Life & Career Choices

Further resources, practical tools and European actors

Exploring life and career choices is about more than choosing a profession: it also involves understanding your strengths, values, possibilities and the skills needed to navigate change. These European resources offer practical activities, trustworthy information and ways to explore different paths.

LifeComp - European Framework for Personal, Social and Learning to Learn Key Competence. Developed by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre, LifeComp describes nine competences across personal, social and learning-to-learn areas, including flexibility, self-regulation, empathy and managing learning. It gives educators and youth workers a useful way to talk about strengths that matter beyond qualifications. Young people can use its simple competence descriptions as prompts to reflect on what they already do well and what they would like to develop. https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/scientific-activities/key-competences-lifelong-learning/lifecomp_en

LifeComp into Action: Teaching Life Skills in the Classroom and Beyond. This practical European Commission guide translates LifeComp into learner-centred educational practice. It offers teaching principles, guidance for developing individual competences and 16 research-informed teaching strategies. Teachers, trainers and youth workers can draw on it to design sessions on handling uncertainty, setting goals, collaboration and learning from setbacks, adapting activities to the age and needs of their group. https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC130003

Youthpass - Valued by You, Valued by Others. This free handbook, published through European youth-work cooperation, is especially useful for recognising learning outside classrooms. Its downloadable reflection and self-assessment activities include "Connecting the Dots", "Name Your Competences" and "Dream Job". Facilitators can use them in workshops or mentoring conversations; young people can identify skills gained through volunteering, projects and everyday life, and practise explaining those skills to others. https://www.youthpass.eu/en/publications/valuedbyyou/

Europass - European Learning and Career Management Tools. Europass is a free European Commission platform for recording skills, experiences, interests and qualifications. Young people can build a personal profile, document volunteering and informal experiences, prepare a CV and cover letter, and explore the next steps in learning or work. A useful group exercise is to begin with real experiences—organising an event, caring for someone or leading a team—and translate them into skills before writing a CV. https://europass.europa.eu/en/what-europass

Eurodesk - Opportunity Finder. Eurodesk's searchable Opportunity Finder brings together verified international opportunities for young people, including scholarships, youth exchanges, volunteering, internships, training and grants. Filters help narrow the options by interests and other practical criteria. Young people can compare several opportunities rather than jump at the first one; educators can turn the search into an activity on evaluating options, entry conditions, costs, deadlines and personal motivation. https://programmes.eurodesk.eu/en

European Youth Portal - Opportunities and European Solidarity Corps. The European Youth Portal offers youth-friendly information about studying, volunteering, working and taking part in civic life across Europe. Its European Solidarity Corps pages explain supported volunteering opportunities and how to register. Youth workers can use the portal for guided exploration of possible pathways; young people can investigate whether a volunteer experience might help them test an interest, gain confidence or develop new skills before making a longer-term decision. https://youth.europa.eu/about-us_en

Euroguidance Network - Guidance Resources and Good Practices. The Euroguidance Network connects European educational and career-guidance practitioners. Its resource collection includes publications, practical examples, videos and material on mobility and transitions. It is particularly useful for teachers, youth workers and counsellors supporting young people who are unsure what comes after school or training, or who want to consider options in another country. It also offers ideas for guidance conversations rather than treating career choice as a one-off test. https://euroguidance.eu/resources

European Youth Information and Counselling Agency (ERYICA) - European Youth Information Charter. ERYICA supports reliable, accessible and independent youth information services across Europe. Its European Youth Information Charter sets out quality principles and links to an implementation guide with examples of practice. For youth workers and educators, it is a useful reminder that good decision support means presenting trustworthy, understandable options without steering a young person toward someone else's preferred choice. Young people can use it to recognise what quality information and advice should look like. https://www.eryica.org/charter

European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO). ESCO is a free multilingual European catalogue of occupations and the skills associated with them. Young people can explore an unfamiliar job title, see what it typically involves and discover skills that connect different occupations. In a workshop, participants can choose two very different jobs and compare their skill profiles, then reflect on which skills they already have and which they might enjoy developing. It is a tool for exploration, not a test that selects a career for someone. https://esco.ec.europa.eu/en/classification

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) - Skills Intelligence. Cedefop's Skills Intelligence portal brings together visualisations and evidence about employment, occupations and changing skills needs in Europe. It can help older young people and educators look beyond stereotypes or anecdotes about which jobs have a future. Guidance practitioners can combine its labour-market evidence with personal interests and values, emphasising that forecasts are one input into a decision—not a prediction of any individual's future. https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/skills-intelligence

EURES - European Employment Services. For young adults considering work in another European country, EURES provides information on job opportunities, living and working conditions, and access to advisers. Its services also connect jobseekers with CV support and cross-border employment events. Youth workers and guidance professionals can signpost young people who are ready to research practical employment options, while also encouraging them to check qualifications, language requirements and the realities of relocation. https://eures.europa.eu/jobseekers_en