

IO1

Comprehensive Synthesis Report on Good Practices and Assessment Tools



Partners

Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Navigation of Granada (Project coordination)

Ms. Isabel Contreras Ocaña

Email: programaseuropeos@camaragranada.org

URL: www.camaragranada.org

University of Padova

Ms. Gilda Rota and Ms. Sara Raponi

Email: gilda.rota@unipd.it

URL: www.unipd.it/stage

BFI OÖ

Ms. Gabriele Winkler

Email: Gabriele.winkler@bfi-ooe.at

URL: www.bfi-ooe.at

PAIZ Konsulting Sp.zo.o

Mr. Rafal Wach

Email: biuro@paiz.com.pl

URL: www.paiz.com.pl

Militos Consulting S.A.

Ms. Chistina Frentzou

Email: frentzou@militos.org

URL: www.militos.org

European Vocational Training Association (EVTA)

Ms. Giulia Meschino

Email: giulia.meschino@evta.net

URL: www.evta.eu



Table of Contents

1. Introduction	5
2. Desk research	8
3. Country Reports	13
3.1 Austria.....	13
Core data of the labour market	13
Relevant skills for job seekers (latest studies)	14
Main political aims and strategies towards transversal skills.....	15
Current standard of knowledge of TCs.....	17
Online / Assessment Resources	18
3.2 Belgium	20
Core data of the labour market	20
Relevant skills for job seekers (latest studies)	23
Main political aims and strategies towards transversal skills.....	24
Current standard of knowledge of TCs.....	25
Online / Assessment Resources	26
3.3 Greece	28
Core data of the labour market	28
Relevant skills for job seekers (latest studies)	31
Main political aims and strategies towards transversal skills.....	34
Current standard of knowledge of TCs.....	37
Online / Assessment Resources	38
3.4 Italy	41
Core data of the labour market	41
Relevant skills for job seekers (latest studies)	44
Main political aims and strategies towards transversal skills.....	47
Current standard of knowledge of TCs.....	48
Online / Assessment Resources	50
3.5 Spain	53
Core data of the labour market	53
Relevant skills for job seekers (latest studies)	60
Main political aims and strategies towards transversal skills.....	61
Current standard of knowledge of TCs.....	63

Online / Assessment Resources	64
3.6 Poland.....	66
Core data of the labour market	66
Relevant skills for job seekers (latest studies)	66
Main political aims and strategies towards transversal skills.....	67
Current standard of knowledge of TCs.....	69
Online / Assessment Resources	70
4. Empirical findings	71
4.1 Survey group	71
4.2 Students	71
4.3 Analysis of responses:	72
4.4 Experts.....	77
5. Discussion	80
6. References.....	81
6.1 References Austria	81
6.2 References Greece	82
6.3 References Poland	85



1. Introduction

The gap between competencies required of graduates in modern productive organizations and knowledge traditionally transferred to learners has been central in guiding towards an efficient and effective education system. Different social and industrial changes (globalization) have decisive consequences on individual competences requested by firms, compared to those acquired by students at school. That means that acquired competencies do not fit (or are misaligned) to those requested by the new ways of working. For that reason the partnership set up an Erasmus+ project, named: KeySTART2Work, which will be described briefly below.

WHAT: THE SCOPE

The main objectives of KeySTART2Work project are to increase VET learners' awareness of the value and potential of TCs development, to improve their employability potential, reducing low-skilled workforce and overcoming skills mismatch.

To achieve these objectives, the project will undertake the following activities:

- Identify good practices on Transversal Competences assessment tools
- Map the state-of-the art of the knowledge and understanding of TCs by VET learners (quantitative survey)
- Examine the key competences needed for employability of VET learners from the perspective of TC experts (qualitative survey)
- Validate the Catalogue of Transversal Competences key for employability by implementing focus groups with employers and employers' associations
- Elaborate a Catalogue of TCs Key for Employability of VET learners
- Disseminate the project through Empowerment Seminars and Multiplier Events
- Develop innovative tools

HOW: THE TOOLS

The KeySTART2Work project will develop the following tools:

An **ICT self-assessment tool** to help VET learners discover their level of TCs, upskill and improve, as well as gain awareness on the added value and potential of TCs for the labour market while providing VET experts, career services providers and other stakeholders with a new, innovative tool and training material to enhance learners' transversal competences. The ICT tool will be provided in English and translated in all 6 project languages (Spanish, French, German, Greek, Italian and Polish).

Guidelines and recommendations on how to create a support service to assess and, accordingly, improve the TCs of VET learners. The service will be established as an experimental unit in the Chamber of Commerce of Granada (Spain), in view of testing and incorporating the project results.

WHO: THE TARGET GROUPS

KeySTART2Work project mainly addresses VET learners, jobseekers, young and adult professionals interested in making the most of their transversal competences, and as a result, improve their employability. The project also targets VET professionals and career guidance providers in the project target countries (Spain, Austria, Belgium, Greece, Italy, Poland) and beyond, interested in improving their know-how, by implementing new tools and training programmes.

At the same time, enterprises will contribute to the project as well as benefit from workers that up-skill or re-skill. Institutional stakeholders such as policy makers, adult education institutions and National Agencies responsible for VET will also be targeted in view of promoting awareness and policy adaptation, as needed.

The work is divided into 4 sections, or work packages.

The first section, Intellectual Output 1 (IO 1) is conducted in order to identify the relevant skills for job seekers, and connected with this, the knowledge required by career guidance professionals in relation to services intended to assist people to manage their careers. The research information collected and developed within this intellectual output is set out here and will be used as a basis for the development of the Catalogue of transversal competences and will be used as a basis for the development of the interactive tool for career guidance professionals (self-assessment tool).

All project partners adhered to common and detailed methodologies for data collection and analysis in order to ensure a consistent quality for the research across the partner countries and to build up a comprehensive picture of transversal skills in Europe from different perspectives. The data was collected through a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches:

- **Desk research:** the desk research aimed at identifying core issues in the context of transversal competences in the partner countries. What is the current standard of knowledge on relevant skills in the different countries? What is the core data of the labour market? What is the current standard of knowledge?
- **Quantitative Survey:** This questionnaire was designed to capture the view of students and you their knowledge about transversal competences.
- **Qualitative Survey:** Complementary to the student's questionnaire, in depth interviews were conducted with experts on the labour market. The purpose of this research was to explore in greater detail experts' views on the main skills identified in the desk research and on their opinions regarding necessary trainings and tools.

As the project is concerned with EU labour market skills, the EU member states were in the focus of attention. Desk research was conducted in the partners' countries and both surveys were accomplished in partner's countries only.

The report is organized as follows:

Chapter 2 – Labour market situation: this chapter provides an overview of the main European main political aims and strategies towards transversal skills. It also includes a national report from each partner country, with national data regarding transversal skills. The chapter capitalizes on information from the desk research and the surveys.

Chapter 3 – Empirical findings: This chapter summarizes the conclusion of the conducted research, separated into students and experts.

Chapter 4: Conclusion towards Keystart2work: based on the information collected and on the discussions held by partners, this chapter presents the main conclusions to be considered for the development of the next activities of the project – namely IO 2 – Catalogue of transversal competences, and IO3 – development of the self-assessment tool.

2. Desk research

The Society of today is facing a lot of complex requirements; the labour market is constantly evolving. Skills, competences and qualifications that people need change over time and to deal with these changes people need to be equipped with a variety of skills. In the context of the Agenda for New Skills and Jobs (COM/2010/0682 final), recent forecasts of future skill needs anticipate increase in labour market demand for additional qualifications and key competences, namely transversal competences critical for employability and employment, such as communication in foreign languages, creativity, teamwork, leadership, communication, etc.. In this respect, most European countries have made significant progress in incorporating key competences for employability, creativity and innovation into national curricula, in defining specific learning outcomes and developing a range of assessment tools to support the learning process.

However, awareness-raising of VET learners on the importance of upskilling and developing transversal competences for employability has not been adequately addressed. According to OECD (2010), learners are not aware of what transversal competences are, how they can be acquired, which competences they already possess and which of them they should improve in order to increase their future employability potential. As a result, although unemployment rate in European -especially Southern European- countries, mainly due to the economic crisis, has recently increased to unprecedented levels, 32% of employers face difficulties with filling jobs due to competences shortage when about 509,000 jobs in the European ICT sector remain vacant.

European Key competencies

Globalization and modernization are creating an increasingly diverse and interconnected world. To make sense of and function well in this world, individuals need for example to master changing technologies and to make sense of large amounts of available information. In these contexts, the competencies that individuals need to meet their goals have become more complex, requiring more than the mastery of certain narrowly defined skills.

Terminology

Various terminologies are currently used within the community to refer to the category of “non-academic” knowledge, skills, values and attitudes

deemed necessary and integral to life in 21st century, whereas the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) uses the term “key competences” (e.g. OECD 2005). In addition, there are also a number of interpretations of which particular skills, attitudes, and values belong in this category.

All different terms (e.g. non-cognitive skills, cross curriculum skills, generic skills, transversal skills) refer to and encompass skills, competencies, values, and attitudes required for the holistic development of learners, such as: collaboration, self-discipline, resourcefulness, and respect for the environment. In this paper the single term “transversal competences” is used throughout this document. The following is a synthesis and analysis of different reports.

With regard to competency in the learning process, skill can be seen as the practical learning outcome, knowledge as the learning input into skills development, attitude as an acquired mode of behaviour influenced by internal and external motivation and characteristics as a disposition related to innate talent. From competence can only be spoken, if someone knowledge and skills through a longer period and acquisition of experience appropriates.

In KeySTART2work following definition is the work basis:

Aptitude and **knowledge** acquired through personal **experience** such as schooling, **jobs**, classes, hobbies, sports etc. Basically, any **talent developed** and **able** to be used in future **employment**. For example, a transferable skill **applied** to a **business** could consist of parenting **skills** in the opening of a pre-school.

<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/transferable-skills.html#ixzz43i1WOhgE>

According to this we perceived as the most important transversal competences the following ones:

#	Transversal Competences (TC)	Description
1	Self-awareness & understanding	Understanding and observing yourself objectively. Understand how your perceptions of yourself, others, and the situation are driving your actions. Self-understanding leads to the correct didactic approach upon improving weaknesses or

		developing one's strengths In order to increase levels of performance and competences.
2	Global Communication& Foreign languages	Communication skills that reflect an understanding of the power of language to shape thought and experience. Having the ability to understand and clearly communicate in our global multicultural world will definitely assist in professional environments, business transactions but also avoid conflicts.
3	Flexibility & adaptability	Ability to prioritize, effectively adapt to the changing professional environment but also to the emotional states generated though the daily interactions with professionals that acquire different levels of authority. Supports change implemented via new approaches, initiatives, methods, and technologies.
4	Critical, strategic & Innovative thinking	Possesses a clear vision for the future that enhances both individual and corporate opportunity, gaining a competitive edge. Brings in new methodologies, ideas that lead to incremental and radical outcomes in a tangible or intangible form. Has the ability to efficiently tackle down issues with effective solutions (Savaneviciene, A., Rutelione, A., & Ciutene, R. 2014).
5	Organization and management	Acquires a focus on progressivity through the proper prioritization and management of resources and tasks.
6	Decision making	A value that is crucial for working environments by hiring and maintaining employees that have the ability to assess and manage risks through effective decision making, in complex and difficult situations. Acquires the ability to evaluate strategically and measure the impact of the decisions taken (Savaneviciene, A., Rutelione, A., & Ciutene, R. 2014).
7	Teamwork oriented	Work effectively with colleagues that acquire different skill sets, personalities and work styles. Understanding diverse motivation levels in order to deliver efficient and effective results.
8	Empathy / Relationship	Being able to listen to others carefully to decode their behaviours and mood by taking the role of the other person and imagining the situation from his or her perspective. This leads to self-reflection, when, upon considering a wide range of opinions and beliefs, individuals recognize that what they take for granted in a situation is not necessarily shared by others.
9	Self confidence	Believing in yourself and your ability to accomplish anything. Those who believe in themselves have access to

		unlimited power and transmit a sense of assurance and high professionalism.
10	Problem solving	Dealing effectively with a wide range of situations of one's professional and individual everyday life.
11	Learning orientation	The will and effort to progress, improving both personal behaviours and professional skillsets through diverse channels of training, and education. In many situations learns from own experiences and strives to improve his/hers status.
12	Stress Management	Acknowledging emotional conditions or dealing with unexpected difficult situations in a calmly manner, avoiding to transmit anxiety and stress to others. Thinking clearly and taking the proper decisions in order to deliver expected results.
13	Negotiation skills	The ability to understand a situation, the motivation and passion when interacting and dealing with partners, colleagues or even competitors. Following in many circumstances a win-to-win approach that will definitely maintain or assist in rebuilding relationships.
14	Leadership	Communicating vision and ideas that inspires others to follow with commitment and dedication. Transmitting a sense of confidence to others that facilitates their success. Being proactive by participating in activities and supporting members in order to deliver specific results.
15	Collect and Process information	Being able to responsibly discriminate source of information to get only valid and sound information. Being able to categorize, compare and analyse information by identifying adequate strategies and approaches.

For more information on county specific elements on Transversal competences please see the national research reports, in the next section.

Additional links

EUROPEAN COMMISSION (2012), *New skills and jobs in Europe: Pathways towards full employment*.

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=9481&langId=en>

CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY (2014), *Hidden competences*.

http://www.cimo.fi/instancedata/prime_product_julkaisu/cimo/embeds/cimowwwstructure/32427_Faktaa_1_2014_Hidden_Competences.pdf

CAROLINE KEARNEY (EUROPEAN SCHOOLNET) (2013), *European mapping of initiatives on the development of key competences*.

http://keyconet.eun.org/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=347aaec4-4326-44ec-ae54-a905580deacd&groupId=11028

Antonio Bolívar, *The competences discourse in Spain: basic education and superior education* <http://red-u.net/redu/files/journals/1/articles/70/public/70-59-2-PB.pdf>



3. Country Reports

3.1 Austria

Core data of the labour market

Austria has a population of 8,584,926 residents (as 1st of January 2015), including 1,146,078 foreign citizens (13.3% of total population). In 2014, an average of 1,715 million people with migration background lived in Austria, that is 20.4% of the entire population. Austria is one of the eleven richest countries in the world in terms of GDP per capita, has a well-developed social market economy, and a high standard of living. Austrian economic system can be characterized as a free market economy with a strong social focus by also taking into account the weaker members of society. Austria also features a tried and tested system of economic and social partnership, which has traditionally played a strong and reconciliatory role in wage and price policies. Economic growth is still on a very low level (0.6%) in the year 2015.

Labor situation

There are more than 20,000 people working in the primary sector, more than 877,000 residents in the secondary sector and at least there are more than 2,515,000 people in the tertiary sector. All together there are 4,263,400 people economically active (cf. Statistik Austria, 2014).

At the end of November 2015 there were 359,293 unemployed registered at the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS). These are 27,537 people (8.3%) more than one year prior to that point. Moreover there were more than 70,000 course participants 2015 which are not part of the unemployment statistics. So if you put these two groups together there are more than 430,000 people searching a job at the end of November. Following the international definition of unemployment (it is important to distinguish from the national definition) there are 5.8% people of Austria without work (cf. EUROSTAT, 2016). Unemployment among youth people is at 10.4%. In contrast 31,021 job opening did exist at the same point in time.

Table 1: Unemployment rate

Age group	Total
15-19	8,115
20-24	38,586
25-49	213,816
+50	93,814

Source: AMS. <http://iambweb.ams.or.at/ambweb/> [dl: 19.01.2016]

After the Second World War Austrian workers had the strong characteristic of goodness of work enthusiasm and hard work. Often there will be talked about the economic miracle at this point of time. Without the receipt of capital from foreign countries, market gaps and consumers on the world market there were no chance for the economy miracle. Beyond controversy the input of manpower is an important part of value added. But motivation and work enthusiasm are just two of a huge variety of factors which are important for a successful economy and affluence. There are a lot of surrounding factors almost out of the influence of the working people which are very important for success.

Manpower

Anyway manpower is a rather important part to gain success in a country. A lot of entrepreneurs underrate the importance of manpower and invest a lot of money in the wrong aspects. The lack of qualified employees, succession planning and the loss of key man are serious problems. Human resources is getting more and more important and often this aspect is the unique selling position which distinguishes a good from a not.

Relevant skills for job seekers (latest studies)

Speeding up, cancellation of borders and transition to flexible working hours are just a view key words of the 21st century. Structural changes are necessary. The competition between companies is getting tighter and therefore it is asked for higher innovation dynamics. To fulfill these requirements well educated employees are necessary. Key competences are getting more and more importance. Often competitive advantages are reached because of key competences. Occupational training will be

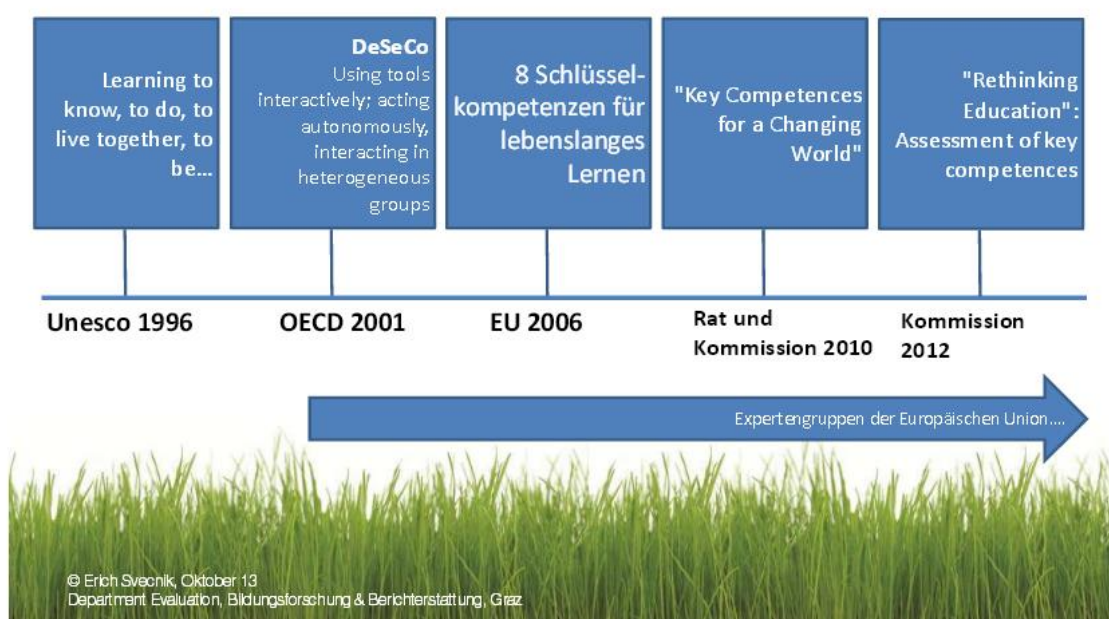
aligned on that fact. Key skills are also important for people themselves because of self-development.

The PIACC study of 2011/12 is the first scientific study which shows valid figures of three competence spheres. These are reading and math's competences and problem solving competence in context of new technologies of adults in Austria. These competences are quite important for young people for getting part of the labor market and beyond that they are important to become a member of social life. The result of this study shows the Austrian people have well developed math's skills and problem solving is on an average level but reading competences are rather bad. The top flight of that comparative study is far away. Better cognitive skills improve your job situation. The level of your own education your parents, voluntary service, demand for further education and the amount of time when people can use their competences in everyday life and their work have a direct connection with the level of competences of a person. This direct connection means the more hold of those facts the more key competences are developed (cf. PIACC, 2014).

Main political aims and strategies towards transversal skills

Especially since the 1990s, a new dynamics has evolved against the backdrop of the characteristic elements which have been described. The preparations for accession to the European Union generated vital impetus. Amongst many other issues, a need for reform and renewal in education was perceived. Increasingly, questions such as the further development of the educational system were put on the political agenda, also at the international level. The diversification of the Austrian system of higher education following the establishment of "Fachhochschulen" (special type of post-secondary colleges) in a novel organizational set-up was an important step. After lessen of world economic and financial crisis key competences will be more in focus in future again. Growth and improvement of affluence are linked together with key competences and lifelong learning. Results of key competence studies show that the Austrian politics is very important in that field. Politicians are responsible for the educational system of a country and they have to improve the further education system stating. Therefore capital investment in improvement of education and development of competences is a main goal for the next century. Countries which save money at the point of education save money on the wrong point. Continuous bad education performances marsh lock-step with a permanent downturn (cf. Schleicher, 2014, p. 31).

For the Austrian politics the improvement of educational and training system is the one of the leading topics. The question of new key competencies carries equal weight at the level of the European Union and the country of Austria, both in the consultation process on lifelong learning, and in the area of stepped-up co-ordination in educational policy.



The Austrian system of education is characterized by a strong focus on vocational education, which starts at a relatively early point in the educational career (at the age of 14 or 15 years) and leads to the first formal qualifications after two to three years already. With regard to requirements and skills by level and by professional specialization, the secondary higher level is highly diversified and requires adolescents relatively early on to opt for one of the two dimensions. At secondary higher level, a well-established system of apprenticeship training exists alongside a well-established system of school-based vocational training, which has recorded the highest growth rates in recent decades. New core competencies: raising standards and specialization of IT skills; promoting entrepreneurialism, social skills, encounter with, and study of, technological culture through contacts with practice and cross-curricular approaches; promoting foreign language skills. These five fields of action contain a number of approaches and activities at different levels of dissemination and development (cf. Lassnigg & Mayer, 2001, p. 2).

In Austria it is customary that relevant stakeholder groups are involved in all major educational policy developments (social partners, University Conference, Fachhochschule Council, university colleges of education, school partners, staff representatives, experts, NGOs, etc.). The integration of the concept of key competences into all major strategic developments is therefore also made in close consultation with these stakeholders. With a view to developing and implementing an Austrian LLL strategy, the content and strategic objectives of the recommendation on key competences form an important reference framework.

“The transition to promote lifelong competence development is necessary, among other reasons, because the acquisition of knowledge in advance is less successful than ever before. The special challenge consists in translating qualifications to competences – a process that is becoming particularly important in the conception of the national and European Qualifications frameworks.” These are the eight key competences from EQR:

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

Current standard of knowledge of TCs

A competency is more than just knowledge and skills. It involves the ability to meet complex demands, by drawing on and mobilizing psychosocial resources (including skills and attitudes) in a particular context. Major educational objectives for the entire school system resulting from the 8 key competences are integrated into the Austrian school legislation with constitutional status, in order to emphasize wide consensus among educational policy-makers. The 8 key competences are also taken into consideration in all curricula, some however with differing special focuses related to the respective school form (Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture, 2009, p. 7).

Existing studies indicate that many national curricula have moved towards integrating transversal competencies as a response to the number of social, economic, and cultural changes brought on by globalization and the rapid development and proliferation of Information and Communications Technology. In their review of nine theoretical frameworks for transversal competencies, Choo and Villanueva (2012) found that one of the major challenges in embedding transversal competencies in learners is how to best integrate transversal competencies into existing curricula. Further to this, it highlights that in the discussions surrounding this challenge, little attention is paid to what aspects are actually really new and why transversal competencies are beneficial to students (cf. Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, 2015, p.2).

Online / Assessment Resources

It is contradictory that on the one hand key competences are identified as one of the most important thing for people to be well prepared for life but on the other hand there are not so many tools in that field of research for measuring those competences. Nevertheless below there are some examples of tools to measure key competences in Austria.

Europass

Europass helps individuals to convey their skills and qualifications in a clear and effective way. Europass moreover aims to support the documentation of qualifications, competences and skills. Contact person in Austria is national agency of lifelong learning.

Every person fill in the checklist on yourself regarding the four key competence factors computer competence, learning competence, social competence and one's own initiative/ entrepreneurial competence. The checklist includes a list with a lot of indicators where you can evaluate your competences on your own.

<http://www.europass.at/>

http://www.schulentwicklung.at/joomla/images/stories/NMS/kompetenzen/schluesselkompetenzen_papier.pdf

ICILS 2013

The IEA (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement) realized with ICILS 2013 (International Computer and Information Literacy Study) for the first time an international comparative

study, which will provide evidence about students' computer- and information-related competencies across countries. ICT was identified as key competences for Austria for the future. In this tool ICT competences will be tested computerised by school kids.

Area I: Collecting and managing information

- a) Knowing about and understanding computer use
- b) Accessing and evaluating information
- c) Managing information

Area II: Producing and exchanging information

- a) Transforming information
- b) Creating information
- c) Sharing information
- d) Using information safely and securely

http://www.medienimpulse.at/pdf/Medienimpulse_Messung_computer_und_informationsbezogener_Kompetenzen_von_Schuelerinnen_und_Schuelern_als_Schluesselkompetenz_im_21_Jahrhundert_Eickelmann_20111128.pdf

Informelle Kompetenzmessung

The informal competence measuring is targeted on school kids in Austria at primary school, grammar school and secondary modern school. This program has a pool of tasks to contribute the teacher. The level of proficiency should be analyzed and if it is necessary teachers can counter steer targeted. This tool should be located by young kids because there it is most important to look precise if the kids have all required competences. Teachers can react quickly after realization of that tool and can change their tuition. Individual advancement can improve the competences of every school kid and will help them in future life.



**Informelle
Kompetenz-
messung**

<https://www.bifie.at/ikm>

Additional links

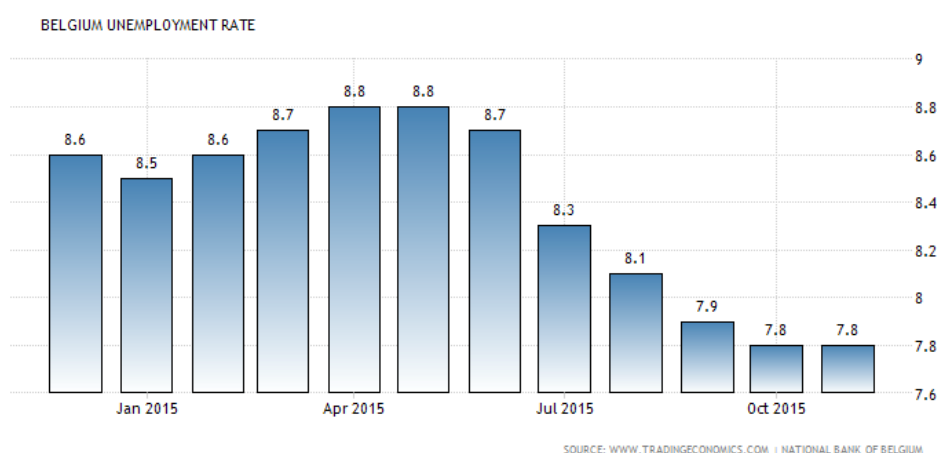
https://www.bfi-ooe.at/bfiweb/sites/default/files/bfi_common/Trainer/Kompetenz%20Management.pdf

<http://www.disgprofil.eu/>

3.2 Belgium

Core data of the labour market

The Belgian economy spent some years of stagnating activity, but recently it has entered a slow-moving recovery with GDP growth expected to accelerate from 1% in 2014 to 1.4% in 2016 thanks to company investments and external trade. The unemployment rate is projected to decrease from a ten-year high 8.5% to 8.1% last year in 2016 thanks to job creation in the private sector¹.



Until November 2015 the Belgian unemployment rate was 7.8%, and among them, the unemployed youth represented 22.60%². This rate varies between the different regions, but in particular, more the young people has a lower level education, more they have difficulties to find a job.



1 Commission Staff Working Document. Country Report Belgium 2015. Including an In-Depth Review on the prevention and correction of macroeconomic imbalances.
http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/csr2015/cr2015_belgium_en.pdf
 2 <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/belgium/youth-unemployment-rate>

On the other side, the employment rate was 61,40% in July 2015³.



The Belgian labour market is characterised by major differences between regions. Flanders outperforms Wallonia and Brussels both in terms of employment and unemployment rates. The situation in Brussels is particularly worrying. At 19.2% in 2013, its unemployment rate stands at twice that of Wallonia (11.3%) and four times above the rate in Flanders (5%). Wallonia and Brussels also have persistently high long-term unemployment, amounting to 56.6% and 51.5% of total unemployment in 2013, respectively. This compares with 32.5% in Flanders.

Nevertheless, thanks to its international business scene, there are different possibilities of finding jobs in Belgium, especially in main cities, like Brussels and Antwerp, where EU institutions, Embassies, international organisations and multi-national companies are based. Most of the population work in the service sector (legal, banking, media and tourism), with around a quarter working in industry including textiles, glass, engineering, car assembly and chemicals where highly skilled workers are requested.

Youth participation in Belgian labour market

Unfortunately, the Belgian labour market shows problems for both young and elderly workers who face important barriers to entry. Even people from migrant backgrounds are in a precarious position because of the low level of education.

³ www.tradingeconomics.com/belgium/employment-rate

**Youth (under 25 years) and Prime Aged Adult (25-54 years) Unemployment Rate in
Selected EU Member States: 10 Years Average (2003-2012)**

<i>Country region</i>	<i>Youth (<25 years) Unemployment Rate (1)</i>	<i>Prime Aged Adult (25-54 years) Unemployment Rate (2)</i>	<i>Ratio: (1)/(2)</i>	<i>Absolute Difference: (1)-(2)</i>
Greece	30,7%	11,1%	2,8	19,6%
Spain	30,4%	13,2%	2,3	17,2%
France	20,9%	7,7%	2,7	13,2%
Belgium	19,8%	6,8%	2,9	13,0%
Brussels	35,0%	15,8%	2,2	19,1%
Wallonia	29,6%	9,6%	3,1	20,1%
Flanders	13,5%	4,0%	3,3	9,4%
EU27	18,9%	7,9%	2,4	11,0%
Germany	11,4%	7,9%	1,4	6,5%
Denmark	10,4%	4,8%	2,2	5,6%
Austria	9,0%	4,0%	2,2	5,0%
The Netherlands	7,3%	3,4%	2,1	3,9%

Source: Eurostat

The school-to-work transition is especially problematic for the low educated in Belgium. In the first five years after graduating, Belgian youth are on average employed for only three years. This is well below the OECD average of about 3.5 years. However, the low educated are only expected to spend slightly more than one year in employment during their first five years after leaving school. In Belgium migrant youths are also much more affected than in other European countries.

Relevant skills for job seekers (latest studies)

Belgium also faces labour shortages. Although unemployment has been increasing since the start of the crisis, job vacancy rates are among the highest in the EU and job offers for critical occupations take longer to fill than the average.

Most available jobs in Brussels are for highly skilled workers within the services sectors, such as finance, international institutions and businesses, estate agencies and education, and public health and social services.

Shortage jobs include:

- engineers,
- technicians,
- architects,
- accountants,
- nurses and midwives;
- IT staff like computer system designers and analysts,
- technical and commercial sales representatives,
- teachers;
- admin staff,
- mechanics, and
- building trades.

These positions are for highly specialised workers who are welcome in Belgium⁴.

Employers have a hard time finding workers for these occupations due to the scarcity of applicants, qualitative requirements (qualifications, experience, languages spoken) or difficult working conditions. Although horizontal mismatches exist, qualification mismatches are mostly vertical⁵. The skills mismatch is mainly related to a greater supply of low-skilled job-seekers than employers need and an under-representation of highly-skilled job-seekers. More than 80% of the active population with tertiary education is employed, against 65% for medium-skilled persons and less than 40% for the low-skilled. This is below the EU average for all three groups, but the gap is especially wide for the low-skilled. As regards horizontal mismatches,

⁴ http://www.expatica.com/be/employment/Work-in-Belgium-find-jobs-in-Belgium_100085.html

⁵ Vertical skills mismatch means the level of a worker's skills is higher or lower than is required by the job. Horizontal skills mismatch means workers have the appropriate qualification level but possess different skills than those required for the job they occupy (Cedefop, 2009).

these mostly relate to skills shortages for technical and future-oriented occupations observed at all levels of education. The number of graduates in science, technology, engineering and mathematics remains low.

A high level of education with certificates is a necessary start, but at workplace today **relational, organisational competences** are strong factors to be hired.

For sure, **linguistic skills** are indispensable: in Belgium there are three official languages. Dutch is spoken in the Flemish community in the Flanders region to the north of Belgium; French is spoken in Wallonia to the south of Brussels; and German is spoken in the southern east. In some cases, mainly in international companies, English may be sufficient⁶.

Close to these competences, some aspects of the **social behaviour** are required to become successful at job. These attributes are transversal or soft skills and include **communication, coaching and leadership abilities**, as well as **personal qualities** such as friendliness, empathy, and optimism. Many of these ones are hard to acquire by just reading a book. Instead, they can only be learned through practice⁷.

Main political aims and strategies towards transversal skills

Transversal competencies, sometimes referred to as non-cognitive skills or 21st century skills, broadly refer to and encompass skills, competencies, values, and attitudes required for the holistic development of learners, such as: collaboration, self-discipline, resourcefulness, and respect for the environment. ERI-Net members agreed on the term transversal competences broken into five domains: critical and innovative thinking, interpersonal skills, intrapersonal skills, global citizenship, and media and information literacy (see table).

⁶ www.expatica.com/be/employment/Work-in-Belgium-find-jobs-in-Belgium_100085.html

⁷ <http://journals.plos.org/ploscompbiol/article?id=10.1371/journal.pcbi.1003708>

Domains	Examples of key skills, competencies, values, and attitudes
Critical and innovative thinking	Creativity, entrepreneurship, resourcefulness, application skills, reflective thinking, reasoned decision-making
Interpersonal skills	Communication skills, organizational skills, teamwork, collaboration, sociability, collegiality, empathy, compassion
Intrapersonal skills	Self-discipline, ability to learn independently, flexibility and adaptability, self-awareness, perseverance, self-motivation, compassion, integrity, self-respect
Global citizenship	Awareness, tolerance, openness, responsibility, respect for diversity, ethical understanding, intercultural understanding, ability to resolve conflicts, democratic participation, respect for the environment, national identity, sense of belonging
Media and information literacy	Ability to obtain and analyse information through ICTs, ability to critically evaluate information and media content, ethical use of ICTs

The regional and community government agreements pay particular attention to creating future measures for the transition from education to employment, as announced in the Youth Guarantee Implementation Plans. These reforms, able to remove structural impediments to accessing the labour market, are intended to improve skill levels and their relevance to labour market needs; new effective vocational and educational training systems will be planned to prevent young people from leaving education early⁸.

In 2013 Belgium with other Countries adopted measures to improve school-to-work gap introducing work experience chances (European Commission 2013). To achieve this aim, a company should invest in the roles of training specialists.

Therefore, apprenticeship comes into a special consideration, because it offers high quality work-based learning with training parallel to school-based training. It enhances the link between education and real working life. This means an easier integration of new workers who are rapidly skilled and efficient in a company that has to promote a lifelong learning.

Current standard of knowledge of TCs

While the Belgian education system generally works well, large disparities in educational outcomes and significant performance gaps between schools exist. Basic skills attainment is good on average, although significant disparities between the communities exist. Also, the Programme for

⁸ Commission Staff Working Document. Country Report Belgium 2015. Including an In-Depth Review on the prevention and correction of macroeconomic imbalances.

International Student Assessment (PISA) survey confirms large disparities in basic skills attainments which partly reflect socioeconomic or migration backgrounds. Immigrant-specific factors, like a different language spoken at home than the language of instruction, help explain the performance gap. Although participation in early childhood education is among the highest in the EU, educational inequality already starts in early childhood education.

Nevertheless, beyond a fundamental specialisation, a candidate has to own transversal skills, also called soft skills, like entrepreneurship, problem solving, collaboration, digital competencies. There are some studies about transversal skills. For example, the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) analysed the situation of different Countries and also Belgium. This survey collected data about the level and the distribution of skills among adults, and how they utilise their abilities in different contexts⁹.

Skills like literacy, numeracy and problem solving in technology-rich environments are “key information- processing competencies” that are relevant to adults in many social contexts and work situations, and necessary for fully integrating and participating in the labour market, education and training, and social and civic life.

Online / Assessment Resources

At a general level, people can find different tools online to learn and discover more about transversal skills. These tools are basically provided at EU level. For example the EU Common digital competence framework¹⁰, ESCO¹¹, ET2020 Working Group on Digital and Online Learning¹² are useful instruments able to reach everyone.

Employers attribute great importance to soft skills in applicants. They opt for tools provided by private companies specialised in focused training. even courses are organised in Brussels and online from NetCom Learning for private groups and public classes. From NobleProg and from PwC

⁹ http://www.keepeek.com/Digital-Asset-Management/oecd/employment/employment-and-skills-strategies-in-flanders-belgium_9789264228740-en#page1

¹⁰ <http://openeducationeuropa.eu/sites/default/files/DIGCOMP%20brochure%202014%20.pdf>

¹¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/esco/portal/home>

¹²

<http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=groupDetail.groupDetail&groupID=3092>

candidates for a job have the possibility to take part in training and workshops.

A project aimed to transversal competences is called Assessment of Transversal Skills 2020 (ATS2020)¹³. It has been implemented to develop a comprehensive learning model to enhance student transversal skills. This includes the provision of teachers with modern approaches and innovative tools for the assessment of these skills. The ATS2020 learning model will be tested in 10 participating countries in 2016 and 2017.



¹³ <http://www.ats2020.eu/ats2020/about-the-project>

3.3 Greece

Core data of the labour market

The **economy of Greece** is the 13th largest economy in EU28 and the 43rd largest country in the world by nominal Gross Domestic Product (2013). The Greek, developed, economy is based on service sector (80,6%) and industry (16%) with the agricultural sector constituting just the 3,4% of the national economic output. In terms of per capita income, Greece is ranked 43rd in the world at \$21,653 (2013). The most important economic industries in Greece are tourism and merchant shipping. In fact, about 20 million international tourists visited Greece last year (2014), which makes it the 7th most visited country in the EU and the 16th in the world.

However, the Greek debt crisis, as a result of the global economic crisis, coupled with the long-term challenges of the Greek economy, has led the government to take austerity measures, in exchange for a significant loan/bailout with the country presently going through the most severe crisis since the restoration of democracy in 1974. Growth is at **unprecedented negative rates** of -3,9% in 2013, -7,0% in 2012, -7,1% in 2011, -4,9% in 2010, -3,1% in 2009 and -0,2% in 2008 (Eurostat, 2013), the deficit remains high and recession has been growing, while the austerity measures have severe spill-over effects to social cohesion. Moreover, at times when the EU28 is hitting the lowest unemployment rate recorded since September 2009, at 9.3%, and a lower, compared to 2014, youth unemployment of 20.1%, ie. 4.540 million people under 25 (September 2015) and despite a slight improvement compared to last year's numbers, **Greece** is experiencing (Eurostat, 2015):

- The **highest unemployment rates in EU28 at 25%**. It is noteworthy that the highest unemployment rate is registered among those who have never attended school (52.5 %) and the lowest rates among higher education graduates (18.5 %) and owners of a PhD or post-graduate degree (11.9 %) (EURES, 2016). In Greece, 68% of adults aged 25-64 have completed upper secondary education, less than the OECD average of 75%. In terms of the quality of the education system, the average student scored 466 in reading literacy, maths and science in the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). This score is lower than the OECD average of 497. On average in Greece, girls

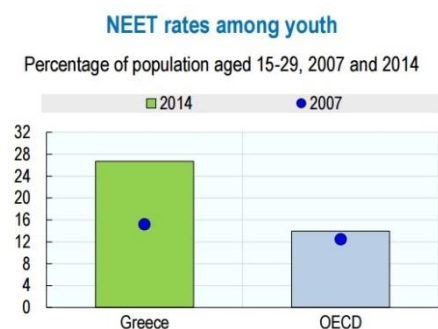
outperformed boys by 19 points, more than the average OECD gap of 8 points (OECD, 2015).

- A **youth unemployment rate at 49.50%** (September 2015) from 48.20% in August of 2015 (TRADING ECONOMICS, 2016). Moreover, **27% of 15-29-year-old** youth in 2014 were neither in employment nor in education or training (NEET) – a strong indicator of youth economic and social distress. While the NEET rate in Greece has historically been higher than the OECD average, the difference rose from just 3 to 13 percentage points since the onset of the crisis (OECD, 2015).

GREECE YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE



Source: <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/>, HELLENIC NATIONAL STATISTICAL AUTHORITY.



Source: OECD Employment Outlook 2015, Chapter

- Unparalleled **long-term unemployment** rate of **73.5%** (2014), adversely affecting women, young people as well as people with lower educational attainment levels and vulnerable groups.
- The largest differences between **male (62.6%) and female (44.3%) employment** rates (2014)/(Eurostat, 2014), when, at the same time, in other countries, due to the financial and economic crisis affecting

traditionally male-dominated sectors (ie. construction, manufacturing), the gender gap in employment rates is slightly narrowed (Eurostat, 2014)

These high rates are mainly due to the impact of the economic crisis and the spill-over effects on the provision of social services and social cohesion. Moreover, Greece presents:

- A **36%** of the population at **risk of poverty or social exclusion** (2014), amounting to the highest rate increase from 2008 (28.1%) to 2014 at +7.9 percentage point, including 22.1% at risk of income poverty, 21.5% severely materially deprived and 17.2% living in households with low work intensity (Eurostat, 2015), counting 350.000 households without an employee
- Significantly higher **poverty rates of 46,5% among unemployed** as opposed to **16,5%** among employed persons (Eurostat, 2015).

At the same time, **labour mobility** in Greece is limited compared to other European countries. This is due to the exceptionally high rate of home ownership (80%) and to social and cultural factors in which immediate and wider family connections play an important role and constitute an atypical but exceptionally strong network of social protection.

In contrast with other EU countries, **most employment is full time**. Part-time employment accounts for 9.5 % of total employment and workers face a 12.2% chance of losing their job, much higher than the OECD average of 5.4%. The percentage of salaried employees, which is estimated at 64.8 %, is still lower than the 83.5 % EU average.

The **main types of jobs** consist in staff in tourism and catering, salespersons, office workers, hairdressers, financial services workers, plumbers, car mechanics, porters and technicians. (EURES, 2016)

With a **Europe 2020 national target of 70% of the active population to be employed** and 450,000 people less at risk of poverty or social exclusion, which means reduction of the at-risk of poverty and/or exclusion rate from 28% in 2008 to 24% in 2020, these tasks and responsibilities as well as the effort to rebuild the country and the economy, revitalise businesses and the labour market, and safeguard social cohesion, building on the policy priorities, needs and initiatives at European level, seem enormous and unattainable (Eurostat) especially given the country's job vacancy rate of less than 1%.

Relevant skills for job seekers (latest studies)

According to the European Parliament Glossary (European Parliament, 2008):

“**skills** means the ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) or practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments)”

while

“**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 personal development. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy”.

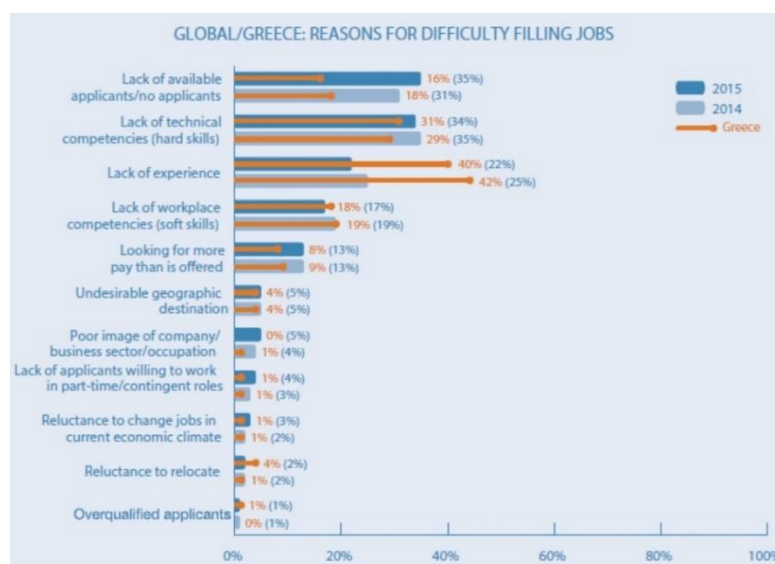
Skills are a key driver of labour market success, competitiveness and social inclusion for individuals, enterprises and societies. High-level skills are not only a prerequisite for employment, higher wages, productivity, innovation and continued economic growth; they also empower individuals to be active and productive members of society. Skills, however, need to keep up with rapid technological progress, organizational change in the workplace and labour market change (CEDEFOP, 2014). It is crucial that, in 2015, 509,000 job vacancies in the European ICT sector will remain vacant (European Commission, 2014), and **Greece is no exception** (Financial Press, 2014).

It is controversial that, according to a 2014 Mc Kinsey report (McKinsey & Company, 2014) and the Manpower “10nth Talent Shortage Survey – 2015”, in Greece, **6 out of 10 employers and hire managers (60%)** are experiencing difficulties in filling job vacancies (when worldwide the same percentage comes up to 38%) while around **80%** of Greek businesses in the last three years have needed to replace staff for that reason and **50%** of companies planning to do the same within the next three years (People for Business, 2014). In 2015, the proportion of Greek employers reporting difficulties in filling jobs is at its highest since 2007. This is predominantly due to:

- **lack of experience** (Greece: 40% when globally: 22%), the highest challenge, claimed by 40% of interviewees
- **lack of technical competencies/hard skills** (Greece: 31% when globally: 34%), the second highest challenge, claimed by 31% of

interviewees. The technical competencies (hard skills) sought more include industry-specific professional qualifications and industry-specific skilled trades certifications.

- **lack of workplace competencies/soft skills** (Greece: 18% when globally: 17%), claimed by 18% of interviewees. Lack of professionalism, enthusiasm, motivation and learning mindset are considered the most frequent soft skills deficits.
- **lack of available applicants/no applicants** (Greece: 16% when globally: 35%), claimed by 16% of interviewees
- **other factors** such as looking for more pay than is offered (claimed by 8%), undesirable geographic destination (claimed by 4%), reluctance to change jobs etc. (Greece: 21% when globally: 13%)



Source: Manpower Group, 2015

- **lack of career guidance** (Greece: only 13% received sufficient information of job opportunities) and **limited access to post-secondary careers services** (Greece: only 38% can get help with résumé preparation and 34% with application and interview support)
- **strong social bias against post-secondary vocational training**, often seen as a last resort for academic failures (Greece: only 28% of youth believe that vocational training is more valued by society)
- **low participation in internships** (Greece: only 67% of academic and 58% of vocational students in post-secondary education undertake an internship, even if that increases the likelihood of a young person being employed in a job relevant to their field of study after six months to 60% higher).

The 2015 top-ten hardest jobs to fill are (Manpower Group, 2015):

1. Sales representative
2. Management/ Executive (Management/ Corporate)
3. Skilled Trades
4. Engineers
5. Secretaries, Pas, receptionists, Admin Assistant & Office Support Staff
6. IT Personnel
7. Technicians
8. Accounting & Finance Staff
9. Laborers
10. Sales managers

The 10 key transversal skills, considered crucial for job seekers in Greece (National Organisation for the Certification of Qualification and Vocational Guidance/EOPPEP, 2013) are:

- Strong literacy skills
- Strong numeral and mathematical skills
- Fundamental financial / accounting skills
- Fluency in english
- Other foreign language skills
- Computer / ICT skills
- Emotional Intelligence related skills
- Team-player
- Strong communicating skills
- Management skills (especially diversity management skills)

In particular:

Concerning **foreign language skills** level, 48% of Greek ISCED2 students (2011) were at proficiency level B1 or higher, while the EU average comes up to 43.5 %.

Concerning **ICT skills / digital competences**, 24% of individuals (2012) in Greece held high level computer skills, compared to an EU average of 28.52%. At the same time, only 8% of Greek individuals hold high level

internet skills, in marked contrast to 13.67% for the EU average (Empirica, 2013).

Digital Competences	Score 2011/2012	EU average
Individuals with high level of computer skills	24%	28.52%
Individuals with high level of internet skills	8%	13.67%
Individuals using the internet	52%	71.33%

Source: Empirica country reports/ Greece: eskills-monitor2013.eu/results

Moreover, concerning **entrepreneurial skills**, 42.3 % of people aged 18-64 in Greece (2012) claim that they have the required entrepreneurship skills and knowledge to start-up a business, compared to and EU average of 46%.

Main political aims and strategies towards transversal skills

In the context of the Agenda for New Skills and Jobs (COM/2010/0682 final), recent forecasts of future skills' needs anticipate increase in jobs requiring high-level or medium-level qualifications. Key competences in the EU framework are those that all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment (European Reference Framework). According to EU strategy, key competences should be acquired during school attendance in any state member. Following the setting of this policy priority, EU member states, more or less, are implementing policies in order to foster competency-based teaching and learning (Asimakopoulos G. & Paraskevas M., 2014).

In Greece, **although some Lifelong Learning (LLL) promoting reforms have been already introduced, transversal competences have not been incorporated yet into the greek legislation, and, thus, Competence Based Learning (CBL) approach has not been addressed so far.** However, Greece has initiated several measures towards transversal skills, as portrayed below.

Law no. 3879/2010 "Development of Lifelong Learning" aims at setting up a single comprehensive framework for Lifelong Learning, under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, for the first time in Greece. In this context, implementation of LLL policies will result in significant structural changes and coordination of the public, private and social sector involved in the promotion of LLL in Greece. Lifelong learning involves all forms of learning undertaken throughout an individual's life, with the aim of acquiring and/or improving knowledge, skills and competencies for personal, social and/or employment reasons. Thus, **LLL constitutes a strategic tool for the implementation of the new policy priority on human resource qualifications in Greece.** To this purpose, the **Hellenic Qualifications Framework is being developed in alignment with the European Qualifications Framework (on going procedure undertaken by EOPPEP), a tool for the classification of qualifications**, in terms of learning outcomes upon a set of prescribed reference levels (EQAVET, 2016).

The recently established **National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP)** aims at creating and maintaining a holistic and interrelated policy framework for the development of lifelong learning and **certification of qualifications** in Greece, as well as upskilling the workforce in line with the new-emerging labour market needs. **Law no 4115/2013** regarding the Organization and Functioning of the "Youth Foundation and Lifelong Learning" (INEDIVIM) and the "National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance" (EOPPEP) ensures and enhances their responsibilities.

It should be mentioned that, according to recent aforementioned legislation (Law no. 3879/2010 & Law no. 4186/2013), VET is formally engulfing the practice of 'in-job apprenticeship' at the upper secondary level, supported and supervised by the Greek Manpower Employment Organisation (OAED), thus coupling the labour market with school-based vocational training. Since the enactment of Law 4186/2013, the Hellenic Qualifications Framework (HQF) addressing VET at all levels (Lingas, 2014).

Soft and hard skills involved, for the first time, into the so-called Professional Outlines developed by EOPPEP (EOPPEP, 2014). In particular, according to the **Joint Decree No 110998/566 B/8-5-2006, Professional Outlines** refer to integrated descriptions of certain professions and/or professional sectors in terms of profession definition, evolution and historicity, legal framework, specifications, knowledge/skills/competences including the so-called "horizontal skills" required for their execution, as well as paths to acquire these skills and competences and ways to evaluate them. Professional

Outlines are developed and accredited by EOPPEP in collaboration with social partners, i.e. employers and employees and the bodies representing them. At the moment there are **202 accredited Professional Outlines** in place.

At the same time, since 2007 **Greece has initiated a National Action Plan towards e-skills** digital literacy, e-learning, e-safety, e-government and electronic literacy (Empirica, 2014). Certain initiatives have been recorded and presented below (Empirica, 2014):

- Training of teachers in ICT pedagogy (2008 – on going)
- HERON national training project: Basic ICT skills training of citizens (2008 - 2011)
- Training of Public Servants on issues and applications with ICT (2009 – on going)
- MEIZON national training project
- Digital Convergence Initiative and Information Society Monitoring Scheme

E-leadership and digital entrepreneurship, although not involved into the political agenda yet, are being addressed by several stakeholders, such as the non-for-profit organisation “Hellenic Professionals Informatics Society” (HePIS) and the Greek Computer Society (EPY) (Empirica, 2014).

Finally, within the framework of the National Reform Programme 2015, the new National Strategic Reference Framework 2014-2020 // ESPA 2014-2020, especially the Sectoral Operational Programmes for Human Resources Development, Education and Lifelong Learning (ESPA), in combination with the one for Competitiveness, Entrepreneurship and Innovation (ESPA) it is compulsory that Greece undertakes and elaborates the Education and Lifelong Learning programme, applicable to the following themes (ESPA, 2015):

- upgrade of the quality of education and promotion of social integration
- upgrade of initial vocational training and vocational educational systems and linking education with the job market, via programmes for work experience acquisition and subsidies to enterprises, improving the quality and effectiveness of VET
- strengthening of human capital in order to promote research and innovation

- reforms in the educational system so that lifelong learning, in formal, non-formal and informal settings, will become a reality for all
- revision of study programmes, promotion of apprenticeship, acceleration of the pace of adoption of new technologies, restructuring vocational training in various sectors, including the maritime professional sector etc., expansion of Second Chance Schools, Adult Training Centres and the Open University and reinforcement of Lifelong Learning Institutes, training educators and boosting specially-targeted teaching addressed at minorities, vulnerable groups and older people
- implementation of the youth guarantee, intensifying a personalised approach process and individual action planning tailored to the specific profile of the NEETs (albeit only for PES registered NEETs in a first phase, leaving out many of the unregistered ones) (Eurostat)
- promotion of social economy and entrepreneurship as well as employment and entrepreneurship at national and regional, through one-stop-shops, levels
- upgrade of public employment services and support.

Current standard of knowledge of TCs

As mentioned in paragraph 1.3, in Greece, **soft and hard skills were highlighted, for the first time, into the Professional Outlines developed by EOPPEP (EOPPEP, 2014).** Professional Outlines are developed and accredited by EOPPEP in collaboration with social partners.

Studying the above mentioned Professional Outlines we can have an overview of what skills are actually expected by professionals in terms of knowledge, skills and competences required for the successful execution of certain professions, and particularly with respect to transversal competences. Most of the Professional Outlines provide lists of required skills and competences for each profession, as linked with certain expected tasks cross cutting in diverse professions and job positions. Professionals are supposed to respond to these detailed profession accounts and related skills as portrayed in the Professional Outlines. The majority of the mentioned skills and competences are highly profession-relevant, corresponding to an overall tasks analysis (Lingas, 2014).

According to the Joint Decree **No 110998/566 B/8-5-2006, “horizontal skills” term is defined as the group of skills considered fundamental to work, education and social professional settings and apply to more than one**

given activity or employment status. As such, basic computer skills, language acquisition, entrepreneurial skills, administration and management skills, social competences and understanding, teamwork and team spirit, organisational skills, communication skills, active listening and time management etc., have been considered “horizontal skills”. **To a certain extent it can be issued that “horizontal skills” term is in alignment with “transversal competences” term.**

“Knowledge, skills and competences required” term refers to both the specific skills required by a given activity or employment status and the “horizontal skills”.

Online / Assessment Resources

Self-assessment online tools

In the frame of EU co-funded projects (Greece participating country)

ATS2020 project <http://www.ats2020.eu/about-a-project> // **Assessment of Transversal Skills 2020 project** is developing a comprehensive learning model to enhance student transversal, 21st century skills across diverse EU national curricula. This includes the provision of teachers with modern approaches and innovative tools for the assessment of these skills. The ATS2020 learning model is being piloted in 10 participating countries in 2016 and 2017, including Greece. All outcomes will be provided also in Greek.

i-Skills project <http://www.i-skills.eu/> // “Fostering Innovation Skills as Key Competences for improving Employability of PhDs in SMEs” is developing an online immersive game as self-assessment tool for innovation skills of PhDs, necessary for their employability in the market and their successful employment in innovation management, linking research with market competitiveness. All outcomes will be provided also in Greek. KeySTART2work project partner Militos Consulting S.A. is partner to the i-Skills project.

TRANSIT <http://www.transit-project.eu/content/objectives> aims to have a positive impact on the development of students' key competences by building and strengthening teacher's competency based education. To achieve this, a pilot teachers training methodology will be developed on the *didactics* and *e-assessment* of key transversal competences, which could be adopted by interested stakeholders promoting educational change. All outcomes will be provided also in Greek.

Private practices

OWIWI <http://www.owiwi.gr/job-seekers> provides an all-inclusive gamified Career Development solution helping HR managers identify transversal skill deficiencies within a team and create tailored training programmes to target specific areas for improvement, achieving excellent levels of productivity. Owiwi's app also addresses job-seekers, providing them with a free transversal skills' assessment tool. Greek language is available.

TEST4U <https://www.test4u.eu/en/> is both a testing and training evaluation platform regarding ICT and digital skills. TEST4U includes test and exercises especially designed so as to cover the syllabus for computer certification acquisition or renewal. Greek language is available.

Using the European Language PORTFOLIO

<http://elp.ecml.at/UsingtheELP/Evaluateyourlanguageskills/Greek/tabid/3169/language/en-GB/Default.aspx> provides users with an online foreign language-assessment tool. Greek language is available.

Online Training

In addition to the self-assessment online tools, several training provisions regarding transversal competences have been identified in Greece, also relevant at EU level, as portrayed at the following table.

In the frame of EU co-funded projects (Greece participating country)

e-Guide+ <http://eguideplus.eu/> is a Quality Career Guidance for disadvantaged and migrant job seekers. Available also in Greek.

TRAINVET4JOBS <http://www.trainvet.eu/about.html> // “Supporting the role of VET professionals to improve the trainees employability” project implemented within the frame of the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Commission, has developed training material aiming at strengthening the capacity of VET trainers and professionals, so they better identify, teach and validate the much needed transversal competences, which will lead and substantially enhance the employability of their trainees. KeySTART2work project partner Militos Consulting S.A. is partner to the i-Skills project. Available also in Greek.

Private practices

Getbusy.gr <http://getbusy.gr/> is a training portal mainly focuses on the enhancement of the users' ICT, digital, entrepreneurial and professional skills. Only in Greek.

TEST4U <https://www.test4u.eu/en/> (as afore mentioned).

Other practices

EOPPEP e-portfolio <http://www.eoppep.gr/teens/index.php/digital-folder> is a national online personal portfolio through which teenagers learn how to present both their hard and soft skills and interests, for free. Only in Greek.

E-skills for jobs <http://eskills4jobs.ec.europa.eu/greece#three> is an EU campaign aiming to raise awareness of importance of ICT skills. The Federation of Hellenic ICT Enterprises (SEPE) is the National Contact Point for the e-Skills for Jobs campaign, together with various stakeholders. Available also in Greek.

Skills 2 Go www.skills2go.eu is a national 8-month campaign for supporting, explaining and promoting soft skills and their importance for professional success. Available also in Greek. KeySTART2work project partner Militos Consulting S.A. is a key driver and contributor of the campaign.



3.4 Italy

Core data of the labour market

Istat (Italian Statistics Institute) issues releases regularly on labour market about “Employment and unemployment” and “Labour indicators in enterprises”.

In the third quarter of 2015 all labour market indicators showed an improvement. Labour input in the total economy (measured in hours worked in the National Accounts) grew by 0.1% on a quarterly basis and by 1.2% on an annual basis. Employed persons, as estimated by the Labour Force Survey, net of seasonal effects, were 22,494 thousand, +0.2% over the previous quarter (+42 thousand units). This growth was associated with an increase by 0.1 percentage points (to 56.4%) in the employment rate among 15-64 year old people, entirely due to the positive trend in the 15-34 age group (+0.7 points). The growth of employment over the previous quarter involved only men, and among different types of workers, only employees (+0.3%, 51,000 persons), as a result of the increase in fixed-term contracts (+4.5%, 107,000 units) and the reduction in permanent employees (-0.4%, 55,000 units). The unemployment rate went down significantly, falling from 12.3% to 11.7% over the previous quarter and further decreasing to 11.5% in October. These results were also affected by the trend in the inactivity rate, on the increase both in the third quarter and in October. Permanent job positions in industrial and services enterprises rose by 0.5% on a short-term basis and by 1.3% on an annual basis, along with the number of hours worked (+0.6% and +2.3%, respectively). The hours worked per capita, although decreased by 0.1% in quarterly terms, grew by 0.9% year-over-year, thanks also to the significant reduction of short-time working allowances: from 27.3 to 15.5 per thousand hours worked. Temporary employment agency jobs continued to increase significantly (+3.0% over the previous quarter and +19.2% y-o-y). The vacancy rate in enterprises with 10 or more employees increased by 0.1 percentage points both over the previous quarter and on an annual basis. The seasonally adjusted labour cost index per full time equivalent (FTE) rose by 0.1% on a quarterly basis, as a result of an increase in wages (+0.3%) and a reduction in social security contributions (-0.4%). Labour costs increased by 0.5% also on an annual basis (+1.1% for wages and -1.2% for social security contributions). The negative trend in social security contributions, despite a slight increase in wages is essentially the result of the significant reduction in employer's

contributions for new permanent jobs created during 2015, as provided for by the 2015 Stability Law. The increase in gross wages per FTE exceeded by 0.9 percentage points the inflation rate in the same quarter of 2014 (0.2% change of the Italian consumer price index for the whole nation).

	SEASONALLY ADJUSTED		Percentage change (3 2015/3 2014)
	Values	Percentage change (3 2015/2 2015)	
LABOUR INPUT (a) (b) <i>National Accounts</i>			
Hours worked (thousands)	10,608,064	0.1	1.2
Agriculture	607,012	0.2	2.6
Industry excluding construction	1,850,614	0.5	0.5
Construction	680,234	-2.0	-2.4
Services	7,470,204	0.2	1.6
LABOUR SUPPLY <i>Labour Force Survey</i>			
Employed (thousands)	22,494	0.2	1.1
Employees	17,007	0.3	1.4
Self-employed	5,487	-0.2	0.1
Employment rate (aged 15-64) (percent and percentage points changes)	56.4%	0.1	0.8
15-34 years	39.5%	0.7	1.1
35-49 years	71.9%	0.0	-0.8
50-64 years	56.2%	-0.2	3.8
Unemployed (thousands)	2,973	-5.2	-10.0
Unemployment rate (percent and percentage points changes)	11.7%	-0.6	-1.2
Inactive population (aged 15-64) (thousands)	14,072	0.7	-0.3
Inactivity rate (aged 15-64) (percent and percentage points changes)	36.1%	0.3	0.0
LABOUR DEMAND (a) (c) <i>Oros, GI and Vela Surveys</i>			
Number of jobs (index 2010=100)	98.0	0.5	1.3
Temporary employment agency jobs (d) (index 2010=100)	139.6	3.0	19.2
Hours worked (e) (f) (index 2010=100)	98.0	0.6	2.3
Per capita hours worked (c) (e) (index 2010=100)	99.4	-0.1	0.9
Short-time working allowance hours per 1,000 hours worked (e) (percentage and absolute changes of percentage)	nd	nd	-11.8
Job vacancy rate (e) (percent and percentage points changes)	0.7%	0.1	0.1
LABOUR COST <i>Oros, GI and Vela, Contractual Wages and Salaries Survey</i>			
Gross wages (a) (c) (index 2010=100)	109.0	0.3	1.1
Social security contributions (a) (c) (index 2010=100)	107.3	-0.4	-1.2
Labour cost (a) (c) (index 2010=100)	108.5	0.1	0.5
Cash wages according to collective labour agreements (monthly average in euros; base 2010=100) (g)	1,922	-	1.3

(a) Provisional data.

(b) For the hours worked (National Account) the change over the same period of the previous year is computed on seasonal adjusted data.

(c) Section from B to S (excluding O) of the Nace Rev 2 classification of economic activities.

(d) Number of jobs relating to hires by employment agencies

(e) Enterprises with at least 10 employees.

(f) The change over the same period of the previous year is computed on adjusted data by working days.

(g) Not seasonally adjusted data.

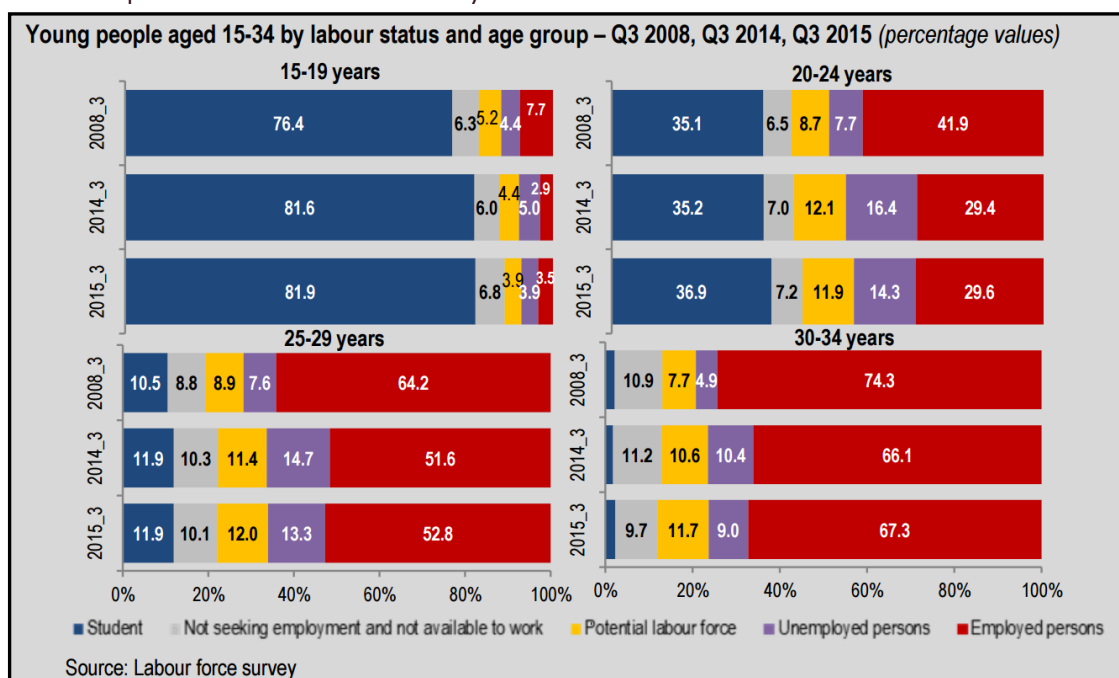
Youth participation in Italian labour market. In the third quarter of 2015 young people aged 15-34 were 12,772 million, 21% of the resident population. Over the past seven years, due to the progressive reduction in birth rate, the number of young people shrank by about a million, nearly 2.4 percentage points. Compared to the beginning of the crisis (third quarter of 2008), in 2015 young people showed lower levels of participation in the labour market and employment, although to varying degrees and for

different reasons in each age group. Among the 15-19-year olds, in particular, the share of the inactive for study reasons increased from 76.4% to nearly 82% of the total, more than offsetting the already very modest decrease in the share of the employed. Participation in the educational system grew to a lesser extent also in the central age group: among the 20-29-year olds, there was a substantial decline in employment, which caused an increase by ten percentage points in the cumulative incidence of unemployed and people available for work but not seeking work, the so-called "potential labor force" (up to 26.2% among the 20-24-year olds and 25.3% among 25-29-year olds in the third quarter of 2015). Among 30-34-year olds, of which 40.8% are parents, the decline in the share of the employed was relatively minor, and the increase in the unemployed was associated with a significant increase in the incidence of potential labour force. In the third quarter of 2015, for the first time, the percentage of the employed increased over the same period of 2014, while that of the unemployed of all young age groups declined (+0.7 and -1.5 points among people aged 15-34). The main employment growth took place among employees with fixed-term contracts and, to a large extent, with medium-low skill jobs. Also young people mirrored the typical gaps of our labour market. In the third quarter of 2015 employment rate of women aged 15-34 was 12.5 percentage points lower than men; this difference increased together with age, and was over 20 points for women aged 30-34. This was due also to the fact that more than half of women in this age group were parents (29.2% of men) and had more difficulties than men in combining work and family. Geographical gaps were still wide with an over 20-point difference between employment rates in the North (49.5%) and in the South and Islands (27.9%) for 15- 34-year olds. The gap was higher for 25-29-year olds (67% vs. 36%). Generally speaking, in the southern regions the major incidence of students went together with an almost double share of the unemployed, and with a more than triple share of potential labour force in comparison with the North. The share of employed people increased together with higher educational qualifications, however this was not enough to balance geographical gaps. Even though for 30-34-year olds the student share was similar (3.5% in southern regions and 1.6% in the North), in the South and Islands area the share of graduates was lower in this age group (19.7% vs. 31% in the Centre and 27.8% in the North). Moreover, in the South and Islands area just 51 out of 100 graduates aged 30-34 were employed, while in the North they were 83 and women had even more difficulties in accessing the labour market. Among graduate women aged 30-34 the incidence of people seeking employment and/or

available for work was close to 40% in the South and Islands area, and was just 9.4% in the North.

Relevant skills for job seekers (latest studies)

The theme of transversal competences was introduced in Italian context by ISFOL (National Institute for professional development). Since the early 90's, Isfol stimulated the reflection about Transversal Competencies through several publications. Nowadays because of the continuous transformations



in the labour market it is necessary to seriously reflect about TCs. The need for a better skilled and creative workforce for the European labour market has been identified as one of the strategic goals in EU Policy statement and Recommendations. The best option for enhancing these kind of skills is through the developing of proactive game-changers able to explore and create new opportunities and jobs. Among transversal competences needed for lifelong workers and “workers 2020” there are: sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, as ability to turn ideas into action, capability to assess themselves, owned competences and talents, and the context of work to seize opportunities that arise. Career guidance refers to services intended to assist people, of any age at any point throughout their lives to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers. Career guidance helps people to reflect on their ambitions, interests, training and occupational choices and abilities. It helps them understand the labour market and education system, and relate this to what they know about themselves (OECD 2004). VET learners need to

develop not only technical skills but also transversal competences to align themselves to the changing demands of the labour market. It is essential to align Career Guidance services to VET learners demands. The result of the Survey Excelsior (2012) promoted by Unioncamere (Italian Chamber of Commerce Union) analyzed which transversal competences are mainly required to newincomers in the labour market, referring to the new hiring in 2011 (excepted for seasonal worker). The result of the survey show that the most required TC is "Teamworking" for 53% of all employer interviewed. Teamworking is a strongly attitude required mainly in job seekers with a high level of education. The second highest percentage is referred to "Flexibility and Ability to Adapt", that it was crucial for little more than half of the new hirings. This is a transversal trend that has relevance for all economic sectors throughout the Italian regions. All TCs are mainly expected in people who have gained a high level of education.

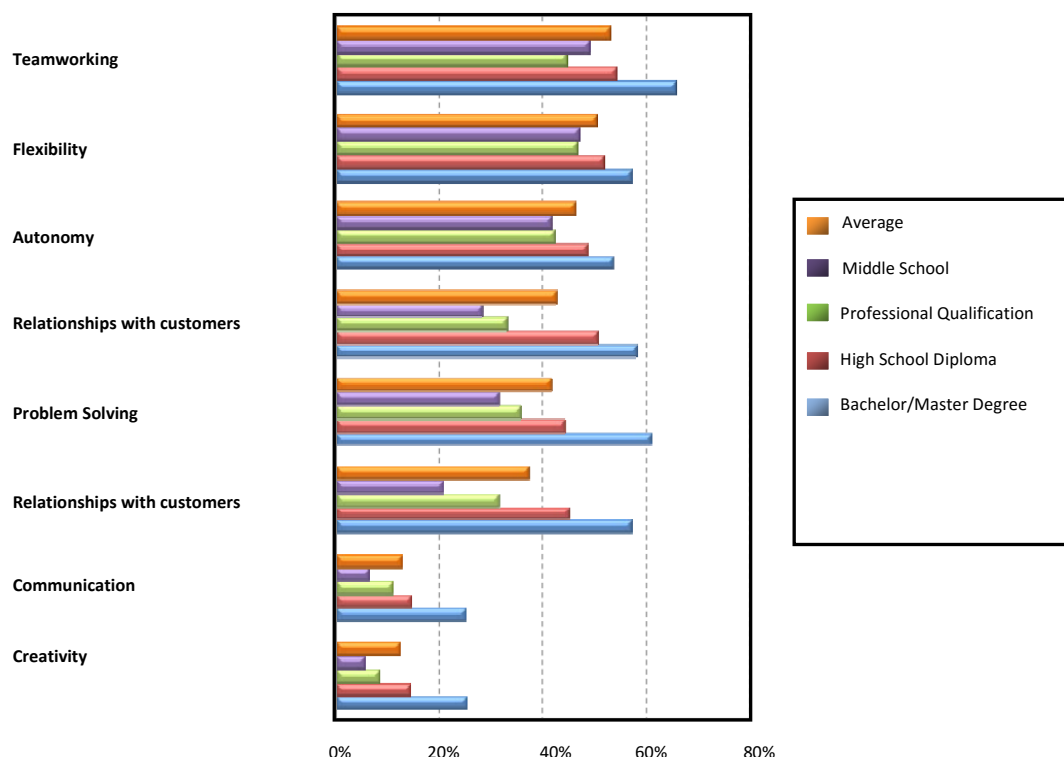
It seems that pragmatism and social skills are therefore essential to succeed in modern job market, especially in medium and large companies, which obviously are asking for staff that focus on the objectives and able to keep up with the constantly changing world of work.

The "ability to work autonomously", was indicated as "very important" by 46% of employers and HR managers, it is largely requested with decreasing intensity from education levels higher than those lower.

"Ability to Manage Relationships with Customers" instead was indicated as "very important" by 42% of employers and HR, "Problem Solving" is important for 41% of interviewed and "Written and Oral Communication" for 37%.

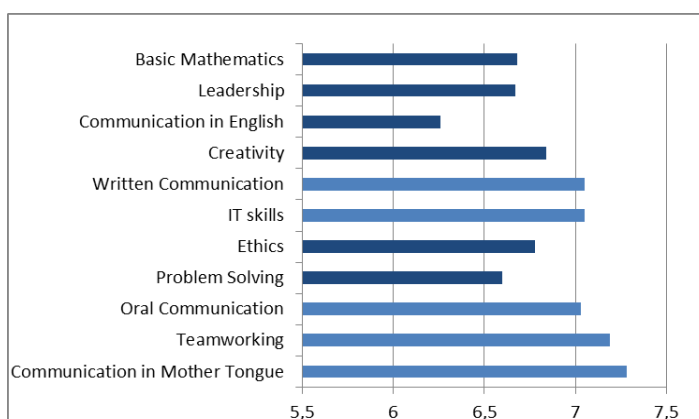
The survey required companies to indicate both the specific skills both the most important soft skills related to their recruitment needs. Therefore, soft skills are required in addition to technical competences relating to the job, obviously TCs do not consider sufficient for a proper transition from training to employment. Moreover, in most cases, business owners did prevail positions that give equal weight to both types of skills.

It is interesting to note that even those who consider the specific skills of the profession more important than TCs are not (12%) of those who put themselves in a position contrary (14%); in the latter case, the company would probably willing to accept a person less qualified in specific skills, in the presence of high capacity of team working, adaptability, autonomy, etc.



There are also other evidences of this lack of competences reported by Italian employer.

Results of Pisa Testing (Programme for International Student Assessment) confirm that our job seekers have a quite good



technical knowledge but they have some deficit in general skill, in particularly they lack in knowledge of foreign languages, basic Mathematics and Analytical skills and Problem Solving. It is also reported a lack in more soft skills as leadership and ethics.

In general, there are several evidence that highlight the urgency to develop TCs in VET Learners, in particularly in people who are looking for a job for the first time.

Main political aims and strategies towards transversal skills

Decreto n.139 del 22 agosto 2007 in Italy establishes the main knowledge and competences to be developed through compulsory education and training, in this list are not only included Technical knowledge and competences but also 8 key transversal competences. 8 key competences should be acquired by young people at the end of their compulsory education and training, equipping them for adult life, particularly for working life, whilst forming a basis for further learning and by adults throughout their lives, through a process of developing and updating skills.

In this framework the adopted definition for competence is: *Competence is the ability to apply knowledge in a defined context, and recognize the specific characteristics in order to adopt behaviors to reach desirable results.*

8 key transversal competences included in the mention Italian law, are:

1. Learning to learn
2. Organizing and planning
3. Communication
4. Collaborating
5. Consciousness
6. Problem Solving
7. Identifying links among facts and events
8. Collect and analyze information

In order to enable students and young people to develop also this kind of competence in addition to technical competence to enable them to gain a comprehensive preparation to deal with labour market, **Legge 196/1997** and **D.M. 142/1998** establish that young people could have the chance to do an intership. The main purpose of such internships is creating a connection between education institutions and organizations and allowing young people to have a first contact with businesses.

Later in 2012 in Italy, discussion is opened about certification and validation of competences developed in informal and non-formal activities and finally was issued **Decree 16 gennaio 2013** in the framework of **Law 92/2012** so-called **Fornero's law : «the labour market reform in a growth perspective»**. This decree outlines a national system of certification of skills, acquired by people through formal, informal and non-formal activities, in order to enhance and value any kind of competence in a logic of lifelong learning.

A National Technical Committee will be issued to provide national minimum standards to be collected in a National Catalogue that could ensure the coherence in assessment of learning outcomes and competences. This step is essential in order to align the several different initiatives and efforts developed in all Italian Regions and provide a common national framework. National Technical Committee was issued and is actually working to draft appropriate guidelines to create service for the assessment and certification of competence and to develop a National Catalogue of Competence. Although pressures and explicit request from European Institution to each community partner to identify and draft a procedure for the certification of competence until 2018 (Recommendation 20.12.2012), the National Catalogue is actually unfinished.

Current standard of knowledge of TCs

ISFOL examined in depth the topic of Transversal Competences.

ISFOL is the Institute for the Development of Vocational Training for Workers (ISFOL) is a national research institute with a specific focus on vocational education and training (VET), employment and social policies and a strong commitment to promoting employment, social inclusion, skills and human capital development as well as at fostering growth and innovation.

Isfol reports to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and provides support to the central government and local authorities. Isfol also acts as in-house agency for the Ministry and is entrusted with the management of relevant national contracts in its fields of expertise.

ISFOL divides the concept of skills into:

1. BASIC SKILL are general skills which refer to the personal cultural dimension, transferable and relevant for the general professional training/preparation of a person (i.e., basic IT knowledge, communication in a foreign language, economy, law and labour law);
2. TECHNICAL and PROFESSIONAL SKILLS are acquired skills in specific areas which refer to certain disciplinary areas (i.e., mastery of general and specialist declarative knowledge as well as a range of suitable procedures to apply);
3. TRANSVERSAL SKILLS, are skills which allow to translate knowledge and skills in effective behaviours. These skills consist in the ability to implement effective strategies to connect one's own skills to the request of the environment. Through the integration of different possessed resources

(i.e. communication skills, analysis aptitude, decision making and problem solving).

In particular, transversal skills are those that each person uses at work, they are not specifically related to a given activity or employment status and affect the ability of individuals to express skillful or expert professional behaviors. They integrate knowledge, skills and cognitive attitudes.

Based on the work coordinated by Gabriella Di Francesco: Unità capitalizzabili e crediti formativi. Metodologie e strumenti di lavoro e I repertori sperimentali, ISFOL, Franco Angeli, Milano 1998):

Transversal competences are clustered into 3 three main skills:

- **Diagnose** the nature of the environment and task, analyze, understand and represent the situation and the problem, themselves (resources that can be used or increased if necessary) as a prerequisite "for the design and implementation of an effective performance" (cognitive skills);
- **Relate**, "get proper report with the environment", people and things of a certain context to respond to requests (interpersonal or social skills: emotional skill set, cognitive and behavioural styles, but also communication skills);
- **Face**, cope, "predispose to deal with the environment and the task, both mentally and in emotional and motor", "take action on a problem (a specific event, a criticality, an anomaly) with the best chance of solving it", build and implement action strategies, aimed at achieving the personal use of the subject and those provided by the task.

These three main skills characterized by a high degree of transferability to different contexts and tasks that can be broken down into simpler skills and abilities. Are resources of the individual subject who have a crucial role in shaping his "behaviour" and "business impact significantly on its actions."

Transversal competencies

Skills linked to diagnostic	Recognize and detect own skills and attitudes
	Identify and classify problems
Interpersonal skills	Explain and communicate effectively
	Understand, listen, tune into the others

	Work in team
	Cooperate and build a good working atmosphere
Skills in the field of organisation and planning (action)	Managing anxiety and stress
	Develop self-paced training
	Plan activities
	Address and resolve problems
	Develop creative solutions

Online / Assessment Resources

ICT tool for the self-assessment of Transversal Competences are mainly provided by private organization, such as:

- CEB (www.cebglobal.com/shl/it/solutions/talent-acquisition/);
- Prism (<https://www.prismbrainmapping.com/>);
- Dialogica (http://www.dialogica.it/it/assessment_on_line.asp);
- Six Second (<http://italia.6seconds.org/>)

This kind of organization develops internally their own tool to use and purchase them in consultancy process.

Fortunately there are also some free tool provided by public organization and international taskforce supported by European grant. For example, Almalaurea is a public interuniversity consortium which collects data from more than 80 percent of graduates in Italy. Almalaurea offers an online self-assessment tool to help High School Student to decide how to continue their professional or educational path. This tool assess some TCs through a questionnaire that uses a 5 steps Likert scale and provide a qualitative report to help student to reflect about themselves and their own characteristics (<https://www.almalaurea.it/lau/orientamento>).

Another Interactive Tool of Self-Evaluation of Competences is the result of a transnational project to help women who gain access to jobs requiring low and medium qualification. Downloading of the tool is possible here: <http://www.surt.org/hidaec/en/>.

The tool is composed of several animated scenarios in which are required to choose 1 out of 4 possible actions.

CE.TRANS. Centre for transitions to work and work offers the chance to assess through a self-assessment questionnaire composed by 32 statement to which respondent could express their agreement on a 5 point Likert scale.

http://www.cetrans.it/esperienze/schede/allegati_tutor_orient/Autoval_Comp_Trasv_Quest.pdf

Luiss University in Rome developed a 3 days long assessment in which combine face to face assessment activity and on-line assessment, at the end of the process students gain a personal report with their own grade on each TC with specific attention to their strengths and weakness. This process is planned as shown in the table below:

Day	Activity		TC assessed
DAY 1	Group assessment	Present yourself	Public speaking
		Role paly	Negotiation
		Group exercise	Leadership
			Creativity
	Individual Assessment	One to one Role play	Communication
DAY 2	Assessment on-line	Test Org-EIQ (Organizational-Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire)	Selfawareness Relationship Management Organization and Self Management
		Test WOMI (Work and Organizational Motivation Inventory)	Reward Motivation Success
DAY 3	Interview Feedback +	Competence Mapping	Analytical Thinking Problem solving Creativity

			Leadership Result Orientation Teamworking Stress Management
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Education & Skills Online is an assessment tool designed to provide individual-level results that are linked to the [OECD Survey of Adult Skills \(PIAAC\)](#) measures of literacy, numeracy and problem solving in technology-rich environments. All results are comparable to the measures used in **PIAAC** and can be benchmarked against the national and international results available for the participating countries. In addition, the assessment contains non-cognitive measures of skill use, career interest, health and well-being, and soon also behavioural competencies. It is an online tool and it is a fully computerized measure of cognitive and non-cognitive skills. It is available on the Internet, and incorporates flexibility and adaptability to provide reliable and valid measures of critical skills associated with work, home and the community. It allows individuals to choose which skills they want to assess. As a baseline, individuals receive a core set of background questions followed by a set of tasks that will provide information about their literacy and numeracy skills. They can elect to receive information about their reading-component skills, problem-solving skills and selected non-cognitive skills.

Recently are also very popular **Serious Games** that are present in almost every educational context. They are game designed for a purpose beyond pure entertainment and they are considered useful to those who wish to use simulation for training and education. Serious games are therefore used in a variety of professional situations such as education, training, assessment, recruitment, knowledge management, innovation and scientific research. These games can be a valuable way of engaging citizens and workers in the learning process by means of metaphors or similar mechanisms close to their user experience. They also contain an encouragement factor to uptake generic job competencies. The need to incorporate new social and transferable skills for lifelong learners gives serious games wider chances within a knowledge society in a state of continuous change. For example in the framework of Erasmus Project called Modes, a Prototype of a serious game on soft skills was developed in four languages to learn those skills identified previously through interviews with companies' representatives (<http://www.modesproject.eu/en/the-modes-serious-game.aspx>).

3.5 Spain

Core data of the labour market

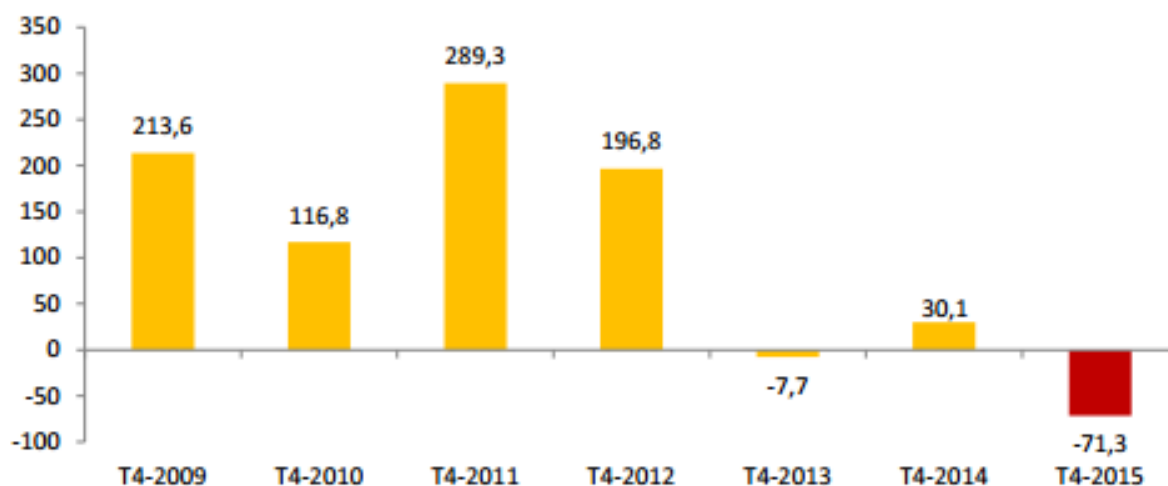
Unemployment has been the core problem in Spain in the last years after the economic crisis affecting to some sectors in the pillars of the Spanish Economy.

During 2015 the main indicators related to unemployment have showed an improvement, more accentuated at the end of the year.

The unemployment rate in the last trimester of the year is 20.90%, which is 0,29 points less than in the previous trimester with an accumulated decrease of 2.81 point in the whole 2015.

The absolute number of unemployed people in the 4th trimester of 2015 is 4.779.500 people, which mean 71.300 people less than in the previous trimester which is the most important decrease in the historic series of the Active Population Survey as showed in the graph below:

Evolution of Unemployment figures (absolute numbers)

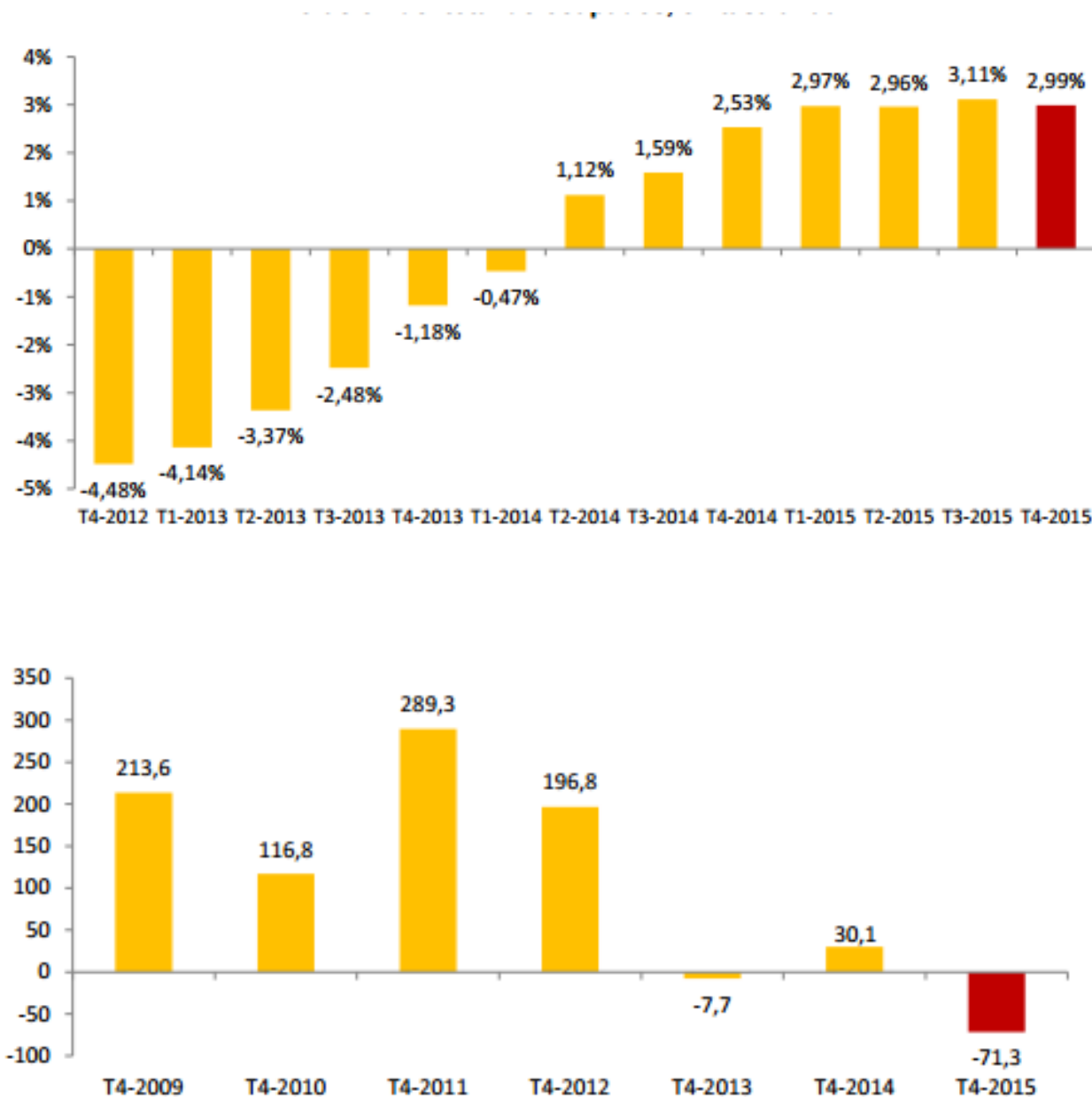


Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística INE – Encuesta de Población Activa

Therefore, we can see a trend of decrease of unemployment with a relevant decrease in 2015 after several years of continuous increase.

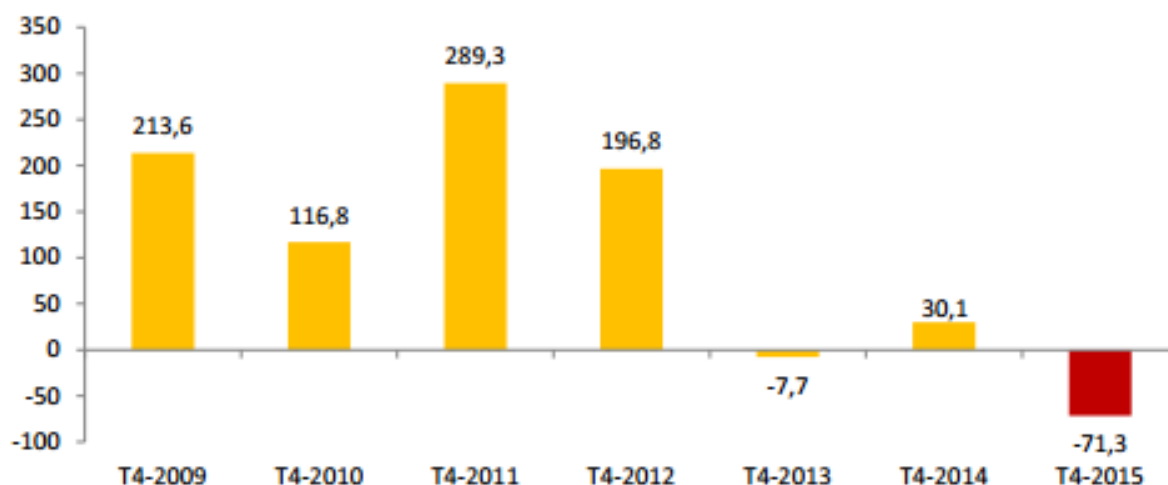
Regarding the employment levels, we observe the opposite trend, confirming the improvement in the situation of the labour market.

Evolution of the Occupation rate



Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística INE – Encuesta de Población Activa

In the graph above we can see a clear turning point in the second trimester of 2014 in which the employment rate started to grow, gradually increasing until the last trimester of 2015 in which the increase has been a bit lower than in the previous trimester.



The figures from the Active Population survey shows an improvement of the situation in the Spanish Labour market that continues being very difficult if we consider the global panorama and the absolute values of the main indicators.

The tables below shows these figures which provide a general overview of the structure of the labour market in Spain.

The figures according to the Active Population survey in the last trimester of 2015 are as follows:

Total population of +16 years old	38.489.600 people
Active population	22.873.700 people
Currently working	18.094.200 people
Unemployed	4.779.500 people
Non- active population	15.615.900 people
Activity rate	59.43%
Unemployment rate	20.90%

Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística INE – Encuesta de Población Activa

We can see that the structure of the working population is not very well balanced since the non-active population represent more than the half of the active population, evidencing an ageing population which is an

important structural problem in Spain, one of the countries with the lowest birth rate of the EU.

The most important figure however is the absolute number of unemployed people since there are a total of more than 4,5 million people who are unemployed.

Distribution of Workers by Age:

TOTAL EMPLOYED WORKERS	18.094.200
16 to 19 years old	79.600
20 to 24 years old	719.700
25 to 29 years old	1.574.400
30 to 34 years old	2.231.300
35 to 39 years old	2.883.300
40 to 44 years old	2.868.600
45 to 49 years old	2.590.100
50 to 54 years old	2.300.100
+55 years old	2.847.100

Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística INE – Encuesta de Población Activa

The employment continues being concentrated in the eldest groups of workers while the youngest population under 30 has a very low employment rate

Distribution of workers by economic sector

TOTAL EMPLOYED WORKERS	18.094.200
Agriculture	779.700
Industry	2.463.400
Construction	1.058.500
Services	13.792.500

Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística INE – Encuesta de Población Activa

The distribution of employment between economic sectors is not balanced and there is a concentration of employment in the Services sector with a low amount of employment in Industry in comparison with other European countries.

Distribution of workers by situation in the labour market

TOTAL EMPLOYED WORKERS		18.094.200
Self-employed workers		3.101.200
- Employers		922.600
- Entrepreneurs without employees		2.065.800
- Members of cooperatives		24.000
- Support in family business		88.800
Employees		14.988.800
- With permanent contract		11.142.600
- With temporary contract		3.846.200
Others		4.100
PUBLIC/PRIVATE SECTOR		
Employees in the public sector		3.000.700
Employees in the private sector		15.093.500
BY DAILY WORKING HOURS		
Full time employees		15.250.500
- Men		9.078.800
- Women		6.171.700
Part time employees		2.843.700
- Men		784.600
- Women		2.059.100

Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística INE – Encuesta de Población Activa

The majority of workforce in Spain are employed while only 17,1% are self-employed (entrepreneurs or independent workers)

A similar % correspond to the employees who work for the public sector, a 16,5% while the rest 83.5% work in the private sector.

It is interesting to note the differences according to gender that we find related to the type of contracts: 9 million of men have a full time contract in front of only 6 million of women. On the contrary, women have the majority of part-time contracts: more than 2 million in front of less than one million of men.

Unemployed people by age, gender and economic sector.

TOTAL UNEMPLOYED WORKERS	4.779.500
16 to 19 years old	155.100
20 to 24 years old	532.500
25 to 54 years old	3.482.200
+55 years old	609.800
MEN	2.387.600
16 to 19 years old	84.400
20 to 24 years old	280.000
25 to 54 years old	1.684.100
+55 years old	339.100
WOMEN	2.391.900
16 to 19 years old	70.700
20 to 24 years old	252.500
25 to 54 years old	1.798.000
+55 years old	270.700
TOTAL UNEMPLOYED IN ALL SECTORS	4.779.500
Agriculture	222.600

Industry	174.400
Construction	207.600
Services	1.377.500
Workers who have been unemployed for more than 1 year	2.328.700
Persons looking for their first job	468.700

Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística INE – Encuesta de Población Activa

In the previous table we can see the differences in the number of unemployed people by sector, age and gender.

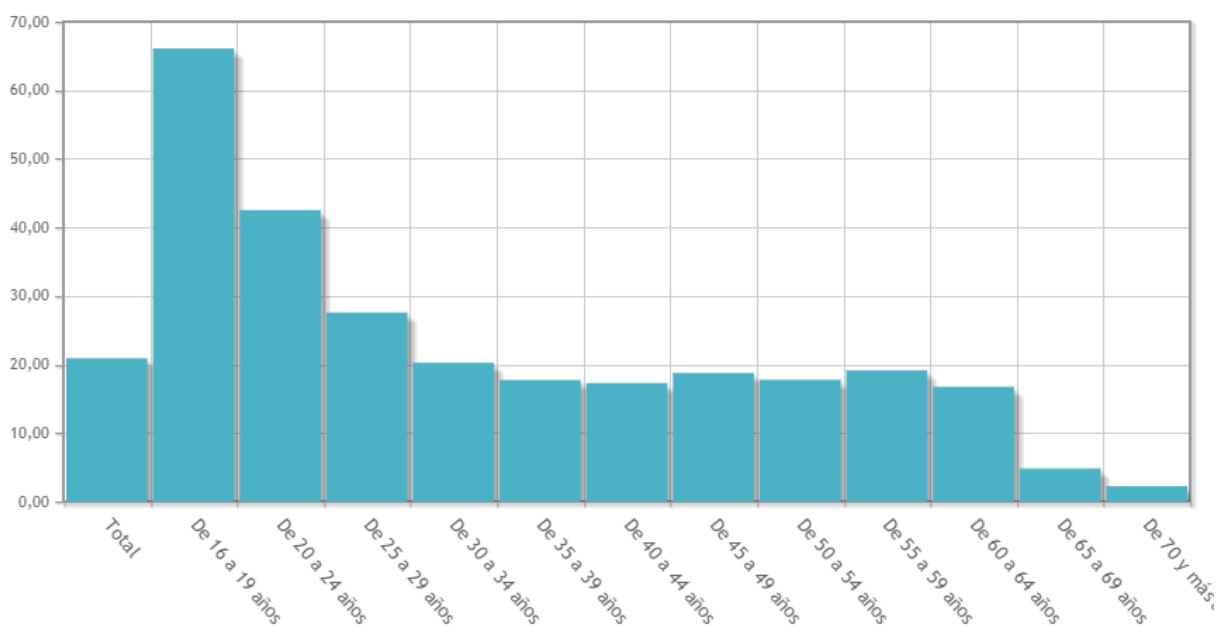
Other important data is that more than 2 million of unemployed workers, that is, around 50% of the total unemployed people have been looking for a job for more than one year.

Nearly half a million, that is, around the 10% of the total are looking for their first job.

Unemployment rate by age group

In the graph below we can easily appreciate how the unemployment rate is concentrated in the youngest groups of population, reaching nearly 70% in the group between 16-19 years old and more than 40% in the group of 20-24 years old.





Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística INE – Encuesta de Población Activa

Relevant skills for job seekers (latest studies)

In the last years, the term competences and particularly key competences are more and more frequent in the context of job seeking and career counselling.

Professionals have adapted the last trends imposed by EU policies and studies and prioritise the key competences of candidates as the essential factor to find a job.

However, there are not official studies on this matter leaded by the education and employment authorities at national level.

It is possible to find disperse studies conducted at regional or institutional level. Many universities and even vocational training centres are working for the development of their own key competences lists to be included in their curricula.

Some interesting works to be taken into account are:

- “Evaluación y medición de competencias profesionales básicas en las empresas de inserción” – Developed by Gizatea, the Association of Insertion companies of the Basque Country with the Support of the regional government in December 2012

http://www.gizatea.net/doc_up/Competencias_cast.pdf

- *"La importancia de las competencias transversales: cómo desarrollarlas en los Centros de Educación Secundaria."* – Developed by the INCREA Chair of Innovation, creativity and learning of the University Jaume I de Castellón in February 2012.

<http://www.uji.es/bin/serveis/increa/publ/altres/impctran.pdf>

- *"Interpersonal competences in the social and labour integration of the youth enrolled in initial qualification professional programmes"* - Rosa **Garcia-Ruíz** et al. Article by researchers of the University of Cantabria and the University of Oviedo published in the Spanish Journal of Guidance and Psychopedagogy. Vol. 24, núm. 2 (2013).

<http://www2.uned.es/reop/pdfs/2013/24-2%20-%20Garcia-Ruiz.pdf>

- *"The competences discourse in Spain: basic education and superior education"* an article by Antonio Bolívar

<http://red-u.net/redu/files/journals/1/articles/70/public/70-59-2-PB.pdf>

Main political aims and strategies towards transversal skills

In the Spanish legislation the term used is key competences, adapting the 8 key competences proposed by the EU.

The concept of competences is structuring the new curricula of Primary, Secondary and high school education.

The **Organic Law 8/2013 of 9 of December for the Improvement of Quality in Education**, known as LOMCE, establish competences as one of the fundamentals of the educational systems, including them in the curricula of primary and secondary education and establishing the further development in the Vocational Education.

In the preamble of the Law it is said:

"... It is necessary to acquire from an early age, transversal competences like critical thinking, management of diversity, creativity and capacity to communicate as well as key attitudes like self-confidence, enthusiasm, perseverance and acceptance of changes..."

According to this Law, the **Order ECD/65/2015 of 21 January describes the relationship between the competences, the contents and the evaluation criteria in primary education, secondary education and high school (Bachillerato).**



The key competences considered in our educational system are:

- Language communication
- Mathematical competence and basic skills in science and technology
- Digital competence
- Learning to learn
- Civic and social competences
- Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship
- Cultural awareness and expression

According to this central role of competences in education, it is expected that the level of competences of young people will increase in the last year, if the educational system is able to get adapted to the challenge.

Apart from the recognition and integration of key competences in the educational legislation, Spain is closely collaborating with the OECD to adapt its Competences Strategy in our country which is analysed in the following section.

Current standard of knowledge of TCs

The concept of competences is widely spread in Spanish Education and VET system since the EU policies are being adopted and the recent Organic Law 8/2013 of 9 of December for the Improvement of Quality in Education recognises competences as a basic pillar of the Educational system.

However, the terminology is still a problem and there is not a clear understanding by all the professional about the different typologies of competences and which elements are included in a competence.

Professionals cannot distinguish well between the concepts “competencia” (competence) and “habilidad” (skill) or between the terms “Key competences” and “transversal competences”.

Apart from these terminology problems which are normal given the relatively recent introduction of the competence concept in the educational system, Spain is working on building a competence strategy for the country and in this sense, the Spanish Government set in motion in 4 July 2014 a collaboration project with the OECD, financed by the European Commission and called “OECD’s Competences Strategy: Building an effective competences strategy for Spain”.

Conscious about the key role of competences for the economic and social development, the objective of the project is to improve the Education and Training systems so they can be able to provide citizens with the necessary skills for social and professional life.

Though the different workshops held in the framework of this project, in which both national and regional stakeholders and authorities have participated, 12 challenges have been identified for Spain in order to build a sound competences strategy:

1. To improve the competences of students in compulsory education
2. To assure that students of high education reach a high level of professional qualification and acquire the relevant competences demanded by the labour market
3. To improve the competences of the less qualified adults.
4. To remove the regulatory and tax barriers to the hiring of workers
5. To bring unemployed people back to the labour market by means of job seeking support strategies and policies.
6. To improve the transition of young people from education to the labour market

7. To maximise the training at the workplace to increase productivity and competitiveness
8. To support highly qualified workers and to universities to promote innovation and increasing competitiveness and growth
9. To improve and widen the access to quality information on job placement and learning opportunities
10. To establish close collaboration relationships to improve the competences results
11. To finance a more effective and efficient competence system.
12. To strengthen the governance of the competences system-

Online / Assessment Resources

There are not official online assessment resources to evaluate the transversal competencies of job seekers.

The Ministry of Education offers some resources for VET and secondary school teachers who want to evaluate the TC of their students on a voluntary basis.

<http://todofp.es/todofp/orientacion-profesional/conoce-tus-habilidades.html>

A group of Chambers of commerce in Spain developed some years ago the project "Quiero Empleo" as a portal addressed to job matching but oriented to the development of people and taking competences as the basic for personal and professional development. In this portal, there is a detailed explanation of what competences are and a tool for self-assessment of the competence level.

<http://www.quieroempleo.com/web/common/competences/CompetenceLevel.aspx>

Apart from this, there are several tools that have been developed on a particular basis by institutions or individuals working in the field of career counselling and help in job seeking as resources and tools for job seekers.

Some of them are

<http://www.ich.es/Empleabilidad/FactPsicoOcupa/Test1.php>

<http://web.educastur.princast.es/proyectos/itepasas/test-de-autoevaluacion.php>

http://www3.uji.es/~jsegarra/talantem/test_1ac/competencias1.html

<http://www.psicoactiva.com/tests/test-del-logro.htm>

<http://www.educaweb.com/orientacion/intereses-profesionales/>



3.6 Poland

Core data of the labour market

As for the end of October 2015 in Poland there were 1 516,9 thousand unemployed registered in the public employment agencies (9,6% of all economically active civilians), which is lower than in September 2015, when it was 1 539, 4 thousand (9,7%) and lower than in October 2014 (1 784,8 thousand; 11,3%) (Central Statistical Office of Poland, 2015a).

The unemployment rate is low compared to the rates from a decade ago; 9,6% at the of October 2005 compared to the 20,6% in January 2002. Since 2005 it started falling and reached 8,8% in October 200 which was the lowest rate since 1990ties, but then it rose to 14,4% in February 2013. Since then it is falling (Central Statistical Office of Poland, 2015b).

At the end of June 2015 the number of the employed was 8636,9 thousand persons, which was by 0,9% higher than last year. Average employment in the first half of 2015 was 8255,7 thousand persons and was (higher than at the same time last year) (Central Statistical Office of Poland, 2015c).

In the 3rd quarter of 2015 the economic activity rate was 56,4. 1 903 thousand people were working in agriculture, 4 913 thousand in industry and 9 368 in services. 4 913 thousand persons were working in public sector and 12 374 thousand in the private sector (Central Statistical Office of Poland, 2015).

Relevant skills for job seekers (latest studies)

Essential data on the skills and competences relevant for job seekers in Poland was obtained during the 5th edition of Study of *Human Capital* in Poland in 2014 (PARP, 2015). The findings are presented below.

Employers constantly report demand for workforce and the increasing difficulties with finding appropriate employees caused, among other things, by lack of competences.

Analysis of the published job offers reveals that taking into account the required competences jobs can be divided in two groups: those for which exhaustive requirements are made by the employees (white collar workers: managers, positions in services and sales) and those where specific competences are intermittently required (blue-collar workers). This

tendency, as well as zero demand for mathematical competences, has remained since 2011.

The most popular competences on the labour market are: self-organisation/self-management (especially for public authorities, officials of a higher rank, managers, specialists, technicians and other mid-level-personnel and also, to a lesser extent, for office workers and services), interpersonal competences (for the same groups in a similar degree), managerial competences (especially for public authorities, officials of a higher rank and managers), computer (especially for specialists, but also for public authorities, officials of a higher rank, managers, specialists, technicians and other mid-level-personnel and office workers) and specific professional/vocational competences (required for public authorities, officials of a higher rank, managers, specialists and, to a lesser extent, technicians and other mid-level-personnel).

The analysis of the Study of *Human Capital* in Poland shows that the most wanted employees' competences are the transversal competences which are developed in an insufficient degree and among an insufficient number of people (*Czy kompetencje Polaków odpowiadają potrzebom polskiej gospodarki? Premiera wyników IV edycji badań Bilansu Kapitału Ludzkiego*, Press release, 2014, bkl.parp.gov.pl/system/files/Downloads/20150420130547/BKL_material_pra_sowy_26_05_2014.doc?1429527961).

In another research carried by Hays 10 most demanded competences in the labour market were defined. These are: the ability to work in a multicultural environment, communicativeness, multitasking, analytical thinking, foreign languages, teamworking, goal orientation, understanding the role of business support, additional professional qualifications and the ability to work under time pressure) (<http://kariera.forbes.pl/10-najbardziej-pozadanych-kompetencji-na-ryнку-pracy-w-2015-roku,artykuly,187529,1,1,2.html>).

Main political aims and strategies towards transversal skills

Poland has introduced a national strategy incorporating objectives for all eight key competences defined in the 2006 *Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council*.

As a result of implementation of the Strategy for the Development of Education in the years 2007-2013 new core curriculum was created in 2008.

It is organised around key competences such as learning to learn, communication, mathematical thinking, etc. in order to foster employability of future graduates .

http://eurydice.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Developing_Key_Competences_pl.pdf.pdf

Eurydice Report *Developing Key Competences at School in Europe: Challenges and Opportunities for Policy* distinguishes three transversal competences from the eight key competences described in *Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council*. These are: citizenship, entrepreneurship and ICT skills.

In primary education (ISCED 1) in Poland each of the tree competences is integrated into a particular subject but only digital competences are taught within a separate subject. Civic and digital competences have a cross curricular status.

In general secondary education (ISCED 2-3) integration of those tree competences into particular subjects and their cross curricular status looks the same as in primary education. The main difference with primary education is that each of them is taught within a separate subject.

In compulsory education, on ISCED level 1 two key competences are tested: mother tongue and mathematics, whereas on level 2 the list is extended with science, foreign languages and social and civic competences. (Eurydice, 2012)

'Partnership Agreement' on using EU Structural and Investment Funds for growth and jobs in 2014-2020, adopted by the European Commission, recognizes low educational activity of adults in Poland accompanying a low level of key competences and vocational competences in this group; after the age 24 learning activities decrease. These two phenomena are coupled, one influencing the other. The Agreement acknowledges the highly importance of creating educational services which will develop adults basic competences (language skills used for communication, reading comprehension, planning and achieving goals, mathematical and technical skills) and transversal competences (learning to learn, ICT competences, social and civic competences, entrepreneurship and the ability to actively participate in culture). Activities focused on the abovementioned aims are financed from the European, national and regional funds. (Ministry of Infrastructure and Development, 2014)

In 2013 The Council of Ministers adopted a draft resolution on *The Strategy for Innovation and Economic Efficiency "Dynamic Poland 2020"* (SIEG), prepared by the Ministry of Economy in cooperation with the Ministry of Science and Higher Education. It is one of the nine strategies for integrated follow up on the National Development Strategy 2020. It's objectives are consistent with those of EU development strategy Europe 2020. One of them is increased emphasis in workforce education on key competences as well as transversal and interdisciplinary competences. This document also foresees engaging business in lifelong learning. (Ministry of Economy, 2013)

A separate document, *Perspektywa uczenia się przez całe życie (Lifelong Learning Perspective)*, adopted by The Council of Ministers emphasizes the role of competence recognition regardless of the way they were acquired. (Council of Ministers, 2013) This is followed by the process of development of a National Qualification Framework.

Current standard of knowledge of TCs

In Poland transversal competences are often approached as a subgroup of key competences. When treated as a specific subject of study, they are often referred to in publications as *transferable competences* (Konarski, S., Turek, D., eds., 2011; Fryczyńska, M., 2013).

As it was said before, transversal competences are widely recognized as the most relevant for job seekers. This is the reason why they are a subject to several EU-funded projects.

Poznań University of Technology is a leader in *The acceleration method of development of transversal competences in the students' practical training process*, an Erasmus+ strategic partnership with Polish and European organizations dedicated to development and implementation of an innovative method of accelerating the development of transversal competences of students by improving the use of practical training (<http://www.awt.org.pl/kolejny-projekt-w-ramach-akceleratora-wiedzy-technicznej-awt/?lang=en>). The method is supposed to be created on the basis of data from higher education providers and employees.

University of Economics and Innovation in Lublin was a leader in the project *School of Key Competences*, which aim was to improve the level of key competences in the group of students from secondary schools ISCED level 2 (*edukacja ponadgimnazjalna*) from several voivodeships in Poland (<http://edycja2.kluczowe-kompetencje.pl/index.php?module=articles&id=40>).

Online / Assessment Resources

Because of the high demand for transversal competences many career services, employment agencies are promoting in their projects, which is highly visible through their websites. Search results in Polish Google for *transversal competences* are about 43 000 entries and for *transferable competences* there are about 90 000 entries. Information about what transversal competences are and why they are important is usually provided through these website. Some of them include tools for self-assessment.

Tools for assessing transversal competences are usually developed in the course of EU-funded projects.

Below examples of such tools are presented

<http://vtecoach.maristak.com/index.html>

360° assessment methodology and electronic coaching; competences: teamwork, learning approach, creativity and innovation; guides and resources on how to interpret the results; coaching element allows to plan the development of competences.

<http://olza.edu.pl/student-absolwent/doradztwo-zawodowe/samoocena-kompetencji>. questionnaires which can be printed and interpreted using instructions given in them; competences: creativity, optimism and self-esteem.

<http://www.jestempredsiebiorczy.pl/>

an assessment tool with an information on suggested trainings; competences: communication, cooperation, entrepreneurship, flexibility, customer orientation, effectiveness, autonomy, problem solving, planning and organization of work, lifelong learning, stress resilience.

<http://www.europassplus2.eu>

<http://www.improve.org.pl> a tool for self and peer assessment of volunteers competences: verbal communication, non-verbal communication, teamwork, creativity, organisational skills (effectiveness), problem solving, entrepreneurship, cross-cultural competence, self-awareness and self-efficiency, learning ability, values and ethics.

4. Empirical findings

All partners have submitted their individual results which have been collated in a common analysis grid. In this section, we provide a summary analysis of data collected from students in the different countries

4.1 Survey group

We have addressed two groups of experts, using different methodological approaches:

- We have questioned 142 students (Austria: 17, Poland: 17; Belgium: 28 Greece: 15, Italy: 31 and Spain: 34)
- As an additional research step, we have conducted 30 interviews in a group of career service representatives, VET Providers, Trainers, Human Resource Managers, where five interviews has been carried out per country. This qualitative survey is complementary to the interviews with professionals and to the questionnaire completed by the students, as this in depth analysis provides a more thorough understanding of transversal competencies as well as allowing experts from the different countries to give a more detailed picture of the current situation.

4.2 Students

All students filled in the questionnaire in different sessions (in class, email and online survey of 17 questions), with the aim of capturing of partner countries young and adult lifelong learners' viewpoints on transversal competences.

Overall, the sample consisted of 142 lifelong learners, among that group 56 were men and 86 were women (details see below):

Country	Male	Female
Greece	7	8
Italy	19	12
Austria	8	9
Belgium	4	24
Poland	6	11
Spain	12	22

The profile of the interviewees is heterogeneous, aged between 20 and 48 years old with an average of 26,65 %. Almost 85% of the sample had work experience and the mean age at which they started working is 20 years. The educational level of the participants was very different because of different students, e.g. from High school diploma until Master degree, colleges to secondary schools, as well as the education path of interviewees differs strongly (economics, humanities, information technologies, laws or engineering).

4.3 Analysis of responses

Question 1: Meaning of term:

Most of the people did not know the concept of transversal competencies even we have differences in partner countries. This could be explained by different groups of students, it looks like that inside VET-Sector the term is not known by students.

Country	yes	no
Poland	35,3 %	64,7 %
Spain	47,1 %	52,9 %
Italy	71 %	29 %
Austria	11,5 %	82,35 %
Belgium	46,4 %	53,6 %

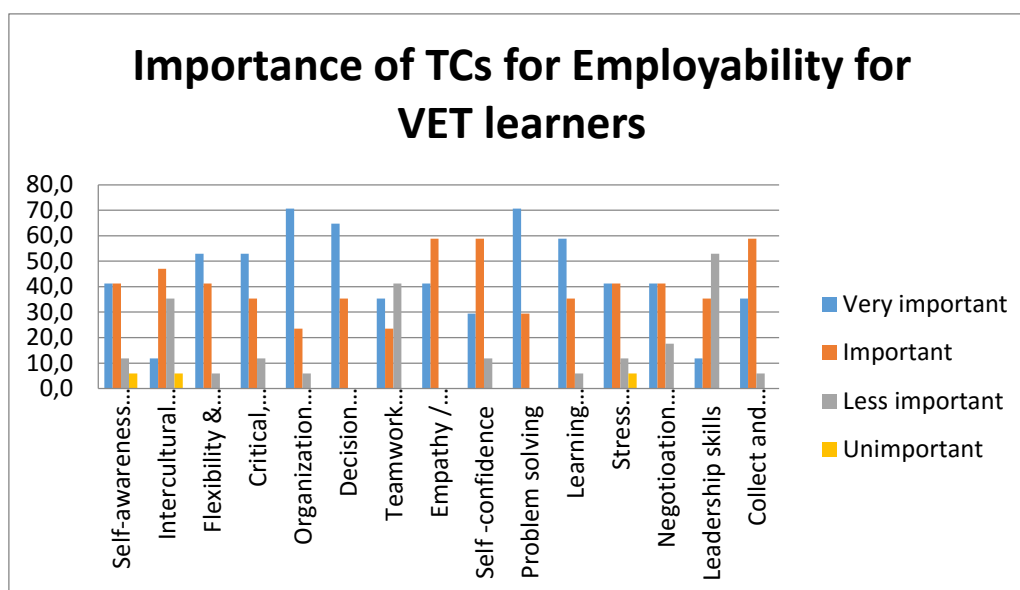
Question 2: Development of transversal competences mainly through....

Most of the people reported to gain transversal competences through formal activities (training and sports). Activities at the university/school and other activities in free time were perceived as such by slightly smaller.

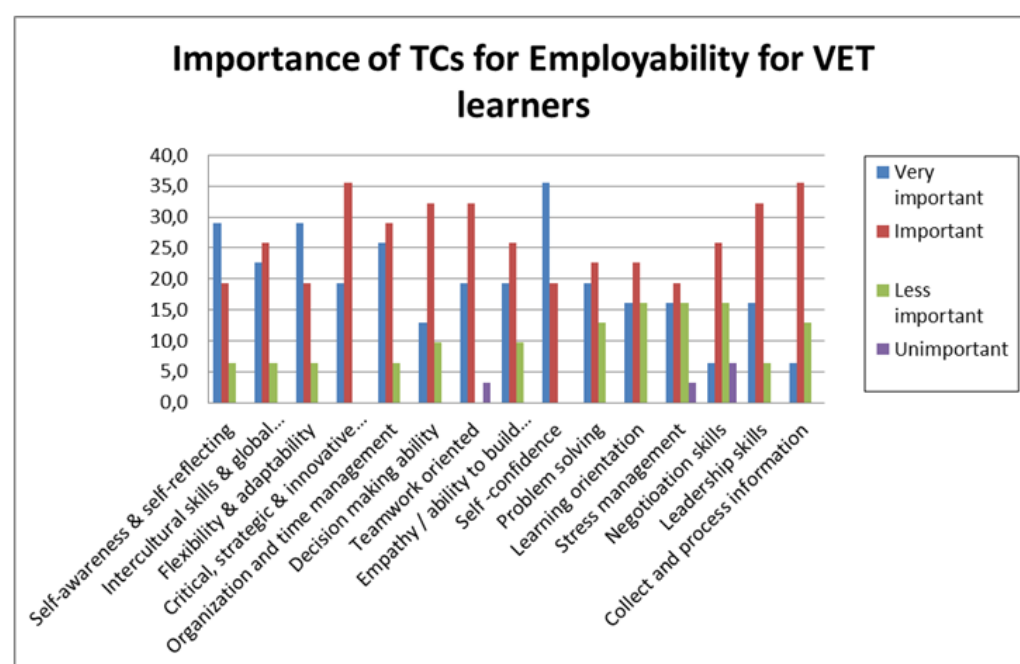
Question 3: What skills and competences are important to develop?

What has been considered by far the most important competence to develop by country is as follows:

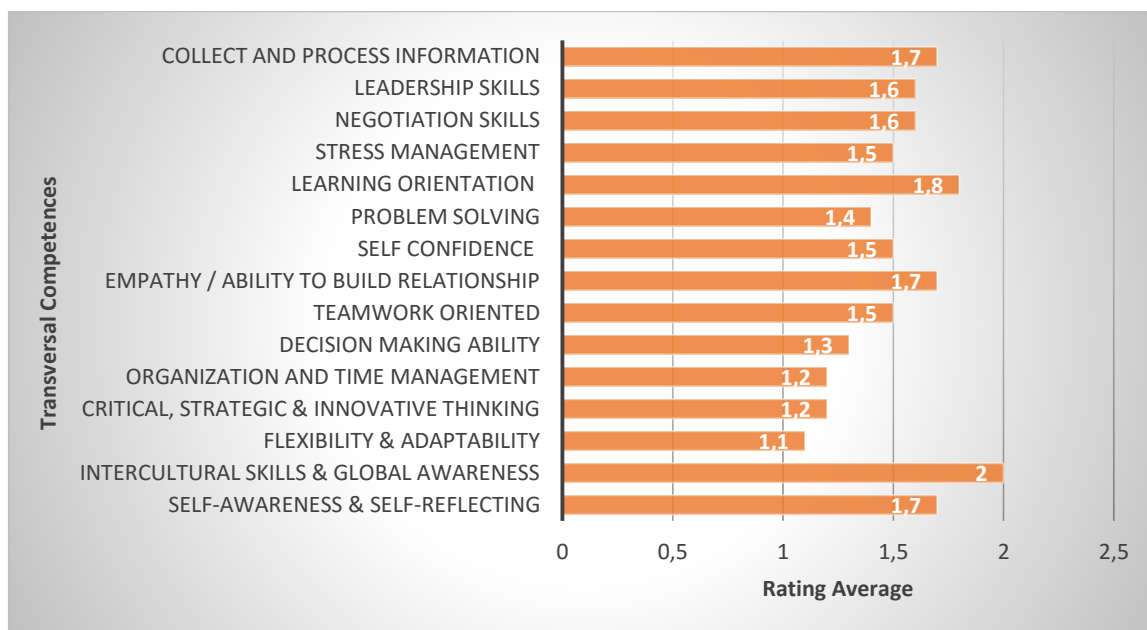
Poland



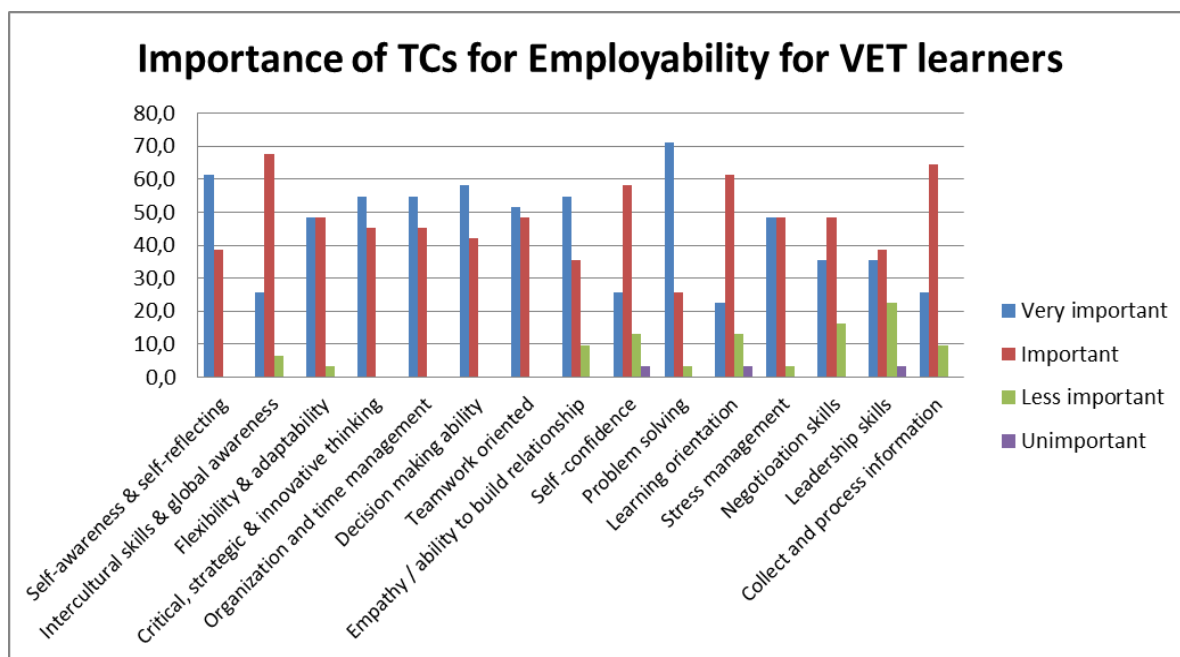
Austria



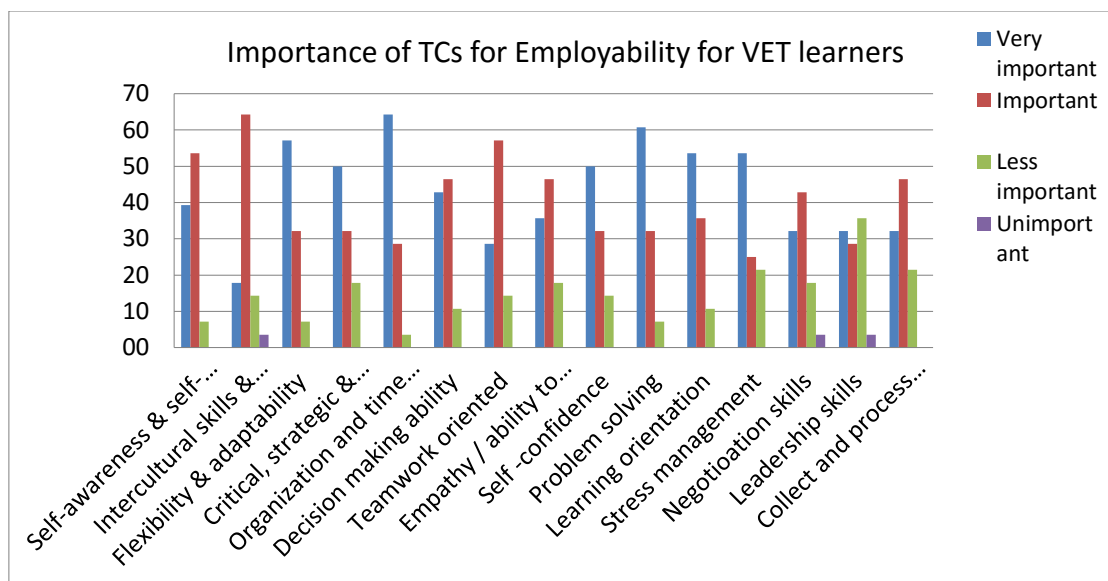
Greece



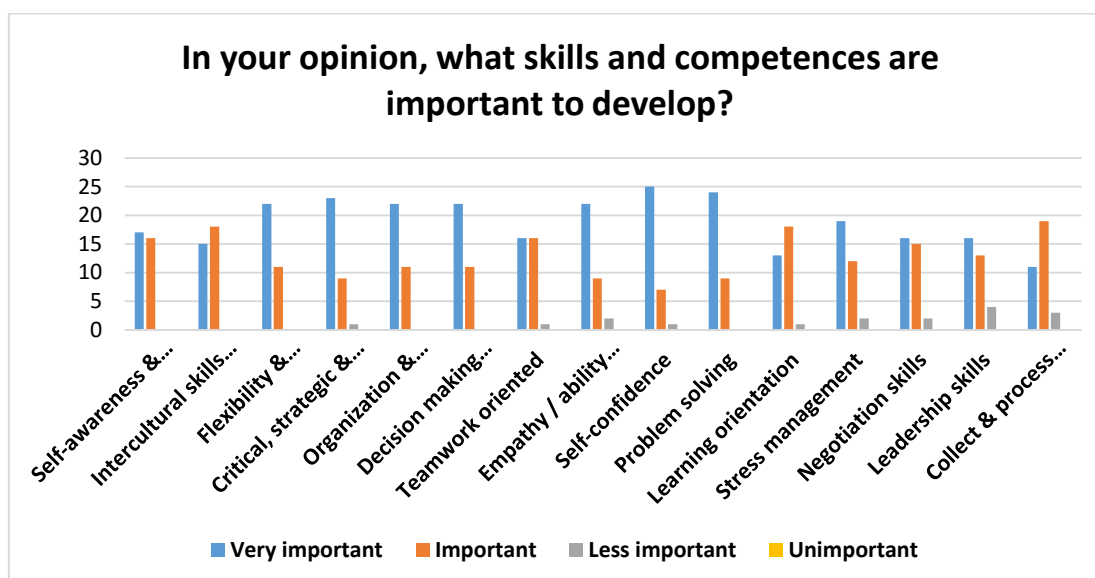
Italy



Belgium



Spain



The most important competences (= the highest rated in all six partner countries) to develop are problem solving, self-confidence, organization and time management. Collect and process data, intercultural skills and global awareness, critical, strategic & innovative thinking has been reported significant lesser. The process of leadership skills, negotiation skills and flexibility are mostly at the bottom of the list.

Question 4: How important is it to integrate activities to develop transversal competences in education?

The vast majority (80 %) of the interviewees considers integrating activities to develop transversal competences in education as “very important”, while the rest 20 % rated it “extremely important or moderately important”.

Question 5: Do you agree that transversal skills are needed in order to adapt to upcoming changes on the labor market and society in general?

Almost all participants agree that the transversal skills are needed in order to adapt to upcoming changes on the labor market and society in general. There is just a 3 % of respondents who didn’t know to answer the question.

Question 6: Does this mean that developing ways of evaluating and recording transversal competences, skills and attitudes that are relevant for access to work and further learning?

This question is directly related to the previous one, and notes that the results of both issues are very similar, only Austria and Italy differ in their answers (here around 30 % indicate that it is not important).

Question 7: What is the rationale behind the move towards integration of transversal skills in the school curriculum?

Most of the students believe that the rationale is due to the response to employers demand to increase “employability” of VET (Vocational Educational Training) learners (up to 58% in some partner countries) and meeting of social demand (36 % in some partner countries).

Question 8: What are the bottlenecks to implement these transversal skills?

Almost all participants see several problems, most think that the main reasons are the lack of training among teachers and lack of time to conduct to do relevant activities are in most partner countries (up to 55 %). A large number of respondents also believe that it is due to insufficient teaching/learning materials targeting developments of non-cognitive skills are hinder the implementation of transversal skills in the school curriculum to a greater extent.

Question 9: What are the areas that require more research and evidence to strengthen the policies related to integration of transversal skills?

Curriculum evaluation is top of learners list of areas requiring more research and evidence to enhance policies related to integration of transversal skills. Except in Belgium here the people identify “Education policy”, “value of non-cognitive skills” and “teacher training” as the areas to be examined for the implementation of policies for the development of transversal competences.

Question 10: What do you suggest should be done to support teachers to implement transversal competences?

The answers to this question are related to the answer to the previous question. Most of the interviewees believe that teachers should be trained (66 %) and provided with more and better materials (50 %). Other practices such as mentoring or information sharing are considered less effective though appreciated.

Finally people were asked to add an additional comment, if there is something to add, which just a few persons honored, e.g. there is one comment on the need to teach TC in a practical way and not just explain what transversal competences are and how to get them.

4.4 Experts

The aim of the empirical research was to justify the importance of defined transversal competences for the workplace. The method of the research was in-depth semi-structured interview with the subjects of quantitative survey. Semi-structured questionnaire was filled out by the interviewee. This research was carried out with 30 professionals, corresponding with the initial work plan, each project partner has to conduct 5 interviews with professionals from labour market, e.g. HR experts, vocational training experts, guidance and career counselling experts. So the research was performed in Austria, Belgium, Greece, Italy, Spain and Poland. Personal information (age, gender, education) was not presented taking into account respondents wishes for anonymity.

Each respondent was asked to evaluate the importance of listed transversal skills and explaining the importance of their assessment. The guideline for interviews was divided into four main categories: Understanding of term, valuation of important competences, which tools for testing TC’s were already used and meaningfulness of usage ICT self-assessments.

Results

Generally it can be stated that the knowledge of TC's is widespread among the professionals, however with other definitions (soft skills, key competences).

Concerning the relation between transversal skills and employability, all respondents argued that transversal skills for employability differ according to each and every open position, as it depends from the specific skills and knowledge demanded for the role, the working environment, the level etc. However, there are some transversal competences, which are expressively requested and which become a "must have", like following chart shows (indicated and ranged as "very important" by each country):

Belgium	Spain
Flexibility and adaptability	Critical, strategic & innovative thinking
Team work	Problem solving
Greece	Italy
Problem solving	Problem solving
Flexibility and adaptability	Self-awareness
Self-awareness/self-reflecting	Collect and process information
Poland	Austria
Self-awareness/self-reflecting	Critical, strategic & innovative thinking
Critical, strategic & innovative thinking	Flexibility and Adaptability
Decision making ability	Intercultural skills and global awareness

Compared with the answers given by students, there are some differences (see above). One person suggested that financial management and communication and presentation skills should be added to the list.

Interviewees generally perceived school, sport and free time as occasions to develop transversal competences. Other suggestions were for example: active participation in organizations, volunteering and family home.

Generally, interviewees perceived reviewing applicants' TC before recruiting a new employee as useful but not always necessary. Although TCs are very important for employability, actually there is not an ongoing service or assess 'TC but there were several independent initiatives, e.g. one to one interview, learning on the job, group exercises.

Although the interviewed persons agreed that a TCs evaluation process is warmly recommended there is no complete agreement about the usefulness of a TC Certificate. Some interviews affirm that a Certificate could be an advantage while others affirms a TC Certificate is just a plus valor, it is no essential. Some people are thinking that TC's are very changeable throughout the time so after about 6 month/1 year the certification should not be longer valid.

About the methodology to adopt to assess TCs all interviewed experts agreed that exist several instruments to assess TCs (differs by partner countries) but each of them provide a different point of view so the best way is using a mixture of instrument for example role play, workshops, questionnaires, etc.

Most of the organizations, for which the interviewed people work, do not check TC's. Only one person gave examples of assessment tools and these are psychological inventories like APIS Z and NEO-FFI. They check the following competences: innovative thinking, creativity, openness to experience and abstract and logical thinking.

Opinions on time a learner could commit to take self-assessment without losing attention or interest or become frustrated varied, but, 20 minutes appeared most frequently and seems the most appropriate amount of time. It appears that there is a different opinion between experts because some experts agreed that the ICT Tool should consist of several modules (one module for each TC to assess) for a total amount of time of about 30 – 45 minutes.

5. Discussion

The results of the qualitative research indicated that Austria respondents evaluated the competences “Intercultural Skills and global awareness” higher than average. For Spain, Italy and Greece the competence “problem solving” is almost the same evaluation in each country. The result showed that for the other countries “Critical, strategic & innovative thinking” is very important. So the results of the research revealed that innovativeness can also be defined as being open-minded to innovation, and having ability to generate and present new ideas applying new methods and finding new solutions. Conversely, leadership skills and negotiation skills were evaluated at the lowest level.

On the other hand, the results of quantitative survey (students) showed that for students the competence “Critical, strategic & innovative thinking” is not that important then for the labour market. However problem solving is very important for students in all partner countries, even if small differences between very important and important of opinions in different countries are visible.

Some of students believe that teachers in general, due to the way they are trained and selected now, are unable to meet the educational challenges of the modern employment condition. Also the majority of interviews claimed insufficient teaching/learning materials targeting developments of non-cognitive skills.

As mentioned at the beginning the results will include in work package (IO2) – Catalogue – and in work package (IO3), where a self-assessment tool on selected competences will be designed.



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