

ABOUT

CONTEXT

“Young people in transition” are challenged in many societies, when straying on their way from upper primary school to youth education. At the same time, these youths are needed desperately in the aging European societies, and the trades are calling out loudly for skilled workers.

For one group in particular, the figures are worrying: youths of 15–29 years who are neither in education nor in sustainable employment, the so-called NEETs. NEETs represent a share of 18.3 % in the EU in 2016 (Eurostat 2017). In times where inequality in European societies is increasing, the focus on NEETs is even more urgent. Youths risk becoming social outsiders with extremely limited chances of achieving a self-sustaining life. As research shows (cefu, DK), transitions are the most sensitive phases on their pathways: such as starting an educational program, coming of age or losing a relationship.

OBJECTIVES

‘Youth in transition’ (YIT) wishes to improve the scaffolding of the most endangered sub-group of the NEETs on their pathways. These “young people on the edge” are characterized by a complexity of personal and social difficulties, caused by psychological diagnoses, socially disadvantaged backgrounds, abuse, drugs, crime or other burdens.

For this purpose, YIT will work with:

- a) establishing “**chain responsibility**”: tightening the supportive cross-professional network under each individual NEET, from upper primary school to VET - and backwards, involving VET in a cross-professional collaboration to ease career learning for youths.
- b) unifying **pedagogical approaches and guidance methods** in the local ecosystems for working with these youths: education, social work, employment service, administration
- c) supplying the professionals with **supportive tools and methods**

METHODS

Usually less apparent, the same youths also have strengths, dreams and experiences that can become strong drivers for them. In YIT, experts and practitioners will work with a resource-oriented and appreciative approach (cefu, 2016), promoting these potentials. Methods such as mastering strategies, building relationships and motivational orientations (cefu, 2017) will be applied in the framework of career guidance (Law, 2010).

Thus, YIT will basically work from a youth perspective, concurrently trying to align this perspective with the conditions of the educational, social and employment system.

This approach, these methods and tools will be piloted in Denmark, Iceland and Slovenia, quality assured by the German research partner. Thus, the aim is for a population of 280 young people to succeed in entering VET, with indicators for completion of their educational programs.

ACTIVITIES & RESULTS

YIT will create 7 intellectual outputs, to be implemented during the project. The development will take place cross-nationally, with implementation in local consortia. These consortia consist of professionals from

youth counselling, employment centres, social workers, other experts and volunteers. University of Hamburg will quality assure the activities.

The outputs encompass:

1. **Analysis** of the needs of the NEETs and the needs of the professionals
2. **Assessment method** to identify vocational maturity of youths (interactive online tool)
3. **Piloting of the assessment tool** for vocational maturity in Iceland, Slovenia and Denmark, min. 150 youths
4. **Competence profile for 'scouts'**: personal contact persons with a coordinating, organising and guiding role
5. **Training unit for the professionals**: supportive methods for their work with NEETs; conducted in Iceland, Slovenia and Denmark with approx. 30-40 professionals
6. **'Individual development pathways'** of NEETs, facilitated by the scouts and their local cross-professional teams; estimated 245 young people
7. **Political recommendations**, referring to the political context, reform work and legislation in the four partner countries and in Europe

IMPACTS & LONG TERM BENEFITS

YIT's trial runs will have a direct impact on approx. 360 NEETs in Slovenia, Denmark and Iceland.

50 % of the test group for the assessment tool are expected to be assessed as vocationally mature. 50 % of the youth population in YIT will enter an educational program in VET, while 80 % will have indicators for completion.

The professionals will experience an impact from participating in the local training units for multi-professional teams. 90 % of the participants will see the methods as relevant for their work with NEETs. 75 % will be able to apply the methods to practice after the training. 80 % will indicate that they feel more cross-professionally aligned in their common approach towards the NEETs.

Finally, YIT will contribute to long-term benefits in the partner countries and possibly other European countries. YIT targets operational improvements on the system level, which can be applied in the context of political reform work. For this purpose, YIT will elaborate and communicate final recommendations.