2017

IO4 You Can Get There Too!

FUTURE

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NEXT

Learning

Get There
Journey to Employment

Contents

1. Introduction to Get There Project

In spite of the European economy's recovery, young people across Europe continue to face high levels of unemployment. To face this reality, effective training programmes need to be accessible to all young people in order to ensure that they have the necessary skills to apply to a variety of positions in the EU.

The Youth Policy of European Commission (2014) emphasizes the urgency to tackle youth unemployment. Youth employment is also the first topic for discussion in the context of the Structured Dialogue between public governments and agencies and youth organisations. In this sense, several actions are being taken in EU, including support young people's entrepreneurship via: (i) targeted education, (ii) access to funds, (iii) mentoring, and (iv) support networks and structures in favour of youth employability skills.

In all this process, Vocational Educational Training (VET) providers play a key role. Bruges Communiqué (2010) states that VET provider organisations should be encouraged to cooperate at European level.

In this sense, the Get There project will equip VET providers with methodologies, tools and competences in order to be the future employability educators (i.e. VET teachers/trainers/professionals) and thus speed up development of employability skills among young unemployed in all partner countries.

The Get There – Journey to Employment project was designed under the Erasmus+ European programme. It seeks to address the issue of youth unemployment and develop better employability skills for young people in each partner country and the wider European Union.

Using an innovative curriculum model as well as a proven learning methodology, the project offers young people an effective programme for moving into employment. The Get There Employability curriculum model includes:

⟩ Innovative methodologies and tools;
⟩ Curriculum focused on developing employability skills from ASDAN, a UK Awarding Body
⟩ Peer mentoring methodology based on the Mentoring Programme from Diagrama (Europeace Youth) in the UK

The Get There project consortium consists of six partners all of whom have worked on European projects based around developing Employability Skills.

ASDAN (UK) is a registered charity and awarding organisation, offering programmes and qualifications that explicitly grow skills for learning, skills for employment and skills for life.

Diagrama Foundation (UK) is a not-for-profit organisation that takes care of the needs of vulnerable people who are experiencing social difficulties, with the defence and promotion of Human Rights at its heart. Their main objective is to promote the development of centres, programmes and research aimed at the prevention, treatment and integration of people in social

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difficulties or at social risk, especially children, families, young people and dependants.

INFODEF (Spain), Institute for the Promotion of Development and Training, is an organisation founded with the intention to provide services and develop projects for the promotion of the Local Development through Education and Culture. INFODEF works in partnership with schools, VET centres, Adult Education organisations, Public Administrations and community and voluntary sector organisations to deliver VET and adult education to meet local needs.

ISQ (Portugal) – Institute for Technology and Quality is a private and independent organisation, not for profit, founded in 1965, which provides scientific and technological support and promotes ongoing improvement, innovation and the safety of people and property in Industry and Services, as well as continuous training, with an international presence and vocation, holding branches in more than 40 countries worldwide.

IEKEP (Greece) The Institute of Training & Vocational Guidance founded in 1990, is a private non-profit organisation, functioning in the region of Attica as an accredited vocational training centre. Its main activities include

- Training services for professionals of various specialties as well as unemployed, covering a wide range of sectors such as constructions, environment, ICT, tourism, culture, basic skills, etc.
- Research activities, mostly on vocational guidance, in cooperation with Public Organizations, European Organizations, Universities, etc.

CARDET(Cyprus) is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental, research and development organisation based in Cyprus with partners around the world. CARDET is becoming one of the leading institutions in the Euro-Mediterranean region for research, evaluation and development. The CARDET team strives to offer the highest quality research and development capabilities and educational opportunities to benefit society.

2. "You Can Get There Too!" Guide

The "You Can Get There Too!" is a guideline to successfully implement Get There project results in other organizations. This guide is based on the experience gained by partners during the Get There project implementation and on the feedback collected by partners from pilot participants, multiplier events participants and trainers involved in the learning activity and even in the pilot.

To achieve this IO, the following steps have been taken:

1) Pilot training run by each partner in order to test the Get There Handbook and the competences Matrix. Each partner choose which modules of the Handbook to test in their pilot sessions, assuring that all 6 Employability skills selected areas of the handbook were tested among the partnership. A minimum of 15 pilot participants per partner have participated in the pilot. Pilot evaluation questionnaires were developed and delivered to pilot participants at the end of the pilots to collect their feedback on the experience.

2) Based on all project experience and performance and specially on the pilot experiences shared by all, it has been elaborated this guideline to boost Get There implementation in other organizations and even in other European countries. It includes tips on what to do and what not to do when implementing Get There course, advices on how to engage trainees, and any other relevant coordinates to help other succeed on using Get There products.

In the following chapters readers will find a overall description of the project Handbook, the main output tested during the pilots, key recommendations and lessons learned during these pilots and gathered through the evaluation process and, finally, some considerations for the transferability of the Get There project approach and methodology to other organizations at national and European levels.

3. Description of Get There Handbook

The aim of the Handbook is to equip employability educators with methodologies, tools and skills in order to actively respond to the needs of the people they work with. This will help enhance personal development, employability and participation in the European labour market.

The objectives of the Handbook are to:

- Provide employability educators with new knowledge and skills to facilitate people of a working age in all partners' countries.
- Contribute to improvements in quality and innovation in Employability organizations and systems.
- Incorporate innovative learning activities and mentoring methodologies taken from, two leading organizations, ASDAN and Diagrama, respectively.

The Handbook has four main features:
1) Employability skills activities and mentoring resources that the trainer can use with end-users
2) General tutor guidelines for effective delivery of sessions
3) Specific employability skills tutor guidelines for enhancement of skill development
4) Supplementary resources in the form of additional activities, video links and useful websites
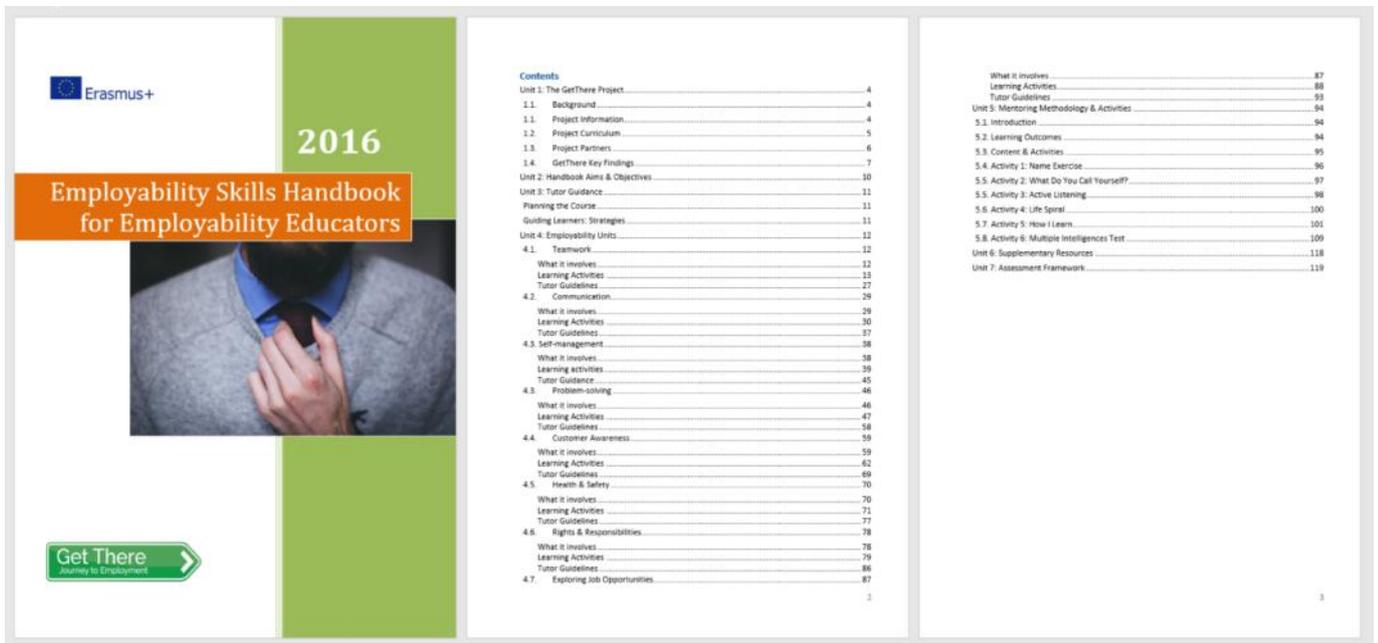
Employability Units inlcuded in the project Handbook:

EMPLOYABILITY UNITS

1 Teamwork
working collaboratively with a group of people in order to achiev a goal

2. Communication
been able to make yourself understood

3. Self-management
relate own interests, skills and qualities to particular job

4. Problem-solving
finding solutions to problems

5. Customer Awareness
knowing about a business and its products and services

6. Mealth & Safety
indentify potential aspects of safety in workplace

7. Rights & Responsabilities
ensure adherence to relevant rules and regulations

8. Exploring Job Opportunities
identify potential job opportunities

4. Overview of National Pilots

		UK	PORTUGAL	CYPRUS	GREECE	SPAIN	Total
ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION	**Organizations participating in the Pilots**	ASDAM	ISQ	CARDET	IEKEP	INFODEF	7
		DIAGRAMA			IASIS	R. INCOLA	
	Location	London	Lisbon (Oeiras)	Nicosia	Athens	Valladolid	7
		London / Kent					
	Nº of piloting days	2 Days	2 Days	1 Day	7 Days	5 Days	23
		3 Days			3 Days		
ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS	**Nº of participants**	34	13	15	20	15	97
	Gender Male	18	13	6	8	10	55
	Female	16	0	9	12	5	42
	Age < 18	10	8	0	0	2	20
	18-25	19	5	12	18	12	67
	> 25	5	0	3	2	1	10

ABOUT THE CONTENT	Employability Units tested		UK	PORTUGAL	CYPRUS	GREECE	SPAIN
		1 Teamwork		■			
		2 Communication			■	■	
		3 Self-management	■				
		4 Problem-solving		■	■		
		5 Customer awareness	■				
		6 Health & Safety	■				
		7 Rights & Responsibilities				■	
		8 Exploring Job Opportunities	■				■
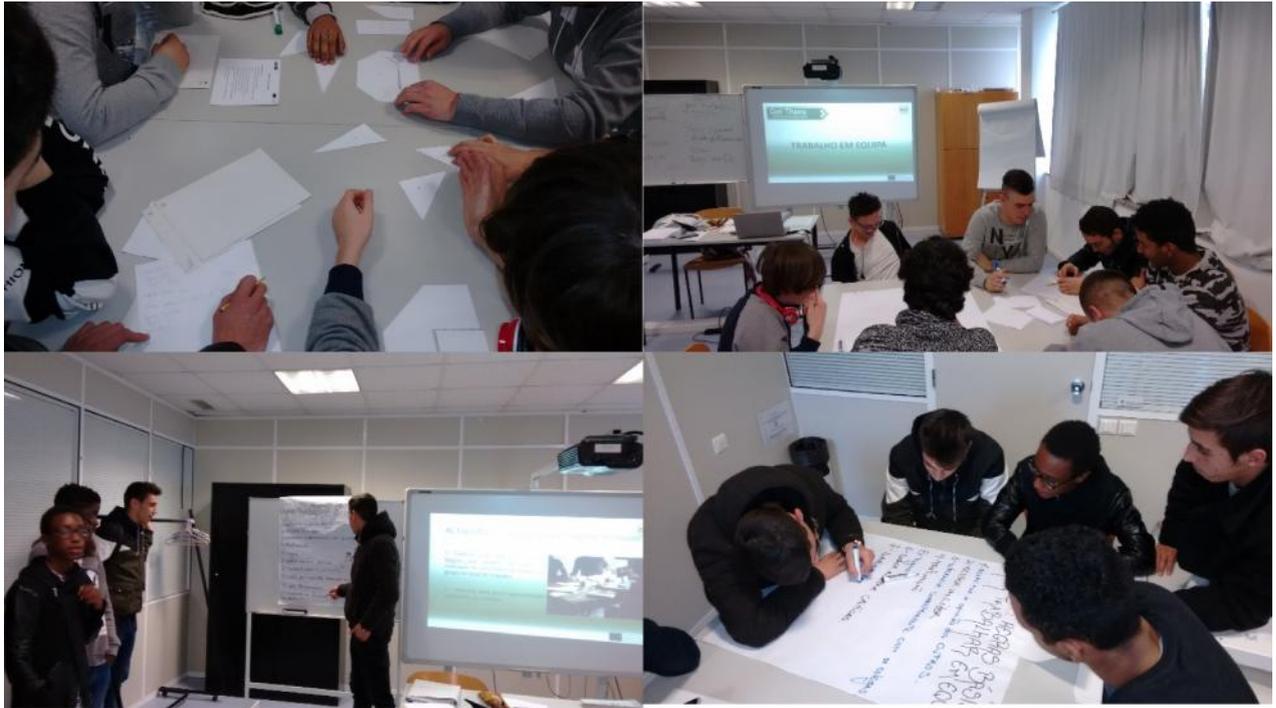
5. Key recommendations and lessons learned

SPAIN

- The possibility to actively participate in the activities has proved to be a very positive aspect of the Get There project approach. Unlike the usual class or training session, the participants considered that the format, similar to a workshop, is more suitable to develop their own skills.

- The activities proposed take also into account the own interest of the participants, and their own experiences and needs, which makes the sessions very practical and useful.

- The tutors and educators were very supportive and show great interest in the topic and to help the participants in the process. This involvement of the educators has showed to be highly motivated also for the young beneficiaries.

- They participants have considered also very good and interesting to participate in a pilot experiences together with other countries. The international dimension of the training experience is also highly motivating for young participants from unprivileged groups.

- There is a need for additional resources and more activities. The acquisition of competencies and skills require time to be improved. It would be useful that those organizations interested on implementing the Get There methods and products would develop their own activities and

resources based on the examples provided by the project and following the structure of the Matrix.

- In some cases, some activities can be combined because they can be considered a logical continuation of the previous one.

- The preparation of a previous short train of trainers has proved to be very useful for the implementation of the Get There approach. Organization interested into adopt this method should prepare their own staff in advance.

- The pilot phase has demonstrated that incorporating this new approach results as motivating for students as it is for teachers and training organizations.

- It is recommended to plan and organize all the contents and the information that trainers will need during the training activities. They will need information in order to help the participants to carry out the different activities proposed.

PORTUGAL

- The Teamwork employability skill was very successful and made the participants reflect on their own characteristics and way of acting. It also boosted their understanding on how they could be a better team player.

- Regarding the Problem Solving employability skill, it was the trainer's impression that it could be more dynamic and appealing, especially taking into consideration the fact that the type of group we tested the materials with involves youth at risk and it is hard to keep their interest in activities that are more individual and that involve mainly the act of writing. The exception goes to the egg challenge, of course.

- In terms of the importance and relevance of this training, it is our opinion that it is crucial for youth skills development and preparation for the labour market, independently of the country we are referring to. This is even more noticeable if we consider youth at risk.

- As in previous experiences with this type of target group – youth at risk – it is of major importance to work on their employability skills in a dynamic and creative training format, balancing individual and group activities, driving them to reflective and introspective exercises and, at the same time, confronting them with their own behaviors, thus challenging them to improve.

- A general overview of the pilot sessions' evaluation allows us to confirm the impact this training had on the participants. The fact that all of them would recommend this training to others is an indicator of their acknowledgement of its relevance.

- An unexpected situation we feel we should report is the fact that some activities from the Teamwork module took more time than expected due to the vocabulary used – the trainer had to explain what most of the words mean...again, this is probably due to the type of group the module was tested.

GREECE

Even though in TfT session the presentation was about the whole process of Get There, the actual pilot sessions in Greece were focused mainly on Module 4.2 Communication and on Module 4.7 Rights and responsibilities.

All subunits of two modules had been implemented during those sessions from IEKEP´s trainers. Methodologically, in this pilot we tried to implement the methodological approach of self-directed learning, while working self-esteem of learners and helping them to be aware of their strengths and weaknesses at the same time. In all modules, challenges worked consisted precisely in identifying their own specific skills as a needed basis to take responsibility for their own skills development during the course. To achieve that, we had to raise awareness on what each skill is and it was clear that not always they had an accurate idea about it.

IEKEP used non-formal training techniques. Each workshop started with name game/energizer exercises and completed with formal and non-formal evaluation.
Participants were introduced to the topics using the Get There Handbook and other relevant supporting material. Discussions, role plays, exercises and 'catalyst' materials were used. Once a small portion of theory had been presented, explored and understood, practical application sessions were then attempted in order to get the group familiar with the importance of soft skills and awareness.

UK

DIAGRAMA

During the execution of the piloting, the main strength was the use of the Mentoring Activities as it helped the learners to reflect on their own experiences and link them to the aims of the activities. The engagement of the trainer and his willingness to act out examples for the trainees was also a positive factor. A more challenging aspect of the training was maintaining the interest

of the learners throughout all of the activities; this could possibly have been due to the fact that it was a voluntary course, rather than a mandatory one. The trainer needs to be very familiar with the Mentoring Course material to be able to execute it effectively.

The profile of the participants was varied with young people under 18 (apprentices and students) and some of them over 25 (apprentices and people doing job search).

It was found that this training could be easily embedded inside the UK system. The experts that were consulted as part of the development process of the units, stated that there was a real need to be trained in practical skills, and the course that has been created for the Get There project is based exactly on the development of practical employability skills. Furthermore, trainers and teachers are able to work on their own personal skills and feelings which can help them to develop their practice.

There were two main conclusions from the training: On one hand, trainers need to study and dedicate at least 1 hour to each unit to understand the theoretical aims and to be able to meet the needs of the learners in each activity. On the other hand, it is important to use the mentoring activities throughout the course to keep the learners engaged in the process. Trainers have to consider time taken to adapt the activities to suit the needs of the learners, the size of the groups, their age and capacity.

Most of the learners were happy with the course and what they had learned during the sessions. They gave positive feedback about the way the course was taught, the activities themselves and how the trainer engaged the learners in the process. We recommend using a closer style of teaching, doing activities continuously to make all of them active and focused on something. The activities require that the trainer is very much involved in their delivery, so a lecture style of course would not work well in meeting its aims and objectives. Some of the activities can bring out quite personal experiences, so the trainer needs to ensure that he builds rapport from the outset with the learners and creates a safe and trusting environment for them to learn in. We also recommend that the trainers carry out all of the activities in the course to get the complete benefit from them.

ASDAN

The main strength of the training was the success of the self-management module, offering beneficiaries dynamic new methodologies and experiences; Health & Safety was a weakness because the beneficiaries had low expectations before the training even began.

For these beneficiaries, modules on interview skills, CV writing and letter writing would all be beneficial, given that many have left education with no formal qualifications to help them develop within these areas.

This training is hugely important for the national context as the Community Links organization has a pan-London presence and is also replicated in other areas of the country with regard to its own employability training programme

The global results of the pilot sessions´ evaluation suggest that the modules work well but need to be delivered by someone experienced in dealing with disengaged young people who are unemployed.

The general overview of the national pilot sessions was that they were successful at this level and could work with other ages and kinds of beneficiaries; the partners at Community Links were delighted with the sessions and expressed the importance of running such sessions.

Lessons learned include having fewer paper-based activities in some activities
recommendations for the implementation in other organisations and even in other European countries are as follows:
- Use experienced trainers who have worked in this area before
- Use physical and verbal activities and make sessions interactive,
- Print a hard copy of the handbook to keep on file.

CYPRUS

The overall experience of the course was a positive one. Participants showed great enthusiasm regarding the two modules that were covered: Problem-Solving and Communication. As a facilitator I believe the course could be greatly enhanced with a stronger focus on self-management (i.e. goal-setting, motivation, action plans).

Considering that the participants came from different backgrounds (university students, employed, unemployed) it was necessary to keep the structure and content of the course as diverse as possible. This was done to ensure all learning styles were met and all educational backgrounds accounted for.

According to the participants there is great need for courses that target employability skills. These national pilot sessions provided young people the opportunity to receive professional training on skills that are necessary in today's competitive market. The course was well-received and respondents showed high engagement with the activities.

On a national scale, the field of professional development is still at its early stages and therefore the Get There course directly addresses the gaps in this area. What is needed for the situation in Cyprus is more specific targeting of organizations for these types of training. Although our target group consisted of young people from various backgrounds (unemployed, employed, university students) it would be advisable to target this training to other classes of young people (i.e. vulnerable youth groups, minority groups).

A recommendation would be that the course is applied in other European countries (beyond the project partner countries) in order to evaluate as to whether the Get There material is applicable on a wider cultural scale.

6. Final Considerations

The pilot training actions has demonstrated that the Get There methodology and products are very successful. The methodology and the contents are very flexible and easily adaptable to a wide range of training environments, approaches and target groups.

The incorporation of these methodologies in the training activities of the organizations will have a very positive effect in all the key actors and target groups of user and beneficiaries. VET teachers/trainers/professional will be equipped with concepts and tools to equip young people with better employability skills and increase their labour opportunities. The target group of final beneficiaries, the young unemployed, will have access to training actions specifically designed to empower them and motivate their learning process and the improvement of their employability skills. With the Get There products, VET providers will have the background to contribute to improvements in quality and innovation in their VET organizations and systems.

We believe that the present guideline on "You can Get There too" will help other VET providers and teachers/trainers/professional at European level to promote the implementation of training actions for the development of employability skills in young unemployed based on this innovative methodology.