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# IO2 - TOOLKIT FOR TEACHER

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## Summary

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# 1. Introduction

Education systems are, in many countries, still based on traditional models, in which the content or the “programme” plays a central role. However, this “content-based” education fails to adapt to today's complex society and its demands and there is a growing need for a “competence-based” approach, in which the learner plays a central role in the process itself. Even if competence-based education could represent a challenge to the traditional teaching roles, it also fosters pupils' involvement and development of those skills that are fundamental to fit into our society.

In this paragraph we will focus on the comparison between “content-based” and “competence-based” education, followed by a definition of the term “competence” according to the European Qualifications Framework.

**Key words:** competence-based education; competence; knowledge; skills.

The concept of "competence" is one of the best solutions to respond to the need for change linked to today's complex society. A society that is no longer static and predictable, but, in contrast where key knowledge, relationship and communication models, the employment demands, are constantly changing. Faced with today's society, education systems are required to change their system and modalities, while maintaining their purpose unchanged: enabling people and communities to live together in a system based on mutual rights, recognized to all people, and shared duties for which everybody is responsible.

The main advantage of competences is to allow, if properly understood, to put the learner at the centre of the learning process instead of the content or "programme" as in the traditional education model.

What does it change in the teaching action of a teacher who wants to move from a content-based to a competence-based approach? In the first case the focus is on what should serve to achieve the objectives, whereas in the second case the focus is on the learning objectives of the subjects, starting from which the appropriate didactic actions are identified.

The most adopted method in the Italian school system is, still today, the content approach mediated by the frontal lesson. The need in terms of learning of girls and boys who face the so-called "disciplines" are ignored in didactics by content.

The curriculum or, according to an outdated concept, the programme are a key focus of the content approach. The subjects become passive, they are required to become part of a static corpus of knowledge, to adhere also to the values and meanings that knowledge conveys.

The school focused on contents is simple and reassuring for teachers: it does not question their cognitive authority, it allows the repetition of lessons one year after the other, it does not provide for negotiation and comparison, it brings the relationship back to a heavy cognitive asymmetry, it Takes their responsibilities away, it reduces the commitment in the planning

phase, in the preparation of the single lesson, in the evaluation. This approach clearly separates teaching and learning. The teacher has two duties: to explain all the contents and to evaluate. Learning remains the responsibility of the learner.

The purpose of the school is to be sought in objective learning which involves the students' protagonism, but the responsibility to build activities and situations that allow and encourage the development of the learning itself lies with the teacher.

In didactics by competences, objective competences are defined in the planning phase. These competences, when complex, are "disassembled" into sub-dimensions (e.g. knowledge and skills or objective sub-competences). The next step requires complex reasoning and articulates a didactic planning (right to micro-planning). It is, in fact, a question of determining which are the appropriate didactic actions, activities, information sessions, experiences, and so on, in order to facilitate the learning of those competences.

Each didactic action is intended to produce learning and must answer the following questions:

- What expertise am I acquiring?
- How does this competence translate into everyday life? Can I give concrete examples?
- What educational activities will I carry out together with my pupils to promote their acquisition as well as to train their use?
- Which assessment (training) and self-assessment tools will I use?
- What information and contents are essential to carry out these activities?
- How will I make my pupils aware of the process they are going through?
- How do I link this new learning to what my learners already know and can do?
- Am I able to motivate the usefulness of this learning?
- Have I planned moments when there will be a "production" from the students? The outcome will be... (product, composition, other...)?
- If the objective skills are not achieved, do I have in mind activities and didactic actions to recover them?
- How does this objective competence fit into the general aims of the current school year?
- Have I foreseen ways to encourage children's reflexivity and self-assessment?
- Have I defined, with my colleagues, at what level of autonomy this competence should be achieved?
- Which other colleagues, through the tools of their disciplines, will contribute to the acquisition of this competence?
- Have I confronted them and we integrated the didactic program?

Answering these questions in an appropriate way requires effort and time; program and micro planning are undoubtedly more demanding, but the degree of pupil involvement increases exponentially, as does the results in terms of acquiring skills. Assessment then becomes no longer a separate moment, but an integral part of the process, and the teacher does not, in turn, escape the assessment and self-assessment of his/her own work.

The European Union (European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning, 2008 - EQF) defines competences as follows: "Competence" means the **"proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study**

**situations and in professional and/or personal development. [...] Competences are described in terms of responsibility and autonomy".**

Check it here:

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:111:0001:0007:EN:PDF>

It is useful to also include the relevant definitions of "skills" and "knowledge" in the EQF:  
**Knowledge** «indicates the outcome of the assimilation of information through learning. Knowledge is the set of facts, principles, theories and practices related to a field of study or work. In the context of the EQF, knowledge is described as theoretical and/or practical»<sup>1</sup>.

**Skills** «indicate the ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems. In the context of the EQF skills are described as cognitive (use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) and practical (involving manual skills and the use of methods, materials, tools)».

#### **Summary box n. 1**

What is a competence: common aspects among the definitions:

They are a set of knowledge, skills, motivations, beliefs, values and interests.

They are associated with a successful performance.

They are articulated in a combination of various elements that differentiate people's performances.

Furthermore, CEDEFOP defines competencies as "Ability to apply learning outcomes adequately in a defined context (education, work, personal or professional development) or Ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development.

Competence is not limited to cognitive elements (involving the use of theory, concepts or tacit knowledge); it also encompasses functional aspects (including technical skills) as well as interpersonal attributes (e.g. social or organisational skills) and ethical values." (CEDEFOP, 2008).

The Recommendation sets two deadlines:

- 2010 to relate the national qualification systems to the EQF.
- 2012 to introduce in individual qualification certificates a reference to the corresponding EQF level.

EQF level.

Since 2012, therefore, a reference to the corresponding level of the EQF has been introduced in all new qualification certificates, degrees and diplomas, thus completing and reinforcing the

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<sup>1</sup> Cedefop (2008) Future Skill Needs in Europe: Medium-term forecast, synthesis report. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

European mobility instruments, such as the Europass, Erasmus and ECTS Portfolio. This recommendation consequently established a common reference to link the national qualification systems of different countries and facilitate communication between them. A network of independent, but linked and mutually understandable, qualification systems is thus created.

The whole debate on certification and competences born within Europe seemed to follow two parallel paths: on the one hand, the progressive development of the concept of competence (in terms of citizenship, life skills, essential and strategic skills), on the other hand, the effort of transparency in the issuance of qualifications and qualifications expendable in the EU labour market. The main points of the Recommendation can be summarized as follows:

1. strengthening the role of guidance in national lifelong learning strategies in line with the Lisbon Strategy;
2. ensuring four actions to accompany citizens' life-long transitions, which can be summarised as:
  - fostering the acquisition of lifelong guidance skills;
  - facilitating access to guidance services for all citizens;
  - strengthening the quality assurance of guidance services;
  - encouraging coordination and cooperation between the various actors at national, regional and local level.

This Recommendation also defines 8 levels, which describe the knowledge and skills (learning outcomes) that characterize it. This makes it possible to classify the level of knowledge, skills and competences regardless of how it has been acquired. Specifically, learning outcomes are defined as what a learner knows, understands and is able to achieve at the end of a learning process. Outcomes are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competences, as already defined in the proposal for a Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 September 2006<sup>2</sup>. The EQF is therefore a reference tool for comparing the levels achieved by European citizens in a lifelong learning perspective, other than a tool for classifying qualifications according to a set of criteria based on the achievement of specific learning levels.

This tool is based on common reference levels, related to *learning outcomes* and placed in an eight-level structure":

- Level I □ Lower secondary school certificate
- Level II □ Two-year certification
- Level III □ Qualification
- Level IV □ National diploma
- Level V □ Advanced technical secondary education
- Level VI □ Bachelor's degree
- Level VII □ Master's Degree
- Level VIII □ Masters, PhDs

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<sup>2</sup> European Commission (2006): Key Competences for Lifelong Learning. Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council, Brussels, Belgium.

## Summary

	Content-based education	Competence-based education
<b>Learning process centered on</b>	the content, the curriculum or the “programme”	the learning subject
<b>Focus on</b>	what should serve to achieve the didactic objectives	the learning objectives and needs of the subjects
<b>Strategies</b>	frontal lessons	negotiation and dialogue with the students
<b>Role of the teacher in the learning process</b>	authority, asymmetry	more symmetry with the students
<b>Role of the learning subject in the learning process</b>	passive	active, empowered
<b>Impact on teachers</b>	simple and reassuring for teachers: it does not question their cognitive authority	challenging, more demanding, since this model requires self-assessment and accurate planning of didactic actions

## Quick question

What do we mean with the term “competence”?

According to the *European Qualifications Framework*, the term “*competence*” refers to the “*ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and/or personal development*”. A subject’s level of competencies determines his/her grade of responsibility and autonomy. Under the label of “*competence*” are included not only cognitive elements (such as the use of theory, concepts or tacit knowledge), but also functional aspects (including technical skills) and interpersonal attributes (e.g. social or organisational skills) and ethical values.

## 2. The European Regulatory Framework

Since 2000, the European Council has been supporting a Lifelong Learning perspective, which means that learning is no more conceived as something to be promoted in a single phase of life. Instead, it must become a permanent condition for people. With the “Lisbon Strategy”, Europe has undertaken a path of innovation in conceiving education. This path aims to increase the external openness of the educational systems, linking what is learned to everyday life and underlining that every citizen must have "the skills needed to live and work in this new information society".

This paragraph proposes an overview, from 2000 to 2010, of the evolution of the concept of “learning” and of the actions implemented to promote it and to combat early school leaving in European countries.

**Key words:** Lifelong Learning; European Councils

The idea of "new basic skills to be provided throughout life" arose at European level through the "Lisbon Strategy" objective (Lisbon European Council 23-24 March 2000)<sup>3</sup>. In the context of a "knowledge-based economy", this objective aims at strengthening employment, carrying out economic reforms and consolidating social cohesion. In the field of education and training, the European Council therefore invited the Member States, the Council and the Commission to take the necessary initiatives within their own spheres of competence in order to achieve the objectives in fig.1

In order to cope with continuous change and the demands for even higher and updated skills, learning can no longer be promoted in a single phase of life.

Instead it must become a permanent condition for people. This is why we speak of Lifelong Learning.

This is an essential priority for employment, effective economic action and full participation in social life.

In fact, the Lisbon Strategy is absolutely essential because for the first time in a European document, economic development is explicitly linked to investment in education and training.

As can be seen from the objectives listed above, the Stockholm European Council suggests - as one of the main strategies - to increase the external openness of the education systems, by linking what is learned to everyday life.

It therefore reiterates that every citizen must have "the skills needed to live and work in this new information society", giving education a decisive role.

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<sup>3</sup> Conclusions, P. (2000). LISBON EUROPEAN COUNCIL 23 AND 24 MARCH. Retrieved March, 25, 2016



Fig. 1

In this context, it is important to add a note on the Bologna and Copenhagen processes:

The Bologna Process, in short, is a process of reform of the higher education system carried out at international level. The aims expressed in the Bologna Process and widely shared by its members are aimed at a reorganisation of education policies in a communitarian sense, providing all the necessary means to achieve it. More specifically, the Bologna Process provided for (and still provides) for a series of pivotal points from which the other objectives branch out. First of all, the aim is to create the supply of a broad base of high-quality knowledge to ensure Europe's

economic and social development, so as to make the Community more competitive at international level. Another primary objective is to increase the attractiveness of higher education to non-European countries. Internally, on the other hand, the Bologna Process aims to build a teaching organisation that is increasingly in tune with the fast global world and the interests of the Community, so as to guarantee, on the other hand, a better spend ability of the qualification in the labour market within the whole European area. To make this objective feasible, a previous step must be the transparency and readability of educational pathways and degrees, or rather a harmonisation of degrees in order to make them comparable between the different institutions. We are therefore talking mainly about formal learning processes.

The Copenhagen process, on the other hand, shifts to the areas of non-formal and informal learning, since its specific aim is to contribute to the achievement of the education objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy, and conceives lifelong learning as a key term within it, which enables people, at every stage of their lives, to take part in experiences that stimulate learning. The process involves:

- a political dimension aimed at establishing common European objectives and reforming national VET systems;
- the development of common European frameworks and tools to increase transparency and quality of competences and qualifications, and to increase mobility;
- cooperation aimed at fostering mutual learning at European level and involving all relevant stakeholders at national level.

#### **BOX – From the Lisbon Strategy to Europe 2020<sup>4</sup>**

The overall strategy for achieving this goal **by 2010** covered about ten different areas including social policies and fields which were relevant to build a knowledge-based economy as well as to modernise the European social model. Since then, every year, the Commission presents a report (**Spring Report**) to the Spring European Council in which the progress made in implementing this strategy is examined in detail. On this occasion, the Heads of State and Government of the Union assess progress made and set future priorities for achieving the Lisbon objectives.

Since 2000, the main stages have been:

March 2001: Stockholm European Council

It defines three strategic objectives:

- increasing the quality and effectiveness of the education and training systems in the European Union;
- facilitating access to education and training systems;
- opening up educational systems to the wider world.

The report also defined thirteen concrete objectives and, for each of them, specified a number of key issues to be addressed, as well as an indicative list of indicators to measure their implementation through the above-mentioned "open method of coordination".

**March 2002: Barcelona European Council**

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<sup>4</sup> Lundvall, B. Å., & Lorenz, E. (2011). From the Lisbon strategy to Europe 2020. *Towards a social investment welfare state*, 333-352.

A. "Detailed Work Programme" was presented in this council. A new overall objective was identified: "to make the EU education and training systems a world quality reference by 2010".

**May 2003: Council of Education Ministers**

A. "Detailed Work Programme" was presented in this council. A new overall objective was identified "to make EU education and training systems a world quality reference by 2010".

Five priority areas are identified, also defining the reference levels to be achieved by 2010:

- decrease of early school dropouts (percentage not exceeding 10%);
- increase of graduates in mathematics, science and technology (increase of at least 15% and at the same time decrease in gender imbalance);
- increase in young people completing upper secondary school (at least 85% of the 22-year-old population);
- decrease in the proportion of 15-year-olds with low reading literacy (by at least 20% compared to 2000);
- increase in the European average participation in lifelong learning initiatives (at least up to 12% of the adult working age population aged 25/64)

**March 2004: Brussels European Council**

It is issued the joint interim report of the Council and the Commission ("Education and Training 2010" The success of the Lisbon strategy hinges on urgent reforms"), outlining progress and delays in the cooperation process. Three "levers" were also identified on which to base future action to meet the Lisbon objectives and schedule:

- to focus reforms and investments on key sectors;
- to make lifelong learning a concrete reality;
- building a Europe of education and training.

Since then, the Council and the Commission have undertaken to monitor progress in implementing the two-year work plan. However, in June 2005, noting the poor results achieved, the Heads of State and Government of the European Union decided to relaunch the Lisbon Strategy by focusing it on two main objectives: economic growth and employment, and a three-year programme is established

**March 2005: Spring European Council**

The Council approves the "Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs 2005-2008", which set out the broad economic policy guidelines for the three-year period to be implemented at national level. On the basis of the general guidelines approved in March, each Member State is due to write a national plan for growth and employment on a three-year basis (2005-2008), setting out reforms and other measures of national competence needed to move closer to the objectives of the Lisbon strategy.

**July 2005: Lisbon Community Programme**

On 20 July 2005, the European Commission presented its Community plan ("Lisbon Community Programme") for growth and employment, including the actions for which the Union is responsible, complementary to those contained in the national programmes and in any case converging towards the same objectives as the Lisbon Strategy.

**March 2006: Spring European Council**

The Council, on the basis of the Commission's assessment of the state of implementation of the Strategy, identifies four priority areas for action:

- R&D and innovation;
- business environment;
- job opportunities;
- integrated energy policy;

In such a framework, it defines a number of specific actions, urging Member States to implement them by the end of 2007.

**October 2006: First national report on the implementation of the Lisbon Community Programme**

Member States submit annual progress reports on the implementation of the National Reform Plans (NRPs). There is a renewed and real commitment to reform by Member States and greater involvement of Parliament and social partners in the Lisbon Strategy, although there are considerable differences between Member States in terms of timing, intensity and commitment to reform. As a result, progress in the different policy areas is also uneven

**March 2007: Spring European Council**

The Spring European Council stresses the importance of the exchange of best practices in the context of multilateral surveillance and calls for greater cooperation between the Lisbon coordinators.

**October 2007: Presentation of Member States' annual progress reports on the implementation of the NRPs.**

The main progress made highlighted in the Commission's report covers the following issues: the increase in economic growth from 1.8% in 2005 to 2.9% in 2007 and 2.4% in 2008 (forecast data); - the creation of about 6.5 million jobs, plus a further 5 expected by 2009 (with a reduction in the unemployment rate below 7); The employment rate of 66% has come very close to the overall Lisbon target of 70%.

It should be noted, however, that not all Member States have undertaken reforms with equal determination.

**December 2007: Strategic Report of the European Commission on the state of implementation of the Strategy ("Keeping up the Pace of Change").**

The Commission's budget is prudent. According to the Commission's assessments, the first Lisbon Community Programme 2005-2008 has produced important results: the improvement of the legal framework of the internal market through the adoption of the Services Directive and the implementation of the Financial Services Action Plan; more targeted regulation to eliminate unnecessary costs and remove barriers to innovation; half of the Member States have developed, or are developing, policies based on the concept of "flexicurity". In addition, the establishment of public-private partnerships is spreading a sense of belonging to the Strategy in Europe, together with the development of a policy agenda for the modernisation of the European economy with the aim of ensuring the welfare needed to meet the challenges posed by globalisation.

On the basis of these analyses, the Commission's Strategic Report addresses the prospects for the years to come and invites Member States to continue on the path of reform, with a view to opening the new programming cycle 2008-2010.

Following the Strategic Report of December 2007, the Spring European Council of 13 and 14 March 2008 launched the second three-year cycle of the Strategy, reconfirming the validity of the Integrated Guidelines also for the period 2008-2010 and endorsing the country-specific recommendations on the economic and employment policies of the Member States and the euro area, drawn up by the Council on the basis of Commission proposals.

In order to overcome the difficulties encountered in the previous cycle, the 2008-2010 LCP focuses the actions to be taken on ten key new objectives to be achieved by 2010:

1. By mid-2008, the Commission will propose a renewed social agenda and help to fill skills gaps.
2. Presentation, in 2008, of proposals for a common immigration policy.
3. Adoption of legislation on small businesses to unlock the growth potential of SMEs over their life cycle.
4. Reduction of the EU administrative burdens by 25% by 2012 and implementation of an ambitious simplification programme.
5. Strengthening of the Single Market by increasing competition in services and taking new measures to integrate the financial services market.

6. Implementation of the "fifth freedom" (the free movement of knowledge) and creation of a genuine European Research Area.
7. Improvement the framework conditions for innovation.
8. Completion of the internal energy market and adoption of a climate change package.
9. Promotion of an industrial policy aimed at a more sustainable production and consumption model.
10. Opening up of new perspectives for international trade and investment and creation of common regulatory and standards area.

In order to ensure the implementation of the Programme, it is proposed, first of all, that the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission agree on strategic reform objectives and actions, with a strong emphasis on the objectives and actions of the Lisbon Community Programme. Secondly, the Commission believes that the implementation of the LCP needs to be rigorously monitored, with an annual overall Commission report on the Union's achievements in the economic reform process and individual reports, also drawn up by the Commission, on the progress made by the Member States. The European Parliament is also invited to examine these results and the process should be concluded with a possible update of the LCP and the strategic guidelines by the Spring European Council.

#### **February 2010: Lisbon Strategy evaluation document**

In the final document you can read: *The Lisbon Strategy has helped build broad consensus on the reforms that the EU needs .... .. and it has delivered concrete benefits for EU citizens and businesses ... .. but increased employment has not always succeeded in lifting people out of poverty ... Structural reforms have made the EU economy more resilient and helped us weather the storm ... However, the Lisbon Strategy was not sufficiently equipped to address some of the causes of the crisis from the outset ... Whilst much has been achieved, the overall pace of implementing reforms was both slow and uneven... The importance of interdependence in a closely integrated economy, particularly in the euro area, has not been sufficiently recognised ... A stronger link between the Lisbon Strategy and other EU instruments and sector specific initiatives or policy measures would have improved its effectiveness ... Earmarking of Structural Funds has helped mobilise considerable investments for growth and jobs although there is further to go ... The partnership between the EU and Member States has generally been a positive experience ... But implementation has suffered from variable ownership and weak governance structures ... The impact of country-specific recommendations has been variable ... Policy learning and exchange of good practices has been stepped up ... Communication has been an Achilles' heel of the Strategy .... More could have been done to strengthen the euro-area dimension ... The external dimension could have been stronger.*

#### **March 2010: Communication from the Commission "A European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth "**

The new "EU 2020" strategy should strengthen the social dimension, combining the economic recovery strategy, the strategy for growth and jobs, the sustainable development and the focus on climate change in an effective and coherent way.

Europe 2020 has three mutually reinforcing priorities:

à smart growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation;

à sustainable growth: promoting a more efficient, greener and more competitive economy;

à inclusive growth: promoting a high-employment economy that fosters social and territorial cohesion.

Moreover, the Commission proposes the main objectives for the EU:

- 75% of people aged between 20 and 64 should have a job;
- 3% of EU GDP should be invested in R&D;
- the "20/20/20" climate/energy targets must be met (including a 30% increase in emission reductions if conditions allow);

- the school drop-out rate must be below 10% and at least 40% of young people must have a university degree;
- 20 million fewer people must be at risk of poverty.

These objectives are interrelated and fundamental to our global success. To ensure that each Member State adapts the Europe 2020 strategy to its specific situation, the Commission proposes that EU targets be translated into national targets and pathways.



Fig.2

### 3. Key competences

Key competencies are defined as those competencies "that everyone needs for personal fulfilment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment".

In 2006 Key competencies are identified with reference to 8 areas, reformed and updated in 2018, by the Council of the European Union.

**Key words:** Key competence; lifelong learning; development.

Key competences have been defined by the Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union entitled Key competences for lifelong learning issued, on 18 December 2006, as those competences "which everyone needs for personal fulfilment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment". Key competences are identified with reference to **8 areas**:

- Communication in the mother tongue
- Communication in foreign languages
- Mathematical competence
- Digital competences
- Learning to learn
- Social and civic competences
- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship
- Cultural awareness and expression.

For each competence, essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to the competence are indicated<sup>5</sup>.

These skills should be acquired during the course of education and form a basis for further learning in lifelong learning.

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<sup>5</sup> Definitions in the European Qualifications Framework:

**Knowledge:** indicates the result of the assimilation of information through learning. Knowledge is the set of facts, principles, theories and practices, related to a field of study or work; knowledge is described as theoretical and/or practical.

**Skills:** indicate the ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems; skills are described as cognitive (use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) and practical (involving manual skills and the use of methods, materials, tools).

**Competences:** indicate the proven ability to use personal, social and/or methodological knowledge, skills and abilities in work or study situations and in professional and/or personal development; skills are described in terms of responsibility and autonomy.

<b>Key competence (2006)</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Communication in the mother tongue</b>	Communication in the mother tongue is the ability to express and interpret thoughts, feelings and facts in both oral and written form (oral comprehension, oral expression, written comprehension and written expression) and to interact adequately linguistically in the whole range of cultural and social contexts - education and training, work, home life and leisure.
<b>Communication in foreign languages</b>	Communication in foreign languages essentially shares the main skills required for communication in the mother tongue: it is based on the ability to understand, express and interpret thoughts, feelings and facts in both oral and written form (oral comprehension, oral expression, written comprehension and written expression) in an appropriate range of social contexts - work, home, leisure, education and training - according to individual wishes or needs. Communication in foreign languages also requires skills such as mediation and intercultural understanding. The level of command inevitably varies among the four dimensions, the different languages and depending on the own background, environment and needs/interests.
<b>Scientific and Mathematical competences</b>	<p>A. Mathematical competence is the ability to use addition, subtraction, multiplication, division and percentages in mental and written form to solve a range of problems in everyday situations. The emphasis is on process and activity aspects as well as knowledge. Mathematical competence involves - to varying degrees - the ability and willingness to use mathematical models of thought (logical and spatial thinking) and presentation (formulas, models, constructs, graphs/charts).</p> <p>B. Scientific competence involves the ability and willingness to use the body of knowledge and methodologies used to explain the natural world in order to identify problems and draw evidence-based conclusions. Competence in technology is considered to be the application of knowledge and methodology with the aim to respond to the wishes or needs felt by human beings. Both areas of this competence involve an understanding of the changes brought about by human activity and an awareness of each citizen's responsibility.</p>
<b>Digital Competences</b>	Digital competence consists of being able to use Information Society Technologies (IST) for work, leisure and communication in a familiar and critical manner. It is supported by basic ICT skills: the use of computers to find, assess, store, produce, present and exchange information and to communicate and participate in collaborative networks via the Internet.
<b>Learning to learn</b>	"Learning to learn" is the ability to persevere in learning. People should also be able to organise their learning through effective time and information management, both individually and in groups.
<b>Social and civic competences</b>	These skills cover all forms of behaviour that enable people to participate effectively and constructively in social and working life - in particular life in increasingly diverse societies - as well as to resolve conflicts where necessary. Civic competence allows people to fully participate in civic life through knowledge of socio-political concepts and structures and a commitment to active and democratic participation.
<b>Entrepreneurship</b>	Entrepreneurship is about a person's ability to translate ideas into action. This includes

	creativity, innovation and risk-taking as well as the ability to plan and manage projects to achieve objectives. It is a useful skill for everyone in everyday life, at home and in society, it is useful for workers to be aware of the context in which they operate and to be able to seize the opportunities that are offered and it is a starting point for the more specific skills and knowledge that entrepreneurs need when they start a social or business activity.
<b>Cultural awareness and expression</b>	Awareness of the importance of creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions in a wide variety of media, including music, performing arts, literature and visual arts.

In 2018 The Council of the European Union adopted a revised recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning. The 8 key competences are maintained, but they have been reformed and updated.

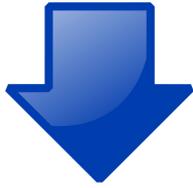
<b>Key competence (2018)<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Literacy competence</b>	<p>Literacy competence indicates the ability to identify, understand, express, create and interpret concepts, feelings, facts and opinions, in both oral and written form, using visual, sound and digital materials from various disciplines and contexts. It implies the ability to communicate and relate effectively with others in an appropriate and creative way.</p> <p>Its development forms the basis for further learning and linguistic interaction. Depending on the context, functional literacy competence may be developed in the mother tongue, the language of school education and/or the official language of a country or region.</p> <p><b><i>Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence</i></b></p> <p>This competence includes knowledge of reading and writing and a good understanding of written information and therefore presupposes knowledge of vocabulary, functional grammar and the functions of language.</p> <p>People should have the ability to communicate orally and in writing in a variety of situations and to monitor and adapt their communication to the situation. This competence also includes the ability to distinguish and use different types of sources, to search, collect and process information, to use aids, to formulate and express arguments convincingly and appropriately to the context, both orally and in writing. It includes critical thinking and the ability to evaluate and use information. A positive attitude towards this competence involves a willingness to engage in critical and constructive dialogue, an appreciation of aesthetic qualities and an interest in interacting with others. It implies awareness of the impact of language on others and the need to understand and use language in a positive and socially responsible way.</p>
<b>Multilingual competence</b>	This competence defines the ability to use several languages in an appropriate and effective way for the purpose of common use. In principle it shares the main skills with alphabetical competence: it is based on the ability to understand, express and interpret

<sup>6</sup> European Commission (2006) : Key Competences for Lifelong Learning. Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council, Brussels, Belgium.

	<p>concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written form (oral comprehension, oral expression, written comprehension and written expression) in an appropriate range of social and cultural contexts according to individual wishes or needs. Language skills include a historical dimension and intercultural competences. This competence is based on the ability to mediate between different languages and media, as set out in the Common European Framework of Reference. Depending on the circumstances, it may include the maintenance and further development of mother tongue skills and the acquisition of the official language(s) of a country.</p> <p><b><i>Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence</i></b></p> <p>This competence requires knowledge of the vocabulary and functional grammar of different languages and knowledge of the main types of verbal interaction and language registers. Knowledge of social conventions, the cultural aspect and the variability of languages is important.</p> <p>The essential skills for this competence are the ability to understand oral messages, to start, stop and end conversations and to read, understand and write texts, at different levels of proficiency in different languages, according to individual needs. It also presupposes respect for the individual linguistic profile of each person, including both respect for the mother tongue of those who belong to minorities and/or come from a migrant background and the appreciation of the official language(s) of a country as a common framework for interaction.</p>
<p><b>Mathematical competence and competence in science, technology, and engineering</b></p>	<p>A.Mathematical competence is the ability to develop and apply mathematical thinking and understanding to solve a range of problems in everyday situations. Starting from a solid mastery of mathematical arithmetic competence, the emphasis is on process and activity aspects as well as knowledge. Mathematical competence involves, at different levels, the ability to use mathematical models of thought and presentation (formulas, models, constructs, graphs, diagrams) and the willingness to do so.</p> <p><b><i>Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence</i></b></p> <p>The knowledge required in mathematics includes a sound knowledge of numbers, measurements and structures, fundamental operations and basic mathematical presentations, an understanding of mathematical terms and concepts and an awareness of the questions that mathematics can answer. People should be able to apply basic mathematical principles and processes in everyday life at home and at work (e.g. in the financial sphere) and follow and examine concatenated topics. People should be able to carry out mathematical reasoning, understand mathematical tests and communicate in mathematical language, as well as use appropriate aids, including statistical data and graphs, and understand the mathematical aspects of digitization.A positive attitude in relation to mathematics is based on respect for the truth and willingness to search for causes and assess their validity.</p> <p>B.Competence in science refers to the ability to explain the world around us using all the knowledge and methodologies, including observation and experimentation, to identify problems and draw conclusions based on empirical facts, and the willingness to do so. Skills in technology and engineering are applications of such knowledge and methodologies to respond to the wishes or needs felt by human beings. Competence in science, technology and engineering involves understanding the changes brought about by human activity and the individual responsibility of the citizen.</p> <p><b><i>Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence</i></b> In science, technology and engineering, essential knowledge includes the basic principles of the natural world, fundamental scientific concepts, theories, theories, principles and methods, technologies and technological products and processes, and an understanding of the impact of science, technology and engineering, as well as human activity in general, on the natural environment.</p>

	<p>Skills include the understanding of science as a process of investigation through specific methodologies, including controlled observations and experiments, the ability to use logical and rational thinking to test a hypothesis, and the willingness to give up one's beliefs if they are contradicted by new empirical findings. This competence includes a critical assessment attitude and curiosity, an interest in ethical issues, and attention to both safety and environmental sustainability, particularly with regard to scientific and technological progress in relation to the individual, family, community and global issues.</p>
<b>Digital Competences</b>	<p>Digital competence presupposes an interest in digital technologies and their use with familiarity and a critical and responsible spirit to learn, work and participate in society. It includes computer and digital literacy, communication and collaboration, media literacy, digital content creation (including programming), security (including being comfortable in the digital world and having cyber security skills), intellectual property issues, problem solving and critical thinking.</p> <p><i>Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence</i></p> <p>People should understand how digital technologies can help communication, creativity and innovation, while being aware of the opportunities, limitations, effects and risks involved. They should understand the general principles, mechanisms and rationale behind evolving digital technologies, as well as the basic functioning and use of different devices, software and networks. People should take a critical approach to the validity, reliability and impact of information and data made available by digital means and be aware of the ethical and legal principles involved with the use of digital technologies.</p> <p>Interacting with digital technologies and content requires a thoughtful and critical, but also curious, open and interested in the future of their evolution. It also requires an ethical, safe and responsible approach to the use of such tools.</p>
<b>Personal, social and learning to learn competence</b>	<p>Personal, social and learning to learn competence consists of the ability to reflect on oneself, to manage time and information effectively, to work with others constructively, to remain resilient and to manage one's learning and career. It includes the ability to cope with uncertainty and complexity, to learn to learn, to promote 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 manage conflict in a supportive and inclusive environment.</p> <p><i>Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence</i></p> <p>For successful interpersonal relationships and participation in society it is essential to understand codes of conduct and communication standards generally accepted in different environments and societies. It requires knowledge of one's preferred learning strategies, one's skills development needs and different ways of developing skills and seeking opportunities for education, training and careers, or identifying available forms of guidance and support.</p> <p>This competence is based on a positive attitude towards personal, social and physical well-being and lifelong learning.</p> <p>It is based on an attitude of collaboration, assertiveness and integrity, including respect for the diversity of others and their needs, and a willingness both to overcome prejudice and to compromise</p>
<b>Citizenship competence</b>	<p>Competence in citizenship refers to the ability to act as responsible citizens and to 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.</p>

	<p><b><i>Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence</i></b></p> <p>Competence in citizenship is based on knowledge of basic concepts and phenomena concerning individuals, groups, working organisations, society, economy and culture. It includes knowledge of contemporary events as well as critical interpretation of major events in national, European and world history. It also embraces knowledge of the objectives, values and policies of social and political movements as well as sustainable systems, in particular global climate and demographic change and its causes.</p> <p>Competence in citizenship requires the ability to engage effectively with others to achieve a common or public interest, such as the sustainable development of society.</p> <p>Constructive participation requires a willingness to participate in democratic decision-making at all levels and in civic activities. It includes support for social and cultural diversity, gender equality and social cohesion, sustainable lifestyles, the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, and a willingness to respect the privacy of others and to be environmentally responsible.</p>
<p><b>Entrepreneurship competence</b></p>	<p>Entrepreneurial competence refers to the ability to act on ideas and opportunities and turn 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.</p> <p><b><i>Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence</i></b></p> <p>Entrepreneurial competence requires an awareness that there are different opportunities and contexts in which ideas can be turned into action in personal, social and professional activities, and an understanding of how these opportunities arise.</p> <p>Entrepreneurial skills are based on creativity, which includes imagination, strategic thinking and problem solving, as well as critical and constructive reflection in a context of innovation and evolving creative processes.</p> <p>An entrepreneurial attitude is characterised by initiative and self-awareness, proactivity, foresight, courage and perseverance in achieving goals. It includes the desire to motivate others and the ability to value their ideas, to feel empathy and care for people and the world, and to accept responsibility by applying ethical approaches at all times.</p>
<p><b>Cultural awareness and expression competence</b></p>	<p>Competence in cultural awareness and expression implies understanding and respect for how ideas and meanings are creatively expressed and communicated in different cultures and through a range of arts and other cultural forms. It requires a commitment to understand, develop and express one's ideas and the meaning of one's function or role in society in a variety of ways and contexts.</p> <p><b><i>Essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to this competence</i></b></p> <p>This competence requires knowledge of local, national, regional, European and world cultures and expressions, including their languages, their expressive heritage and traditions, and cultural products, as well as an understanding of how these expressions can influence each other and affect the ideas of individuals.</p> <p>Related skills include the ability to express and interpret figurative and abstract ideas, experiences and emotions with empathy, and the ability to do so in different arts and other cultural forms. They also include the ability to recognize and realize opportunities for personal, social or commercial enhancement through the arts and other cultural forms and the ability to engage in creative processes, both individually and collectively.</p>



*This section outlined the 8 key competencies, updated by the council of the European Union in 2018, and so listed: Literacy competence; Multilingual competence; Mathematical competence and competence in science, technology, and engineering; Digital Competences; Personal, social and learning to learn competence; Citizenship competence; Entrepreneurship competence; Cultural awareness and expression competence.*

## 4. Formal, non formal and informal learning

With the term lifelong lifewide learning we refer to every area of life and every time of the subject useful to the learning process. This conceptual broadening makes it possible to identify the learning possibilities that exist outside the contexts or the developmental period linked to the school years.

To pursue this objective, it is essential to identify the various types of learning: Formal learning, Non-formal learning, Informal learning.

**Key words:** lifelong lifewide learning; learning possibilities.

Nowaday everywhere we talk about lifelong learning, which refers to the vertical dimension; it refers to the fact that learning concerns the whole life span<sup>7</sup>. This conviction also derives from an understanding of the learning dimension inherent in every human action. The concept of lifelong learning represents the overcoming of a defined temporal dimension (the time of initial education) that once represented, in the existence of a subject, often the only portion of life dedicated to learning.

In order to be more complete it is also necessary to speak of lifewide learning, an expression that refers to the horizontal dimension, which involves all areas of life and represents the overcoming of those places traditionally dedicated to learning (such as school and university) and the enhancement of every experience of the subject.

The complete expression then becomes lifelong lifewide learning with which times and spaces of learning expand to include every sphere of life and every life phase of the subject.

**Formal learning:** it takes place in an organized and structured context (in a school/training institution), is explicitly thought and designed as learning and leads to some form of certification.

**Non-formal learning:** it is learning related to activities that are planned but not explicitly designed as learning (what is not provided by a training institution and does not normally lead to certification, e.g. a day of in-depth study of a work problem in your profession).

**Informal learning:** the multiple forms of learning through experience resulting from daily life activities related to work, family, leisure; it is not organized or structured and does not lead to certification (e.g. membership).

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<sup>7</sup> Cedefop 2015. European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Cedefop reference series; No 104.

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In such a concept of learning, it is essential to make people, not knowledge professionals, understand how the concept has changed so that they can recognize in the various aspects of their lives the opportunities that encourage it and, through awareness, can take advantage of them.

A fundamental part (though not sufficient) of this attempt is a better naming of the various types of learning through which some representative terms have now entered the language, spreading even outside of the professionals.

## 5. How to enhance the competence learned outside school within the school curriculum

To be truly competent outside of school, it's fundamental to develop specific skills required by real situations, but various data show that what is done at school is hardly transferable directly to external practical contexts. In fact, Resnick identifies four general classes of discontinuity between learning at school and outside of school.

**Key words:** competence, out-of-school, theory and practice, shared activities.

Resnick (1987b)<sup>8</sup> point out that there are at least four main characteristics whereby learning outside of school differs from learning inside the school context.

The first is that at school individual cognition dominates, while outside of school cognition is shared. In other words, the dominant form of school learning and performance is individual. Although there are group activities of various kinds at school, students are judged by what they can do on their own, and most activities at school are designed as individual work. In contrast, many activities outside of school are socially shared.

Work, personal life and leisure take place within social systems and each person's ability to succeed in a given task depends on what others do and the way many people's mental and physical performance mixes.

The second characteristic is that pure mental activity prevails in school, while outside school what is important is the manipulation of instruments. At school, in fact, the greatest achievement is "pure thought": what individuals can do without the external support of books, calculators or other complex tools. Although the use of these tools can be allowed during learning, they cannot be used during tests and evaluations in general. School is an institution that values thinking that proceeds independently, without the help of physical and cognitive tools. On the contrary, most mental activities outside of school are closely related to tools and the resulting cognitive activity is modelled and dependent on the type of tools available.

The third characteristic concerns the contrast between manipulation of symbols at school and contextualised reasoning outside school.

The extensive use of tools is in fact only one of the ways in which extracurricular thinking involves the physical world to a greater extent than school thinking.

Outside school actions are closely related to objects and events; people often involve objects and events directly in their reasoning, without necessarily using symbols to represent them.

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<sup>8</sup> Resnick, L. B. (1987). The 1987 presidential address learning in school and out. *Educational researcher*, 16(9), 13-54.

School learning, on the contrary, is mostly based on symbols, whereas connections with symbolized events and objects are often lost. In other words, symbolic activity tends to distance itself from any meaningful context.

School learning is limited to the problem of learning rules for understanding symbols and writing according to these rules. What emerges, for example when comparing the application of arithmetic in the classroom and in the real world, is that what you learn in school - mostly symbolic rules of various kinds - is not connected with what you know outside of school. According to Resnick, if on the one hand school does not contribute directly to performance outside of school, on the other hand knowledge acquired outside of school is little used to support school learning.

This approach leads to isolation between school and extracurricular life.

The fourth characteristic consists in the contrast between learning general principles at school and the specific skills required by the situation outside.

Part of the aforementioned isolation, compared to everything else, lies in the teaching of general theoretical principles and competences. Its generality and transferability is undoubtedly the *raison d'être* of formal education. However, to be truly competent outside of school, people need to develop specific skills required by the situation.

#### **DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LEARNING AT SCHOOL AND OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL**

##### **Individual cognition at school / Shared cognition outside of school**

**At school:** students are assessed for what they can do on their own

**Outside:** work, personal life, fun require sharing activities

##### **Pure mental activity at school / Handling instruments outside of school**

**At School:** thinking proceeds automatically

**Outside:** most mental activities are intimately connected with the instruments

##### **Manipulation of symbols at school / Contextualized reasoning outside**

**At school:** learning is fundamentally based on symbols

**Outside:** actions are intimately connected with objects and events

##### **Learning general principles at school / Specific skills required by the situation outside of school**

**At school:** acquisition of general principles

**Outside:** acquisition of specific skills related to the situation

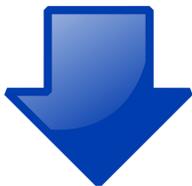
Various data show that what is done at school is hardly transferable directly to external practical contexts. It is also true that individuals who are not in school experience considerable difficulties when facing the changing of known contexts and may fail completely; on the contrary, individuals in school are able to do much better, although they rarely use the general

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principles taught at school and rather invent new specific methods, more appropriate to the situation.

Resnick therefore identifies four general classes of discontinuity between learning at school and the nature of cognitive activity outside of school.

In short: 1) schooling focuses on individual performance, while out-of-school mental work is often socially shared; 2) schooling aims to promote thinking without help, while out-of-school mental work usually involves cognitive tools; 3) school fosters symbolic thinking, while out-of-school mental activity engages directly with objects and situations; 4) schooling aims to teach general skills and knowledge, while situation-specific competences dominate externally.



*In this section are described Resnick's four main differences between learning outside of school and learning inside at school:*

- 1) schooling focuses on individual performance, while out-of-school mental work is often socially shared;*
- 2) schooling aims to promote thinking without help, while out-of-school mental work usually involves cognitive tools;*
- 3) school fosters symbolic thinking, while out-of-school mental activity engages directly with objects and situations;*
- 4) schooling aims to teach general skills and knowledge, while situation-specific competences dominate externally.*

## 6. The competency assessment matrix

To reach a **competence goal**, a useful approach is to analyse competence in its **multiple dimensions**, asking which knowledge, skills or resources the subject should use in order to develop a competent behaviour. That's why it's important to analyse the competence by planning a task or an activity based on general elements of a competency assessment matrix (Dimensions, Criteria, Indicators, Levels, Anchors).

**Key words:** competency assessment matrix, competence, task, dimensions, criteria, indicators, levels, anchors, skills, knowledge.

The competency assessment matrices are aimed at the analytical description of competence as well as the definition of criteria and level scales for the assessment of competences.

They are based on a definition of competence that focuses on its size and on the expected levels of mastery.

Performance assessment matrices are functional to the assessment of a particular performance or product.

### General elements of a competency assessment matrices

**General Dimensions:** indicate the particular characteristics that distinguish a given object of evaluation: *"what aspects do I consider in evaluating that particular object?"*

- **Criteria:** define the *quality parameters* on the basis of which an object is evaluated and answer the question *"based on what I can appreciate the quality of the object in question?"* Generally, in the construction of a matrix, criteria are considered alternatives to dimensions, as both invite to analyse some key elements of the object being assessed. The main distinction between the two terms is that criteria are qualitative.

- **Levels:** describe each criterion on a *scale of intensity*; they describe a **progression in the intensity** of the dimensions/criteria considered on the basis of an ordinal scale from the lowest to the highest level. The scales used in the matrices normally have 3 to 5 levels.

- **Anchors:** provide **concrete examples of performance** at the different levels described in the section.

### Building competency assessment matrices

Authentic tasks allow us to attest the mastery of the subject in relation to one or more expected competences. Therefore, the starting point in the planning of an authentic task is to ask oneself which competence(s) are to be developed in the pupils.

In order to design appropriate tasks and activities, it would be useful first of all to have a clear idea of the competence one would want to develop. A competency assessment matrix allows us to analyse the competence itself.

Starting from a competence goal chosen among those indicated in the policy documents, a useful approach is to analyse competence in its multiple dimensions, asking which knowledge, skills, cognitive processes and metacognitive, motivational resources the subject should use in order to develop a competent behaviour.

Referring to Le Boterf's proposal (2008)<sup>9</sup> according to which the subject acts in a competent way when he or she knows how to deploy a series of resources (knowing and knowing how to do, knowing how to act, wanting and being able to act), it is possible to identify three levels of competence analysis (see Castoldi, 2016):

- The **first level** includes the set of **cognitive resources**, i.e. the *knowledge* (knowing) and *skills* (knowing how to do) needed to tackle a given task.
- The **second level** focuses on the processes that characterize the mobilization of the previous resources (the ability to act) and identifies three types of processes: 1) the interpretation of the task to be faced ("**task reading**") such as, for example: understanding, analysis and recognition of the variables; 2) action processes ("**action strategies**") that recall the operational strategies that the subject must activate in order to face the task, such as the identification of possible solutions; 3) self-regulation processes ("**control/regulation**"), that recall the control and revision methods activated to adapt one's action to the changing situation faced.
- The **third level** recalls the **willingness to act** which condition the way the subject acts in the given situation (the will and the ability to act) and refer to the relationship of the subject with himself (self-esteem, recognition of his own resources etc.), with others (relationship, collaboration etc.), with the task (motivation, determination etc.), with the context (sense of belonging, attention to resources and constraints etc.).

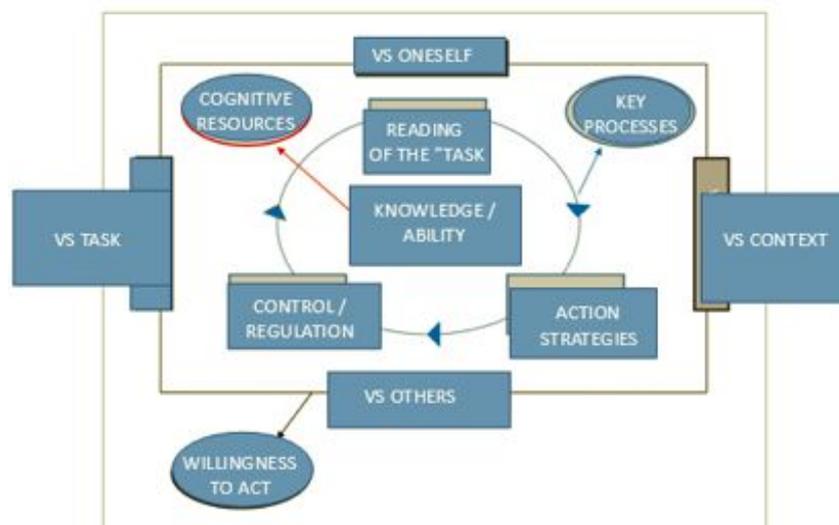


Fig. 3 - Levels of competence analysis (Castoldi, 2016)<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Le Boterf, G. (2008). *Repenser la compétence. Pour dépasser les idées reçues*, 15.

<sup>10</sup> Castoldi, M. (2016). *Valutare e certificare le competenze*. Roma: Carocci.

This scheme can be considered as a starting point for reflecting on the different aspects that are involved in a specific competence.

The building of a competency assessment matrix requires first of all to identify the dimensions of the competence, those peculiar characteristics that distinguish a particular performance. For example, in the competence that refers to the understanding of a narrative we could trace the following dimensions: lexical knowledge, identification of information, etc...

Once dimensions have been identified, a subsequent operational declination is represented by criteria, which define performance quality parameters.

Either dimensions or criteria are often present in a competency assessment matrix, as they both refer to central elements of competence, although the difference is that criteria are qualitatively connoted. In order to link to the previous example, we can assume as criteria: recognition of the main message, identification of the purpose of the text, inference of the meanings of words unknown from the context, etc..

Once competence dimensions and criteria have been identified, each dimension and/or criteria should then be declined into two to three behaviour indicators, something that attests to the presence of each particular dimension or criterion. In the example on story comprehension, it is possible to choose as indicators: the reuse of terms used in the text in other contexts, the choice of a title congruent with the general meaning of the text, etc...

The next step consists of a brief description of the levels of mastery of the competence, from the lower to the upper level. There are four levels of competence, both in order to align with the certification model of the first cycle (initial, basic, intermediate, advanced) and for a possible declination in grades.

Some suggestions with reference to the description of the levels:

Use a "**positive**" language that emphasizes what is present at that level of competence, rather than what is missing;

Refer to the degree of:

- **personal re-elaboration:** *from reproductive responses of schemes and models to personal and original responses.*
- **autonomy:** *from adult driven behaviours to autonomous learner behaviours.*
- **familiarity of action contexts:** *from familiar and simple to new and complex contexts.*

Start from the basic level of mastery and continue with the higher levels (adding in the description of the levels what the student can do more independently and/or more creatively and in unfamiliar action contexts).

Finally, it is possible to choose concrete examples (*anchors*) of performance at different levels.

**Possible format of a competency assessment matrix**

**Reference class level:**

**Competence Target:**

<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Initial</b>	<b>Basic</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>	<b>Advanced</b>
Cognitive resources mastery (knowledge and skills <sup>11</sup> )					
<i>Cognitive and/or operational processes</i>					
<i>Cognitive and/or operational processes</i>					
<i>Cognitive and/or operational processes</i>					
<i>Disposition to act</i>					
<i>Disposition to act</i>					



*In this section we found what the building of a **competency assessment matrix** requires:*

- *First of all to identify the **dimensions** and the **criteria***
- *Then to decline each into two to three behaviour **indicators***
- *Then to do a brief description of the **levels** of mastery of the competence, from the lower to the upper level.*
- *Finally to choose concrete examples (**anchors**) of performance at different levels.*

<sup>11</sup> It is possible to specify in a special table the knowledge and skills involved.

## 7. Examples of good practices: the schola project

Three projects are considered examples of “good practice”: VAEB (2003-2006) initiated by iriv in 7 countries and awarded at the 2006 Helsinki Prizes as best practice; SUCCESS AT SCHOOL (2012-2014), initiated by the University of Northampton (leader) with iriv in 6 EU countries and awarded 1st place at the EU project selection in Brussels (2012); SCHOLA (2016-2018), initiated by Blaise Pascal College with iriv in 5 EU countries and awarded as best practice example (2019). The Schola project combines prevention and treatment by focusing on one main objective: every child should have every chance to build a future and thus succeed in life.

**Key words:** good practice, volunteering project, non-formal learning, informal learning, early school leaving.

The Schola project<sup>12</sup> stems from the need to combat early school leaving (ESL) which has become one of the main priorities of the EU member States, as stated in particular in the "Europe 2000 Strategy". This approach combines prevention and care by focusing on one main objective: every child must be able to have every chance to build a future and thus be successful in life. This is the main concern for achieving social cohesion and a fair education system. The involvement of all members of the educational community, in close relation with local authorities and operators, should make it possible to offer alternative solutions to every young person who is struggling in school.

In order to tackle the ESL, extra-curricular activities were offered outside school, especially in sensitive urban areas (suburbs, areas with a high unemployment rate, single parents families, high level of drop out rates). Children and young people were offered different types of activities allowing them to learn a language, mathematics or any other discipline through games or social activities.

The idea, complementary to school, is to give self-confidence and hope to young people who feel lost and abandoned by school. These activities combine different profiles of "educators" - teachers work closely with volunteers and professionals. This alternative approach could again involve young people experiencing difficulties at school to find a way to achieve educational success, for example by testing other pedagogical methods with adults (professionals from associations or local authorities) who should not evaluate their work, but support them in improving the assessment they will receive at school. This "deviation strategy" has been enhanced through educational activities offered outside school (through play, sport, activities ...) to bridge the gap between informal and non-formal learning (outside school) and formal learning (at school).

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<sup>12</sup> Be a Volunteer, Succeed at School. Schola: a pedagogical approach to value volunteering. vol. 1, p. 54-67, Ljubljana:ZRC Sazu, ISBN: 978-961-05-0117-6

The Schola project, initiated together with the College Blaise Pascal and iriv together with a European team (College Blaise Pascal & iriv + University of Perugia + ZRC SAZU (Slovenia) + University Karel De Grote (Belgium) + University of Krakow (Poland).

It has achieved a very good basis for the CLASS and has been selected as an example of “best practice” by the European Commission (2019). It was not the first attempt to use a voluntary experience as an example of non-formal and informal learning and as a meaningful extra-curricular activity to struggle against Early School Leaving (ESL).

There have been two previous European projects:

- VAEB<sup>13</sup> (assessing a voluntary experience, 2003-2006, initiated and led by iriv in 7 countries)
- the SAS-Success at School thanks to a volunteering project (initiated by the University of Northampton & iriv in 6 countries, 2012-2014)<sup>14</sup>.

Both projects have also been awarded (selection 2012 & European awards of 2006).

This shows that volunteering has been considered since 2006 (VAEB project) as a meaningful basis for acquiring relevant competences required both on the labour market (VAEB, 2006) and at school (SAS, 2014 & Schola, 2018).

Project	Main outputs
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>VAEB (2003-2006)</b>  <b>Initiated by iriv in 7 countries</b>  <b>Awarded at the Helsinki awards of 2006 as excellent practice</b></p>	<p>A first report; state of art, presents the key data concerning volunteering, and the assessment of voluntary experience (AVE).  A second report analyses the results of the consultation made in spring 2004, about the needs for AVE expressed by national associations. A questionnaire was the base of the consultation. It can be downloaded in the seven languages of the partner's countries. It is a tool for association to analyse their strategy about training, assessment of competences and monitoring of volunteers.  A portfolio and a guide for trainers. This tool and this method allow the assessment and the valorization of competences gained during a voluntary experience. They have been experimented among associations and professionals in human resources.  A network of experts on a national and European level, whose contacts are available on our website. The network is a place to exchange experiences and practices, and it is also accessible for the expert in training.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Success at school (2012-2014)</b>  <b>Initiated by the University of Northampton (leader)</b></p>	<p>1. <b>Pedagogical approach</b> - proposing different sessions to youngsters living in deprived areas to enhance a voluntary involvement in an association, insisting on the educative aspect, professional perspective, cultural and social values</p>

<sup>13</sup> VAEB. 2003-2006. Weblog dedicated to the Assessment of a Voluntary experience (Vaeb). 28. 5. 2018.

<sup>14</sup> Halba, B. (2011). Valuing volunteering: a major issue for the European Year of Volunteering. *VALUE Project Proceedings*.

<p><b>with iriv in 6 EU countries Scored 1<sup>st</sup> rank at the selection of EU projects in Brussels (2012)</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. <b>Mentoring</b>: proposing a support to youngsters/pupils to make them build the link between the activities developed among the association and the skills and competences required at school</li> <li>3. <b>Experimenting</b> the sessions together with the mentoring in the five countries</li> <li>4. <b>National networks of</b> pupils, schools, associations of youngsters working with schools</li> <li>5. <b>Publications</b> (newsletters, leaflet, articles) - the president of the French initiator and partner, iriv conseil, published two articles in scientific reviews: Traditiones (Institute of Anthropology) and Solsko Polje (Institute for Educational Sciences)</li> <li>6. <b>A website Internet</b> : <a href="http://www.successatschool.eu">www.successatschool.eu</a></li> <li>7. A weblog for the experimentation in Essonne (France): <a href="http://sas-essonne.blogspot.fr/">http://sas-essonne.blogspot.fr/</a></li> </ol> <p>European network of experts in the field of Early School Leaving (ESL).</p>
<p><b>Schola (2016-2018) Initiated by the College Blaise Pascal with iriv in 5 EU countries Awarded as example of best practice (2019)</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Intellectual outputs 1- Pedagogical Sessions</b> – offering different modules for school mentors (teachers &amp; professionals working in associations- volunteers and paid staff), based on a collaborative approach, to understand and apply in their professional practice the benefits of extra-school activities to struggle against ESL and to enhance the motivation both of the learners and teachers/trainers</li> <li>2. <b>Intellectual output 2- Mentoring</b> : designing a pedagogical strategy among mentors (teachers &amp; educators in associations) in order for them to include the Schola approach in their professional practice (differential strategies-combining at school activities together with out of school strategies),</li> <li>3. <b>Experimenting</b> both the pedagogical sessions and mentoring in each of the 5 countries- the first year the training sessions among the teachers &amp; trainers (IO1) and the second year the mentoring among youngsters (IO2);</li> <li>4. <b>Exploiting the results</b> of the project among the associations, primary and secondary schools, local authorities in charge of education for public with special needs (youngsters) by implementing focus groups, meeting of information in order to involve key stakeholders;</li> <li>5. <b>Evaluating</b> the quality of the results among the partners</li> <li>6. <b>Disseminating</b> the results among European, national and local networks by the implementation of events such as seminars or conferences.</li> </ol>

PROJECT  
MAIN OUTPUTS

**SUCCESS AT SCHOOL (2012-2014)**  
Initiated by the University of Northampton (leader) with  
iriv in 6 EU countries  
Scored 1<sup>st</sup> rank at the selection of EU projects in Brussels  
(2012)

**Pedagogical approach:** proposing different sessions to youngsters living in deprived areas to enhance a voluntary involvement in an association, insisting on the educative aspect, professional perspective, cultural and social values.

**Mentoring:** proposing a support to youngsters/pupils to make them build the link between the activities developed among the association and the skills and competences required at school.

**Experimenting:** the sessions together with the mentoring in the five countries.

**National networks of pupils, schools, associations of youngsters working with schools.**

**Publications** (newsletters, leaflet, articles): the president of the French initiator and partner, iriv conseil, published two articles in scientific reviews: Traditiones (Institute of Anthropology) and Solsko Polje (Institute for Educational Sciences).

A web site Internet: <http://www.successatschool.eu/> [www.successatschool.eu](http://www.successatschool.eu)

A weblog for the experimentation in Essonne (France): <http://sas-essonne.blogspot.fr/>  
European network of experts in the field of Early School Leaving (ESL).

**SCHOLA (2016-2018)**

Initiated by the College Blaise Pascal with iriv in 5  
EU countries  
Awarded as example of best practice (2019)

PROJECT  
MAIN OUTPUTS

**Pedagogical approach:** proposing different sessions to youngsters living in deprived areas to enhance a voluntary involvement in an association, insisting on the educative aspect, professional perspective, cultural and social values.

**Mentoring:** proposing a support to youngsters/pupils to make them build the link between the activities developed among the association and the skills and competences required at school.

**Experimenting:** the sessions together with the mentoring in the five countries.

**National networks of pupils, schools, associations of youngsters working with schools.**

**Publications** (newsletters, leaflet, articles): the president.



*In this section have been analyzed three projects considered to be examples of good practice: VAEB (2003-2006), SUCCESS AT SCHOOL (2012-2014), SCHOLA (2016-2018). In particular, the Schola project achieved a very good basis for CLASS and has been selected as an example of “best practice” by the European Commission (2019).*

## 8. Competence Assessment - Practical Tools

Seven practical tools for competence assessment are presented - The recognition of Volunteer Skills – CESVOT/LocalGlobal, Liceo Scientifico “G. Galilei” – Pescara – ITALY, The 4-step reflection process (York-Barr), “Start-Assessment-Center” (IMBSE, 1998), The VAEB portfolio – iriv & alii (2003-2006), Tool for self-assessment of learning and competences acquisition – Desincoop, CRL – Guimarães – Portugal, The Schola tool – iriv & alii (2016-2018).

For each instrument, the history of the instrument and the theoretical background, the structure of the instrument, its applicability, strengths and weaknesses as well as Comments on the use within the CLASS project are described.

**Key words:** competence assessment, tools, swot analysis, volunteering.

### **The recognition of Volunteer Skills – CESVOT/LocalGlobal**<sup>15</sup>

#### *Tool history and literature background*

The Recognition of Volunteer Skills allows to describe in detail the skills possessed by the person who does and has done active volunteering. The tools and the procedure have been developed by a Cesvot working group made up of organization consultants, training experts, experienced volunteers and work psychologists.

Cesvot has tested a method for the Recognition of the Competences of Volunteers (Ri.Co.V.) who perform voluntary work in the third sector. The method (consisting of a model and a procedure) refers only to voluntary activities and follows the European guidelines on the recognition of non-formal competences. It is a simple, sustainable method that can be applied to voluntary experience, regardless of the size or field of intervention of the institutions. This has been developed in collaboration with LocalGlobal.

The Ricov method follows the European guidelines on the recognition of non-formal competences, it is simple, sustainable and applicable to volunteering experiences, regardless of the size or sectors of intervention of the institutions. Recognition is based on the detection and evaluation of transversal competences that are developed by performing organized volunteering activities or by participating in non-formal training courses. The transversal competences refer to the relational, communicative and action skills of the volunteer himself, thus excluding the technical competences related to the domain of professional qualifications.

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<sup>15</sup> Those are unofficial material kindly sent by CESVOT Toscana, all provided by the help of Andrea Caldelli of Altra Città association

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The recognition service makes use of the work of a commission in which an expert of the Ricov method and a referent of CESVOT are present and provides for the issue of a certificate and a Summary sheet of the volunteer's competences.

### *Structure of the tool*

The survey of competences is carried out through an interview that aims to verify together with the volunteer the experiences and performance levels for the seven competences foreseen in the reference model.

There are three products resulting from the Competence Recognition process: (1) the Volunteer Skills Summary, which summarizes what emerged during the recognition interview, (2) the European Curriculum enriched by the Volunteer Skills Summary Framework; and (3) the Volunteer Skills Dossier that documents the evidence that emerged during the recognition interview before the Recognition Committee, containing the Advisor's observation form and the documentary materials provided by the volunteer.

It should be pointed out that the competences that are the subject of the Summary (1, 2) and of the Dossier (3) are exclusively the "typical competences" of the volunteer, competences of a transversal order, according to the ISFOL tripartition, whose objective measure concerns the relational, communicative and action skills of the volunteer-person; while any identification and measurement of specific technical-professional competences pertaining, for example, to the domain of professional qualifications is excluded. Attention is therefore paid to the "typical skills of the volunteer" that the person develops by doing organized voluntary work or by participating in specific refresher courses organized by the associations.

### *Applicability of the instrument*

The Volunteer Skills Framework is a matrix that provides a repertoire of 7 typical skills (vertical) and 6 levels of performance (horizontal). In turn, the performance levels are grouped into 3 classes which are mainly related to an attitude of (1) Employee > Participant-Executor, (2) Technician > Self-Governing, (3) Expert > Responsible - Coordinator. The fundamental characteristics of the three role-attitude classes are defined as follows:

**(1) Person in charge > Participant-Executor.** The volunteer participates in the mission activities starting to acquire the knowledge and tools that will make him/her autonomous to act with respect to the values and aims of the OdV. His or her functions

are mainly exploratory and/or executive. He acts mainly alongside mature or experienced volunteers.

**(2) Technician > Autonomous-Autonomous.** The volunteer possesses knowledge and skills that make him or her autonomous in acting consistently with the values and aims of the OdV. of which he or she is a member. He has full responsibility and capacity for individual action. He acts individually; he supports young volunteers; he can be supported by more experienced volunteers.

**(3) Expert > Responsible - Coordinator.** The volunteer has solid knowledge and skills that allow him/her to guide the work of other volunteers by interacting with them in an effective way with respect to the implementation of the values, aims and activities of the OdV. He or she is responsible for the work of the volunteers by helping to define their functions and how to exercise them. It is called to interact with actors and bodies outside the association in activities of promotion and coordination (network).

In general, the tool is normally used within the volunteer paths and Cesvot issues the Summary Form to the volunteer, containing, in addition to personal information and the role played in the organization, the synoptic representation of the level for each competence identified and a narrative description of the performance levels for the skills assessed (that should be included in the European Curriculum as a specification of the transversal skills possessed by the volunteer). Before the interview, the volunteer will be asked to send his/her curriculum and a survey form filled in with his/her data and experiences of volunteering, as well as any training courses attended.

*Strengths/Weaknesses – swot analysis*

**SWOT Analysis**

	<b>HELPFUL</b>	<b>HARMFUL</b>
<b>INTERNAL</b>	<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Fast usability</li> <li>· Specific for volunteers</li> <li>· Clear and complete level grids</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Never related to school</li> <li>· Only competencies related to volunteering activities</li> <li>· Need specific training for users and supervisors</li> </ul>

EXTERNAL	Opportunities	Threats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Model very used within the volunteering activities and third sector</li> <li>· Tables and grids allows to fast complete the Summary Form</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Maybe far from school curricula</li> <li>· Need to implement a link with general framework of competencies</li> <li>· Naive users takes too long to learn how to use it</li> </ul>

### *Comments on the use within the CLASS project*

The instrument seems at first sight very useful and well centred on the voluntary and third sector. The usability is very good with precise indications and precise lists of skills and their levels. However, for the use within the Class project there is a need to find a way of connection that allows communication between the world of volunteering and that of the school, expanding the lists of skills and trying to link it with the school curricula.

## **Liceo Scientifico "G. Galilei" - Pescara -ITALY<sup>16</sup>**

### *Tool history and Framework of References*

Liceo Scientifico "Galilei" proposes an Assessment Rubric for Key Competences, which takes into account various regulatory and methodological elements arising from Italian and European documents; Thus it can be included in the "toolkit" developed under the CLASS project.

In particular, we referred to the following documents:

1. Work-School Pathways (in Italian abbreviated as P.C.T.O) Guidelines (Pathways for Key Competences and Orientation), MIUR, 2019.
2. High School Students Profile, (EQF, Level 4) Educational Offer Plan school years 2019 / 22.
3. Service Learning, Avanguardie Educative, INDIRE, 2017.
4. Assessment Rubric for KEY Competences (a. Project, b. Collaborate and participate, c. Act autonomously and responsibly), Liceo Galilei, as 2018/19.

Assessment and validation of the skills achieved in voluntary activities are the main focus of CLASS project, therefore the following documents are of particular importance:

1. *Ri.Co.V. The recognition of Volunteer Skills*, CESVOT.
2. Volunteer Charter of Values, CSVnet, 2001.
3. Agenda 2030, Objective 4, Goal 4.7.

<sup>16</sup> Those are unofficial material kindly provided by the Liceo Galilei of Pescara

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The SWOT analysis of *Ri.Co.V.* highlights some differences between their tool and the one used in the Italian schools. Our goal is to merge them: the Italian secondary school still finds it difficult to depart from the assessment of disciplines to that of skills. Furthermore, it is good to remember that upon receiving the European Recommendations in the Italian education system, the EU Key Competences underwent terminological changes which were declined as "Key Competences for learning" and grouped into 4 discipline axes.

The connection between European Competences / Italian Competences and discipline axes and the Secondary school student Profile (see Point 2 in the list) can be structured as in the example related to interpersonal Competences (ANNEX).

The Tool developed within the CLASS project will therefore be applied to assess the competencies developed during Work-Study Pathways which in the Italian Education System connects with the world of work.

The students attending the last three school years are involved in extracurricular activities connected to the work; hence observed and Key Competences can be observed and assessed from the orientation point of view.

Every Class Council selects some Competences to be observed and developed which are particularly suitable for the class groups and then they will be assessed and validated. The National Guidelines recommend selecting the Competences starting from a matrix of 4 fundamental Competences to be then detailed.

Since Italian 'LICEI' (secondary schools comparable to Grammar schools) do not have a vocational connotation, Volunteering activities (such as those envisaged by CLASS) can be a valid alternative to company internships and above all contribute to developing citizenship Competences, feelings of solidarity, spirit of initiative and entrepreneurship. For students of "Licei" these activities have to count for a minimum of 90 hours in the three-year period.

#### *Structure of the tool*

The tool proposed by CLASS is, as mentioned, composed of a variety of tools, some evidence based (Observation / evaluation rubric), others of a metacognitive type (logbook, cognitive autobiography, survey).

We, therein, propose a rubric taken from the experience reported by the *Ri.Co.V.* Tool with some modifications and adaptations of the Competences developed by the student / volunteer in the context of their Work-school Pathways activities.

The Class Council / tutor can easily manage by referring to the list of indicators to tick if applicable. In the proposed tool we refer 3 out of 4 of the Competences included in the Matrix and defined by the Work-School Pathways Guidelines.

The indicators applied to the different evidences allow to define the student / volunteer's Profile into 4 levels: BEGINNER, BASIC, INTERMEDIATE, ADVANCED.

#### *Applicability of the instrument*

The tool is designed to be used during the period of voluntary activity carried out as a PCTO (as formative evaluation) and at the end of the period for the purpose of validating the experience, given that PCTOs in the Italian system contribute to the final evaluation of the student.

It allows the accurate recording of multiple evidences usually overlooked in school evaluation and to group them in the BEGINNER, BASIC, INTERMEDIATE, ADVANCED profiles. It is desirable that these assessments should also be included in the Student's Europass CV tool.

Technical-professional skills are excluded from this section.

#### *Strengths / Weaknesses - swot analysis*

##### PROPOSAL FOR AN EVALUATION TOOL- SWOT ANALYSIS

S	W	O	T
STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
-Link between PCTO assessment and voluntary activities -Structure knowns by teachers	-Take into account only the ongoing profile of scientific High School	-Possible use in the world of associations to evaluate their volunteers	-Specific to Italian reality -Possible regulatory changes

#### *Comments on the use within the CLASS project*

The tool provides a link between the world of school and that of volunteering, however it must be compared with the educational realities of the other partner countries and implemented with the elements that take into account such differences in education systems.

## **The 4-step reflection process (York-Barr)<sup>17</sup>**

*Tool history and literature background*

### **Who developed it?**

The method has been developed and published by Jennifer York-Barr, with a team made of William A. Sommers, Gail S. Ghere and Jo Montie.

J. York-Barr's research and teaching has been grounded in partnerships with schools and school districts. Her early work focused most specifically on creating classroom communities in which students with various exceptionalities were included. That work grew into a broader focus on growing school communities grounded in conversations that support ongoing reflective practice and learning. She has been honored with several college and university level teaching awards and has authored or co-authored more than 100 publications, most of which are focused on instructional collaboration, inclusive schooling, teacher leadership and professional learning.

York-Barr is currently Associate Professor at the University of Minnesota-Minneapolis (USA).

### **What are the bases on which it was developed?**

The method takes its lead on the basis that a reflective practice can greatly improve the learning process in adults.

Reflection in fact involves, and therefore improves, dispositions such as:

- Metacognition (thinking about thinking and conducting an internal dialogue before, during and after an event).
- Connecting information to previous learning.
- Drawing cognitive and emotional information from different sources.
- Acting on and processing the information (synthesis, evaluation).
- Applying insights to contexts beyond the one in which they were learned.

Also, adults using a reflective practice can positively inspire children / students to do the same.

This volume, aimed primarily at teachers, educators and school staff in general, offers a framework of strategies for thinking and active as reflective educators.

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<sup>17</sup>J. York-Barr et al., *Reflective Practice to improve Schools – An Action Guide for Educators*, 2006

### **What are the specific directions for use?**

There are no specific directions for use, but the author recommends that the method is used in a broader context of building a reflective community into the organisation.

#### *Structure of the tool*

### **How does the instrument look like?**

The 4-step reflection process is a questionnaire made of 21 open-ended questions, designed to lead the person through a 4-step reflection process.

The questions create a guideline to analyse one's own behavior in a given occasion, they lead the person through a path of self-assessment, toward the final objective, which is to learn from their behavior in a structured way.

### **Which parts does it consist of?**

The 21 questions are divided into 4 main fields, corresponding to 4 Steps:

1. Look back (6 questions)
2. Think in depth (5 questions)
3. Learn something new about yourself (6 questions)
4. Organise your next steps (4 questions).

### **How to use it?**

The questionnaire can be used by individuals or in small groups, during a training session or as a homework. It can be used unsupervised but it is useful to have a coach/trainer during the use, as there can be questions from the participants to be answered. Moreover, the exercise would be more effective. If the questionnaire is used in a classroom (or group training session), it would be better if the coach/trainer/teacher reads aloud one question at a time, giving participants time to focus on each question, rather than handing out the whole questionnaire, as this could lead to bypassing some questions or rushing to finish all the questionnaire without the due attention to each question. In case there is a team behavior to analyse, it would be better to start with a work done by every single person, who can afterwards compare their perception on the subject.

### **Which parts to be filled by the teacher?**

Considering that the method has been developed to help teachers and educators to assess and improve their results in the classroom, the teachers should take the test and use

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it for themselves as an exercise in reflective practice. As this is an exercise of self-reflection and self-assessment, no parts should be filled by the teachers/coaches/trainers, if the recipients are the students.

### **Which parts to be filled by the student (if applicable)?**

The students -the participants in general- should write down in as many words as possible all the replies to the questions.

### *Applicability of the instrument*

#### **Where is it used?**

The York-Barr questionnaire is used in some American schools as an experimental method to increase learning at individual and organisation level, so that educational practice continuously improves and student learning is enhanced. It is also used in behavioural research, during coaching sessions and in corporate training.

#### **How is it used?**

The questionnaire is a tool to learn reflective skills. It is used as an exercise in critical analysis of a problem, a situation or an event.

#### **What does it allow you to detect?**

The method allows to:

- Review a process to see if it achieved the desired goal or outcomes.
- Make learning visible, to complete the learning cycle for each non-structured or unforeseen situation happening in our lives.
- Give a more considered response to an event.
- Achieve meaning and understanding inside actions.
- Add value to self and to performance.
- Move oneself to an expert level.

#### **How can it be used within the school context?**

It can be used by the teachers, in order to learn reflective practice skills.

It can be used for self-assessment purposes, but also to assess the students' behavior on a given occasion.

For this reason, it can be a method to learn how to assess non-formal and informal competences in the students before, during and after a given situation.

## How can it be used outside the school context?

The questionnaire can be used in work organisations:

- as a tool to self-evaluate and self-assess one's own performance,
- as a problem-solving instrument,
- to give a structured framework to non-formal or informal learning,
- as a part of an Action Plan to measure and improve self-awareness and self-efficacy.

This is especially useful with managers and top managers, who rarely have someone to evaluate their performance or skills (leadership, management, strategy, etc.), so they have fewer occasions for personal growth.

The questionnaire is also useful to teams (team building and team working), in order to better connect and develop a common thinking process.

## What degrees of competence acquisition can you detect?

Being a self-assessment tool, the only detectable degree of competence acquisition is a self-evaluated one.

### *Strengths/Weaknesses – swot analysis*

#### **Strengths**

- Versatility. The tool can be used with singles and groups of all ages.
- Ease of use. There is no need for platforms.
- New. The method is only 15 years old.
- Scientifically sound.
- Stimulating. It improves personal and professional capabilities and helps the development of many cognitive skills.
- Positive chain reaction. The exercise of reflection has a positive effect also on other people, who will be affected by it. It can be learned by teachers and taught by them to students.

#### **Weaknesses**

- Time consuming. The method requires time to dedicate to reflective practice, and often people have not much time to give.
- Need to focus. It can be hard for users to focus on the questions, if not guided by a teacher/trainer/coach, so it is not at its best to use on one's own.

- Difficult to use for large groups. As the questions are all open-ended, it would be difficult to merge the data with large groups.

#### *Comments on the use within the CLASS project*

As stated in the chapter “How it can be used in the school context”, the tool can be used to assess students’ behavior before, during and after a given situation, like an extracurricular activity.

For this reason, it can be a useful method to assess the growth of non-formal and informal competences in the students before, during and after the volunteering experience in the CLASS project.

### **“Start- Assessment- Center” (IMBSE, 1998)<sup>18</sup>**

#### *Tool history and literature background*

#### **Who developed it?**

The assessment centre procedure "Start" was developed by the Institute for the Promotion of Vocational and Social Institutions (IMBSE). The IMBSE is an educational institution that has been active in youth promotion in Moers, on the Lower Rhine since 1983. It is also active in other German states since 1992. As part of the programme for "Promoting and testing new ways into the labour market" initiated by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the IMBSE was given the opportunity in 1998 to develop and test assessment procedures for disadvantaged young people in the transition from school to work (cf. Druckrey 2002, p. 16).<sup>19</sup>

The meaning of the name "Start" is composed of the following objective of the competence survey programme (testing strengths and resources). The developers give young people the opportunity to learn about their vocational skills and aptitudes, to learn about their social skills and their skills in coping with everyday life. They learn about different occupations and their requirements in order to be able to orientate and stabilize themselves in this respect. As will be shown on the methodological level, one focus is on the examination of job-related competences. Thus, a large part of the assessment exercises is job-related and job-specific.

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<sup>18</sup> Druckrey, P. (2003): IMBSE- Institut für Maßnahmen zur Förderung der beruflichen und sozialen Eingliederung e. V., START. In: INBAS: Competence Assessment Part II: Instruments and Procedures; Reports and Materials, Volume 9, Offenbach am Main. pp. 60-84.

<sup>19</sup> Druckrey, P. (2002): Start=Testing Strengths - Testing Resources. In Direkt: Fördern und Qualifizieren, issue 14/ 2002, pp. 16 - 17.

Above all, it should be possible for the supervisors who work with young people to develop individual support plans and qualification paths for young people on the basis of the results of the procedure (Druckrey 2003, p. 60). The objectives of the procedure are thus primarily to be found in the area of vocational orientation and competence assessment of young people.

### What are the bases on which it was developed?

The origin of the method lies in the practical approach of observing competences within practical situations and then reflecting on them. Feedback from outside as well as inner reflection processes plays an important role.

Especially the aspect of feedback and reflection, based on concrete observations and self-observations can positively influence the individual participant's learning and give concrete information about the participants' strengths. In addition, participation in the Assessment Center helps to determine competencies relatively precisely.

Kanning (2003)<sup>20</sup> illustrates the principle as follows:

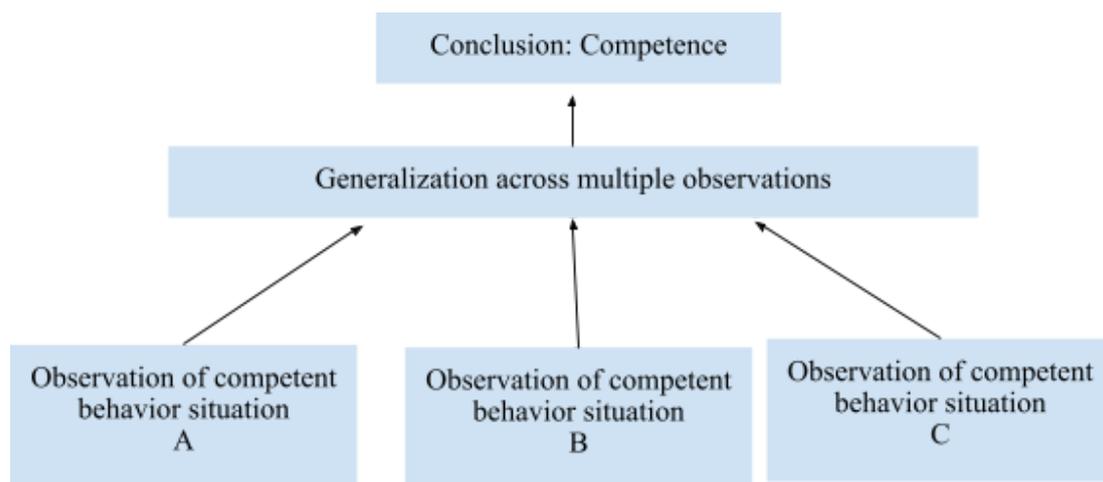


Fig. 4 - Competent behaviour according to Kanning, 2003

Also reflection is a very important part in the assessment process. New information that participants collect about themselves is linked to previous learning. Thus, these experiences can be used beyond the context itself.

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<sup>20</sup> Kanning, U. (2003): Diagnostics of social competences. Göttingen: Hogrefe.

### **What are the specific directions for use?**

The assessment tools are described in detail in the manuals for the implementation of the individual sub-areas (e. g. social skills, care, multimedia, etc.). In addition, assessment and evaluation criteria are summarised there. The authors recommend the training of specialists for the implementation of the various assessment centres.

### **Structure of the tool**

The "Start"- Assessment Centre- Program is a very comprehensive collection of materials and methods for the assessment of students' competencies. For each skill-specific or subject-specific instrument there is a manual with over 250 pages of summarized materials and instructions.

"Start" focuses on an action-oriented approach and includes assessment procedures for different topics and areas of competence: Administration (office), horticulture, home economics, IT activities, multimedia, care, social skills, textiles and sales. For each of these fields a comprehensive assessment centre was constructed (cf. Druckrey 2003, p. 61.f.)<sup>21</sup>. Depending on the approach, intensity and exploration intention, the assessment centre may last several days, but individualisation with a focus on sub-areas is also possible.

The assessments consist of individual, partner and group exercises as well as role plays and questionnaires. The assessments focus on the central requirements in the respective tested areas.

For individual tasks, different levels of demands are taken into account by developing three levels of difficulty: participants can choose the level of difficulty they believe they can master.

After an oral introduction by the instructors and a first trial run, young people receive detailed written and photo-equipped work instructions and thus a strongly pre-structured task and instruction. In addition to the job-specific focal points, "Start" also offers assessment centres that focus exclusively on so-called "life skills". Here, "Start" understands social and organizational skills. Tasks range from individual or cooperative tasks, such as building a domino track, planning a visit to the cinema, calling a critical customer or talking to the boss (cf. IMBSE 2004). All in all, the exercises are constructed with a reference to the world of life as well as the respective working environment.

During the work on the exercises, young people are observed according to previously defined criteria and assessed on the basis of a five-level rating. A scale from 1 to 5 is applied, with the fifth level representing the best performance and the first level the worst performance. "Start" works with five dimensions (cognitive characteristics, social characteristics, the way work is carried out, fine motor skills / dexterity and cultural techniques / communication). Behind these dimensions lies a total of twenty characteristics (e.g. perceptiveness, perseverance, ability to make contact, independence, diligence, ability to work in a team). In the selection of

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<sup>21</sup> Druckrey, P. (2003): IMBSE- Institut für Maßnahmen zur Förderung der beruflichen und sozialen Eingliederung e. V., START. In: INBAS: Competence Assessment Part II: Instruments and Procedures; Reports and Materials, Volume 9, Offenbach am Main. pp. 60-84.

the characteristics, "Start" has oriented itself from the MELBA procedure and selected those that are relevant for the respective fields. After each exercise, young people receive a skills profile, which is made up of individual exercises profiles and the results of an observer conference. This is summarised in a personal feedback.

At the end of the temporary procedure, each participant receives his or her individual results in the course of one-on-one interviews in which, in addition to a written summary, a promotion or development recommendation is also given.

The fact that the quality criteria in "Start" are met was checked in an evaluation study and is considered proven. "Start" points out that the quality standards of the "Arbeitskreis Assessment Center e. V." (<https://www.forum-assessment.de/>) are met.

In the concept description of "Start", concrete explanations of the implementation of the respective standards are given (cf. Druckrey 2002, p. 12 ff.)<sup>22</sup>.

### **Which parts to be filled by the teacher?**

In this context teachers act in three different roles. Firstly, they choose the appropriate form of assessment for the target group and give instructions on how to carry out the exact tasks. In the second step, they observe participants as they work on the tasks and evaluate them within teams with experts. In the third phase, they report back observations and results to participants and develop tailor-made action plans for them.

### **Which parts to be filled by the student(if applicable)?**

First of all, participants have the task to work in practical settings in a group or alone. In some cases there are self-reflection and self-evaluation phases within the assessment procedures.

#### *Applicability of the instrument*

### **Where is it used?**

The "Start" programme is primarily aimed at young people who are participating in a vocational preparation scheme. Here, the procedure is used at the beginning of a measure to query and map areas of competence and competence characteristics.

"Start" is used by numerous institutions that conduct vocational training measures in order to plan additional support measures in a targeted manner.

The German partner "Akademie Klausenhof", involved in the Class project, has been using this competence survey procedure for many years with the same goal.

"Start" also has the potential to be used at the threshold between regular school and professional career and to have an orienting effect.

Contents for the executing and project responsible specialists are conveyed in the context of training courses.

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<sup>22</sup> Druckrey, P. (2002): Start=Testing Strengths - Testing Resources. In Direkt: Fördern und Qualifizieren, issue 14/2002, pp. 16 - 17.

### **How is it used?**

The assessment centre is used to assess the competencies of pupils and young people in the form of practical exercises.

### **What does it allow you to detect?**

The method of the assessment centre allows a relatively holistic view of participants' specific competencies and to develop targeted development plans for them.

### **How can it be used within the school context?**

The complete assessment programme has the potential and is used in schools to identify the pupils' areas of competence and to promote them adequately. Given the broad scope of this tool, it should be noted that individual parts and sub-areas can also be used. All observations during and on the periphery of the assessment are important to assess the students' abilities. Thus, both formal and informal competences can be identified.

### **How can it be used outside the school context?**

This tool is very difficult to use outside the school context. Larger organisations may be able to do so, but the scope of the tool requires participants' professional and personnel-intensive support.

### **What degrees of competence acquisition can you detect?**

The precise identification, presentation and summary of competences and the knowledge of them represent an increase in competence for a realistic self-assessment of the participants.

### *Strengths/Weaknesses*

#### *Strengths*

Results have a high significance.

- By having several experts accompany and evaluate the assessments, an objective picture of individual participants' competencies can be created.
- Some of the European key competencies are mapped.
- Materials have been tested in practice and are constantly updated.
- Parts of the tool favour group-dynamic processes and can thus strengthen individual students' willingness and motivation to participate in the exploration of the competences and also to volunteer.
- It is a very practical approach.

#### *Weaknesses*

- Teachers have a high learning load in order to be able to use the tool.
- The method is very time-consuming to prepare.
- The method is very time-consuming to implement.

- A focus on relevant parts of Start is needed.
- For many parts of the assessment larger groups are needed.

#### *Comments on the use within the CLASS project*

As already described in the introduction, the tool can be used well in the school context in the required circumstances to identify individual pupils' areas of competence in some relevant categories before volunteering and placements. Thus, additional processes can be initiated based on the assessment results and students can be placed in appropriate volunteer contexts to use their strengths or to develop competences.

As described in the weaknesses of the tool, "Start" is a very comprehensive assessment programme, which should be further selected for use in the Class project and checked for its relevance. A targeted use of useful methods and an individual compilation, which is both productive in terms of results and feasible for the teaching staff, therefore seems to be imperative.

From the point of view of the German partners and participating schools, the use of the tool is favoured by the existing expertise of the "Akademie Klausenhof" in handling the tool.

### **The VAEB portfolio – iriv & alii (2003-2006)<sup>23</sup>**

#### *Tool history and literature background*

The VAEB portfolio was the first tool designed for identifying and assessing competencies acquired thanks to a voluntary experience in Europe. It gathered a European team of 7 countries with different backgrounds in Volunteering. France, leader of the project, has just adopted a law (the so-called Modernisation Law of 2002) officially recognizing a voluntary experience as a professional experience, as long as it is clearly documented with "evidence" of work and tangible results achieved. All the process should be assessed by a jury composed of qualified professionals in the field of the activity of voluntary experience (for instance Health, Accountancy, Sport...). United Kingdom was considered as the most advanced country in the field - considering the number of British people declaring having been volunteers in the past year (almost half of the population) and the many ways in which volunteering has been recognized in Society and Education: since kindergarten children are taught and supported to become volunteers; in complement, concrete qualifications related to a voluntary experience have been introduced. Italy was similar to France in its attempts to officially recognize a voluntary experience as volunteers were numerous in the charitable sector, which is mainly implemented by religious associations addressing a fragile public (such as elderly, sick, disabled, or anyone suffering from an addiction), but also in the cultural sector (thanks to volunteers, museums or churches or any Heritage location could be open to the public) with an active support provided

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<sup>23</sup> VAEB. 2003-2006. Weblog dedicated to the Assessment of a Voluntary experience (Vaeb). 28. 5. 2018.

since the 1990s by different governments (for instance Walter Veltroni, Minister of Culture who has also been mayor of Rome, an emblematic city for its Heritage). Austria was quite similar to France and Italy as it has implemented a special process to gain credits on the basis of a voluntary experience when a candidate intended to pass a public exam (to become a civil servant); the common approach with France and Italy may be linked to a similar cultural or religious background together with a tradition of “popular education” (education for all). Germany, Poland and Hungary were considered as “less-advanced countries” in the recognition of Volunteering. Germany did not have any Center for Volunteers, whereas many other Western countries have created them since the late 1970s; a voluntary experience was considered serious enough to be identified and assessed; the role played by trade unions may explain this lack of recognition and qualification linked to a voluntary experience (this is the same with the Valuing Prior Learning process). Poland and Hungary used to be communist countries where any involvement was “official” with its many forms of “compulsory volunteering” (for instance for Youth), which is a main contradiction. Freedom, indeed, is a main criterion in the definition of a voluntary involvement. Activism was high (especially in the struggle against the USSR) and there were numerous activists (who were volunteers). However, since their involvement was political, it was not similar to the “neutral” approach at stake in Western countries. When these countries became “democratic”, free from the USSR (in the late 1980s), their populations became quite reluctant to any form of involvement in organizations - volunteering was not popular at all among youngsters. During the implementation of the VAEB project, just at the time of Poland's and Hungary's entry into the European Union (2004), a law was adopted both in Poland (considered as a “role model” for the other Eastern countries) and Hungary, officially recognizing a volunteering as a main social and educative activity, with special institutions or organizations dedicated to it. It was a new step in the democratic transition of these former Eastern countries.

The VAEB project may be considered as a pioneering project as it was “the right project at the right time”. Indeed, it was implemented in times where many changes happened in the legislative framework of Volunteering meant to provide an official recognition for this “leisure time” activity taken more and more seriously. In particular volunteers were no more suspected as being “incompetent” because they were not paid. “Doing something for nothing” was, at last, considered as a crucial civic, social but also professional activity. For this reason, the VAEB project was awarded in 2006 at the the Helsinki awards (gathering all the Ministers for Education and Labour, associated to experts in the field of lifelong learning) as an “excellent practice in addressing the priorities of the Copenhagen process and promoting an enhanced European cooperation in Vocational Education and Training”. The VAEB project has also paved the way for an official recognition of Volunteering in Europe as an emblematic example of non-formal and informal learning. The European Commission clearly expressed it on the occasion of the European Year of Volunteering in 2011 (EYV 2011) with an official statement (September 2011).

### *Structure of the tool*

The VAEB portfolio consists of a 4 step approach.

In a first step, volunteers are asked to remind of their voluntary life in a linear way, a biography. In complement they have to detail any opportunity of training they were offered by their associations for the purpose of their volunteering. For instance it is quite common to follow training with a psychologist when addressing a sensitive public such as people suffering from an addiction.

In a second step, on the basis of their biography, the volunteers are asked to detail the tasks they have fulfilled together with tangible results achieved. For instance if a volunteer has been in charge of organizing a yearly event of the association, being in charge of the design of a flyer, a website or weblog or any other support of communication (poster, ...) he/she is asked to provide these “evidences of work” in the portfolio in order to create a “book” of his/her achievements as an artist does for his/her creation (paintings, sculptures, photographs...).

In a third step, the volunteers have to select 3 to 5 main competences in the 25 competences suggested by the VAEB portfolio. In order to support them in the process, a mind map is offered. On the basis of a task/mission fulfilled, the volunteers have to explain in which context they have acquired this competence and the corresponding level of competence (with a scale from 0 to 4 - 0 corresponding to a “no experience” and therefore “incompetence”, 4 being the creation level as the volunteer could create a new task/mission thanks to the perfect mastering of the competence). The selection of the competences must be considered from a professional perspective.

This leads to the fourth step, the action plan. On the basis of the professional perspective of volunteers, some recommendations are made: the experience may be too “light” and therefore the volunteer has to dedicate more time and take more responsibility to improve it; a second option is when a relevant experience is accompanied by a relevant master of the competence (with a minimum level of autonomy “I am able to do it alone”) and therefore the volunteer may apply for a job or a training or any other professional opportunity; a third option is when the voluntary experience is relevant but has to be assessed thanks to an “official” training delivered by an official organization.

In complement to this portfolio process to be achieved by a volunteer, if necessary together with the support of any professional specializing in Valuing Prior Learning, it is also highly recommended to provide any testimony of “officials” in the association - for instance a board member - in order to deliver an attestation of involvement (detailing the dates, the duration in terms of weeks or months, the task fulfilled, the results achieved, any other comment on the spirit or behavior or quality of the volunteer). This may be considered as a “letter of recommendation” - an average of 3 attestations (from the same association or from different associations) is a main asset as the diversity of the people providing such attestation is a main added value.

### *Applicability of the instrument*

The best way to explain the applicability of the VAEB portfolio is to give an overview of the way it was tested during the implementation of the project in the 7 countries.

In France the testing was implemented with two associations. The first one was an association providing training to volunteers in Ile de France (CICOS). The training approach of the VAEB portfolio was quite relevant for them as they were used to assessment but not on the basis of a voluntary experience. The trainers discovered the informal and non-formal learning approach and were quite convinced especially as the main issue faced by associations (their public) was the high turnover of the voluntary staff. The portfolio was a means to value the experience gained among the association and so a way to keep volunteers for a longer period of time. The associations were quite convinced to apply the portfolio for recruiting new volunteers. The second French association involved in the testing was the AFEV, an association created in order to support students to become volunteers, and the main form of volunteering was school mentoring in sensitive urban areas. The AFEV has already worked with some Universities (for instance in Brittany) in order to offer some credits to students involved in voluntary activities in addition to their studies. Therefore the portfolio was a useful tool for the AFEV, since it allows students and their tutors to identify their voluntary experience and express it in terms of competence. A third French partner of the VAEB project was the University of Maine (in Le Mans, a city situated in the region of Pays de Loire), that created, among its Department of Human and Social Sciences, a Master dedicated to Management of Social Economy, with a focus on Management of Volunteering. The portfolio was an example of a Human Resource Management (HRM) tool that the University teacher in charge of the Master could explain to his/her students as many of them intended to work among associations.

In Austria and Germany, the VAEB portfolio was tested among two different associations. In Germany it was an association in Frankfurt that worked with women who wanted to renew themselves with a professional activity after having raised their children. The portfolio VAEB was most useful in order to value an activity they had achieved during the many years dedicated to their children, in their resume there was no more a “blank” but many activities fulfilled thanks to volunteering. In Austria, the organization involved in the testing was a federation of associations in the “education for all” field, working with people willing to renew themselves with a professional activity after a break (family reason, nervous breakdown, unemployment, travels...). The Austrian association was familiar with the non-formal and informal approach and could easily apply the portfolio, the mind pad approach was an Austrian suggestion.

In Italy, the VAEB portfolio was tested by the FIVOL- Fondazione Italiana per il Volontariato (it does not exist anymore but was financially supported by a trust created by a bank in Roma). The table of competences was suggested by our Italian colleagues and so they were also very familiar with the approach. They could value the experience gained by youngsters involved in civic volunteering in order to support them to find a job after their studies and their

first “professional” experience in the many associations relying on volunteers to implement their activities.

In the United Kingdom, the VAEB portfolio was used as another assessment tool for a voluntary experience and as an innovative method for acquiring a qualification (among the many ones suggested by the British Framework of Qualification). The Institute of Research of Volunteering (under the aegis of the National Center for Volunteering), the partner of the VAEB project, was composed of researchers who had defended a PHD in the not for profit sector or PHD candidates in the same field. They could combine a theoretical perspective with the practical approach of the VAEB portfolio. This has been a main asset for the project.

In Poland and Hungary, the testing was implemented thanks to the National Centers for Volunteering that were very convinced by the VAEB approach as they could receive public financial support. The Polish and Hungarian governments meant to promote Volunteering in Society to enhance a democratic spirit, following Kennedy’s saying: “Don’t ask what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country”.

*Strengths/Weaknesses – swot analysis*

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>Volunteers discover the usefulness of their experience and realize how far they could use it in a professional perspective. Volunteers become “experts” in competences, on the basis of the ones they have acquired thanks to their involvement. The learning by doing approach is most meaningful especially for adults who are more reluctant to formal learning.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <p>Volunteers alone are usually lost in the portfolio process and need a counselor/tutor to help them, it is not always simple to find a relevant professional profile. It is not so easy to collect all the evidences of activity together with the attestations from associations as there is a high turnover in the not for profit sector.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Opportunities</b></p> <p>The Valuing Prior Learning processes that have become popular in many European countries are very interested in any tool or method meant to identify and assess a specific experience (mainly non formal and informal learning). Associations have used the tool to recruit new profiles of volunteers, especially the younger ones, in order to prepare a professional future.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Threats</b></p> <p>The VPL process where using the VAEB portfolio has to be financed by public or private bodies which limit the opportunities for the candidate, this is a main limit. Some councilors in VPL are not familiar with a voluntary experience and may even be more demanding for the justification that could discourage the volunteers.</p>

*Comments on the use within the CLASS project*

The VAEB portfolio should be very useful as it is very focused on Volunteering and has been designed for assessing such an example of non-formal and informal learning.

The portfolio approach has become more and more popular in the past years to assess an experience (especially related to informal and non-formal education) and should not raise a lot of issues.

Nevertheless, teachers have to be supported to apply the VAEB portfolio – first, volunteering is still a very specific activity; secondly the non-formal and informal approach is still new in schools where formal learning is obviously the main standard; any experience acquired “outside school” may be considered as irrelevant at first glance. A step by step approach has to be enhanced.

### **Tool for self-assessment of learning and competences acquisition - Desincoop, CRL - Guimarães -Portugal<sup>24</sup>**

#### *Tool history and Framework of References*

Since 2006 Desincoop had participated in mobility projects and after 2009 dozens of projects in Youth in Action, later Erasmus+, in which identified the lack of conscience from almost all of young people of the importance of these projects to acquire competences and knowledge.

In 2010 a new strategic approach started with the youngest members of the cooperative, with their participation in several training courses almost promoted by Salto and other European networks and with the establishment of an organized group of volunteers to support all the procedures necessary to engage participants in a more effective way.

Group of volunteers to support all the procedures to engage participants in a more effective way.

Because of this experience, in 2013 the cooperative accreditation in EVS was proposed to the Desincoop Board. Since the moment we started filling the application form, a small group of volunteers with the technical guidance of the President made a research to implement different EVS management tools and also transfer these tools to local volunteering activities.

The final version of the Competences file for self-assessment was approved in 2015 after some disappointing experiences with the first versions.

The second important moment of this tool implementation was related to the dissemination of the local project ImaC under the partnership established with Agrupamento de Escolas Francisco de Holanda. Nowadays is the support of all the activities, planned on an annual basis and revised after an evaluation of the impact. In this project, participants are engaged at least for three years, from 10 to 12 grade.

We have two participants: one group belongs to vocational training courses that accept to participate during the school year in some activities; another profile is related to those students who on 11 and 12 grade do their work-related training developing one activity or choosing one to their proofs of professional aptitude on 12 grade.

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<sup>24</sup> Those are unofficial material kindly provided by DESINCOOP

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During Summer, secondary students are recruited for actions under the NOS Programme and normally are those who assist in the assessment and identification of needs for a new annual plan to be proposed at the beginning of the school year.

### **What are the bases on which it was developed?**

The tool was built in a very participative model to provide a self-assessment evaluation to new volunteers.

The main reason, after deep reflection, was based on the importance of empowering participants and giving them an instrument to develop and follow their own path. The second reason was we decided that this tool should be a pillar for the learning that volunteering is the capacity to accept and implement a commitment. In this sense, we proposed to each volunteer to do this exercise first for himself/herself.

The final version and the items in each area were selected according to the application context.

### **What is the reference literature?**

European documents were an important reference, as well as some masters and doctorate thesis. The weakness of this tool is the inexistence of a support document describing the construction process and the monitoring process. Desincoop is a small cooperative and for us participating in this kind of tasks is not a professional activity, it is our contribution to the materialization of the cooperatives 7th Principle: Commitment to the community.

### **What are the specific directions for use?**

After the organization presentation, there is the discussion of the expectations about the volunteer participation, that involves both sides, Desincoop and the volunteer; the third step is linked with task negotiation and the exercise to plan a schedule. The fourth phase is the presentation of the tool and the decoding of each item sense. The next one is the proposal to the volunteer to look at the planning, identify critical moments for learning, and reproduce the file in the number of critical moments. Two moments are always among Desincoop proposals: fill on the first day and fill before the volunteer report. Therefore, the first commitment is to fill this document only in the dates decided and never consulting the previous files. The only exceptions are related to very specific moments, very common in EVS, linked for example with the doubt to continue or interrupt the volunteering or when some conflicts arise inside the hosting organization or/and with the sending organization since responsibilities and expectations have a very important role. The tutor can support the volunteer in the path analyses and avoid voluntarist decisions but the decision to use and share the contents is always a volunteer's decision.

## *Structure of the tool*

### **How does the instrument look like?**

The tool is an excel file with different sections and uses a 1 to 5 scale in each question.

### **Which parts does it consist of?**

Individual area - refers to groups of competences that report primarily to the individual:

#### **Personal skills - relating to the person himself/herself**

- Personal development - Ability to develop qualities as an individual in interaction.
- Learning to learn - Ability to adopt a permanent learning attitude.

#### **Leadership skills - related to the command of activities, processes or people**

- Spirit of innovation - Ability to participate in and promote change.
- Spirit of initiative - Ability to start activities.
- People coordination - Ability to promote and run activities that involve others.

#### **Interpersonal Skills - relation to interactions with others**

- Interpersonal sensitivity - Ability to interact conveniently.
- Networking - Ability of forging new social ties.

#### **Work auxiliary area - Concerning to cross-learning about the contribute for the work**

##### **Technical expertise - related to specific knowledge**

- Administrative - Ability to run basic auxiliary tasks for individual work.
- Planning and organisation - Ability to program the work.
- Basic Skills of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) - Capacity to use the computer and others ICT in user optic.

#### **Interpersonal Skills - regarding work in others**

- Negotiation - Ability to establish commitment between divergent interests.
- Teamwork - Ability to develop an activity with others for the benefit of the group.
- Communication - Ability to transmit information to the receiver.

### **How to use it?**

As explained in the reception phase we propose this tool to the new volunteer.

### **Which parts to be filled by the teacher?**

This tool was created for a volunteering context as a self-assessment tool. Although the teacher is not expected to fill it out, it is a fundamental instrument to combat illiteracy and allows students or volunteers to use the tool correctly.

### **Which parts to be filled by the student (if applicable)?**

This is a self-assessment instrument so is supposed to be entirely filled by the student or volunteer. This is out of external control. Filling it is also a volunteer decision. We propose to

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share its contents but the final decision belongs to the volunteer. If he/she accepts, it is a very important indicator for our evaluation of volunteer integration into the organization.

### *Applicability of the instrument*

#### **Where is it used?**

So far it has been used exclusively within Desincoop activities and in the last five school years in partnership with a Secondary School.

#### **How is it used?**

Being aware of the benefits of volunteering and the importance of all the acquisitions that can be transferred to other dimensions of life was the main goal. Specifically, as already explained, it allows to explore the principle of commitment but also other important dimensions.

#### **What does it allow you to detect?**

The self-commitment of the volunteer to fill it and decide how and when. Doing volunteering is in first place a commitment and this instrument allows us to detect the intensity and regularity of the compliance with this exercise, of assumption of a decision that was made by himself/herself and that is primarily aimed at promoting self-knowledge and critical competences.

#### **How can it be used within the school context?**

This tool was also used in a school context with students from vocational curriculum and allows teachers to observe how students see themselves in different moments of their academic path. It can be used in a specific activity or in the context of an internship or a community activity.

#### **How can it be used outside the school context?**

It was primarily created to be used outside the school context and with volunteer's participation.

#### **What degrees of competence acquisition can you detect?**

As mentioned, only if the volunteer decides to share his or her own reflections.

### *Strengths/Weaknesses – swot analysis*

#### **Strengths**

- The tool resulted from a young people's participative process.
- Learning is based on a holistic process.
- Learning of values and competences through experience and practice.
- Self-monitoring of volunteering paths.

- Designed for volunteering activities/projects.

#### **Weakness**

- It depends on students' maturity level.
- Without decoding, it is not an easy tool to manage.
- The presence of interpersonal skills is a point of confusion even when explained that is related to different areas.
- In some cases it is too long and should be adapted to different contexts.
- Guidelines can be useful.

#### *Comments on its use within the CLASS project*

The Portuguese case is familiar to some teachers because it was used during four school years and can help in the pilot phase. It was tested and can be developed for a deeper reflection about its use.

### **The Schola tool – iriv & alii (2016-2018)<sup>25</sup>**

#### *Tool history and literature background*

The Schola tool was designed under an Erasmus + project for identifying and assessing competences acquired thanks to a voluntary experience as an example of extra-curricular activity. It gathered a European team of 5 countries with different backgrounds in Volunteering. France (Collège Blaise Pascal & Iriv), leader of the project; Italy (University of Perugia); Belgium (Karel De Grote University); Poland (University of Krakow); Slovenia (ZRC SAZU).

The SCHOLA project was the second attempt to use a voluntary experience as a means to combat Early School Leaving (ESL) as the first attempt was under the Success at school project (SAS, 2012-2014); initiated by iriv (France) together with the University of Northampton (UK), leader, ZRC SAZU (Slovenia), the University of Bologna (Italy), the University of Lisbon (Portugal) and the New University of Sofia (Bulgaria). The SAS project had suggested a training for students who might be more likely to struggle in school because they lived in sensitive urban areas (this was the case for partners from France, Italy, Lisbon) or because they belonged to migrant families who wouldn't speak the host language (this was especially the case for partners in the UK, Bulgaria and Slovenia). The training was meant to explain the benefits of volunteering, enhancing an altruistic spirit, promoting involvement in an extracurricular activity that is useful to others, developing opportunities to meet people (mainly adults) who did not belong to the students' families (parents) or schools (teachers), reflecting on different ways to acquire an experience relevant for their school work. In addition to the training, a mentoring was

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<sup>25</sup> Be a Volunteer, Succeed at School. Schola: a pedagogical approach to value volunteering. vol. 1, p. 54-67, Ljubljana:ZRC Sazu, ISBN: 978-961-05-0117-6

designed to support teachers in accompanying their students in extracurricular activities. On the basis of the Success at school project, the Schola project was designed in close partnership with the College Blaise Pascal (Massy, France), as this school had already tested the SAS project for 3 years (2014-2016). Other stakeholders were also associated to the testing (an association the first year - Espace Singulier, a social center, a cultural center - Paul B; the Opera de Massy) as the activities had to be implemented outside school and the idea was for students to discover other parts of their city (as they were unlikely to go in neighborhoods other than their own). Other partners were associated because they had already worked with a relevant network of schools and/or associations (University of Perugia, University of Lisbon), mainly with schools (University of Krakow and Karel De Grote University) or mainly with associations (ZRC SAZU).

The main challenge of the Schola project was to build a bridge between activities implemented at schools (in the framework of the compulsory curriculum) and extracurricular activities implemented outside schools (during their free time, based on free will). In France, a link was made with a compulsory internship that students had to achieve (one week, during the school year, in any place such as a shop, a firm, a school...) when they were 14 years old (last year before high school – lycée in French). Indeed, the process was equivalent: contacting an association (for volunteering) / an organization (for the internship); introducing themselves (why they would be relevant for the “job”); respecting the rules of the organization (status of the association/ internal code of the organization); providing a specific task/mission (with tangible results); being asked to deliver a self-assessment (interview for the volunteering, report of internship). In Italy, the University of Perugia involved a very meaningful network, a federation of associations whose volunteers suggested reading aloud some books (many styles, depending on the place where it was read) in libraries, pre-schools or retirement houses. Thus, students could easily be involved as active volunteers. In Belgium and Poland, as the partners were more familiar with teachers and schools, they had to build a brand new network on the ground, outside schools, with associations working with students. In Belgium, the territory was urban (Antwerp) with a very diverse population, in Poland, the territory was rural with a very homogeneous profile of students. In Slovenia, the ZRC SAZU used to work with associations in the field of popular arts and tradition; many of them were youth associations; this research Institute was also very familiar with Volunteering (a scientific review they edited, *Traditiones*, had published special issues on Volunteering; an international conference of Anthropologists was also focused on this topic ten years before). The diversity of the team, gathering partners more familiar with the topic of volunteering (iriv, ZRC SAZU, University of Perugia) and others more familiar with the topic of Early school leaving and the strategies to support teachers (College Blaise Pascal, Karel De Grote, University of Krakow), had a very fruitful impact on the designing of the tool. This instrument was meant to identify and assess the competences acquired through Volunteering and the ways to make them be understood and applied in schools (both by teachers and head of schools). Volunteering was familiar to all partners, it was not a real innovation (as it

used to be 10 years before under the VAEB project for Germany, Poland or Hungary), at least on an individual level (micro-economic approach). However, it was innovative on an institutional level (meso-economic approach), as there is still no official recognition of a volunteer experience as an example of “non-formal” and “informal learning”, and “formal learning” is still the only one taken into account for the assessment of pupils. Schools and Education in general are quite conservative and not so open to activities acquired during extracurricular activities.

### *Structure of the tool*

The Schola tool also consists of a 4 step approach (like the VAEB portfolio).

*In a first step*, volunteer students are asked together with their teachers to describe their voluntary experience, detailing the tasks and missions fulfilled during their voluntary activity. They must answer 3 questions: what, where, why. A main condition for considering the involvement as relevant is its duration (from 6 months, at least, to a year). Moreover it has to be fulfilled on a regularly basis (each week or each month), respecting 5 main characteristics - free (freedom), unpaid (not for profit), for others (altruism), for the general purpose (for the Community) in the framework of a not for profit structure (association, local authority, church...).

*In a second step*, students are asked to reflect on their voluntary experience - gathering feedback of the outputs achieved or any tangible results; in addition, they have to identify and analyse feelings and thoughts after this new experience. They must also provide concrete feedback on the external and internal factors that may have had an impact on their voluntary experience (both in a positive or negative way).

*In a third step*, students have to select competences suggested in the SCHOLA portfolio and, on the basis of a task/mission fulfilled, they must explain in which context they have acquired the selected competence and the corresponding level of competence (with the same scale from 0 to 4 - 0 corresponding to a “no experience” and therefore “incompetence”, 4 representing the creation level as the volunteer could create a new task/mission thanks to the perfect mastering of the competence). The competences relevant for a student are linked to the Eight Key Competences (European Commission, 2006) but they are adapted to their level of education (literacy-KC1, foreign language-KC2, numeracy-KC3, fundamental skills in Information & Communication Technology-KC4, Learning to Learn- KC5, Social and Civic competences-KC6, Sense of initiative & entrepreneurship-KC7, Cultural awareness and expression-KC8). In addition to the competences asked to a student at school, competences acquired/implemented thanks to volunteering are detailed such as being able to express in an oral and written way to present an association (KC1), being able to express the same content in a foreign language (KC2), being able to build a budget (KC3), being able to design a weblog or website for the association (KC4), being able to explain to other volunteers the tasks to be fulfilled (KC5), being able to defend a cause and raise awareness of the general public (KC6), being able to initiate and

implement any concrete action to defend the cause (KC7), being able to be understood whatever the context and background of the audience (KC8).

*In a fourth step*, students together with their teachers are asked to build an action plan. The main idea is to bridge the gap between formal learning (acquired at school) and informal and non formal learning (acquired outside school). The SWOT analysis is suggested as a methodological approach to identify and improve one's weaknesses and to value one's positive points.

#### *Applicability of the instrument*

The best way to explain the applicability of the SCHOLA tool is to give an overview of the way it was tested in the 5 countries.

*In France* the testing was implemented together with the Opera de Massy, as the pedagogical sessions suggested to students took place in a meeting room belonging to the Opera House and a professional working for the Opera de Massy could introduce her/his educational and professional pathway. The sessions were held once a month, on a voluntary basis for students. Students were very involved; the number of participants was an average of 12 students. The only barriers to participation were other extracurricular activities such as sport activities (for instance, the female basketball team), quite involved in the Schola testing, was very successful and had to attend a series of competitions). Another example: 4 of the participants were also involved in a scientific workshop (meant to build a rocket); these students were also very successful as they won first place in a national competition and third place in an international contest. It gives an idea of the students' profiles. The second part of the year was more focused on the organization of their yearly event: participants suggested organizing a world fashion "défilé". They selected the countries of origins of most of their fellow students, selected the relevant clothes, chose the most appropriate music and agreed on the way to introduce each of them. Thanks to the action suggested by the Schola, they were familiar to meet once a month and to work altogether and they better knew each other as they met in a different context. This was also a way for them to discover their teachers from a different perspective, as this was no longer a hierarchical way of interaction. The youngsters were also very glad to meet other adults (Opera House professionals, iriv team members) and to have the opportunity to express themselves, asking specific questions and thinking of their own professional future (even if theoretically).

In Italy, the Schola was firstly tested thanks to the network "Reading in a loud voice" but latterly the team of the University of Perugia was very successful to involve a very rich and various network of associations on the ground, mainly belonging or working with the CESVOL (the regional center for Volunteering in Umbria). During a seminar held in Perugia, the Schola team was very impressed by the involvement of school teachers in close partnership with the associations and the University of Perugia, a very successful example of "virtuous circle".

In Slovenia, the ZRC SAZU team was used to working with associations but not so much with schools and this was the tricky part - being convincing with the teachers to support their

students in extracurricular activities (and being unpaid for this support, so also volunteers). Moreover the rate of ESL is low in Slovenia (efficient Education system and small country).

In Poland, the Schola approach was quite efficient thanks to the partners involved outside the University of Krakow (most involved in associations for youth in the countryside). Moreover Volunteering has become popular in Poland as it is a usual activity offered to youngsters as extracurricular activities. Nonetheless, the main barrier faced was the many changes in the education system (many reforms) and therefore the uncertainty about the sustainability of any initiative to combat Early School Leaving. On the occasion of a seminar held in Krakow, our Polish colleagues organized meetings on the ground with schools and students and we could understand the many questions they had on the future of their compulsory curriculum. As a result the “non-compulsory” activities are even more uncertain.

In Belgium, the team of Karel de Grote was very concerned and involved. Thanks to their personal involvement, an efficient network of stakeholders on the ground could be built, especially associations working with youngsters. Some of them had already initiated some tools to identify and assess a voluntary experience (for instance an online portfolio, in Dutch). The impact of the Schola has been very positive as the Belgian team could implement a local action, using the tool and following the Schola approach in several schools around Antwerp. Teachers working with a very rich diversity of students are very demanding of any new strategy to engage students and enhance their motivation for school and any school-related activity.

#### *Strengths/Weaknesses – SWOT analysis*

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Teachers who have been volunteers are the best “role models” for their students as they can provide concrete examples of voluntary experiences and vivid testimonies. The more the heads of schools are involved in the process the better the teachers’ motivation to support their students in extracurricular activities as their “extra-work” is taken into account, even though in an informal way. They are better supported for any action they wish to implement.	Some teachers are not convinced about Volunteering, especially as they still have to organize many activities, in addition to their main teaching tasks at school. If they are volunteers, this is in other contexts, different from their profession. The competence approach is still an ongoing process and some teachers are not very familiar with non-formal and informal learning.

<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<p>The SCHOLA project and tool might be a main support to value and assess any extracurricular activity, since the portfolio approach is quite simple to adapt to any new context - the 4 steps remain unchanged and the list of competences may easily be updated and adapted to a new demand/profile.</p> <p>The higher the rate of ESL the better chance to be convincing to schools/teachers who agree to test any new approach.</p>	<p>The Schola approach has to be supported by the heads of schools who play a key role as they are in charge to validate any additional students' assessment, in close partnership with teachers.</p> <p>The Institution (administration in charge of Education) has to value non formal and informal learning and especially the use of extracurricular activities to acquire such a learning.</p>

*Comments on the use within the CLASS project*

The SCHOLA portfolio should be useful as it is focused on Volunteering and has been designed for assessing such an example of non-formal and informal learning; it should be even more adapted to the context of the CLASS (schools and teachers) as it has been designed for this purpose and tested in this context.

Nevertheless, once more, teachers have to be supported:

- to apply the portfolio process (the 4 step approach);
- to be convinced that Volunteering is a meaningful example of an extracurricular activity to tackle the issue of Early School Leaving;
- to understand the combination between non-formal / informal / formal learning.

Moreover, the support of the heads of schools is more than necessary, since they have the final say with respect to the inclusion of the assessment of competences in students' evaluation (even though teachers have an active role of proposal and implementation in the process).

<b>Tools</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Link</b>
<b>The recognition of Volunteer Skills – CESVOT/LocalGlobal</b>	Fast usability. Specific for volunteers. Clear and complete level grids.	Never related to school. Only competencies related to volunteering activities. Need specific training for users and supervisors.	
<b>Liceo Scientifico “G. Galilei” – Pescara - ITALY</b>	Link between PCTO assessment and voluntary activities. Structure known by teachers.	It takes into account only the ongoing profile of scientific High School.	

<p><b>The 4-step reflection process (York-Barr)</b></p>	<p>Versatility. The tool can be used with singles and groups of all ages.</p> <p>Ease of use. There is no need for platforms.</p> <p>New. The method is only 15 years old.</p> <p>Scientifically sound.</p> <p>Stimulating. It improves personal and professional capabilities and helps the development of many cognitive skills.</p> <p>Positive chain reaction. The exercise of reflection has a positive effect also on other people, who will be affected by it. It can be learned by teachers and taught by them to students.</p>	<p>Time consuming. The method requires time to dedicate to reflective practice and often people have not much time to give.</p> <p>Need to focus. It can be hard for users to focus on the questions, if not guided by a teacher/trainer/coach, so it is better not to use it on one's own.</p> <p>Difficult to use for large groups. As the questions are all open-ended, it would be hard to merge the data with large groups.</p>	
<p><b>“Start-Assessment-Center” (IMBSE, 1998)</b></p>	<p>Results have a high significance.</p> <p>By having several experts accompany and evaluate the assessments, an objective picture of the competencies of individual participants can be created.</p> <p>Some of the European key competences are mapped.</p> <p>Materials have been tested in practice and are constantly updated.</p> <p>Parts of the tool favour group-dynamic processes and can thus strengthen individual students' willingness and motivation to participate in the exploration of the competences and also to volunteer.</p> <p>It is a very practical approach.</p>	<p>Teachers have a high learning load to be able to use the tool.</p> <p>The method is very time-consuming to prepare.</p> <p>The method is very time-consuming to implement.</p> <p>A focus on relevant parts of Start is needed.</p> <p>For many parts of the assessment larger groups are needed.</p>	

<p><b>The VEAB portfolio – iriv &amp; alii (2003-2006)</b></p>	<p>Volunteers discover the usefulness of their experience and realize how far they could use it in a professional perspective.</p> <p>Volunteers become “experts” in competences, on the basis of those they have acquired thanks to their involvement.</p> <p>The learning by doing approach is most meaningful especially for those adults who are more reluctant to formal learning.</p>	<p>Volunteers alone are usually lost in the portfolio process and need a counselor/tutor to help them. It is not always simple to find a relevant profile of a professional .</p> <p>It is not so easy to collect all the evidence of activity along with the attestations from associations, as there is a high turnover in the not for profit sector.</p>	
<p><b>Tool for self-assessment of learning and competences acquisition</b> Desincoop, CRL – <i>Guimarães - Portugal</i></p>	<p>The tool resulted from a young people participative process. The learning is based on a holistic process.</p> <p>Learning of values and competencies through experience and practice</p> <p>Self-monitoring of volunteering paths. Designed for volunteering activities/projects.</p>	<p>It depends on maturity of the student level. Without a decoding, is not an easy tool to be managed. The presence of interpersonal skills was a point of confusion even when explained that is related to different areas.</p> <p>In some cases it is too big and should be adapted to the different contexts.</p> <p>Guidelines can be useful.</p>	
<p><b>The Schola tool – iriv &amp; alii (2016-2018)</b></p>	<p>Teachers who have been volunteers are the best “role models” for their students as they can provide concrete examples of voluntary experiences and vivid testimonies.</p> <p>The more the heads of schools are involved in the process the better the teachers’ motivation to support their students in extracurricular activities as their “extra-work” is taken into account, even though in an informal way. They are better supported for any action they wish to implement.</p>	<p>Some teachers are not convinced about Volunteering especially as they still have to organize many activities, in addition to their main teaching tasks at school.</p> <p>If they are volunteers, this is in other contexts, different from their profession.</p> <p>The competence approach is still an ongoing process and some teachers are not very familiar with non-formal and informal learning.</p>	



*In this section have been analysed practical tools for assessing competences and comments on their use within the CLASS project:*

- 1- The recognition of Volunteer Skills – CESVOT/- Tuscany-Italy*
- 2- Liceo Scientifico “G. Galilei” – Pescara – ITALY*
- 3- The 4-step reflection process (York-Barr)*
- 4- “Start -Assessment- Center” (IMBSE, 1998)*
- 5- The VAEB portfolio – iriv & alii (2003-2006)*
- 6- Tool for self-assessment of learning and competences acquisition – Desincoop, CRL- Guimarães – Portugal*
- 7- The Schola tool – iriv & alii (2016-2018)*

## 9. An operational proposal and model

Following the analysis of the tools presented in the previous paragraph, a new standard operational model is proposed. The purpose is to provide an instrument to mentor students' volunteer activities and account for it within the school curriculum. Through this tool students will be led to reflect about their activities and the competencies developed in volunteering. With the support of teachers, educators, students will actively take part in the production of a certification of the skills acquired.

**Key words:** skills assessment; operational tool; volunteer

The analysis of the tools collected leads to an operational proposal, a standard model to better mentor students in the activities carried out in the volunteering / third sector, within the school curriculum. The proposal provides different operational steps where the student, depending on the time and the path, is led to reflect, to document in detail and - supported by school teachers and educators outside the school - to produce different products that will form a synthesis and an integrated certification of the skills acquired at school and outside school.

### *The opening of the student's dossier*

As a first step, the student will fill out a personal data sheet, so that the student's dossier can be officially opened, as well as collect the "association roadmap" which would go along with the personal data sheet in order to open the student's dossier. A privacy form to be signed by the student's partner will be provided.

<i>Code</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Example</i>
<b>1</b>	<b>PERSONAL DATA AND ASSOCIATION</b>	
1.1	Name and surname	
1.2	Place and date of birth:	
1.3	Mail:	
1.4	Tel:	
1.7	School	
1.8	School curriculum	

1.9	Association, municipality	
1.10	Macrosector	
1.11	Do you participate in other Volunteering Associations?	ASSOCIATION > DELEGATION / PROV. > MACROSECTOR > HOW LONG > ROLE >
<b>2</b>	<b>YOUR EXPERIENCE AS A VOLUNTEER</b>	
2.1	How long will you practice active volunteering?	
2.2	How often will you practice volunteering activities?	
<b>3</b>	<b>TRAINING EXPERIENCES</b>	
3.1	Please, mention the main training courses carried out in the associations in which you have participated.	COURSE TITLE > YEAR-DATE > ASSOCIATION > DURATION HOURS > TOPICS COVERED >
<b>4</b>	<b>WHAT ARE MY SKILLS</b>	
4.1	Literacy competence	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4.2	Multilingual competence	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4.3	Mathematical competence and competence in science, technology, and engineering	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4.4	Digital Competences	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4.5	Personal, social and learning to learn competence	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4.6	Citizenship competence	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4.7	Entrepreneurship competence	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4.8	Cultural awareness and expression competence	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
<b>5</b>	<b>OTHER PERSONAL INFO</b>	
5.1	What are my interests?	
5.2	What do I want to achieve?	
5.3	Which actions/work would I like to carry out?	
5.4	Personal or social experience	
5.5	Any other interests (sport, arts, leisure, etc...)	

#### *The volunteer's diary*

Once the volunteering experience has started, a synthetic diary is provided, where the student will have to report the dates, the work done, the things that happened. He/she will also have to fill in a part related to the (positive and negative) feelings and experiences. This part is intended to begin the student's own reflection process, that will help to highlight the skills acquired at the end of the course.

DATE AND TIME	PLACE	ACTIVITY CARRIED OUT	POSITIVE ELEMENTS	NEGATIVE ELEMENTS

*The reflection step*

At the end of volunteering, through an extrapolated reflection guide, the student can begin the self-reflection path aimed at highlighting the salient moments and actions, which have served the development of skills through the activities carried out. Therefore, the student is first required to identify at least 5 specific events that he/she considers the most significant ones, taking them from the volunteer's diary that he/she filled during the volunteering path. Below, as a guide, there are the questions on which he/she must reflect and answer briefly for each of the 5 experiences considered as the most important ones.

n°	event
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Below, as a guide, are the questions on which he/she must reflect and answer briefly for each of the 5 experiences considered as the most important ones.

<b>1.LOOK BACK</b>	
1.1 What happened?	
1.2 Where was I?	
1.3 What was I doing?	
1.4 What was the context of the event?	
1.5 What part did I play in what happened?	
1.6 What part did I play in what happened?	
<b>2.THINK DEEP</b>	
2.1 Why have events taken this turn?	
2.2 Why did I behave this way?	
2.3 How did the context influence the experience?	
2.4 Have my past experiences affect the reactions I have had?	

2.5 How did they influence my actions and thoughts at the time?	
<b>3. LEARN SOMETHING NEW ABOUT YOURSELF</b>	
3.1 What did I learn from that experience?	
3.2 How can I improve?	
3.3 What went well?	
3.4 What did I do well?	
3.5 What went wrong or not as good as I thought?	
3.6 How did I contribute to this?	
<b>4. ORGANIZE THE NEXT STAGES</b>	
4.1 What should I remember to think about the next time I encounter a similar situation?	
4.2 How can I favor conditions that can improve future learning and the contexts in which I move?	
4.3 If it happens again, what would I do differently?	
4.4 How would I adapt my practice in the light of the competence acquired?	

### *First identification of skills*

On the basis of the reflections produced by the student and on the basis of the volunteer's diary, the student can begin, in summary, to identify levels and skills achieved during the course. A questionnaire will then be submitted where he/she can identify (perceived) skills and levels of achievement.

### *Skills Volunteer role / activities*

**Have you an example to show how you have demonstrated this skill in your volunteering?**

#### **1. Interpersonal Communication**

*(Being able to communicate ideas and information to others and work with a variety of people in multi-cultural environments, for example volunteers, clients, staff members)*

1  2  3  4  Not relevant

**2. External Communication** *(Managing public relations; lobbying and advocacy; promotion of your work / organisation through presentations, media contact etc.)*

1  2  3  4  Not relevant

**3. Written Communication** *(Being able to present information in written form, e.g. reports, articles, minutes of meetings)*

1  2  3  4  Not relevant

**4. Event Organising** *(Organising events such as seminars, conferences, general assemblies, exhibitions, competitions, shows etc.)*

1  2  3  4  Not relevant

**5. IT** *(Using computer programmes, e.g. Word, Excel, Access; using internet and e-mail; using databases; designing websites; programming)*

1  2  3  4  Not relevant

**6. Foreign languages** *(Understanding spoken and written language/s; translating and interpreting; using language for business purposes)*

1  2  3  4  Not relevant

**7. Active Listening** *(Being receptive to what others say, showing empathy, not assuming a major role in the conversation, responding to requests for help)*

1  2  3  4  Not relevant

**8. Being Proactive** (*Showing initiative and creativity, responding to changing situations; being flexible*)

1  2  3  4  Not relevant

**9. Negotiation / Mediation** (*Facilitating constructive debate; finding compromises; finding satisfactory solutions to conflicts*)

1  2  3  4  Not relevant

**10. Problem Solving** (*Finding appropriate solutions to specific situations; management of stress*)

1  2  3  4  Not relevant

**11. Decision Making** (*Identifying possible options and assuming responsibility for choosing best outcome*)

1  2  3  4  Not relevant

**12. Leadership** (*Being able to take a lead, make strategic decisions to move forward; representing your organisation externally*)

1  2  3  4  Not relevant

**13. Team working** (*Contributing to a collaborative climate; cooperating to reach common goals, accepting others' points of view*)

1  2  3  4  Not relevant

**14. Motivating Others** (*Encouraging others to get involved*)

1  2  3  4  Not relevant

**Other specific skills developed as a result of your volunteering (please write in):**


### Skills assessment

The student must elaborate this last part with the mandatory support of the educator outside school; it consists of a grid with indicators and is focused on the levels that the student believes to have reached.

<i>Skill</i>	<i>Level</i>					
	<i>Attendant</i>		<i>Technician</i>		<i>Expert</i>	
	<i>A1</i>	<i>A2</i>	<i>T1</i>	<i>T2</i>	<i>E1</i>	<i>E2</i>
<b>2.1 Active citizenship</b>	I am familiar with the values of the voluntary organisation in which I participate, by referring to older volunteers.	I know the values of my voluntary organisation and I know broadly the founding principles of volunteering.	My voluntary activity is inspired by the values of the mission of my voluntary organisation	My voluntary activity is inspired by the associative values and the founding principles of organized volunteering.	I knowingly practice the principles of volunteering by promoting the mission of my voluntary organisation	I knowingly practice the principles of volunteering and spread the founding values of organized volunteering.
<b>2.2 Relationship</b>	I am able to establish relationships with the interlocutors keeping in mind the rules of good communication (also with the help of other volunteers)	I listen carefully to my interlocutors by applying the rules of good communication and addressing myself, if necessary, to the most experienced volunteers.	I communicate effectively with my interlocutors in an autonomous way referring to the rules of good communication	I know how to establish relationships of trust and mutual respect with my interlocutors inside and outside the voluntary organisation.	I hold structured dialogues. I have advanced interpersonal skills and can advise if younger volunteers are needed.	I train and expand the network of my association, taking care of interpersonal relationships and paying attention to the correct modes of communication.
<b>2.3 Teamwork</b>	I participate in working groups to learn functions, roles, responsibilities	I participate in working groups by assuming particular functions, roles, responsibilities	I actively participate in working groups respecting the functions, roles, responsibilities that I have been assigned	I actively participate in working groups in accordance with the principles of good organizational communication	I coordinate working groups by creating sharing and acceptance of roles and responsibilities	I coordinate working groups with authority by creating the prerequisites for cooperative learning.

<b>2.4 Analysis/ assessment</b>	I participate in data collection and/or problem definition and/or the elaboration of new project ideas.	I collect and arrange data in order to address a problem in an organised way.	I can process information in order to identify specific action objectives related to my role in the voluntary organisation.	I can process data in order to identify result-oriented solutions in relation to its field of action.	I can define data-based strategies taking into account the constraints and resources available within my voluntary organisation.	I can build monitoring and evaluation systems in order to set and control the achievement of objectives.
<b>2.5 Problem solving</b>	I can identify a critical situation with respect to my voluntary activity by addressing the people in the voluntary organisation who are able to respond.	I can identify critical situations in the voluntary work I do; and, before asking for help, I can give a preventive response to the need.	I can identify simple critical situations in the framework of my voluntary activity and resolve them when they directly concern me.	I understand complex problems* that occur as part of my volunteer work and resolve them when they affect me directly.	I can identify and resolve difficult situations that affect my volunteer work and my organisation.	I am able to design systems to prevent the problems of the voluntary organisation by identifying solutions useful to the volunteer in order to carry out his or her role correctly.
<b>2.6 External communication</b>	I participate in external communication activities related to the activities I carry out.	I participate in external communication activities by carrying out the specific functions assigned to me.	I also carry out external communication activities using digital communication tools.	I have technical communication roles using the media to multiply relations with the public.	I am able to define tools and methods in order to encourage public participation in the aims and results of the association.	I am able to communicate the quality of services by activating listening/verification channels for continuous improvement.
<b>2.7 Organization (of pro-social activities)</b>	I participate in the organisation of simple membership activities* by following the instructions given to me.	I participate in the organisation of complex membership activities* under the guidance of experienced volunteers.	I can self-organise to carry out simple activities* according to specific instructions.	I can self-organise to carry out complex activities* by interacting with other volunteers and/or agencies	I am able to organise activities involving human resources and financial management.	I can organise complex activities* using specific business-planning and/or fundraising techniques.

<b>Attitude</b>	<b>Participant &gt; Executor</b>	<b>Autonomous &gt; Self-organised</b>	<b>Responsible &gt; Coordinator</b>
Level of complexity-autonomy	The volunteer participates in the mission activities by starting to provide himself or herself with the knowledge and tools that will make him or her autonomous to act with respect to the values and aims of the voluntary organisation. Its functions are mainly exploratory and/or executive. It acts mainly alongside mature or experienced volunteers	The volunteer has knowledge and skills that make him or her autonomous to act in accordance with the values and aims of the voluntary organisation of which he or she is a member. He or she has full responsibility and capacity for individual action. He or she acts individually; he or she supports young volunteers; he or she can be supported by more experienced volunteers.	The volunteer has solid knowledge and skills that allow him/her to guide other volunteers by interacting with them to implement the values, aims and activities of the voluntary organisation. He or she is responsible for the work of the volunteers by helping to define their functions and how to exercise them. He/She is called to interact with actors and bodies outside the association in promotion and coordination activities (network).

*The assessment of the path together with the teacher or the association tutor*

At the end of each volunteering period, the student will have to bring the documentation produced by him/her to the reference teacher together with the teacher, the student will deepen the experience, so that he/she can fill in what will be the "student's skills profile", as well as the future action plan. In fact, remember that the experience of volunteering, in order to connect with the objectives of achieving competencies, especially key competences, between the extra-school and the school environment, should not be a "one-off" experience. Instead, it should be a series of experiences outside the school context that go in parallel and intersect with those of the school curriculum.

OBSERVATION AND IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS SHEET

*Interview with Teacher <> Volunteer*

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Teacher:</b>
<b>1.1 Surname and name of the Volunteer</b>	
<b>1.2 Age</b>	
<b>1.3 Qualification/ degree</b>	
<b>1.4 Association</b>	
<b>1.5 Field*:</b>	
<b>1.6 Role of the Volunteer</b>	
<b>1.7&gt; Notes of the teacher</b>	

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION FOLLOWING AN INTERVIEW WITH THE VOLUNTEER

<i>Skill</i>	<i>Level</i>						<i>NOTES FROM THE INTERVIEW</i>
	<i>Attendant</i>		<i>Technician</i>		<i>Expert</i>		
	<i>A1</i>	<i>A2</i>	<i>T1</i>	<i>T2</i>	<i>E1</i>	<i>E2</i>	
<b>2.1 Active citizenship</b>							
<b>2.2 Relationship</b>							
<b>2.3 Teamwork</b>							
<b>2.4 Analysis/ Diagnosis</b>							
<b>2.5 Problem solving</b>							
<b>2.6 External communication</b>							
<b>2.7 Organisation (of pro-social activities)</b>							

<i>Attitude</i>	<i>Participant &gt; Attendant</i>	<i>Autonomous &gt; Technician</i>	<i>Managerial &gt; Expert</i>
<i>Role</i>	<i>Attendant - Executor</i>	<i>Technician - Self-Organised</i>	<i>Responsible - Coordinator</i>
Level of complexity-autonomy	The volunteer participates in the mission activities by starting to provide himself or herself with the knowledge and tools that will make him or her autonomous to act with respect to the values and aims of the voluntary organisation. He or her functions are mainly exploratory and/or executive. He or she acts mainly alongside mature or experienced volunteers.	The volunteer has knowledge and skills that make him or her autonomous in acting consistently with the values and aims of the voluntary organisation of which he or she is a member. He or she has full responsibility and capacity for individual action. He or she acts individually; he or she supports young volunteers; he or she can be supported by more experienced volunteers.	The volunteer has solid knowledge and skills that allow him/her to guide other volunteers by interacting with them to implement the values, aims and activities of the voluntary organisation. He or she is responsible for the work of the volunteers by helping to define their functions and how to exercise them. He or she is called to interact with actors and bodies outside the association in promotion and coordination activities (network).

### EXPERIENCE OF THE VOLUNTEER, ASSESSMENT

ASSESSMENT OF...	NOTES	NECESSARY IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS...
3.1 Times of the experience		
3.2 Frequency of services		
3.3 Fields		
OTHER NOTES		
3.4 Role and tasks		

REPORTED TASK	LEVEL	MONTHS / YEARS	NOTES
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

## TRAINING

Please indicate the training courses carried out in the associations in which you have participated.

YEAR	COURSE	ASSOCIATION	DURATION - HOURS	DISCIPLINES AND THEMES
	1.			
	2.			
	3.			
	4.			
	5.			

SUMMARY NOTES > OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE VOLUNTEER

**Summary of the volunteer's skills**

Date	<input type="text"/>				
Volunteer					
Surname	<input type="text"/>	Email	<input type="text"/>	Date of birth	<input type="text"/>
Name	<input type="text"/>	Mob.	<input type="text"/>	Volunteer since	<input type="text"/>
Main Association					
Name	<input type="text"/>	Field	<input type="text"/>	Years of existence	<input type="text"/>
Delegation	<input type="text"/>			Frequency	<input type="text"/>



<b>2.5 Problem solving</b>						
<b>2.6 External communication</b>						
<b>2.7 Organisation (of pro-social activities)</b>						

*Volunteer Competence Profile*

The profile briefly shows the performance that for each competence was verified by the teacher during the interview with the volunteer.

*ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP >*

*RELATIONSHIP >*

*TEAMWORK >*

*ANALYSIS/ASSESSMENT >*

*PROBLEM SOLVING>*

*EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION>*

## FUTURE ACTION PLAN

SKILL	LEVEL ACHIEVED	DESIRED LEVEL	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN

### *The end of the school, the certification of skills and the implementation of the CV*

At the end of the school path, the teacher, thanks to the student's dossier, during the final certification of competences, will therefore be able to certify not only those competences achieved within the school path, but will be able to integrate them with those achieved and well documented outside the school context. A further moment, after the certification, that can be included is the completion of the Curriculum Vitae<sup>1</sup>. The teacher can then provide examples and precise indications for the filling in of the curriculum, so that it does not represent only, as often happens, a list of training results and work experiences, but it details the skills achieved by the student, and therefore it will allow a possible employer to have many more elements for the evaluation of the CV itself.

#### **Sample curriculum vitae in EU format**

##### **EUROPEAN CURRICULUM VITAE FORM**

##### **PERSONAL DATA**

Name [ **LAST NAME, FIRST NAME (FIRST NAMES) ]**

Address [ **HOUSE NUMBER, STREET, ZIP CODE, COUNTRY, CITY]**

Telephone

Fax

E-mail

Citizenship

Date of birth [ day, month, year]

##### **PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT**

- Time (from & to) [List each position - that is important for the curriculum vitae – separately, starting from the last one and going back in time.]
- Employer's name and address
- Type of activity, field

- Profession, position
- Main activities and tasks

### **EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

- Time (from & to) [List each education - that is important for the curriculum vitae – separately, starting from the last one and going back in time.]
- Name and type of educational institution
- Main subjects/know-how studied
- Name of qualification obtained
- Level according to country classifications

### **INDIVIDUAL COMPETENCES AND SKILLS**

*Competences and skills you have gained throughout your life and your career but are not necessarily certified with an official certificate or degree*

MOTHER TONGUE [ **LIST YOUR MOTHER TONGUE**]

OTHER LANGUAGES

[ **list the language(s)**]

- Reading competence [Identify your knowledge level: excellent, good, basic level.]
- Writing competence [Identify your knowledge level: excellent, good, basic level.]
- Speaking competence [Identify your knowledge level: excellent, good, basic level.]

### **SOCIAL COMPETENCES AND SKILLS**

*Living with others and joint work in a multicultural environment, in a position requiring communication and team work (e.g. in the fields of [LIST the skills and identify where you obtained them.] culture and sports), etc.*

**ORGANIZATIONAL COMPETENCES AND SKILLS** *Coordinating and administering people, projects and budget plans; at work, as voluntary work (e.g. in the fields of culture and sports) or at home, etc. [LIST the skills and identify where you obtained them.]*

**TECHNICAL COMPETENCES AND SKILLS** *Computers, special equipment, machinery, etc. [LIST the skills and identify where you obtained them.]*

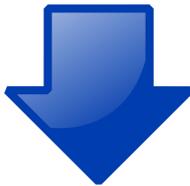
**COMPETENCES AND SKILLS IN THE ARTS** *Music, writing, fine arts, etc. [LIST the skills and identify where you obtained them.]*

**OTHER COMPETENCES AND SKILLS** *Skills not mentioned above. [LIST the skills and identify where you obtained them.]*

LEADERSHIP PERMISSION(S)

### *The guiding value of the path*

The path therefore assumes a function both evaluative and guiding. The school that decides to adopt this path not only carries out a significant integrative experience but also sets up an integrated system between curricular and extracurricular experiences and stimulates the emergence of self-orientation skills.



*In this section have been analyzed the eight steps of an operational proposal to better mentor students in the activities carried out in the volunteering / third sector, where the student is led to reflect, to document and to produce different products.*

- 1- The opening of the student's dossier.*
- 2- The volunteer's diary*
- 3- The reflection step*
- 4- First identification of skills*
- 5- Skills assessment*
- 6- The assessment of the path together with the teacher or the association tutor*
- 7- The end of the school, the certification of skills and the implementation of the CV*
- 8- The guiding value of the path*

## 10. Conclusions

The model proposed here aims to include a shared method for the recognition of competences learned at informal and non-formal level through extra-curricular activities in the third sector. Through the seven steps proposed, the student will be able to identify the skills achieved and the level of these skills, so as to be able to help the teacher in certifying not only the skills learned at school but also those learned outside of school. During the testing phase with the teachers, some good ideas for the correct and functional use of the model came out, which will be discussed and reported in this final paragraph.

A first observation was made about the difficulty that individual students might have in learning and carrying out the whole process. There are two possible solutions to this problem: the first one is that the student is followed and helped by an educator or a volunteer within the association where the student gains experience. The second, cheaper and more implementable, is to activate a system in which the most experienced students (those who have already done the activities in the past) support the less experienced ones during the process. Then the educator or the student will propose regular meetings to accompany and train the inexperienced student.

A second observation was made about the inexperience of the student in completing the first step, especially regarding the critical ability to identify, on a scale from 1 to 10, their starting skill levels. We believe that this is just an exercise for students to reflect, after the actual activity, on their beliefs and skills and to "learn" afterwards to place themselves in an active role, reflecting on the starting point they had identified and their perception of themselves after having done the path (e.g. it is interesting as metacognitive training to reflect on what they had at the beginning of the path and how it has changed since the beginning).

Finally, we know that each country or school could have different levels than those in our model (for example in Italy the levels, instead of 6, are 4), so the observation was on how to connect the two modes.

In our opinion, since indicators are well described and precise, it will be up to the teacher to choose how to link these indicators to the indications provided by the individual countries. In fact, it is enough to read the indicators and make a decision on the equivalent value of the individual formats present in the various countries and schools.



*In our opinion, since the indicators are well described and precise, it will be chosen by the individual teachers how to link them to the indications of the individual countries. In fact, it is enough to read the indicators and make a decision on the equivalent value of the individual formats that have the various countries and schools.*

### **Main Partners:**

SOLCO Srl – Coordinator (IT)

University of Perugia – Department of Philosophy, Human Sciences and Education Sciences (IT)

IRIV – Research Institute on Volunteering (FR)

Desincoop (PT)

Caritas Borken (DE)

Liceo Galilei Pescara (IT)

### **Associated Partners:**

AEFH (Agrupamento de Escolas Francisco de Hollanda), Guimarães (PT)

Akademie Klausenhof, Hamminkeln (DE)

CSV (Centro Servizi Volontariato), Pescara (IT)

This tool (*9. An operational proposal and model*) is a re-elaboration by the research group of the University of Perugia, coordinated by Prof. Federico Batini, starting from the following original tools:

*The recognition of Volunteer Skills – CESVOT/LocalGlobal*<sup>26</sup>

*Liceo Scientifico "G. Galilei" - Pescara -ITALY*<sup>27</sup>

*The 4-step reflection process (York-Barr)*<sup>28</sup>

*"Start- Assessment- Center" (IMBSE, 1998)*<sup>29</sup>

*The VAEB portfolio – iriv & alii (2003-2006)*<sup>30</sup>

*Tool for self-assessment of learning and competences acquisition - Desincoop, CRL - Guimarães -Portugal*<sup>31</sup>

*The Schola tool – iriv & alii (2016-2018)*<sup>32</sup>

Chapters 1 to 6 have been assembled by Marco Bartolucci (Unipg) from original texts provided by Federico Batini and Giulia Toti (Unipg research group). Chapter 7 has been elaborated by Marco Bartolucci (Unipg) thanks to the collaboration of Benedicte Halba Institut de Recherche et d'Information sur le Volontariat (whose work is at the basis of this collaboration). Chapter 8 has been elaborated by Marco Bartolucci (Unipg) starting from the material provided by all the partners as indicated in the chapter itself and in the note to the next chapter. Chapter 9 contains the tool assembled by the Unipg research group starting from the tools provided by all partners. Chapter 10 is attributable to all partners.

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<sup>26</sup> Those are unofficial material kindly sent by CESVOT Toscana, all provided by the help of Andrea Caldelli of Altra Città association

<sup>27</sup> Those are unofficial material kindly provided by the Liceo Galilei of Pescara

<sup>28</sup> J. York-Barr et al., Reflective Practice to improve Schools – An Action Guide for Educators, 2006

<sup>29</sup> Druckrey, P. (2003): IMBSE- Institut für Maßnahmen zur Förderung der beruflichen und sozialen Eingliederung e. V., START. In: INBAS: Competence Assessment Part II: Instruments and Procedures; Reports and Materials, Volume 9, Offenbach am Main. pp. 60-84.

<sup>30</sup> VAEB. 2003-2006. Weblog dedicated to the Assessment of a Voluntary experience (Vaeb). 28. 5. 2018.

<sup>31</sup> Those are unofficial material kindly provided by DESINCOOP

<sup>32</sup> Be a Volunteer, Succeed at School. Schola: a pedagogical approach to value volunteering. vol. 1, p. 54-67, Ljubljana:ZRC Sazu, ISBN: 978-961-05-0117-6.