



COM_WORK.

**Exchanging practices
for recognize and validate competences
of social and educational professionals
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THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK



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ComWork-Erasmus

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Introduction

Com-Work is a Participatory Research Project that aims to contribute to progress and innovation in the domain of practices to promote social welfare. The research focuses are all extremely dense and equally indispensable for each other:

- The acquired competences in informal and non-formal contexts by social professionals who carry out their professional activities in social and education fields;
- The NEET population, nowadays one of the main beneficiaries of the European Community resources and, in this research, the recipients also of professional services;
- The system of training and competence recognition and validation, in continental terms, to ensure transparency and mobility to people.

These focuses of research will be object of analysis to achieve the main objective of the project that is to build the Learning Unit.

This first draft of the Theoretical Framework aims to narrow the field, problematize the issues and propose ideas and definitions to be shared within the working group of the COM WORK Project.

1. NEET: a *status* difficult to define

At the moment one of the priorities of the Member States and the European Union, to counter the systemic crisis and renew the social and economic model, is the fight against unemployment/inactivity in all its structural differences. The policies pursued by the European Union, to address the challenges posed by globalization and unemployment in the labour market of the European Union, are oriented to promote employment and training, considering growth not as an end in itself but as a tool to ensure the adequate social inclusion of citizens. In recent years social inclusion is at risk also, but not only, from a prolonged economic crisis that caused the increase in poverty in Europe and the consequent removal by the reduction targets set in the *Europe 2020 strategy*. Youth unemployment is at very high levels and various factors affect the actual capability of young Europeans to access rights and achieve personal and professional autonomy. In an attempt to address this issue intervention

programs have been built that include not only the employment component, but also the endorsement of capacity to develop their potential.

The phenomenon of NEET fits into this context, an acronym for "*Not in Education, Employment or Training*" or young people who do not participate or seek any path of training, education or work...

According to statistics the phenomenon is acute, especially in recent years, and is located mainly in the segment of the population aged between 20 and 29 years, with some exceptions. The 2014 EU Report, *Social Justice Index 2014* - a project that compares 28 European countries in terms of social justice (poverty prevention, right to education, access to the labour market, social cohesion, health, intergenerational justice) - has shown that in Italy the NEET are 32 % of young people, the highest percentage in Europe.

The NEET between 15 and 29 years grew by more than 5 percentage points between 2008 and 2012, rising from 19.2% to 24.6%. The largest increase was for men (7.1 points) rather than women (3.8 points). Within this macro definition there are different realities, professionalism, training and social conditions. The starting point is that the NEET represent a **collection of stories**, each of which is a special case.

It is difficult to give a uniform image. We might begin by saying that they are young people who have missed their study path, or that having completed master after master course tried to enter the world of university research but did not succeed; some of them, having finished compulsory education are neither working nor attending vocational training, or work illegally and therefore are not economically "recognizable" and fall into the "category"; others, new graduates have immediately sought occupation and failing, have lost motivation and stopped trying; and finally there are graduates who have acquired competences that proved insufficient for the demands of the world of work and who fail to define a professional project. Another variable to be reckoned with in this picture is that the NEET may be unemployed or inactive. At this point it is worth proposing a reading of the 'status' no longer from multiple negatives (not-not) but by statements. And this means that in the reading of the problem variables come into play not only as a result of the economic crisis but also educational, social, political factors. Youth unemployment and inactivity are both particularly worrisome, given their permanent effects on employability and future productivity of the persons concerned. The current divergence of the youth unemployment rate is likely to fuel a difference even more pronounced, in the long run, of socio-economic fundamentals both in monetary union and in the EU.

Prolonged expulsion from the labour market or the educational system, and the intensification of the economic crisis, may result in:

- long term marginalization;
- early drop out of school (the rate of NEET and school dropout is positively correlated);
- low level of education and training;
- difficulties and low likelihood to be inserted fully and with the appropriate protections in the labour market.

Be "outside" school or the labour world can really strike at the root of a sense of belonging to the society in which you live. You are not exploited, underpaid, fired; you are just "out".

Human Capital identifies the material resources available to a society or a person, which include: knowledge, education, information, technical capabilities acquired during life, or all resources that give rise to the capability to perform activities of transformation and creation aimed at the achieving of both social and economic goals and personal or collective goals. That's why one of the main concerns at the centre of the EU policies is the high loss of Human Capital, which is also economically reflected in billions of Euro invested in inadequate training systems, deficient incentives for innovation policies, inefficient economic policy measures.

At European level the situation just described of young people is alarming in many Member States; Greece and Italy have high both the number and the trends; in Bulgaria, Ireland and Spain is rather the scale of the issue that concern, while in Cyprus, Luxembourg, Hungary, Portugal and Slovenia is the growing trend.

Young NEET (15-29 years) par sex in partner countries¹
Year 2012 (%)

Countries	Tote	Young NEET	
		Male	Female
Bulgaria	24,7	23,0	26,4
Italy	23,9	21,8	26,1
Spain	22,6	23,1	22,2
Portugal	15,9	15,7	16,0

In most European countries the phenomenon involves women to greater degree (17.8 / 14.0% on average against the men) with particularly large gaps in the Czech Republic and Hungary. Within the statistical data you can identify some recurring events:

- a high presence of women,
- a high presence of inactive,
- a high proportion of subjects with no work experience,
- a high proportion of young people with a high degree,
- a high presence of those discouraged in finding a job.

It is in this context that the **Europe 2020 Strategy** underlines the binomial **youth-competences** as a load-bearing axis to help exit from the crisis. In this Strategy are developed themes like:

- learning competences;
- recognition of professional qualifications;
- European classification of capabilities, competences and professions (European Skills, Competences and Occupations - ESCO)
- identification, recording and validation of competences acquired outside the formal sector of education and training,
- European Skills Passport (eg. Europass and Youthpass) that will allow each one to record and present the lifelong acquired experiences.

One significant aim of the COM_WORK project is this particularly attention to the concept/**construct of competence** that finally allows to break the rigidity

¹ Re-elaborated version of ISTAT data 2013 analyzing the 4 countries involved in Com-Work Project

of definitions for bringing people to the concrete of their experiencing. In this passage you meet people (beneficiaries) who turn to the services and people (professionals) that in those services should be able to propose feasible and replicable paths, in which rediscover the sense of planning and the power of choice facing the so many questions that come and will come from the status of NEET.

Addressing the causes of NEET, there is a partial view that emphasizes the individual responsibility, especially the inability of people to acquire specific qualifications; there are therefore a focus on qualifications and guidance activities on the individuals; the contexts are not discussed and the opportunities (or lack thereof) are missing. We need to consider more deeply the environment and the use of its potential. This can be critical when we observe Professional skills (is it someone circumscribing individual problems or challenges also the environment in which the individual is present in the sense of co-responsibility for solutions found?). This combination with individual and environmental approach challenges for a more and more citizenship connection between all the actions and asks for a sustainable point of view in a large vision about individual and global development. That means we can mobilize a lot of references, like freirian (Paulo Freire) ones and inclusive entrepreneurship for young people in a supportive building process.

2. From dissipation to enhancement of competences

At deficits of the national economic system correspond an even more serious deficit in the field of school and training with widespread poverty and fragility of technical capacity, knowledge and basic competences within a highly polarized territorial situation especially for gender variable².

For narrative economy, we can say that is a thematic ascribable at gaps due to a deficit of human capital - or better of *capabilities* as mentioned by Amartya Sen³ - dangerously low compared with the others countries with which we

² Cfr. The data refers to the international survey OECD- PIAAC on adult competences in October 2013 by ISFOL.

³ Beside Indian economist is important to remember the authoritative contribution of American philosopher Martha Nussbaum which borrows the capability approach by Sen integrating it with a

compete, a capital that requires **dynamic maintenance** to contain the risk of its obsolescence. Take the perspective of *lifelong* and *lifewide learning*, requires, in fact, not so much competences structured in a rigid and functionalist sense, but, recovering Sen, a dynamic process of capability, "A person "capability" refers to the alternative combinations of functioning that are feasible for her to achieve. Capability is thus a kind of freedom: the substantive freedom to achieve alternative functioning combinations (or, less formally put, the freedom to achieve various lifestyle)"(Sen, 2000, p75)⁴.

Another element that penalizes the quality of human capital, reducing the chances of access to the labour market, is the growing gap between the competences required by companies and those in possession by workers (skills mismatch), particularly for young workers. this phenomenon is due to several factors such as, for example, the mismatch between training and production technologies, a workforce too low or too much trained (*over and under-qualification*).

This involves for the individual:

- the risk of to work in an environment that is incongruous to the competences possessed,
- the effect to increase the chances of falling into the trap of long-term unemployment (as happens in the cases of those who while in possession of a degree perform in a job for which it would be required a lower level of education),

triggering, in both cases, a vicious circle of decay of knowledge and consequent social exclusion.

The need to enhance human capital, while reducing the dissipation especially among young people, and to address the issue of growth in all its complexity, makes it necessary to reaffirm the central role of education and training as it is reiterated several times in EU documents, beginning with the Europe 2020 Strategy that, recalling the objectives of the **2000 Lisbon Strategy**, aims to create the conditions for a growth that need to be sustainable, inclusive, but together intelligent, or rather based on knowledge and innovation and on the disseminated processes of learning and information.

One of the five identified objectives concerns, in fact, the need to raise the level of education and training of young people with reducing rates of early

neo-Aristotelian approach (Nussbaum, M.C., *Giustizia Sociale e Dignità Umana*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 2002; Nussbaum, M. C., *Creare capacità. Liberarsi dalla dittatura del PIL*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 2012).

⁴ Sen A., *Development as freedom*, Paperback - August 15, 2000.

dropped out of school below 10% (*early dropped out school*) and increased to 40% of the 30-34 years old peoples with a university education (*tertiary education*).

Within the 2020 Strategy also places the initiative *Youth on the Move* (launched in 2010) that aimed to enhancing the potential of young people by providing them education and training of quality, effective integration in the labour market and greater **transnational mobility**⁵. This initiative reaffirms the validity of an approach based on **active inclusion**: is the activation of the subject, called to constantly improve their competences and to maintain their level of employability, to be the most effective strategy of work and social inclusion...

At the same branch of European initiatives in support of youth policy fits the Recommendation of the Council of the European Union of 22 April 2013 on the establishment of a "*Youth Guarantee*" to ensure young people, with less than 25 years, an offer qualitatively valid of work, a further education, an apprenticeship or internship training or other measure of training within four months after becoming unemployed or from the exit of formal education system. An initiative that, to encourage the authentic activation of different beneficiaries⁶, needs services and highly qualified professionals able to integrate and to create dialogue training culture, knowledge of labour market world and personalization/individualization of actions that put the individual and his personal and professional biography in the centre.

From these brief considerations we understand that, to address the profound changes occurring in the labour market, as well as in the conception of learning and training, the development of new competences, as well as the emergence and putting in value of those which, although valuable and transferable often remain invisible precisely because of the crisis, is a crucial factor to respond to the constant stress and competitive evolution of the workplace.

⁵ Mobility presupposes transparency of professionals and educational qualifications as well as the presence of disposals that allow citizens to transfer their competences from one system to another, from one country to another (see below tools for mobility).

⁶ Three types of beneficiaries and actions are identified: 1) young people in unemployment and not in possession of qualifications (budget activities, orientation, additional training and internship in companies, even abroad, and initiatives of placement); 2) unemployed young people in possession of secondary and university qualifications (training modules in the company in order to qualify them and thereby make them valuable in the job market with *placement* actions); 3) young people in difficulty and in danger of social exclusion (educational activities of a promotional nature like "*second chance*", with strong relevance for internships and work placement paths targeted and accompanied).

3. The concept of competence

The debate about competences in the last 40 years was related to the consistent transformation of qualifications system and organisational settings and work contexts, more flexible and less structured.

The evolution of the concept of competence shows an holistic character, contaminated from different disciplines, as the EU and international theoretical literature demonstrates, regarding approaches language methodology and instruments.

It is not useful in this paper review the huge number of definitions of competence in the specialized literature but we propose as work definition of our research group⁷, competence as a process by which an individual, faced with a specific work context and its demands, becomes activated, regains and mobilises own resources of various types: knowledge, competence, personal characteristics and resources etc.

Competence is a different individual mix of; different *skills* that enable to combine knowledge, practical, operational, relation and emotional resources; different level of *motivation* and commitment (I want to act); *capabilities* related to context, organisational and social settings making possible for people to assume personal responsibility for their tasks and lives and risks (Le Boterf, 2000)⁸.

The concept of competence is useful and necessary and it allows us to face the new forms of competitiveness and the increasing complexity of work situations, requiring not just technical skills but also personal qualities, making the difference by objective identical situations.

The integration between subject and context is therefore relevant to understand, how do different people work and under what kind of conditions; which are the individual dimensions activated in every profession and activity so that it is possible to make hypothesis about the development of this interaction and to certificate the involved skills.

⁷ In Italy, today we have a legislative definition of competence, in the Legislative Decree 13 of 16 January 2013, which regulates the validation of non-formal and informal learning and certification of competences. Competence is defined as "proven ability to use, in work, training or professional and personal development, a structured set of knowledges and skills acquired in formal, non-formal or informal contexts.

⁸ Le Boterf G., *Construire les compétences individuelles et collectives*, Les Éditions d'Organisation, Paris, 2000.

Competence helps to understand in a more dynamic way the relationship between subject, learning process, thinking and action, experience based training and social recognition of individual knowledge. It allows to overcome the logic of achievements and to avoid the dominance of training on formation, the limitation of autonomy, responsibility and personal growth of citizens and workers and to promote creativity, capacity to change in changing context, “learning to learn”, empowerment, and sense of self-efficacy, and the capacity to make professional and training project and to use what you have learned. In the Attachment n. 1 we propose the exercise of A. Yatchinovsky e P. Michard⁹ about the concept of competence.

4. The learning results validation in the EU documents

The terms ‘non-formal’ and ‘informal’ are being defined by the European Centre for the Development of Professional Training (Cedefop) as follows: non-formal learning means that the individual learns voluntarily in programmed activities (work or studies) but that this is not formally in terms of learning objectives. Informal learning, instead, is being acquired on an involuntary basis in everyday activities related to work, family or leisure and is not structured according to learning objectives.

The topic of the validation of non-formal and informal learning is part of the European agenda since the beginning of the nineties under the heading of life-long learning. There are references to validation since 2002 in the Communication of the Commission on lifelong learning, the resolution on advanced cooperation in professional instruction and formation (Copenhagen Declaration). The key documents are the Common European Principles for the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning (2004) and the European Guidelines (2008). The Principles can be summed up in individual rights (among which the voluntary nature of the validation process), the duties on the parties involved, including the clause for the guarantee of the quality, the value of trust, the credibility and the legitimacy.

The Guidelines instead contain the rationale of validation. Until today not all the member states have activation the construction of a system of validation at

⁹ Yatchinovsky A., Michard P., *Le bilan personnel et professionnel*, Paris, ESF éditeur, 1994

national level. Turning to more theoretical considerations, the European Commission and Cedefop formulate the process of the validation.

The common method for the promotion of the validation of non-formal and informal learning is based on open cooperation, the exchange of national experiences and the dissemination of piloted experiences. In fact the European Council supports the dissemination and exchange of good practices in member states collected through the European Inventory on the validation of non-formal and informal learning.

5. Instruments for the mobility and transparency of human capital

The European Qualification Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF) has primary importance for the concrete exercise of rights by European citizens to have their formation periods recognised as well as their life and work experiences within the entire common territory. EQF is the joint reference point for describing and comparing qualifications (including those at higher level) and the certificates of professional formation (initial and continuous) that are being issued by the countries of the European Union.

The principle objectives are: to promote mobility and permanent learning by making titles, qualifications and competences transparent; to improve the quality of systems of instruction and professional formation; to promote personalised access for all citizens to instruction and higher education courses through the recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning; to facilitate the transfer of results of learning from one system to the other; to define a common code of reference for the systems of instruction and formation based on the results of learning.

The member states have to therefore establish the most opportune links between EQF and national indicators of formation, qualification and the recognition of competences acquired and to implement and integrate all these instruments which, being aimed at the promotion of mobility and employability of citizens and employees, are inevitably linked to EQF: ECVET: (*European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training*) for the recognition of educational credits in the field of professional formation; EUROPASS criteria for the recognition of periods of formation spent in another EU country. EQUAVET

(*European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training*) for the guarantee of instruction and professional formation.

Among the pilot experiences for the promotion of the system for the implementation of EQF is the project ***Color - Competency and learning outcomes recognition for migrants*** (March 2011- April 2013) with the participation of six regions.

In terms of methodology, EQF is based on the results of studies undertaken 1997 by OSCE with the project DeSeCo (Definition and Selection of Competencies) with the aim of identifying key functional competences for employability and for an active citizenship to enable people to cope with current cultural, economic and social changes. These competences seen in a holistic and relational sense, can be activated by people in an integrated way in specific contexts and can be classified in three categories:

- 1) knowing how to use instruments for effective interaction,
- 2) knowing how to interact in heterogeneous groups,
- 3) knowing how to act autonomously and to take responsibility.

EQF bases the recognition of qualifications on learning outcomes understood as the results somebody can demonstrate at the end of a learning process not only of formal, but also of non-formal and informal learning periods. Such achievements can be expressed as knowledge, skills and competences. The comparison and the classification of the various qualifications issued by member states is based on common reference points relating to the learning outcomes and expressed in a structure of eight levels which allows for their presentation from minimal to maximum complexity.

A further strengthening comes from the recommendation of the Council of Europe of December 2012 with which the member states are called upon to institute national systems for the validation of non-formal and informal learning by 2018. This has had the effect that the social and institutional recognition of experiential learning of all competence levels becomes a right, much more than in the past, which a person can spend as capital in terms of competences independently from the form in which they have been acquired. This is an opportunity to gain recognition in terms of educational credits for the acquisition of titles and qualifications, which traditionally are being issued by formal systems of education - a possession of knowledge, which belong to persons, enterprises, organisations and territories.

This is undoubtedly a complex topic in view of the multiple implications of a political, cultural, trade union and social nature and represents a clear innovation which has significant implications, but which can also generate

resistances, which have to be dealt with. This makes it imperative to redefine the relationship between different actors involved in the collaboration.

To adopt therefore an approach, which centres on the concept of competence allows us to focus our attention on the capacity to mobilise the resources of every individual as a response to different contexts. In addition it offers the possibility to present one's own wealth of experience in a comprehensive language which can be shared by a wide range of potential dialogue partners, which can be agencies, educational agencies, institutions etc. and which allow for greater transparency in the communication.

The link between transparency and competence is evident when one adopts the perspective of personal services in order to improve the employability and the well-being of the person.

Annex 1 – The Little Prince

This is how an account of one's own experience becomes the occasion for collecting different competences.

Il Piccolo Principe (Antoine de Saint-Exupéry)	The Little Prince (Antoine de Saint-Exupéry)
<p>... Così ho trascorso la mia vita solo, senza nessuno cui poter parlare, fino a 6 anni fa quando ebbi un incidente col mio aeroplano, nel deserto del Sahara. Qualche cosa si era rotta nel motore, e siccome non avevo con me né un meccanico, né dei passeggeri, mi accinsi da solo a cercare di riparare il guasto. Era una questione di vita o di morte, perché avevo acqua da bere soltanto per una settimana.</p> <p>La prima notte, dormii sulla sabbia, a mille miglia da qualsiasi abitazione umana. Ero più isolato che un marinaio abbandonato in mezzo all'oceano, su una zattera, dopo un naufragio. Potete immaginare il mio stupore di essere svegliato all'alba da una strana vocetta:</p> <p>«Mi disegni, per favore, una pecora?»</p> <p>«Cosa? »</p> <p>«Disegnami una pecora».</p> <p>Balzai in piedi come fossi stato colpito da un fulmine. Mi strofinai gli occhi più volte guardandomi attentamente intorno. E vidi una straordinaria</p>	<p>... So I lived my life alone, without anyone that I could really talk to, until I had an accident with my plane in the Desert of Sahara, six years ago. Something was broken in my engine. And as I had with me neither a mechanic nor any passengers, I set myself to attempt the difficult repairs all alone. It was a question of life or death for me: I had scarcely enough drinking water to last a week.</p> <p>The first night, then, I went to sleep on the sand, a thousand miles from any human habitation. I was more isolated than a shipwrecked sailor on a raft in the middle of the ocean. Thus you can imagine my amazement, at sunrise, when I was awakened by an odd little voice. It said:</p> <p>"If you please--draw me a sheep!"</p> <p>"What!"</p> <p>"Draw me a sheep!"</p> <p>I jumped to my feet, completely thunderstruck. I blinked my eyes hard. I looked carefully all around me. And I saw a most extraordinary small</p>

<p>personcina che mi stava esaminando con grande serietà. Qui potete vedere il miglior ritratto che riuscii a fare di lui, più tardi. Ma il mio disegno è molto meno affascinante del modello.</p> <p>La colpa non è mia, però. Con lo scoraggiamento che hanno dato i grandi, quando avevo sei anni, alla mia carriera di pittore, non ho mai imparato a disegnare altro che serpenti boa dal di fuori o serpenti boa dal di dentro.</p> <p>Ora guardavo fisso l'improvvisa apparizione con gli occhi fuori dall'orbita per lo stupore.</p> <p>Dovete pensare che mi trovavo a mille miglia da una qualsiasi regione abitata, eppure il mio ometto non sembrava smarrito in mezzo alle sabbie, né tramortito per la fatica, o per la fame, o per la sete, o per la paura. Niente di lui mi dava l'impressione di un bambino sperduto nel deserto a mille miglia da qualsiasi abitazione umana. Quando finalmente potei parlare gli domandai: «Ma che cosa fai qui?»</p> <p>Con tutta risposta, egli ripeté lentamente come si trattasse di cosa di molta importanza:</p> <p>«Per piacere, disegnammi una pecora...».</p> <p>Quando un mistero è così sovraccarico, non si osa disubbidire. Per assurdo che mi sembrasse, a mille miglia da ogni</p>	<p>person, who stood there examining me with great seriousness. Here you may see the best portrait that, later, I was able to make of him. But my drawing is certainly very much less charming than its model.</p> <p>That, however, is not my fault. The grown-ups discouraged me in my painter's career when I was six years old, and I never learned to draw anything, except boas from the outside and boas from the inside.</p> <p>Now I stared at this sudden apparition with my eyes fairly starting out of my head in astonishment.</p> <p>Remember, I had crashed in the desert a thousand miles from any inhabited region. And yet my little man seemed neither to be straying uncertainly among the sands, nor to be fainting from fatigue or hunger or thirst or fear. Nothing about him gave any suggestion of a child lost in the middle of the desert, a thousand miles from any human habitation. When at last I was able to speak, I said to him:</p> <p>"But--what are you doing here?"</p> <p>And in answer he repeated, very slowly, as if he were speaking of a matter of great consequence:</p> <p>"If you please--draw me a sheep . . .".</p> <p>When a mystery is too overpowering, one dare not disobey. Absurd as it might seem to me, a thousand</p>
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<p>abitazione umana, e in pericolo di morte, tirai fuori dalla tasca un foglietto di carta e una penna stilografica. Ma poi ricordai che i miei studi si erano concentrati sulla geografia, sulla storia, sull'aritmetica e sulla grammatica e gli dissi, un po' di malumore, che non sapevo disegnare. Mi rispose:</p> <p>«Non importa. Disegnami una pecora».</p> <p>Non avevo mai disegnato una pecora e allora feci per lui uno di quei due disegni che avevo fatto tante volte: quello del boa dal di dentro; e fui sorpreso di sentirmi rispondere:</p> <p>«No, no, no!. Non voglio l'elefante dentro al boa. Il boa è molto pericoloso e l'elefante molto ingombrante. Dove vivo io tutto è molto piccolo. Ho bisogno di una pecora: disegnami una pecora».</p> <p>Feci il disegno.</p> <p>Lo guardò attentamente, e poi disse: «No! Questa pecora è malaticcia. Fammene un'altra».</p> <p>Feci un altro disegno.</p> <p>Il mio amico mi sorrise gentilmente, con indulgenza.</p> <p>«Lo puoi vedere da te », disse, «che questa non è una pecora. È un ariete. Ha le corna ».</p> <p>Rifeci il disegno una terza volta, ma fu</p>	<p>miles from any human habitation and in danger of death, I took out of my pocket a sheet of paper and my fountain-pen. But then I remembered how my studies had been concentrated on geography, history, arithmetic and grammar, and I told the little chap (a little crossly, too) that I did not know how to draw. He answered me:</p> <p>"That doesn't matter. Draw me a sheep."</p> <p>But I had never drawn a sheep. So I drew for him one of the two pictures I had drawn so often. It was that of the boa constrictor from the outside. And I was astounded to hear the little fellow greet it with:</p> <p>"No, no, no! I do not want an elephant inside a boa constrictor. A boa constrictor is a very dangerous creature, and an elephant is very cumbersome. Where I live, everything is very small. What I need is a sheep. Draw me a sheep."</p> <p>So then I made a drawing.</p> <p>He looked at it carefully, then he said: "No. This sheep is already very sickly. Make me another."</p> <p>So I made another drawing.</p> <p>My friend smiled gently and indulgently.</p> <p>"You see yourself," he said, "that this is not a sheep. This is a ram. It has horns."</p> <p>So then I did my drawing over once</p>
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<p>rifiutato come i tre precedenti.</p> <p>«Questa è troppo vecchia. Voglio una pecora che possa vivere a lungo». Questa volta la mia pazienza era esaurita, avevo fretta di rimettere a posto il mio motore. Buttai giù un quarto disegno.</p> <p>E tirai fuori questa spiegazione:</p> <p>«Questa è soltanto la sua cassetta. La pecora che volevi sta dentro ».</p> <p>Fui molto sorpreso di vedere il viso del mio piccolo giudice illuminarsi:</p> <p>«Questo è proprio quello che volevo. Pensi che questa pecora dovrà avere una grande quantità d'erba?»</p> <p>«Perché?»</p> <p>«Perché dove vivo io, tutto è molto piccolo»</p> <p>«Ci sarà certamente abbastanza erba per lei, è molto piccola la pecora che ti ho data».</p> <p>Si chinò sul disegno:</p> <p>«Non così piccola che - oh, guarda! - si è messa a dormire...»</p> <p>E fu così che feci la conoscenza del piccolo principe.</p>	<p>more. But it was rejected too, just like the others.</p> <p>"This one is too old. I want a sheep that will live a long time." By this time my patience was exhausted, because I was in a hurry to start taking my engine apart. So I tossed off this drawing.</p> <p>And I threw out an explanation with it.</p> <p>"This is only his box. The sheep you asked for is inside."</p> <p>I was very surprised to see a light break over the face of my young judge:</p> <p>"That is exactly the way I wanted it! Do you think that this sheep will have to have a great deal of grass?"</p> <p>"Why?"</p> <p>"Because where I live everything is very small . . ."</p> <p>"There will surely be enough grass for him," I said. "It is a very small sheep that I have given you."</p> <p>He bent his head over the drawing.</p> <p>"Not so small that--Look! He has gone to sleep . . ."</p> <p>And that is how I made the acquaintance of the little prince.</p>
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Source: Yatchinovsky A., Michard P., *Le bilan personnel et professionnel*, Paris, ESF éditeur, 1994.

Different competences can be recognised are:

- capacity to accept and to adjust to an exceptional situation;
- capacity to handle the unexpected

- capacity to value a situation and to make predictions on the basis of this analysis.
- capacity to listen, to pay attention and to become open to
- capacity to describe one's life experience and to form a picture of the other
- capacity to order urgent matters in terms of their priority.
- intuition and creativity

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