CAREER LEARNING AT SCHOOL: PEDAGOGICAL MODELS AND METHODOLOGICAL GUIDELINES

A handbook

PRIME

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PRIME

Sommario

Introduction

Children growing up in the 21st century will build their biographies in an environment characterised by change, chance and uncertainty (World Economic Forum, 2018). Research and experiences from many countries highlight that childhood experiences are foundational in the construction of identity and in shaping future careers. Career development is, in fact, a maturation process which begins very early in life and that continues throughout life (McMahon & Watson, 2018). This refers to the ongoing process of a person managing their life, learning and work over their lifespan. It involves developing the skills and knowledge that not only equip children for the next stage of their lives but also enable them to handle complexity (ELGPN, 2015), plan and make informed decisions about education, training and career choices. (McMahon, Patton & Tatham, 2002).

In this process, early experiences play a pivotal role: observations of attitudes towards work within families, cultural stereotypes, and exposure to the media may influence children's meaning of work and in turn their occupational identities.

Primary years are a period of important exploration and although it could be tempting to think that pupils at this age are too young for thinking of careers, research from many countries show that career development is a concept that children understand since kindergarten (Patton and McMahon, 1997). Children as young as 5 years are able to express occupational dreams (Phipps,1995) and the understanding of themselves and their educational and job opportunities is a process that takes place in interaction with others over time and that begins from an early age (Gottfredson, 2002; Law, 2009). It is during primary schools that career preferences slowly start taking shape (Poole & Low, 1985).

Despite the awareness of the importance of this delicate developmental window, schools often do not provide struc-

tured activities to support career-related learning in primary years. Moreover, no consistent approach across primary schools does exist regarding this topic in many countries and limited evidence is available.

The term 'career' or 'careers' needs also a cautious approach in primary phases. The focus is not on circumscribing opportunities to a certain career but primary years are years when children's aspirations should be tentative and imaginative. The question which drives the work on careers in primary school is not "what do you want to be when you grow up?" but is, instead, "how can you dream of something you do not know about?". The focus should be on giving children from an early age a wide range of experiences of the world which includes the world of work. The aim is to broaden horizons and enlarge opportunities while fighting stereotypes and obstacles to children's aspirations.

In this context, the term "career-related learning" refers to early childhood activities which in primary schools are designed to "give children from an early age a wide range of experiences of and exposure to education, transitions and the world of work" (Kashefpakdel et al., 2018).

Based on these premises, the PRIME handbook tries to offer a comprehensive overview on early career-related learning with the aim of helping primary schools teachers familiarise with the topic and implement activities in their daily practice.

The handbook is intended to stress the potential and the importance of supporting early career learning and to inspire and give ideas for the work on career-related learning both in and outside school and to offer key didactic considerations in this regard.

The handbook consists of 6 chapters.

- Chapter one responds to the question **"why is early career-related learning important?"**. This introduc-

tory part explores the contribution of career learning activities in relation to wider national scenarios of economic changes, innovation in career perspective and social justice. This investigates the rationale for career learning activities in the XXI century and offers a review of the relevant literature and socio-economic data on career stereotypes and obstacles to social mobility. This part fosters the commitment of educational actors in this matter and highlights the role and responsibility of schools and the community at large in widening and enhancing study choices, career goals and aspirations of pupils.

This chapter ends with a glossary which is meant to support the reader throughout the handbook.

- The second chapter offers an overview on the **methodological framework which guides the design of career learning activities.** A specific focus is on the career management skills framework which is used as reference and foundation for the design of career-related learning activities.
- Chapter three investigates **career stereotypes in Europe.** This chapter presents the most common career stereotypes in Europe and analyses their impact on children's career development.
- Chapter four focuses on how we can **improve career-related learning at school.** It aims at answering the question: "what works?" and represents a methodological roadmap for the development of activities with a collection of a set of guidelines for the delivery of career learning activities.
- Chapter five offers an overview on the **importance of the community to support pupils' career development.** Guidelines for stakeholders mapping and community building are shared to support activities which involve the whole community in the process.

The handbook is the result of a cooperation between 9

partners from 4 countries funded by the Erasmus+. The project is called PRIME and focuses on the development of tools and resources for improving career-related learning in primary schools (2021-1-IT02-KA220-SCH-000030518). The project aims to contribute to the improvement of career-related learning activities in initial stages of education, by developing innovative models and resources to support pupils in exploring jobs, strengthening competencies, increasing aspirations and broadening horizons on who they want to become in the future.

Together with this handbook, the PRIME project offers a set of tools to support schools activities, a multimedia game which will involve local communities in a digital career-related experience and a training for teachers. Further information can be found here: *https://www.projectprime.eu/*

The project partners are:
- Assindustria Consulting srl, Italy
- Centro Studi Pluriversum, Italy
- DEP INSTITUT SL, Spain
- Virolai E.M.S.A., Spain
- ETAIREIA PROIGMENON EFARMOGON SISTIMATO DIOIKISIS-MONOPROSOPI ETAREIA PERIOPISMENIS EYTHINIS, Greece
- Arsakeio Gymnasium Patras, Greece
- Centrul Judetean de Resurse si Asistenta Educationala Vrancea, Romania
- Universidad de Valladolid, Spain

A note for the reader

The contributors to the handbook come from different countries with different school and education systems, with different cultures, with different opportunities to support children and young people's career learning, and with

different experiences around children and young people's career learning.

The students, whose career learning teachers want to support, live in different contexts which give them different opportunities and limitations. It is important that teachers understand career education as embedded in a context (Haug et al., 2020; Sultanta, 2017). We want to encourage the book's readers to remember and reflect on their local context while reading the book and reflect on how the book's suggestions are relevant in the context they live and work in – and their students live and go to school in. The reader can reflect on how the contents presented in the handbook need to be adapted to make sense in their local context.

We hope you will enjoy the book and wish you good luck with supporting the career-related learning of your students.

Chapter 1

Career learning at school:

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE XXI CENTURY

Children growing up in the 21st century will build their biographies in an environment characterised by change, chance and uncertainty (World Economic Forum, 2018). Research indicates that almost two-thirds of those starting primary school now will end up working in jobs that currently do not yet exist (World Economic Forum, 2016). Digitalisation and the shift towards sustainable economies and careers are shaping the labour market which is changing at a fast pace, now more than ever. Students will be protagonists of this complex scenario as they will build their career trying to thrive in this challenging and evolving landscape. In this scenario, young generations are asked to face more complex careers, with more options in both work and learning, they face a sequence of complex choices as careers are nowadays protean, not linear and opportunities are wider, global and fast-changing (OECD, 2010). With many crossroads and infinite directions, careers are nowadays constructed rather than chosen (Neary, Dodd and Hooley, 2015) and individuals need to carefully coordinate their life, work, learning choices and experiences, at all ages and stages throughout their lives (Vaughan, 2011). "The capacity to exercise agency and to influence the development of one's own career is what is often described as career management" (Neary, Dodd and Hooley, 2015) which represents a main challenge for new generations and societies.

With the above-mentioned challenges, schools, families and society as a whole share the mission of equipping students with the skills which will enable them to handle complexity, to successfully manage their career while making choices towards sustainable development and growth, both at a personal and community level. Students will need scaffolding in their career development. This represents, in fact, an ongoing process that does not only deal with transition times but with the complex management of life, learning and work over the lifespan which requires to face complexity (ELGPN, 2015), plan and make informed decisions and career choices (McMahon, Patton & Tatham, 2006).

The impact of the career development process on young people's future has been well researched at an international level. A series of US and UK longitudinal studies have shown that the way teenagers think about their futures in education and employment has a significant impact on what actually becomes of them as adults (Hughes et al. 2016) in terms of later educational, economic or social outcomes. In particular, the character of teenage aspirations is found to be directly linked to adult social status (after controlling for/beyond social background and academic achievement) (Schoon and Polek, 2011).

A similar story goes for the role of ambitions misalignment and career uncertainty: teenagers who are uncertain in their career aspirations are more likely to experience a significant period of being NEET compared to peers (Yates et al., 2011) or to have lower levels of educational attainments (Staff et al., 2010). Teenagers who underestimate the education required for their career aspirations are also more likely to become NEET (Yates et al., 2010). These studies and others (see Hughes et al., 2016 and Mann et al., 2019 for a review) highlight the importance of the process of understanding oneself and educational and job opportunities during school years. But when do children start dreaming of certain careers or develop certain beliefs toward work and education? How do career aspirations take shape? To answer these questions, we need to move back to childhood.

Childhood experiences are foundational in the construction of

identity. Beliefs regarding their place in the world and occupational preferences start taking a shape early in life. Understanding oneself and their educational and job opportunities is, in fact, a process that starts from an early age and continues over time (Gottfredson, 2002; Law, 2009). Already at 5 years, children can express their occupational dreams (Phipps,1995). Although it might be tempting to think that young children are too young for learning and thinking of careers, Australian researchers have shown that preschool children understand the concept of career development (Patton & McMahon, 1997) and that career preferences already exist in early years of school (Poole & Low, 1985).

The process of career learning is, in fact, continuous (Fettes, Evans & Kashefpakdel, 2020): it starts when the child is born and goes on throughout life. Students actively explore their worlds, experience and reflect on the world of work and education and on the connection to other parts of life, they reflect on different lives to live, values, visions of life and visions in life. All this in relation to both oneself and others. They begin to build possibilities for present and future selves (Cahill, 2017) and reflect on the sense of self (who am I?), skills (what am I good at?), knowledge (what do I know?), knowledge of the world of work, life roles. **Through self-reflection and social interaction, they make "meaning of their explorations and experiences of the world and build foundational stories about who they are and about who they could become"** (Ahn, 2011). By early childhood, children demonstrate "concern about the future, control over their lives, curiosity about occupations and work as well as confidence to construct a future" (Savickas 1991; 2002; in Kashefpakdel et al., 2019). In this "growth stage", children move from what Super calls 'fantasy' ideas about their future to genuine 'interests' (Super, 1996): it is in primary years that children start getting engaged in both present and future problem-solving and choice-making.

This process happens in a context and the context plays a significant role. Career learning is, in fact, contextually-embedded: observations of attitudes towards work within families, cultural stereotypes, and influence of the media do influence children's

meaning of work and in turn their occupational identities (Skorikov & Vondracek, 2011). Children's aspirations are based on family, friends and the media and they are shaped, moulded and restricted by the context children are exposed to (Archer et al. 2014; Chambers et al., 2018). Children's conceptions of who they are and what they could become are "products of their wider socio-economic surroundings: influenced by social and cultural capital (what they consider a reasonable and possible future to be)"[1]. The family socio-economic background plays, in fact, a significant role as it is often linked to the careers repertoire the child is exposed to, the role models children get to know, to conceptions and stereotypes on works and life roles: "what you can't see, you can't be" or "how can you dream of something you do not know about?". Strong evidence comes from a report called "Drawing the future" where 7 to 11 years old students were asked to draw a picture and describe the job they wanted to do when they grew up. The results were illuminating, if slightly depressing. Over 20,000 took part and it turned out really clearly that children from a young age had ideas about careers and that, importantly, nearly 40% of children base their career aspirations from people they know. 45% stated that TV, film, and radio were the biggest influencing factors of their choice while only 1% got to know the job mentioned from someone visiting the school. This has a huge implications for social mobility: "children from poorer backgrounds may not have access to successful role models from the world of work and their aspirations are limited as a result"[2].

The same report also highlights that children have absorbed enough from the cultural landscape as they believe that there is "men's work" and "women's work". "By the age of seven it was clear that the jobs chosen reflected standard gendered ideas. In the UK, in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

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1   https://www.nesta.org.uk/blog/great-expectations/

2   https://www.educationandemployers.org/career-related-primary/#_ftn7

(STEM), four times as many boys wanted to become engineers as did girls. Twice as many boys as girls saw science as their chosen future, while girls were four times more likely than boys to want to be vets, and more than twice as likely to want to be doctors" (p. 21)[3]. A similar result comes from Linda Gottfredson's studies. These reported that between 6 and 8, children started grasping the concept that a set of behaviours may belong to each sex and began seeing jobs and future pathways as intrinsically gendered. And this is true also for younger children. An analysis of 4,000 5-year-olds in England and Estonia found that gender norms were already strongly present at that age. At 5 children have already developed basic knowledge about jobs, an understanding of status hierarchy among jobs and "appropriate" professions in terms of gender and socio-economic status (Cinamon & Yeshayahu, 2020).

Another aspect worth mentioning refers to the fact that, already in primary schools, children's aspirations and views on jobs and labour market are narrow and out-of-sync with the labour market demands. This shows the early origin of the mechanisms leading to skills mismatch in the mature years. A world wide report collected job aspirations from 15 year old students coming from 41 countries: one third of them expressed interest in just 10 different occupations.

Moreover, it is commonly and historically thought that children's ideas about who they could become are unrealistic and likely to change. This has led to little consideration of children's aspirations (Gore et al., 2016) but a growing body of literature is demonstrating that children's views on careers are not as "magical" as once thought and that students' aspirations often remain similar in the teenage years and early adulthood (Auger et al., 2005; Care et al., 2007; Chambers et al., 2018; KidZania, 2017). Of course, career ideas in primary school children are tentative and look imaginative but research shows that they are not as transitory as

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3   https://www.educationandemployers.org/career-related-primary/#_ftn7

thought. Career aspirations are surprisingly persistent over time, similar at age 17 as among primary school students.

With all these premises, it is then crucial to highlight that **holding biassed assumptions and narrow or stereotyped aspirations and views can lead to a steep cost in economic prosperity, individual career fulfilment and occupational diversity.**

These early assumptions and aspirations do have an influence on:

- The academic effort that students exert in certain lessons (Flouri and Pangouria, 2012; Bandura et al., 2001; Gutman and Akerman. 2008);
- The subjects students choose to study (Kelly, 1989; Archer and Dewitt, 2017);
- The jobs they end up pursuing (Akerlof and Kranton, 2000; Breen and Garcia-Penalosa, 2002).

In this scenario, early interventions acquire a particular meaning: early career-related learning can bring a lasting impact on children's development and on the way children perceive different jobs and the subjects that enable them to access those jobs (Howard et al., 2015).

With the term early career-related learning we refer to early childhood activities in primary schools designed to "**give children from an early age a wide range of experiences of and exposure to education, transitions and the world of work.** This is part of a lifelong learning and career development process" (Kashefpakdel et al., 2019) and aims at two main desired outcomes. **These focus on developing knowledge about work and developing skills for work and life. The first one refers to learning and exploring a number of careers, learning pathways and sectors while the second refers to specifically developing non-academic skills such as skills that will benefit the students' future wellbeing and the wellbeing of others. Career management skills, enterprise skills and socio-emotional skills are among those.**

The focus of these activities is on broadening horizons and offering children a wide range of experiences of the world which includes the world of work. In this sense, career-related learning is not about asking pupils what they want to do in their future when they grow up but is about helping them grow awareness of themselves and the world of work, it aims at helping them **"weavining what they know into useful learning for now and later"** (Watts, 2002). Even if, as previously said, childhood is a developmental stage characterised by exploration and aspirations are imaginative, yet a range of attributes and behaviours can still be instilled in those years with the aim of leaving children in the best possible position as they begin transition to their future life (starting with the transition to secondary school).

Early career-related learning is about providing children with an opportunity to consider their futures and offering pedagogical support to help them construct and realise their ambitions without constraints. As Cahill says, "this is not just about jobs, work, and careers, rather it is about life stories" (2017) and about providing children with the freedom to build their biographies in a socially just context.

Which type of activities do we refer to?

Mann, Rehill and Kashefpakdel (2018) tried to categorise career-related learning in groups. They identify three main areas:

- Activities focused on educational outcomes such as activities to change pupils' attitudes about the value of education or activities to offer supplementary resources to the class focused on reading, numeracy, etc.;
- Activities to enhance students' understanding of jobs and careers (with a specific focus on challenging stereotypes, on the real-life application of disciplines, etc.);
- Activities to give children the opportunity to learn and practice knowledge and skills demanded by the contemporary labour market (e.g. problem solving, ethical thinking, etc.).

Despite no formal curricula of early career-related learning activities do exist in most European Countries, many schools report

that they organise the above-mentioned career-related learning activities. These are often fragmented and not planned in a structured manner. Table 1 offers an overview of examples of activities as reported by the schools involved in the desk research of the PRIME project and as reported in the literature (mainly from the UK context where there is a renewed attention to the topic).

Table1. Career-related learning activities at school

Early career-related learning activities at school
Aspiration days Workplace visits Career insights Enterprise days Curriculum-linked activities Subject specific activities e.g. languages Numeracy and literacy activities related to careers Speed networking sessions Company visit (face to face or online) Interviews with professionals who are invited to school Days dedicated to business knowledge Activities on specific topics related to the world of work and professions Activities for the development of active citizenship skills (understanding and use of the first language and mathematical skills) Activities dedicated to future aspirations botanic garden meeting with professionals from the world of work Educational trip Role play game lessons on local opportunities Collaboration paths with entities outside the school parents at school to tell about their professions Lectures and workshop activities on world of work market and opportunities Explore the diverse routes adults have taken to get their current job, academic, starting their own business etc.

While this unstructured nature of early career learning represents an important constraint for the impact of these activities,

teachers and schools are well aware of their importance and often lack the support, materials and training to deliver impactful early career-related learning activities. The PRIME project works toward this direction and the following chapters represent the theoretical and methodological foundations of the set of tools and training materials which the PRIME project offers.

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Chapter 2

A methodological framework on career education at school:
THE CAREER MANAGEMENT SKILLS FRAMEWORK

What do you want to be when you grow up? Sooner or later, every person faces this dilemma. Answers to this question, as presented in detail in Chapter 1, depend on what students experience and witness in their everyday life since the first years of their education. Career development is in fact a continuous process strongly interconnected with life experiences and the environment where the child grows up. How to best support career development and promote children's aspirations?

Here comes career education which strategically aims at equipping children with those tools which will enable them to handle complexity and build their future.

During primary education, the purpose is for students to learn how to read, write, do math and have knowledge about basic cultural notions, but also to start developing the values, skills, attitudes, knowledge and critical understanding to thrive and actively take part in a complex society. To meet these goals, career education in a lifelong perspective plays a pivotal role as it is strongly connected to lifelong learning. In this regard, career education relies on its formative dimension with the aim of developing a powerful link between curricular teaching and transversal skills.

As an educational activity, career education speaks the language

of pedagogy: career education activities consist in fact of educational activities planned clearly having in mind educational objectives and didactic methodologies.

In this regard, when thinking of career education and early career education, the main reference when thinking of educational outcomes refers to the methodological framework of Career Management Skills.

Career Management Skills (CMS) is the term used to describe the skills, attributes, attitudes and knowledge that individuals require in order to manage their career. With many crossroads and infinite directions, careers are nowadays constructed rather than chosen (Neary, Dodd and Hooley, 2016) and individuals need to carefully coordinate their life, work, learning choices and experiences, at all ages and stages throughout their lives (Vaughan, 2011). "The capacity to exercise agency and to influence the development of one's own career is what is often described as career management" (Neary, Dodd and Hooley, 2016) which represents a main challenge for new generations and societies.

In this challenging contemporary scenario, schools, families and society as a whole share the mission of equipping students with the skills which will enable them to handle complexity, to successfully manage their career while making choices towards sustainable development and growth, both at a personal and community level.

These skills are called Career Management Skills. A variety of definitions exist (see Sultana, 2013) and we report here the definition provided by The ELGPN, the European Lifelong Policy Network: "Career management skills (CMS) are competencies which help individuals to identify their existing skills, develop career learning goals and take action to enhance their careers."

The Resolutions of the Council of the European Union passed in 2004 and 2008, highlight the need for strong guidance services throughout the life course to equip citizens with the skills to manage their learning, their careers and their transitions between and within education, training and work. The Resolutions mention CMS as one of the four priorities of guidance services in

Europe.

To support the implementation of CMS there have been a number of frameworks that have been developed in different countries (Hooley et al., 2013). An early example of a career management framework was developed by Law and Watts (1977) in the 1970s as a framework for career education in schools. This is called the DOTS model and focuses on 4 main areas:

1. Decision learning;
2. Opportunity awareness;
3. Transition learning;
4. Self awareness

Despite the differences between countries and frameworks, the innovative aspect of the use of a CMS framework is that there is an important paradigm shift in lifelong guidance which abandons a "test and tell" or matching paradigm. This approach moves away from a limited view of career guidance as activities focused on choice making in a circumscribed moment of transition in favour of a learning and development paradigm (Jarvis, 2003) which represents the foundation of the PRIME project. In this view, guidance activities are considered learning opportunities, a process of learning and development which goes on throughout life (Super et al., 1996).

Thus, CMS frameworks provide an instrument which connects career theory, practice and policy (Hooley et al., 2013) as they define a focal point for interventions in a complex and multicultural society: instead of focusing on the end-process of a choice (e.g. choosing a school or abandoning school), the framework supports activities which aim at equipping students with those "capabilities" (Sen, 2008), with those tools that will enable them to gather, analyse, synthesise and organise self, cultural, educational and occupational information to make and implement decisions and transitions.

The concept of CMS helps us move from thinking of guidance as a spotlight that advises students while focusing on a smaller and

smaller range of future options, to a view where career learning has the role of shedding light on a greater range of opportunities. It aims at widening horizons, increasing aspiration, and fighting stereotypes. Career learning is then defined in this handbook as a powerful tool to help students "to understand who they could become and to help them to develop a healthy sense of self that will enable them to reach their full potential" and to feel part of their community (Kashefpakdel et al., 2018). This entails the learning component we mentioned earlier, cannot be done in once-in-a-lifetime intervention prior to school transitions and requires thoughtful educational activities.

A number of career management frameworks have been developed in different countries (Hooley et al., 2013). They refer to different skills areas. Figure 1. presents the areas proposed within a Policy Reform European project which worked to develop and validate a framework which could be useful in different countries and with different target groups.

The framework proposed below presents a set of career management skills grouped into 6 career learning areas (defined after an intensive comparative analysisq of existing frameworks). Among the 6 areas, the PRIME project specifically focuses on two areas which will be described below. The clear reference to these areas supported the development of all tools and resources of the project.
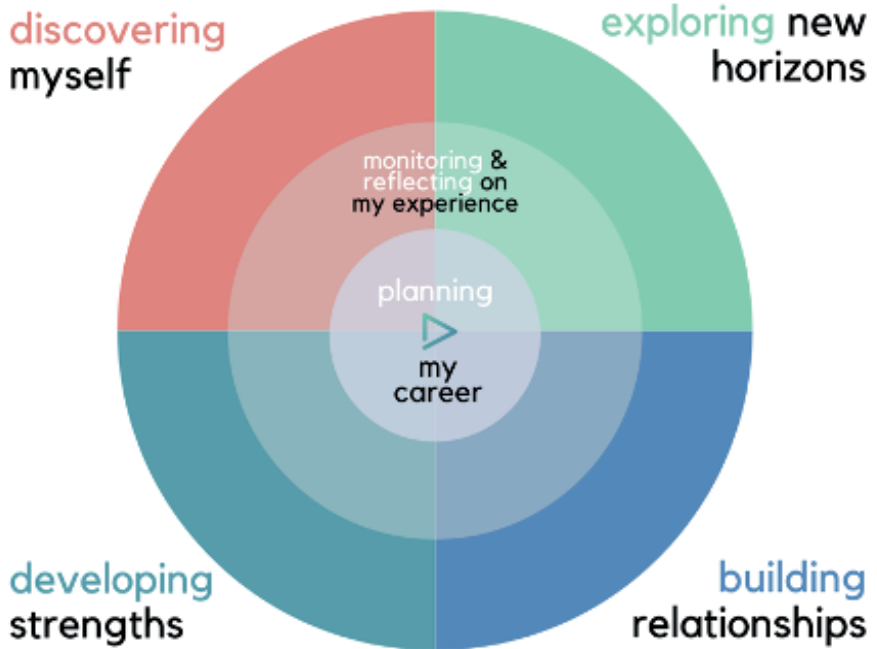
Figure 1. the CMS areas proposed by the CAREERS AROUND ME project. https://www.careersproject.eu/

Focus n. 1. Helping students exploring new horizons

Gathering, selecting, and analyzing information about post-school opportunities is fundamental in making choices related to one's educational and professional career in an informed way. Over the past few decades, the sources from which students can draw information about educational and vocational opportunities have exponentially increased. Students construct their ideas about educational paths and their representations about careers by retrieving information from a variety of sources: e.g. stories and experiences from family and friends, experts they meet during open days or job fairs, teachers, the media, and social networks. Sometimes the messages they receive from these many sources run counter to what they are taught at school. For those reasons it is crucial to support students in the exploration of these opportunities and to help them find relatable information which are known to play a role in shaping aspirations and in the decision making process later on.

This macroarea of CMS is labelled as "EXPLORING NEW HORIZONS". This area is about exploring career opportunities and understanding the complexity of the socio-economic scenario including reflecting on the ethical and sustainable impact of career choices.

The skills set as learning outcomes are:

- Understanding careers and the labour market. Giving students the chance to explore knowledge about different career opportunities in the labour market means letting them explore different areas of professional profiles and go beyond stereotypes. Promoting this skill also means to make students able to reflect on future careers and understand how the labour market and careers change over time. Understanding careers also means to let students be receptive to how they can describe careers, also in uncommon ways.

- Understanding complexity. This means to be aware of the

multivariate factors that can influence individuals' careers. Being aware that the world of work is changing, that the future is not already written are fundamental elements of this learning objective. They translate into activities aimed at supporting students exploring how careers are changing and how they can shape the future direction of the world with their career.

- Ethical and sustainable thinking. This last area refers to the importance of letting students understand that personal choices have an impact within the community and the environment. This area has to do with the idea that any professional is a change maker who, via his work, is contributing to shaping the world. In this regard, it is particularly important to shed light on how careers can contribute to sustainable development goals.

Focus n. 2. Monitoring and reflecting on experiences

The other main area of skills which has guided the PRIME project refers to the area called "Monitoring and reflecting on your own experience". Since the future of work is constantly changing, it is necessary for students to be able to activate themselves to monitor and reflect on past experiences in order to design their future. Learning to attribute meaning to past experiences, both positive and negative, is important for planning, designing and redesigning one's life, study and work goals. This area focuses on the individual's active engagement in monitoring and reflecting on the career path, on results of learning and achievements. While for older students this encompasses a variety of subareas, with primary school children this opens up the possibility to help them reflect on their learning achievements and help them link these achievements to future perspectives. In particular, this area relates to the ability to analyse the skills required to act a certain role or to accomplish a certain task at school. This awareness is then widened by another layer of reflections where students are supported to link the same skills they act to careers and possible futures. Activities built with this aim powerfully work to help them feel empowered to access possible futures. Moreover, these activities design a protected space to boost self-efficacy and self-awareness while building bridges between schools and the outside world.

When working to make learning visible, it is useful to refer to explicit competence frameworks. In the PRIME project and products, we often refer to the Key competences for lifelong learning. With the Recommendation of 22 May 2018, the European Council was able to summarise in a single document the vast literature produced in the field of "key competences for lifelong learning", drawing up a reference framework that outlines particular 8 key competences, all of equal importance for the personal development of citizens. Among them, the following transversal competences are identified, which translate into a series of specific

competence elements. These are summarised in a single matrix containing 4 areas of competences:
- personal, social and learning to learn competence;
- citizenship competence;
- entrepreneurial competence;
- competence in cultural awareness and expression.

These competences enable all citizens to distinguish himself/ herself from others, to influence his own way of acting and to activate strategies to face the challenges of evolved organisational models in increasingly interconnected and digitalised contexts (European Council Recommendation, 2018). They are widely in use for didactic design.

The resources and tools developed by the PRIME project work to help students become aware of these skills and to link their skills to the world of work while building bridges between schools and the outside contexts.

The section below offers a description of the four areas with the definition of a list of abilities particularly phrased for primary students.

Personal, social and learning to learn competence consists of the ability to reflect on oneself, manage time and information effectively, work with others constructively, remain resilient and manage one's own learning and career. It includes the ability to cope with uncertainty and complexity, to learn to learn, to foster one's physical and emotional well-being, to maintain physical and mental health, and to be able to lead a health-conscious and future-oriented life, to empathise and to manage conflict in a supportive and inclusive context.

Abilities:
- Ability to reflect on oneself and identify one's aptitudes
- Ability to manage time and information effectively
- Ability to learn and work both collaboratively and autonomously

- Ability to work constructively with others
- Ability to communicate constructively in different environments
- Ability to create trust and empathy
- Ability to express and understand different points of view
- Negotiation skills
- Ability to concentrate, think critically and make decisions
- Ability to manage one's own learning and career
- Ability to handle uncertainty, complexity and stress
- Ability to remain resilient
- Ability to promote one's physical and emotional well-being

Citizenship competence refers to the ability to act as responsible citizens and participate fully in civic and social life, based on an understanding of social, economic, legal and political structures and concepts as well as global developments and sustainability.
Abilities:
- Ability to engage effectively with others for a common interest or Public
- Critical thinking and integrated problem-solving skills

Entrepreneurial competence refers to the ability to act on ideas and opportunities and to transform them into values for others. It is based on creativity, critical thinking and problem-solving, initiative and perseverance, and the ability to work collaboratively to plan and manage projects that have cultural, social or financial value.
Abilities:
- Creativity and imagination
- Strategic thinking and problem-solving skills
- Ability to transform ideas into action
- Capacity for critical and constructive reflection
- Ability to take the initiative
- Ability to work both collaboratively in a team and autono-

mously
- Ability to maintain the pace of activity
- Ability to communicate and negotiate effectively with others
- Ability to handle uncertainty, ambiguity and risk
- Ability to possess initiative and self-awareness
- Ability to be proactive and forward-looking
- Capacity for courage and perseverance in achieving goals
- Ability to motivate others and value their ideas, to feel empathy Ability to accept responsibility

Competence in cultural awareness and expression involves understanding and respecting how ideas and meanings are creatively expressed and communicated in different cultures and through a range of arts and other cultural forms. It involves a commitment to understand, develop and express one's ideas and sense of one's function or role in society in a range of ways and contexts.
Abilities:
- Ability to express experiences and emotions with empathy
- Ability to recognise and realise opportunities for personal, social or commercial enhancement through the arts and other cultural forms
- Ability to engage in creative processes both individually and collectively
- Curiosity about the world, openness to imagine new possibilities

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Chapter 3

Career stereotypes in Europe

3.1 Definitions & concepts

Stereotypes are defined as "**a standardized mental picture that is held in common by members of a group and that represents an oversimplified opinion, prejudiced attitude, or uncritical judgment**" (Merriam-Webster dictionary), as "**a social attitude that associates members of some social group more strongly than others with certain traits**'' (Pudifoot, 2021) or as "**a rigid and discriminatory view of a person, in terms of their social category membership (such as ethnicity, age or gender), undermining their capabilities and ignoring the diversity of the group**" (Hinton, 2020). Stereotypes are a part of our usual social and psychological life and sometimes we do not even realise that we are using them. By definition, stereotypes are **inflexible ways of thinking**: "stereotypes are rigid, and they stamp all to whom they apply to with the same characteristics" (Schneider, 2004).

Pudifoot (2021) noticed that "stereotyping can lead to errors of judgement and false perceptions of individuals and groups, but it does not always have a negative qeffect" and that "stereotypes are not always inaccurate and stereotyping does not always have a distorting effect on judgement". She concludes that the rigidity of the stereotypes "**can be a source of inaccuracy as long as stereotypes are not responsive to evidence suggesting that they are inaccurate**".

From a different perspective, Macrae, Stangor & Hewstone (1996) noticed that "**when stereotypes are consensually shared within a society, their consequences become much more pernicious,** because they affect entire groups of people in a common way", but also suggest a primary way of talking them: "stereotypes are learned, and potentially changed, primarily through the information that individuals acquire through direct contact with members of other social groups", therefore underlying the role of information and direct interaction in correcting the negative stereotypes. This idea is shared by Houghton, Furumura, Lebedko & Li (2013), who mentions that "false stereotypes can be changed through the exchange of accurate information about each other's characteristics, and the cognitive and affective components of attitude can be independent".

When thinking on careers and jobs, occupational stereotypes refer to "a preconceived attitude about a particular occupation, about people who are employed in that occupation or about one's suitability for that occupation" (Lipton, O'Connor, Terry & Bellamy, 1991). Evidence suggests that there are "cross-culturally cutting dimensions of social judgement" (Strinic, Carlsson and Agerstrom, 2022). This definition, based on the more general definition of stereotypes as oversimplified and often untrue, but fixed attitudes about a specific thing, shows that the **occupational stereotypes can refer to the occupation itself** (for instance, prejudice related to some aspects of a job description that makes that job more adequate for some categories of people) **or to some groups of people** (that supposedly have some characteristics that make them more adequate for some occupations).

Therefore, the occupational stereotypes can be seen as "people's overgeneralized, only partially true, often misleading, and almost always oversimplified ideas and perceptions" about jobs and people doing those jobs (http://career.iresearchnet.com/career-development/occupational-stereotypes).

Unarguably, occupational stereotypes have an important influence on selection, hiring and performance evaluation (Strinic,

Carlsson and Agerstrom, 2022), but also on **career choice and planning, as "individuals may or may not wish to explore certain occupations**" (Ulrich, Hechlik and Roeber, 1966) depending on the stereotypes they have regarding that occupation.

Like in the case of all stereotypes, there might be some true aspects that encourage an unrealistic generalisation; for instance, there are countless studies showing that men are paid more than women for similar jobs (Blau and Kahn, 2000) and this strongly influences gender differences in pay expectations (Kaman, Hartel, 1994), and this actual fact encourages people to create gender stereotypes about specific jobs and about specific people that can do those jobs.

Many times, specific persons, especially young people who have limited and irrelevant direct experience with the world of work, can be influenced by occupational stereotypes, mainly through stereotyped thinking, characterised often by oversimplification, prejudice, projection of individuals' own inadequacies onto others. Moreover, authority figures might have an important role in transmitting stereotypes and generalising them.

This is even more important for pupils, as they base their career expectations and plans only on the general information they can get from mass media or authority figures such as parents and educators, and the risk of them assuming occupational stereotypes is therefore very high. This strongly emphasises on the important role of teachers and early career education, as it is well known that information is the most effective way of tackling stereotypes. Nevertheless, it is important to mention that early career education needs to be done with responsibility and by specialists, as tackling stereotypes is not easy and some activities dedicated to this purpose can even encourage occupational stereotypes instead of breaking them.

Different stereotypes about work and career

Gender stereotypes

Gender stereotypes "reflect traditional female and male role models, which have been hardened over years and are very resistant to change" (WITEC, 2006) and are probably the most common occupational stereotypes, this making them also the hardest to tackle. Everyone knows that some professions are associated more often with men or women, and also that men are more often associated with some professions and women with other professions, and, unfortunately, this bias affects our way of perceiving the world of work.

Researchers made a distinction between "descriptive gender stereotypes (designating what women and men are like) and prescriptive gender stereotypes (designating what women and men should be like)" (Heilman, 2012), but concluded that both determine biassed judgements and decisions, especially for women. Gender stereotypes regarding the career can be based on some true facts, but the over-generalisation and over-simplification of those facts can lead to rigid ways of perceiving the world of work. For instance, it is well known that the average salary of men is bigger in many countries than the average salaries of women (for instance, in the E.U. the difference was 13% in 2020, according to Eurostat), but this fact is too easily transformed by some people into a gender stereotype by claiming that all men are paid more than all women. In the same way, the clear fact that most of the people doing a specific job are men (e.g. military, police etc.) or women (e.g. pre-primary and primary education, nursing, etc.) is easily overgeneralised by some people in gender stereotypes claiming that certain jobs and professions are only for men and other only for women. For many people lacking information and critical thinking, the difference from "average" to "all" is not so relevant and therefore is easier to over-simplify things by as-

suming a stereotype that for them has valid arguments, therefore making it harder to tackle.

Unfortunately, since stereotypes are harder to tackle when they are shared by many people (Macrae, Stangor & Hewstone, 1996), gender stereotypes can be the hardest to change as they are over-spread and, in many societies and cultures, the perception of different roles of men and women in the world of work is shared by a large part of the population.

At the same time, gender stereotypes related to the world of work have an important role in choosing a career and many negative influences on young people trying to identify their future professional path; it is easy to understand that boys will be reluctant to choose a career that is socially perceived as more appropriate for women and vice versa. Research showed that **"gender roles are formed in early childhood and continue to influence behaviour through adolescence and adulthood, including the choice of academic majors and careers"** (Olsson and Martiny, 2018). Therefore, the role of career education becomes very important, as it will provide young people building their career the accurate information about the world of work that have the potential of tackling gender stereotypes.

Another key factor in understanding the role of gender stereotypes in career choice is the difference between explicit and implicit career preferences: Gadasi & Gati (2009) showed that when asked directly to choose a preferred profession (explicit career preference), most of men selected professions that are stereotypically considered "masculine" and most women selected professions considered "feminine"; but, when asked to establish their preferences in career related aspects (implicit career preferences), the gender bias was significantly lower. Therefore, this data suggests that gender stereotypes about careers are publicly admitted and therefore are harder to tackle and will be defended by the ones who have them. Also, the same research showed that "the difference between the directly reported and the indirectly derived lists was larger for women than for men, suggesting that the impact of stereotypes is more pronounced

in women's than in men's directly reported career preferences" (Gadasi and Gati, 2009).

It is very important when planning career education activities to have in mind that directly tackling stereotypes only reinforces them, so mentioning the stereotypes and simply saying that they are not right (or even providing information that they are not right) will have a limited result, if any. Therefore, it could be more effective to present to the children information tackling the stereotypes without even mentioning the stereotype itself, for instance by having interviews and presentations from people (men and women) that work in a field that is stereotypically associated with the other gender, by presenting specific information that will make children think for themselves and questioning the gender stereotypes in careers. Research data confirms that "**long-term exposure to counter-stereotypical role models (e.g., mothers in non-traditional work, female politicians, and female faculty) in role aspirants' natural environment positively correlated with their aspiration toward, and engagement with, counter-stereotypical roles**" (Olsson and Martiny, 2018).

But, of course, as for any other stereotype about career, the most powerful tool that educators have is the development of children's **critical thinking**, therefore empowering them to discriminate between information and stereotypes and to choose their career path based on reliable information and realistic evaluation of their opportunities.

Age/generational stereotypes

Age stereotypes mostly refer to professional characteristics that are attributed to entire groups of people based only on their age, being defined as "judgements about individual employees based upon their age rather than on their actual knowledge, skills or abilities" (Hedge and Borman, 2012).

Most present stereotypes about older workers are related to perceiving them as "less motivated, generally less willing to partici-

pate in training and career development, more resistant and less willing to change, less trusting, less healthy, and more vulnerable to work-family imbalance" (Vickerstaff and Van der Horst, 2021). The same authors consider that "ageism is commonplace and embedded at all levels: in public policy narratives when talking about older workers, in popular narratives about baby boomers stealing prosperity from younger generations; in organisational regimes which favour the ideal fit and healthy worker (aka not "the old") and in workplace banter about older workers being put out to pasture".

One very important aspect related to age stereotypes on careers is that there are also positive stereotypes about older workers, most known ones being that "they are more reliable and committed, and possess better social skills than younger workers" (Mulders, 2019).

Of course, there are also age stereotypes that refer to characteristics attributed to young workers, and Van Dalen, Henkens and Schippers (2010) synthesised them by mentioning that "younger workers are typically perceived as positive concerning the abilities and characteristics in which older workers are seen as negative". In a more descriptive analysis of those stereotypes, Kleissner & Jahn (2020) mentioned that younger workers are usually perceived as having better technical skills, flexibility, physical strength, productivity, interest in trainings, creativity, adaptability and learning capability, but also mentioned that "negative stereotypes toward younger workers include characteristics such as inexperienced, unmotivated, unreliable, or arrogant".

Age stereotypes are usually related to employers' preferences when hiring new staff (Mulders, 2019) but, of course, they have a strong impact on choosing the career path, as it is easy to understand that age stereotypes will make a young person focus more on potential professions that are perceived to be more appropriate for younger workers.

Career educators that work on tackling age stereotypes need to take into consideration one important aspect that will make their activity even more difficult: many times, stereotypes are

used as logical arguments for other stereotypes. For instance, many people might claim that jobs that require repetitive and monotonous actions are perceived as being less adequate for the younger workers, and the usual argument for that is that millennials are more focused on rapid results and have limited attention span and therefore they could not perform well in repetitive tasks. Apparently, there is an argument there, but in reality one age stereotype (jobs more appropriate for a specific age group) is justified through another age stereotype (about the millennials); still, the apparent logic of the argument makes tackling age stereotypes very difficult.

Another key aspect that needs to be taken into consideration when tackling age stereotypes in career education is that research showed that age stereotypes are significantly dependent on the age of the persons making the evaluation (Kleissner and Jahn, 2020). Considering the fact that career educators work with young people and children, they should expect that their beneficiaries will agree more with the positive stereotypes regarding young workers and the negative stereotypes regarding older workers, therefore career education activities should be planned to indirectly tackle both those aspects.

Financial stereotypes

It is perfectly understandable that young people facing career choices take into consideration the payment that they assume they will get by doing that job; the major issue here is related to stereotypes about payment in different professions: some professions are perceived as "well paid" and others as "underpaid". These stereotypes are usually over-generalisations of some very well known examples, and mass media plays a key role into promoting this bias in perception (for instance, due to mediatisation of some persons that are very reach from the IT area, it is understandable that many people generalise and consider that all IT specialists are very well paid).

Starting from these stereotypes, it is understandable that there

is a strong social pressure on young people to choose professions that are perceived as ensuring them a financial comfort "for sure", especially on children with high educational performance, almost irrespective of their interests, abilities, preferences etc.

Tackling these stereotypes in career education through counter-examples might raise some ethical issues, as it might not be so adequate to present to the children examples of IT specialists that have low salaries just to prove that not all IT workers are very rich. Still, there is the option of presenting to the children examples of people doing different jobs and earning good salaries just to prove to them that any job can be rewarding as long as the performance of the person doing that job is high. Again, critical thinking is essential to be developed so that kids can understand for themselves that "average salary" for some profession does not mean that all people doing that profession earn that, and the payment is usually related to the performance, so, for any particular profession, there are people in that profession that are highly paid and people in that profession that earn less.

Status stereotypes

The need for a social status is a main source of motivation and one of the highest stages in Maslow's hierarchy of needs, therefore one can easily understand why children and teenagers would be more interested in a career that is perceived as giving them a higher status in the society. Many times, stereotypes about the status provided by a job are related to the stereotypes regarding the financial reward from a profession, but there are many exceptions from this rule. For instance, the social perception is that teachers are generally underpaid (Talis in 2018 showed that most teachers tend to be dissatisfied with their salaries), but still the status as a role-model is one of the main reasons people want to become teachers (Bergmark, Lundström, Manderstedt & Palo, 2018) – with both aspects having major differences from country to country.

Of course, the social perception of having high status professions

determines a high social pressure for young people to choose those professions, especially in the case of students with high grades and performance. Again, in this case, two stereotypes act together: on the one hand, the status stereotypes, on the other hand the stereotype about all pupils with high academic performance being able to perform in any profession they want.

Another social pressure that derives from the status stereotype is related to continuing studies into higher education, and this is very important considering that having a university degree became more and more expensive in the past years. Also in this case, mass media plays a key role in increasing the pressure for higher education and for high status professions.

Like in many other cases, tackling these stereotypes in a direct manner and trying to prove them wrong will only reinforce the stereotypes, as the social and the individual needs for status are very powerful motivators for the individuals. **The more effective way might be to present to children success stories about professionals doing jobs that are not associated traditionally with a high status and do not require higher educations (such as car mechanics, electricians etc.) and to allow them time to develop their critical thinking in order to understand that they can build their status in other more efficient ways.**

Emigration stereotypes

Emigration stereotypes are more present in the poorer countries, as those are the countries that usually are the source of migration; for many children in those countries, career is often associated with migration, perceived as the only solution that allows a better harnessing of one's skills and knowledge. Migration can be seen as a "career path", with many children not really reflecting on what professions would fit their knowledge and interests but planning to migrate and take whatever job they will find in the host country. Obviously, this stereotype has different intensity in different countries, being more intense in countries that have a higher migration rate, as this stereotype is usually based

on punctual "success stories" at local or personal level (in the families, among friends, etc.) and is encouraged by peer pressure.

This way of perceiving the world of work can have important negative consequences on children's career planning, as some teenagers do not plan a career and do not prepare themselves for a specific career (including education and acquiring knowledge and skills for that career), but only plan their migration.

Career education can contribute to this topic by making children aware of the positive and negative aspects related to migration; for instance, many migrants over-evaluate their salary in the host country and under-evaluate their future spendings, and that makes their integration in the host country more difficult, in many cases so difficult that the only solution is the return to their home country. Therefore, children should be taught to get informed and to choose a career abroad wittingly. Another possible strategy would be to help students meet local role models doing satisfying and interesting jobs in their context of reference.

Ethnic stereotypes

As opposed to emigration stereotypes, ethnic stereotypes are more present in the countries that are usually a destination for migrants, countries with many ethnic minorities.

Related to careers, ethnic stereotypes are sometimes strong convictions related to the perfect match between an ethnicity and some professions, usually associated with the stereotypes about the ethnicity itself. This stereotype makes people believe that a person from a specific ethnicity is more or less qualified for a profession or for a job, with major impact on the presence of discrimination in hiring persons from a minority ethnic group (for instance, McGinnity & Lunn in 2011 showed that, in Ireland, "candidates with Irish names are over twice as likely to be called to interview as are candidates with an African, Asian or German name"). The most well-known ethnic stereotype is the "Polish plumber", a stereotype of cheap labour from Eastern Europe that includes some indirect reference to the fact that immigrants can only do

low-qualified jobs.

Usually, the ethnic stereotypes have a limited influence on what jobs teenagers want, but have a very strong impact on what jobs become less desirable, on what careers teenagers don't want to choose. This stereotype is more or less associated with the status stereotype: if a profession is associated with a migrant or minority group, it provides a lower status and becomes less desirable, especially for the young people from the majority group.

Stereotypes about specific jobs & people

Apart from the above-mentioned more general stereotypes about careers and professions, there are sometimes more particular stereotypes that target specific jobs and specific people. Usually, these stereotypes are explained by lack of information and are based on an overgeneralization of a very particular situation. For instance, there are many stereotypes about movie stars, and still most of the people believing in those stereotypes never met a movie star.

But maybe the most inciting specific stereotypes are the ones related to the new professions that appeared due to the important changes in the world of work in the past years; for instance, there are already stereotypes about "content creators", "bloggers" etc., even if these are recently new professions and their definition is still in progress. In this case, lack of information meets people's need for certainty, so stereotypes precede actual information.

This kind of stereotypes can impact career choices and career planning for specific children and youngsters, especially for those who are considering the professions that are targeted by the stereotype; it doesn't impact large groups of teenagers (like the gender stereotypes for instance), but still can influence teenagers into choosing of not choosing a specific profession. The best way to tackle these stereotypes is, probably, to organise interviews with professionals doing that specific job, so as to facilitate children's access to information.

3.2 Tackling career stereotypes through career education

Career education activities as defined in cannot avoid the topic of career stereotypes, and professionals working in career education must assume their role in tackling career stereotypes.

On the one hand, there are the irrational stereotypes, the beliefs that children might have without being aware of them and without considering those thoughts to be stereotypical. For instance, children are usually raised with love for their country and positive attitudes towards their conationals; irrespective of calling this patriotism or nationalism, it might determine the future adults to have very strong positive stereotypes about their ethnicity and about all persons from their ethnic group, that might affect their social integration, their career plans and might interfere with their job, especially if they work with people from other ethnic groups. The most effective way to tackle these unconscious stereotypes is to make students think, usually by addressing direct questions. For instance, whenever the child makes over-generalised statements ("us, from our ethnic group, we are all…"), a direct question such as "do you know all the people from your ethnic group?" or "you really don't know any member from your ethnic group that is not like that?", can make the child think and re-analyses its beliefs. But, if the child tries to find arguments for his/her original statement, then the stereotype is not unconscious anymore, and any other challenge to these beliefs will only reinforce the stereotype.

On the other hand, there are stereotypes that the person is aware of, and tackling those stereotypes in a direct manner will only reinforce them, as the person trusts his/her judgement and will not be eager to accept he/she was wrong. In this case, stereotypes can only be tackled in indirect ways, without even mentioning the stereotype, through activities that seem to have no link with the stereotype itself.

The first task of career educators, especially when targeting one

specific career stereotype, is to provide information to the children, reliable information from reliable sources. It seems to be maybe even more important to teach children how to identify reliable sources in order to inform themselves, in line with a constructivist approach. Career education activities can focus on strong examples of situations and persons that contradict the stereotype, on interviews with professionals, on games that allow children to find information themselves, any activities that facilitate learning of relevant information about the topic of the stereotype, but without even mentioning it to the children.

As previously mentioned, to tackle the general way of stereotypical thinking, the most powerful tool that career education has is the development of children's critical thinking; even if this is a more general goal of education, career educators need to also focus on this goal, as children need to develop their habit to actually process the information they get in contact and to analyse it in order to establish the facts.

Another key skill in tackling career stereotypes is **establishing realistic objectives**, especially in terms of time needed to reach those goals. Professionals working in career education need to fully understand that stereotypes are formed over the years, and any activity that can aim to change a stereotypical way of thinking will need time to be effective.

External resources

http://career.iresearchnet.com/career-development/occupational-stereotypes
https://www.merriam-webster.com/
https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/edn-20220307-2#:~:text=This%20indicator%20is%20calculated%20for,from%2016.4%25%20to%2013.0%25.

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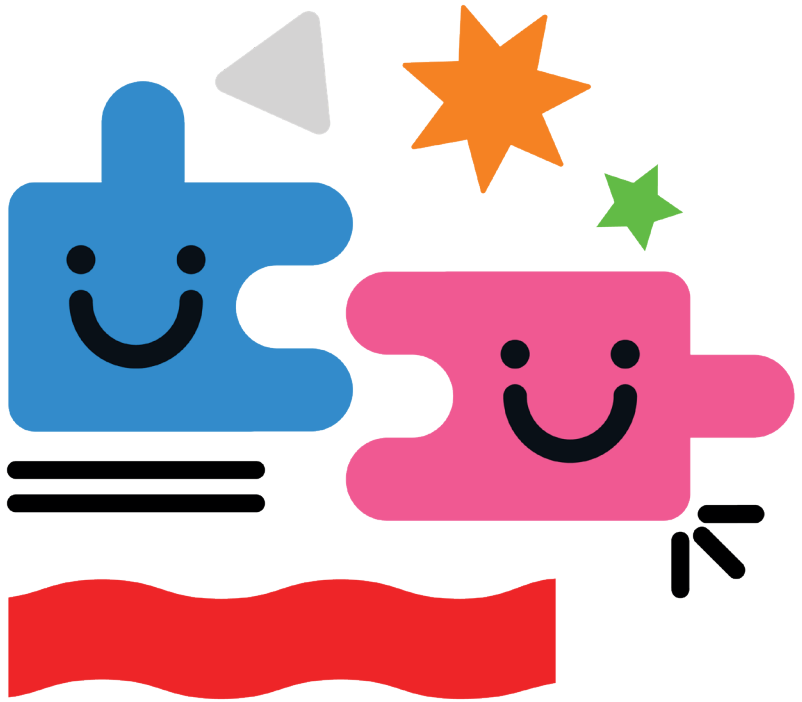
Chapter 4

Improving Career Learning at school: what works?

Career Learning at school should take a wide approach and a whole school strategy. A wide approach should promote a large variety of activities. Research has shown that schools with a robust guidance program had students who were more likely to have better academic outcomes (higher grades), report that they felt their education was preparing them for the future, and that their school had a positive learning environment (Lapan, Gysbers & Sun, 1997). How can we improve Career Learning and improve outcomes, attitudes, skills and motivation. In order to design, implement or improve career learning at school it is imperative to look at what works based upon evidence-based research. The literature available on career learning examines on the one hand, what types of career learning are most effective with students and on the other hand, various studies also examine the impact on students of career learning and career guidance activities. The impacts analysed include educational outcomes, attitudes, and skills, and looking to the future for older adults their professional pathways and employment outcomes.

What are the career learning activities at school that work?

The research shows that certain types of activities work best at the Primary school level because they have shown the most impact upon students. There four key elements within Career Learning activities that have been shown to work best with

school-age children:
· Exploration
· Connection
· Experience
· Reflection

Exploration

Exploration is a key element within career learning. The aim of exploration is to broaden the information students have about careers and the world of work. This exploration is about a widening of information and perspectives for future training and professional pathways. Research shows that from an early age, a child's identity related to careers begins to develop and therefore, in addition to promoting exploration, the earlier this exploration begins, the better.

According to, "How youth explore, experience and think about their future: A new look at effective career guidance" by the OECD exploration is key so that students can visualize and plan for their educational and professional futures – imagining pathways and possible futures. When we talk about exploration at the primary school level these activities could include learning about professional sectors, professions related to a theme or project or learning about different work-life roles.

Connection

Connection refers to making links and effective collaboration between the school and the world of work. Connection activities enable students to gain valuable insights into the world of work. This includes activities such as activities that involve local business, professional associations, and social entities. Schools are at the centre of a community and the Career Learning activities that work best are those that actively involve external actors – companies, social sector entities, professional associations, individual professionals, etc. Various studies show the effectiveness

in connecting learning to the real world. This connection can be done many ways but often involves volunteers or experts within classroom activities.

Connecting and contextualizing classroom learning can impact students by having them challenge incorrect assumptions about working life and professions. This contextualization is most successfully done through authentic interactions with employers and allows students to see the clear link between subjects in school and the wider world (Kashefpakdel, Rehill, Hughes, 2018)). Studies also show that in making connections between career-learning at school and the world of work the design of these activities and the selection of these role models and experts should work to challenge gender and socio-cultural stereotypes relation to education, training, and professional pathways. In the 2018 study of career aspirations of primary students, in addition to highlighting the early onset of gender stereotypes related to career aspirations, the study also highlighted that students learned about their aspired professions primarily from family members or through a media connection (celebrities, TV, film, etc.). The least likely source of knowledge about the professions were a local community member or from a volunteer professional coming into their school (Chambers, Kashefpakdel, Rehill, & Percy, C. 2018).

Experience

Experience or experiential activities are seen as those that offer first-hand experience of the world of work to students. Career learning activities of experience at the primary level are those such as visits to businesses and industries. Exposure and experience to the work of work is seen in the literature as an effective career-learning activity. Experience activities provide students with the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge.

Reflection

Reflection is seen as a key aspect of all career learning activities.

Reflection is impactful within career learning because it creates and promotes a time and space to think about the future and like a wheel – as a process to then continue to expand horizons and to begin again with exploration. Thinking about the future allows the student to integrate within themselves what they have explored and experienced in other career-learning activities. Analysis of longitudinal data has shown that when students have had career learning activities that allow space and time for exploration, promote first-hand experience and space for reflection, they often have been employment outcomes as young adults (OECD, 2021).

Impact on students of Career Learning at school

So far, we have discussed the types of activities, methodologies and key elements of career learning that have been shown in evidence-based research studies to be most effective – to work best with students. However, what impact does career learning have on students? What is the evidence-based around the impact of guidance, counselling, and career-learning of students? In 2911 Whiston, Tai, Rahardja and Eder brings together 118 impact assessments of counselling and guidance curriculum, induvial planning and responsive service programs. It analyses the impact of the impact of different types of services and programmes have on different levels of education (Whiston, Taim Tahardja & Eder, 2011). In this educational level analysis of impact the results show that guidance curriculum has the highest effect in upper Primary school and lower Secondary (10-15 years of age). The impact of career learning on students as seen in various studies and meta-analysis can be summarized into four main categories:

- Educational outcomes
- Attitudes and motivation
- Educational and professional empowerment
- Skills and motivation

Improvement of educational outcomes

Educational outcomes refer to the academic benefits of career learning. Studies have shown that career learning activities can have a positive effect on students' academic performance, such as improvement in academic grades and test scores (Education and Employers, 2017). In a literature review by Fundació Bofill (2018), it was shown that overall guidance and counselling programmes improve students' educational performance. The literature review observed improvement in average grades in an academic year as well as in results in certain specific standardized tests. However, the improvements in these indicators were not seen in all studies. It should be highlighted that the literature review did seem very relevant impacts in the development and improvement of educational skills such as writing or problem solving (Escapa & Julia, 2018).

At the primary level, in a 2017 survey by the Education and Employers Charity found that 90% if primary school teachers thought that engaging children with the world of work through connections with employers has a positive impact on their academic outcome (Education and Employers, 2017).

Attitudes and motivation

Attitudes and motivation refer to the impact of career learning on students' self-confidence and motivation. Studies have shown that students who engage in career learning activities have a more positive attitude towards learning and are motivated to achieve their goals (Escapa & Julia, 2018). In the 2017 survey by Education and Employers, over 80% of the primary school teachers who responded agreed that student achievement can improve as the result of volunteers from the world of work supporting students to believe in their own skills and abilities. Teachers also observe an increase in educational and career motivation after they have had done career-learning activities with role models from the world of work ad well as understanding of the

world outside the classroom (Education and Employers, 2017).

Empowerment and skills

Educational and professional empowerment refer to the impact of career learning on students' knowledge and understanding of their future career options. Studies have shown that students who engage in career learning activities are more likely to explore and discuss their career aspirations and understand their future options (Chambers et al., 2018). The literature review shows significant impacts on the student's self-confidence, especially when making decisions (Escapa & Julia, 2018). Decision-making is a key career management skill and therefore this is evidence of the essential importance of career learning and the development of career management skills.

Similarly in a 2009 review of the outcomes of school counselling is found that the effect of activities and interventions on students resulted in areas of discipline, problem solving, and increasing career knowledge (Whiston & Quinby, 2009).

In the "How youth explore, experience and think about their future", exploration as an essential part of career learning promotes a student's personal agency and therefore promotes their empowerment and decision-making skills (OECD, 2021). Research also suggests that career-related learning provides students with the opportunity to explore and practice skills that will be required in their professional life as well as in the transition from primary to secondary education (Kashefpakdel, Rehill , & Hughes, 2018).

Studies have shown that students who engage in career learning activities are more likely to develop the skills necessary for success in their chosen field, such as problem-solving, communication and collaboration (Kashefpakdel & Rehill, s.f).

In conclusion

This article has explored the research surrounding what career

learning activities work best at the primary school level. We have looked at the four elements of exploration, connection, experience, and reflection and discussed the evidence-based research into the impact of career learning activities on students. By taking the time to understand these four elements and the evidence-based impact of career learning activities we can ensure that our primary school students are getting the best possible education and career guidance. Overall, it is clear that career learning activities in school can have a positive impact on students' educational outcomes, attitudes and motivation, educational and professional empowerment and skills and motivation. Career learning activities should be encouraged in primary school in order to help students to develop the skills and knowledge necessary for success in their chosen field (Hooley, s.f). Career learning activities that have been shown to work include those that promote the exploration of professions and the world of work as well as activities that connect the world of work directly to the classroom – expanding the school community to actively include local industry, businesses, and the social sector. Career learning activities should also promote experience of the world of work – to observe and experience professions, tasks, and ways of working. And career learning at primary should incorporate reflection within activities, so that students can continue to expand their horizons and grow their aspirations for the future. Career learning activities at the primary school level are key for students to develop their future aspirations and to plan for their educational and professional futures.

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CHAPTER 5

The importance of the community:

GUIDELINES FOR MAPPING STAKEHOLDERS AND BUILDING THE EDUCATING COMMUNITY

Learning as a community process

The theory on situated learning emphasises that learning, thus also career learning, takes place continuously by participation in communities. People learn together and career learning must be understood as a relation between the individual and the social practices she participates in (inspired by Lave & Wenger, 2019).

The theories presented above contribute with different perspectives on and understandings of career learning processes. However, all the theories emphasise that career learning is a social process which takes place in communities and in the society the individual is a part of.

The construction of one's own training and professional path requires coordinated inputs from various actors including: guidance counselors, teachers, public and private employment service operators, entrepreneurs, universities, chambers of commerce, local authorities, trade unions, parents , alumni and non-profit organizations.

In order for this variegated network to be an enriching element and a guarantee of quality, there must be coordination between the different actors, so that the guidance activities are experienced and perceived by the student in a holistic and unitary way, as a coordinated set of reflections connected to each other that can really help the student to orient himself.

Working in communities can potentially contribute to increased

career learning for the students.

In a system in which individuality seems to play the main game, there have in fact been no secondary problems on a social level. More and more issues related to inequalities, poverty and marginalization are denounced. All complex problems that, in order to face them, require the possibility of considering the person at the center of all human reasoning and working with others to jointly create a community system that, without abandoning the classic themes of competition, can recover those solidarity bonds that make us savor the real value of being a community.

When this happens, we usually feel better, we are more satisfied and the relational system becomes more dynamic, more interconnected. It is better understood that it makes little sense to limit ourselves to pursuing one's selfishness when next to us there is someone who suffers and who most of the time savors loneliness.

Reaching out, helping the other is a fundamental educational element for building a more balanced and more responsible society.

All this can be achieved better if we educate children from an early age to mutual respect, to the importance of solidarity and therefore we transmit the importance of assuming one's responsibilities which must not only concern purely personal aspects but must work so that from children knowing how to look at each other, reaching out when the other needs, helping him is a great accelerator of the best educational process to have better citizens over time.

Children growing up in the 21st century will be seeking careers in an environment characterised by change, chance and uncertainty (World Economic Forum, 2018).

Findings from the literature review indicate childhood experiences are foundational in the construction of identity; observations of attitudes towards work within families, cultural stereotypes, and influence of the media may influence children's meaning of work and in turn their occupational identities.

The term 'career-related learning' (CRL) comprises of early child-

hood activities in primary schools designed to give children from an early age a wide range of experiences of and exposure to education, transitions and the world of work. This is part of a lifelong learning and career development process.

Successful career-related learning is not possible without some input from employers, employees and businesses outside of school (QCDA, 2010; CBI, 2014). It makes a very significant difference that the human resource in question is someone bringing real life, authentic experience of the workplace (Stanley et al., 2014).

Location matters, for example, more rural or isolated schools noted that finding employers and volunteers from the local community was problematic. Technologybased learning activities can also support the child as a unique individual and encourage exploration, experimentation, risk taking, critical thinking, decision making, and problem solving (Crause et al, 2017). There is a need to balance employer and volunteer engagement alongside demand for teacher training and/or continuous professional development (CPD) opportunities. Career guidance professionals have an important role to play and effective inter-professional working is essential.

From the perspective of lifelong guidance, networking and structured cooperation between the school and the key players in the area are strategic elements for ensuring quality guidance (ELGPN, 2015, p. 45).

The educational process that contributes to defining a student's career path is the result of formal, informal and non-formal learning (see image). The student also learns in situations not intentionally intended for learning and it is, therefore, essential to create what the 2014 guidelines call an "educational guidance community" that connects the different training contexts by eliminating the barriers between the three dimensions. This community must be "characterized by a strong social respon-

sibility of all the actors involved in order to promote the social and economic development of the territory, the employability of young people and social inclusion. This implies sharing responsibilities with the other services and actors present in the area" (MIUR, 2014, p. 9).

The importance of having strong partnerships on the ground is underlined by all the reports on guidance conducted by the OECD, the European Commission and other international agencies, in more than 55 countries, since 2004. The same figure emerges from a report recently published in the UK, which attempted to identify the characteristics of a good guidance system. The report, funded by the Gatsby Charity Foundation, bases its conclusions on extensive international research, visits to five independent schools in the UK and analysis of six states, which are considered pioneers in the field of guidance and show some high achievement, in terms of academic performance (Canada, Finland, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland and the Netherlands). The report shows that collaboration with representatives of the world of work is one of the key elements to ensure quality.

The benefits of a collaboration-oriented territorial network are so clear that it is difficult to imagine how guidance activities can achieve the same standard of quality without the involvement of all these actors.

Nonetheless, partnerships are often fragile, often dependent on individual goodwill, personal relationships and networks, and the perception of mutual benefit.

On the other hand, territorial networks require a significant investment of both time and money to be built and to be maintained: if these networks do not have a public mandate and if they are not recognized and supported, it is often easy for them to lose strength and fall apart.

From an operational point of view, in career guidance, networking means cooperating within a common project that is defined and tackled together. The ability to promote, support and manage networking is developed by practicing integration (Bresciani, 2006; Galeotti et al., 2021). For those involved in guidance at

school,this requires specific skills, as well as time and resources. These requirements are underlined in the NICE model for the training of guidance practitioners in the area which refers to 'social systems development and interventions'.

What are the fundamental stakeholders of the "Educating Community"?

The two main communities in which the person's formative process starts are certainly the family and the school.

Actually possible partners in the field of guidance are entrepreneurs and workers' representatives such as members of chambers of commerce or business associations. These partners are strategic in that they can (OECD, 2021):

help students learn more about professions through company visits, job shadowing experiences, making presentations, participating in careers fairs;

offer valuable information on the contemporary world of work and on demand through the organization of work experiences, internships and competitions between companies or by contributing to the preparation of the school's information resources;

offer information to support the transition between school and work through, for example, curriculum writing workshops, mock interviews, mentoring activities for entrepreneurship initiatives;

enrich disciplinary teaching to promote students' academic commitment through, for example, the structuring of learning by doing activities or orientation teaching activities in which students experience first-hand how a certain discipline is used in work contexts.

The fundamental role of representatives of the world of work is supported by a vast literature on the subject including a recent manifesto signed by 6 international organizations and by a series of studies which investigated the relationship between guidance activities which involved the involvement of representatives of the of work and student employment outcomes subsequently the world of work which here it is right to decline for the aspects

relating to companies which in themselves represent the community that welcomes the person who realizes for life and that makes it perpetuate the values of merit and responsibility.

It is clear that in this meaning the possibility of having families able to cultivate the educational and training aspects of the individual counts a lot; it is very important that the school is supported and helped by all means to carry out the most important educational and training tasks for the younger generations.

But also the business community must always keep the educational value of working activity high, and must never neglect the implementation aspects that work transfers to each individual and innovation must be an indispensable constant to alleviate suffering as much as possible. of work by replacing them with the highest production values.

If it is true that in order to train it is necessary to have an overall dimension of the various subjects, indeed of the social formations assigned to this important task which is the educational and formative one, it is necessary to consider the collaboration and exchange between these formations appointed to work for an objective that must be central. to be unitary.

And here enters fully how crucial it is to be able to have an open and responsible community, which knows how to connect the various formations: family, school, work so that the best practices aimed at the most significant realization of the person as such are enhanced.

It would be nice to think of a system that knows how to grasp passions, inclinations, inclinations in each one so that everyone can find their highest level of satisfaction in the activity.

This can never be taken for granted but requires constant attention in monitoring the various elements that contribute to making this goal possible.

Some important things to remember when working withEenterprise and with Primary Schools

It is evident that in a community context in which each social formation is asked for a specific assumption of responsibility, on the business side, taking the decision to undertake the educational and training aspects of primary school children poses a problem of languages and also a duty. ethical not to overlap with the educational values of the family and the school which can only have priority on the training and educational level.

The company can do a lot while respecting these limits because not only can it find suitable languages for young people but it can start a path that makes them understand how crucial work is to achieve oneself and also to cultivate one's dreams and aspirations.

A company is able to make people understand how from the idea it is possible to reach concreteness and make it possible to touch that in the realization path it is very important to respect the rules, the balance to reach the final goal which is the realization of something. tangible and salable like the possibility of rendering a useful service for someone.

The company is the community par excellence in charge of combining many organizational elements but in particular it must have the wisdom to bring together more subjects with their own individuality who, as in a harmonious process that takes place in an orchestra, is in charge of bringing to life to each one the beauty of having made their own contribution as a contribution to the common goal.

All this generates the virtuosity of being together, each in their own sphere but having clear that the company is responsible for keeping the efforts of each one in close connection to achieve the common goal.

Making children aware of company realities means dealing with simplification and understandable languages to make them un-

derstand how the company that produces, which lives in a territory is not something extraneous to the training and educational process as for many of these young people it will to represent the place in which the working life path is likely to take place. Letting the very young live the experience of a working community helps them a lot to grasp the essence of collaboration, respect, the importance of knowing how to grasp roles and responsibilities.

Enterprise education is at one level about developing aspirations and creating ambition. At a second level, it is about attitudinal change – developing a 'can do' attitude, being proactive and being adaptable and flexible (Specialist Schools and Academies Trust, 2010).

Enterprise education aims to provide the skills and tools that will help children succeed post-school, whatever they do (Lackéus, 2015; Enabling Enterprise, 2015; Young, 2014).

Some believe, enterprise education refers to formal teaching and learning of specific content or outcomes, while for others it is more informal and openended (Edwards and Muir, 2012; Hytti and O'Gorman, 2004). Young (2014) provides a broad definition, suggesting enterprise education is about children developing "a positive outlook, an ability to see the glass as half full rather than half empty."

As discussed in Millard's paper on enterprise education in 2012, enterprise education can develop:

- Knowledge and understanding of key concepts about organisations, risk, and change;
- Skills such as the ability to make informed decisions, manage risk, and make presentations;
- Attitudes, including self-reliance, openmindedness, and pragmatism;
- Qualities, such as adaptability, perseverance, determination, creativeness and flexibility. (Millard, 2017, p.22)

Millard (2017) argues that enterprise education can be approached in three ways including:

- teaching about enterprise which helps developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of issues such as how businesses work;
- teaching for enterprise which increases engagement with and interest in enterprise;
- teaching through enterprise which is a more active learning process that helps young people develop an enterprise skill set by giving them experience of the wider world.

Practical advice on how to involve labor representatives in guidance activities

- Avoid calling the professional directly. Search first in your network of relationships if you can have mediated contact with the professional.
- Once you've identified the professional, start with a low-demand request. Wait until you build a more stable relationship before asking for a meaningful commitment.
- An initial approach could be to invite the professional to school for a short activity such as telling about his job, how he came to do that job or what kind of professionalism he is looking for (if an entrepreneur). Alternatively, you could ask the professional to tell how a certain discipline or a certain disciplinary topic finds a concrete application in the world of work.
- A more demanding activity could then be a visit to a company or an internship. For this the professional will have to spend more time. Try to prepare the request by adding a series of economic reasons such as considering the visit as an opportunity to attract a workforce, explain the needs in terms of skills, knowledge and professionalism and retain young people in the area.
- Visit the professional before the activity to make sure that the place is suitable for the students and to show the profes-

sional that, in case of problems, the students have a teacher to refer to. Use this opportunity to share expectations and to share with the professional any specificities of the students (in terms of representations, background, etc.).

·   Throughout the process, continue to motivate the profession-al by emphasizing that the school can only prepare students for their adult life with the help of professional professionals. Thanks for the collaboration and emphasizes that it is appre-ciated by the entire school community.

Adapted from: OECD (2021), "Getting the most out of employer engagement in career guidance", OECD Education Policy Per-spectives, No. 36, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/fbbc3788-en.

In the international literature review exploring the impact of em-ployer engagement activities, the authors identify seven charac-teristics of more effective employer engagement:

·   Authentic. It will enable first-hand encounters between students and individuals from the world of work. Anything which appears inauthentic to young people, will appear less trustworthy and so easier to ignore.

·   Frequent and often mandatory. A good metaphor for em-ployer engagement in guidance is throwing mud at a wall. The more that is thrown – the more experiences that students have – the more likely it is that they will encounter informa-tion and experiences that prove to be helpful to them – and the more effective employers as a group will be in signal fu-ture employment opportunities. It is good practice to require students to take part in activities, particularly at a younger age. Students don't know what they don't know and manda-tory participation in career talks can be expected to broaden career thinking and challenge assumptions and expectations that haven't been well considered.

·   Valued. As noted, a good test of whether employer engage-ment is working is to ask students themselves if they learnt something new and useful. Where young people themselves

testified that episodes of employer engagement were valuable to them, some studies suggest that they were right and better outcomes followed.

- Varied. Both teachers and students say that different types of activity are useful in different ways. If the ambition is to equip students with the knowledge and skills needed for a successful transition into work, activities like practice interviews, CV workshops and work placements have higher value. Alternatively, where the objective is to enhance student understanding of jobs in the labour market, activities like career talks, job shadowing and job fairs are especially valuable. In all cases, exposing students to a variety of different people in work – ranging from apprentice or trainee through to CEO - will help deepen and broaden lessons drawn from encounters.

- Contextualised. Where provision is undertaken within the context of effective careers provision, some studies highlight—and logic suggests—improved outcomes for young people. (Percy and Kashefpakdel, 2018[7]), for example, find that students in schools with richer cultures of career provision are more likely to find career talks with external speakers helpful and can expect greater long-term financial returns. Employer engagement is best overseen by well-trained career guidance professionals who are well-placed to optimise its benefits.

- Personalised. Employer engagement theory acknowledges that young people vary a lot in the extent to which they can draw on useful non-school resources (such as parents and family friends) to visualise and plan their futures. While need will relate to socio-economic background and schools in areas of greatest disadvantage should expect higher levels of resourcing, it is not a simple relationship.

- Begun at a young age. With benefits appearing to be more driven by changes in attitude and expectation than the growth of human capital, interventions should begin in primary schooling where identity formation (including the chal-

lenging of gender stereotypes) can be supported through career learning activities within and outside of the classroom (Percy and Amegah, 2021[8]).

So, there are lots of different and effective ways to work with Primary School children. Here are our top five tips to get you started.

- Gain attention. At the beginning of every interaction, introduce pupils to who you are, what you do and the way you will attract their attention. Get them to practice it with you a few times too. For example: raise your hand and expect all pupils to do the same to show they are listening. Remember, don't try and talk until all children have followed your rule.

- Adapt communication. Younger children are naturally curious and need to be active. Generally, they can only focus for one minute per year of age! So, keep this in mind. For example: simplify your message and give very explicit step-by-step directions on how to complete tasks. Use body language and hand signals to support your explanation and don't give too much information at once. At the same time, don't be afraid to introduce new vocabulary to children – just be clear in your explanation and give them time to absorb it.

- Be flexible. You're unlikely to know a group of children as well as their teacher, and no one expects you to. However, it's helpful to acknowledge that some pupils will finish tasks quicker than others and that a child's ability to engage can vary day-to-day due to things out of your control. For example: be creative and always have extra or alternative activities up your sleeve. You could also ask the teacher for class context before your visit.

- Be enthusiastic. The wonderful thing about working with Primary School children is that they are full of life and energy and are generally eager to learn. Try to mirror this enthusiasm. For example: Keep things real and show that you are

excited about working with the children and the activities you've asked them to complete. Be careful not to be too silly though or underestimate their maturity level; the children might follow your example or find you patronising.

· Give them 'choice'. Primary aged children can often like to feel that the adults in the room view them as grown-up. They also like to feel that they are in control. This is a particularly good feeling to conjure in pupils with Special Educational Needs, as surprises or the feeling of being forced into something can cause distress. For example: offer choices where both outcomes are acceptable to you and let the children pick between 'this and this'.

What makes a good resource or activity for Primary School children? ✓

You may wish to use the following checklist to assess the primary aged readiness of your resources and activities.

1. Have you used images to help illustrate meaning or to model the learning outcome? ☐

2. Have you kept things bright and appealing whilst not overpowering? Too much, and learners might find it hard to access, too little and they might switch off. ☐

3. Have you used simple font, mirroring the style in early reading books, particularly for younger pupils? ☐

4. Have you provided clear, step by step instructions for short introductory activities? ☐

5. Have you differentiated tasks to suit a variety of abilities and used language that is applicable to the world of a child? Try to avoid internal business language, particularly without an explanation. ☐

6. Have you designed short, practical, interactive and creative sessions particularly for EYFS-Y3 (ages 0-8)? ☐

7. Have you made overt and specific references to the skills pupils are developing? There is a difference between gaining knowledge about the world of work and developing skills for the world of work; ensure this is obvious, for example by linking what the children are learning to their world. ☐

8. Are your resources and activities editable or already available in different font sizes and on different coloured backgrounds to meet individual special needs? ☐

9. Have you provided suggestions for adaptations for different age ranges or group sizes to enable the resource to be used flexibly by a teacher? ☐

10. Have you included the opportunity for pupil self-reflection and evaluation, and do you have plans to follow this up to ensure it is meaningful? ☐

Parental involvement

Some selected examples of countries targeting parents in career-related learning activities include: Canada (CCDF, 2016), Denmark (Katznelson and Pless, 2007), Northern Ireland (Minister for Employment and Learning and the Minister for Education, 2016) and the State of Virginia in Australia (2013).

Parental involvement on both the school and home fronts has been argued to enhance pupil achievements in school (Epstein, 1983; Grolnick, Kurowski, & Gurland, 1999; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001; Hill & Taylor, 2004; Pomerantz et al., 2005).

Parents' involvement in children's studies improves children's achievement because of the skill-related resources it provides. By 'skill-related resources', Pomerantz et. al (2007) describe cognitive skills, such as receptive language capability and phonological awareness, as well as metacognitive skills, such as planning, monitoring, and regulating the learning process.

There are a number of reasons why parental involvement can enhance such skills amongst children. Firstly, when parents are involved in teaching and learning, they may gain useful information about how and what children are learning at school; such information may aid them in helping children build cognitive and metacognitive skills (Baker & Stevenson, 1986).

Secondly, when parents are involved they may gain more accurate information about the capacity of the child. Holding such information may enable parents to assist children at a level that fosters maximal skill development among children (Epstein & Connors, 1995; Epstein, 1987).

Thirdly, even when parents do not have such knowledge, their homebased involvement may provide children with opportunities to learn from practice and instruction (Senechal & LeFevre, 2002).

Parents transmit cultural capital, values, and gender-role attitudes to their children (Dumais, 2002) which, in turn are associated with aspirations.

In a review of best practice in parental engagement by Goodall

and Vorhaus (2010) they showed that parental engagement interventions are more likely to be effective if they are informed by a comprehensive 'needs analysis' and 'targeted' at particular groups of parents.

In other words, interventions should be matched to the needs and profile of the families and parents they are aimed at, rather than providing a general 'one size fits all' support.

The study also found that parental involvement which aims only to supplement parental knowledge and/or to change attitudes does not reliably translate into improved outcomes for children. Although parents seem to have the most prominent influence on children's career development, other family members – such as siblings and extended family – also have been shown to be an important influence (Schultheiss, Palma, Predragovich, & Glasscock, 2002. The whole community can contribute to offering other perspectives and points of view for guidance activities at school: working alumni, parents who can share their direct experience in the world of work (not only with presentations but also with actions like "work with me for a day"), non-governmental organizations, the world of volunteering, local authorities. These can bring alternative perspectives on the world of work and, at the same time, underline the value of volunteering, leisure time, healthy and balanced lifestyles, etc. In multicultural contexts, members of ethnic minorities can help ensure that guidance activities are diversity sensitive.

Supporting families in the orientation process:

Families play a key role in influencing children's career choices.

The three most studied variables that are part of the area of family influence are: socioeconomic status, gender, ethnicity. Parents potentially influence adolescents' choices and their working identities also through their role as interpreters of reality and through the experiences they report to their children. These can have an impact on self-perception and values, work beliefs and work attitudes.

To support families, the English project "Talking Futures" offers a series of tools and operational guides to help parents in the

orientation process for their children. Among these, the project offers a kit of questions and reflections to guide a conversation with one's children on orientation topics.
https://www.talkingfutures.org.uk/

In summary

Why engage the community in educational tasks (and not only for instance only teachers)?

- It is a dimension of social wellness, to reduce inequalities and having a better society
- It is easier to have better citizens toward educating children from an early age to mutual respect, to the importance of solidarity and therefore we transmit the importance of assuming one's responsibilities
- It helps the child to "look around", to connect "the brain with the eyes" and to ask himself the important questions for his own growth. This means that informal education and training has equal dignity as formal training.

Why engage employers?

Because they are important to
- help students in learning more about the professions through company visits, job shadowing experiences, making presentations, participating in career guidance fairs;
- offer valuable information on the world of contemporary work and demand through the organization of work experiences, internships and competitions between companies or by contributing to the preparation of the school's information resources;
- offer information to support the transition between school and work through, for example, workshops on curriculum

writing, interview simulations, mentoring activities for initiatives centered on entrepreneurship;

- enrich disciplinary teaching to promote students' academic commitment through, for example, the structuring of learning by doing activities or orientation teaching activities in which students experience first-hand how a certain discipline is used in work contexts.

But what they can teach to a child?

- To make a dream come true
- Always have a plan B.
- To get excited
- To see things with foresight
- To consider risk a natural element
- To understand the importance of commitment
- Building in small steps (eg from the Little Prince "the elephant is eaten one bite at a time")
- To design: the project is something open, which evolves both in time and in space
- To see mistakes as an investment
- To become aware of the existence of an individual identity and a collective identity
- To re-evaluate "the real economy" and not take the objects around us for granted
- To have an open mind, available to learn about new experiences and interpret them with a critical sense, avoiding clichés or prejudices due to ignorance
- To give value to time and distinguish between that dedicated to the project, that dedicated to "doing nothing" and that wasted!

What can learn employers from child?

- To question oneself and see each other with different glasses
- Rediscover their own stimuli and motivation
- Finding the dream in the drawer again
- Reflect on the new formulas of worker well-being (eg Ikea slogan "CEO of his time")
- Understanding how easy it is sometimes to undertake but how difficult it is to maintain!
- It is essential to recreate a social bond between generations which unfortunately technology risks distancing

Businesses can get easier involved:

- Appealing to the sense of responsibility towards the new generations
- Remember that every entrepreneur was a child
- Underling that every entrepreneur has children
- Avoid calling the professional directly. Search first in your network of relationships if you can have a mediated contact with the professional
- Once you have identified the professional, start with an undemanding request. Wait to create a more stable relationship before asking for a meaningful commitment.
- An initial approach could be to invite the professional to school for a short activity such as telling about his work, how he got to do that job or what kind of professionalism he seeks (if an entrepreneur). Alternatively, you could ask the professional to tell how a certain discipline or a certain disciplinary topic finds a concrete application in the world of work.
- A more demanding activity could then be a visit to the company or an internship. For this the professional will have to spend more time. Try to prepare the request by adding a series of economic reasons, such as considering the visit as an

opportunity to attract workforce, tell the needs in terms of skills, knowledge and professionalism and keep young people in the area.

- Visit the professional before the activity to make sure that the place is suitable for students and to show the professional that, in case of problems, students have a teacher to refer to. Use this opportunity to share expectations and to share any specific characteristics of the students with the professional (in terms of representations, background, etc.).

- Throughout the process, continue to motivate the professional by emphasizing that the school can prepare students for their adult life only with the help of professionals from the world of work. He thanked for the collaboration and stressed that it was appreciated by the entire school community.

How must be all the activities to be meaningful for students?

In the international literature review exploring the impact of employer engagement activities, the authors identify seven characteristics of more effective employer engagement:

- Authentic.
- Frequent and often mandatory.
- Valued.
- Varied.
- Contextualised.
- Personalised.
- Begun at a young age.

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CHAPTER 6

Glossary on career learning for the community

Career

The interaction of work roles and other life roles over a person's lifespan, including how they balance paid and unpaid work, and their involvement in learning and education.

Career carousels

These events involve a range of volunteers coming together to speak with groups of children about their jobs. In a career carousel, a child will speak individually or in small groups to employee volunteers for a short period of time (commonly 5-15 minutes) about their job career.

Career education

Programmes and activities of learning to help people to develop the skills necessary to manage their career and life pathway. These include accessing and making effective use of career information and guidance. Careers education prepares students for adult and working life. Specifically, it aims to equip young people to play an active part in determining their future roles as learners and workers, helping them to make realistic and informed choices about their careers, to manage the transition to the next phase of education, training or employment and to succeed in

further and higher education, training and work'.

Career guidance

A range of activities that enable citizens of any age, and at any point in their lives, to identify their capacities, competences and interests; to make meaningful educational, training and occupational decisions; and to manage their individual life paths in learning, work and other settings in which these capacities and competences are learned and/or used.

Career insights

It is an example of employer engagement activities with employers or business representatives coming into the school to speak about their job or career path, including the route they may have taken and challenges they faced. Particular emphasis is placed at this stage on explaining how certain subjects are relevant to working life.

Career learning

Includes early childhood activities in primary schools designed to give children from an early age a wide range of experiences of, and exposure to, education, transitions and the world of work; is about helping "children to understand who they could become and helping them to develop a healthy sense of self that will enable them to reach their full potential".

Career-related learning

Early childhood activities in primary schools designed to give children from an early age a wide range of experiences of and exposure to education, transitions and the world of work. This is part of a lifelong learning and career development process.

Career management skills

A range of competences which provide structured ways for individuals (and groups) to gather, analyse, synthesise and organise self, educational and occupational information, as well as the skills to make and implement decisions and transitions.

Challenge based learning - Inquiry based learning

Challenge Based Learning is an effective learning framework initiated at Apple, Inc. and used in universities, schools, and institutions around the world. The framework empowers Learners (students, teachers, administrators and community members) to address local and global Challenges while acquiring content knowledge in math, science, social studies, language arts, medicine, technology, engineering, computer science and the arts. Through Challenge Based Learning, students and teachers are making a difference and proving that learning can be deep, engaging, meaningful, and purposeful.   Around the world hundreds of millions of people are involved in formal education. For a majority of these Learners, the focus is on acquiring knowledge and skills necessary to move to the next level and eventually enter the world as a productive member of society. Challenge Based Learning provides a framework for participants to accomplish this while building 21st century skills, developing a framework for life-long learning, and making an immediate impact on the world.

Community

Community refers to a social group with a common territorial base; those in the group share interests and have a sense of belonging to the group.

Community-based learning

Community-based learning refers to a wide variety of instructional methods and programs that educators use to connect what is being taught in schools to their surrounding communities, including local institutions, history, literature, cultural heritage, and natural environments. Community-based learning is also motivated by the belief that all communities have intrinsic educational assets and resources that educators can use to enhance learning experiences for students.

Competence

Proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development.

Curriculum

Inventory of activities implemented to design, organise and plan an education or training action, including definition of learning objectives, content, methods (including assessment) and material, as well as arrangements for training teachers and trainers.

Dropout

The term *drop-out* means "fallen out", and refers to person who drop out of school before having obtained a diploma or degree.

Early school leaving

The term "early school leaving" refers to all forms of early leaving of education and training before completion of upper secondary education or its equivalents in vocational training.

Economic and social outcomes of guidance

Guidance has social and economic outcomes: in particular, im-

proving the efficiency and effectiveness of education, training and the labour market through its contribution to reducing drop-out, preventing skills mismatches, increasing job tenure and boosting productivity; and also addressing social equity and social inclusion.

Engagement

In education, student engagement refers to the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning or being taught, which extends to the level of motivation they have to learn and progress in their education. Generally speaking, the concept of "student engagement" is predicated on the belief that learning improves when students are inquisitive, interested, or inspired, and that learning tends to suffer when students are bored, dispassionate, disaffected, or otherwise "disengaged."

Enterpreneurial competence

Entrepreneurial Competence is one of the eight Key Competences for Lifelong Learning as identified by the European Council. The European Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 states: "Entrepreneurial competence refers to the ability to act on the basis of ideas and opportunities and to transform them into values for others. It is based on creativity, critical thinking and problem-solving, initiative and perseverance, as well as the ability to work collaboratively in order to plan and manage projects that have cultural, social or financial value."

Evidence

The information presented to support a finding or conclusion. Evidence should be sufficient, competent and relevant: there are four types of evidence: observations (obtained through direct observation of people or events); documentary (obtained from written information); analytical (based on computations and

comparisons); and self-reported (obtained through, for example, surveys).

Evidence-based policy and practice

The conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current evidence of what works best, and most cost effectively, to inform lifelong guidance policy and practice. More generally, any activity, intervention or way of working that has been designed on the basis of evidence that demonstrates the effectiveness of the particular approach (policy or practice) being used.

Gamification

Gamification of education is a strategy for increasing engagement by incorporating game elements into an educational environment. The goal is to generate levels of involvement equal to what games can usually produce. The main goals of gamification are to enhance certain abilities, introduce objectives that give learning a purpose, engage students, optimize learning, support behavior change, and socialize

Guidance

Help for individuals to make choices about education, training and employment.

Guidance counsellor

A trained individual delivering guidance as defined above. Guidance counsellors assist people to explore, pursue and attain their career goals.

Guidance outcomes

Guidance has economic, social and learning outcomes and these reflect both its personal impact and the wider societal benefits.

Guidance policy

Policy that determines and shapes the range and extent of guidance services that exist, their aims and principles, how the services are funded, and who is eligible to use them and under what circumstances.

Guidance systems

The way the delivery of guidance services has been designed and organised. This might be the approach taken in a particular country or region to the organisation of guidance services or a particular way of delivering guidance, such as online or at a distance.

Identity capital

It is a useful theoretical framework to understand how career-related learning in primary schooling works. It refers to various resources and personality traits and/or strengths needed to understand and negotiate personal obstacles and opportunities for children as they grow up. Identity capital includes having an extensive social network, financial support, self-efficacy, motivation, adaptability and resilience.

Impact

General term used to describe the effects of a programme, policy or socioeconomic change. Impact can be positive or negative as well as foreseen or unforeseen.

Inclusion

The term "inclusion" literally means the act of including an element within a group or set. It is a word used in different fields, from mathematics to biology through rhetoric and some common uses (such as, for example, "inclusion in a list"). In the social sphere, inclusion means belonging to something, be it a group

of people or an institution, and feeling welcomed and aims to eliminate any form of discrimination within a society, but always respecting diversity.social inclusion is the process of individual's self-realisation within a society, acceptance and recognition of one's potential by social institutions, integration (through study, employment, volunteer work or other forms of participation) in the web of social relations in a community. In present-day European societies, the concept is relevant to all young people as youth is the life stage when young people make the transition from family dependence to autonomy within the larger society under rapidly evolving circumstances. It has a particular meaning to those young people who come from disadvantaged backgrounds and live in precarious conditions. For them, social inclusion involves breaking various barriers in order to acquire their social rights as full members of society.

Key competences

The sum of skills needed to live in contemporary society. In its recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning, the European Commission (2006) sets out the eight key competences: communication in the mother tongue; communication in foreign languages; competence in maths and basic competences in science and technology; digital competence; learning to learn; social and civic competences; sense of initiative and entrepreneurship; and cultural awareness and expression.

Labour market information

Labour market information tells you about the workplace or labour market. Labour market information describes the condition of the labour market, past and present, as well as future projections. It makes clear where work opportunities are increasing or decreasing, what occupations exist, what you need to study to become a professional in that occupation, what is required to take up an occupation, how one can find a job, change job or

progress in a career.

Labour market information and intelligence

Labour market intelligence refers to labour market information that has been analysed and interpreted before presenting it to the public. Essentially most careers information is labour market intelligence.

Learning outcomes

They are the description of what a learner knows, understands and is able to achieve at the end of a learning process. The results are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competences. They focus on the context and potential applications of knowledge and skills, help students connect learning in various contexts, and help guide assessment and evaluation.

Learning outcomes of guidance

The set of knowledge, skills and/or competences an individual has acquired and/or is able to demonstrate after completion of a guidance activity or through participation in the guidance process.

Lifelong learning

The social, economic, political, cultural scenario is constantly evolving and learning cannot be relegated to a phase of life, but must become a constant process. The lifelong learning is called to provide the necessary resources to the individual to develop his potential, root in knowing his personal fulfillment and be able to live, work and thrive in the knowledge society. The term knowledge society took on new relevance after the Lisbon European Council of March 2000, which gave the European Union the strategic objective of developing a more competitive knowledge-based economy capable of combining sustainable growth

with quality employment and greater social cohesion.

Lifelong guidance

Lifelong guidance aims to provide career development support for individuals of all ages, at all career stages. It includes careers information, advice, counselling, assessment of skills and mentoring. Quality guidance services should be available to all individuals, regardless of their employment situation, socioeconomic status, ethnicity or gender.

Non-formal learning

Non-formal learning includes various structured learning situations which do not either have the level of curriculum, syllabus, accreditation and certification associated with 'formal learning', but have more structure than that associated with 'informal learning', which typically take place naturally and spontaneously as part of other activities. These form the three styles of learning recognised and supported by the OECD.

Preventive action

Action to eliminate the cause of a potential nonconformity or other undesirable potential situation.

School disengagement

Disengagement from education refers to a situation where a person does not feel included, does not participate in school activities, is not enrolled, or has poor school attendance. Disengagement from school is linked to individual attitudes or values and can be influenced by peers, family members, the community, the media, and surrounding cultural aspects in general, including the school itself.

Stereotypes

The term stereotype refers to the rigid generalizations about social groups that represent reality in an altered way because they make it perceive as if it were all the same, as if the individuals of a group were all the same. Stereotypes arise from a process of categorization according to which individuals sort people, objects and events according to certain categories that limit the amount of information with which they should be confronted, thus simplifying the complexity of the world and avoiding having a differentiated attitude towards everything or situation.

Social Mobility

By social mobility we mean the passage of an individual or a group from one social status to another, and the level of flexibility in the stratification of a society, the degree of difficulty (or ease) with which it is possible to move from one layer to another within the social stratification that is the plurality of social groups present within society with different roles and different access to resources.

Social Justice

It means lowering the concept of justice in the context of a society considered as a set of individuals who (inevitably) entertain relationships of various kinds. To aspire to achieve social justice means to implement the conditions under which justice is effectively guaranteed to each one, in the conviction that in doing so the overall progress of society will be achieved in conditions of lasting peace.

Sustainable development goals

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now

and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. They recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.

Self-knowledge

Knowledge that an individual has about him/herself.

Skill

Ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems.

Social emotional skills and behaviours

It refers to the traits which individuals use to understand and manage their emotions, communicate with others and maintain healthy relationships. These include communication, empathy, team-work, self-awareness, confidence, self-belief, leadership, understanding and managing emotions, resilience and collaboration

Tutoring programmes

There are programs that connect schools, pupils and parents with employers who can help mentor struggling students in curriculum subjects. Tutors help develop a child's understanding of a subject while simultaneously showing the pupil how the subject and school curriculum can relate to the mentor's own career. These activities have the same benefits as employer engagement activities in broadening a child's understanding of careers with the additional bonus boosting academic attainment.

Vocational guidance

Help for individuals to make choices about education, training and employment.

Work-related learning

Planned activity that uses the context of work to develop knowledge, skills and understanding useful in work, including learning through the experience of work and working practices and learning the skills for work

Workplace visits

These are activities that often involve a group of children visiting an organisation from a couple of hours to a full day. The aim is to provide children with a general overview of the company and wider industry, to familiarise them with its working environment and to provide them with guidance and how they could one day get into the industry. Workplace visits can comprise a variety of activities such as: group exercises, workshops, networking events, presentation, Q&A session and site tours.
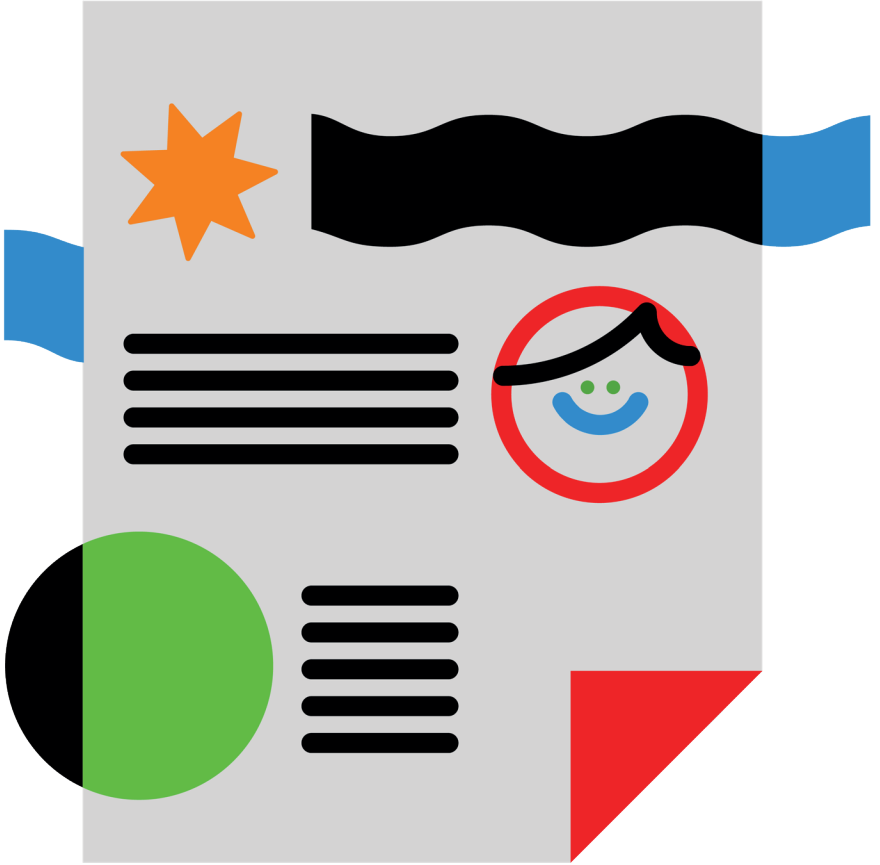
Annex 1

The PRIME questionnaire

The questionnaire consisted of two sections: one on demographic information of the respondent and one with a focus on early career-related learning. Prior to filling in the questionnaire, participants were introduced to the rationale of the project and to its main concepts. The questionnaire was initially created in English and then translated in the partners' languages. Data were collected either using paper versions (scores were then digitalised) or using a platform called Typeform which allows an accessible graphic layout.

The section below reports the questionnaire used.

Intro to early career-related learning

Career development is a maturation process that begins very early in life (McMahon & Watson, 2018). It refers to the ongoing process of a person managing their life, learning and work over their lifespan. It involves developing the skills and knowledge that not only equip children for the next stage of their lives but also enable them to plan and make informed decisions about education, training and career choices. (McMahon, Patton & Tatham, 2002). Children growing up in the 21st century will be seeking careers in an environment characterised by change, chance and uncertainty (World Economic Forum, 2018).

In the primary phase there is a need to be cautious about the use of 'career' or 'careers'. This is a period largely of exploration

and children's aspirations should, rightly, be tentative and imaginative. Yet there are a range of attributes, skills and behaviours that can be instilled in this stage of child's life that will leave them in the best possible position as they begin their transitions to secondary education and to future life. The focus should be on broadening horizons and giving children a wide range of experience of the world – which includes the world of work.

In this report we use the term 'career-related learning' to encompass early childhood activities in primary schools designed to give children from an early age a wide range of experiences of and exposure to education, transitions and the world of work.

Demographics

Your name
The name of your organization
Country
Region (County – Province)
Town
What is your job role?

    A. teacher
    B. school counsellor
    C. career practitioner
    D. school principal
    E. soon-to-come teacher
    F. another job role. Which one?..........

Gender

a. male / b. female / c. I prefer not to say

Type of school

a. public / b. private / c. mixed status

Education level you are teaching / working

a. preschool education / b. primary education / c. lower secondary education

If you teach/work at another education level this questionnaire reached you by mistake and please discontinue answering it.

A focus on early career learning

- At what age do you believe children should start learning about the world of work?
    - A. In nursery school
    - B. In primary school
    - C. In lower secondary
    - D. In secondary education
    - E. In university

Why is introducing children to the world of work important? (Likert from 1-7 disagree-agree)

- It can be very influential in broadening children's aspirations
- It can bring learning to life and increase motivation
- It helps to challenge gender stereotypes about jobs and subjects studied
- It helps children believe in their abilities (self-efficacy)
- It can change children's attitude positively towards school
- It can change children's attitude positively towards learning leading to improved academic attainment
- It helps link school subjects to the world of work
- It can help parents/carers to gain insights to the world of work

Does your school organise career-learning activities?

- o   No
- o   Yes

If yes, which type of activities?
- ·   Workplace visits (in presence or online)
- ·   Speed networking sessions
- ·   Enterprise days
- ·   Curriculum-linked activities
- ·   Subject-specific activities
- ·   Numeracy and literacy activities
- ·   Days on aspirations
- ·   Other, please add

Do you involve representatives from the world of work in your school activities?

- o   No
- o   Yes
- ·   If yes, please specify in which activities they are involved….

Do you/does your school run activities to contrast career stereotypes?

- o   No
- o   Yes
- ·   If yes, please specify which type of activities…

Do you/does your school run activities to think of the world of work in relation to main societal challenges (e.g. sustainability)?

- o   No

o Yes
- If yes, please specify which type of activities...

How could we better promote the bridge between schools and companies/the world of work?

Do you think further training on this topic could be useful?

- 1-7 from not useful at all to extremely useful

Is there any supporting material or tool you would consider useful to help your school improve career-related learning activities?

Thank you for filling in the questionnaire. If interested, please leave your phone number and/or email and we will keep you update on the next steps of the project

The sample

176 participants from 4 countries took part in the data collection phase.

The numbers are evenly split among the project countries, respondents were in the majority females teaching in public schools. The sample of teachers mainly worked in primary (47.15%) and lower secondary schools (41.47%) with a smaller group teaching in nurseries (20.45%).

The table below reports the details of the sample.

Country	Number of participants	Gender	Type of school	Education level you are teaching
Greece	44	F 90,90%	34.09% public (15) 54.54% private (24) 11.36% other (5)	preschool education 26 (59.09%) primary education 14 (31.81%) lower secondary education 20 (45.45%)
Italy	44	F 88.63%	95.5% public (42) 4.5% privat (2)	preschool education (0%) primary education 28 (63%) lower secondary education 16 (36,4%)
Romania	38	F 65,78%	100% public (38)	preschool education 2 (5.3%) primary education 6 (15.8%) lower secondary education 30 (78.9%)
Spain	50	F 78%	94% public (47) 6% charter school (3)	preschool education 8 (16%) primary education 35 (70%) lower secondary education 7 (14%)
All	176	143	80.68% public (142) 14.77% privat (26) 4.54% other (8)	preschool education 36 (20.45%) primary education 83 (47.15%) lower secondary education 73 (41.47%)

Results

At what age do you believe children should start learning about the world of work?

When asked at what age they believe children should start learning about the world of work, respondents answered covering all educational levels with the majority of respondents mentioning the importance of starting early (nursery and primary school).

When to start?

When to start?
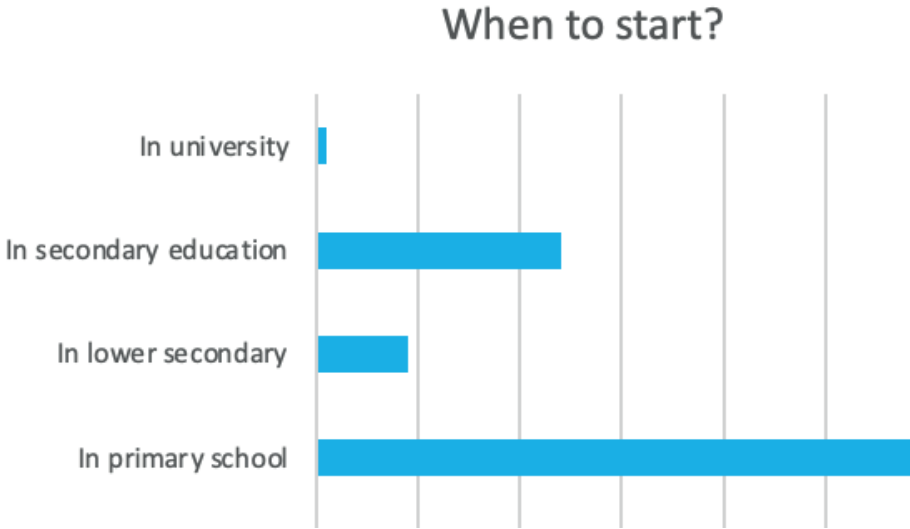
Country	Number of participants	In nursery school	In primary school	In lower secondary	In secondary education	In university
Greece	44	31	10	2	0	0

Italy	44	8	26	3	6	1
Romania	38	18	15	4	1	0
Spain	50	9	24	0	17	0
All	176	66	75	9	24	1

Why is introducing children to the world of work important?

Aim of early career learning
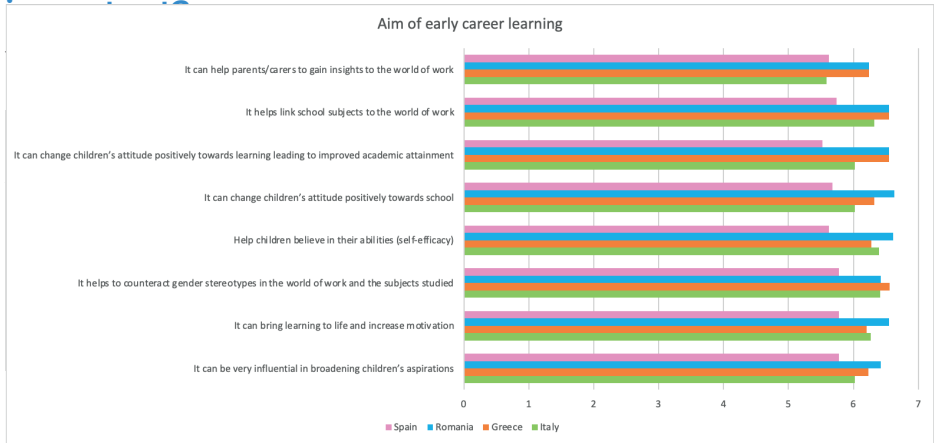
Does the school organise career-learning activities?

Country	Yes	No
Greece	40	44
Italy	20	24
Romania	33	5
Spain	12	38
All	105	71

Career learning activities in the school
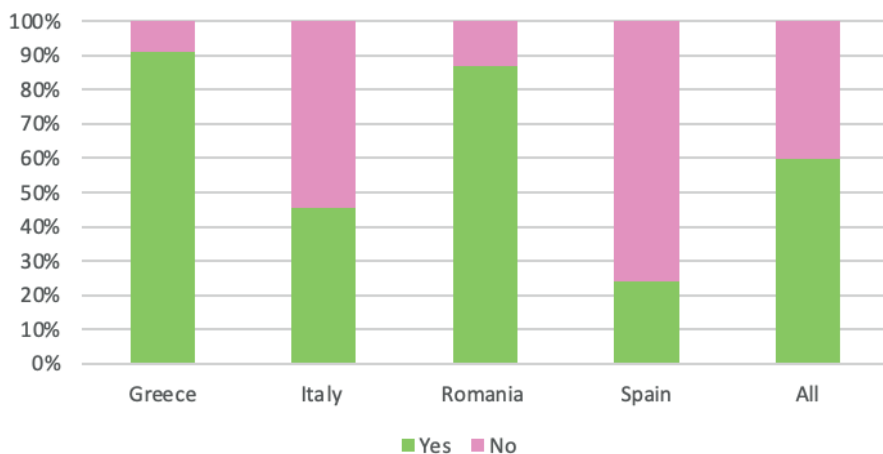
Among the possible activities listed, respondents mentioned visits to workplaces, curriculum-linked activities and subject-specific activities as the most popular early career education activities.

Does the school involve representatives from the world of work in the school activities?

Responses to this question highly varied in the different countries involved in the PRIME project. While in Greece and Roma-

nia, nearly 70% of schools do involve representatives of the world of work in the schools activities. In Italy and Spain, the percentage goes down to 30-40%.

Country	Yes	No
Greece	29	15
Italy	19	25
Romania	28	10
Spain	16	34
All	92	84
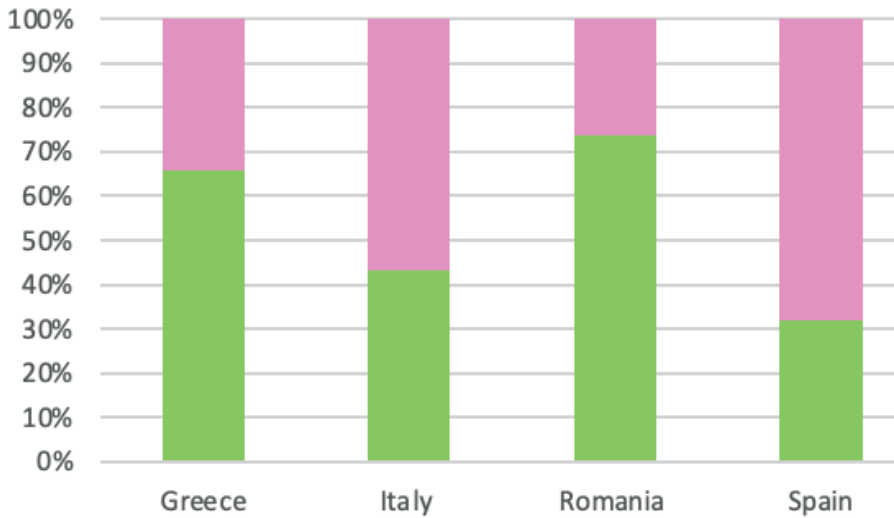
When asking which type of activities, respondents listed a variety of activities which are grouped below:

Workshops where students put in practice some disciplines with professionals:
- Artisan workshops
- Manual activities with professionals

Professionals who go to school and meet the students
- Ex-alumni activities
- Parents visiting
- Professionals invited to school

Visit to industries and other working spaces

Visits of professionals linked to certain disciplines (depending on the country)
- During leadership classes
- During financial education activities
- During civic education activities
- During management classes
- During personal development classes
- During STEAM classes and activities

Other initiatives
- Education programs led by unions, associations, specialised bodies etc.
- During a week
- as extra-curricular activities

Training to teachers

Does the school run activities to contrast career stereotypes?

Responses to this question highly varied in the different countries involved in the PRIME project. While in Greece, nearly 80% of schools do offer activities to fight stereotypes, in the other countries the percentage goes down to 25 to 50%.

Country	Yes	No
Greece	34	10
Italy	12	32
Romania	19	19
Spain	13	37
All	78	98

Activities against stereotypes
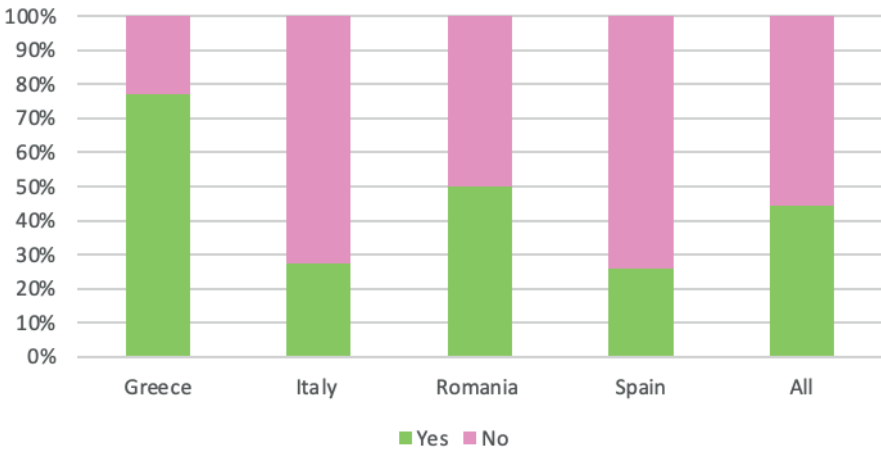
When asking which type of activities, respondents listed a variety of activities which are grouped below:

- Meetings with testimonials (e.g. "we invite people who have excelled in different fields to talk to the children about the challenges of their work.)
- Activities with high schools
- Guided discussions and conversations
- Activities integrated in curricular activities

(readings, case studies, role-plays, team-based investigations in the context of tasks or projects)
· Educational games
· Movies
· Extracurricular projects
· Programs on human rights, gender equality, inclusion, acceptance of diversity
· Visits to workplaces and educational institutions and interviews to students and workers
· European projects or specific project on this topic (e.g. "Building superheroes" in which different people are invited, people who carry out different activities and who talk to the students about the meaning of the labor market, career, etc.)
· Counseling activities specifically dedicated to this aspect (individually and at a group level)

Does the school run activities to think of the world of work in relation to main societal challenges (e.g. sustainability)?

Responses to this question highly varied in the different countries involved in the PRIME project. While in Greece, nearly 80% of schools do offer activities to fight stereotypes, in the other countries the percentage goes down to 25 to 50%.

Country	Yes	No
Greece	27	17
Italy	29	15
Romania	20	18

Spain	13	37
All	89	87

Do they think further training on this topic could be useful? (1-7 from not useful at all to extremely useful)

Importance of training

■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 ■ 7

Country	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Greece	0	0	0	0	7	17	18
Italy	0	0	3	4	8	13	16
Romania	0	0	0	0	1	9	28
Spain	0	0	0	1	9	20	20
All	0	0	3	5	23	48	75

Is there any supporting material or tool they would consider useful to help schools improve career-related learning activities?

Participants suggested some tools to improve career learning activities in class:

- Manual activity workshops: tailoring, carpentry, mechanics
- Specific supporting material
- Guided tours
- A school program based on this topic
- Erasmus projects
- Vertical curriculum
- Video interviews
- Training courses for teachers
- Technological platforms for career education activities; platforms capable of providing information on the characteristics of the various sectors/companies, suggestions on the most suitable training courses for each job "outlet", profiling of the most suitable incoming skills for a given training course
- Information material
- Role play games
- Taking the school outside the walls and working on and with the territory
- Examples of projects implemented in the area
- Meeting with industry experts
- Co-planning between teachers and company tutors

Annex 2

The PRIME focus groups Methodological support for running the focus groups

The focus group

Every partner will organise 2 focus groups in order to collect information, needs, experiences and proposals from participants. The target group consists of teachers, school counsellors, career practitioners, school principals who work in primary schools and lower level secondary schools. Each group should include around 10 participants. If not possible, partners can organise smaller focus groups. The aim is to reach 20 participants per partner.
The report for each focus group will be sent by every partner to anita.montagna@pluriversum.eu and laura.profiri@pluriversum.eu and uploaded on the project drive.

General principles for running the focus group:
1. Focus groups should be no more than 10 in size. Any more than this will make recording the results very difficult.
2. Do not make the focus groups any longer than an hour and a half as people will lose concentration and this will affect the quality of the data.
3. It may help you to have two people to conduct the focus group - one to facilitate and one to take notes.

4. It would help you to manage the gathering and accurate re-
    cording of data if you ask everyone to wear a name badge.
    This can be easily achieved using a sticky label and pen.

5. Make sure that everyone understands the purpose of the re-
    search and has signed an informed consent form (see the
    document).

6. Feel free to digitally record the focus group but ensure that
    everyone is aware that you are doing this.

7. A tip to help when listening back to your recordings of the
    session: use individual's names when responding to points
    (thank you John, that was helpful etc.) This will ensure that
    you can recognise and distinguish between voices when you
    listen back to your recording.

8. Encourage all the participants to answer.

Participants: try to engage participants from different schools.
Try to engage participants who work in different types of schools
and possibly from schools located in different areas.
Prior to run the focus group, local researchers should complete
this section to help with writing up field notes (to be added in
the FG report):

1. Date of focus group
2. Name of Country
3. Where did the focus group take place?
4. How many people were in the focus group?
5. Details re the participants, names, gender and roles (see at-
    tendance sheet)
6. Was this group recorded?
7. Name of the researchers

Guidelines for running the national focus groups

A. Introduce the research to participants.

- Introduce yourself, the purpose of the meeting, introduce the project, the methodology and the rules of the focus group. "This focus group has been created as part of an Erasmus funded project called PRIME. The project involves partners from all over Europe and aims to develop tools and resources to help improve career-related learning in primary and lower level secondary schools while building a powerful guidance community. The project will result in a number of outputs including an educational game, a series of activities for students, a handbook and a training course for teachers. The results of this focus group represent the starting point of the project and will contribute to all project outputs. All the outputs will be published and made freely available."

- Introduce the concept of early career learning: "when we say career learning we often think of activities focused on career choices. On the contrary, early career learning refers to all those activities which....................To do it, we must start early with the aim of widening students' horizons, contrasting career stereotypes and broadening the students' opportunities. A crucial asset of early career learning is that it is based on exploration of opportunities and of labour market information. The question that guides this line of work is: "how can you dream of something you do not know about?" To work effectively in this direction, the support of a guidance community and the direct engagement of representatives of the labour market is fundamental as it creates the network on the local territory to allow a powerful exploration of actual career pathways and career opportunities."

B. Starting with these premises, ask participants to introduce themselves, their role and if they have any experience with early career learning in their daily practice.

- What does your school do to connect (and value) the school curriculum to the outside world?
- Do you involve representatives from the world of work in your school activities? If yes, how do you involve them?
- How can we improve/build bridges between schools and the surrounding community? / What would be needed to improve the collaboration between schools and the world of work?
- Which are, in your opinion, the major career stereotypes you believe need to be targeted in early career learning activities?

C. Thank and invite to fill in the questionnaire and to stay in touch.

Consent form

Explain the data policy for the project. All data provided with this focus group will be treated in line with data information legislation and freedom of information legislation. The data will be anonymised, held securely and will only be shared amongst project partners. We are going to digitally record the group. This will only be used to check the accuracy of our notes and the recordings will be destroyed at the end of the project.

If you would like to withdraw your data you may due this up to one week after the focus group and you can do this by emailing [please put the local contact name here] on [please put the local contact email address here] stating your name, and the date of

completion of the focus group.

If you have any questions about this research, please contact [please put the local contact name here].

Informed consent (please see the document).

Please sign the following letter to demonstrate that you have understood the purpose of the research and that you are happy for us to use your data.

Results

COUNTRY	TARGET GROUP	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Romania	Teachers	32
Romania	School counselors	9
Spain	Teachers	20
Spain	Ex student	26
Greece	Teachers	46
Italy	Teachers	37
Italy	Students	10
Total		180

Country: Romania

Focus group 1

Target: 11 teachers from schools in our county (from the 14 schools involved in the Erasmus consortium coordinated by CJRAE Vrancea), pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education, mostly ladies, with some experience in Erasmus as participants in KA1 courses, previously involved in cooperation with CJRAE Vrancea.

1. ***Question:*** *What does your school do to connect (and value) the school curriculum to the outside world?*

Most of the participants mentioned **school trips** and education-al activities outside the school (extracurricular activities). Some participants mentioned study **visits** in local small companies (most schools are in small rural areas, so it's easier to connect with private companies, but on the other hand there are only small businesses). Another idea emerged and it was connect-ed to involve **parents** in some of the educational activities was mentioned, more often in relation with inviting some parents to talk to the children about their jobs.
Very interesting to highlight that in 3 schools there is a school counsellor, so teachers mentioned **specific activities** that he / she does, such as evaluating children's occupational interests, testing and questionnaires etc.

2. ***Question:*** *Do you involve representatives from the world of work in your school activities? If yes, how do you involve them?*

The focus was on the idea of inviting them (in most cases, **parents**) to speak to the children about their jobs, their specific tasks etc… Also, parents are involved in deciding some aspects of curriculum (in Romania, there are some classes / school subjects that are decided by schools, with consultation of parents).

3. ***Question:*** *How can we improve/build bridges between schools and the surrounding community? / What would be needed to improve the collaboration between schools and the world of work?*

Most of the participants agreed that the best option is to really involve the parents into the decision-making process at school level, as this would encourage them to participate in career

learning activities. Partnerships with local businesses were also mentioned, both in terms of children visiting and specialists attending school activities. And again, participants mentioned the need for a career counsellor, or at least a school counsellor to organize and manage such activities.

An interesting idea was that better communication with parents is necessary, so that parents could better understand the effort that the school does and the objectives of the activities of career learning.

4. *Question: Which are, in your opinion, the major career stereotypes you believe need to be targeted in early career learning activities?*

Most frequently mentioned are **gender stereotypes** (occupations for men vs. occupations for women) and the **lack of social valorization for some occupations** (that determines the lack of some categories of specialists in Romania, such as plumbers, electricians, workers in agriculture etc).

Focus group 2

Target: 12 teachers from schools in our county (from the 14 schools involved in the Erasmus consortium coordinated by CJRAE Vrancea), pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education, mostly ladies, with some experience in Erasmus as participants in KA1 courses, previously involved in cooperation with CJRAE Vrancea.

5. *Question: What does your school do to connect (and value) the school curriculum to the outside world?*

Most common activities mentioned are the extracurricular activities: visits to local companies, inviting parents to speak to the children about their job or their business, theatre etc.

This becomes a clear preoccupation for teachers especially with

the 8-th graders, when they have to choose their profile for high-school and when there is a higher risk of children not continuing their studies. They also highlight that in primary education there is almost no activity related to career.

6. **Question:** *Do you involve representatives from the world of work in your school activities? If yes, how do you involve them?*

The only thing mentioned was inviting them (in most cases, **parents**) to speak to the children about their jobs, their specific tasks etc.
Also, parents are involved in deciding some aspects of curriculum (in Romania, there are some classes / school subjects that are decided by schools, with consultation of parents).

7. **Question:** *How can we improve/build bridges between schools and the surrounding community? / What would be needed to improve the collaboration between schools and the world of work?*

Most participants agreed that the best option is to really involve the **parents** into the decision-making process at school level, as this would encourage them to participate in career learning activities.
Partnerships with local business were also mentioned, both in terms of children visiting and specialists attending school activities; these activities could be optimized and be officially integrated in the school priorities in order for both parties to clearly understand the objectives and the importance of career learning.
There is a constant concern at school level to enhance the quality of **cooperation with the local community**, with the management and teachers focusing on that aspect; maybe there is a need to focus this cooperation also on career education.

8. *Question: Which are, in your opinion, the major career stereotypes you believe need to be targeted in early career learning activities?*

Most frequently mentioned are **gender** stereotypes (occupations for men vs. occupations for women) and the lack of **social valorization for some occupations** (that determines the lack of some categories of specialists in Romania, such as plumbers, electricians, workers in agriculture etc.)

Focus group 3

Target: 9 school counselors from CJRAE Vrancea working in different schools in our county (primary and lower secondary education)

9. *Question: What does your school do to connect (and value) the school curriculum to the outside world?*

Most answers refer to **school trips and educational activities outside the school** (those are mostly extracurricular activities that might "touch" our topic, but those activities are not specifically designed for this objective).
Extracurricular activities such as theatre or various celebrations might include role-playing of different occupations (same note as before).
Some participants mentioned **study visits in local small companies** (most schools are in small rural areas, so it's easier to connect with private companies, but on the other hand there are only small businesses).
Also, involving **parents** in some of the educational activities was mentioned, more often in relation with inviting some parents to talk to the children about their jobs
Partnerships with other institutions in the community (church, mayor's office, police office) or local NGO are mentioned,

even if only at a general level. Participants mentioned explicitly that they are not school counselors, so they don't know many things about this topic, implying that they have limited responsibility on this topic – a general perception that is generalized in Romania, even if most of the schools don't have a professional school counsellor, and even in the schools that have a school counsellor he has many other activities and objectives, not only the career counselling.

10. Question: *Do you involve representatives from the world of work in your school activities? If yes, how do you involve them?*

The only thing mentioned was inviting them (in most cases, **parents**) to speak to the children about their jobs, their specific tasks etc. Also, parents are involved in deciding some aspects of curriculum (in Romania, there are some classes / school subjects that are decided by schools, with consultation of parents).

11. Question: *How can we improve/build bridges between schools and the surrounding community? / What would be needed to improve the collaboration between schools and the world of work?*

Most participants agreed that the best option is to really involve the **parents** into the decision-making process at school level, as this would encourage them to participate in career learning activities.
Partnerships with local businesses were also mentioned, both in terms of children visiting and specialists attending school activities.
Enhanced partnership with other institutions in the community and local NGO for common small projects.
An interesting idea was that better communication with parents is necessary, so that parents could better understand the effort

that the school does and the objectives of the activities of career learning.

12. Question: *Which are, in your opinion, the major career stereotypes you believe need to be targeted in early career learning activities?*

Most frequently mentioned are gender stereotypes (occupations for men vs. occupations for women) and the lack of social valorization for some occupations (that determines the lack of some categories of specialists in Romania, such as plumbers, electricians, workers in agriculture etc).

Focus group 4

Target*:* 9 teachers from Scoala Gimnaziala Pufesti, primary and lower secondary education

13. Question: *What does your school do to connect (and value) the school curriculum to the outside world?*

Most of the participants mentioned specific activities that school counsellors do for career counselling, from self-awareness and self-knowledge (including evaluation of vocational interests, different quizzes and questionnaires), role-playing, invited speakers, other counselling activities).
They also mentioned activities that involved parents and other teachers, especially class-teachers.
There were some mentions of inviting **alumni** to speak to pupils, watching videos presenting some specific occupations, but those are not generalised aspects.
Most participants agreed that most of the activities are done with higher pupils, especially the ones in 8-th grade, and less with younger students, almost none in primary education.

14. Question: *Do you involve representatives from the world of work in your school activities? If yes, how do you involve them?*

As far as the school counsellors know, the only involvement is inviting some specialists to present their jobs to the children, mostly in higher classes.

15. Question: *How can we improve/build bridges between schools and the surrounding community? / What would be needed to improve the collaboration between schools and the world of work?*

Organising and planning specific educational projects dedicated to career learning, in a systematic and organised way.
Another idea was to promote participation of parents in the educational activities, also in a systematic way, with planned activities for longer periods of time for achieving a specific objective, maybe including career learning as a specific objective for the educational activities and informing the parents about its importance and objectives, so that both teachers and parents could be more motivated to organize such activities.

16. Question: *Which are, in your opinion, the major career stereotypes you believe need to be targeted in early career learning activities?*

The main answer was about "**gender** stereotypes". The second answer was connected with social context: "mirage" of working abroad and the general perception of "all jobs being more attractive if they are done outside Romania", a partial cause of migration from Romania.
The participants also mentioned the **incorrect perception of the causality of payment differences**: most children associate a higher payment with some occupations, without perceiving

the importance of performance in determining the payment level.

Country: Spain

Focus group 1

Target: 20 teachers

1. **Question**: *What does your school do to connect (and value) the school curriculum to the outside world?*

All the participants shared with the group their experiences:
- Offering future professions through project work. Contextualize projects to relate it to the world of work.
- Example- countries- tourism and related professions.
- Projects with an expert – a parent that can come add a perspective about professions.
- Learning and Service Activities
- Work with children and parents.
- In later years, experiences at companies – and they are referents for activities at the primary level.
- Former students giving testimonies as well as professionals (lawyers, physical therapists) explaining their trajectory – also with the turns and differences.
- Inspirasteam – programme of Deusto University (6th of Primary). Against career stereotypes in STEAM- Engineers.
- In Primary – not as much activities as other levels.

2. **Question:** *Do you involve representatives from the world of work in your school activities? If yes, how do you involve them?*

Families are strongly involved. Especially through the figure of the expert – through a workshop or talks. The pandemic has affected this type of involvement.

We don't have the connection with all of the profiles that we would like – we are limited by the families but maybe not all have availability to come to the school during the school day is sometimes very difficult.

Asking for continuity is more difficult but very punctual/periodic does work.

It needs to be a real connection but also viable.

3. **Question:** *How can we improve/build bridges between schools and the surrounding community? / What would be needed to improve the collaboration between schools and the world of work?*

With the nursing home, with other schools, with the civic center – the pandemic has affected the network, but we would like to open up.

Difficulty to connect – depends on the school. Some of the participating schools are in the mountains.

There is work to build a network.

The alliances – it is difficult. We have to look further on – long-term to create relationships with organisations.

It is an objective to build the network.

The companies/the world of work need to see the benefit of working with schools – the continuity and sustainability of the project.

If we have to make new connections and contacts each year- it is very tiring and inefficient. What can the company/organisation gain?

In primary – it isn't a short term investment – it is long term.

We need to value what we do at the school in Primary – the why of what we are doing. The companies don't know the impact of making that connection for primary students. They are not aware of what goes on in the school and they would value it.

The professions that will be in the future don't exist yet – what should we include as a school?
Structurally, a bridge could be the unions or company boards, Erasmus+, a meeting point for schools and companies.

4. ***Question:*** *Which are, in your opinion, the major career ste-reotypes you believe need to be targeted in early career learning activities?*

Gender stereotypes – professions for girls/boys – this needs to be tackled from the school. There needs to be a diversity of refer-ences. Not only women/men in reverse.
Social-cultural stereotypes (socioeconomic) - tackle stereotypes VET profiles for example. In mentoring activities or testimonies – including a diversity of profiles- pathways and training. Try that the school projects the situation/reality the least biased possible, but not hide reality from them about the current situation with-in the world of work.

Focus group 2

Target: 26 participants graduated from Primary Education, Early Childhood Education, Pedagogy, Psychology and Social Educa-tion

1. **Question:** *What does your school do to connect (and value) the school curriculum to the outside world?*

The participants suggested to do different types of activities:
- Trips to places where they talk about the labour market such as Micropolis or Kidzania. There, children can develop ideas and functions as if they were adults acquiring their roles.
- Project-based work where work families and occupations are addressed through lectures and workshops.
- "Entrepreneurial Week" were several companies that have

started their journey in the world of entrepreneurship go to the classroom to share their experience to the students.

- Using gamification to work on professions and occupations
- Using theatres as a medium of teaching, for example, "past and future occupations"
- To develop entrepreneurial thinking, where students in groups with different themes think of business ideas or possible professions.
- "We are entrepreneurs". General Project where they adopt by groups a profession to try and generate income in a term. For example, cooks selling cakes, gardeners selling flowers...
- Family members visit the classroom to explain their professions, where and when they work, as well as their main duties.
- Field trips to factories and companies where students can see firsthand how work is done.
- Searches through ICT of the different professions.
- Cultural days of "World of Work"
  A. Dynamic sessions
  B. Projections and audiovisual creations
  C. Simulations of different professions

2. **Question:** Do you involve representatives from the world of work in your school activities? If so, how do you involve them?

Generally, the participants answered positively. From the world of work,they usually involved:
- Workers from the local waste facilities, who go to schools to share what their work consists of and how they do it.
- Talks by different state security forces with exhibitions
- Talks about professions by the center's guidance counsellor.
- Escape Room on different professions carried out by a temporary employee company.
- Neighborhood awareness day where they can identify the

professions.

- Become (choose a profession) and have a person who works in it come to the center to talk to them and explain it in depth.
- Workshops with professionals about their jobs and their roles.
- Workshops on how to manage your academic journey to achieve your goals.

3. Question: How can we improve/build bridges between schools and the surrounding community? / What would it take to improve collaboration between schools and the world of work?

All the participants contributed to explore ideas useful to improve the connections between schools, community and the world of work.

- Forums in social media where they can share information or their Jobs likes and dislikes.
- Role games where they can interact.
- Workshops about old professions to learn where we come from and where we can go.
- Trips to different working places so that they can learn first-hand what they do.
- Virtual games in which screens are unlocked according to the selected studies.
- Infographics about different professions.
- Establish in the nearest area and surroundings which spaces can be visited to learn what they do.
- To make families aware of the importance of all training.
- Carry out large educational projects for students and involve the project throughout a whole school year or, at least, for two terms.

Country: Greece

Focus group 1 and 2

Target: 23 Teachers (two focus groups, 11 + 12)

1. *Question: What does your school do to connect (and value) the school curriculum to the outside world?*

According to the participants in Greek focus groups the activities that have been implemented in order to connect school with the world of work are:
· Contacts with local enterprises and
· Parents coming to school to talk about their professions
· A day in a local company
· Visits in enterprise (live or remote)
· Visits in thematic organization (ie. To the planetarium/ observatory where specialists in astronomy talk about their role)
· Questionnaires on interests and preferences of students in relation to career options
· Career days on the subject of professions
· Classroom speakers (i.e. CEO of a small business)

Regarding the activities that in some schools are organized in the class and aim to enhance the knowledge of students on the labour market, there were mentioned the following:
· live a day in the life of a..../ role games
· playing hiring director for careers in (specific field)
· awareness of occupations: build a lego city and talk abour the different roles that people perform in i.e. train station, office tower, shops, school, child care center, hospital etc (primary)
· alphabet careers: identifying an occupation that begins with each letter of the alphabet- give 3 skills or personal attributes

that this person should have (primary)
- watching TV shows and reading books
- dressing up: encourage children to put on different clothes for different occupational roles (primary)
- use game to introduce children to career learning - RealGame

2. **Question:** *Do you involve representatives from the world of work in your school activities? If yes, how do you involve them?*

The Greek teachers/school counselors involve mainly the parents of their students in the school activities in order to participate and talk to students in events dealing with career presentations – presenting their jobs. Additionally, they invite representatives of different local enterprises in events they organize, such as career days- presentation of professions etc. Finally, the Greek schools organise school educational excursions to local enterprises, so as the students to get in touch with specific professions in their natural environment.

3. **Question:** *How can we improve/build bridges between schools and the surrounding community? / What would be needed to improve the collaboration between schools and the world of work?*

In order to improve the collaboration among schools and the world of work, it was strongly advised that this is the role of the municipalities or the ministry of education that they should bring schools in contact with representatives from the world of work. Furthermore, close collaboration with parents working in different fields in the community and co-organisation of events with enterprises, local administration and schools are among the answers that Greek teachers gave.

4. Question: *Which are, in your opinion, the major career stereotypes you believe need to be targeted in early career learning activities?*

Regarding the stereotypes that need to be targeted in early career learning, the participants in the focus groups pointed out the idea that exists in the minds of a lot of people that some professions are made for women and other for men, or that women should avoid professions requiring too many years of education or hours of working as they have to grow up their children and finally that women are not efficient for high level jobs.

Focus group 3 and 4

Target: 23 Teachers (two focus groups, 10 + 13)

The two meetings have already taken place: the[1st] on 16 June 2022 and the 2nd on 20 June 2022
We had prepared a power point in which we examined the current situation in our country in terms of vocational guidance and what is happening at the same time in Europe , in order to give greater emphasis to the importance of this program and the success of its work.
We brought as an example the project "Jobland" to give an insight into the expected result and analyzed the selected terms from the glossary, while explaining the selection box.
A discussion followed, where there was an exchange of experiences from the school context and from the actions carried out by each teacher in his school with the aim of discovering new professional horizons, and getting to know the world of work mainly at a local level, but also at verifying the existence of stereotypes regarding the choices of students.
Some findings emerged from the discussion, such as:
We had addressed both private and public municipal, but it became clear from the discussion that private schools include

in their program relevant actions from kindergarten onwards, while in public schools there is less flexibility in circumventing the curriculum.

For example, very often activities such as role-playing games are inspired by previous discussions, prove the significance of the family environment and enable young students to adopt a role as a profession.

Several times parents of students (doctors, civil engineers, architects, entrepreneurs in the field of clothing, etc.) after consultation with the Headmaster come to the school to discuss with the students about their profession.

Something similar takes place in the Gymnasium with graduates of the school who often and through their workplace give an interview to the students. Their young age makes them more accessible to students, so that they can comfortably formulate their questions.

On career days students are divided into groups and visit local businesses, interview owners and employees with questionnaires they have compiled themselves and then present to the plenary.

It is true that the School Vocational Guidance course is neglected, and the students don't have the opportunity to combine their gifts and skills with specific professional spaces.

Teachers who teach at both levels also referred to the entrepreneurship project , where a real business is formed and students take on specific roles within it.

Everyone without exceptionQ referred to the fact that there is still a distinction between intellectual and manual professions but also female and male ones.

All this mainly concerns private schools, because in public schools there is not the same flexibility in the timetable, and if it is given it will not be treated with the required seriousness

Also what struck us was that the teachers in public schools (except 3) while they had sent the consent form did not want to open the camera and were generally not very available.

In general, we think that collaboration in the focus groups will be

very fruitful, this is why we are looking forward to the next stages of work.

Country: Italy

Focus group 1

Target: 7 Teachers from primary and lower secondary schools

Focus group 2

Target: 2 Teachers from primary and lower secondary schools

Focus group 3

Target: 3 Teachers from primary and lower secondary schools

Focus group 4

Target: 7 Teachers from primary and lower secondary schools

Focus group 5

Target: 6 Teachers from primary and lower secondary schools

Focus group 6

Target: 11 soon to become trainers for adult education and 1 university professor

Focus group 7

Target: 1 Representative from the Regional school office

Focus group 8

Target: 10 Students from an Arts School (representatives of 3 classes).

1. *Question: What does your school do to connect (and value) the school curriculum to the outside world?*

Teachers reported a set of activities. As whole the teachers came from Pesaro & Urbino Province, they mostly reported the activities offered by Confindustria (digital trips to local companies) or other activities such as school trips, visits to craftmen's workshops.

Many teachers report the national activity "Eureka" by Federmeccanica as a precious learning-by-doing activity which help bridging with the world of work.

Many teachers also work starting with the curricular topics to explore professions and job sectors. This is rare and often related to technology.

The lack of activities is reported as a lack and a need.

This lack and the importance of these activities is also highlighted by the representative of the Regional School Office who endorsed the PRIME project after the focus group.

At higher levels of education, schools and the world of work have more opportunities to formally collaborate (eg. job shadowing, learning by doing activities, etc.). Unfortunately, the same premises shared for early career education are valid: activities cannot be limited to transition times. Students report they would have strongly appreciated the possibility of having this early on in their school life.

Soon to become teachers and trainers expressed the novelty of the topic.

2. ***Question***: *Do you involve representatives from the world of work in your school activities? If yes, how do you involve them?*

All the participants in the focus groups reported this is something very rare in the schools involved.
Some schools report they are planning to involve parents but this is something exploratory for the school. They plan to involve them with interviews on their jobs.
The majority of schools reported that they often meet professionals in school trips or particular project the school runs (e.g. a farmer).

3. ***Question:*** *How can we improve/build bridges between schools and the surrounding community? / What would be needed to improve the collaboration between schools and the world of work?*

Planning considering the best timing for the class. This needs to be organised with the teachers and the school in order to ensure the optimal impact (trying to connect the professional with the curricular topics).

4. ***Question:****Which are, in your opinion, the major career stereotypes you believe need to be targeted in early career learning activities?*

Among the different participants, the most noted stereotypes were:
· gender stereotypes both applied to educational choices and to vocational choices,
· ethnic stereotypes related to educational choices and to vocational choices,
· high and low level jobs

- highly paid and poorly paid jobs
- low professional opportunities related to disabilities.

The most reported one was related to gender stereotypes which was reported to be highly present also in the first cycle of education.