

DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR MEASURING QUALITY AND PROGRESS OF OUTREACH IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE YOUTH GUARANTEE IN THE WESTERN BALKAN COUNTRIES

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Western Balkan (WB) countries have committed to the Youth Guarantee (YG), which ensures that young people under 30 receive a quality offer of employment, education or training within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving education. Reaching out to young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) is key for the success of the YG. However, outreach to inactive and hard-to-reach is a challenge for countries, as is monitoring progress and ensuring quality of outreach.

To address this challenge, the EU agency European Training Foundation (ETF) and Finnish Institute for Educational Research (FIER), have partnered with universities in six WB countries. Together, their aim is to develop a methodology for public employment services and others to monitor progress and measure the quality of outreach to NEETs outreach by defining learning outcomes in the form of a career management skills (CMS) framework. The framework defines the competences required to be ready to participate in formal learning and work activities and builds the basis for deriving learning, monitoring and evaluation tools.

THIS STUDY PRESENTS ONE PART OF THE INITIATIVE, AN ANALYSIS OF CMS FRAMEWORKS, from nine international sources: Australia, Canada, England, Estonia, Ireland, Malta, Scotland, and Serbia, as well as the EU LifeComp framework. A total of 496 specific competencies were identified and organized using a predefined analytical framework encompassing three main areas: *Self in Context*, *Education & Learning*, and *Work-Career-Livelihood*. Each of these areas was linked to corresponding general competencies, such as knowledge, attitudes, practical skills, social networking skills, and critical understanding of self in educational and work settings. Further analysis yielded a refined list of 244 items distributed across the aforementioned areas.

DEFINITIONS OF CMS

The various definitions of CMS illustrate that it is a multidimensional concept that includes a range of abilities crucial for lifelong career development. The definitions highlight the significance of self-awareness, learning, and adaptability, as well as the development of competencies across various domains, implying a holistic approach to personal, social, educational, and occupational development. They also emphasize the interconnected nature of skills, attitudes, and capabilities, as particularly specified in the Scottish Framework, and consider the lifespan perspective.

METHOD

To analyse career management competencies systematically, a structured approach was applied:

- Identification of relevant frameworks: Ten CMS frameworks were selected from various regions, including Ireland, Serbia, England, Canada, Australia, Scotland, Malta, and the LifeComp-EU framework.
- Competency Extraction and Documentation: Competencies were extracted from each framework and documented in a structured Excel spreadsheet, enabling clear and organized comparison across frameworks.

- Categorization and refinement: After documentation, competencies were categorized into broad areas common across all frameworks, allowing overarching themes and shared competency areas to be identified. These broad categories were then refined into specific subcategories for detailed analysis.
- Competency Extraction and Documentation: For each framework, we extracted individual competencies and documented them in a structured Excel spreadsheet. This facilitated a clear and organized comparison across frameworks.

PRELIMINARY RESULTS

The table 1 provides a detailed breakdown of competences within CMS frameworks that have been extracted from the selected CSM frameworks, highlighting the frequency and percentage of each competence category overall. The overall number of items extracted was Overall number of items extracted reduced from 496 to 244. The largest of extracted

items are in the category of "Work – Career – Livelihood" (41.3% of total extracted items), with practical skills (23.2%) being single most important item in the group, and overall. "Self in context" also gets a significant attention with 40.5% of extracted items belonging to this category, with a balanced distribution across social and emotional skills, attitudes, and self-awareness. "Education & Learning" is the least emphasised, accounting for 18.1% of the total extracted items, with a focus on understanding the world of education and learning.

The initial results provide a comprehensive catalogue of competencies identified in international CMS frameworks, which will serve as a source for contextualizing a methodology to monitor progress and measure the quality of outreach to NEETs in the six Western Balkan countries. By defining learning outcomes in the form of a CMS framework, the initiative aims to support public employment services and other stakeholders in their efforts to ensure successful implementation of the Youth Guarantee in the region.

Competence	Frequency	%
A. Self in context	201	40.5%
A1. Social and emotional skills	42	8.5%
A2. Attitudes	53	10.7%
A3. Knowledge about and critical understanding of self in context	59	11.9%
A4. Community & social networking skills	47	9.5%
B. Education & Learning	90	18.1%
B1. Knowledge about and critical understanding of the world of education and learning	51	10.3%
B2. Learning Skills	39	7.9%
C. Work – Career – Livelihood	205	41.3%
C1. Knowledge about and critical understanding of the labour market	90	18.1%
C2. Practical skills	115	23.2%
Total	496	100.0%

Table 1: Competence distribution in analysed CMS frameworks