WP2 report

Competency framework

LabSET
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The aim of WP2 is to create a training programme for stakeholders –professionals and volunteers– involved in refugees' integration in the perspective of an intercultural society. The training programme has to be designed according to users' profile and needs: who do we want to train? What are their needs? More specifically, what are the skills that they need to acquire and the competencies they need to develop in order to perform efficiently?

While the needs of our target group are being analysed in WP1 (see context analysis and practice analysis), the first output of WP2 is a competency framework formulating the competencies expected of front-line staff in their work with refugees. This competency framework will be the backbone of our training programme.

Theoretical background

First of all, it is important to clarify the definition of the concept of "competency" that we are using in order to avoid misunderstanding. The meaning attributed to the concept of "competency" will result in different choices to be made in the training programme, as well as in the learning situations and in the evaluation tools. These choices will be presented in the next report regarding the training programme.

We are referring to Tardif (2006) who defines a competency as

« A complex knowing to act building on the effective mobilization and combination of a variety of internal and external resources within a family of situations »
(Tardif, 2006, p. 22, our translation)

This definition puts the idea of the mobilization of resources at the centre of training and of learning situations. It implies a necessary "alignment" between competency framework, learning activities and evaluation.
It requires that:
- the competency grid reflects the targeted professional role/function,
- the learners have many opportunities for action,
- they are accompanied in their competency development,
- all the actors share a same set of criteria for quality.

Methodological guidelines described by Poumay and Georges (2017) (see annex1) have been used to define the competencies. We are using the following syntax:

It includes:
- a verb (**knowing to act**)
- an object (**content**)
- gerunds (**essential components**, reflecting the complexity of the competency)

It is complemented by:
- places or other determinants (**professional situations** that reflect the extent of the competency) – note that only professional situations that require special learning are retained.
- verbs/sentences listing the **critical learnings** i.e. the most important learnings necessary to achieve the expected level of development of the competency (and NOT the whole list of resources to mobilize and combine). The training modules' duration being only 100h, therefore, defining several levels of development is not relevant.

Methodology

In order to better grasp the sector of "refugees' integration" and be as relevant as possible in our actions, LabSET-ULiège (WP2 leader) carried out bibliographic research and a preliminary analysis of competency profiles for refugees' integration actors.

In WP1, CEDEM-ULiège (WP1 leader) did an extensive research, reviewing the state-of-the-art and carrying on fieldwork (see context and practice analysis reports).

These data, as well as the expertise of TREE partners, provided a basis for our reflection.

Two meetings (12/06 and 04/10/2018) were organised with TREE partners under the supervision of researchers from LabSET-ULiège. The objectives were to:
- agree on the target group concerned by the competency framework
- identify the major professional complex actions (i.e. the competencies) that any worker involved in refugees' integration has to carry out.
- define the characteristics that qualify a "good" professional in refugee's integration
- give examples of professional cases in which the competencies are needed
- list the critical learnings that they require for each competency

The WP leader compiled all the information from these meetings and provided a first draft version of the competency framework.

Partners discussed it within their respective institutions (internal validation) and sent their comments back to LabSET who adapted the draft version accordingly.

An additional meeting (03/12/2018) was needed to complete this second draft and finalize it. We confronted the competency framework with the reports from WP1and made sure that the identified needs were potentially taken care of (external validation).

Competency framework for stakeholders involved in refugees' integration, in the perspective of an intercultural society

The partners identified **three competencies** expected from all stakeholders involved in refugees' integration, regardless of their area of expertise.

These 3 competencies are applied in four **professional situations**, representing situations met in most cases by TREE partners (i.e. social work, training, nursing/medical care and social interpreting).

Each competency is assorted by **essential components** qualifying the competency (quality criteria) and **critical learnings** needed in order to develop the competency.

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Competency framework for stakeholders involved in refugees' integration, in the perspective of an intercultural society

PROFESSIONAL SITUATIONS	- Social work - Training - Medical care/nursing - Social interpreting

COMPETENCIES	CRITICAL LEARNINGS
Communicate in an intercultural way with refugees • *by facilitating a dialogue* • *by considering the individuality and the different cultural realities* • *by respecting the limits of your mandate*	1. Identify your/their cultural influences, representations, mission and your/their possible effect on your actions 2. Consider the life trajectory of a refugee in a systemic way 3. Adapt your communication to people and situations 4. Deal with psychological distress, traumatized population
Support refugees through the integration process • *by considering the different legal frameworks* • *by working with the relevant services* • *by adopting a professional ethic* • *by fostering empowerment*	5. Keeping up with a clear and dynamic representation of actors, structures and procedures in the field of refugees' integration 6. Scaffold the guidance towards autonomy 7. Identify ethical issues in a case
Position yourself in the refugees' integration sector • *by adopting a reflective perspective on your experiences* • *by considering the political and societal context* • *by sharing with the professional network* • *by coping with emotional strain*	8. Identify your own limits/boundaries and act if you overpass them 9. Evaluate and regulate your action 10. Consider the different levels of involvement in the integration sector 11. Have a critical view on your own reference framework 12. Have a deep understanding of interactions between historical, political and social contexts

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Référentiel de compétences des acteurs dans le champ de l'intégration des personnes réfugiées, dans la perspective d'une société interculturelle

SITUATIONS PROFESSIONNELLES	- Secteur social
	- Formation
	- Secteur médical
	- Interprétariat social

COMPETENCES	APPRENTISSAGES CRITIQUES
Communiquer de façon interculturelle avec les personnes réfugiées • *en favorisant le dialogue avec la personne* • *en tenant compte de l'individualité et des multiples réalités culturelles* • *en respectant les limites de son mandat*	1. Identifier ses influences culturelles, ses représentations, sa mission et leur effet possible sur ses propres actions 2. Considérer la trajectoire de vie d'un réfugié d'un point de vue systémique 3. Adapter sa communication à ses interlocuteurs et à la situation 4. Faire face à la détresse psychologique, à des populations traumatisées
Soutenir les personnes réfugiées dans leurs démarches d'intégration • *en tenant compte des différents cadres légaux* • *en collaborant avec les services compétents* • *en adoptant une éthique professionnelle* • *en visant l'émancipation*	5. Avoir une vision claire, dynamique et actualisée des acteurs, des structures et procédures dans le champ de l'intégration des réfugiés 6. Accompagner à l'autonomie 7. Identifier des problèmes éthiques dans des cas
Se positionner dans le secteur de l'intégration des personnes réfugiées • *en adoptant une posture réflexive sur ses expériences* • *en tenant compte du contexte politique et sociétal* • *en partageant avec le réseau professionnel* • *en gérant la charge émotionnelle*	8. Identifier ses propres limites et agir en cas de dépassement de celles-ci 9. Évaluer et réguler son action 10. Considérer les différents niveaux d'engagement dans le secteur de l'intégration 11. Porter un regard critique sur son propre cadre de référence 12. Avoir une compréhension fine des interactions entre les contextes historique, politique et social

Bibliography

Tardif, J. (2006). *L'évaluation des compétences : Documenter le parcours de développement*. Montréal, Canada, Chenelière Éducation.

Poumay, M., Tardif, J. and Georges, F. (2017). *Organiser la formation à partir des compétences. Un pari gagnant pour l'apprentissage dans le supérieur*. Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgique : De Boeck Supérieur.

Annex 1 – Six stages that lay the groundwork for the development of a competency framework: formalisation and illustrations

Poumay, M., Tardif, J. and Georges, F. (2017). *Organiser la formation à partir des compétences. Un pari gagnant pour l'apprentissage dans le supérieur*. Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgique : De Boeck Supérieur, p. 230-231.

STAGE 1: Leads to the **definition of the competencies** for the programme (5 to 6 competencies for a master's degree of 120 credits, each of which is central to the profession or the type of challenge targeted by a discipline).

Questions to ask yourself: What are the complex knowing-to-act that one wishes to help the students develop? What are the major knowing-to-act involved in the relevant profession? What are the professional responsibilities that could be assumed at the end of the training? Is each of these knowing-to-act truly complex, i.e. is it self-sufficient (one performs it for its own purpose and not with a view to performing another action)? Is it much more than one step in a process (such that it cannot be automated)? Is it needed in different contexts? For each competency, is there, potentially, a person whose only role in the organisation that employs him/her is this skill? Is this action central to the profession in question? Is it expressed in such a way that it is not found identically within the framework of another programme?

Lexical form: Action verbs

Example: For caregivers (Alterform) – To maintain high-quality personal relationships with the patient and his/her family...

STAGE 2: Leads to the **definition of the elements that are essential** to the action, i.e. the DNA of the competency, which takes its entire complexity into account. Each competency will thus be defined by some essential elements.

Questions to ask yourself: What are the essential qualities that these knowing-to-act must demonstrate? What qualities are indispensable to the action, without which the action may sometimes be carried out but not be acceptable (e.g. ineffective, dangerous or unacceptable from an ethical standpoint)?

Lexical form: Gerunds

Example: For caregivers (Alterform) – To maintain high-quality personal relationships with the patient and his/her family) ...while preserving and respecting his/her autonomy as much as possible.

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STAGE 3: Leads to the **definition of the professional contexts** that takes the scope of the competency into account.

Questions to ask yourself: In which environments, contexts, conditions or situations will the student be required to make use of this competency? As a whole, do these situations offer students the opportunity to learn everything that is expected of them?

Lexical form: Verbs or nouns

Examples: For speech therapists (ULiège) – Carry out an assessment in the context of a request for expertise; in the Master's degree in tourism (Paris-Est) – cooperation within a work group.

STAGE 4: Leads to the **definition of development levels** for the competency, which allows the creation of a training continuum.

Questions to ask yourself: To define level 1 (novice, for example 2nd bachelor's degree): At this competency level, what are the tasks that allow a "legitimate peripheral participation" by beginners, i.e. activities that are simple and risk-free, but necessary and already embedded within the framework of the profession or the responsibilities in consideration?

To define level 2 (intermediate, for example, at the end of the bachelor's degree): At this competency level, what could be asked of students at the end of a bachelor's degree?

To define level 3 (proficient, for example, at the end of the master's degree): At this competency level, what can be expected from a final-year intern or a person who has just been hired?

Are these levels well-defined and in a way that works and is observable?

Lexical form: Variable

Examples: For speech therapists (ULiège) – Intermediate: Make use of a procedural approach to evaluation; Proficient: Integrate a comprehensive dynamic evaluation. In nursing (HECVS [1]) – Year 1: Take into account the fragility that stems from a "temporary" physical health problem; Year 2: Take into account the vulnerability that stems from a chronic health problem.

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[1] Haute École Cantonale Vaudoise de la Santé (example taken from Tardif, 2004, p. 17).

Tardif, J. (2004). *Un passage obligé dans la planification de l'évaluation des compétences : la détermination des indicateurs progressifs et terminaux de développement* (2e partie), Pédagogie collégiale, 18 (2), p. 17.

STAGE 5: Leads to the **definition of Critical Learnings (CL)**, i.e. those most important in leading students to the targeted level of competency development.

Questions to ask yourself: For a given level of development (e.g. the "intermediate" level, at the end of the bachelor's degree), what are the essential and most important things to learn? A word of caution, their number is limited (around ten per competency, across all levels) and they are already integrators (so pure knowledge is rarely found here). There is no hierarchical order between them (there are no steps or processes that take place between CL). Since these are critical for students to be deemed competent, they will all have to be mastered; none of them can compensate for a deficiency in another.

Lexical form: Verbs

Example: For architects (ULiège) – to address the project from the point of view of each stakeholder in an appropriate way.

STAGE 6: Leads to the **definition of resources** (these lists are NEVER exhaustive!) or resource areas.

Questions to ask yourself: What are the knowledge, know-how and professional attitudes (even if they are potentially isolated on this occasion) that will be useful to master Critical Learnings and to develop competencies?

Lexical form: Nouns

Example: For speech therapists (ULiège) – Knowledge of spoken language disorders

And finally,

Questions to ask yourself: Would you hire this student in your company or organisation? Which tasks could you entrust him/her with?

If these tasks fit the "proficiency" level for each of the programme's competencies, this stage leads to the **student's success.**

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