a certain level of responsibilities and autonomy, specific occupational or non-occupational tasks and functions.
- The principle of accumulation of learning outcomes: in a modular system, each module is linked with other modules, envisaging partial and full qualifications; modules could refer to a fundamental competence (in this sense a compulsory part of a training path) or to a complementary component (elective modules). Modules are usually part of one or more aggregates, forming kits corresponding to a set of competences defining at least partial qualifications.
- The principle of certification of learning outcomes: in a modular system also smaller units of a qualification path are certified, on the basis of an assessment of learning outcomes, independently from the mode of their acquisition. Modules normally foresee the issuing of a certificate.
- A competence based approach to the description of partial and full qualifications: descriptors are based on the reality of work processes, and competences describe a successful behaviour in a concrete situation (work performance); competences are therefore described in terms of “being able to...”, whether they are professional or non-professional. Competence based descriptors can be complemented by the articulation of learning outcomes in knowledge, skills and attitudes, mobilized by the people in a job situation in order to



- perform the expected task.
- The valuation of any kind of learning performance: Modules are described and complemented by criteria and indicators for the assessment of learning outcomes in such a way that non-formal and informal learning performances can be fully taken into consideration.
- The involvement of stakeholders and actors in the design, management and update of qualifications: any modular system implies the establishment of a career-oriented coordination site or steering commission, responsible for setting up modules, accrediting and coordinating modular training offers.
- A structured quality assurance system: usually managed by a Quality Assurance Committee – involving stakeholders, professional associations and relevant actors – in charge: to ensure the accreditation of training offers; to take decision about the issue partial and full final qualifications, and to deliver the certification of informal / non formal learning outcomes.

Second Chance model will also cope with one of the major obstacles normally hampering the development of flexible (personalized) qualification pathways based on learning units, addressed to not qualified adults: the lack of a critical mass of participants to flexible training paths, transforming very often modularized training offers in traditional comprehensive and rigid preparatory courses, hosting a sufficient number of learners. In fact the developed model enhance experiential and workplace learning, and foster the role of learning settings and spaces not implying the presence in a classroom. The sustainability of this innovative feature of the second Chance model will be

possible only with an active involvement and engagement of entrepreneurial associations and companies which will play a fundamental role in providing experiential learning settings.

Example of a modular training structure for the retail sector in Ticino Region (Switzerland)

The modularization of the training pathways in the retail sector in Ticino (Switzerland) was developed according to the existing professional regulations, but aiming at making the Swiss dual approach more flexible and better integrating job experiences and formal training. In Switzerland the modularisation of learning pathways is strictly linked at the implementation of principles and practices of validation of learning outcomes, according to diverse modalities and goals.

More information about the training plan and the learning units in the annex:

A05: Second Chance training plan

Annexes:
(click to open)



2.2.2 Initial assessment and recognition of prior learning

Low-qualified young adults often suffer from poor levels of self-image which can affect their chances to enter a training programme, to get a qualification and finally to find a steady working situation.

The main obstacles to be faced of includes for examples:

- Lack of confidence and self-esteem. Low-qualified adults, and particularly long-term unemployed, are often concerned by a lack of confidence and they pay severe difficulties to start new training pathways or to be reintegrated in job environment.
- Low motivation. A lack of confidence often meant that low-qualified people have no drive to start new trainings and get qualifications; this is often a result of previous bad work and scholar experiences.
- Negative perceptions of learning. Low-qualified people were often not successful in school, building resentment towards – and fear of – learning. This process often leads to a vicious circle in which early failure prompts to rejection and lack of engagement with learning, leading to continuous failure and ‘confirmation’ of the negative projections previously built. Many of the low-qualified adults had left school early, before completion of schooling or attempting to gain qualifications.²

Furthermore personal barriers such as: human capital deficiencies (such as, lack of or out-dated work experience, obsolescent skills, poor literacy/communication, IT and numeracy skills, lack of self-confidence, etcetera); lack of formal qualifications; job

matching difficulties (lack of links to labour market and employers networks of employers, the lack of work experiences, etcetera); lack of finance (for example to enter training path); health issues and other personal barriers can strongly compromise a successful reinsertion of young adults in a training path.

The Second Chance model tries to face these kinds of difficulties by setting up an initial assessment phase where the lacks, the needs and the exigencies of the trainee are taken in account to avoid or at least minimize possible failure during the training path.

Initial assessment within school shop training model

The initial assessment provided in the training plan has several important functions.

First of all, it is important to specify that this is not an assessment in the strict meaning of the term, nor is it selective (determination of the usefulness or sustainability of training for each young person is determined at any rate at the very start). Rather, this is a preliminary analysis of the person’s potential and is intended to help the person become more aware of himself/herself.

The initial assessment is intended for a target group of young people who did not perform well in compulsory education, who lack motivation or have personal weaknesses, who have presumably been inactive for quite some time. The first step of the process is to provide the young person with a practical foundation enabling him/her to honour commitments, stick to schedules, remain in the classroom, devote a considerable portion of the day to structured activities, share physical space with a group of people, and show interest in establishing new interpersonal relationships. All of these are important for the resumption of any type of activity and should not be taken for granted.

² CEDEFOP (2013), Return to work. Work-based learning and the reintegration of unemployed adults into the labour market, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.



The methodology adopted for the initial assessment in the Second Chance model is mostly based to the “career circle” method, developed within the framework of two previous European projects and in particular in the Youth2Work project³ (2012-1-CH1-LEO05-00391).

The Career Circle, already successfully experimented in Ticino region (Switzerland), is a method based on group coaching and mentoring, on peer support aimed at empowerment and building a sense of self-efficacy among participating young people. The method uses an experiential and active approach that is different from traditional classroom-based methodologies. It is intended for young people who may have had a negative experience with school.

Thanks to a combination of structured activities the participants succeed, within a relatively short time, to considerably improve their level of self-awareness with regard to aspects that are important for interpersonal and professional interaction. They will be able to see their own objectives more clearly and establish a short- to medium-term strategy to approach their situation with greater optimism.

At the end of the process participants will have given careful thought to their personal and social resources, will be more aware of their own limitations and know what to do during training to overcome them. Depending on their personalised training plan, activities will be selected to develop already existing professional competences and/or basic skills (literacy, numeracy, Italian L2). Participants will also share their difficulties and aspirations with the working group, within a protected and reassuring context: the

formation class group that participants will be part of during the six-month period of training under the Second Chance model is another very important aspect to be handled from the very start of the process. This aspect is facilitated by the proposed method. The results of the initial assessment also provide a solid basis for the work to be done in the months to follow, during individual coaching meetings held to assist learners as well as for subsequent training and professional developments after the learner has completed training.

Recognition and validation of prior learning

Recognition and validation of Prior Learning (RVPL) – whereby skills and knowledge gained by individuals outside formal learning processes are assessed and granted formal recognition – has become an increasingly important topic within European adult training policies in recent years.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is intended as a tool delivering a fairer, more flexible and more inclusive system to assess and recognize individuals’ learning. The RVPL process offers the possibility to have personal learning achievements - wherever and however learning has taken place (such as: formal, non-formal or informal learning) – assessed, recognized and validated. RVLP process may occur before or as a part of a formal process of learning and it might ideally lead to a qualification.

RVPL can only take place where there is an established framework of credit, qualifications and/or occupational standards onto which recognized skills and knowledge can be mapped, in this sense RVPL is strictly linked to the legislative frameworks of every country and has to be implemented depending on local rules and regulation. Even though RVPL is often expressly permitted by

³ <http://www.youth2work.eu> (last visit 12.11.2015)



many central Europe country legislation, the practical implementation encounter often difficulties related to various factors such as: lack of awareness, low esteem about the procedure, complexity of the process and difficulties to collect evidences.

Nevertheless RVPL can offer an important opportunity to low qualified people who are searching for a Second Chance to get a qualification.

In particular RVPL:

- Is a way to bring those who may have felt excluded from education back into learning pathways and into better jobs, and to boost motivation and self esteem;
- Can deliver greater flexibility and customized pathway in training and education systems helping trainee to establish personalized training plan to enable the person to obtain a final certification.
- Promote a positive learning culture where learning is seen as an attainable and positive goal for every individual.

Beyond the core requirement of a well established framework qualifications to successfully integrate RVPL in the Second Chance model we recommend:

- to raise awareness and gain consensus among stakeholders, employers and trainees.
- a rigorous assessment processes to ensure quality
- to minimize bureaucracy and to coach trainees through the process
- to dedicate sufficient resources to have high specialized assessors delivering RVPL
- to guarantee affordable access to the RVPL process

(particularly important when dealing with low qualified applicants or people with low levels of basic skills.

- to foresee separate training to recover basic and soft skills when needed
- to guarantee for the providers the necessary autonomy to develop customised RVPL procedures according to needs and resources of the target group.

2.2.3 Recovery of basic and soft skills through practical experience

Basic training at the workplace

After completion of the initial assessment, learners will undergo six months of initial re-training in a workplace learning environment (in our project, addressed to the retail sector, in form of a “school shop”). This structure is intended to offer learners initial exposure to the specific professional role through a short-term pathway combining modular classroom instruction with practical training. This effective combination of theory-practice pursues three objectives:

- The alternation between classroom instruction and practical training at the workplace is similar to the typical training situation encountered in dual-track VET programmes. The aim is to give young people the opportunity to replace bad scholar/training experiences that they may have had in the past with this type of training with more positive ones;
- To enable learners to understand how, theoretical concepts and lessons learned in the classroom are actually applicable to real working situations;
- To use adequate methods to enable learners to link the



abstract concepts conveyed in classroom instruction to real-life working situations.

In addition to theory-practice modules relating to professional knowledge and skills, learners have the option of attending modules designed to improve basic language and mathematical skills, for those who do not yet have the basic skills normally expected of a young person completing compulsory education or who need to consolidate these basic skills. The decision on whether to attend these modules is made on the basis of the outcome of the initial assessment.

Furthermore, individual coaching is provided to young people whose soft skills during the initial assessment are deemed to be in considerable need of improvement. Individual coaching may be prolonged to also cover the next level of training.

2.2.4 Personalization of the training path and individual coaching

The Second Chance model stresses the need to make qualification pathways more flexible and transparent. For this reason the model is based on flexible and personalized qualification pathways, aiming at integrating workplace learning, informal experiences and recovery of basic knowledge, skills and competences in a formal learning setting.

Personalized learning required taking in account some recommendations⁴.

1. Take into account available competences in the intake phase, as well as expectations and needs of the learners; an

initial assessment plays a role of the utmost importance in enhancing motivations and self-confidence, and preparing a good training plan.

2. Design personalized learning agreements, ensuring exemptions as well as reinforcement of training provision when needed, respecting prior learning and the expectations of the learners.
3. Create the conditions of learning as a developmental process; ensure continuous accompaniment, and the possibility of valuing work and practical experience as a means to develop competences.
4. Integrate experiential and theoretical learning, providing learners with founded knowledge, both considering professional specific issues and basic skills (language, math, etc.).
5. Value formative and summative assessments as a means for consolidating learning and prepare a comprehensive holistic assessment of competences, in a qualification perspective

Personalization and flexibility of training pathways also mean that Job experiences play a fundamental role that should be taken in account when admitting learners to a training path. Second chance qualification pathways are often too rigid and exigent for low qualified workers and should be more encouraging. In particular:

- They should be flexible, based on recognition and validation

⁴ Valbuk project (2014), Valbuk – Guidelines, Handbook and toolkit, Lamone: Ecap R&D.



of already existing skills, preparing a whole qualification but also intermediate steps, and activating a good combination of formal and informal learning

- They should be based on units of learning and steps of development
- They should ideally allow the recognition and the permeability of parts of a complete qualification (credits to be spent for further developments or for employability).

The approach adopted in the Second Chance model stresses the importance of a personalized learning, based on resources, expectations and ambitions of the learners. Facilitating personalized learning implies the availability of flexible arrangements, the possibility of developing a qualification pathway step by step, the recognition of partial achievements for personal use and in the framework of progressive career paths. Officially recognized qualifications have to be complemented, in a continuum, by partial qualifications recognized, for instance, by collective bargaining, in order to define a flexible professionalization path, encouraging the workers active in the sector to progress in their careers.

2.2.5 Competence oriented learning design and teaching

Focusing on competences means taking into account knowledge and skills as well as the personal methods used in mobilizing resources, including attitudes, behaviours, motivation. A competence is an ability that extends beyond the possession of knowledge and skills.

The Second Chance training model was designed bearing in

mind a competences oriented approach and particularly work related competences in the retail sector as defined by the Swiss VET framework. Nevertheless the structure of the model and the learning units can be easily adapted and transferred in other countries. Furthermore the proposed structure composed by two different phases (basic and complementary training) plus the initial assessment at the beginning of the training path, can be generalized and adapted to other economic sectors rather than retail.

Based on the experiences coming from other national and European projects and done during the development of the Second Chance model, some key statements can be used for the formulation of the competences included in modules and learning units.

- The operative conditions in which competences are put in action play a fundamental role in descriptions. What are the actual requirements for realizing the task in a specific context? Is one of the key questions to be answered when defining competences description.
- Competences should be described mentioning a precise operative setting.
- Competence level has to be defined
- The level of competence: goals have to be formulated with reference to a specified level, using words reminding a coherent taxonomy
- The function of the module within a qualification or learning path has to be clarified particularly considering basic modules, on which other modules build
- The comprehensive nature of competences and the correlation



with observable / measurable performances have to be taken into account: module and units must relate to operative tasks, and complete performances, defined by outputs.

2.3 Train-the-trainers

Dealing with youngsters and young adults who did not manage to complete a first vocational training and who do not have a qualification, often means to deal with people who come from a difficult social background with a lower level of education and lacks of basic and social skills. This target group has rarely access to lifelong learning training opportunities and the lack of basic, social and personal competences is often one of the barriers to be overcome in order to have access to training pathways such as the one developed during the Second Chance project. As a matter of fact, basic skills (such as reading, writing, ICT knowledge and other personal skill) are key competences that represent important pre-conditions for the access to lifelong training pathways (formal and non-formal). Furthermore, basic and social skills are very important for the development and the consolidation of youngsters and adults' social and cultural identity and are considered a crucial element to prevent possible pernicious behaviours, which can bring to long-term social exclusion phenomena. If anything, good mastery of basic skills is recognised as an important feature to achieve a good quality of life. Data collected in the partners' countries, show that basic skills are rarely considered in adult VET learning pathways and they are rarely part of training curricula aiming at recovering VET qualification.

For these reasons the Second Chance model pays particular

attention to offering a reasonable training in basic skills by integrating the recovery of this kind of competences in a protective learning environment.

To offer suitable teaching and coaching methodologies and to be able to deal with this kind of target group, the trainers should of course have specific competences and knowledge.

Competences and skills needed to the trainers

Usually modern didactic principles can be taken into account and applied also when training low skilled people. However, this target group commonly presents a wide variety of needs and characteristics that have to be considered when designing the contents of the training. Trainers have to respect participants' values and difficulties, and have to consider needs, attributes and prior knowledge and learning of the target group. For this purpose it is important that trainers possess solid background knowledge of the social situation of the target group. Sensitivity to cultural and social background is an additional precondition that trainers should acquire in order to deal with a defined target group.

Beside the didactic and methodological competences traditionally used when dealing with adult learners, and the sectorial competences and qualification needed to train on specific subjects, for trainers involved in the Second Chance model following skills and knowledge are of particular importance:

- ability to excite and maintain participants' motivation
- communication and cooperation skills;
- sensitivity to cultural aspects and understanding of the social background of the target group;
- adults activation and animation capabilities;



- in depth knowledge of the local VET qualification system and of lifelong learning opportunities;
- Coaching and guidance competences;
- knowledge of the labour market;
- organisational skills and moderator capability;
- background knowledge of group dynamics (observing group dynamics and processes, conflict management and etcetera);
- flexibility to adapt the training to trainees needs and expectations;
- knowledge of and methods for planning learning processes;
- practical experience in implementing and managing training pathways.

Among the above-cited knowledge and skills: motivation, group dynamics, communication, cultural aspects and coaching competences assume in the Second Chance training model a greater prominence.

Train-the-trainer concept

The train-the-trainer concept should aim at the sensitisation and qualification of staff in the field of “second chance” training. Generally speaking, trainers should be made aware about the importance to guarantee equal access opportunity to VET qualifications and life long learning. During the training, professionals working with the project’s target group are invited to get in touch with the Second Chance approach in order to get used to the aims, the philosophy and the tools related to the method.

Taking into particular account the needs of trainers and professionals dealing with low qualified people, and particularly with those lacking of basic competences, the train-the-trainers

concept will be structured in modules or better to say in learning units (as suggested by the training guidelines developed by a previous European project named Pro-skills - Basic skills for lifelong learning⁵).

The training should be based on a block of six main units of four hours each, for a total of about 24 hours of training. To access to the training units, the trainers should already have a basic education in the adult training domain.

We recommend inserting the Second Chance training block in already existing train-the-trainers pathways, as a complementary and specialising education for interested trainers, teachers, coaches and etcetera.

The six main units should present following contents:

- Learning Unit 1 (LU1) - Second Chance method and philosophy;
- LU2 - Training skills, methodologies and tools to deal with low qualified trainees;
- LU3 - Coaching techniques;
- LU4 - Personal skills and empowerment;
- LU5 - Social skills and cooperative learning;
- LU6 - Self-management skills, setting goals and planning.

After the Second Chance training the trainers should be able to:

- adopt and explain the Second Chance method and philosophy;

⁵ Pro-Skills project was developed under the former EU LLP- Grundtvig programme by a partnership composed among the others by SFAL - Swiss Federation of adult learning (partner nr. 2 in the Second Chance project). For further information and to download projects documents and guidelines please refer to the project's Internet site: www.pro-skills.eu (last visited on 10.11.2015).



- understand his/her role and in particular his boundaries within the training course context;
- clearly define and communicate to participants the framework and the objectives of the training;
- use and implement suitable training strategies and tools, responding to the needs and the expectation of the trainees;
- coach and guide trainees during their training pathways and particularly through the process of recovering basic and social skills;
- personalize and make flexible the training path following the trainees' exigencies;
- work with participants' resources and align the training course with their previous experiences, knowledge and learning;
- observe and evaluate the training process and tailor it to the participants' needs;
- collaborate with other organisations and, if necessary, make contact with institutions and experts capable of supporting participants to answer their specific needs;
- identify suitable VET qualification pathways for every trainee;
- Establish relationship and networks with the labour market.

For more information about training the trainers in the basic skills domain please refer to the guidelines and the training concept developed by the Pro-skills project (<http://www.pro-skills.eu>).



Toolbox



3. The Second Chance toolbox

The Second Chance toolbox gathers the main tools used during the project, to collect and analyse information and to develop the Second Chance training model.

The toolbox also collects a set of possible tools and teaching aids, which can be used for the implementation of the training modules particularly during the assessment phase.

The toolbox includes: documents produced during the project, teaching aids produced by the EPRO model in Germany and other means produced by the partners in previous projects.

Furthermore the toolbox also incorporates different resources that have been used to develop the Second Chance model and that can be a useful source of inspiration for the transfer of the model in other national system or to other economic sectors.

The tools and documents contained in the toolbox come from different partners and countries and are presented in their original language.

The tools and the resources listed in the toolbox are available on the Second Chance Internet site: <http://secondchanceproject.net>



SECOND CHANCE TOOLBOX

Tools

- Analysis grid: to collect and analyse VET and early school leavers situation in a specific country or region (E).
- Case study Hans: virtual case studies to analyse the training opportunities for improve career chances of low qualified people (E).
- Second Chance Modular structure for the retail sector (different languages).
- Second Chance Learning units for the retail sector (different languages).
- Second Chance training programme Switzerland (different languages).
- Second Chance concept and tools for the initial assessment
 - Concept for the initial assessment based on Career Circle method (I)
 - Manual for the use of the Career Circle method (I, other languages available on www.youth2work.eu)
- Second Chance concept and tools for guidance and coaching during the training pathway
 - Concept for the coaching during Second Chance training pathway
 - Grid for progress monitoring and assessment of the participant to the Second Chance training pathway.
- Second Chance project Brochure: to briefly present the Second Chance project (different languages).
- Second Chance training model Flyer: to briefly present the training model to stakeholders, young adults and companies (E, I).
- Second Chance exploitation of the model: form to collect, report and analyse exploitation opportunities and difficulties (E).
- Second Chance stakeholders meeting report form: form to report meeting and discussion with local stakeholders (E).
- Modulare Nachqualifizierung Kaufmann /-frau im Einzelhandel: examples of training modules for sales assistants developed by ABU in Germany (DE).
- Pro-Skills Manual: the training concept developed during the European project Pro-Skills (www.pro-skills.eu) is specifically thought for the promotion of social and personal skills of disadvantaged young adults. The manual presents concepts and

training schemes that can be easily adapted and used to the Second Chance training pathway (different languages).

- Pro-Skills train the trainers concept: the guidelines developed during the European project Pro-Skills define the basis of a possible concept to train the trainers dealing with low qualified and low skilled people (different languages).
- CEDEFOP European terminology: definition of 130 key terms of the European education and training policy (E).

Resources

- Studies and articles describing how to shift to a “learning outcomes” based approach (E).
 - CEDEFOP (2008), The shift to learning outcomes Conceptual, political and practical developments in Europe. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.
 - CEDEFOP (2010), Learning outcomes approaches in VET curricula - A comparative analysis of nine European countries. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
- Article about developing flexible training pathways to reduce access barriers and increase opportunity (E). [R4]
- Study about work-based learning and the reintegration of unemployed adults into the labour market (E). [R5]
- Valbuk (www.valbuk.ch). Internet Site of the European project Valbuk with information, guidelines and tools about the recognition of prior learning outcomes and the modularization of learning pathways (different languages).
- TrainCom Information and Learning Platform (<http://train-com.de>). Learning platform dedicated to VET actors who want to develop or redesign training programmes with a competence based approach (different languages).



Coordinator



Core partners



Associated partners



SECOND CHANCE

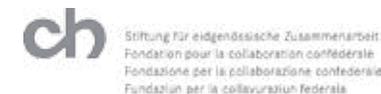
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