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Video-CV to Increase and Develop Employment Opportunities
LLP-LDV/TOI/08/IT/456



TRANSFERRING THE V.I.D.E.O. PROJECT MODEL: A TRANSNATIONAL REPORT COMPARING THE OUTCOMES OF 4 NATIONAL REPORTS

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INTRODUCTION

This paper is aimed to present and compare the outcomes of four national reports realised by the V.I.D.E.O. project Partner Institutions.

The reports implied:

- A) a desktop research pointing out the development, exploitation and dissemination of the Video-CV tool in the context of each country participating in the Project;
- B) field analysis focused on interviews with counselors (managers and operators of Vocational Guidance Centres, Centres for the Employment or similar Institutions) and entrepreneurs.

Through the comparison of the researches results, this paper will highlight:

- ✓ The *conditions of use* related to the Video-CV tool within counselling and employment services and with respect to specific target groups and the different national contexts involved;
- ✓ The *technological and organisational aspects* implied by the transfer action;
- ✓ A *protocol of use* implying information such as: targets, tools, equipment/technical requirements and procedure required in the use of VC tool;
- ✓ The *Professional profiles* required to realise and exploit a Video-CV (standard competences for operators, counsellors and technical experts);
- ✓ The *prototypical Model* for creating Video-Cvs, according to the outcomes of the survey.

PART I – DESCRIPTION OF THE NATIONAL RESEARCHES OUTCOMES

1. General description of the reports

1.1 Desk research

For the desk research, in the majority of the cases, the data came from the Internet and this evidence demonstrated that the current use of the Video-CV tool is not well established.

In all the four countries that provided the reports there are numerous web sites devoted to hosting Video-CVs, but these are mainly not- professional products.

In some cases (only a few in Italy, much more in Germany) it exists a professional service specifically devoted to the Video-CV design and production (e.g. private agencies, web sites working on the design and creation of Video-CVs, and other similar services). But the general impression is that the Video-CV is still far from being an implemented tool for the job seeking. However, the research results point out that there is a huge interest toward this tool, which is increasingly becoming more and more relevant on the job market.

According to the desk researches, almost all the participating countries count some relevant examples of web sites, web platforms offering the possibility to upload and publish on-line a Video-CV. Greece makes an exception, this is why the desk research carried out in that country did not point out any relevant web-site offering such a service. The only experiences related to the Video-CV, available in Greece are related to a different product which is a digital portfolio.

1.2. On-field analysis

As far as the field analysis is concerned, in each country several people working in the field of the Employment Agencies, Vocational Guidance Centres and similar organisations have been interviewed, together with a certain number of entrepreneurs.

Interviews involved:

In Germany, 6 managers and placement officers, and 5 employers and personnel officers;

In Greece, 5 managers and 5 operators of Vocational Guidance Centre or similar Institutions, and 5 entrepreneurs;

In Italy, 5 managers and 5 operators of Vocational Guidance Centre, and 2 entrepreneurs;

In the UK, 4 entrepreneurs and 2 experts in local and national government employment agencies.

For the majority of the cases, enterprises involved were SMEs.

The on-field analysis pointed out that the majority of the Employment Centres counselors (managers and operators) had no experiences with the Video-CV tool, which had not been developed and tested by any of the interviewees.

The only experiences identified (for Greece and Italy) were related to a product similar to the Video-CV: the digital portfolio.

The same is for the entrepreneurs. However, both the parties, counselors and entrepreneurs, agreed that developing an innovative tool like the Video-CV has huge potential.

2. Vision of the Video-CV and general evaluation of the Tool

Generally speaking, the Video-CV tool is regarded by all the counselors as a tool that will better express job seekers' skills and practical abilities, even if there could be problems related to the experience of the Video-CV clients to sit in front of a camera.

Almost all the people interviewed emphasised that the video application should not be the only form of application. But it should be seen as an additional tool that will help certain individuals.

From the entrepreneurs' point of view, the utility of the Video-CV tool lies in its being a **time and money saving procedure**. Furthermore, for special kind of jobs (where practical abilities are requested, for example, it would help, during the screening phase to select the most appropriate applicants). This means adopting a targeted intervention strategy.

Almost all the interviewed people confirmed that the Video-CV has to be regarded as an added value respect to a written CV. This means that it should be mainly focused on **showing the practical skills of the job seekers**.

This is the **real innovation of the Video-CV tool** for the interviewed people, bearing in mind the national desk researches as well as by the general documentary research related to the use and diffusion of the Video-CV tool all around the world¹, the existing Video-CVs available on the web, are really nothing more than a "spoken version" of the written CV.

This aspect is closely related to the fact that, according to the interviews already developed by partners the Video-CV is particularly helpful to show those additional skills and abilities acquired within a **non-formal or informal learning context**, even if its use has not to be limited to those experiences.

Both by the experts of the employment institutions and from the entrepreneurs have strongly stressed the importance of having a Video-CV being well designed and professionally created. In

¹ See the research titled "*The Video Cv Tool. A Documentary Research On Development And Diffusion Of Video Cv Tool In Europe And Usa*", available at the address:
http://www.videocurriculumproject.net/presentazioni/VIDEO_CV%20Documentary%20research.pdf.

fact, poor presentations would not be good both for the individuals, and for the employers, who would no longer want to be involved in the Video-CV use.

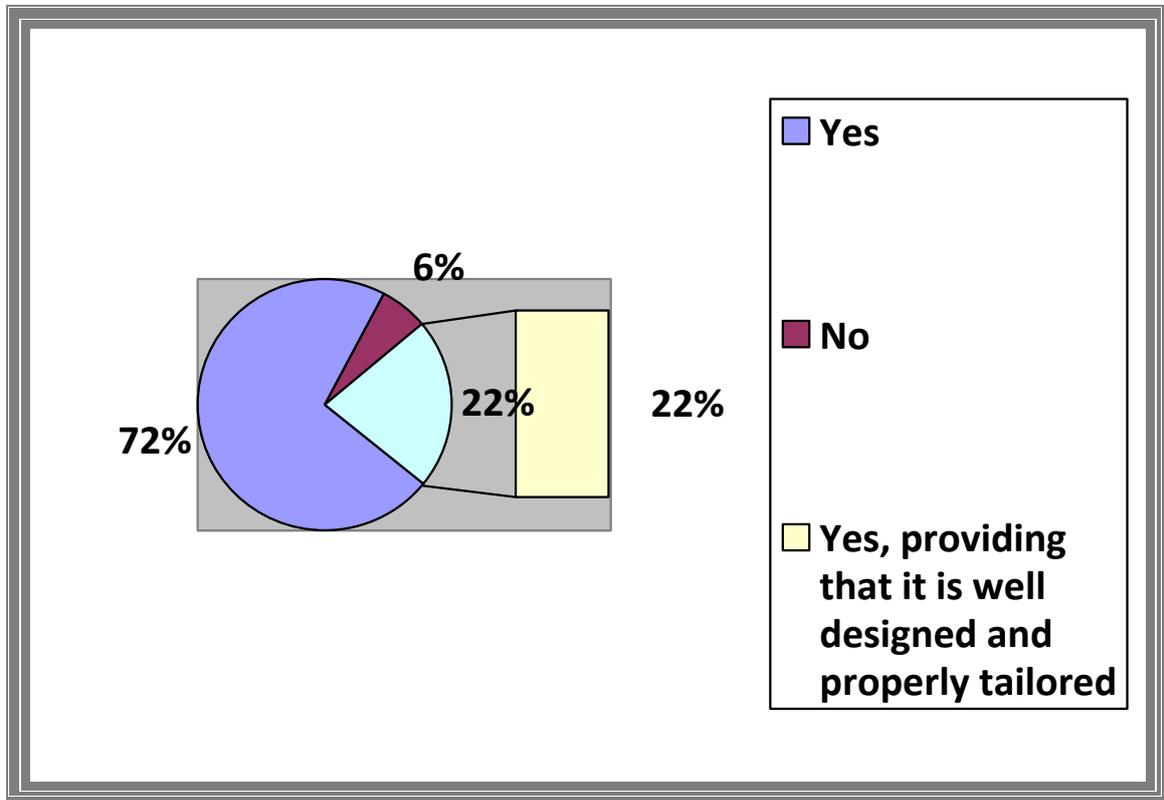


Fig. 1 - Answers to the question: Do you think that the Video-CV is useful?

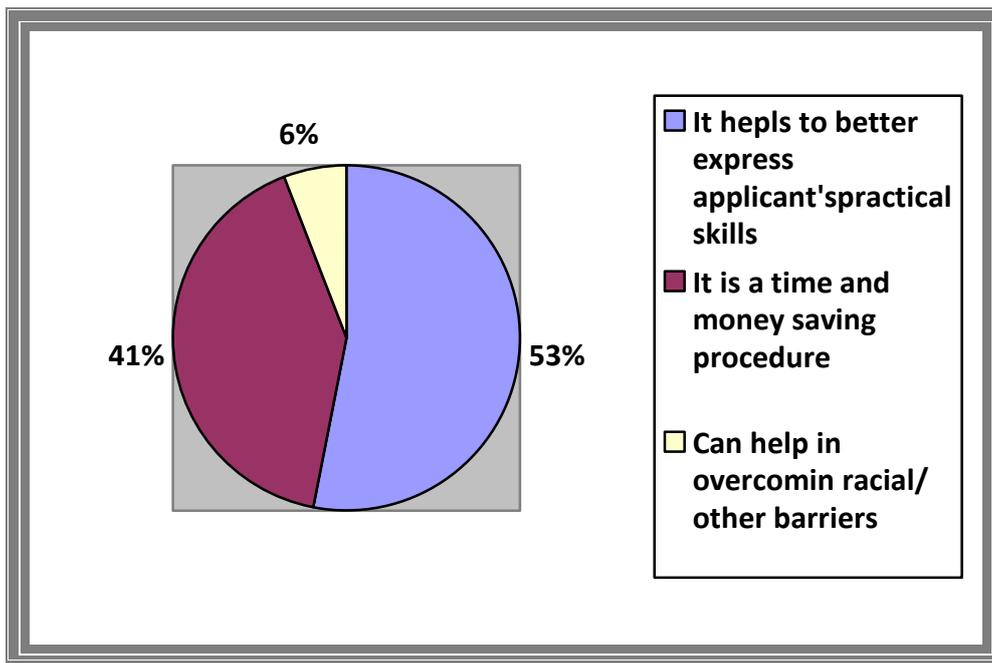


Fig. 2 – Most common answers related to the importance, for the interviewed people, of the Video-CV

3. SWOT analysis on the researches outputs

Although the Video-CV is generally regarded as very effective tools when it is well designed and produced in a professional way, there are some potential weak points and possible threats to its deployment.

The scheme below highlights the most common points of strength, weakness, opportunity and threat (SWOT ANALYSIS) pointed out on the basis of the national reports results.

According to the SWOT analysis, the Video-CV tool has many advantages, in particular it can help job seekers in showing hidden skills by expressing creativeness, communication skills, and practical abilities.

STRENGTHS		WEAKNESSES	
Video-CVs allow applicants showing concrete abilities acquired within a non-formal learning context	Video-CVs can make the selection procedures more cheap and fast	The Video-CV creation requires well trained operators	The Video-CV requires a careful preparation (from the professional interview to the creation of a script, to simulations before recording the video, to the psychological support to the applicant)
The Video-CV helps to find out and valorise the "hidden abilities", which is not easy/possible to appreciate through a written CV	The employers could gain an immediate insight into the applicants' potential from their "live performance"	The Video-CV is an innovative, not tested product	The Video-CV do not offer any interaction between recruiter and applicant
The applicants have the possibility to try several times to prepare the best they can		The smaller companies have limited access to the Internet	
OPPORTUNITIES		THREATS	
The Video-CVs must be created through a partnership approach	The Video-CV offer, to some targets, the possibility to overcome prejudices	The Video-CV could produce a subjective reaction related to the person's look and his/her ability to perform in front of the camera.	The viewer may have bias to ethnic or particular gender
The Video-CVs require a strong links among centres for the employment and similar structures with local enterprises	The Video-CV gives space to people's creativeness and personality and communication skills	The target groups of entrepreneurs needs to be considered carefully	The Video-CV must be well designed and properly executed
		The Video-CV can rise too high expectations in the applicants, related to the possibilities to find a job	

Fig. 3 – SWOT analysis about the Video-CV tool according to the V.I.D.E.O. Project researches

Strongly underlined is the fact that the Video-CV is a product allowing enterprises to save time and money for the selection procedure, thus having also a direct positive economic impact.

Among the more stressed points there is that a link to the existing agencies/companies/enterprises have a critical role to play in the process and it is crucial for the success of the entire process.

It is vital to ensure that the CVs are well designed and professionally realised. A poorly created Video-CV could have a negative affect on the desired outcomes of using a Video CV and people would lose interest in the process.

4. Proposed structure for the Video-CV

The outcomes of the interviews highlight that the Video-CV would be better built on a standard structure, where the job seeker is free to present his/herself, but within a certain set of standard “topics”, like:

- ✓ Presentation of the person (objectives);
- ✓ Knowledge and skills;
- ✓ Professional experiences;
- ✓ Education;
- ✓ Objectives.

Length:

- ✓ The appropriate length of the Video-CV is very important. According to the majority of the answers, the Video-CV should be between **3-5 minutes at the maximum**

The structure for the Video-CV implies:

- ✓ Highlighting the applicants’ strengths in terms of skills, competences and practical abilities;
- ✓ “Showing”, more than “narrating”. The Video-CV tool will show in concrete practical skills and abilities;
- ✓ Showing applicants’ personality and practical skills;
- ✓ Valorising the person in his/herself, for example showing something (like some childhood pictures, for example, or any other significant thing) which can “tell” something important about the person (for example, for an immigrant, an object coming from his/her country and being significant for the history/training of the person).

It has been suggested a structure based on two main sections, being:

1. **Evocative** (*showing personal aspects, biography, who applicants are, where they come from, what has been applicants' life until today*);
2. **Proving** (*showing what applicants can do, showing them while interacting with other people, while working, etc.*).

5. Standard competences and professional figures needed

All the interviewees stressed the necessity for guidance counselors and operators working in employment services and similar structures, to acquire specific competences and skills. In particular, managers and operators interviewed believe that to design, create and exploit a successful Video-CV tool, the following competences are needed :

1. Technical competences in order to learn **how to create** an effective Video-CV.

This implies:

- Technical skills, concerning how to record a professional and powerful Video-CV, such as using the necessary technical equipment, checking the environment: lighting, background, distance etc.;
- Skills and knowledge of how to build a Video-CV specifically tailored on the competences and skills of applicants;
- Communication and teaching skills;
- Empowerment and encouragement skills in order to make candidates feel more comfortable and self-confident;

1. Competences in using a video camera;
2. Competences in using video editing programmes (Windows Movie Maker or similar).

PART II – A PROTOCOL FOR THE USE OF THE VIDEO-CV TOOL

1. Targets

A section of the questionnaires was devoted to find out which are the most appropriate target groups for the Video-CV tool.

The answers provided outlined the ideal target of this innovative tool, both for the users (job seekers) and for the entrepreneurs:

A) Users

According to the outcomes of the national reports, a Video-CV is more useful when it shows practical abilities; therefore it is clear that we can exploit the advantages of this tool also for specific jobs and social categories, for example:

- ✓ Craftsmen (like, for example, carpenters, upholsterers, farmers, tanners, and similar);
- ✓ Older people and people whose abilities are not formally acquired, but acquired within non formal and informal learning contexts instead;
- ✓ People with skills - informally and formally acquired, not certified or certified, related with a practical skill, both high and low-middle educated (secretaries, plumbers, archivists, electricians, medical attendants, etc.)
- ✓ Job seekers that because of their age (more than 45 years old), their sex, their nationality or any physical disability have difficulties in finding a job. Thanks to the Video-CV, in fact, they can demonstrate their skills and competences;
- ✓ Creative and innovative people (web-designers, graphic artists, directors, cartoonists, decorators, photographers, and similar).

This can help overcoming the strongest limit of the existing Video-CV tools which are generally conceived and developed (according to the outcomes of the research “*The Video- CV Tool. A Documentary Research On Development And Diffusion Of Video Cv Tool In Europe And Usa*”²) in the majority of the cases, **tailored for young people and high –educated people.**

B) Entrepreneurs:

The service is ideal for small companies, charities, NGOs, etc. that do not have the human resource/recruitment abilities of larger organisations, and for those companies looking for employees having particular, practical skills.

2. Technological and organisational aspects implied by the transfer action

2.1. Basic technological equipment required

According to the researches results, the technology implied should be **simple, cheap and accessible**: a simple web-based system is needed in order to reduce the likelihood of excluding smaller companies from the opportunity to exploit the Video-CV.

To implement the whole process of making a Video-CV, it is necessary to have:

- ✓ a digital camera with USB connection (DVD, VHS, etc). The camera must be fixed on a tripod;
- ✓ a video captures software;
- ✓ a video-editing software;
- ✓ a kit of lights to illuminate the person;
- ✓ a PC with Internet Connection, Cd/DVD reader and recorder, word processor;
- ✓ a microphone;
- ✓ a light –color background;
- ✓ a scanner (optional);
- ✓ a silent room.

2.2. Organisational asset implied

The interviewees stressed the importance of having a team of highly-skilled operators to support the person during the whole process related to the Video-CV creation including the professional preliminary interview, the analysis of the most appropriate tool to help the person in finding a job (traditional CV, digital portfolio, Video-CV) and the Video-CV recording.

² http://www.videocurriculumproject.net/presentazioni/VIDEO_CV%20Documentary%20research.pdf

Feedback from all the managers and operators interviewed identified that the ideal make up of a team working in the Video-CV creation should involve, in each Centre for Employment or similar structure, **at least 2 people**: a Tutor (the guidance counselor or similar figure) and a skilled operator (technical expert), able to concretely realise the product (Video-CV recording), to use the Video editing programmes, and able to place the Video-CV on-line.

A third person (Tutor's assistant), helping the Tutor in scanning needed documents, supporting him/her in designing the Video-CV script and assisting the Tutor and the other operators, is also needed to achieve the full potential of this tool.

The guidance counselor or tutor is crucial throughout the entire process: this person has to be completely aware of the characteristics of the informal learning (everyday learning) to be able to immediately recognise the skills and the activities in which the person to be involved in the Video-CV creation, is more competent.

It is of critical importance that the team are properly trained in the Video-CV creation and management.

3. Legal issues

The Video-CV must be created and exploited according to the National Privacy Laws, being aware that a visual presentation of an applicant, just like in a Video-CV, may introduce unwanted biases and prejudices. Because all of the visual attributes of the applicant are apparent in the video, it may be possible that erroneous biases are introduced in the recruiter. For example, concerning:

- ✓ gender
- ✓ marital status
- ✓ gender reassignment
- ✓ pregnancy
- ✓ sexual orientation
- ✓ disability
- ✓ race
- ✓ ethnic background
- ✓ nationality
- ✓ religion or belief
- ✓ age

A consent for the on-line publication of the Video-CV is needed. Thus, applicants must give their express, written consent at the on-line publication of the Video-CV.

Clients should agree to the use of the Video-CV and be informed about what would happen to them after they had been used. It is essential that an on-line system/platform hosting the Video-CV for the clients is “moderated”, thus it has not to be an open platform.

Job seekers have also to consent the use of their image for the purposes related to job-research, allowing not only its on-line publication on the web site, but also the transmission of the Video-CV to interested subjects. It has to be stressed that in case of people with special needs, like mental or physical disabilities the permission of the guardian is needed.

Although users give their consent to the exploitation of their images and personal data, nevertheless it is mandatory to think to measures for the protection of sensitive data of applicants as well as their identities.

For this aim, **it is necessary to protect the identity of job seekers for example by identifying them by a code and not making visible their names and surnames.**

Finally, a basic measure for the data protection needed is allowing the download of the CV as well as the vision of the Video-CV only for registered and verified enterprises, according to the German Model of Video-CV³. Technically it is simple to block the download of the video CV and this should always be implemented.

³ See for details, the report titled The V.I.D.E.O. Project Model for Video-CV tools, www.videocurriculumproject.net.

PART III

VIDEO-CV PROTOTYPICAL MODEL

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE MODEL

1.1 Overview

The prototypical Model for the Video-CVs of the V.I.D.E.O Project is the result of the original Models⁴ (German and Italian experiences) and the outcomes of the desk and on-field researches.

The prototypical Model is based on the idea of a standard structure, built on a set of topics (*I am...; Education and Training; Work experiences; My future job; I believe that I am...*) coming from the German Model of Video-CV, and the idea to show also those skills and abilities acquired in a non-formal or informal learning context (just like in the case of the 42 years old male client of the Video-CV created by the C.O.L. Marconi), highlighting also “hidden” skills (for example, creativeness) that very often do not find a place or a proper expression in a written CV.

The two main Models (German and Italian) are the basis of the prototypical Model of the V.I.D.E.O. Project, the latter is much more focused on expressing users’ practical skills. This constitutes the real innovativeness of the Video-CV tool to be provided within the V.I.D.E.O. Project (because as pointed out by the outcomes of the desk researches⁵ realised within the VIDEO Project) almost all the Video-CVs currently available on the Internet are simply a “spoken version” of a written CV.

Thus, the most relevant features on which the V.I.D.E.O. Project prototypical Model is focused on, are:

- ✓ Vision of the Video-CV as a tool mainly devoted to **show** informal competences of the applicants, that are not written in the paper or are “hidden”;

⁴ Information about this starting Model are available in the paper “The V.I.D.E.O. Project Model for video-cv tools” available on-line at the address www.videocurriculumproject.net.

⁵ The National Reports presenting the outcomes of the desktop researches as well as of the on-field researches focused on interviews to managers and operators of Vocational Guidance Centres on one hand, and entrepreneurs on the other hand, are available on-line at the address www.videocurriculumproject.net

- ✓ Possibility for the applicants to show their competences and the values they believe in;
- ✓ Possibility for a job seeker to demonstrate his/her communication skills through body language and communication skills.

The videos must be, in a certain way, *evocative*, a kind of short movies telling the story (made of personal history, actual abilities, and previous professional experiences) about a person.

Therefore, in order to obtain this evocative product, it is possible for example for job seekers while presenting themselves (see next chapter, point 1, *Who I am*) to show pictures of their childhood or depicting them with friends, at home, or again, it is possible to show a few items representing certain aspects of an individual's life for example, for an immigrant, an object coming from his/her country and being significant for the history/training of the person.

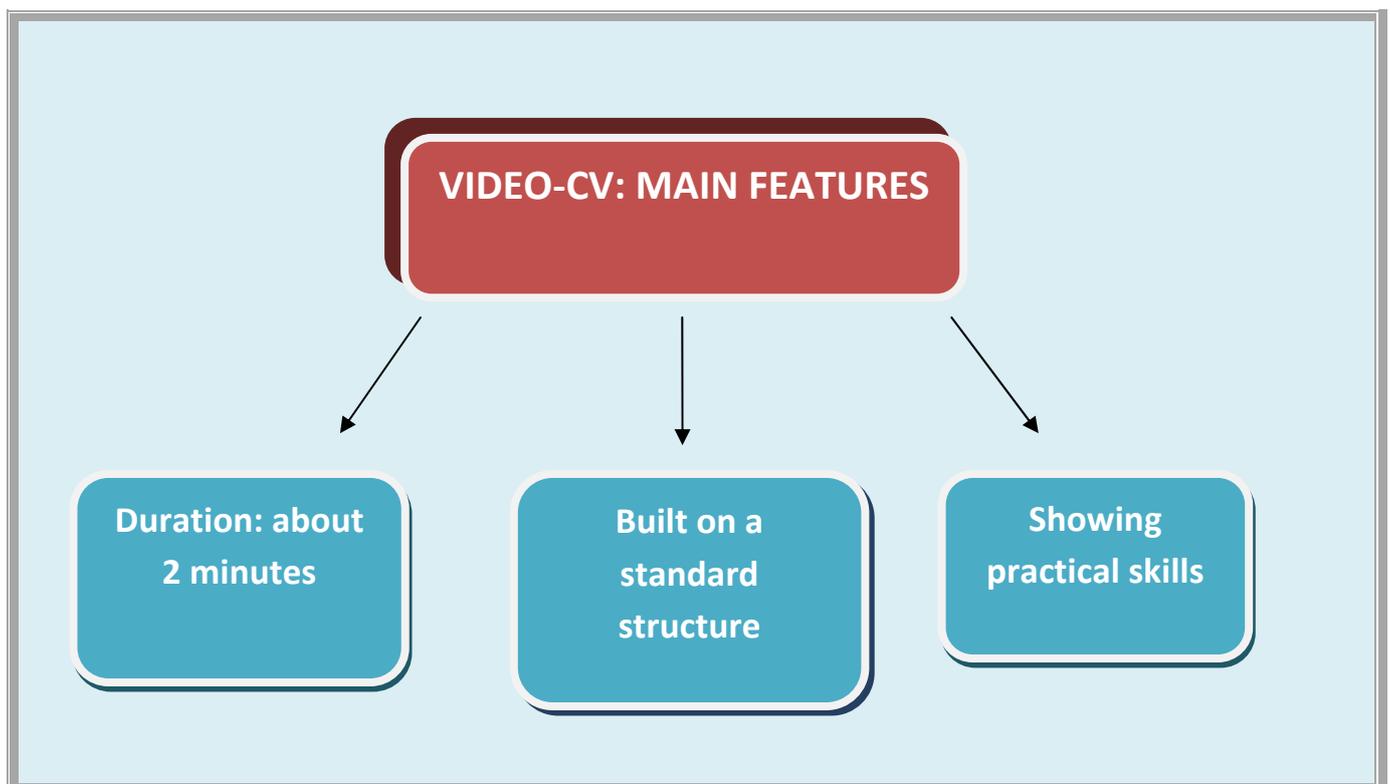


Fig.4 – Main features of the Video-CV prototypical Model

1.2. Duration

According to the outcomes of the desk researches realised within the work package 2 of the V.I.D.E.O. project⁶, the ideal length of the Video-CV is of about **2 minutes**⁷. In any case, the maximum length of the Video-CV must not exceed the limit of 5 minutes.

1.3. Structure Of The Video-CV

In detail, the Video-CV prototypical Model is a product built on the following standard steps:

1. **Who I am** (providing information about the story, personality, education and training, previous working experiences, etc; about 30 seconds)
2. **What I can do** (showing in concrete applicants' skills and practical abilities; 1 minute)
3. **Me in the future** (expressing expectations for the professional future, describing the occupation that the applicant is looking for, how users see themselves in the context of the desired job; 30 seconds)

⁶ "The Video-CV tool: A documentary research on development and diffusion of the Video-CV tool in Europe and USA", www.videocurriculumproject.net.

⁷ This is the average time that recruiters generally dedicate to the viewing of a Video-Cv as well as to any other document sent by job seekers.

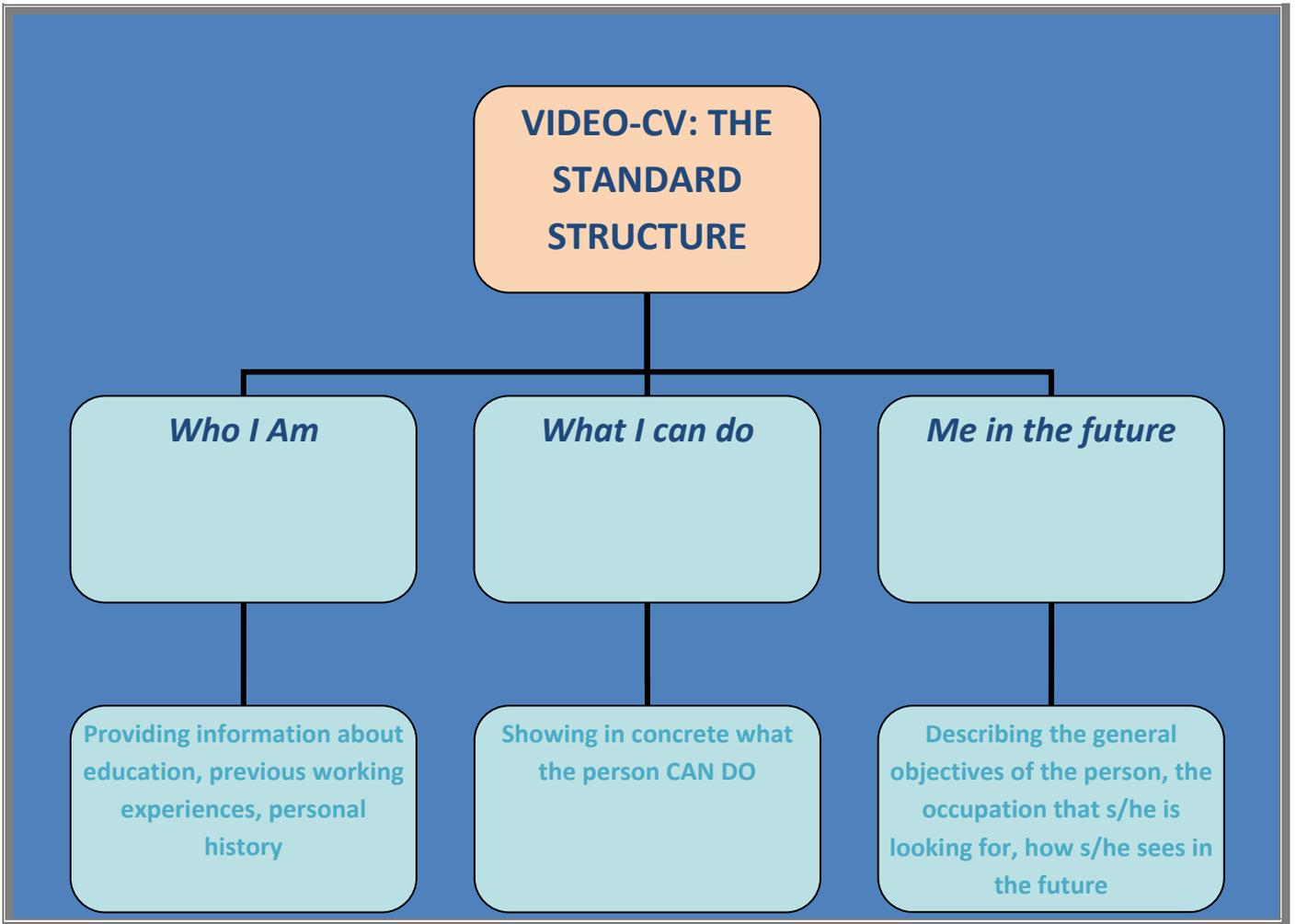


Fig. 5 – Standard structure of the Video-CV prototypical Model

2. THE PROCESS

The steps to be followed to create a Video-CV are:

1. The interview between the tutor (guidance counselor) and the user: this is the first step of the guidance path;
2. The creation of a storyboard for the Video-CV (Video-CV script);
3. The implementation of a 4 phases-process.

The **guidance path** is the starting point of the Video-CV creation process; as shown in the scheme below, the path starts with the personal guidance interview, from which the guidance counselor creates a strong cooperation.

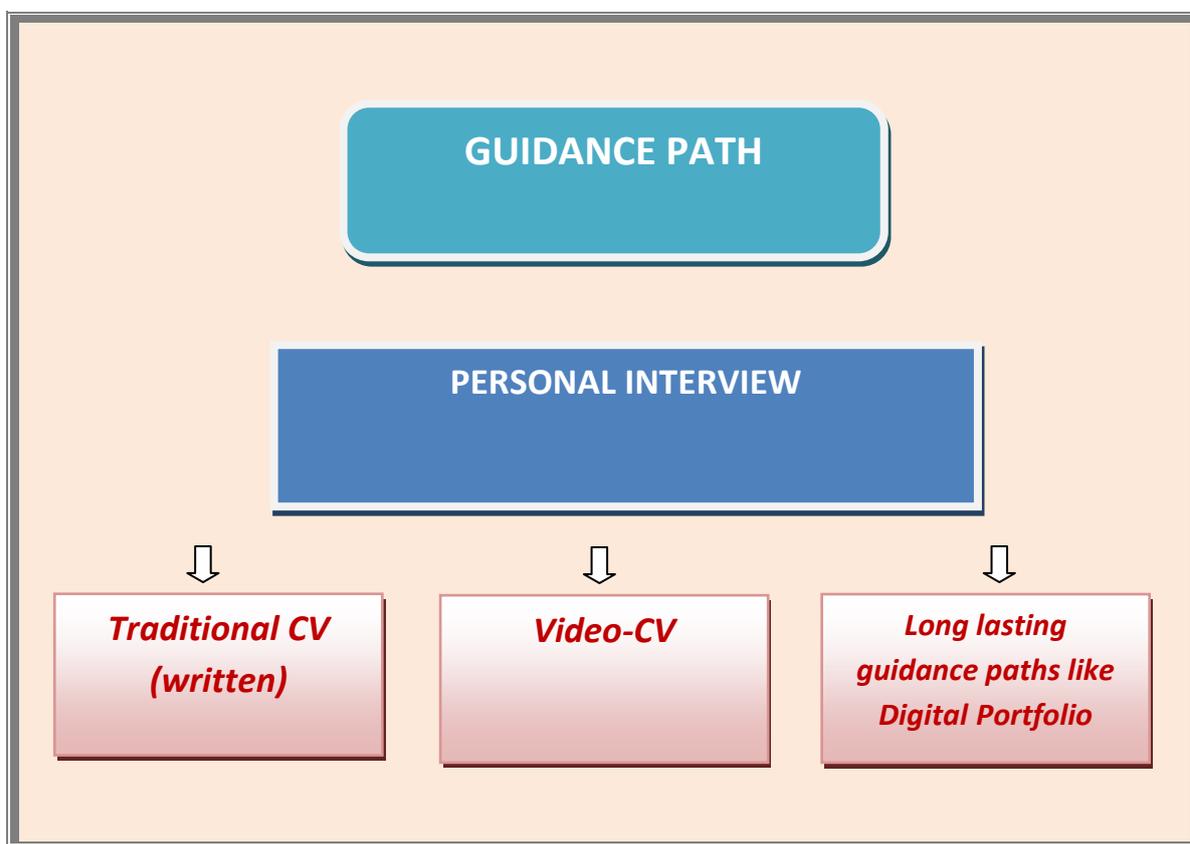


Fig. 6 – Guidance path: deciding between traditional CV or Video-CV

The personal interview is the core of this stage. Through it, the guidance counselor acquires deep information about the user's competences and his/her professional needs, both to decide which guidance counseling path is more suitable for the user and to design the profile –both personal and professional, of the user.

This step is crucial in order to decide the best way for the job seeker to present him/herself, which means choosing a tool, among traditional CV, Video-CV and specific guidance counseling paths which involve longer periods of time like the digital portfolio.

Through listening the user's personal and professional story, the tutor might immediately recognise the user's competences; moreover s/he might be able to bring to light applicant's competences both certified and not documented. This is the reason why it is very important for the guidance counsellor to be aware of the characteristics of the so-called non-formal and

informal learning, to be able to decide –at the end of the guidance interview- the most suitable guidance path and tool among written CV, digital portfolio, Video-CV.

Once decided if the Video-CV is the appropriate tool, the phase devoted to the concrete Video-CV creation can start.

The steps for this phase are synthesized in the following diagram and the very technical processes are explained in detail within the paper “Kit Of Training Guidance Material To Create A Video-CV”⁸

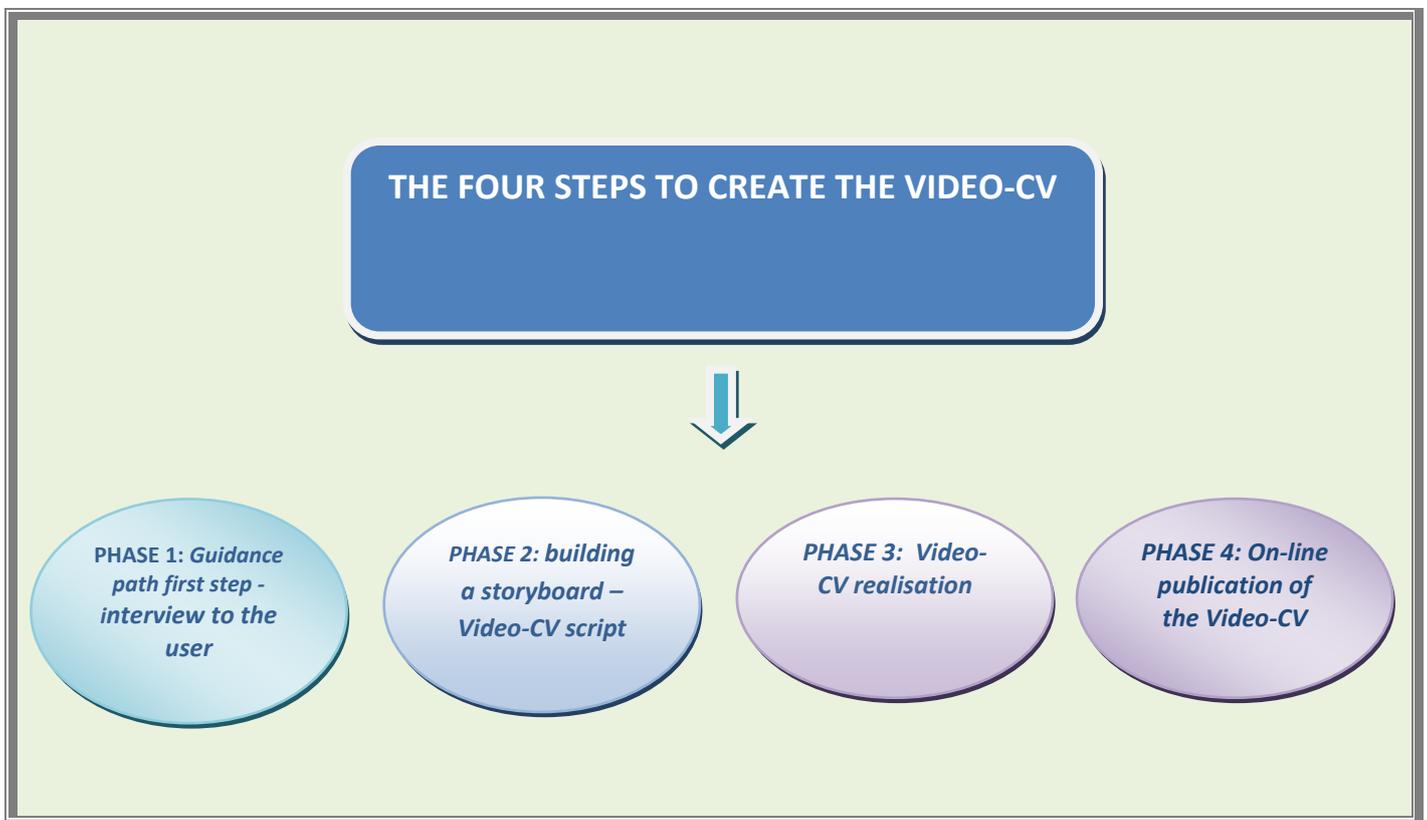


Fig. 7 - Four-phases process for creating the Video-CV

⁸ The paper is available on line at the address www.videocurriculumproject.net