Introduction to the project CURSOR

The project CURSOR- Crafting Career Roadmaps is a Strategic Partnership with the aim to tackle the issue of youth unemployment and social exclusion. The project offers youth workers an opportunity for professional development along with innovative tools to use in their work so as to support young people with fewer opportunities in Career Planning.

With CURSOR, the partners seek to enhance the international dimension of youth activities and promote high-quality and inclusive youth work.

Project identity

The project is co-funded by the EU Programme Erasmus+

Key Action: Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices.

Action: Field: Strategic Partnerships for youth.

Main objective: Development of Innovation.

Project Partners

The CURSOR consortium comprises 4 partners representing Cyprus, Ireland, Poland and Romania.

Cyprus Organisation for Sustainable Education and Active Learning – SEAL CYPRUS – Cyprus
SEAL CYPRUS is a non-profit organisation based in Nicosia, the ethnically divided capital of Cyprus. Our members are from both ethnic groups. Our activities include volunteer actions in social issues, cultural events, and educational programs. We are experienced in working with participatory methods and techniques of non- formal education. We use a wide range of innovative interactive educational methods to provide open and distance learning, non- formal education, e-learning and on the job training. We are working with individuals, non-profit organisations, and public sector entities.www.sealcyprus.org

Universitatea Din Pitesti – UPIT – Romania

University of Piteşti (UPIT) has over 10.000 students, 500 staffs and 6 faculties (www.upit.ro). UPIT areas: education/training; scientific/applicative research; guidance/counselling; professional orientation; international cooperation; publishing.Its staffs are accredited and have experience in EU projects. UPIT has specialised departments: Training Center, Teaching Staff Training Department, Centre for Sustainable Development Projects, International Cooperation Center, Research Centers, Centre of Higher Education Quality Assurance, Publishing House, etc.UPIT is member of European Universities Association (EUA), Danube Rectors' Conference (DRC), Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF), European Forum of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (EfVET), European Distance and E-Learning Network (EDEN). www.upit.ro

Tomorrow Sp. z.o.o. – Poland

Since 2008, Tomorrow links technology and innovation to provide their clients with unique multimedia solutions. Our experts craft bespoke solutions fit to the needs and high expectations of the market and users. Our company owns proprietary, well-tested technology, based on international standards, allowing us to create virtual environments, mobile apps, entire platforms or training simulators, used in business, industry, IT environments as well as education and culture. Tomorrow actively uses „gamification" systems – that is, introducing techniques and design typical for games in different contexts. Tomorrow's clients include Poland's largest organizations (500+), including financial organizations (banks, insurance companies), universities and NGOs, or state and local authorities. www.tomorrow.pro

Future In Perspective Limited – FIP – Ireland

Future In Perspective Limited is a private company working in the field of vocational training, adult education, youth development, e-learning, digital media and social inclusion. The company focuses its work in 6 main areas, namely; conducting research and analysis in the fields of education and business development; developing continuous professional development training resources for front-line youth workers, VET and adult education professionals; developing training to support workplace learning; designing evaluation and quality assurance frameworks; multi-media design and developing media rich learning resources; developing branding concepts and promotional campaigns for community and voluntary education providers to re-engage reluctant learners. www.fipl.eu

Introduction to the CURSOR Career Planning Resources

The partners in the project CURSOR have developed a full suite of innovative tools for youth workers who wish to support young people with fewer opportunities in Career Planning. These tools are educational resources for career planning that can be used in day-to-day youth work.

The project CURSOR has developed career planning resources and tools to be used by youth workers to support the young people to take control of their career. The resources have been developed based on a thorough needs analysis which was the initial stage of the project CURSOR. The needs analysis has been developed in parallel with a **Learning Outcomes Matrix**.
The resources are grouped in four themes:

SELF: Understanding your personality, interests and values
STRENGTHS: Know how to use your talents and personal qualities
HORIZONS: Visualise yourself in the world of work, training and learning
NETWORKS: Identify who can support you finding opportunities for education and work

The classification of the above themes has been inspired by the Career Management Skills (CMS) Framework of Scotland. If you wish to find out more on the CMS Framework, visit
https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/34749/career_management_skills_framework_scotland.pdf

The learning resources developed constitute a complete in-service training programme for the continuous professional development of front-line youth workers. With the use of these resources, the youth workers can support young people to acquire career planning skills and identify their career pathways.

Each learning resource has been produced in video format to support learning in a variety of different learning environments. The video has been uploaded on the E- learning portal of the project but also on Youtube. All the resources are available in all partner languages; Greek, English, Polish, and Romanian.
Six resources have been developed for each of the themes of Self, Strenghts, Horizons, and Networks; three of them being Introductory (I) and three of them being Advanced (A). The structure of the resources is as follows:

R1 Self 1 (I) - Work Values
R2 Self 2 (I) - My Self in Society
R3 Self 3 (I) - The Sense of Self
R4 Self 2 (A) - Self-knowledge Journal
R5 Self 5 (A) - Stress Management to Build Personal Resilience
R6 Self 6 (A) - The Social Self

R7 Strengths 1 (I) - Strengths Development Planner
R8 Strengths 2 (I) - Personal Timeline - Tracking my Achievement
R9 Strengths 3 (I) - Evaluate Your Strengths
R10 Strengths 4 (A) - Growth Mindset
R11 Strengths 5 (A) - Using my Strengths to Set Career Goals
R12 Strengths 6 (A) - Boost your career

R13 Horizons 1 (I) - Growth Tree
R14 Horizons 2 (I) - Identifying Transferrable Skills
R15 Horizons 3 (I) - Plan your career pathway
R16 Horizons 4 (A) - Personal Scenario Planning
R17 Horizons 5 (A) - Presenting Transferable Skills
R18 Horizons 6 (A) - Factors around planning career pathways

R19 Networks 1 (I) - Making Connections
R20 Networks 2 (I) - Developing your Elevator Pitch
R21 Networks 3 (I) - Networking - why to do it
R22 Networks 4 (A) - Social Networking Diary
R23 Networks 5 (A) - Building EQ for Career Success
R24 Networks 6 (A) - Networking - how to do it

For each of the above educational resources, the partners have developed additional educational material. This material constitutes the Handbook you are now holding in your hands or reading online.

For each of the resources, you can find the following material: Theoretical background, guidelines on how to use the resource and, references (in the cases where there are additional resources you can study).

The aim of the guidelines on how to use the resources is to ensure that front-line youth workers, youth leaders, youth volunteers and any other potential intermediaries are confident in using them to support young people in career planning.

Youth workers in online learning environments

The importance of the internet needs to be taken into account in youth work since these online tools are often the first stop for young people. As youth work adapts to new contexts, greater diversity of formats is required to reach wider audiences of young people; particularly those who usually do not take part in youth activities like the young people with fewer opportunities.

Youth workers today need to be prepared to guide the young people on how to navigate the internet with a critical mind. They need to guide them to harvest the opportunities the internet provides for learning and personal and professional development.

Some of the benefits of taking up online learning courses are:

LOWER COST
On the whole, most online classes are considerably less costly compared to the traditional classroom setting. There are no transportation, lodging, or meal expenses. Learning materials such as textbooks and manuals can also be made available digitally, which comes at a lesser or no cost to the learner. In the case of CURSOR, enrolment in the project e-learning platform is (and will remain) free of charge.

LEARNER'S PHYSICAL CONVENIENCE
An obvious benefit to online courses is accessibility. Learners don't need to leave their home and can take their course in a convenient way. This is particularly appealing for learners with disabilities, as their limitations present concerns that would arise in a more traditional learning

setting. The internet and the computer, the laptop, and the smartphone provide accessibility and visual and auditory impairments.

TIME FLEXIBILITY

Online classes remove the inconvenience of standard times scheduling by allowing learners to take their courses at their convenience. Online courses also minimise scheduling conflicts with personal responsibilities, such as work and family commitments by allowing learners to continue their courses at their own pace.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

It is important to understand that the internet gives the youth workers the opportunity to pursue professional development by attending online courses in relation to their occupation. The lack of opportunities for professional development for youth workers has been one of the main needs that have driven the design of the project CURSOR.

The partners' ambition is that the youth workers in their wider networks will guide the young people in their career planning with the help of the resources that have been developed by the project. It is important to mention here that all the resources we have created can help the users learn in a self-directed way.

There are four key stages to independent learning, known as self-directed learning: being ready to learn, setting learning goals, engaging in the learning process, and evaluating learning. The role of self-directedness is considered paramount in maintaining one's employability. We believe that with the project CURSOR, we have covered all the above mention stages. What's more, we have created the material and the structure to support self-directed learning in an online environment.

The online learning environment has been the fastest-growing educational context in the last decade (2010- 2020). For the design and the development of the online environment of the project CURSOR, the course management tool that has been chosen was eFront (https://www.efrontlearning.com/).

eFront has been chosen because it has the following characteristics: it is content friendly, it has an assessments engine with native support for multiple types of questions, quizzes, and tests with reporting on all results, and it supports certification of learning. Moreover, the learners can access the CURSOR e-learning platform from their smartphones.