



# Summary National Report

Ireland

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## IRELAND



## Traditions and understanding of Symbols

Symbols are a rich part of cultural life in Ireland, a tradition which can be traced back to 8000BC. The appearance of emblems such as the Harp or Claddagh Ring are both examples of the various ways in which symbols from previous generations continue to be used within modern Irish society.

Psychoanalysis, developed by Freud, details the importance of events while young in impacting on the human condition, as well as examining the role of the conscious versus unconscious. Psychoanalysis was introduced to Ireland in the 1980's but is not widely used and has had minor cultural impacts.

The use of symbols in career guidance practice in Ireland is similarly limited in Ireland. The SymfoS project represents an exciting opportunity to introduce an innovative method to work with young people who present with difficulty when accessing the labour market.

## Our primary target group of young people

In Ireland we aim to work with young people aged 15-24 years who face barriers when trying to entering into the labour market. These young people could be low skilled, early school leavers, NEET young people. We will engage them through the guidance practitioners in our organisation working with clients who fit the criteria. We will also link with our extensive network of local youth organisations in order for them to refer appropriate young people to the programme.

## Similar methods and possible Synergies

The Ballymun Jobs Centre currently utilizes an extensive profiling assessment when establishing the needs of clients. This allows the guidance practitioners to tailor the use of specialised methods with the young person to address their specific barriers, whether through intensive client centred career guidance process and developing action plans, referring them to counselling, personal development courses/programmes or basic skills training etc.

Peer Buddy Support Programmes are not used in a formalised way in Ireland but there have been some successful elements of the model apparent in the Ballyrunners programme. The programme highlighted the importance of peer encouragement for young people and underscores the potential for a Peer Buddy Support Programme to work very well in a guidance setting.

## Validation of the SymfoS Learning Outcomes

Léargas, a not for profit organisation, is the national contact for ECVET in Ireland. It is responsible for the cooperation between national and international partners in education and training programmes. Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) are responsible for the validation of all learning activities and this is mapped onto the National Qualifications Framework (NFQ), creating a comparable listing of qualifications earned in a variety of contexts. The NFQ system has also been designed to be compatible with ECVET. Gaining validation for a vocational programme through this system can be very expensive and time consuming and so it is felt that it would be preferable to incorporate the SymfoS project into an already accredited guidance training course.

A systematic validation of learning outside of formal education settings is a goal of Europe at the moment. This is currently referred to in Ireland as Recognition of Prior Learning. It is facilitated through QQI but can be a very tedious process to go through, requiring extensive evidence of learning. Europass is not overly popular in Ireland at the moment but has potential to be a useful forum to collect details of the informal and formal learning of clients taking part in the project. Similarly Youthpass in Ireland has some limitations. It would be advised that a full assessment of its impact be conducted and presented to policy makers as a suggestion for inclusion when implementing the Youth Guarantee in Ireland.

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