



SURVEY ON PARTNERS' MAPPINGS

Y.U.S.S. – Addressing Youth Unemployment through Soft Skills Coaching Programmes

2011-1-ES1-LEO05-35958

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1. Introduction – aims and objectives of the survey

The following report has been elaborated within the frames of WP 3 “Analysis on the existing coaching programmes on soft skills in social competences at EU level” (Deliverable 14) of the project “Addressing Youth Unemployment through Soft Skills Coaching Programmes”. The aim of the report is to present the overall situation and to analyse the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and treats in field of the existing coaching programmes aimed to support young unemployed people to enter the labour market in 5 EU countries: Spain, Germany, France, Bulgaria and Austria. The analysis will support the transfer of the “Be Competent, Be Sapiens” products in the above countries by identifying the most important aspects and the needs concerning trainings on soft skills for young unemployed people.

2. Methodology of the analysis

For the purposes of the survey, Bulgarian Development Agency with the support of the other partners in Y.U.S.S. project developed a Local mapping template that aimed to guide the process of collecting information at national level. The partners were asked to identify and describe 3 best practices from their countries by presenting the soft skills covered in the programme, target group/s, methodology, assessment tools and analysing the results/effects of the programme and its added value.

On the basis of the template 5 national reports have been prepared presenting best practices of education and training programmes on soft skills for young unemployed people in Spain, Germany, France, Bulgaria and Austria. The reports have been prepared individually by the partners:

- P1. Asociación de Servicios a las Empresas y Actividades Diversas de Madrid (ADESEMA), Spain

- P3. Volkshochschule im Landkreis Cham e.V. – VHS Cham, Germany
- P4. Institut pour le Développement et la Formation – IDF, France
- P5. Bulgarian Development Agency – BDA, Bulgaria
- P7 European Network for Transfer and Exploitation of EU Project Results – E.N.T.E.R., Austria

3. Summary of the best practices identified in Spain, Germany, France, Bulgaria and Austria

3.1. Spain

In Spain the following education and training programmes focused on developing the soft skills of young people were identified as best practices and presented in the National report:

The Galatea Programme: The Galatea Program is a mentoring program provided by the Psychologists Professional Association / Guild of Madrid (COPM). It is aimed at helping young psychology professionals develop in the Human Resources area and thus making their entry into the labour market easier. The general objective of the program is to increase the visibility, the qualifications and promotion of the psychologists and the human resources professionals.

Coaching Psychology Master's Programme: The National University of Education at Distance (UNED) developed a two-year master's program on Coaching Psychology. The program's objective is to help psychologists and other university degree graduates to develop coaching skills and techniques and to incorporate the coaching procedures into their workplace activity. The training program provides psychological knowledge with a scientific basis to support coaching, along with relevant skills to effectively perform the coach job, the development of ethics and professional values that characterize good professionals in this field. The graduates receive a private certificate after successfully completing the program.



Coaching Supervision Programme: The Coach Supervision program is a two-month program aimed at managers of NGOs, senior college students and/ or master graduates. The organization which provided this training was the European School of Coaching (EEC). The main soft skills covered in the program included skills related to successful performance in the area of Human Resources: flexibility; focus on people; troubleshooting; results orientation; communication; leadership; tensile strength and time management.

3.2. Germany

In Germany Volkshochschule im Landkreis Cham e.V. identified and analysed the following training programmes aimed to support young unemployed people to enter the labour market:

Pre-vocational education program (BvB): The Pre-vocational education program is provided by the German Federal Employment Agency. The program supports youth and young adults in gaining access to the training and labour market if they do not have initial vocational training, if they have fulfilled their compulsory education and are under 25 years old. BvB offers a wide range of services depending on the individual abilities and needs of the participants. The program includes theoretical knowledge, personal development, vocational basic skills, vocational training, basic qualifications in IT, media literacy, language training and application training.

The ProfilPASS for young people: The ProfilPASS is funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and is accompanied by the Federation and the German States under the auspices of the Saarland. The ProfilPASS system is used to ascertain and document the abilities and competences of young people. The general goal of the ProfilPASS is for young people to expand their career guidance through the approach of individual reflection and assessment. The process of individual skills assessment is monitored by a ProfilPASS advisor. Thus, the ProfilPASS is primarily an instrument for self-reflection on skills, abilities and competences. Participants in the ProfilPASS process receive a ProfilPASS competencies



certificate which is in a way the first “passport” applied throughout Germany. It includes academic qualifications as well as informal learning.

Mentoring system for the transition to the labour market: The mentoring system for the transition to the labour market was implemented as an element of the program “Abschluss und Anschluss – Bildungsketten bis zum Ausbildungsabschluss”(“Graduation and afterwards – Education chains until training qualification”) supported by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). The program is carried out every year. Participants are youth attending their penultimate school year as well as youth attending special schools. The main soft skills covered in the program match the ones which are outlined in the description of the pre-vocational education programme. This tool is designed to support those young people who will probably have difficulties in earning a lower secondary school-leaving certificate or equally matched qualification and/or in coping with the transition to vocational education and training.

3.3. France

The three coaching programmes identified as best practices in France are:

Coaching programmes provided by Pôle Emploi (National Agency for Employment): Pôle Emploi is aimed at solving the unemployment problem. The main soft skills covered in the program are related to the communication competence and the ability to adapt to a company’s environment. The methodology of this coaching program is designed to facilitate learning new behaviour for personal growth. Considering communication purposes, the coaching method is carried out with groups.

The program “Parcours vers l’emploi”: The program “Parcours vers l’emploi” is aimed at the development of a personalized teaching approach. The "passport emploi" is a tool or a common procedure for people on the labour market that need inclusion and training on the territory of Corsica. It includes an inventory of social skills taking which are classified in 4 main



categories: 1) autonomy, 2) assertiveness, 3) communication and 4) adaptation to the life of the company.

The support for the creation of an economic activity and the business incubator program are organized by BGE Ile Conseil and C2E: These two organizations provide access to business support program aimed at unemployed people. It is a coaching program aimed at developing specific social skills needed by managers by tasks execution, taking personal initiatives and so on.

3.4. Bulgaria

In Bulgaria the survey made by BDA showed the there are no coaching programmes specifically aimed to support young unemployed people to enter the labour market through improving their soft skills. The following programmes were identified as best practices for coaching programmes aimed to support the soft skills development of various target groups:

Programme “Effective communication”: The coaching programme on soft skill development “Effective communication” is provided by IDEAs Bulgaria. The main soft skills covered in the programme are related to the communication competence. The target group is employees, leaders / managers, presenters, coaches and traders. The programme is certified by IDEAs Bulgaria but not by any public authority.

Programme “SUCCESS based on Experience”: It is a long-term coaching programme for personal and team effectiveness provided by Likora Ltd, which is an organization offering coaching and training in social and behavioural skills. The programme covers various soft skills and aims to support work teams, employees, and managers.

Programme “Effective Personal Productivity”: It is a long-term coaching programme provided by “LMI – Leadership Management Bulgaria”. LMI recommends the coaching programme on “Effective Personal Productivity” (EPP) to employees at all levels of an organization. The main

soft skills covered in the programme are: time management; communication skills; empowering the team and controlling priorities.

3.5. Austria

In Austria there is no special course or programme that offers teaching of soft skills to young people who are in the transition from school to work. These programs described by E.N.T.E.R. are aimed to support young people to help them overcome that difficult transition from school situation into the labour market.

CLEARING programme: the CLEARING programme supports young people in their transition from school to career and their professional orientation. The programme is offered at schools. The main target groups are young people with at least 30% of learning disabilities or special educational needs, social and emotional impairments. A profile of the skills, abilities, needs, interests and talents is worked out together with the employees of the programme and a future plan is developed.

“Youth Coaching” programme: The programme offers professional assistance and help for young people and their parents concerning further education and employment. The general goal of the programme is helping young people plan their next steps (concerning their professional future) based on their strengths and abilities. The „Youth-Coaching“ programme is foreseen for young people finished their last year of compulsory education (9 years); young people up to the age of 19 years who are not yet registered into the Employment Service and young people who are at risk of drop out of school.

In the national report for Austria E.N.T.E.R. also listed some special courses available to all people who want to attend them (not related to age of the participants, special educational needs and so on): courses offered by The Austrian Public Employment Service (AMS), by The Institute for Economic Promotion (WIFI); “The most important things about personality”, “Business Behaviour for apprentices” and “Your appearance please”.

4. Comparative SWOT analysis of the results of the national local mapping reports (Spain, Germany, France, Bulgaria and Austria)

The following analysis is based on the SWOT analyses provided by each partner in the National local mapping templates. Presenting the results in a comparative way aims to provide a general picture of the situation in the countries where the survey was done and to identify the similarities and differences.

4.1. Strengths

In the analysis of the existing coaching programmes focused on soft skills development the main strengths identified by the partners were related to availability of public funding, quality of the training provided and the qualification of the professionals working in the field, the positive impact of the programmes on the target groups.

According to the Spanish, German and Austrian local mapping reports one of the key strengths of the coaching programmes at national level is their high quality standard and the professionalism of the providers/ coaches.

In Germany, France and Austria was underlined as very important strength feature the state financial support that the coaching and training programmes identified as best practices by the partners receive. In Germany the three selected practices are supported by public funds which means that no extra costs arise for participants. In France the programmes presented in the national report are also implemented with state financial support. Thus the costs are no impediment to participation in the programmes and equal access is enhanced.

In Germany and Austria the extensive support that participants receive from key parties like advisors/ coaches, institutions, parents, employers, teachers and so on was identified as



strength of the existing programmes. The inclusion of other key parties contributes to the process of preparation for entering into the working life.

The Bulgarian and French partners see the advantages of existing coaching programmes related to positive long term effects/ results on individuality, work and work environment.

The Austrian, Spanish and German partners identified as a strong point of the existing coaching programmes individual skills assessment and individual assistance plan. Taking into account personal strengths, weaknesses, interests, competences and abilities of the participants permits young people to find support in the fields they need help.

Specific strengths of the identified best practices mentioned by the partners refer to the activities and materials focused on personal development that these programmes offer to graduates/ undergraduates / coaches in Spain; to the unique tool “Passeport emploi” that defines in a detailed way the social skills needed by the labour market in France; to the practical purposes and results of the coaching programmes in Bulgaria.

4.2. Weaknesses

The French, Austrian and Bulgarian partners identified as negative aspect that most coaching programmes are not focused on soft skills development or exclude some important soft skills. In Austria and Bulgaria coaching courses on soft skills are not specifically aimed at young people and they only deal with one aspect of soft skills.

Another disadvantage of some coaching programmes on soft skills in Germany and France is related to the difficulty to evaluate their effectiveness and quality. In Germany there is no overarching evaluation of the programmes as well as structures that fund and offer vocational education and training of disadvantaged groups. This complicates structural reforms of the



transition system that are meant to enhance the effectiveness and transparency of the funding measures.

In Spain, France and Bulgaria most coaching programmes on soft skills are not supported by public funds so these courses are sometimes quite expensive and the young people who wish to enrol need to pay themselves.

In Spain and Bulgaria there is also a problem related to the lack of awareness and publicity of the coaching and training programmes through the educational pathway.

Another weak point of the existing programme in Germany is related to inappropriate staff (coachers) to participant ratio. In Germany the advisors and social education workers have to look after about 20 to 30 young persons, some of them with learning difficulties, special needs or a migratory background, and that is a precondition for a non-effective individual guidance.

The German partner also emphasized the need for clear responsibilities of each state actor involved in youth work, and the need to reduce unnecessary administrative interfaces and to support the establishment of institutionalized cooperation.

The French partner identified the difficulty to transfer this know-how because providers don't have any specific support/product for the coaching activity.

The Bulgarian partner mentioned the potential disadvantage related to duration of coaching programmes. Short term coaching programmes may result in short term effects.

4.3. Opportunities

Increasing demand for soft skills accompanied by government, institutions and organizations' efforts to support the development of such skills among young people is a great opportunity

for the easier transition of young people from school/ university to work. Professionalism of providers/ coaches and state financial support create opportunity for developing coaching programmes specifically aimed at soft skills.

The Spanish partner emphasized the increased recognition of soft skills in Spain.

4.4. Threats

Threats underlined by the Spanish partner are the lack of agreed standards and lack of official certification/ diploma after finishing the courses. The Bulgarian partner also emphasized the lack of certification as external factor that could prevent coaching programmes on soft skills to achieve their short and long term objectives.

5. Conclusions

Besides getting necessary educational qualification, young people need to develop soft skills like communication skills, autonomy, ability to adapt to an organizational environment, emotional intelligence, etc. These are very important skills without which it will be very difficult for young people to perform well in a particular field of work.

The surveys done in Spain, Germany, France, Bulgaria and Austria, showed that in all countries coaching programmes on soft skills exist although in some of the countries they are not specifically aimed at young unemployed people and in other cases they are not specifically focused on soft skills development or do not cover the complete spectre of soft skills needed by young people to enter the labour market.

In some of the partner countries in Y.U.S.S. project, coaching programmes on soft skills are not supported by public funds and sometimes these courses can be quite expensive. This is an additional barrier to social skills development. Thus, instead of getting support and help at this crucial point of transition, some young people are not given the opportunity to develop



the needed skills and might not successfully make their first steps from education into employment.

The process of young people preparation for entering into the working life can be enforced by support from key parties like advisors, coaches, institutions, employers, etc as well.

Following the SWOT analysis, in order to implement successfully the coaching programme developed within the project “Be Competent, Be Sapiens”, when adapting the products the partners have to focus their attention on the following aspects:

- Soft skills needed at the local labour market: the adapted content of the coaching programmes should take in consideration the results of the WP 2 research done within Y.U.S.S. partnership and to focus on the most important soft skills for the national context;
- Qualification of the trainers/coachers: the programme should be provided by experienced trainers/coachers in order to be as efficient as possible and to support the target group to enter successfully into the labour market;
- Adoption of effective system to evaluate the effectiveness and quality of the training: the provision of the coaching programme at national level should be supported by effective evaluation mechanisms that can bring useful feedback and become a basis for further improvement of the training content;
- To find efficient dissemination channels to provide sufficient information for the training to the target groups: the analysis of the existing programmes identified as weakness of the existing programmes the insufficient information available in the society. This is why the partners should focus their attention to disseminate widely information about the upcoming training from which to select the target group. Of course within the frames of the project there are objective constraints (administrative, financial) for the number of trainees, but the partners need to find effective ways for the further exploitation of the products after the project end.



- To select and ensure appropriate ratio trainer - number of trainees: for the provision of the pilot programme it is important to define the ratio between trainers/ coaches and trainees that will work most efficiently at national level. Too many trainees with small number of trainers/ coaches could lead to not efficient training;
- To look for channels for certification of the training: The lack of certification is a factor that could prevent coaching programmes on soft skills to achieve their short and long term objectives. Young people that invest considerable efforts in developing soft skills need acknowledgement of their achievement and knowledge. Therefore, it is of significant importance when adapting the products partners to take into account channels for certification of the training.

All aspects mentioned above like adoption of an effective system that evaluates the effectiveness and quality of the training, qualification of trainers/ coaches, efficient dissemination channels, etc. aims to ensure successful implementation of the transferred programme in order to support the effective entrance of young people into the labour market. They are also suggestions that will support the effective exploitation of the products transferred within Y.U.S.S. project after the end of the project.