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AccessCareer

Enhancing Inclusive Access to Career Counselling

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Career Self-Management Handbook

A practical guide to understanding your skills, building your profile and taking the next career step

About this handbook

This handbook brings together resources for supporting career self-management at different stages. It was prepared within AccessCareer project for adults who may face social, economic, linguistic, digital or other barriers when accessing employment, learning and career guidance. The handbook does not assume that every person can or should use every digital resource independently. Instead, it shows which tools may be used directly and where support from a career counsellor, employment adviser, trainer, social worker or trusted support service may be helpful.

What career self-management means

Career self-management is the ability to understand your skills and interests, explore realistic opportunities, make decisions, build relevant skills, prepare applications and review your progress over time. It is an ongoing process rather than a single decision.

Who may find it useful?

- Adults seeking employment or returning to the labour market.
- Long-term unemployed people and people changing career direction.
- Migrants, refugees and third-country nationals navigating an unfamiliar labour market.
- Young adults and NEETs who need a structured starting point.
- Low-skilled adults or people whose experience is difficult to communicate.
- People facing digital, financial, language, disability-related or other access barriers.

How to use the handbook

1. Start with the chapter that best matches your current need.
2. Read the support label before opening a resource.
3. Check language, registration and digital-access requirements.
4. Use one resource at a time and record the result.
5. Translate the result into one concrete next action.

6. Ask for professional support when a resource feels difficult, inaccessible or unclear.

Support labels

Independent use possible: many users can start alone.

Independent use possible; support may help: the resource can be used alone, but guidance may improve results.

Support recommended: technical language, data or choices may be difficult to interpret alone.

Supported use recommended: the resource is designed mainly for use with a practitioner.

Important accessibility note

Free online access does not automatically mean that a resource is accessible to everyone. Internet connection, devices, email access, language, literacy, digital confidence and disability access may affect use. AccessCareer did not conduct an independent technical accessibility audit of the external platforms.

Your career self-management journey

Step	Focus	Outcome
1	Understand your starting point	Identify skills, experience, interests and transferable strengths.
2	Explore options	Compare occupations, skills requirements and labour-market demand.
3	Build skills	Choose realistic learning activities linked to a career goal.
4	Prepare applications	Create and tailor a clear CV and supporting information.
5	Search and apply	Use reliable vacancy channels, alerts and employment support.
6	Review and act	Track progress, build networks and update the action plan.

Step 1. Understand your starting point

Looking for an alternative in your language? Start with the website of your national or regional public employment service. Choose resources that clearly identify the provider, state whether they are free, explain registration requirements and provide privacy information. Avoid entering personal or payment data before checking the service conditions.

Career planning begins with a clear picture of what you already know, what you can do and what matters to you. Formal qualifications are only one part of the picture. Paid work, unpaid work, family responsibilities, volunteering, community participation and informal learning can also build relevant competences.

Before you start

Write down one question you want this step to answer and one result you want to keep. This will help prevent information overload.

Europass Profile

Inventory

What can this resource help you do?

Europass Profile is a free online tool developed by the European Commission that helps individuals identify, document and manage their skills, qualifications, work experience and achievements in one place. It supports career self-management by facilitating skills reflection, career planning and access to learning and employment opportunities

Recommended for	Multiple Disadvantaged Groups
Support level	Independent use possible; support may help
What you need	Language: Multilingual (31 European languages) Registration: yes Format: Online Tool

Recommended for	Multiple Disadvantaged Groups
Go to the resource	https://europass.europa.eu/en/europass-tools/europass-profile
Last checked	September 2026; external conditions may change

How to use it

Users can create and maintain a personal profile to record skills, qualifications, work experience and achievements.

The tool supports self-assessment, career planning, CV preparation and the identification of education, training and employment opportunities.

It can be used independently or within career guidance activities.

Strengths

- Free and officially supported by the European Commission
- Available in multiple languages
- Supports skills identification and career planning

Things to consider

- Registration is required
- Some users may need basic digital skills to create and maintain their profile
- The platform offers many features that may initially appear complex to inexperienced users

Accessibility and inclusion note

Available online, multilingual, accessible from different devices, allows users to store and update information over time.

Skills Builder Universal Framework

Language note: core content is primarily available in English. Automatic translation may support access, but translation quality can vary. Where possible, use the framework with a practitioner or verify whether an official or trusted adaptation exists in your language.

Life Skills

What can this resource help you do?

A free, open-source framework developed with businesses, educators and academics that breaks eight essential transferable skills into step-by-step levels, from beginner to mastery. It supports skills assessment, structured skill-building, and progress tracking for employability.

Recommended for	Long-term Unemployed
Support level	Independent use possible; support recommended
What you need	Language: Primarily English; embedded automatic translation may support additional languages Registration: Registration is required for the Skills Builder Benchmark self-assessment; framework information can be browsed online Format: Online Tool
Go to the resource	https://www.skillsbuilder.org/
Last checked	September 2026; external conditions may change

How to use it

Beneficiaries can self-assess where they currently sit on each of the 8 essential skills using the step-by-step framework, then track their own progress as they build up from basic to advanced levels; practitioners can use it to structure a coaching or training plan, set concrete skill-building goals, and evidence progress over time (useful for people with little formal work history, since progress is visible even from a very basic starting point).

Most useful at the skills assessment and skills-building stage — bridging the gap between self-awareness and being job-ready

Save or review the result and decide your next action.

Strengths

- Free, open-source and backed by years of research

- Applicable across education, employment and social-impact settings
- Breaks skills into small, measurable steps suitable for absolute beginners

Things to consider

- Licensed under a non-commercial, no-derivatives licence, limiting adaptation
- No published formal web accessibility compliance statement identified
- Originally developed in the UK and mainly in English, though used internationally

Accessibility and inclusion note

Free to access and download, usable for non-commercial purposes without payment, available as downloadable toolkits/PDFs, developed with input from disability and neurodivergence advisory groups

EU Skills Profile Tool for Third-Country Nationals

Inventory

What can this resource help you do?

Free multilingual online tool developed by the European Commission to help third-country nationals, including migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, document and communicate their skills, qualifications, work experience and language competences through a structured profiling process.

Recommended for	Migrants
Support level	Supported use recommended
What you need	Language: Nearly all official EU languages; supports bilingual use Registration: No Format: Online tool / assisted skills profiling tool
Go to the resource	https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1412&langId=en

Recommended for	Migrants
Last checked	September 2026; external conditions may change

How to use it

Primarily used in a guided one-to-one session with a career counsellor or caseworker. The beneficiary and practitioner jointly document education, vocational and informal training, work experience, language skills and personal circumstances. The resulting profile can support referrals to employment services, training, qualification-recognition pathways and subsequent CV preparation.

Strengths

- Free and maintained by the European Commission
- purpose-built for third-country nationals
- bilingual interface

Things to consider

- Designed mainly for guided use rather than independent self-service
- requires practitioner time
- does not provide vacancies or direct job matching

Accessibility and inclusion note

Free browser-based access and multilingual, bilingual use. Mobile use is possible. Formal accessibility for people with disabilities was not established in the partner assessment.

Step 2. Explore career options and labour-market opportunities

A realistic career decision connects personal interests and strengths with occupational requirements and labour-market conditions. Information tools can help, but they should not be treated as predictions or guarantees. Use them to ask better questions and identify options for further exploration.

Before you start

Write down one question you want this step to answer and one result you want to keep. This will help prevent information overload.

ESCO – European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations

Career exploration / Skills identification

What can this resource help you do?

A free European Commission multilingual platform that allows users to explore occupations and the skills, knowledge and competences associated with them. It supports career exploration, skills identification and understanding of labour-market requirements.

Recommended for	Job seekers, unemployed adults, career changers, adult learners, career counsellors and other individuals exploring occupations and skills
Support level	Support recommended for some users

Recommended for	Job seekers, unemployed adults, career changers, adult learners, career counsellors and other individuals exploring occupations and skills
What you need	Language: 28 languages, including Greek and English Registration: No for browsing/searching the ESCO classification; some additional functions such as dataset download may request details Format: Website / Online database and classification
Go to the resource	https://esco.ec.europa.eu/en
Last checked	September 2026; external conditions may change

How to use it

Beneficiaries can search occupations and explore the skills and competences associated with different career options.

Career practitioners can use ESCO during guidance sessions to discuss occupational profiles, identify existing skills and skills gaps, and support career or learning planning.

Save or review the result and decide your next action.

Strengths

- Free
- European Commission resource
- available in Greek

Things to consider

- It is primarily a classification/information resource rather than an interactive career-guidance tool
- the amount and technical nature of information may be overwhelming for some disadvantaged or low-skilled users without practitioner support.

Accessibility and inclusion note

Multilingual terminology including Greek; web-based access; structured occupational and skills information. Formal accessibility features should be verified separately.

Skills-OVATE

Language note: the tool interface and technical labour-market terminology are in English. If English is a barrier, use the resource with a career practitioner or consult labour-market information from a recognised national or regional employment service in your own language.

Labour-Market Intelligence / Career Planning

What can this resource help you do?

Free Cedefop labour-market intelligence tool analysing online job advertisements to provide information on skills, occupations and sectors in demand across European labour markets. It supports evidence-informed career exploration, planning and identification of skills-development needs.

Recommended for	Multiple Disadvantaged Groups
Support level	Support strongly recommended
What you need	Language: English Registration: No Format: Online tool
Go to the resource	https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/skills-online-vacancies
Last checked	September 2026; external conditions may change

How to use it

Users can explore occupations and sectors, examine skills appearing in online vacancies, compare labour-market patterns across countries and identify potential skills gaps.

Practitioners can use the data to support career exploration, upskilling/reskilling discussions and action planning.

Save or review the result and decide your next action.

Strengths

- European focus
- evidence-based labour-market intelligence



- supports informed career planning

Things to consider

- English only
- labour-market data may require guidance to interpret
- online vacancies do not represent the entire labour market

Accessibility and inclusion note

Free online access; no registration; accessibility for people with disabilities is not clearly established; English-only interface may create a language barrier

Step 3. Build the skills you need

Once a goal and a skills gap are identified, the next step is focused learning. Choose a manageable learning activity connected to a practical objective. Completing many unrelated courses is less useful than completing one relevant course and applying the learning.

Before you start

Write down one question you want this step to answer and one result you want to keep. This will help prevent information overload.

EU Academy

Language note: the platform interface is multilingual, but the language available can vary by individual course. Check the course language before enrolling and look for an equivalent course from a recognised public or educational provider if the content is not available in a language you understand.

Agency & Empowerment

What can this resource help you do?

A free European Commission online learning platform offering multilingual courses on a wide range of themes, including digital skills, entrepreneurship, languages, etc. It supports skills development, self-paced upskilling, and access, where available, to certificates or digital credentials that can document completed learning.

Recommended for	Multiple Disadvantaged Groups
Support level	Independent use possible; support may help
What you need	Language: Multilingual: The platform is accessible in over 35 languages, including non-European ones. Registration: Registration is required for the Skills Builder Benchmark self-assessment; framework information can be browsed online Format: Online Tool

Recommended for	Multiple Disadvantaged Groups
Go to the resource	https://academy.europa.eu/
Last checked	September 2026; external conditions may change

How to use it

Beneficiaries can independently browse and enrol in free online courses according to their learning and employability needs.

They can follow self-paced training, monitor their progress and, where available, obtain certificates or digital credentials.

The platform can support individual upskilling plans, particularly in areas such as digital skills, entrepreneurship, languages and financial literacy.

Strengths

- Free and officially supported by the European Commission
- Available in multiple languages
- Offers self-paced, flexible learning

Things to consider

- Requires a stable internet connection and basic digital literacy to navigate
- The level of accessibility may vary across individual courses and content types
- Course quality and depth can vary between topics

Accessibility and inclusion note

Available online, multilingual, accessible from different devices, allows users to store and update information over time. The platform offers online and multilingual access. The accessibility of individual courses and functions should be checked against the user's specific requirements.

IBM SkillsBuild

Language note: language availability varies by course. Check the language of the selected learning pathway before registering. If the course is not available in a language you understand, look for equivalent free training from a recognised public employment service, public education provider or trusted organisation.

Digital skills and employability / Skills development

What can this resource help you do?

A free online learning platform offering career-focused training in digital and professional skills, including AI, cybersecurity, data and workplace skills. It supports adults entering employment, changing careers or developing skills for career progression.

Recommended for	Adult learners, job seekers, unemployed adults, career changers, low-skilled adults and individuals seeking digital/professional upskilling
Support level	Independent use possible; support may help
What you need	Language: 20+ languages; availability varies by course. English and several other major languages available. Greek availability is not confirmed. Registration: Registration is required for the Skills Builder Benchmark self-assessment; framework information can be browsed online Format: Website / E-learning platform / Online courses
Go to the resource	https://skillsbuild.org/adult-learners
Last checked	September 2026; external conditions may change

How to use it

Beneficiaries can independently select learning pathways and courses to develop employment-related digital and professional skills.

Career practitioners can recommend specific courses based on identified skills gaps and incorporate them into individual career-development/action plans.



Save or review the result and decide your next action.

Strengths

- Free
- career-focused
- self-paced

Things to consider

- Registration is required for the full learning experience and credentials
- Greek does not appear to be available across the platform
- requires basic digital literacy and internet access

Accessibility and inclusion note

Online access from different devices; multilingual content; self-paced learning. Specific accessibility features should be verified for individual courses.

Step 4. Prepare your job application

A CV should make relevant experience easy to understand. The purpose is not to record every life event, but to show evidence that matches the opportunity. People with fragmented or informal experience may benefit from support in identifying transferable skills before writing the CV.

Before you start

Write down one question you want this step to answer and one result you want to keep. This will help prevent information overload.

CV Maker

Language note: this resource is available in Italian. If needed, look for a free CV builder offered by a recognised public employment service or trusted employment organisation in your country and language. Check costs, registration requirements and privacy conditions before entering personal data.

Job Application Support

What can this resource help you do?

Free online CV creation tool that guides users through the development of a professional curriculum vitae using structured templates and practical suggestions. The tool helps users highlight their skills and experience in a clear and effective way.

Recommended for	Multiple Disadvantaged Groups
Support level	Independent use possible
What you need	Language: Italian Registration: no Format: Online Tool

Recommended for	Multiple Disadvantaged Groups
Go to the resource	https://www.adecco.com/it-it/cvmaker
Last checked	September 2026; external conditions may change

How to use it

Used by job seekers to create, review and improve their CV independently.

It can also be integrated into career guidance sessions, employability workshops and job-search support activities led by counsellors and trainers

Save or review the result and decide your next action.

Strengths

- Free and easy to access
- user-friendly interface
- supports individuals with limited CV-writing experience

Things to consider

- Available only in Italian
- focused specifically on CV creation rather than broader career planning
- requires basic digital skills.

Accessibility and inclusion note

Online access from desktop and mobile devices; intuitive interface; no specialised knowledge required.

Step 5. Search and apply for opportunities

Job search is more effective when it is structured. Define target roles, use reliable channels, create alerts, record applications and review results. Online portals can widen access but do not remove language, qualification, transport, discrimination or caring barriers.

Before you start

Write down one question you want this step to answer and one result you want to keep. This will help prevent information overload.

EURES

Job Search / Career Planning

What can this resource help you do?

Free European employment support portal providing access to job vacancies, labour-market information, guidance and employment support services. It supports job search, career exploration, application preparation and European employment mobility.

Recommended for	Multiple Disadvantaged Groups
Support level	Independent use possible; support may help
What you need	Language: Multiple European languages Registration: Yes Format: Online platform
Go to the resource	https://eures.europa.eu/index_en

Recommended for	Multiple Disadvantaged Groups
Last checked	September 2026; external conditions may change

How to use it

Users can search and filter vacancies, explore labour-market and working conditions information, review employment guidance and access EURES Advisers.

Practitioners can use selected vacancies and labour-market information for guided job-search and application activities.

Save or review the results and decide your next action.

Strengths

- Free
- European coverage
- direct access to employment opportunities

Things to consider

- Digital skills may be required
- vacancy terminology can be difficult for some users
- does not guarantee employment

Accessibility and inclusion note

Multilingual interface; online access; accessibility features available, although suitability may vary by user needs and content

Empléate – Portal Único de Empleo

Language and geographic note: this portal is mainly in Spanish and is intended primarily for job search in Spain. For another country or language, use the official national or regional public employment service and verify the provider, costs, registration and privacy conditions.

Job Search

What can this resource help you do?

Official Spanish public employment portal operated by SEPE. It brings together vacancies from the National Employment System, regional public employment services and participating job boards, and provides job alerts and labour-market information to support structured job search.

Recommended for	Multiple Disadvantaged Groups
Support level	Independent use possible; support may help
What you need	Language: Spanish; some sections may be available in co-official regional languages Registration: Yes for alerts and saved profiles; browsing is possible without registration Format: Website / Online Tool
Go to the resource	https://www.empleate.gob.es
Last checked	September 2026; external conditions may change

How to use it

Users can browse and filter vacancies by location, sector and contract type.

Registered users can create a candidate profile, save searches and receive personalised alerts.

Career practitioners can support first-time registration, help users define realistic search criteria and use current vacancy information during guidance and application-preparation activities.

Strengths

- Free official government portal
- aggregates public employment vacancies
- regional and sector filters

Things to consider

- Primarily available in Spanish
- personalised functions require registration, an email address and basic digital skills
- does not itself provide skills profiling or CV-building support



D3.2 Career Self-management Tools Development

AccessCareer
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Accessibility and inclusion note

Browser-based and mobile friendly. Full personalised use requires an email address and registration. Primarily available in Spanish. Formal accessibility for people with disabilities was not established in the partner assessment.

Practical page 1. Build and use your network

Networking is not limited to formal business events. A network can include former colleagues, teachers, neighbours, community organisations, public employment services, volunteering contacts and online communities. The objective is not to ask everyone for a job, but to improve access to information, advice and opportunities.

- ☐ List five people or organisations that may know about work, training or support opportunities.
- ☐ Prepare a two-sentence introduction explaining what you are looking for.
- ☐ Ask for information or advice rather than immediately asking for employment.
- ☐ Attend one local or online event related to the target sector.
- ☐ Record who you contacted, what was discussed and the next follow-up date.
- ☐ Respect privacy and do not share sensitive personal documents openly.

Practical page 2. Create a safe professional online presence

- ☐ Search your own name and review publicly visible information.
- ☐ Use a clear professional summary aligned with the roles you are seeking.
- ☐ Check spelling, dates and consistency across profiles and CVs.
- ☐ Review privacy settings before uploading documents.
- ☐ Do not publish identity documents, addresses, private phone numbers or sensitive personal data.
- ☐ Verify job offers and avoid requests for payment, banking credentials or unnecessary personal data.

Practical page 3. Prepare for an interview

- ☐ Re-read the vacancy and highlight the three most important requirements.
- ☐ Prepare one short example showing each relevant skill.
- ☐ Practise explaining career gaps or changes factually and briefly.
- ☐ Prepare two questions about the role, workplace or next steps.
- ☐ Plan transport, accessibility, technology and timing in advance.
- ☐ Ask for reasonable adjustments when needed and appropriate.

Practical page 4. Consider work-related costs

A job or training opportunity may involve costs that affect whether the option is realistic. The following prompts support planning and are not financial advice.

Possible cost	My estimate	Possible support or solution
Transport		
Childcare or dependent care		
Clothing or equipment		
Internet or device		
Training or certification		
Relocation or accommodation		



Personal Career Action Plan

Planning question	My answer
My current career goal	
Strengths I can use	
The main gap I need to address	
Resource I will use	
Action I will complete	
Target date	
Person or service that can support me	
How I will know I have made progress	
Review date	

Final next-step checklist

- ☐ I can describe my main skills and experience.
- ☐ I have identified one or more realistic target roles.
- ☐ I understand at least one skills gap or learning priority.
- ☐ My CV or professional profile is updated.
- ☐ I have selected reliable vacancy channels and alerts.
- ☐ I know what support I may need and where to ask for it.
- ☐ I have one next action and a review date.

Glossary

Term	Meaning
Career self-management	The ongoing process of understanding, planning and acting on learning and career goals.
Transferable skill	A skill that can be used across different roles or settings.
Skills gap	The difference between current skills and the skills needed for a goal.
Labour-market information	Information about occupations, vacancies, sectors, skills demand and working conditions.
Digital credential	Digital evidence of learning or achievement, subject to the issuing organisation's conditions.
Professional support	Assistance from a counsellor, employment adviser, trainer, social worker or relevant service.



D3.2 Career Self-management Tools Development

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External resources disclaimer

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