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**Establishing a Partnership to Set up
a Youth Guarantee Scheme in Veneto**

VP/2012/012/0175

Guidelines and Recommendations

for trainers, practitioners, policy makers, stakeholders

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Establishing a partnership to set up a Youth Guarantee Scheme in Veneto – YGV VP/2012/012/0175

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1. Guidelines for trainers/practitioners

Foreword

Between the main objectives of YGV Project we can find the following: “to improve the level of cooperation among different social actors, in order to face youngsters needs in an integrated way”. Using the *learning approach* in the project we tried to promote participation and full reflective involvement of the various actors. In particular, according to our *Evaluation Report*, this approach “aims to encourage a re-reading of the participatory process of the project, highlighting not only the output but also the context and organizational factors that affected the implementation, its strengths and weaknesses and the elements that might constitute basis for the transfer of the scheme to the whole Veneto context”.

The proposal of *Guidelines for trainers/practitioners* represents a tool to facilitate the “experience transfer” towards a lot of number of trainers, officers, educators and other practitioners in the field of the schools, vocational education centres, local employment services, associations and other stakeholders.

The *Guidelines* has been realised on the basis of several sources:

- Focus group with trainers/practitioners and SWOT analysis,
- Meetings with “provincial network” and Provincial Technical Committee,
- Videos on experiences,
- Internal Evaluation report,
- Specific reports on each action.

Finally, the *Guidelines* has been diffused (by Italian edition) to regional trainers/practitioners involved in Youth Guarantee programme.

Main remarks about trainers/practitioners

Concerning the trainers/practitioners and their action methodology, the project identified following main points:

- the importance of taking a “preventive approach” with early school leavers and NEET,
- the necessity to "categorize" different NEET targets to better identify the types of measures, to promote a personalisation approach. Indeed we must diversify measures (both in terms of communication and involvement that the actions of concrete support) on

the three age target of Neet. They each have needs, knowledge and tools that require specific approaches,

- the importance to adopt “laboratory methodology” of teaching,
- the importance of active involvement of companies (above all through the co-selection),
- the value of “target proximity” delivering actions at local level,
- the integration of traditional instruments of guidance with assessment tools used from companies,
- the necessity to strengthen and diversify services to value new career guidance, also enhancing the role of training agencies.

Particularly, the project the project has shown that trainers/practitioners have to pay attention to some focal points:

- engage the municipalities in “negotiating tables” and / or actions, especially the representatives of youth local initiatives (e.g. youth information centers, youth projects, ...) and local healthcare services,
- promote a new "work culture" in young people from the revision of school curricula and training,
- aim at intake by young people of their life and professional projects,
- encourage the involvement of young people themselves (for example, those who study communication) in communication measures aimed at young people (enhancement of the approach of "peer action"),
- pay attention to the different models and processes of transitions between school and work-social inclusion,
- differentiate and integrate the various communication channels (traditional and new) to youth,
- Invest in joint training of practitioners from various subsystems (school, vocational training centers, employment services, companies, ...).

Guidelines

From the project emerged various information about types of actions implemented:

School visits

The experience

The organization and management of school visits to was edited by the Service Law / Duty Education and Training in the Province of Treviso, in collaboration with the Regional Education Office.

8 visits were planned at State Institutes and 2 at Vocational Training Centres.

The visits have enrolled a total of 16 boys of which 12 effectively participated. Of these 12 young people, 5 could be defined NEET potential (as currently attending a school curriculum, but with strong motivations to abandonment) and 7 are effective NEET (not currently working or are inserted in any school).

The visits have had success percentage above the “effective” NEET. Indeed, after the visits, 9 boys have returned to school.

The visits were concluded with a workshop held at the City Crafts Lancenigo, in which all the boys were invited to bring them to an interview given to a professional choice, in order to further consolidate the choice to orient them explored and give a more comprehensive training to the path taken. This interview, to be held in autonomy, had been prepared with the project tutor in the last phase of the school visit.

It should be emphasized that young people who actively participated in the last meeting also showed a willingness to engage in serious resume paths variously interrupted, even accepting the challenge, in some cases, to undergo a substantial recovery job training to addressing the necessary entrance exams, provided to find, in organizations and institutions, a real competence of listening to their specific and personal requests for help (this last situation, which was facilitated by support under the project customized and specific).

Indications for trainers/practitioners

These visits, whether conducted by the referent orientation of the school - in the manner proposed by the project - proved to be extremely effective, because of the personalized approach and for setting “laboratory”, aimed at an in-depth counseling and exploration aspects not only educational but also emotional related to early school leaving, and the new project future.

This type of school visit was the result of a successful network between institutions and collaboration to co-construct approximate effective interventions. It can become an important asset: the guidance indeed is a personalized relation to help, that works when, as in this case, right conditions allow it.

Short internships

The organization and management of placements for young people - for a period of 15 days - was handled by the Service Law / Duty Education and Training in the Province of Treviso, and has involved the employment centres of Treviso, Oderzo, Montebelluna, and Vittorio Veneto.

The Experience

These placements have enrolled a total of 22 children, but only 12 have actually used the path of training. The other two have returned to school routes, thanks to the school visits included in the project.

Have therefore been planned, as expected, 12 internships at companies in the territory is known that contact ad hoc. All were completed.

Of these, three did not lead to a further proposal of training, as companies in these cases have shown traits of immaturity too significantly greater and the total absence of basic skills. One of these three boys, however, is back in school, thanks to the fact that the stage has allowed the boy and his family to be aware that the same was not yet ready for an entry into the world of work.

Nine placements have resulted in the activation of an internship placement, lasting 200 hours each, funded by the project UPI "Towards our future". Furthermore, two of these are then also followed an internship paid by the company based on the DGR 1324. In addition, one of two young people, who is serving a prison sentence, obtained by the court set aside the sentence thanks to work commitment demonstrated.

Indications for trainers/practitioners

We can say that the short internship proved a useful tool to allow a first approach to the company, not demanding in terms of time, and therefore more suitable to snatch an initial availability of businesses and young people. Such injections may be strategic and preliminary successive engagements, allowing a gradual very appropriate in the case of minors.

At the same time, however, it should be emphasized that the short duration does not offer great

possibilities for recovery of any critical.

To underline in any case the need for a tutoring attentive even in the case of paths so short, having regard to the fragile seal that children often demonstrate in working environments. Very often it is a competent and diligent tutoring that can make a difference.

Work experiences

The experience

This action has seen 97 young people enrolled, with 53 actual participants in 15 companies.

The work experiences have had a duration of about 640 hours, distributed in 'period of four months. Young people have also benefited from a grant of EUR 3 per hour funded by the Province.

They were selected through a process of matching supply and demand based on:

- A "directory of opportunities" built in collaboration between the provincial and companies available,
- A presentation of applications and a pre-selection,
- A selection interview in the company,
- A monitoring of individual paths, ongoing and final.

At the end of the paths were hired 10 young.

Indications for trainers/practitioners

Even in this experience has been confirmed:

- The need to start from the needs actually expressed by the companies, in order to overcome approaches welfare approach,
- The decisive importance of the collaboration of the company in the pre-selection and selection,
- The importance of accompanying and monitoring by the practitioners of vocational training centres.

For practitioners was highlighted the need to have:

- appropriate analysis skills (i.e. at socio-organizational and technical level) to support the dialogue with the company, starting from the knowledge of the business units, processes and professionals required,
- the ability to convince young people and companies to use tools methodologically structured and validated.

The experience

This action has involved 6 NEET and a "listener" (having an age greater than 24 years).

Were set up two working groups based on the idea entrepreneurial elaborated:

- one called "40team", aimed to produce an app for smart phones,
- one called "music bar", aimed at creating environments with music and a small restaurant.

The projects were accompanied by some experts in the areas related to the start of the company, legal issues and tax and to financial sustainability.

Only the first has had an operational conclusion by drawing up an effective business plan. This outcome highlights the problem of maturity required to young people who want to imagine a start up, not only in terms of initiative and creativity, but also of realism, resilience and ability to cooperate in a group. In the case of the "40 team" work has led to a precise definition of the expected product, with the technical specifications and the market in which it spread. It was also established the role of the various participants and prepared a good business plan to evaluate investments, revenues and earnings. It was then defined a chronological table for the time required to implement the service, the experimentation in some local pilot and the formal establishment of the company.

Indications for trainers/practitioners

This action has highlighted the absolute need for specialized skills ad hoc by practitioners accompanying start-up projects.

The ideal is to have an interdisciplinary team that can support the various stages of processing and realization of the business idea.

In particular it should be well cared for the selection phase as early ideas of these young people are quite rough and vague, without a clear understanding of what it means to start and run a business. At this stage the resources should be concentrated especially on young people who demonstrate a more defined and a significant motivation, avoiding as much as possible approaches unrealistic.

The approach in this laboratory must include support for:

- The structuring of the business idea and business plan,
- Analysis of economic and financial sustainability, to start the company and to provide income to the participants in the first year of operation,

- Analysis of possible organizational and legal form to be given to the company, considering that it is composed of several young "aspiring" entrepreneurs.

A significant element to point out is the issue of the estate and motivational youth group in the transition from the idea to the "nascent stage" of confrontation with the elements of economic and financial need. Being young people who come from different work experience and who meet together for the first time for the purpose of sharing a business plan, the initial investment motivation alone is not sufficient to implement the idea. There is indeed a personal frailty and motivational when you pass from the dream to entrepreneurial the project.

2. Recommendations for policy makers/stakeholder

Starting from the experience of the project, Region of Veneto submits to the attention of training practitioners, policy makers and other stakeholders some operative suggestions and policy recommendations useful to create the best environment for the deployment of effective actions supporting young Neets, something which should be capitalized for the future of the “Youth Guarantee Programme”.

From this point of view four are the proposed areas of reflection:

1. Network of services (public/private) and links with the labour market. Fundamental in our experience has been the deployment of public and private practitioners as reference points for both the young person and for the company. The carried out actions (work experiences, company and school visits, internships, entrepreneurship labs) wouldn't been possible without an effective and fruitful cooperation between the involved services (public/private/school/company). For this area is necessary to highlight as it appears essential, for the success of the intervention, the guarantee that the public or private practitioners have certainty and transparency of the information to be given to the addressees and of the offered services.

2. Personalization of the interventions and training for trainers. The term "Neet" hides very different situations. That's why the intervention cannot be rigid and with a limited offer. The experience of YGV project, in the terms in which it has been configured, has been innovative and particularly significance for recipients who participated. What emerged regards the value of being SEEN. Someone brings you out from the background, and finally looks at you. This is already evolutionary in itself. The enhancement of the person and the personalization of the intervention, the recognition and acceptance of EACH new identity are elements that help to recover the leadership of young people, giving them feeling of responsibility for their own growth. This approach presupposes, of course, quality, sensitivity, education and training for trainers and practitioners. We can therefore say that there are two central requirements:

- Developing individualized and customized analysis and intervention modalities, that can become real tools of facilitation, favouring targeted actions and interventions oriented rather than "rain" actions or actions designed for large numbers of beneficiaries;
- Ensuring the proper training for those who deal with children and adolescents in school dropout.

3. Tutoring and the importance of peers. In the experience of the YGV project, the contribution of the peers as tutors, where it was possible to have recourse, has turned out interesting. The peer-tutoring, special relationship involving two or more companions, proved to be a great way to promote the exchange and discussion among students. Interventions are more effective if they involve peers as witnesses of their positive experience, encouraging young people to think positively to their career or studies.

4. Focus on investments. Having efficient service networks, offering a proper training to trainers, providing personalized training and guidance interventions is very expensive. Therefore we have to intervene in the new programming, concentrating resources on few key hubs:

- the "building", where possible, of a training adequate to the demand;
- the pursuing of the transition between school and labour market,
- the offering of guidance services for students, and of effective placement channels for young people.

Following, we indicate, in more detailed way, the learning that we intend to report in order to allow a transfer and a continuous improvement of policies for training and labour in favour of Neet.

The suggestions and recommendations are proposed taking into account both the different types of action developed by the YGV project (building of the territorial network, intercepting Neets, opportunities on labour market), and the various parties concerned (policy makers, stakeholders and system practitioners), and, finally, the different areas of possible intervention (regional and national).

Reinforcement of territorial networks

► **Network approach** is to be considered crucial in respect of policy for Neet. Local authorities (Municipalities) and specifically referents on policies for youth might be involved in the network and in implementing the activities. Alliance between public and private organizations and bodies is essential.

‣ **Inter-institutional approach.** The project pointed out the strategic relevance of an inter-institutional and multilevel approach for policies and interventions dealing with Neet. Inter-institutional framework is required by the multi-factorial issues underlying the Neet phenomena and multilevel one is to be considered essential in order to involve all actors can provide a range of different services on the ground. At the same time, the project highlighted that alliance between public and private organization and bodies is essential to make policies facing successfully Neet issues.

‣ **Local is better.** Many actors at local level show willingness to collaborate. Local levels appear more and more relevant, as they promote and valorise the role of local actors. Moreover, social capital expressed at local level can be exploited and spent in an appropriate manner to improve the implementation of social policies, including Neet. In this respect, one of the most essential turning point of an effective policy addressing Neet refers to the phase of intercepting them, adopting also all resources originating from social capital a territory can express.

Getting in touch with Neet

‣ **Variety of communication channels.** Traditional communication channels (database, word of mouth, information point, mailing list, etc.) are more effective to first contact, while social networks are more useful to keep in touch with users. In general Facebook represented an effective tool to intercept some youngsters, in association with word-of-mouth, cards, telephone and emails.

‣ **Peer-to-peer communication.** It is a valid means to intercept Neet. It represents a form of horizontal, informal and direct communication, that has proved to be particularly effective when used addressing Neet. Many are the examples of such an approach used in implementing the project actions. For instance, the visit to the schools have been managed and conducted by students themselves.

‣ **Direct contact with trainers/practitioners.** It represents both an added value for youngsters and an encouragement to stay active.

‣ ***Adequate intermediaries and interfaces.*** Social workers, athletic associations and priests can be usefully used to reach Neet where they live. It was noted that institutional services of information addressing youngsters, often aren't being attended by Neet and in general by disadvantaged people. Therefore in some cases these services, that have demonstrated over time an high level of penetration among young people, don't seem to obtain the same success among Neet.

Giving answers towards the Labour market

‣ ***Mutual relationship between schools/companies and local employment services.*** Customised school and company visits should become usual opportunities for schools. The presence of experienced people, in schools and in companies, is a crucial factor for successful activities.

‣ ***Taking-over of each Neet by employment services.*** It is an essential step to put in place a guidance activity throughout the entire training activity (internship, visit, working experience). The taking-over process is to be interpreted as a prerequisite for the development of a training system based on a modular approach. By adopting such a model, each Neet can be provided of a range of training opportunities, each of which is being include in an individual pathway that may be modified in time, according to the changing needs of the user.

‣ ***Lean administrative procedures.*** They are needed to keep up the Labour Market dynamicity. Often the interest expressed by a firm on a particular professional profile have to be satisfied in very short time to cover the production requirements. That means that, if the firm can't count on a candidate provided by employment services in a reasonable time, is forced to opt for other solutions. Over-bureaucratic approach should be simplified, for a successful collaboration with firms.

‣ ***Fostering entrepreneurship.*** The project highlighted that entrepreneurial laboratories could take advantage by a closer linkage to start-ups and business incubators at regional level. Moreover, effective links with sponsors of business ideas should be promoted and enhanced.

Matrix for improvement at local and national level

Territorial level	Veneto Region	Italy
Area of intervention		
Informative systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expanding the Regional Registry of Students (ARS) to students over 18 years and until the end of university courses. - Ensuring a greater connection / confluence of ARS with the Service for Work Insertion (SIL). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve the reliability of the database relating to NEETs, trying to reach both the young people currently "invisible" (i.e. that are outside the existing databases), and those really in the position of NEET, given that in some regions they appear to be overestimated.
Services and networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involving in territorial networks and/or in the local actions also Municipalities and especially the representatives of youth policies (e.g. youth information centres, youth projects, ...). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving the inter-institutional coordination among the Regions and the Ministries competent for education, training and labour. - More flexible modes of action, by taking in charge of the dynamism typical of business situations, and by reducing to the minimum the bureaucratic procedures. - Expanding the opportunities and the tools for the customization of interventions. - Promoting the training of professionals and of specialized skills for mentoring and guidance of young people at risk.
Communication and involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthen the direct comparison with the various practitioners in the different involved agencies and organizations. - Promoting the young people's active attitude and their involvement in the design of the interventions. - Ensure the extension of events also to the "periphery", with the maximum proximity to the final users. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diversifying and integrating the various communication channels, traditional and new, since those "traditional" (databases, information points of territorial public bodies, local mailing of list users and practitioners, trainers, ...) are often more effective for the first contact, while those "new" (social networks) are more suitable for the maintenance of contacts. - Integrating the traditional guidance tools (European CV, Europass, individual and professional balance of competences, ...), with the assessment tools used at company level. Direct involvement of business in talks with young people (co-selection) represents a strategy that increases the effectiveness of insertion.