



Youth Employability Competences

# Developing employability competences

## Background

Four of the partners of the YEC project organised and ran Advisory Board sessions with employers and young people. They used a number of different methods and tools within the meetings, varying the content and supporting the development of skills and competencies useful in the world of work.

## Competencies

- Discussions linked to the project supported and developed the understanding of both employers and young people as to which competences are important and expected in the labour market and how these can be developed outside of the job market.
- Employers and young people connecting and exchanging experiences allowed the young people to learn which attitudes and approaches are valued by the employers and how job seekers can prove them. It also helped them understand what are the "deal breakers" in the employment process and why soft skills are equally important in a given position as hard skills and knowledge. These interactions also helped the young people to practice interacting in a more formal / professional way with adults that they do not know.
- Discussion around competencies helped the young people to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses, with group discussions supporting ideas for enhancement where necessary.
- More generally during the meetings participants were encouraged to express their opinions which they reported helped build motivation, confidence, a sense of worth and communication skills. Facilitators noted increased levels of independence and autonomy amongst participants as the project progressed. Working on activities in a group supported their skills in working with others.
- Facilitators also noted an improved ability of members to articulate what they felt were the needs of young people in relation to employability competences
- Members of the youth advisory board were given a written reference and paragraph to include in their CV outlining their involvement in the project which they listed under voluntary work experience. Participants reported that this was hugely beneficial to them and they used their experiences as a point of conversation at job interviews.
- Wellness including physical and mental health was openly discussed within the group, initially in relation to the world of work but then broadening to include other life situations
- Using the modules of the project as discussion topics meant that some of the less well explored competencies such as work place discrimination were greater understood

