

Individual pathways for NEETs in cross-professional settings – a didactic model

Background and aim

This paper outlines a generic model for designing individual pathways for NEETs in a cross-professional context, supported by close contact persons ('scouts').

The term "NEET" refers to young people who are neither in education, nor employment or training. They typically struggle with a complexity of problems such as personal and/or social difficulties, psychological diagnoses, abuse, drugs, crime or lack of basic educational skills. Their difficulties typically occur in combination with each other.

The generic model is an overview of how professionals can work, preferably together, with planning, evaluating and adjusting individual pathways for NEETs in a cross-professional context. The NEETs follow individual pathways towards vocational maturity to achieve self-sufficiency and a life they desire.

Individual pathways are the procedural development process created in close collaboration between NEETs and their current contact person(s). That is, the development the young person must go through to approach vocational maturity. This process is continually evaluated and adjusted.

Collaboration takes also place between the different professionals and their organizations in the context around the NEET.

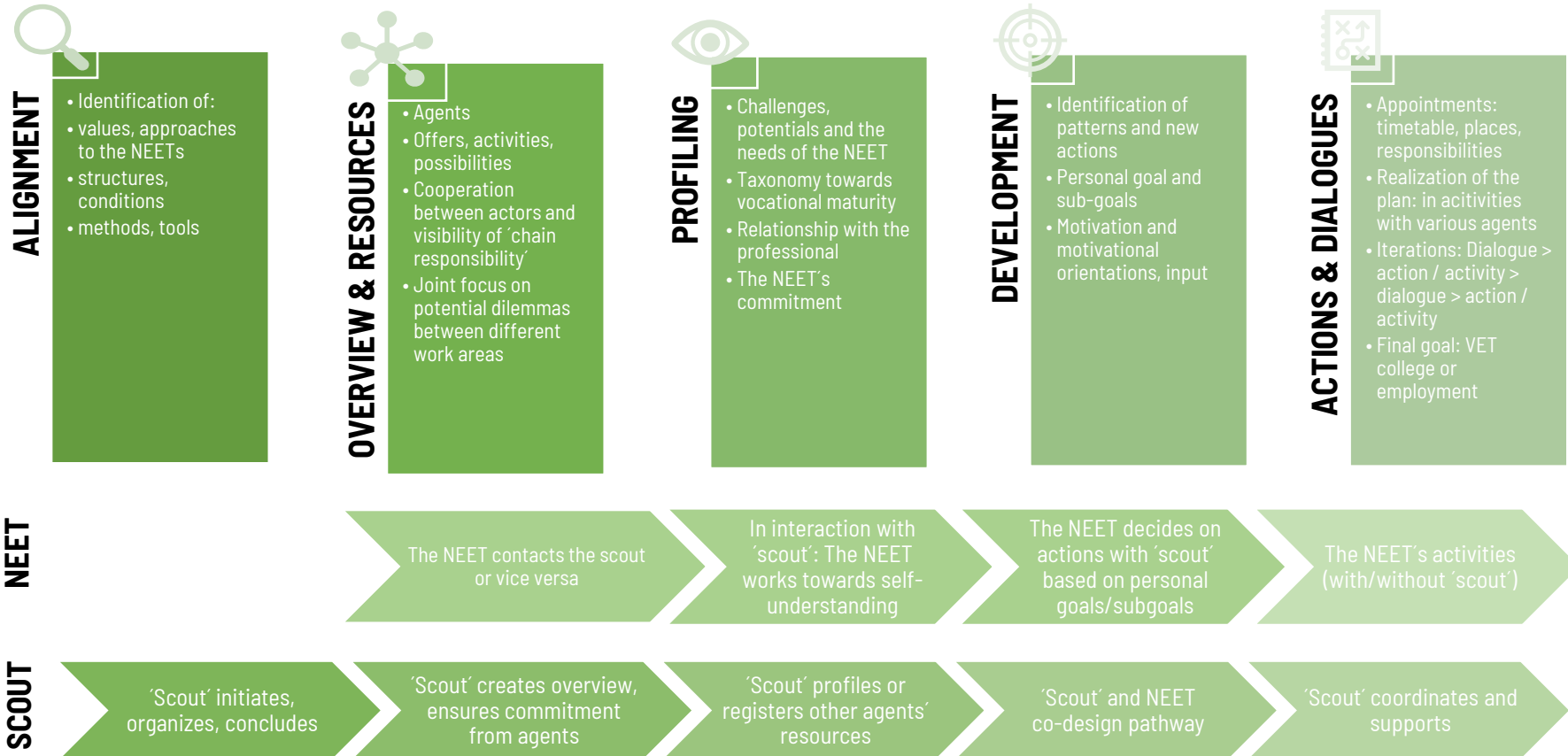
A 'scout' is a close and consistent contact person for the NEET, during the phases of their pathways as well as during transitions. The scout profile combines two roles; that of organizational coordinator and that of personal counsellor. The scout can perform both of these roles or the role of scout can be divided among several coordinated professionals, depending on local implementation and the individual needs of the NEET.

The team behind the model and its levels

The generic model was co-developed by the Danish partner team of Youth in transition; in particular the Youth Counseling Center, UU Kolding, the national body for education guidance and youth guidance, EUK/KL, and consultants from Moeve aps, with contributions from the project partner organizations in Iceland and Slovenia. Hamburg University delivered quality assurance.

The European generic model has inspired the construction of national didactic models in Denmark, Slovenia and Iceland. In Denmark, 11 municipalities practice the didactic or parts of it, each of them in their own local version. The local version of the Southern Danish municipality Kolding will be implemented in autumn 2020 and will be publicly available.

The design of individual pathways for and with NEETs in a cross-professional context, facilitated by scouts



The elements of the model

The first part of the model focuses on the professionals' preparation of their joint work with the NEETs. The columns of the model have a logical order: Alignment > overview & resources > profiling > development > actions & dialogues.

However, the second part of the model will often take place as a circular process with several iterations and phases of "dialogue > action > activity".

The final goal is that the NEETs attain a high degree of educational and vocational maturity that empowers them to manage attaining an education or independently manage being in a job.

Interaction between the professionals

Alignment The professionals identify and reflect on their approaches and their attitudes to NEETs, in order to consciously choose methods for working with NEETs. The purpose is to reflect on local practice and to continually developing it.

Overview and resources

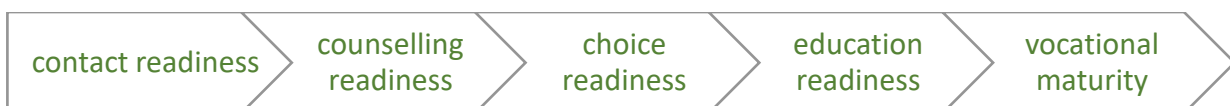
A prerequisite for successful cross-professional work with NEETs is the professionals' mutual understanding of each other's approaches and perspectives, as well as the creation of a common language as a foundation for cross-professional cooperation. In addition, right activities at the right time with the NEETs must be chosen. Thus, knowledge of and overview of personal and organizational resources (actors), services and areas of cooperation within the organizations of the municipality, in other sectors and in civil society, is important. All in all, the 'chain responsibility' between these actors must be outlined, and commitment must be ensured.

Furthermore, a joint understanding of potential dilemmas - such as focusing on relationship work versus focusing on regulatory requirements - is necessary for diminishing barriers and increasing a mutual understanding of each other's perspectives.

Interaction with the NEETs

The second part of the model focuses on the professionals' interaction with the NEETs.

Profiling The next step in the model is the dialogue with the individual NEET. The professional creates a profile of the young person's life experiences, including school background, challenges and potentials as well as the young person's needs. In this process, the focus is also on the NEET developing a self-concept and working with it to enable a change of contra-productive patterns and to enable a focus on the dreams and desires of the NEET. In addition, it is essential that the professional focuses on forming a relationship with the NEET. The NEET becomes involved in his/her progression towards vocational maturity and the phases during this process. A taxonomy with indicators can be applied to monitor and support the process, in dialogue with other professionals and the NEETs themselves.



The professionals are aware that the individual progression will not necessarily be linear, not necessarily distinct in its separate phases, and not necessarily simultaneous with that of other young people. In other words, there can be skips, detours or overlaps, and the tempo of development will vary for each individual.

Individual development

Once a relationship has been formed and the NEET is working with his/her self-concept, the NEET and the professional start formulating goals and sub-goals as well as planning activities. It is important that this work is based on the NEET's own commitment and that these goals and sub-goals are formulated in collaboration between the professional and the NEET.

Goals and sub-goals should be supported by selected and well-chosen activities that can promote the young person's continuous development towards vocational maturity. In this process, activities such as multiple visits of companies or educational institutions can be relevant.

Actions and dialogues

The chosen goals, sub-goals and activities are included in an educational plan, which should be continually evaluated and adjusted if needed. Various actors are involved when relevant, and responsibilities are agreed upon.