



CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training

Guidance Support for Mid-life Career Transitions

Dr. Antje Barabasch (Cedefop)

ELGPN Meeting, Athens, 18.-19.2.2014

Career Transitions & Lifelong Learning

Mid-Career Changes

RESEARCH PAPER

Using the career compass: Learning for career and labour market transitions.



Low-Skilled

Narrative of career/ labour market related learning of low skilled workers

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/working-with-us/public-procurements/20697.aspx>

(End 31.12.2014)

Creating a Meaningful Working Life

Workplace Changes

New Competences



Changes in Career Direction

New Learning Needs



Sample (25 interviews per country)

- Age 35-44
- Completed upper-secondary education + IVET/CVET
- Reflect a range of different career and learning pathways
- Mix of employment status



Reflexive interview (Strootbants):

- Employment history, age, family, geographical mobility, educational/training path
- Reasons for relevant transitions
- Narrative self-evaluation of competencies and of their impact on transition dynamics
- Future outlook





Results from the Countries



Gendered Labour Market Transitions



Knowing our Rights



Negotiating Social Partnerships



Self-Construction of Identity



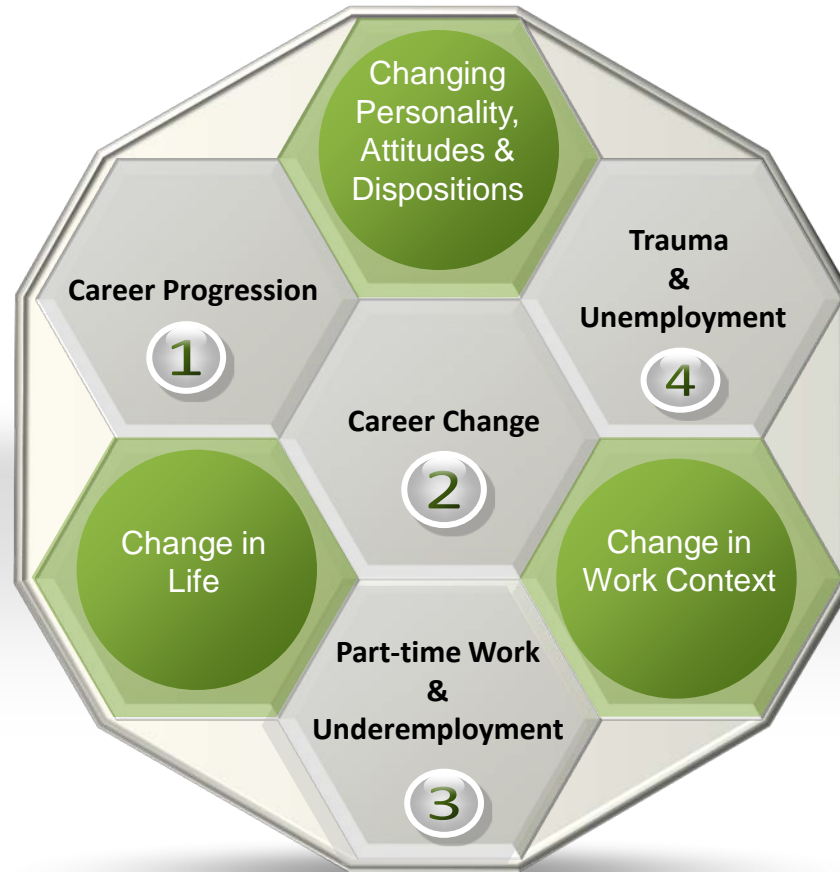
Education for Survival in Society



Emerging Themes

- Search to develop expertise/mastery
- Licenses to practice
- Barriers

1



- Strategy & luck
- Contextual shifts
- Structural constraints

2

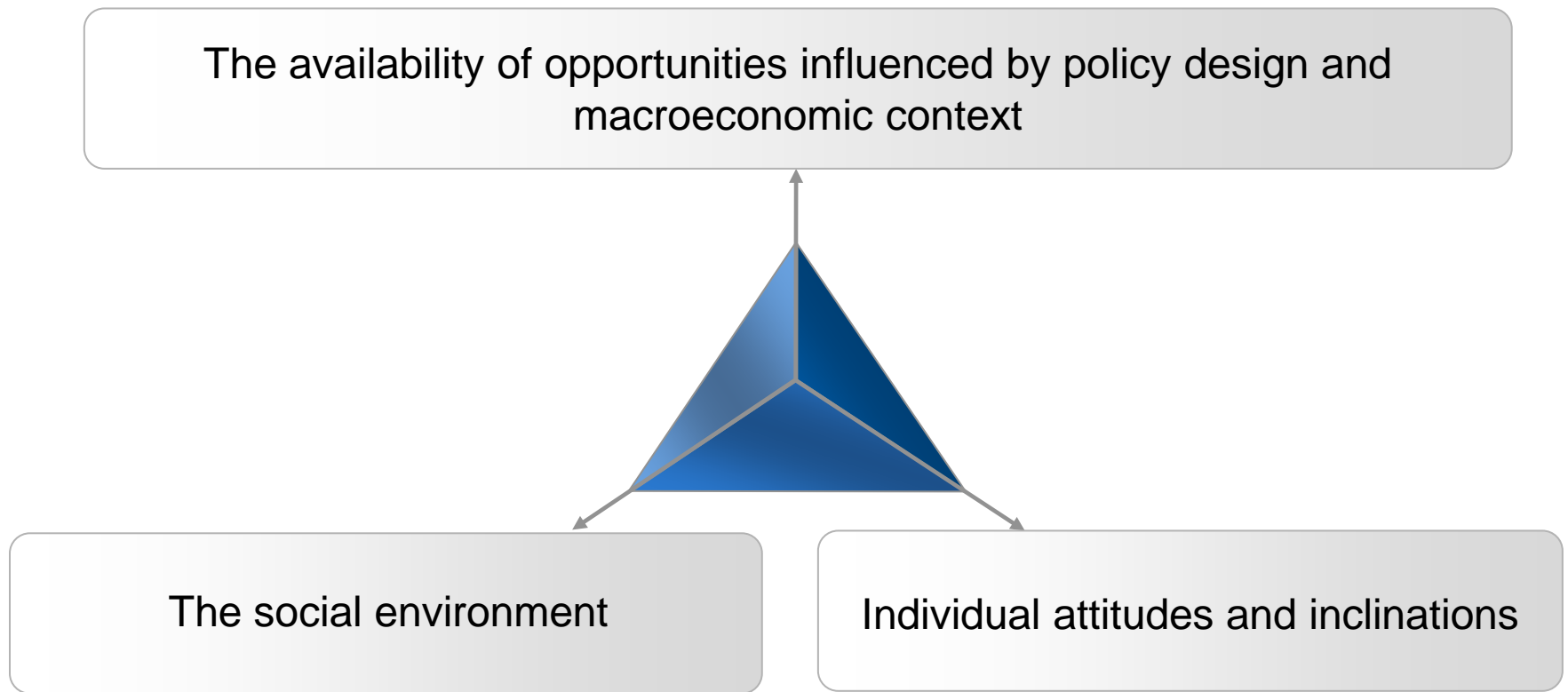
- Progression - temporary/permanent contracts
- Periods of career drift & uncertainty

3

- Initial setbacks – recovery
- Burn-out

4

Dimensions for Labour Market Transitions



Non-Linear Careers

From teacher to sailor (Marco, Italy)

Opened a sailing school, rediscovered education and its importance, especially for disabled people, intuition of new pedagogical opportunities linked to sailing (validate its approach, Education Science).

From Dance/Theater to Teacher (Concita, Spain).

“I was worn down but the changes and the life struggles made me get up again and from three years ago I am back in the school of education. Well, part time, the courses I can take.” She works in childcare. Had support from partner only ; not from her family neither from her friends.



From Factory Worker to Social Worker (Eduardo, Spain).

“Before I started studying I had a full-time job at a factory which made it impossible to combine it with my studies. But when I started I found a part-time job which allowed me to combine it with my studies.” Maintaining friendships with his ex-colleagues (factory) was very important to him. (Social Capital)

Becoming a Gardener – Babul (40,FR)

- Initial VET in mechanical engineering
- Work as operative in production
- Injury
- Period of unemployment
- Jobs as handyman & groundkeeper (1 year)
- Wish to be retrained to gardener



„I went to the Pôle d’employ who were, as per usual, completely useless. Really, all they do is get up to date with what you have done so far, rather than trying to help you actually get a job. I was disappointed, because I wanted to retrain as landscape gardener, and they just kept on suggesting agricultural labouring jobs; picking tomatoes, beetroot, cabbages. It’s not the same thing at all – they really didn’t get it...I’ve done that kind of manual, repetitive work and I wanted to use my unemployment rights to open up retraining.”

Looking for the “right” Job – Mette (41, DK)

- Initial VET as legal secretary
- Lots of different jobs: airport security, human resources, amusement park, cargo at navy base
- Contact with office of employment several times



„I think that 40% of the people who are in the same situation as I they are there because they want a change of work. They don't want to work in an office. The people from the PES are so eager to get us back into the offices instead of asking: Could we re-educate you to do something different? ... They are so busy trying to fit us back into the same job that we are trying to escape. ”

Reasons/Triggers for Career Changes





Individual Conduct and the Role of Learning

- Access to, and success in, education and learning
- School and university are taken as generators of cultural visions
- Personal goals are based on concrete experiences at work
- Learning is voluntarily chosen as an opportunity to keep in touch with the evolution of the professional world

Policy Conclusions

Activation Programs need to take individuals plans for career change into account.

“Career Break” for reassessment & Support for continuous training.



Different forms of learning in relation to the need for reskilling or upskilling need to be accessible.

Identify appropriate learning strategies and pedagogic practices (i.e., accounting for individuals preferences for work based learning) .



Individualized Career Guidance.

Voucher for independent sessions.



Thank you!



For further questions please contact:
Antje Barabasch
Email: antje.barabasch@cedefop.europa.eu