

Reaching the Lost Generation



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## Table of Contents

What is the RLG Programme? .....	1
The RLG Programme .....	3
Tracking the participants .....	4
Personal experiences of tracking participants.....	6
Tracking Exemplars .....	8
Appendices.....	9

## What is the RLG Programme?

The Reaching the Lost Generation project addresses the issue of the very high number of young people in Europe who are classed as NEET, not in employment, education or training. Across the EU community this can range from 5% to 25% of 16 to 24 year olds (2016).

This project has the aim of developing entrepreneurial skills in young people to move them on from being reactive to proactive members of their society. Partners in 4 countries; Hungary, Germany, Poland and Scotland, have developed an educational programme – **‘Reach for Your Life’s Goals’** (RLG) - to promote the entrepreneurial skills of disadvantaged young people.

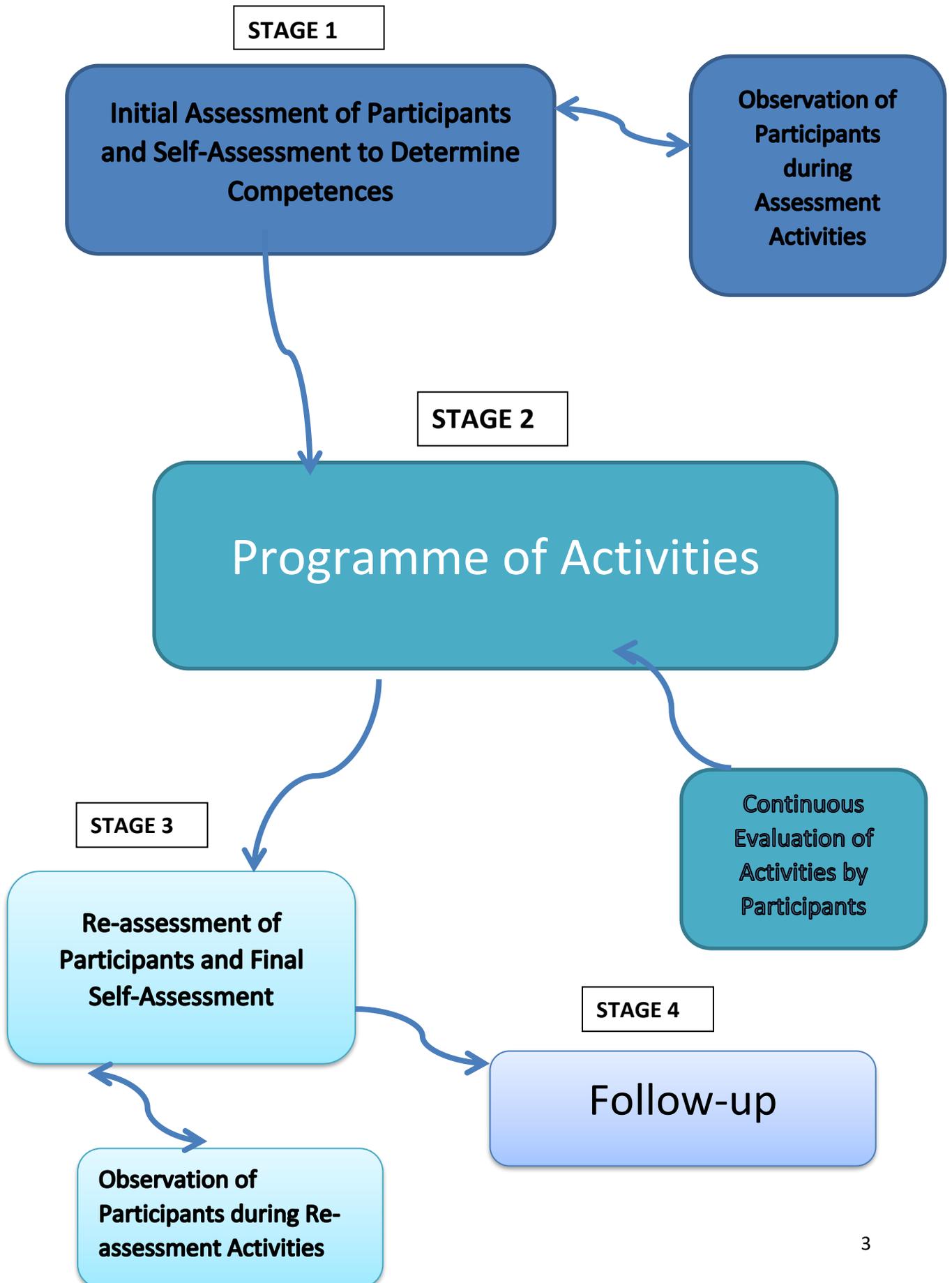
We have identified 10 competences which require development in those who are at risk, or are already not in employment, education or training. These competences are:

- Adaptability and Flexibility
- Business Thinking and Awareness
- Decision Making
- Interpersonal Skills
- Planning and Organising
- Problem Solving
- Strong Initiative
- Taking Responsibility
- Willingness to Learn
- Willingness to Take Risks

The RLG programme is made up of an **initial assessment** and **observation** to determine the level of these competences, a number of **activities** which focus on promoting the competences which have been identified as in need of development, and a final **re-assessment** to determine where competences have been improved.

We have developed this programme to promote the skills, behaviours and attitudes to help young people to become proactive members of society with the ability to move forward into education, training, employment or self-employment. It is therefore an important part of the programme that we **follow-up** these young people after their training is finished to find out how successful it has been.

## The RLG Programme



## **Tracking the participants**

The aim of our programme is to develop competences in young people that can help them to achieve positive outcomes. Following delivery of the RLG programme, an important element is the tracking of participants to determine the successful outcomes of the programme for them. It is also very useful to gain feedback on how well the programme has been viewed by the participants, and whether or not it needs to be changed for future use.

### **Who should do the tracking?**

It is important that the need and reasons for tracking are made clear to participants and trainers from the start of programme. Since it is in the participants' interests that the programme is offering them what they need, feedback is required to inform trainers if it has been successful or not. The main trainer/trainers should do the follow up with the participants as they will have developed a relationship with the participants and will be more aware of their requirements post-training.

It should be stressed to the participants during their training that the follow up process is an important part of the programme, it is to help and support them therefore they should be willing to respond to contact made after the programme has been completed.

### **How should tracking be done?**

Before the completion of each RLG programme, the trainer should make sure that they have up-to-date contact details for each participant and ideally they should be contacted directly 3 months after their programme has completed. Participants will need to be contacted by text, telephone and email before the majority of them will respond. If participants agree to this, tracking is probably easiest through social media as some participants will change email address and mobile numbers on a regular basis. Any contract made with participants at the start of the programme should have a section which allows contact with them during the 12 months post training period.

Whatever form of follow-up will be used should be discussed with the participants during their training, so that they are in agreement about the best method of making contact with them.

### **What information will be collected?**

The main aim of tracking participants is to establish if they have achieved a positive outcome following the RLG programme. Therefore you will want to find out if they are now in education, training or employment. It is also very useful to gain feedback from the participants to determine which parts of the programme were seen as most/least enjoyable or most/least helpful to them post-training. This feedback can provide valuable information to the trainer to help them to further develop the programme for future participants.

### **How often should the participants be followed up?**

The first contact should be made no later than 3 months following their RLG programme. Ideally contact should be made at least once more (either at 6, 9 or 12 months) post training as the participants circumstances might well have changed during this time.

The age of the participants will also determine how often they should be contacted. A younger person leaving the programme and going on to further education might remain in education for a number of years, therefore their circumstances will not change as much as someone who is entering employment for the first time. If a participant plans to go on to self-employment following the programme, they might appreciate being contacted several times in the following year to feed back their progress.

It can be useful for the trainer to set themselves an automatic reminder on their mobile phone or email calendar when it is time to follow up participants.

### **Issues to be considered**

The nature of the participants will determine how easy or difficult follow-up will be. Some participants might be difficult to track due to the nature of their home life or personal circumstances. The most popular social media for your country should be used to contact

participants as this can vary across countries. On-line questionnaires can be used: Google Forms/Survey Monkey/Doodle etc

## Personal experiences of tracking participants

For the **Scottish** partners of the RLG project, the process of tracking their programme participants was relatively easy. Those who were involved in one of the RLG programmes delivered in Scotland were either school pupils, who were in their final compulsory school year, or young unemployed people who attended a training programme run by a college. Contact was made with the school on a regular basis to ask for updates on the destinations of the participants. As the Scottish Government focusses on school leavers gaining a positive destination post-school, Skills Development Scotland carries out a destinations survey of recent school leavers each year, and information was requested from them to provide us with the current status of our course participants. Gaining personal information from the participants is more difficult and we had to rely on anecdotal evidence from those who did make contact with us (through personal contacts and by email).

The **German** partners used the RLG activities as part of their BvB programme with groups of participants whose contact details are stored on a central database. They are contacted initially by telephone 6 months after finishing their programme (usually January). During this initial telephone call their contact details are checked and the database updated if necessary. Following this a written questionnaire (email or post) is sent out with a request that it is returned after 2 weeks. If telephone contact is not made the questionnaire is still sent out.

The **Polish** partners found that using Facebook as a means of tracking their course participants was the most effective.

The **Hungarian** partners worked with different RLG groups and as a consequence, tracking of participants needed to be done in different ways, too. Some of the test trainings were completed within a VET institution where RLG was embedded into the training programme. Most of the participants continued their education in the same school and their teachers

could easily monitor their performance after RLG. Participants of other groups were more challenging to track. Colleagues used several means of communication, like Facebook, e-mails, phones to find out how their lives continued after RLG. Some former participants were visited in their homes. Participants were first contacted after 3 months.

## Tracking Exemplars

### **Achievement Goals**

During the programme the trainer should ask the participants to complete an 'Achievement Goals' plan (Appendix A) detailing what they hope to achieve following the programme. The trainer should tell the participants that this will be sent back to them by post, so that they can see what they have achieved and if their plans have changed. The participant will place this plan in a self-addressed envelope. For follow-up (at 3 or 6 months) this can then be posted back to the participants with a feedback questionnaire and a stamped addressed envelope to return the questionnaire to the trainer.

### **Group Progress Form**

If the participants were part of a school or other educational/training group it can be easy to track them by asking an administrator or tutor who deals with the participants to complete a progression form for them (Appendix B). This is useful to see what progression has been made by the participants, or otherwise, but it does not provide the trainer with any feedback from the individual participants or their thoughts on the programme itself.

### **Email Contact**

Following the programme the trainer can email the participants with a short questionnaire either within the email or as a separate attachment (Appendix C). To make this more personal they can also attach any pictures taken of the participant during the programme. This might help to trigger the participant's memories of the programme.

### **Text Contact**

As above, the trainer can send a short questionnaire by text to the participants.

### **Telephone Contact**

A questionnaire can be read out to participants during a telephone conversation. Despite the fact that all participants will have a mobile phone, not all will respond to a telephone call. However it is worth trying if you have been unable to contact the participant by other methods.

## **Questionnaire**

A more detailed questionnaire can be sent out by email, text or on social media (Appendix D).

## **On-line Surveys**

Feedback can be gained from surveys which can be set up online using applications like Google Forms, Survey Monkey or Doodle. Using the templates provided, or setting up your own template, you can create a survey and send participants a link to this in an email (Appendix E).

## Appendices

- A. Achievement Goals Plan**
- B. Group Progress Form Exemplar**
- C. Email Questionnaire Exemplar**
- D. Detailed Questionnaire**
- E. On-line Surveys**

Appendix A

**Achievement Goals Plan**

Name:

Date:

What I want to achieve:	How will I achieve this?	What further information or support do I need to help me achieve this?
In 3 months' time:		
In 6 months' time:		
In 12 months' time:		



## Appendix C

### Email Questionnaire Exemplar

Hi xxx, now that it has been 3 months since you completed your RLG programme it would be good to hear from you about your thoughts on the programme and what you are doing now. I would be very grateful if you could complete the short questionnaire below and send this email back to me by reply. Thank you!

#### What are you doing now?

- Employed
- Self-employed  Please explain:
- Unemployed
- In Education
- In Training
- Other  Please explain:

**In what way did the RLG programme help you to progress?**

**What did you find the most useful about the RLG programme?**

**What did you find the least useful about the RLG programme?**

**Would you recommend the programme to a friend, if not, why not?**

**Appendix D**

**Detailed Questionnaire**

**Name:**

**Date:**

<b>What are you doing now that the programme is finished?</b>	
<b>Is this what you hoped you would be doing by now? If not, why not?</b>	
<b>Have your goals changed since the RLG programme? If yes, please explain why.</b>	
<b>What did you gain most from the RLG programme?</b>	
<b>What did you enjoy about the programme?</b>	
<b>What did you like least about the programme?</b>	
<b>Would you recommend the RLG programme to others?</b>	

## Appendix E

### **On-line Surveys**

Here are some examples of surveys that are available free online:

#### **Google Forms**

<https://www.google.com/forms/about>

- Unlimited surveys
- Unlimited respondents
- Survey answers and data are automatically collected in Google Spreadsheets
- Lots of theme options
- Add your own custom logo
- Add images or videos
- Skip logic and page branching
- Imbed survey into emails or website
- Add collaborators

#### **Survey Monkey**

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/>

- 10 questions
- 100 respondents
- 15 question types
- Light theme customization and templates

#### **Doodle**

<https://doodle.com/online-survey>

#### **Survey Planet**

<https://surveyplanet.com/>