

## Basic Groundwork Focus Groups Summary

### Participants

The Focus Groups were conducted in:

Country	Partner	Total	Males	Females	Age Range
Malta	Agenzija Zghazagh	19	9	10	16-21
Spain	ADESEMA	8	4	4	21-25
Austria	Lebenshilfe	15	14	1	16-25
Poland	Społeczna Akademia Nauk	5	0	5	17-23
Germany	Stephansstift	10	3	7	18-25

### Duration

All focus groups took a minimum of 9 hours split into two to five sessions as determined by each partner.

### Participants' Background

The profile of young people participating in the focus groups was quite varied across the different countries, including young people from high risk groups such as migrant youth, young people with disabilities, students in vocational training and post-secondary education, university students as well as young people in employment.

### Content of Workshops

From the workshop minutes it seems that the content of the focus groups sessions were adapted by each partner to better suit the particular group of participants they were working with. Engagement of young people in the sessions seems to have been very good with active involvement in discussions and tasks set.



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## Reasons for becoming NEETs

Dropping out of school/lack of education

Having physical or mental health problems

Experiencing discrimination

Social or personal problems

Addictive behaviours

Criminal records

Lack of financial means

Lack of access to employment opportunities

Lack of skills

Economic Crises and lack of job opportunities

## Recommendations and Suggestions

Universities should provide more practical placements for young people during their courses. This may include opportunity for students to do a summer job in the same sector to prepare them better for employment.

To increase availability of start-up schemes to help young people to have/create their own business.

To introduce Entrepreneurship as an optional subject in secondary schools.

To conduct a training course or a conference to provide career advisors and other professionals with information on existent services and educational programmes available to young people of school leaving age.

Introduce job shadowing experiences as compulsory rather than optional for all secondary schools.

Increased career orientation and more internship opportunities.

Use coaching with youth at risk of social exclusion, as they have to work on self-knowledge, and be self-aware of their potential, setting aside their own limitations and barriers. It should be open, flexible and adaptable to individual circumstances. Young people need support in putting a professional plan into practice.

Provide additional information and skills in order to enable youth to be more effective peer leaders.

Skills that youth at risk should learn or work on In order of relevance, are:

Self-esteem, and they also highlighted that this could be also to cover the lack of love and affection	Self-motivation and positive attitude, as you receive what you project	Responsibility for their actions and their own life
Communication skills	Decision making	Learning to learn
Team work		

Involvement of friends and/or family whose support is seen as necessary if one encounters problems or has plans that might deviate from the norm.

Youth Coaching should be expanded to a comprehensive school coaching that includes not only job planning support, but also considers the entire situation of the young person (including problems in school and in the family as well as social and financial problems) and should occur early on.

Young people need more information about existing support systems and measures. In this context, they see it as beneficial to have an information and service center for all their concerns which would subsequently refer them to the pertinent institutions.

## Where and how can youth at risk be reached?

The best way to reach youth at social risk exclusion is to be with them and meet them in the social areas and public places they hang out in: school, through friends, youth leisure areas such as café's and bars, youth centres, neighbourhoods, residential groups, juvenile courts, on the streets.

Fliers should be addressed to young people, not to families, as youth are the ones who have the motivation/necessity to participate in these kind of programmes.

Fliers could include an invitation to young people to participate in a workshop to provide more information about the information given in the flier.

Dissemination should have the aim to reach those young people with more barriers to participate, but also to those more open or those who never think about it.

Conduct a short presentation for young people at risk and their parents attending secondary presentation which includes information on all educational post-secondary programmes. Young people attending different educational programmes will be given five minutes to speak about their experience.

Conduct a career fair in a public place. Employers, university students' organisations along with the Public Employment Service could be involved. Promotional material could be distributed in secondary and post-secondary schools. A music stage could be set up to attract more young people to the event.

Use financial rewards, freebies, provide refreshments, intervention of celebrities in order to attract young people who are hard to reach.

Use fun and modern outreach activities to gain young people's attention such as flash mobs, theatre, dance or song and videos as well as sharing of personal experiences.