

International Expert Conference on Digitalisation including AI as a Challenge for Vocational Education and Entrepreneurship Education

As part of the EU project Career 4.0, an international research team from the Institute of Work Sciences at the Ruhr University of Bochum worked on an innovative learning concept to promote entrepreneurial and digital skills to prepare young people even better than before for the labour market. A conference with experts from nine different EU countries will take place on 24th and 25th of January 2022.

The project, funded by the European Union under the Erasmus plus - Strategic Partnerships programme, aims to teach entrepreneurial and digital skills across national borders. Renowned experts from home and abroad will take part in the expert workshop, which will be conducted online. Among them: Prof. Dr. Dirk Ifenthaler (Chair of Economic and Business Education, Learning, Design and Technology, Universität Mannheim), PD Dr Tobias Kämpf (Institute for Social Science Research e.V. (ISF), Munich), Prof. Dr. Kantola, Professor (Mechanical engineering, University of Turku, Finland), Mr. Christoph Krause (Digital Crafts Competence Centre of the Koblenz Chamber of Crafts), Dr. Benjamin Paaßen (Team Prof. Dr Niels Pinkwart, German Research Center for Artificial Intelligence (DFKI)), Prof. Pitsoulis (Institute for Business Administration and Business Informatics, University of Hildesheim) and Prof. Dr. Ulrich Braukmann (Chair of Business Education, Start-up Education and Start-up Didactics; Institute for Start-up and Innovation Research (IGIF) University of Wuppertal).

The welcoming at the conference will be given by Prof. Freitag Prorector for Teaching and Studies at the Ruhr University Bochum. Experts from at least nine EU countries are taking part in the conference, including Hungary, Spain, Austria, the Netherlands, Italy, Greece, Finland, Germany and Bulgaria.

- - Successful establishment of a learning platform

The EU project "Career 4.0" deals with the promotion of entrepreneurial and digital skills of young people in Europe and builds on the two previous three-year EU projects "Job Developer" and "Enterprise+". The latter was awarded as a best practice project by the EU Commission based on 180 project ideas in three years.

Through the use of IT and AI tools, the potential of the learning platform is to be expanded in the future in order to enable effective and individualised learning support for young people and their learning companions through constructive feedback and personalised learning paths. In particular, this involves agile learning methods, learning analytics, adaptive learning systems and intelligent CBR recommendation systems.

- Intention of the expert workshop

The following objectives are pursued within the expert conference:

- Presentation of the results and successes in the "Career 4.0" project and their integration into the existing national and regional strategies for the promotion of "Entrepreneurship Education" and digital vocational education and training as well as into the existing qualification concepts and educational structures in the EU countries.

- Promoting the exchange of national and international experts in order to reflect on the results and discuss challenges that have arisen as well as optimisation potentials, e.g. in the application of IT-supported digital solutions ("lessons learned").
- Development of regional, national and European strategies for the dissemination and sustainable use of the project results after the end of the project (development of a business model for the learning platform, etc.).
- Establishment of the European network in the field of "Digitalisation in Vocational Education and Training" and "Entrepreneurship Education".

- Holistic learning concept with agile management methods

The learning platform has already been used in the six EU countries Bulgaria, Hungary, Spain, Greece, Italy and Germany. In total, over 90 mentees and over 30 mentors participated in the activities in all EU countries. From some countries, young adults who had taken a specific school subject (entrepreneurship) participated, from other countries, students among others participated and from Germany, apprentices and trainees participated. The learning facilitators had different roles, including career counsellors, psychologists, educators, business planning mentors, management consultants, teachers, lecturers and managers.

The user-friendliness of the learning platform, learning contents and learning tasks as well as personal experiences with digital forms of learning were evaluated in advance by 46 participants (12 learning guides and 25 mentees). It became clear that the learning platform, including the corresponding agile learning concept, was met with great acceptance among the users.

The project's learning concept uses methods of agile management and combines established best practices from different countries into one. Current topics are addressed, for example through megatrends, and individual learning goals of the young people or mentees are pursued with the help of mentors. The concept, which consists of four learning projects, focuses on an individual analysis of skills and work requirements and the Personal Development Plan. The aim is to match the strengths of the mentees with the skills expected by the labour market. Through distinctive feedback loops and regular adjustment of current, individual learning goals, participants can be helped to achieve their long-term learning goals.

The learning platform which was developed as part of the project helps to make this process more efficient by simplifying contact between mentors and mentees, effectively supporting feedback processes and enabling better quality management as well as collaborative and self-directed learning.

- Self-learning modules as a certification programme

Within the learning concept, the project provides self-learning materials for mentors and learning guides, among others. The topics of the self-learning material are, for example: Design Thinking, giving constructive feedback, agile project management in the digital working world and self-organisation as well as communication management and ways in the age of digitalisation. Through this certification programme, further training for the mentors can be offered in addition to the support for the mentees.

- Project team

In addition to the Institute of Work Science at the Ruhr University of Bochum, the University of Milano-Bicocca in Italy (working closely with Stanford University, California USA on the topic of "Design Thinking") and the Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Hungary (Pécs) and Bulgaria (Garbovo) are involved as partners. In addition, a renowned IT company (Cytech; spin-off from the University of

Heraklion, Crete) and a management consultancy from Greece as well as a business development organisation in Spain closely linked to the University of Oviedo are partners.

For further information, please contact:

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Clicked on

Website of the Career 4.0 project
<https://career4.eu/>

Access to the learning platform of the Career 4.0 project
<https://app.career4.eu>