AGENDA EDUCAIEI

PRIMARY SCHOOL CAREERS: WIDENING THE FUTURE

John Kelly*

In 2011 in Europe, 13.5% of those aged 18 to 24 were early leavers from education and training, with at most a lower secondary education. According to Eurostat, in 2011, 7.5 million young people aged 15–24 and an additional 6.5 million young people aged 25–29 were excluded from labour market and education in Europe. The problem of Early School Leaving (ESL) is a complex issue with negative consequences for students and families, especially for those who come from low socioeconomic environments and vulnerable groups.

Most negative factors of ESL are already present in primary school and they affect pupils’ choices and their commitment to schooling and learning. Primary school should be a place where pupils learn to know and explore the world, as well as to develop their career and life dreams, regardless of the cultural and social backgrounds of their families.

The EU funded Comenius project “Widening the Future” has been conceived to use careers guidance in primary schools as a positive remedy to ESL. The project involves five countries (UK, Italy, Spain, Denmark and Romania) and looks at best practice in guidance for students aged 7 to 12 and developing action plans for:

• analysis of guidance needs in 5 countries adapted to local circumstances in order to prevent early school leaving;
• development of training pathways for teachers based on cooperative learning approaches;
• creation of an on-line platform for cooperative learning;
• adaptation of ICT tools in order to meet the specific needs of teachers and pupils;
• testing the best resources and promoting dissemination and exploitation activities.

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Exemplary programmes such as the National Danish Framework for Guidance in Education and the ACEG Framework in England have been studied and used in the development of pilot actions. A variety of tools and activities are also being piloted to look at what will prove most effective in each country.

In the UK, CASCAiD Ltd, a careers guidance software producer owned by Loughborough University, has been using Paws in Jobland to assist primary schools with an introduction to the world of work. Paws in Jobland is an easy to use online software resource for children aged 7 to 11. The animated dog Paws helps students to explore Jobland with places such as an hospital, office, building site, shops and an airport. Paws helps children to meet people in different job areas and find out about what jobs they do. This is helped with audio narration and on-screen text supporting the development of reading and listening skills.

The tool also features a simple career finder where students answer questions on things they like and then relevant jobs are suggested. There is a quiz about jobs and puzzles and other fun things to do. A set of worksheets and teachers' notes have been prepared to link the tool to the primary school curriculum and help teachers introduce the tool into different classroom contexts.

Paws in Jobland helps schools to deliver career-related learning at Key Stage 2. It can be used to deliver many elements of the suggested learning framework and is a fun way to look at the world of work and opportunities for young peoples’ futures.

Further information is available at:
www.wideningthefuture.eu
www.cascaid.co.uk

Quotes from Teachers (these are taken from Paws Case Studies on our website)

Our children loved using the site and we could see the real benefits for including it in Term 6 work for Year 6 pupils as they head towards secondary school.

“The computer delivery kept the children engaged throughout. It’s colourful, pacey and fun, yet at the same time giving a lot of very useful information to inform choices later in life.”
“We feel that Paws in Jobland really does encourage the children to think of themselves in the real world of work, yet in a fun and child-friendly format.”
Head teacher, Linda Jeffcutt, Blockley C of E Primary School in Gloucestershire

“I’ve introduced them to Paws and then the children have been exploring for themselves.”

“The children have been very enthusiastic. They’ve found it very easy to manage and navigate.”

“The children get excited particularly when they come across a job that they had thought about themselves.”

*Miss Perkins, a teacher at Thringstone Primary School*

All of the age groups have enjoyed using it to find out about the range of jobs in each area and the roles and responsibilities that people have.

“It has broadened their knowledge of the community and what people do.”

“It helps with community cohesion, which is something we focus on in terms of how we work with the community.”

*Mr Wakeland, Assistant Headteacher at Sutton Road Primary School*

**Logos**
The two important ones (after CASCAiD!) are for Widening the Future and the EU and these are attached.

![Widening the Future and Lifelong Learning Programme logos]

**Conference**
There will be a final conference for the Widening the Future project in Siena, Italy in September. Details will be on the Widening the Future website in due course.
Biography
John Kelly - BSc (Hons) is International Business Director at CASCaID and a member of Careers Development Institute and the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance. CASCaID create career guidance software programs for all ages and are owned by Loughborough University. John manages the relationships between CASCaID and the careers guidance organisations in Canada and the US, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Belgium, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Italy, Slovenia and Croatia.