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# A Curriculum for Career Development of Educational Staff

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A curriculum is an intellectual output 2 (102) of the project. The curriculum consists of 5 modules that cover 21 basic career competences, supporting individuals in their career management. The aims, topics and expected outcomes are described for each module and, at the end of the document, recommendations for trainers are listed. The curriculum could be useful for all of those in the educational field who want to purposely develop their career competences. It specifically addresses headteachers as leaders who are partly responsible for the career development of educational staff members.

*Keywords:* educational staff, career, career guidance, career development, career competences, curriculum

## Introduction

A curriculum for the career development of educational staff is one of the intellectual results of the Erasmus+ project LeadCa-

reer taking place from 2015 to 2017 in close partnership between Slovenia, Croatia and Austria. The idea of designing a curriculum for educational staff members arose from the analysis of recent national and international policy papers, other documents and practice related to life-long learning career guidance. The project group noted, and wanted to draw attention to, the importance of career development competences for educational staff members, as there are several indicators showing that training for educational staff career development has been neglected in most countries. 21 basic career competences supporting individuals in their career management have been assembled in the curriculum. It is intended for all those individuals in the educational field who want to purposely develop their career competences. It specifically addresses headteachers as leaders who are partly responsible for the career development of educational staff members. We believe that the educational staff who are well-educated and well-trained in career development are, in turn, going to be able to develop students' career competences, as they are the ones who will be facing difficult and important career decisions and transitions in their careers.

The curriculum consists of 5 modules. The aims, topics and expected outcomes are described for all five of them and, at the end of the document, recommendations for trainers are listed. The design of the curriculum is based on the most significant deficits that have been detected after analysing a questionnaire that asked questions in different fields of career competences (*basic knowledge, self-potential, self-leadership strategies and enactment*). This questionnaire was given to teachers (as potential participants) in three different countries. It was then agreed to use the above-mentioned fields of competences as a framework for the design of the curriculum. Module 5, *My Learning Process*, was added to provide time for reflection on the learning process and get feedback from the participants. Furthermore, the fields of competences were important for a more detailed description of the modules. A common scheme for the description of all modules was therefore developed. All modules include the following items: descriptions, aims, topics and the expected outcomes of learning. For a substantive elaboration of the curriculum, the different career competences within the fields were clustered and for each cluster categories were identified. Those categories represent the structure of each module in the form of different topics. The last stage of the curriculum design was the validation and review.

## Aims, Topics, Expected Outcomes

The title of the curriculum is *I Am a Teacher – I Create My Career*. It is structured around basic career competences, arranged in four clusters: basic knowledge, self-potential, self-leadership, and enactment. At the beginning of the project, 40 important career competences were used as a starting point for the design of the questionnaire, the purpose of which was to measure the extent to which the teachers had already developed these competences. In the process of designing the curriculum, this set of competences was reconsidered by the project members again; some of these competences were rewritten in a more user-friendly language while others, if too similar to stand on their own, were combined into one. The curriculum covers 21 career competences for the 21st century (table 1).

## The Curriculum

The curriculum is divided into five different modules as presented below. The curriculum is designed to be carried out in a timespan of five days. Approximately eight hours of work are foreseen for each module. It is understood that the various modules can also be taught individually over a longer period of time. The described curriculum is to be seen as a proposal and potential framework for training. It is the trainer who is responsible for the methodological and didactical implementation of classes. As a support sample, educational materials were developed for each module and can be used as a guideline in carrying out different modules (see Intellectual Output No. 3 for details).

The content of the curriculum is divided into five modules, as explained below. Each module follows an identical structure: the title of the module, an overall description, aims, the characterization of each of its three topics (Module 5 only has two topics) and expected outcomes.

The title of the first module is *My Career – My Dream*, the second *I Am the Leader of My Career*, the third is called *My Personal Mastery*, the fourth *I Plan My Career* and the fifth *My Learning Process*.

### **Module 1: My Career – My Dream**

*Description.* Module 1 provides an introduction to the topic in general, an overview of the structure of the curriculum, and seeks a

TABLE 1 Career Competences for the 21st Century

Module	Career competences
1 Basic knowledge	<p>I understand the recent theories and concepts of career development and their relation to local, national and global changes.</p> <p>I understand the different segments of the labour market and their influence on conducting my career development.</p> <p>I understand the meaning and the importance of my career development for my professional and personal life.</p>
2 Self-potential	<p>I improve and enrich my professionalism.</p> <p>I interact confidently and effectively with others to build networks.</p> <p>I develop a range of scenarios for my preferred future.</p> <p>I make effective career decisions.</p> <p>I follow my career path.</p> <p>I manage changes.</p>
3 Self-leadership strategies	<p>I am aware of how I change and grow throughout life.</p> <p>I am aware of my skills, strengths and achievements.</p> <p>I reflect on my needs, aspirations and opportunities.</p> <p>I continually reassess my goals, values, interests and career decisions.</p> <p>I learn from my own experiences, formal and informal learning opportunities to inform and support my career choices.</p>
4 Enactment	<p>I am able to set short-term and long-term goals for my career.</p> <p>I am able to develop strategies to reach short-term and long-term goals.</p> <p>I am able to acquire information that helps me in my attempt at changing jobs.</p> <p>I am able to manage the whole process of finding, applying for and getting a job.</p> <p>I am confident, resilient and able to learn when things do not go well or as expected.</p> <p>I am aware of what might interfere with my goals, and I am able to develop strategies to overcome these barriers.</p> <p>I use/am confident about using different (self-) assessment/(self-)evaluation tools and techniques.</p>
5 Reflection on all competences	<p>I reflect on my learning path through the lense of the 21 competences from the previous four modules. This enables and motivates me to consider potential future steps for my career path and take them.</p> <p>The last part of this module is dedicated to the evaluation of the curriculum.</p>

deeper understanding of the present situation of participants' careers. At the beginning of this module, the participants acquire general information about the curriculum regarding the outlines of the programme and the outcomes that the participants will achieve. Within this module, the focus is on 'me' and 'my career' over the course of time. This means reflection on one's career, goals, decisions and future plans.

*Aims.* The aims of the module are:

- to introduce participants to the curriculum;
- to enable participants to reflect on their career path;

- to encourage participants to reflect on their career competences and career management skills;
- to create a career vision.

*Topic 1: Introduction.* The curriculum consists of 5 modules. In this introductory phase, the participants focus on the overview of the general aims of these modules. The main methods and techniques are presented. At the beginning, the participants are encouraged to express their expectations, needs and wishes regarding their careers. Opportunities for the transfer of acquired knowledge/skills are also discussed.

*Topic 2: My Career Path.* Within this topic, the participants reflect on their career path. The development and improvement of personal career planning skills are examined. This means reflection on one's own career, participants' motivation, dreams and future. Participants are encouraged to address the changes and goals of their future career.

*Topic 3: Career Competences and Career Management Skills.* The main purpose of this topic is to self-assess one's own career management competences. Strategies are introduced to help the participants become aware of the level of their own career competences and career management skills. They are encouraged to reflect on these in order to assess which one should be developed and worked on. This is a necessary prerequisite for starting a career planning process.

*Expected Outcomes.* After the completion of the module, the participants will be more:

- connected to their career vision;
- informed on the different modules of the curriculum as an overview;
- knowledgeable about their career path;
- aware of their career competences and career management skills.

### ***Module 2: I Am the Leader of My Career***

*Description.* This module introduces the participants to the basics of career guidance and career management skills. Relevant theoretical models are presented, basic terminology is introduced and applicable skills for the 21st century career management are presented. Participants are informed about the relevant career

guidance policies and the labour market. The participants relate the acquired knowledge to their own career development.

*Aims.* The aims of the module are:

- to obtain a basic knowledge of career management skills;
- to be informed about national policies regarding career guidance and the labour market;
- to assess their career management skills;
- to be able to relate personal career development to career management skills;
- to build on the future directions.

*Topic 1: Basics of Career Management Skills.* The main aim of the first topic is to familiarise the participants with the basics of career management skills. They get to understand different contemporary theories, learn about the best examples of practice and reflect on their career management skills. They are thereby actively involved in the process of improving their career management skills.

*Topic 2: National Policies, Strategies and Labour Market.* The main aim of this topic is to inform participants about national policies regarding career guidance and labour market. Participants reflect on the received information and compare it to the current state of their careers.

*Topic 3: My Career Development in Relation to Career Management Skills.* The aim of the third topic is to connect the knowledge of career management, national policies and current labour market and compare it with the state of participants' careers. Participants identify the gap between the current state of their management skills compared to its preferred future state and build on the steps, which leads towards future directions in one's career path.

*Expected Outcomes.* After the completion of the module, the participants will be more:

- aware of the meaning, notions and concepts of career management skills;
- informed about national policies and labour market;
- have a basic knowledge of the majority of relevant theories and concepts in career guidance and management;
- confident to build on the future career directions.

### ***Module 3: My Personal Mastery***

*Description.* Modul 3 aims to empower the participants in leading their career development. Participants identify values, skills and goals in relation to their career development, then compare and contrast them with the findings of the self-analysis. They use these insights to enhance their future career path.

*Aims.* The aims of the module are:

- to identify and analyse the most influencing factors in career development;
- to link the identified factors to career competences;
- to get familiarised with tools and techniques for the identification of influencing factors in career planning.

*Topic 1: Identifying Factors That Influence My Career.* The main aim of this topic is to make the participants aware of the factors that influence their career.

The four biggest influencing factors, i.e. the participants' personal characteristics (e.g. values, strengths, expectations), the participants' immediate surroundings related to family and friends and significant others, the participants' professional surroundings as well as the participants' broader social environment (national, international) will be addressed.

*Topic 2: Assessing the Influencing Factors.* The main aim of this topic is to enable the participants to use techniques and tools for assessing, identifying and analysing their values and skills in relation to the four biggest influencing factors.

*Topic 3: Managing Change and Decision-Making in My Career.* The main focus of this topic is on the evaluation of participants' goal achievement in order to make changes. The second focus is to reflect upon participants' past career decisions, transition factors and goals setting.

*Expected Outcomes.* After the completion of the module, the participants will be more:

- aware of the influencing factors in relation to identified career competences;
- confident in career decision and change making;
- aware of the use of tools and techniques for the identification of the influencing factors in career planning.



### ***Module 4: I Plan My Career***

*Description.* Module 4 is based on the previous modules. Participants work with current concepts of career guidance. The focus is on planning a specific career, while keeping work-life balance in mind. Module 4 also deals with different activities in relation to a potential career transition.

*Aims.* The aims of the module are:

- to help participants design and implement their own career decisions;
- to foster a resilient attitude towards unexpected events;
- to show a variety of strategies;
- to introduce the participants to job application and assessment tools and techniques.

*Topic 1: Career Planning 'Level 2.'* This part of the module encourages participants to set medium and long term goals for their career. In order to achieve them, different strategies are identified that fit the participants' wishes, expectations and attitudes. Potential obstacles are identified, analysed, and measurements are discussed.

*Topic 2: Using Skills.* Participants are introduced to a broad variety of possibilities available in case they want to change or move on with their career. Strategies like acquiring information, networking or application processes are shared. The participants also question and evaluate possible decisions and consequences that have to be made in and/or result from the course of this decision-making process. The development of a resilient attitude towards failure or unexpected events is also fostered.

*Expected Outcomes.* After the completion of the module, the participants will be better:

- able to set short-term and long-term goals;
- able to develop strategies and make decisions to reach these goals;
- skilled in managing a successful application/transition process;
- skilled in using self-evaluation and self-assessment tools;
- able to deal with the unexpected and be resilient.

### ***Module 5: My Learning Process***

*Description.* The main aim of the module is to evaluate participants' learning path throughout the curriculum and their possible transfer of knowledge and skills.

*Aims.* The aims of the module are:

- to reflect on and assess the participants' learning process in the curriculum;
- to identify possible action steps and future support to develop colleagues' and students' career management skills;
- to evaluate the curriculum.

*Topic 1: My Learning Path.* Participants reflect and assess the learning process. They analyse the knowledge they have gained and skills related to career development, in order to identify potential future career scenarios.

*Topic 2: The Role of the Headteacher.* The role of the headteacher (expectations, experiences, best practices, suggestions, influences, etc. in participants' career development) is looked at.

*Topic 3: Use of Career Knowledge and Skills.* Participants reflect upon the opportunities of transferring the career knowledge and skills they have gained to their colleagues and students. The participants share ideas on how colleagues and students can be supported in their career management skills.

*Topic 4: Evaluation of the Curriculum.* Participants evaluate the curriculum by using different approaches and techniques in order to improve the curriculum.

*Expected Outcomes.* After the completion of the module, the participants will be more:

- aware of their career learning process;
- confident in supporting colleagues and students in career development.

### **Recommendations**

This curriculum has been designed as a continuous process. This means that while the entire curriculum should be completed within a certain timeframe, the needs and availability of participants should be taken into account when planning the schedule. This training is not considered mandatory but instead intended as

a skill-enhancing programme that builds on the motivation and eagerness of the participants.

It is not only the participants who will benefit from the completion of this course. It will affect the entire educational community with all its stakeholders, from (preschool) teachers to headteachers, parents and students.

The curriculum was created with knowledge available in 2017. Since we are living in an ever-changing environment, the curriculum should also be constantly revised and amended. Its evaluation after the completion of the modules ensures this.

As a support to the curriculum, sample educational materials were developed and collected in Intellectual Output No. 3. The provided materials should be viewed as a guideline for curriculum implementation; however, the trainers should feel free to adapt this material to their professional needs.

Being a trainer of this curriculum requires a positive attitude towards career development and builds on previous knowledge, which could be acquired in a train-the-trainer programme.

### **Kurikul za karierni razvoj strokovnih delavcev v vzgoji in izobraževanju**

Kurikul ima obliko intelektualnih spoznanj 2 (1s2) projekta. Sestavlja ga pet modulov, ki zajemajo 21 osnovnih kariernih kompetenc, ki so v oporo posameznikom pri lastnem upravljanju kariere. Za vsak modul so opisani nameni, teme in pričakovani izidi, na koncu dokumenta pa so navedena še priporočila za vodje usposabljanj. Kurikul bi lahko bil koristen za vse na izobraževalnem področju, ki želijo namensko razvijati svoje karierne kompetence. Posebej se nanaša na ravnatelje kot vodje, soodgovorne za razvoj kariere strokovnih delavcev.

*Ključne besede:* strokovni delavci v vzgoji in izobraževanju, kariera, karierna orientacija, razvoj kariere, karierne kompetence, kurikul

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