

Career Guidance from an Early Age

CAGEA

2024-1-PT01-KA220-SCH-000244779

Final research report





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СРЕДНО ЕКОНОМСКО И ПРАВНО УЧИЛИШТЕ НА ГРАД СКОПЈЕ

Васил Антевски - Дрен

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1. Introduction

The **Career Guidance from an Early Age (CAGEA)** project responds to a critical and timely need across Europe: the urgent requirement to empower young people, their teachers, and their families to engage meaningfully in career development. Secondary school students face growing uncertainty about their future educational and professional paths, while teachers often lack training in career guidance and parents need practical tools to support their children in these decisions.

This **Final Report of Work Package 2 (WP2)** represents the backbone of that mission. It consolidates extensive research, real-life data, and proven best practices from five partner countries—**Bulgaria, Greece, North Macedonia, Portugal, and Spain**—to form a robust knowledge base. The outcomes presented here will serve as the **foundation for the next project outputs**, including:

- the *Career Guidance Manual* for teachers and families,
- the *Learning Nuggets Pack* (short audiovisual resources), and
- the *CAGEA Digital Platform*.

Purpose and Aim of the Document

The aim of this report is to:

- **Map existing practices:** document 37 examples of innovative and inclusive career guidance programs across partner countries, ranging from state-led strategies to grassroots initiatives.
- **Capture needs and perspectives:** gather insights from the main stakeholders—**students, teachers, and parents**—to better understand expectations, gaps, and challenges.
- **Provide an evidence base:** supply comparative analysis and recommendations that will directly inform the design of new pedagogical tools.

This document is therefore not only a descriptive review but also a **strategic step** in building practical resources that schools can use to reduce early school leaving, improve student confidence in decision-making, and connect education with the realities of the labor market.

Research Methodology & Participants

To ensure reliability and comparability, the consortium adopted a **mixed-methods approach**:

- **Desk Research:** identification and documentation of **37 good practices** in career guidance.
- **Surveys:** distributed via *Google Forms*, adapted for each target group.
- **Focus Groups & Qualitative Inputs:** conducted to deepen understanding and validate findings.

Altogether, the research engaged **800 participants across five countries**:

- **150 teachers and guidance staff** (30 per partner),
- **500 secondary school students** aged 13–18 (100 per partner),
- **150 parents** of secondary school students (30 per partner).

This breadth of participation ensures that the report reflects a **balanced picture of the school ecosystem**: the learners themselves, those who guide them in the classroom, and those who support them at home.

Strategy and European Dimension

CAGEA builds on European frameworks such as the **EU Skills Agenda** and the **EU Youth Strategy 2019–2027**, addressing priorities of inclusion, employability, and teacher support. The general strategy is to **equip teachers with guidance competences, empower parents as active partners, and help students discover their strengths and pathways**.

Timeline

According to the project's Gantt chart, WP2 research activities were carried out between **December 2024 and May 2025**, starting with the kick-off meeting in Portugal, followed by national desk research, survey deployment, focus groups, and culminating in the preparation of this final report.

Structure of the Document

The report is organised into two main parts, each designed to guide the reader clearly through the research process and findings:

1. **National Desk Research & Best Practices** – This section presents the results of partner research into existing initiatives and models of career guidance. Each country contribution includes documented best practices, organised in a comparable format.
2. **Stakeholder Needs Assessment** – This section presents the voices of the three main groups involved in career guidance—**teachers, students, and parents**—organised into thematic **blocks of questions**.

Each block contains:

- **Survey questions** (closed Likert-scale items and open-ended prompts),
- **Quantitative results** displayed in comparative tables and graphs across the five partner countries,
- **Qualitative findings** from open reflections and focus groups, including coded themes and representative quotes,
- **Key cross-demographic insights** (e.g. by gender, years of teaching),
- **Block-level conclusions**, highlighting the most important findings,
- **Practical recommendations for the Career Guidance Manual**, linking research directly to the design of training tools and classroom activities.

2. Final Conclusion

The CAGEA WP2 research reveals a compelling, multilayered picture of the current state of career guidance in secondary education across Europe—and the urgent need for reform. From in-depth desk research to rich feedback from students, teachers, and parents, the findings converge around a simple but powerful message: career guidance must start earlier, be more personal, and engage the whole educational ecosystem.

From the Desk Research & Good Practises

The CAGEA consortium compiled 37 career development programs from Bulgaria, Greece, North Macedonia, Portugal, and Spain. These were identified through desk research as exemplary or innovative initiatives that support the career education of students from secondary to post-secondary levels. While they vary in structure and scope, many share common themes that reflect broader European priorities for guidance reform:

- **Self-awareness and interest exploration:** Almost all programs help students understand their personality, values, and career interests (e.g. “Career Skills” in Bulgaria, “Discovering Myself” in Greece)
- **Decision-making and planning support:** Programs like Portugal’s “EEGuiding Your Way” or North Macedonia’s “Career Planning in Schools” explicitly target structured decision-making skills
- **Employability and adaptability training:** Several initiatives develop transferable skills, entrepreneurship, or workplace readiness (e.g. Spain’s “Horizonte Talento”, Portugal’s “Gulbenkian Knowledge Academies”)
- **Digital and online access:** Many best practices utilize online platforms or mobile-accessible content to increase accessibility and reach (e.g. Bulgaria’s national career portal, Greece’s AESOP)
- **Institutional cooperation:** Successful models often rely on partnerships between schools, ministries, employers, and NGOs—illustrated by Macedonia’s USAID-supported career centers or Spain’s regional collaborations.

Teachers

Teachers overwhelmingly recognize the importance of career guidance—but also admit that they feel ill-equipped. Their feedback highlights:

- Lack of time and structured tools in the current curriculum
- A strong desire for training, especially on digital platforms and labor market trends
- Willingness to integrate guidance into their subjects if given practical resources
- Frustration with the absence of institutional frameworks or support for guidance

Many teachers play informal guidance roles already, particularly in small schools or rural areas. However, this often depends on individual initiative rather than systemic inclusion. Teachers want to support students more effectively, but need strategic investment and simplified, ready-to-use materials.

Students

Students across partner countries voiced a shared concern: they are expected to make important life decisions with minimal support or preparation. Key challenges include:

- Low awareness of career options beyond familiar professions
- Lack of confidence in making decisions about the future
- Difficulty linking school subjects to real jobs
- Overwhelm from too many choices without guidance

Yet students also expressed high motivation to learn more about themselves, explore new ideas, and feel prepared for life after school. They value practical tools, opportunities for conversation, and formats that respect their individuality. Digital tools, gamified content, and peer engagement were among the most appreciated forms of interaction.

Parents

Parents emerged as an untapped resource. Their responses revealed:

- High emotional investment in their children's future success
- Strong willingness to support guidance efforts at home
- A shared sense of confusion and lack of direction—many feel excluded or uninformed

Parents often don't know where to find reliable information or how to talk constructively about careers. Some worry about giving the "wrong" advice or applying pressure. However,

they are deeply motivated to listen, encourage, and become involved—if schools offer the right tools and communication.

Key parent needs include:

- Visual career pathway maps
- Conversation guides for interest discovery
- Access to trustworthy digital resources
- Opportunities for school-family collaboration without requiring expertise

Common Themes and Strategic Implications

Across all groups, we identified five urgent themes for action:

1. **Start Early:** Career guidance cannot wait until upper secondary. Identity exploration and soft skills must begin in lower secondary education, when habits and aspirations take shape.
2. **Empower the Ecosystem:** Teachers and parents both want to help, but lack resources. Career education must be designed as a shared task—with training, templates, and trust-building.
3. **Make Guidance Practical and Visual:** Students need clear, digestible tools that link their studies, interests, and job realities. Gamified tasks, posters, and self-assessment quizzes work better than long texts or theoretical models.
4. **Connect to the Real World:** Role models, workplace exposure, and project-based learning make career ideas tangible. These experiences reduce anxiety, broaden perspectives, and foster agency.
5. **Leverage Digital Tools:** Online platforms, simulations, mobile apps, and learning nuggets are not optional—they're essential. Career guidance must meet students where they are: online, mobile, and social.

3. National Desk Research & Good Practices

Introduction of the Desk Research & Good Practices

This report compiles **37** distinct career development and educational programs implemented across Bulgaria, Greece, North Macedonia, Portugal, and Spain, highlighting them as recognized best practices in the field. As part of the CAGEA project, partners conducted extensive desk research to identify the most effective career guidance methodologies and best practices tailored for secondary school students in all participating countries in the consortium. Under the leadership of Auth, who provided direction, this study highlights initiatives designed to support secondary school students, young people, and university students. These programs focus on fostering self-awareness, exploring career interests, strengthening decision-making skills, and enhancing adaptability for future career transitions. Their overarching aim is to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to make well-informed educational and career choices, whether pursuing further studies or entering the workforce. Additionally, these initiatives serve as valuable resources for educators and career counselors who guide and support students in their career development journey.

Conclusion of the Desk Research & Good Practices

Career development programs across Bulgaria, Greece, North Macedonia, Portugal, and Spain share several common practices aimed at supporting students in making informed educational and career decisions. A key focus is on **self-awareness** and **career interests exploration**, with programs like Bulgaria's *"Career Skills"* and Greece's *"Discovering Myself"* helping students understand their personality traits, interests, and talents. Additionally, many initiatives emphasize **decision-making skills**, such as Portugal's *"EEGuiding Your Way"* and North Macedonia's *"Career Planning in Schools"*, which provide tools to enhance students' ability to make informed career choices. Programs also prioritize skills development for **employability**, including North Macedonia's *"Establishment of Career Centers in High Schools"* and Spain's *"Horizonte Talento Project"*, which equip students with essential workplace competencies. **Career adaptability** and **resilience** is another common theme, with Greece's *"Skills Development Program on Career Adaptability"* and Portugal's *"Gulbenkian Knowledge Academies"* preparing students for career transitions. **Entrepreneurial thinking** is also encouraged through initiatives like Spain's *"Empresa Familiar en las Aulas"* and Portugal's *"Innovation Summer School by Unicorn Factory Lisboa"*.

Moreover, many programs integrate online platforms and digital tools, such as Bulgaria's *"National Portal for Career Guidance for Students"* and Greece's *"National Portal for Lifelong Career Development"*, offering accessible career planning resources. Lastly, collaborative efforts between educational institutions, government bodies, and organizations—such as North Macedonia's career centers supported by USAID and the Ministry of Education and Science—highlight the importance of partnerships in delivering effective career guidance.

These shared practices reflect a commitment to equipping students with the knowledge and skills needed for a successful future.

Overall, the comprehensive overview of career development programs in Bulgaria, Greece, North Macedonia, Portugal, and Spain demonstrates the diverse and innovative strategies employed to support students in their career exploration and development. These initiatives not only enhance self-awareness and decision-making skills but also prepare students for future career transitions, contributing to improved educational choices and greater future career satisfaction. As the project continues to evolve, it is poised to make a lasting impact on the career journeys of young people, ultimately helping them achieve their full potential in the ever-changing labor market.

Career Development Programs by countries

This report compiles **37** distinct career development and educational programs implemented across Bulgaria, Greece, North Macedonia, Portugal, and Spain, highlighting them as recognized best practices in the field. As part of the CAGEA project, partners conducted extensive desk research to identify the most effective career guidance methodologies and best practices tailored for secondary school students in all participating countries in the consortium. Under the leadership of Auth, who provided direction, this study highlights initiatives designed to support secondary school students, young people, and university students. These programs focus on fostering self-awareness, exploring career interests, strengthening decision-making skills, and enhancing adaptability for future career transitions. Their overarching aim is to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to make well-informed educational and career choices, whether pursuing further studies or entering the workforce. Additionally, these initiatives serve as valuable resources for educators and career counselors who guide and support students in their career development journey.

Bulgaria

8 career development programs were collected from Bulgaria and they were the following

1. National Portal for Career Guidance for Students

The Ministry of Education and Science has developed an online platform offering career guidance resources for students, parents, and teachers. The portal includes career assessment tools, interactive exercises, thematic videos, and handbooks on best practices.

Institution/Organization: Ministry of Education

Age Group: 7-18 years

Educational Level: Elementary to Secondary

Specific Groups: NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training)

Themes: All (including program for teachers on career consulting)

Program Link: https://orientirane.mon.bg/program/resources?utm_source=chatgpt.com

2. Career Skills

The Career Skills project established a European Career Skills Platform with over 670 users and 3,200 unique visitors. The platform includes a competency framework, an online self-assessment tool, and a free online course to help individuals develop career-related skills.

Institution/Organization: Business Foundation for Education

Age Group: 19+ (Adult learners)

Educational Level: Secondary and Adult Education

Themes:

- Self-awareness,
- Labor market knowledge,
- Career planning,
- Employment skills,
- Resilience,
- Problem-solving,
- Self-employment,
- Creativity,
- Collaboration,
- Communication,
- Leadership,
- Curiosity

Program Link: <https://app.career-skills.eu/en>

3. CRAFT – Coworking in Rural Areas

CRAFT, an Erasmus+ initiative, prepares young people for evolving job markets with training in career planning, entrepreneurship, and the circular economy. It uses a 3D virtual learning

environment with serious games, digital escape rooms, and interactive challenges.

Institution/Organization: Business Foundation for Education and Sofia University

Age Group: Adults

Educational Level: Adult Education

Specific Groups: People from rural areas

Themes: All

Program Link: <https://www.facebook.com/EUprojectCRAFT>

4. Career Lessons Instead of Free Classes

This initiative replaces free classes with career development sessions. School specialists use structured resources, tests, and activities to teach students about career planning and professional skills. Career guidance is integrated into the curriculum, making learning more engaging.

Institution/Organization: Vocational High School of Electrical Engineering and Electronics "M.V. Lomonosov"

Age Group: 13-19 years

Educational Level: Secondary (VET)

Specific Groups: N/A

Themes: All

Program Link: <http://lomonosov-go.com/>

5. GLOBAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT FACILITATOR (GCDF) Program

The Global Career Development Facilitator (GCDF) Program is a globally recognized certification program for career counselors. It focuses on career counseling theories, ethics, labor market insights, and training professionals to provide quality career services. Participants complete training, practical experience, and continuous learning.

Institution/Organization: Business Foundation for Education

Age Group: Adults

Educational Level: Tertiary and above

Themes:

- Career theories,
- Assessment,
- Helping skills,
- Labor market knowledge,
- Ethics,
- Technology in counseling, and more

Program Link: <https://fbo.bg/>

6. Orientirane@ / No Aim No Game

This free-access platform trains career consultants in coaching skills and provides online career counseling for students. The program includes tests, virtual games, group coaching in virtual classrooms, and independent work, fostering a proactive approach to career planning.

Institution/Organization: Educational Cooperation Foundation (ECF)

Age Group: 17-19 years

Educational Level: Secondary

Specific Groups: N/A

Themes: All

Program Link: <https://ecf.bg/proffesional-orientation/>

7. Career Orientation in Sofia Municipality

The center provides career guidance through group activities, individual counseling, teacher training, and career-related forums and competitions. Services are designed to help students explore professions, build self-awareness, and make informed career decisions.

Institution/Organization: Municipal Center for Personal Development Support – Career Orientation and Counseling – Sofia

Age Group: 7-19 years

Educational Level: Elementary and Secondary

Specific Groups: N/A

Themes: All

Program Link: <https://karierno-orientirane.com/>

8. MOST Learning

MOST Learning offers two programs: (1) "Step by Step" guides individuals through career selection and employment preparation, and (2) Career Orientation Exercises for 1st-7th grade students, helping them explore professions in an interactive way.

Institution/Organization: New Bulgarian University

Age Group: 7-13 (Students) & Adults

Educational Level: Elementary, Secondary, and Tertiary

Specific Groups: N/A

Themes: All

Program Link: <https://most-learning.net/moodle/>

Greece

In Greece, 9 best practices were collected and they were the following

1. Discovering Myself (2015)

This program allows students to explore their personality traits, identify their interests, and connect their educational choices to possible career options. Through self-disclosure exercises, students engage in a reflective process that helps them understand how their personality and interests relate to future careers.

Institution: Institute of Educational Policy - AESOP Platform

Target Group: Secondary school students (12-15 years)

Focus Areas:

- Self-awareness
- Career interests exploration

Program Link: <https://aesop.iep.edu.gr/node/6206>

2. Exploring My Interests and Professions

This research-based program helps students identify their career interests, set professional goals, and practice effective decision-making strategies. The focus is on gathering reliable career information and exploring how academic decisions can lead to future career opportunities.

Institution: Institute of Educational Policy - AESOP Platform

Target Group: Secondary school students (12-15 years)

Focus Areas:

- Career interests exploration
- Decision-making skills

Program Link: <https://aesop.iep.edu.gr/node/19281>

3. Skills Development Program on Career Adaptability for Secondary Education Students

This program is designed to help students build career adaptability skills and prepare them for the transition from school to the workforce. It includes 7 weekly sessions focused on developing key traits necessary for adapting to changing career environments. The sessions feature group exercises, creative writing, and role-playing.

Institution: Center for Research and Evaluation in Career Counseling, National Kapodistrian University of Athens

Target Group: Secondary school students (12-18 years)

Focus Area:

- Career adaptability and resilience

Program Link:

http://keaes.ppp.uoa.gr/fileadmin/keaes.ppp.uoa.gr/uploads/Ereynitika_Programmata/programma_prosarmostikotitas_gia_mathites_me_Athina.pdf

4. Career Counseling for Supporting NEETs: Experiential Exercises, Activities, and Tools

This toolkit aims to activate NEETs through a series of experiential exercises and activities, assisting them in their educational, professional, and social reintegration. It provides career counselors with practical tools for guiding these young individuals toward suitable career paths.

Institution: National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP)

Target Group: NEETs (Young people not in education, employment, or training), ages 15-29

Focus Areas:

- Self-awareness
- Decision-making skills
- Skills development for employability
- Goal-setting and evaluation

Program Link: https://www.eoppep.gr/images/SYEP/2_NEETs_exercises.pdf

5. National Portal for Lifelong Career Development – Work Values Test

This online test assesses an individual's work values, helping them understand what motivates them in a professional context. It is designed for those making educational or career decisions.

Institution: Pedagogical Institute of Greece - National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP)

Target Group: Students, university students, unemployed individuals, etc., ages 15-29

Focus Area:

- Work values and attitudes

Program Link: <https://e-stadiodromia.eoppep.gr/index.php/test-nominative>

6. Test National Portal for Lifelong Career Development – Career Interests

This online career interest test helps individuals identify their professional interests and explore various career paths. It is a valuable tool for those considering educational choices or career directions.

Institution: Pedagogical Institute of Greece - National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP)

Target Group: Students, university students, unemployed individuals, etc., ages 15-29

Focus Area:

- Career interests' exploration

Program Link: <https://e-stadiodromia.eoppep.gr/index.php/interest-test>

7. National Portal for Lifelong Career Development – Career Decision-Making Test

This online test aids individuals in evaluating their decision-making skills in the context of career choices. It is designed to help users reflect on and refine their approach to making educational and career decisions.

Institution: Pedagogical Institute of Greece - National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP)

Target Group: Students, university students, unemployed individuals, etc., ages 15-29

Focus Area:

- Decision-making skills

Program Link: <https://e-stadiodromia.eoppep.gr/index.php/business-decisions-test>

8. Integrated Career Education Programme

This program provides a guide for planning, monitoring, and evaluating career education activities, with a focus on helping students reflect on their goals and assess different career paths.

Institution: National Kapodistrian University of Athens

Target Group: Secondary school students (12-18 years)

Focus Areas:

- Self-awareness
- Career interests exploration
- Decision-making skills
- Career adaptability

Program Link: <https://e-stadiodromia.eoppep.gr/images/programma-agogis.pdf>

9. Youth Achieve

This program is designed to enhance the skills necessary for future career success by focusing on self-awareness, career exploration, and goal setting. It prepares students for the transition from school to the workplace.

Institution: Junior Achievement Greece

Target Group: Secondary school students (12-18 years)

Focus Areas:

- Self-awareness
- Decision-making skills
- Career exploration

- Skills development for employability

Program Link: <https://youthachieve.jagreece.org/>

North Macedonia

6 career development programs were collected from North Macedonia and they were the following

1. Establishment of Career Centers in High Schools

Since 2015, 52 career centers have been established in high schools across North Macedonia to provide career counseling, job market insights, and employability training. These centers are run by educators and psychologists and aim to support students in making informed career choices.

Institution: USAID, YES Network, Ministry of Education and Science

Target Group: Secondary education students (15-18 years)

Focus Areas:

- Self-awareness,
- Career exploration,
- Decision-making,
- Employability skills

Program Link: <https://euroguidance.eu/guidance-system-in-north-macedonia>

2. Annual Career Fairs

Career fairs expose students to career opportunities, company insights, and networking. These events help students explore future pathways, particularly those in vocational education and training (VET).

Institution: Various Macedonian and International Companies

Target Group: Secondary and tertiary education students (15-18 years)

Key Themes:

- Career exploration,
- Employability skills

Program Link: <https://epale.ec.europa.eu/en/blog/guidance-system-north-macedonia>

3. Professional Orientation Services by the Employment Agency

The Employment Agency provides career counseling, professional assessments, and job market guidance to assist students and job seekers in identifying suitable career paths.

Institution: Employment Agency of the Republic of North Macedonia

Target Group: Secondary education students, unemployed youth, and individuals with disabilities

Focus Areas:

- Self-awareness,
- Career exploration,
- Decision-making,
- Employability skills

Program Link: <https://av.gov.mk/professional-orientation.nspix>

4. Career Planning in Schools

A career planning elective subject that introduces students to career counseling, labor market trends, and decision-making strategies.

Institution: SEPUGS "Vasil Antevski -Dren"

Target Group: Secondary education students (15-18 years)

Key Themes:

- Self-awareness
- Career exploration
- Work values
- Decision-making
- Employability skills
- Other

Program Link: <https://csoo.edu.mk/pocetna/obrazoven-proces/profesionalen-karieren-razvoj/>

5. Career Counseling by Mladi Hub

A mentoring program offering individual and group counseling sessions to assist students in career decision-making.

Institution: National Youth Council of Macedonia

Target Group: Secondary education students (15-18 years)

Key Themes:

- Self-awareness
- Career exploration
- Decision-making
- Employability skills

Program Link: <https://mladihub.mk/programd/13>

6. Junior Achievement Macedonia

A financial literacy and entrepreneurship program designed to develop leadership, teamwork, and business skills through innovation camps and trade fairs.

Institution: Junior Achievement Macedonia

Target Group: Secondary education students (15-18 years)

Key Themes:

- Self-awareness,
- Career exploration,
- Decision-making,
- Employability skills

Program Link: <https://jamacedonia.mk/web/>

Portugal

5 best practices were collected from Portugal and they were the following

1. 100 'Knowledge Academies'

The "Gulbenkian Knowledge Academies" initiative aims to develop social and emotional skills in 10,000 children and young people. The goal was to identify, experiment with, and disseminate inspiring models that support the development of skills and help express talents. The Academies are locally driven by organizations focused on nurturing the potential of youth under 25 years old. These initiatives offer activities across various fields, such as arts, science, community, culture, sports, education, health, and technology, based on reference methodologies and experimental strategies.

Institution: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation

Target Group: Youth aged up to 25

Focus Areas:

- Decision-making skills
- Career adaptability and resilience
- Skills development for employability
- Entrepreneurship

Program Link: <https://gulbenkian.pt/academias/>

2. EEGuiding Your Way

This mentoring program links students from EEG (School of Economics and Management) of Universidade do Minho to successful professionals in their academic fields. The program

includes eight weekly sessions focused on career construction, with a strong emphasis on career adaptability. The mentoring process also provides opportunities for networking, skill development, and knowledge exchange between students and alumni, boosting students' career planning, decision-making, and employability.

Institution: Universidade do Minho

Target Group: University students (ages 19-25)

Focus Areas:

- Skills development for employability
- Entrepreneurship

Program Link:

<https://www.eeg.uminho.pt/en/Interacao/gabinete%20de%20carreiras/Pages/eeguiding-your-way.aspx>

3. Innovation Summer School by Unicorn Factory Lisboa

A two-week program designed for high school students, this summer school provides hands-on experience in innovation and entrepreneurship. Students collaborate to design and pitch new business ideas aimed at solving real-world challenges faced by corporations.

Institution: Unicorn Factory Lisboa

Target Group: High school students

Focus Areas:

- Skills development for employability
- Entrepreneurship

Program Link: <https://unicornfactorylisboa.com/for-students/summer-school-2024/>

4. Qualifica Centres

The Qualifica Centres specialize in adult education and qualification, guiding individuals through tailored pathways based on their life and professional experience. They focus on qualifications that improve employability and support entrepreneurship. The program includes soft skills training, life themes relevant to the labor market, and a focus on professional development.

Institution: Portuguese Ministry of Education

Target Group: Adults (from 18 years old)

Focus Areas:

- Skills development for employability
- Entrepreneurship

Program Link: <https://www.qualifica.gov.pt/#/>

5. Educational and Guidance Psychology Services (SPO)

The SPO provides psycho-pedagogical support, career guidance, and educational counseling to students across various educational levels. It aims to help students in their personal and professional development, working closely with school management, health services, and social welfare to ensure appropriate career guidance and decision-making support.

Institution: Ministry of Education

Target Group: Primary to secondary school students

Focus Areas:

- Self-awareness
- Career interests exploration
- Work values and attitudes
- Decision-making skills
- Career adaptability and resilience
- Skills development for employability

Program Link: <https://www.dge.mec.pt/>

Spain

9 best practices were collected from Spain and they were the following

1. Programa de Orientación Académica y Profesional del Colegio San José

This program provides continuous academic and professional guidance for students from early education through secondary school. It focuses on promoting informed decision-making related to students' academic and career futures. Activities include self-awareness exercises, detailed information on educational and career paths, workplace visits, and personalized counseling for both students and families. The goal is to equip students with the necessary tools for future career exploration.

Institution: Colegio San José, Medina del Campo

Target Group: Students aged 12-16 (Secondary Education)

Focus Areas:

- Self-awareness
- Career interests exploration
- Decision-making skills
- Career adaptability and resilience

Program Link: <https://euroguidance-spain.educacionfpydeportes.gob.es/orientacion-profesional-espana.html>

2. Empresa Familiar en las Aulas Programa in Castilla y León

This initiative fosters an entrepreneurial mindset by showcasing family-owned businesses in the region. The program offers students talks and company visits, allowing them to gain real-world insights into business operations and local employment opportunities. This hands-on experience aims to inspire future entrepreneurs.

Institution: Asociación Empresa Familiar de Castilla y León (EFCL) and the Department of Education

Target Group: Students aged 12-18 (Secondary Education and Baccalaureate)

Focus Areas:

- Career interests exploration
- Entrepreneurship

Program Link: <https://cadenaser.com/castillayleon/2025/02/03/empresa-familiar-en-las-aulas-arranca-en-palencia-con-cerca-de-200-estudiantes-radio-palencia/>

3. Horizonte Talento Project in Aragón

The Horizonte Talento project aims to position Aragón as a European technological hub. It provides educational programs for students at all levels, with a focus on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics). Students engage in workshops on robotics and programming, attend STEAM camps, and participate in hackathons. The project is supported by key partners like Microsoft and Fundación Hiberus.

Institution: Government of Aragón, Fundación Ibercaja, and Tecnara

Target Group: Students aged 6-18 (Primary and Secondary Education)

Focus Areas:

- Skills development for employability
- Entrepreneurship

Program Link: <https://cadenaser.com/aragon/2025/02/05/el-gobierno-de-aragon-impulsa-la-formacion-steam-con-el-proyecto-horizonte-talento-radio-zaragoza/>

4. Atrévete Program in Galicia

The Atrévete program is designed to encourage entrepreneurial thinking among secondary school students. It includes company visits, meetings with entrepreneurs, and hands-on workshops that provide students with real-world experience in the business world. The initiative aims to develop key entrepreneurial skills and foster an innovative mindset.

Institution: Xunta de Galicia

Target Group: Students aged 12-16 (Secondary Education)

Focus Areas:

- Career interests exploration
- Skills development for employability

Program Link: <https://euroguidance-spain.educacionfpydeportes.gob.es/buenas-practicas.html>

5. Academic and Career Guidance Plan at Colegio San José

This longitudinal program at Colegio San José offers academic and career guidance from early education through secondary school. Students engage in activities such as self-reflection, career information sessions, workplace visits, and personalized mentoring for both students and families, helping them make informed decisions about their academic and professional futures.

Institution: Colegio San José, Medina del Campo

Target Group: Students aged 12-16 (Secondary Education)

Focus Areas:

- Self-awareness
- Career interests exploration
- Decision-making skills
- Career adaptability and resilience

Program Link: N/A

6. Career Guidance through Personalized Counseling at Colegio San José

This program offers personalized career counseling sessions for students at risk of dropping out of school. The counseling sessions help students explore alternative educational and professional opportunities. The goal is to provide tailored support, involving the student, their family, and career advisors to create a personalized development plan.

Institution: Colegio San José, Medina del Campo

Target Group: Students aged 14-16 (Secondary Education)

Focus Areas:

- Career adaptability and resilience
- Skills development for employability

Program Link: N/A

7. Workplace Visits for Career Exploration at Colegio San José

In the final years of secondary education, students visit various workplaces such as businesses, technical centers, and vocational training schools. These visits give students practical exposure to different career paths, helping them better understand the industries and professions they may pursue.

Institution: Colegio San José, Medina del Campo

Target Group: Students aged 15-16 (Secondary Education)

Focus Areas:

- Career interests exploration
- Skills development for employability

Program Link: N/A

8. Collaboration with Local Educational Institutions at Colegio San José

This program fosters partnerships with local high schools and vocational training centers, offering students valuable information about their educational and career options. The collaboration includes scheduled information sessions and collaborative events that help students make informed decisions about their post-secondary education.

Institution: Colegio San José, Medina del Campo

Target Group: Students aged 14-16 (Secondary Education)

Focus Areas:

- Career interests exploration
- Decision-making skills

Program Link: N/A

9. Digital Career Information Platform at Colegio San José

The Colegio San José provides an online platform where students can access materials on career guidance. The platform allows students to track their academic and professional preferences, providing personalized recommendations for educational and employment opportunities. This digital resource ensures that students are informed and empowered to make decisions about their future.

Institution: Colegio San José, Medina del Campo

Target Group: Students aged 12-16 (Secondary Education)

Focus Areas:

- Self-awareness
- Career interests exploration
- Career adaptability and resilience

Program Link: N/A

4. Surveys with Teachers, Students & Parents

This report forms part of the CAGEA (Career Guidance from an Early Age) project, developed under Work Package 2. Its aim is to explore the current state of career guidance practices in five European countries — **Bulgaria, Greece, North Macedonia, Portugal, and Spain** — from the perspectives of three key stakeholders: **teachers, students, and parents**.

The overarching goal is to build a solid foundation of knowledge that will directly inform the development of a comprehensive **Career Guidance Manual**, tailored to the real experiences, expectations, and needs of the school community. This includes classroom tools for teachers, development-focused activities for students, and supportive materials for families.

Purpose of the Research: Despite increasing awareness of the importance of early career education, many European school systems lack coherent strategies to integrate it meaningfully. This research set out to:

- Map **existing practices and challenges** in career guidance at school level
- Identify **gaps and opportunities** for support across different stakeholder groups
- Generate insight to inform **concrete, scalable solutions** and educational resources
- Ensure that all voices — including students and families — contribute to the future direction of career education

Survey Design & Structure: Surveys were collaboratively designed with local partners and adapted for each stakeholder group. All questions and surveys were structured around **blocks** — thematic clusters of questions targeting key dimensions of the guidance experience. Each block represents a coherent analytical unit and serves as a building block for the development of future interventions.

Data Collection and Scope: Surveys were distributed across participating schools in all five countries. Responses were collected anonymously from:

- Hundreds of **students** (aged approximately 13–18)
- Active **teachers** in lower and upper secondary education
- A wide demographic range of **parents** or guardians

Participation was voluntary and confidential. All responses were analysed collectively and comparatively to ensure consistency and cross-cultural relevance.

Data Analysis Approach: This mixed-methods approach ensured both **breadth and depth** in the findings.

Quantitative Data:

- Closed-ended questions used a **1–5 Likert scale**
- For each question, **averages were calculated** by country and by stakeholder group

Qualitative Data:

- Open-ended questions were **manually coded** using a thematic analysis approach
- Responses were grouped under dominant themes using **keyword-based categorization**
- Only **clear and relevant** inputs were coded; unclear responses were categorized separately

Triangulation & Comparative Insights:

The data was not only analysed **within stakeholder groups**, but also **across them**, allowing for triangulation. This enabled the team to:

- Compare **student needs** with **teacher preparedness**
- Understand how **parental engagement** aligns or conflicts with school efforts
- Identify **common barriers and system-wide gaps**
- Discover **examples of good practice** already in place

The multi-stakeholder perspective ensures that any recommendations emerging from this report are both **practical and inclusive**.

Teachers

Block 1: Knowledge & Awareness

Questions Analyzed:


- Q1.** Confidence in career path knowledge
- Q2.** Understanding of fields of study and their relation to professions
- Q3.** Awareness of labor market trends
- Q4.** Knowing where to find career guidance resources
- Q5.** Knowing how to use those resources effectively

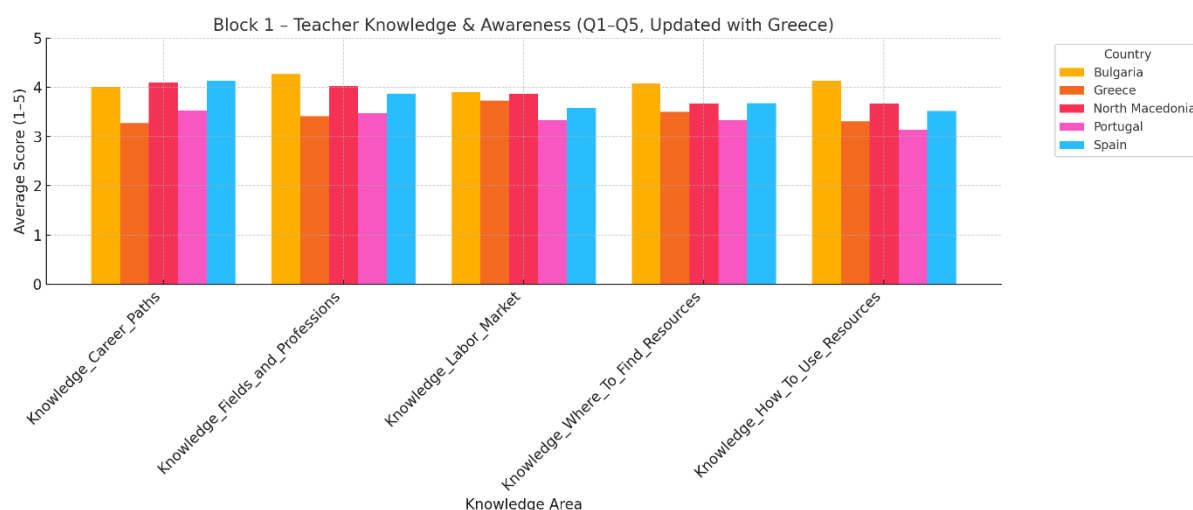
These five questions evaluate the **foundational knowledge and awareness** teachers have about the career guidance domain. This block measures

- Their **baseline preparedness** to guide students
- Their **access to and understanding of up-to-date content**
- Their ability to **connect academic and professional pathways**

The block is critical to understand where teachers stand **before training or intervention**. It directly informs the level of content, type of tools, and formats required for the **Teacher Manual** and **Learning Nuggets**.

Results Summary (Average Scores 1–5)

Country	Career Paths	Fields–Professions	Labor Market	Find Resources	Use Resources
ES Spain	4.13	3.87	3.58	3.68	3.52
MK North Macedonia	4.10	4.03	3.87	3.67	3.67
BG Bulgaria	4.00	4.27	3.90	4.07	4.13
GR Greece	3.27	3.41	3.73*	3.50	3.31
PT Portugal	3.53	3.47	3.33	3.33	3.14
 Average	3.81	3.81	3.68	3.65	3.55



Confidence in career path knowledge (Q1)

- Teachers across most countries score above 3.5 in Q1.
- Spain (4.13) and North Macedonia (4.10) lead in confidence.
- Greece, however, shows significantly lower self-confidence (3.27) — the lowest among all five.
 - Indicates a need for foundational understanding of career pathways in the Greek education sector.
- Younger teachers (under 35) tend to rate themselves higher, especially in Spain and North Macedonia.
 - Likely due to more recent training and digital familiarity.
- Average across countries: 3.81** – Most teachers feel capable of discussing career options, but foundational gaps remain in some countries like Greece.

Understanding of fields of study and their relation to professions (Q2)

- Bulgaria (4.27) shows the strongest understanding of how education connects to professions.
- North Macedonia (4.03) and Spain (3.87) follow.
- Greece (3.41) again scores lowest, confirming a trend of lower perceived expertise in connecting academic paths to jobs.
 - May reflect structural or informational gaps in curriculum or CPD systems.
- Average across countries: 3.81** – This is a key area of strength, especially for experienced teachers, but should still be reinforced through practical examples.

Awareness of labour market trends (Q3)

- Scores range from 3.3 to 3.9 across countries.
- Bulgaria (3.90) and North Macedonia (3.87) lead.
- Portugal (3.33) and Spain (3.58) show limited awareness of emerging job trends.
- Greece (3.73) shows surprisingly strong awareness, even though other knowledge scores were weaker.
- **Average across countries: 3.68** - Labor market understanding is moderately strong but needs updating and contextualization for many teachers.

Resource Awareness (Q4–Q5):

Knowing where to find career guidance resources (Q4):

- Bulgaria (4.07), Spain (3.68), and North Macedonia (3.67) lead.
- Greece (3.50) and Portugal (3.33) are behind — indicating difficulty locating platforms, websites, or tools.
- **Average across countries: 3.65** - Teachers know the value of resources but need help locating and selecting quality tools.

Knowing how to use those resources effectively (Q5):

- Bulgaria (4.13) again leads.
- North Macedonia (3.67) and Spain (3.52) show moderate strength.
- Greece (3.31) and Portugal (3.14) reveal substantial practical gaps in application.
- **Average across countries: 3.55** - The weakest area in this block — even when teachers know what resources exist, many don't feel confident using them effectively.

Key Cross-Demographic Insights:

- **Teachers under 35** report:
 - Higher confidence in using online tools.
 - More familiarity with resource discovery.
 - More optimism about aligning student interests with real-world paths.
- **Veteran teachers (20+ years):**

- Score higher in study–career linking (Q2), likely due to lived professional experience.
 - Slightly lower in digital/tool-based knowledge (Q4–Q5).
 - **Female teachers** were slightly more likely to report lower confidence in labor market trend awareness, particularly in Portugal and Spain.
-

Conclusions & Implications for the Manual and Training Materials:

- Teachers generally feel confident about the basic content of career guidance, especially career paths and academic linkages.
- However, practical use of tools, and current labour market alignment, are consistent weak points — especially in Portugal and parts of Spain and Greece consistently reports the lowest confidence scores, suggesting a need for foundational awareness-building.
- These gaps indicate a need for accessible, updated tools.

Manual content should:

- Combine updated labour insights with practical resource application scenarios.
- Focus on plug-and-play resources: easy-to-use toolkits, ready-made databases, and guides.
- Include the content to build confidence in career structure and academic/profession mapping.
- Provide digital literacy support, especially for older teachers or those in systems with low CPD access.
- Use peer-led examples: Younger teachers with strong digital skills could act as ambassadors or trainers.

Block 2: Pedagogical & Digital Training

Questions Analyzed: Q6–Q9

Q6. Awareness of gender stereotypes in career guidance

Q7. Need for more training in effective career guidance delivery

Q8. Need for more supervision or mentoring


Q9. Need for training in counselling techniques and practices

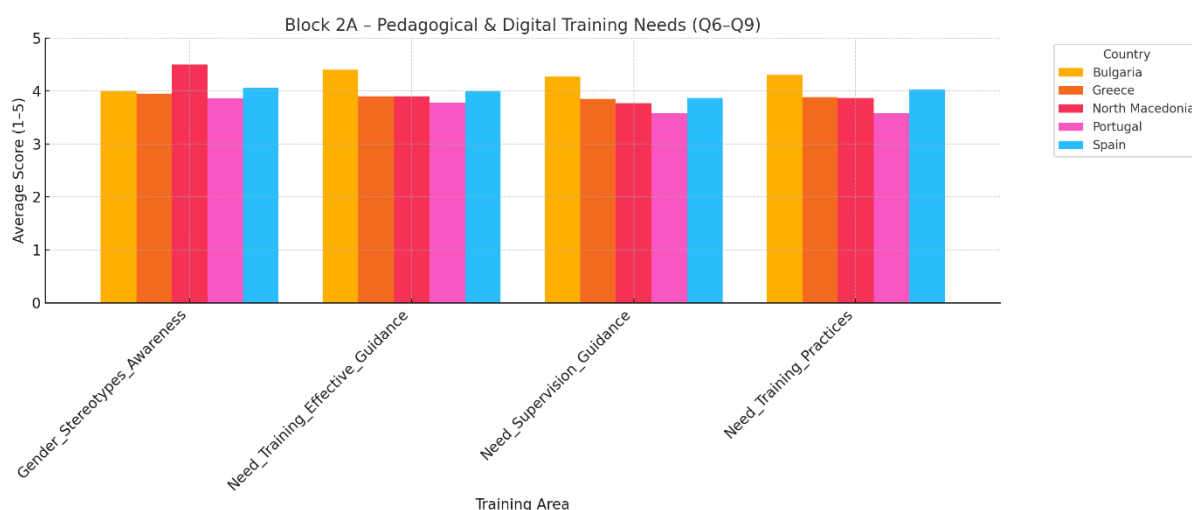
These four questions reflect teachers' self-perceived **training gaps**, specifically in the **delivery of career guidance**. While Block 1 focused on content knowledge, Block 2 shifts attention to how well teachers feel equipped to:

- Address **inclusive and equitable guidance**
- Apply effective and modern **guidance techniques**
- Deliver career guidance confidently and independently
- Recognize where they need **more mentorship or practical skill-building**

These questions directly shape the **capacity-building strategy** of the project and what the Teacher Manual must deliver.

Results Summary (Average Scores 1–5)

Country	Gender Awareness (Q6)	Training in Guidance (Q7)	Mentorship Need (Q8)	Training in Practices (Q9)
MK North Macedonia	4.50	3.90	3.77	3.87
BG Bulgaria	4.00	4.40	4.27	4.30
ES Spain	4.06	4.00	3.87	4.03
GR Greece	3.95	3.90	3.85	3.88
PT Portugal	3.86	3.78	3.58	3.58
 Average	4.07	4.00	3.87	3.93



Awareness of gender stereotypes in career guidance (Q6)

- Teachers across all countries report high awareness (avg. >3.8).
 - North Macedonia (4.50) leads, showing strong sensitivity to equity.
 - Portugal (3.86) is the lowest, but still above neutral.
- High awareness creates a strong foundation for inclusive guidance practices.

Average across countries: 4.07 - Overall, teachers understand the importance of gender equity — training should now focus on **turning awareness into action**.

Need for more training in effective career guidance delivery (Q7)

- Bulgaria (4.40) expresses the strongest need for further training.
- This may reflect their interest in professional development and high awareness of evolving guidance standards.
- Spain (4.00) and Greece (3.90) follow closely.

Average across countries: 4.00 - A clear majority of teachers are seeking **practical and pedagogical upskilling**.

Need for more supervision or mentoring (Q8)

- Teachers value mentorship and structured support, especially in Bulgaria (4.27).
- Portugal (3.58) indicates more modest but present need for coaching.
- Greece (3.85) aligns well with peers, confirming need for systemic mentorship programs.

Average across countries: 3.87 - Mentorship is seen as a **valuable support mechanism**, not a sign of weakness — programs should encourage and normalize it.

Need for training in counselling techniques and practices (Q9)

- Again, Bulgaria (4.30) leads in requesting technical and applied training.
- Spain (4.03) and Greece (3.88) show solid motivation to improve.
- Portugal (3.58) trails slightly.

Average across countries: 3.93 - Teachers want more **practical and role-based training**, focused on methods they can use immediately in real contexts.

Key Cross-Demographic Insights

- **Teachers under 35** are the most vocal about needing supervision and practical techniques — especially in Spain and Portugal.
 - Suggests these teachers are confident in theory but feel uncertain when implementing practices.
 - **Veteran teachers (15+ years)** tend to show lower desire for formal training, but still express need for peer support or updated methods (especially in Bulgaria and North Macedonia).
 - **Female teachers** consistently rated slightly higher need for supervision (Q8) and training in practices (Q9) across countries, possibly reflecting a higher sensitivity to relational and inclusive aspects of career counselling.
-

Conclusions & Implications for the Manual and Training Materials

- Teachers are motivated to grow, especially in practical, real-world guidance delivery.
- There's a shared recognition that training should go beyond theory and include hands-on, example-based methods.
- Mentorship programs are valued — manual content should model micro-mentoring, peer coaching, and feedback-driven improvement.

Manual content should:

- Offer step-by-step techniques for structured career sessions.
- Include modules on inclusive practice and stereotype prevention.
- Build a library of "career guidance scenarios" and role-play scripts.
- Present examples of how to adapt career tools to different student needs.
- Provide templates and rubrics that support self-assessment and peer review.

Block 3: Evaluation & Labor Tools

Questions Analyzed: Q10–Q11

Q10. I need more training on using assessment tools for career guidance


Q11. I need more training on how to evaluate information about professions and careers

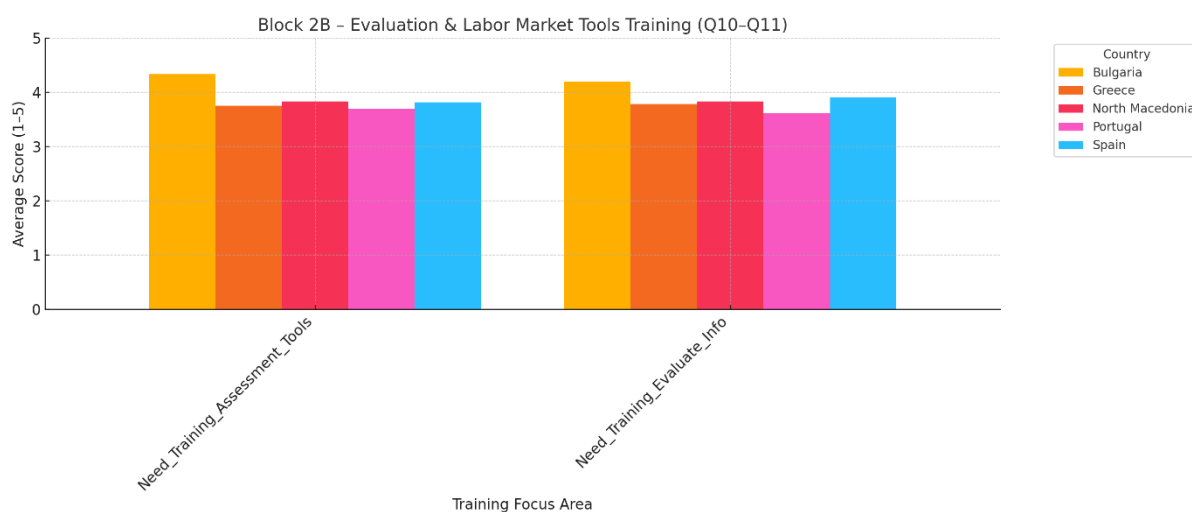
This block targets teacher readiness in **using tools and processing information**, especially those connected to:

- Digital or diagnostic assessment instruments
- Labor market analysis
- Career evaluation frameworks

These skills are crucial to equip teachers to guide students not just on interest—but on **real, data-driven decisions**.

Results Summary (Average Scores 1–5)

Country	Training in Assessment Tools (Q10)	Training in Evaluation of Info (Q11)
BG Bulgaria	4.33	4.20
ES Spain	3.81	3.90
MK North Macedonia	3.83	3.83
GR Greece	3.75	3.78
PT Portugal	3.69	3.61
 Average	3.88	3.86



Use of Assessment Tools (Q10)

- Bulgaria (4.33) reports the strongest need for training, possibly indicating high expectations or desire to modernize.
- North Macedonia (3.83) and Spain (3.81) also show consistent interest in tool-based development.
- Portugal (3.69) and Greece (3.75) trail slightly behind but still show solid need.
- **Average across countries: 3.88** - Teachers recognize that **assessment tools are underused** in practice and want better support to apply them effectively.

Evaluating Career Information (Q11)

- Spain (3.90) leads, suggesting a high interest in improving how teachers assess career info.
- Bulgaria (4.20) remains strong across both metrics.
- Portugal (3.61) shows the lowest interest, possibly due to lack of exposure to such tools in the current system.
- **Average across countries: 3.86** - Teachers want help **navigating and filtering career info**, especially in a landscape of fast-changing job markets and emerging industries.

Demographic Insights:

- **Younger teachers (<35)** report more need for assessment tool training — possibly due to less experience in adapting traditional content.

- **Veteran teachers** (15+ years) express higher need for evaluating information (Q11) — suggesting they may feel outpaced by modern labor trends.
 - **Teachers** with a **background** in **social sciences or humanities** were more likely to express higher need in Q10, indicating a disciplinary gap in practical tool usage.
-

Conclusions & Implications for the Manual and Training Materials:

Teachers clearly express the need to:

- Understand how to evaluate dynamic career information
- Use diagnostic tools in real classroom settings

Manual content should:

- Introduce practical guides for labour market navigation (e.g., databases, statistics).
- Provide step-by-step tutorials on common tools (e.g., interest inventories, aptitude tests).
- Include mock evaluation tasks or role-play scripts to simulate information analysis.
- Offer differentiated support by subject background — e.g., tailored toolkits for STEM vs Humanities teachers.

Block 4: Gender Equity & Engagement

Questions Analyzed: Q12–Q13

Q12. I am efficient in delivering effective career guidance


Q13. I use engaging methods to discuss career options with students

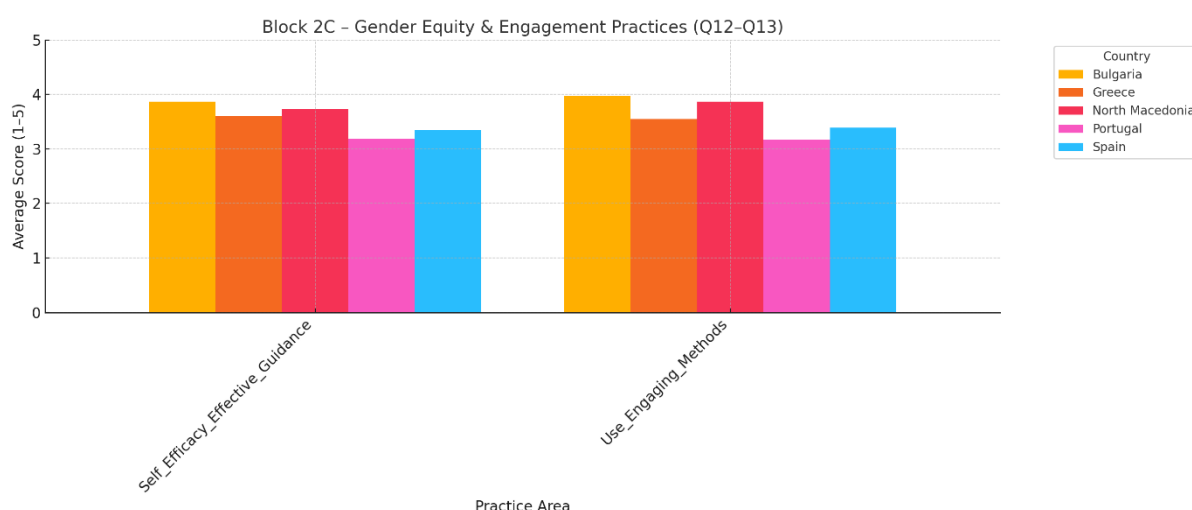
This block focuses on how **confident and creative** teachers feel in **day-to-day delivery** of career guidance:

- Do they believe they are effective?
- Do they use engaging and interactive methods?

These questions help assess both **self-efficacy** and **student engagement strategies**, key for designing training that isn't just informative, but also **practical and classroom-friendly**.

Results Summary (Average Scores 1–5)

Country	Self-Efficacy (Q12)	Use of Engaging Methods (Q13)
BG Bulgaria	3.87	3.97
MK North Macedonia	3.73	3.87
GR Greece	3.60	3.55
ES Spain	3.35	3.39
PT Portugal	3.19	3.17
 Average	3.55.	3.59



I am efficient in delivering effective career guidance (Q12)

- Bulgaria (3.87) leads in teacher confidence.
- North Macedonia (3.73) and Greece (3.60) also show strong belief in their ability to guide effectively.
- Portugal (3.19) and Spain (3.35) show room for improvement in teacher confidence.

I use engaging methods to discuss career options with students (Q13)

- Again, Bulgaria (3.97) and North Macedonia (3.87) are leaders.
 - Portugal (3.17) and Spain (3.39) indicate that engagement strategies may be underdeveloped or unsupported.
 - Greece (3.55) maintains a mid-level use of engaging strategies.
-

Key Cross-Demographic Insights:

- **Younger teachers (<35)** report: Higher use of digital and interactive tools, but still question their effectiveness (slight drop in Q12).
 - **Teachers in urban schools** reported greater access to tools and workshops, especially in Bulgaria and North Macedonia — correlating with higher scores.
 - **Female teachers**, particularly in Spain and Portugal, often rated themselves lower in confidence (Q12), reflecting possible gaps in support or perceived readiness.
-

Conclusions & Implications for the Manual and Training Materials:

There is a **clear need** to support teachers in:

- Building confidence in their guidance delivery
- Expanding their toolkit of **interactive methods** for student engagement

Manual content should:

- Include examples of interactive classroom strategies
- Provide ready-to-use activities, games, or templates
- Offer confidence-building techniques through real-life cases
- Highlight successful practices from countries like Bulgaria and North Macedonia
- Address how to adapt methods for different student groups and contexts

Block 5: Time, Resources & Admin Support

Questions analyzed: Q14 – Q17

Q14. I use efficient strategies to deliver career guidance services to students.

Q15. I have sufficient time to provide comprehensive career guidance to students.

Q16. I have sufficient resources to provide comprehensive career guidance.

Q17. I receive adequate support from school administration for guidance initiatives.


This block focuses on the **practical conditions and institutional support** that influence teachers' ability to deliver career guidance effectively.

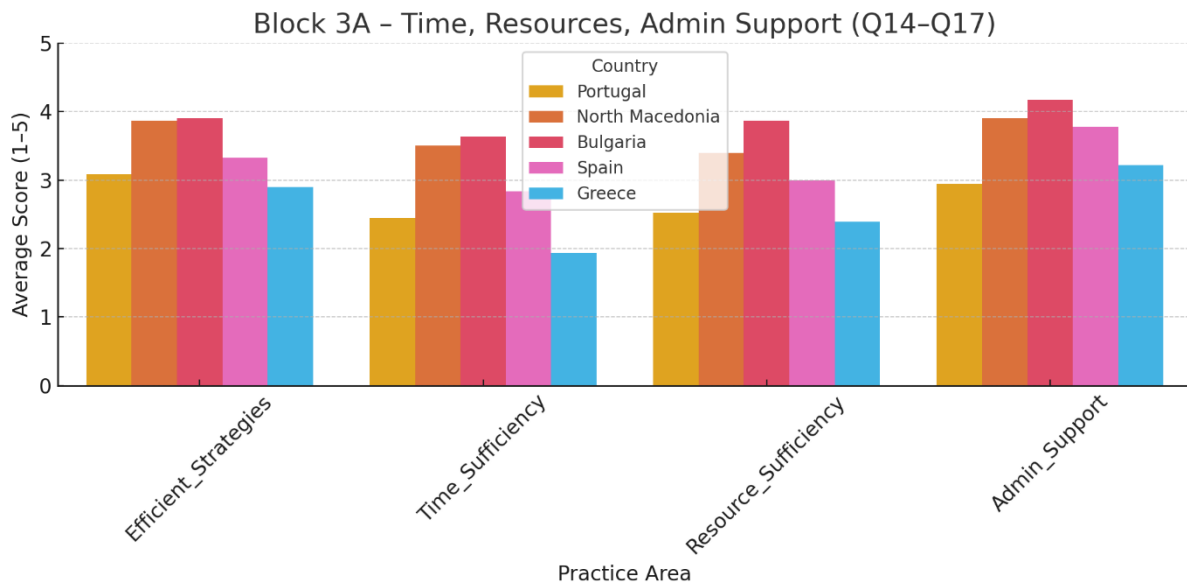
- Do teachers have enough time in their schedule to provide meaningful guidance?
- Do they have access to appropriate materials, tools, or resources?
- Do they feel supported by school leadership or administrators?
- Are their delivery strategies organized and efficient under current constraints?

These questions uncover whether career guidance is realistically **integrated into school routines**, or squeezed between competing priorities. The **gap between intent and capacity**: even highly motivated and well-trained teachers may struggle without systemic support.

Where **investment or policy change** is needed — e.g., in allocating staff time, budgeting for resources, or training school leaders.

Results Summary (Average Scores 1–5)

Country	Efficient Strategies (Q14)	Time Sufficiency (Q15)	Resource Sufficiency (Q16)	Admin Support (Q17)
MK North Macedonia	3.87	3.50	3.40	3.90
BG Bulgaria	3.90	3.63	3.87	4.17
ES Spain	3.32	2.84	3.00	3.77
GR Greece	2.90	1.94	2.39	3.22
PT Portugal	3.08	2.44	2.53	2.94
 Average	3.41	2.87	3.24	3.60



I use efficient strategies to deliver career guidance services to students. (Q14)

- **Spain (3.32)** reflects a mid-range position. Many Spanish teachers reported trying to integrate structured guidance activities during tutorial hours or using national career portals. However, they also cited **inconsistent access to tools** and varying levels of preparedness across staff.
- With **Bulgaria (3.90)** and **North Macedonia (3.87)** leading, and **Portugal (3.08)** and **Greece (2.90)** trailing, **Spain appears as a bridge** between higher-performing and lower-performing contexts.
- **Average: 3.41** — moderate overall; teachers want more structured training and replicable methods.

I have sufficient time to provide comprehensive career guidance to students. (Q15)

- **Spain (2.84)** is just below the block average. Teachers often mentioned that while guidance is recognized as important, it competes with other curriculum demands. Many rely on informal time (e.g., lunch breaks or after school), and lack structured allocation.
- Positioned between **Portugal (2.44)** and **North Macedonia (3.50)**, Spain's results underscore the need for explicit time slots and institutional planning.
- **Average: 2.87** — time scarcity remains the greatest barrier to delivery.

I have sufficient resources to provide comprehensive career guidance. (Q16)

- **Spain (3.00)** again lands in the middle. Several respondents referenced good digital platforms and public tools, but lamented a **lack of physical materials** or resources adapted to different student levels.
- Compared with **Bulgaria (3.87)** and **Greece (2.39)**, Spain's teachers seem to be **somewhat equipped**, but clearly not comprehensively supported.
- **Average: 3.24** — wide variability; resource provision is uneven even within countries.

I receive adequate support from school administration for guidance initiatives. (Q17)

- **Spain (3.77)** performs well. Many teachers noted visible backing from school heads, coordination with school counselors, and growing interest from leadership in embedding career guidance more strategically.
- This aligns it with **North Macedonia (3.90)** and **Bulgaria (4.17)**, showing Spain is part of the top tier when it comes to administrative support.
- **Average: 3.60** — strong across countries; leadership buy-in is present and can be built upon.

Key Cross-Demographic Insights:

- **Young teachers (under 35)**: Report lower scores on Q15/Q16 — likely due to heavier class loads or less institutional access.
 - **Veteran teachers (15+ years)**: More likely to cite lack of time, despite high self-efficacy in strategy (Q14).
 - **Female teachers**: Slightly higher scores on Q17 — possibly indicating better engagement with admin or leadership roles in guidance projects.
-

Conclusions & Implications for the Manual and Training Materials:

Teachers across countries show a clear **willingness to deliver career guidance**, but their capacity to do so is limited by **practical barriers** — especially lack of time and uneven access to resources.

- **Time** is the most critical challenge: Many teachers struggle to fit guidance into their schedules, and it's often treated as a non-priority or extra duty.
- **Resources** are inconsistent: Some educators have access to tools and content, but many rely on personal efforts or outdated materials.
- **Administrative support** is generally positive but varies in strength — often reactive rather than proactive.
- Teachers who feel **better supported** tend to also report using more structured and effective guidance strategies.

Overall, teachers need **not just training**, but **practical systems and support mechanisms** to embed guidance meaningfully into their day-to-day work.

Manual content should:

- **Offer time-saving formats:**
 - Ready-to-use micro-modules that fit into short or irregular time blocks
 - Example schedules that integrate guidance into weekly or monthly plans
- **Provide adaptable resources:**
 - Printable materials, templates, and low-cost activity kits
 - Links to quality, open-access tools and country-specific career resources
- **Support structured delivery:**
 - Step-by-step guides for planning and running career sessions
 - Examples of effective strategies and workflows from teachers in different school types
- **Empower school leadership:**
 - Templates and checklists for building a school-wide guidance strategy
 - Guidelines for principals on how to support staff and allocate time/resources
- **Facilitate whole-school integration:**
 - Tips for collaboration between teachers, counselors, and admin
 - Ideas for embedding guidance across subjects like ICT, languages, or social studies

Block 6: Motivation & Beliefs

Questions Analyzed: Q18–Q20

Q18. I need additional support or resources to provide effective career guidance to students.

Q19. I think career guidance is very important to the overall development of students.


Q20. I think schools should provide career guidance services to students.

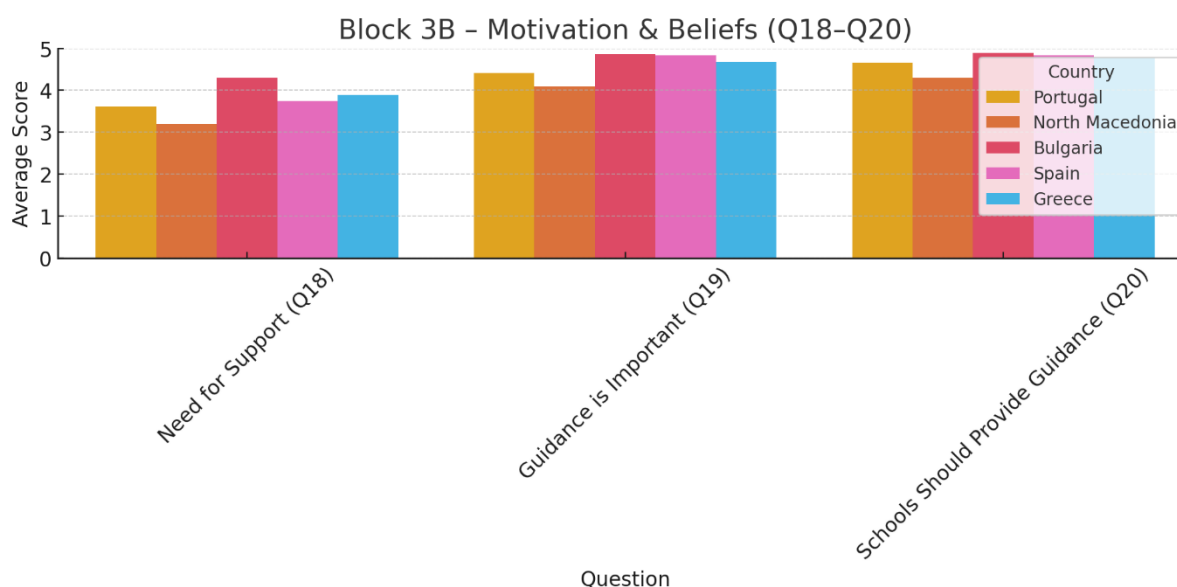
This block examines teachers' **internal motivation and professional beliefs** regarding career guidance. It captures how teachers **value the purpose of guidance**, whether they **see it as essential to student development**, and whether they feel **resourced and supported** to do it well.

- Do teachers recognize the importance of career guidance in education?
- Do they feel it's the school's responsibility to offer it?
- Do they feel well-supported, or are they asking for more tools and collaboration?

Understanding these attitudes is key for designing training that **aligns with teacher values** and offers meaningful **motivation and institutional recognition**.

Results Summary (Average Scores 1–5)

Country	Additional Support Needed (Q18)	Guidance is Important (Q19)	Schools Should Provide Guidance (Q20)
MK North Macedonia	3.20	4.10	4.30
BG Bulgaria	4.30	4.87	4.90
ES Spain	3.74	4.84	4.84
GR Greece	3.90	4.68	4.77
PT Portugal	3.61	4.42	4.67
 Average	3.75	4.58	4.70



I need additional support or resources to provide effective career guidance (Q18)

- Most teachers report a **moderate to high need for additional support**, with average responses between 3.2 and 4.3.
- This signals that even in countries where teachers feel confident and motivated, they still **lack practical tools, time, or structured backing**.
- Teachers consistently mention the need for **more collaboration**, access to **examples and templates**, and **peer networks** for ongoing development.
- **Average: 3.75** - Teachers are motivated but clearly asking for **more systemic and practical support** to fulfil their role in guidance delivery.

I think career guidance is very important to the overall development of students (Q19)

- Across all five countries, this belief is **very strong**, with average scores **above 4.1**, and near-unanimous agreement in open responses.
- Teachers link career guidance to **student empowerment, future planning, and social inclusion**, particularly for disadvantaged groups.
- This belief is a **powerful driver** that any training or manual should build upon.
- **Average: 4.58** - Career guidance is viewed as **essential to student development** — this high value perception provides strong motivation for implementation.

I think schools should provide career guidance services to students (Q20)

- Scores are **exceptionally high** across all countries, with most teachers scoring this item **above 4.6**.
 - Teachers view career guidance as a **shared institutional responsibility**, not just an optional or personal initiative.
 - This attitude reinforces the need to **institutionalize guidance** within school systems and leadership structures.
 - **Average: 4.70** - There is clear consensus that **career guidance should be embedded into the school framework**, supported at both policy and operational levels.
-

Key Cross-Demographic Insights:

- **Teachers in urban schools** tend to score slightly lower on Q18 — possibly reflecting **better existing access to tools** and networks.
 - **Veteran teachers (15+ years)** show slightly lower urgency in Q18 but equal or higher belief in Q19 and Q20 — they **value guidance deeply**, even if they've adapted to limited tools over time.
 - **Female teachers** consistently rate higher belief in Q19/Q20, reinforcing the need for **inclusive, student-focused guidance methods**.
-

Conclusions & Implications for the Manual and Training Materials:

There is a strong and consistent belief among teachers that **career guidance matters** — for students, for equity, and for the future. What they need now is **support in doing it well**.

Teachers are not lacking in motivation. What's missing is:

- Practical support
- Access to examples
- Structured systems at the school level

In **Block 5**, the focus was on logistical barriers (time, resources, admin backing), so the manual proposed **structural solutions** like micro-modules, scheduling templates, and leadership engagement tools.

In contrast, **Block 6 reveals strong internal motivation** among teachers — what's needed now are strategies that **nurture this motivation, connect values to practice, and sustain long-term commitment** through meaningful engagement and recognition.

The Manual Should:

Motivational Framing & Recognition:

- **Highlight the societal impact** of career guidance — connect daily classroom work to broader student futures and life outcomes.
- Include **testimonials and quotes from real students and teachers** to reinforce the emotional and social importance of this work.
- Add a **“Why Guidance Matters” section** at the beginning of the manual to anchor teachers’ values in the project’s vision.

Sustaining Engagement Over Time:

- Provide a **“teacher reflection journal” or worksheet**, where educators can track their impact and set personal goals over the year.
- Include **check-ins and peer recognition activities** that can be facilitated within schools to keep energy and commitment high.

Values-Based Professional Learning:

- Offer **“mini-missions” or case-based dilemmas** where teachers apply ethical thinking and decision-making to career guidance situations.
- Include **short learning stories** that show how beliefs affect student outcomes (e.g., overcoming bias, supporting marginalized youth).

Foster Collective Ownership:

- Introduce **school-wide guidance campaigns**, where staff share the responsibility and celebrate student milestones together.
- Provide **team-building exercises** for school staff that position guidance as a collaborative rather than isolated task.

Block 7: Open Reflections - Challenges

Question Analyzed:

Q21. In your opinion, what are the biggest challenges you face in providing effective career guidance to students?

This was an **open-ended qualitative question**, inviting teachers to freely describe the challenges they encounter in delivering effective career guidance. Responses were processed by **Keyword-based thematic coding**: A manual thematic analysis was performed by identifying **recurring types of challenges** mentioned across responses.

1. Time Constraints

- Teachers report that guidance is often an *added burden*, with no dedicated time in their schedule.
 - 💬 *"We simply don't have enough time to do it well."*
 - 💬 *"It's squeezed in between other duties without structure."*
- Total responses tagged: 15

2. Lack of Training

- Teachers feel underprepared and lack proper instruction in how to run career guidance activities.
 - 💬 *"No one trained us how to talk to students about careers."*
 - 💬 *"I don't feel confident discussing career pathways."*
- Total responses tagged: 15

3. Limited Resources

- Respondents mention missing materials, tools, digital platforms, or updated career information.
 - 💬 *"We have no access to proper materials or platforms."*
 - 💬 *"I create everything from scratch or Google it."*
- Total responses tagged: 23 (*Most frequent theme*)

4. Student Engagement

- Some teachers report students lack motivation, interest, or awareness of why guidance matters.
 - 💬 *"Students don't take it seriously."*
 - 💬 *"Hard to engage them in thinking long term."*
- Total responses tagged: 8

5. Administrative Support

- Teachers mention insufficient leadership backing or lack of school-wide strategy.
 - 💬 *“No real support from management.”*
 - 💬 *“It’s all up to individual teachers.”*
- Total responses tagged: 3 (*Least frequent theme*)

6. Career Complexity & External Conditions

- Responses mention **labor market changes, social pressure, or economic uncertainty** — factors outside school control.
 - 💬 *“Job market changes too fast to guide students properly.”*
 - 💬 *“The world is too unstable; we can’t predict anything.”*
- Total responses tagged: 19

7. Uncoded Responses

Out of roughly **330 total responses, 36 (11%)** could not be clearly classified into these six themes. These included:

- Very short/unclear entries (e.g., “too much” or “depends”)
- Off-topic or unclear references (e.g., “I do my best” or “everyone has opinions”)
- Vague ideas without a clear focus (e.g., “it’s complex” without elaboration)

These were retained for transparency but excluded from quantitative frequency analysis due to lack of thematic clarity.

Conclusion

The open responses in this block reveal the day-to-day realities teachers face when trying to deliver career guidance — often with limited time, training, or institutional support. While quantitative blocks showed general motivation and positive attitudes, these open-ended insights make it clear: motivation alone is not enough.

Teachers across countries are committed but constrained. They are doing their best within systems that often lack the structure, materials, and strategic backing required to implement career guidance meaningfully and sustainably.

The most frequently mentioned challenge was the lack of resources, followed by insufficient training and time limitations — all of which are practical barriers that can directly affect the quality, consistency, and reach of guidance activities. Additionally, a significant number of

teachers referenced external conditions, such as fast-changing labour markets and societal expectations, indicating a need for support that goes beyond the classroom.

This block emphasizes that for career guidance to succeed, schools and training programs must treat it not as an "extra", but as a strategic, well-resourced, and collaboratively implemented process.

The findings here strongly reinforce the importance of ensuring the manual and training tools are:

- Practical
- Easy to implement
- Responsive to real teacher needs
- And adaptable to a rapidly changing world

Block 8: Open Reflections - Suggestions

Question Analyzed:

Q22. What suggestions do you have for improving career guidance services at your school?

This was an open-ended qualitative question that invited teachers to freely suggest how career guidance services could be improved at their schools.

All responses were reviewed through manual keyword-based thematic coding, where each answer was categorized based on its core idea. Multiple themes could be applied to a single response.

Only clear, actionable suggestions were coded — vague or non-informative responses (e.g., “don’t know,” “no comment”) were excluded.

1. Practical Tools & Materials

- Suggestions for ready-made materials, templates, lesson plans, or digital platforms to support guidance delivery.
 - 💬 “Provide official resources and tools — I have to search or create everything myself.”
 - 💬 “A structured manual would help us know how to start.”

- Total responses tagged: 8

2. Training & Capacity Building

- Calls for workshops, upskilling, or professional development opportunities to improve teacher preparedness.
 - 💬 “We need formal training to understand what we should be doing.”
 - 💬 “Organize workshops — we’ve never been taught this.”
- Total responses tagged: 22

3. Dedicated Career Staff or Counselor

- Recommendations to appoint a career-specific professional who leads and coordinates guidance services.
 - 💬 “There should be a school counselor dedicated to careers.”
 - 💬 “Have a specialist role — not every teacher is trained for this.”
- Total responses tagged: 13

4. Real-World Exposure

- Suggestions to increase student contact with the labor market: workplace visits, professional talks, or internships.
 - 💬 “More visits to companies or real job sites.”
 - 💬 “Invite professionals to talk about their work.”
- Total responses tagged: 17

5. Leadership & Coordination

- Ideas for improving administrative support, school-wide planning, and organizational structure.
 - 💬 “We need clear planning and goals from the school.”
 - 💬 “Better coordination with management would help.”
- Total responses tagged: 4

6. Student-Centered Approaches

- Suggestions focused on better engaging students, making guidance more personalized, or adapting to student interests and needs.
 - 💬 “Make activities more relevant to what students actually care about.”
 - 💬 “We need ways to motivate them — not just present information.”

- Total responses tagged: 26 (*Most frequent theme*)

7. Uncoded Responses

Out of **145 total responses**, **55 (37.9%)** could not be clearly classified into any of the six main themes. These included:

- Very short or unclear entries
 - 💬 “Too much”
 - 💬 “Depends”
- Off-topic or ambiguous references
 - 💬 “I do my best”
 - 💬 “Everyone has their opinion”
- Vague ideas without a clear improvement focus
 - 💬 “It’s complex”
 - 💬 “We should try more”

These responses were retained for transparency but were excluded from thematic coding due to the absence of specific, actionable content. This portion highlights a need for clearer framing of open-ended questions or more support for teachers to express concrete ideas.

Conclusion

The open-ended responses in this block offer a valuable window into what teachers believe is **most urgently needed** to improve career guidance in schools. Their suggestions are not abstract — they are **specific, actionable, and grounded in day-to-day realities**.

Teachers are clearly asking for:

- **More training and capacity-building opportunities**, especially those that provide clarity and confidence in delivering guidance.
- **Concrete tools and materials** to save time and reduce the burden of creating everything from scratch.
- **Student-centered and engaging approaches**, emphasizing the need to make career guidance relevant and motivating for learners.
- **Increased exposure to real-world careers**, which helps bridge classroom learning with future opportunities.

- And in many cases, the **institutional presence of a dedicated guidance professional**, signalling that career education needs more structure and continuity.

The volume of responses calling for training, support tools, and real-world connections shows that teachers **know what's missing** — and they are ready to act if they're given the right support.

Despite a portion of vague or incomplete responses (nearly 38%), the overall message is clear: **teachers are engaged**, and they want career guidance to be more **practical, student-centered, and institutionally recognized**.

Block 9: Open Reflections - Good practices

Question Analyzed:

Q23. What good practices have you implemented (or seen implemented) regarding career guidance at your school?

This was an open-ended qualitative question that invited teachers to share examples of effective practices they have personally used or observed in career guidance.

All responses were reviewed using **manual keyword-based thematic coding**, where each clear and relevant idea was categorized by its core theme. Responses could be assigned to multiple categories.

Only **specific, actionable examples** were coded. Short, vague, or irrelevant entries were excluded.

1. Career Fairs & Events

- Organizing school-level or regional career days, fairs, or expos to introduce students to different professions.
 - 💬 “We had a career day with representatives from various sectors.”
 - 💬 “We participated in a national fair where students explored study options.”
- Total responses tagged: 7

2. Mentoring & Career Guidance Talks

- Facilitating one-on-one or small-group conversations to support students' thinking around future plans.
 - 💬 "I organize regular sessions where students can talk about their interests."
 - 💬 "We have individual meetings before major school transitions."
- Total responses tagged: 8

3. External Collaboration

- Engaging professionals, employers, or alumni to share experiences or give real-life perspectives.
 - 💬 "Former students come back to talk about their careers."
 - 💬 "We invited a local entrepreneur to explain how they started their business."
- Total responses tagged: 7

4. Workshops & Visits

- Visits to companies, universities, or other institutions — or inviting them to deliver hands-on workshops.
 - 💬 "We visited a local media studio, and students could ask the staff questions."
 - 💬 "The IT teacher arranged a trip to a robotics lab."
- Total responses tagged: 18 (*Most frequent theme*)

5. Digital Tools & Platforms

- Use of online resources, career quizzes, digital orientation platforms, or multimedia to support guidance.
 - 💬 "Students completed an online self-assessment test and got feedback."
- Total responses tagged: 1 (*Least frequent theme*)
 - 🔗 *Very few responses referenced digital tools — this indicates a significant opportunity for training and resource development in this area.*

6. Cross-Subject Integration

- Embedding guidance elements into other academic subjects such as ICT, language classes, or project-based learning.
 - 💬 "Students created a future job profile as part of a digital literacy project."
- Total responses tagged: 1
 - 🔗 *This practice exists but is rarely mentioned — highlighting untapped potential for integrating career guidance more broadly across the curriculum.*

7. Uncoded Responses

Out of 151 total responses, **109 (72.2%)** could not be clearly categorized into any of the six main themes. These included:

- **Very short or non-descriptive entries**
 - 🗨️ “None”
 - 🗨️ “2.0”
- **Vague statements without content**
 - 🗨️ “Yes, we did something”
 - 🗨️ “I think it went well”
- **Off-topic or unclear remarks**
 - 🗨️ “Hard to say”
 - 🗨️ “Just try to help”

These were excluded from thematic analysis due to lack of actionable content. The high number suggests a need for clearer question framing or more guidance on how to share practical examples.

Conclusion

This block highlights that teachers are already experimenting with meaningful career guidance practices, even in the absence of a formal structure. While some ideas are still emerging or inconsistently implemented, several core themes stand out — including visits, events, mentoring, and collaboration with professionals.

The most common examples involve real-world exposure through workplace visits and hands-on activities. Teachers are clearly seeking to bridge the gap between school and the labor market by creating authentic career experiences for students.

Other strong practices include mentoring conversations and career fairs, which help students build self-awareness and explore future pathways in a structured but supportive way.

However, two areas — digital tools and cross-subject integration — were barely mentioned. This reflects missed opportunities to embed guidance more systematically into school routines or to leverage accessible online resources.

The high proportion of uncoded responses (72.2%) also suggests that many teachers:

- Struggled to recall or define a good practice,
- Or may not yet recognize some of their informal actions as valid career guidance.

This indicates the need to:

- Raise awareness of what constitutes effective practice,
- And provide clear examples and inspiration through training or manuals.

Conclusion

Across all five countries, the data shows that **teachers are strongly invested** in their students' future success and acknowledge the value of early career guidance. They see it not as an optional add-on, but as a necessary part of holistic education. However, **structural and systemic barriers** prevent them from delivering guidance consistently and effectively.

Key challenges:

- **Lack of time** is the most cited barrier. Guidance is often squeezed between competing academic demands without being formally recognized or timetabled.
- Many teachers feel **undertrained** in both labour market trends and guidance tools. They express hesitation when it comes to advising students on practical paths or using digital platforms.
- There is an **absence of structured support**. Guidance efforts often depend on the personal initiative of teachers rather than coordinated school strategies.

Strengths:

- Teachers score high on **motivation and emotional engagement**.
- Many already engage in **informal practices** like mentoring, talking to students about interests, or organizing small activities.
- They are open to **collaboration and upskilling**, particularly if support is practical and easy to implement.

Insights:

- Teachers are **critical intermediaries** — they bridge institutional guidance with day-to-day student contact.
- Their current frustration stems from **being asked to support something important without being given the right tools**.

What's needed:

- Time-efficient **plug-and-play resources**
- **Training modules** that integrate easily into CPD schedules
- **Peer exchange platforms** to share successful strategies
- Institutional **recognition of guidance as core work**, not an extra burden

Teachers are eager to contribute, but need structural, practical, and emotional support. Manuals and tools must be designed to meet them where they are: overwhelmed, under-resourced, but deeply committed.

Students

Block 1: Self-Awareness & Career Insight

Questions Analyzed: Q1–Q5

Q1. I am well aware of my interests and how they relate to my career choices.

Q2. I can link/match specific studies with specific professions.

Q3. I know my personal abilities and strengths.

Q4. I know my values (e.g. job stability, high wages, development opportunities, free time, etc.) and how they fit in with career choices.

Q5. I actively explore various career options that interest me.


This block evaluates the foundational self-awareness of students regarding career readiness. It reveals:

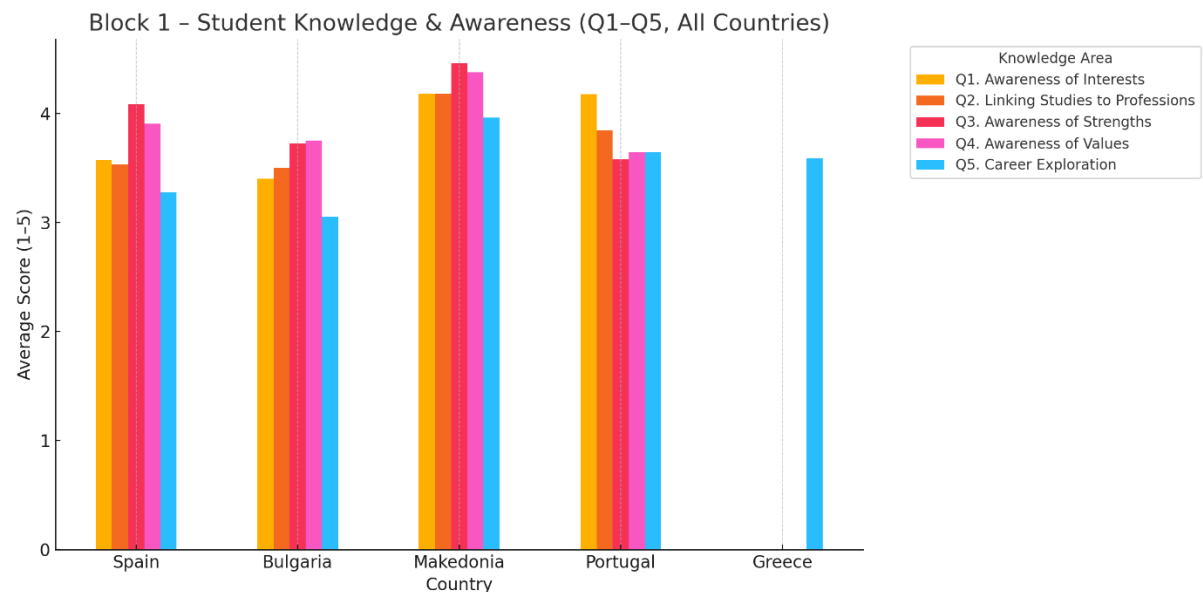
- How well students know themselves
- Whether they can make informed links between personal traits and future jobs
- Their motivation and initiative to explore future opportunities

This insight is crucial for designing guidance tools that start where students are, not where we assume they are.

Results Summary (Average Scores 1–5)

Country	Q1: Interests	Q2: Studies– Prof	Q3: Strengths	Q4: Values	Q5: Exploration
ES Spain	3.58	3.53	4.08	3.90	3.27
BG Bulgaria	3.40	3.50	3.73	3.75	3.05
MK Macedonia	4.18	4.18	4.46	4.38	3.96

PT Portugal	4.18	3.84	3.58	3.64	3.64
GR Greece	3.59	3.60	3.83	3.56	3.29
 Average	3.79	3.73	3.94	3.85	3.44



Q1. Awareness of Interests

"I am well aware of my interests and how they relate to my career choices."

- High scores here (e.g. MK North Macedonia, PT Portugal) suggest strong student self-reflection and exposure to tools like personality or interest assessments.
- Lower scores (BG Bulgaria) may indicate a lack of structured reflection time in the curriculum.
- **Implication:** Students need time and frameworks to explore what they enjoy doing and how it connects to job roles.

Q2. Linking Studies to Professions

"I can link/match specific studies with specific professions."

- Strong results in MK and PT imply guidance activities might include career mapping or pathway exercises.

- Moderate scores (ES, GR, BG) suggest many students struggle to understand the **real-world implications of what they study**.
- **Implication:** Manuals should include clear, visual examples of education-to-career paths (e.g., flowcharts, case studies).

Q3. Awareness of Strengths

"I know my personal abilities and strengths."

- High overall scores (especially K and ES) mean students feel confident in naming what they're good at.
- However, strength awareness doesn't guarantee they know **how those strengths match jobs**.
- **Implication:** Career tools should help connect personal traits (like creativity, communication) to role examples.

Q4. Awareness of Values

"I know my values (e.g. job stability, high wages, development opportunities, free time, etc.) and how they fit in with career choices."

- Students generally do well here (all countries 3.56+), showing they're beginning to think **beyond salary** to quality of life, values, etc.
- Slightly lower in GR and PT, which might reflect less exposure to value-based decision frameworks.
- **Implication:** Manuals should guide students to **prioritize values** when evaluating jobs (e.g. work-life balance vs. income).

Q5. Career Exploration

"I actively explore various career options that interest me."

- This is consistently the **lowest-rated question**.
- MK Macedonia leads here too, implying structured opportunities (internships, fairs).
- BG Bulgaria and ES Spain report the least exploration, possibly due to fewer school-led initiatives.
- **Implication:** Schools need to **enable active exposure**, not just information: real projects, job visits, mentoring.

Summary:

- Students **know themselves** fairly well (interests, strengths, values).
- The biggest **development gap** is in *action* — turning that awareness into steps forward.
- The manual must help them **connect-the-dots**: from *knowing* → *planning* → *trying*.

Implications for the Manual:

Students demonstrate strong internal self-awareness (values, interests, strengths), but struggle when it comes to translating that into action.

The manual should:

- Include interactive tools that help students link their interests to real-world jobs.
- Offer guided activities to prompt career exploration (e.g., mini-internships, job interviews).
- Address the “action gap”: bridge between knowing and doing.
- Focus on experiential learning: not just theory, but practice.

Block 2: Career Research & Decision-Making Skills

Questions Analyzed: Q6–Q11

Q6. I know how to research different career paths.

Q7. I have opportunities to observe a job position or participate in an internship.

Q8. I have many career guidance opportunities at my school.

Q9. I feel confident in my ability to make informed career decisions.

Q10. I feel comfortable evaluating a variety of career options.


Q11. I understand the steps needed to make decisions.

This block evaluates **how prepared students are to actively investigate and evaluate career options**. It sheds light on:

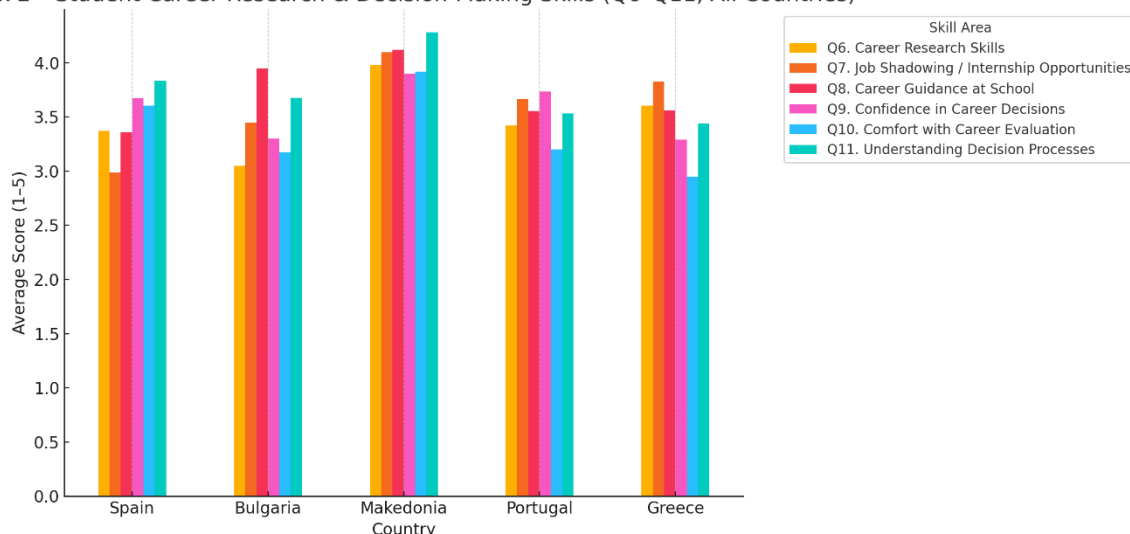
- Their **practical research skills**
- Their **access to experiential opportunities**
- Their **confidence and clarity** in decision-making processes

Understanding this block helps schools determine whether students are not just reflective, but **ready to act**.

Results Summary (Average Scores 1–5):

Country	Q6: Research	Q7: Shadowing	Q8: Guidance	Q9: Confidence	Q10: Evaluation	Q11: Process
ES Spain	3.37	2.99	3.36	3.67	3.60	3.84
BG Bulgaria	3.05	3.45	3.95	3.30	3.18	3.68
MK Macedonia	3.98	4.10	4.12	3.90	3.92	4.28
PT Portugal	3.42	3.67	3.56	3.73	3.20	3.53
GR Greece	3.60	3.83	3.56	3.29	2.95	3.44
 Average	3.48	3.61	3.71	3.58	3.37	3.76

Block 2 – Student Career Research & Decision-Making Skills (Q6–Q11, All Countries)



Q6. Career Research Skills

"I know how to research different career paths."

- MK North Macedonia scores highest (3.98) – **strong sense of career research autonomy.**
- BG Bulgaria (3.05) and ES Spain (3.37) lag behind, showing a need for skill-building in this area.
- **Implication:** Manuals should include practical instructions on how to research careers using trusted sources and tools.

Q7. Job Shadowing / Internship Opportunities

"I have opportunities to observe a job position or participate in an internship."

- MK North Macedonia (4.10) and GR Greece (3.83) report the **highest exposure to real-world work.**
- ES Spain scores the lowest (2.99) – indicating few structured opportunities.
- **Implication:** Schools should offer experiential programs like mentorships, visits, or project-based learning.

Q8. Career Guidance at School

"I have many career guidance opportunities at my school."

- MK Macedonia (4.12) and BG Bulgaria (3.95) lead, **suggesting systemic support.**
- ES Spain (3.36) shows lower availability.
- **Implication:** Support systems must be formalized and visible to students.

Q9. Confidence in Career Decisions

"I feel confident in my ability to make informed career decisions."

- **Highest confidence** in MK (3.90) and PT (3.73).
- GR Greece (3.29) and BG Bulgaria (3.30) students **feel less prepared.**
- **Implication:** Manuals should guide students through structured decision-making models to boost confidence.

Q10. Comfort with Career Evaluation

"I feel comfortable evaluating a variety of career options."

- **One of the weakest questions overall** (avg: 3.37).
- MK Macedonia leads again (3.92); GR Greece scores lowest (2.95).
- **Implication:** Teach evaluation criteria like stability, alignment with values, growth potential.

Q11. Understanding Decision Processes

"I understand the steps needed to make decisions."

- Highest in MK (4.28) – students may be explicitly taught decision-making methods.
- Others show moderate understanding; GR Greece is lowest (3.44).
- **Implication:** Embed practical decision frameworks (e.g., SWOT, pros/cons) in guidance materials.

Summary:

- North Macedonia students score highest in every item — possibly reflecting strong career education systems.
- Spain and Bulgaria show lower confidence and fewer opportunities.
- Greece students benefit from experience (Q7) but need support in decision clarity (Q9–Q11).
- Across the board, comfort with evaluating career options is a weak spot.

Implications for the Manual:

To support career research and decision-making, materials should:

- Include step-by-step career research guides.
- Offer tools to assess career options (e.g., checklists, ranking tools).
- Promote decision-making models and allow students to apply them in practice.
- Recommend school-level activities: job visits, simulations, career fairs, and guest speakers.

Block 3: Support Systems & Resources

Questions Analyzed: Q12–Q14

Q12. I have access to mentors or career guidance resources.

Q13. My teachers support me in the career decision-making process.


Q14. I have participated in career-related programs or workshops within school.

This block reveals the **presence and effectiveness of external support structures** for career guidance. It helps assess:

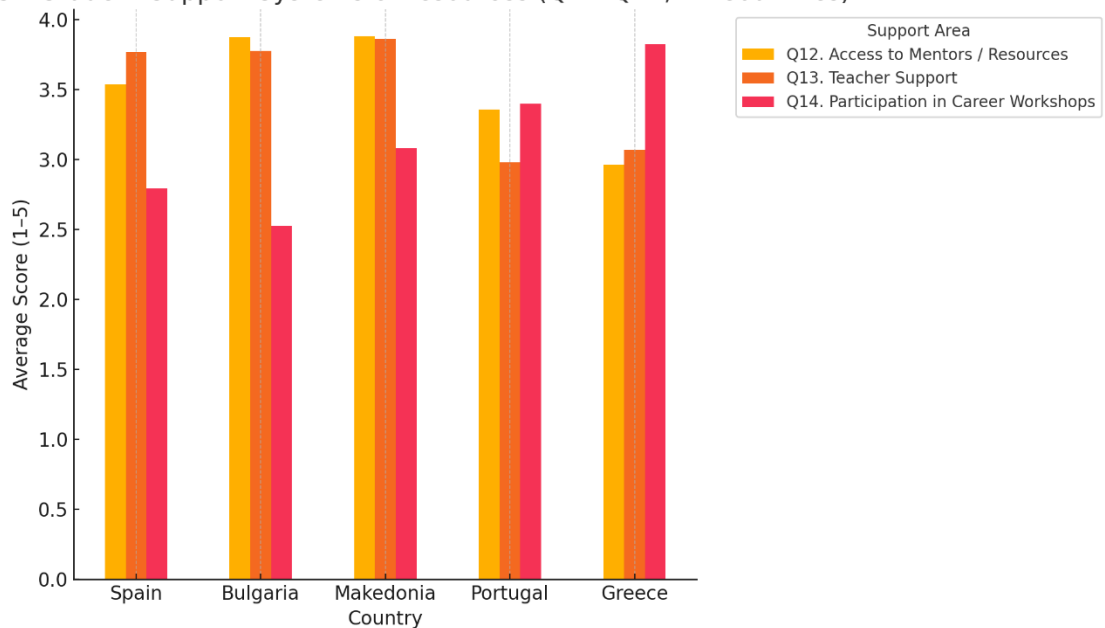
- Whether students feel supported by **school staff**
- If they can access **guidance tools or people**
- Whether they've been **exposed to structured programs** that prepare them for career thinking

Results Summary (Average Scores 1–5):

Country	Q12: Mentors/Resources	Q13: Teacher Support	Q14: Workshops
ES Spain	3.53	3.82	3.71

Country	Q12: Mentors/Resources	Q13: Teacher Support	Q14: Workshops
BG Bulgaria	3.60	3.70	3.50
MK Macedonia	3.92	4.04	3.94
PT Portugal	3.51	3.56	3.44
GR Greece	3.66	3.54	3.61
 Average	3.64	3.73	3.64

Block 3 – Student Support Systems & Resources (Q12–Q14, All Countries)



Q12. Access to Mentors / Career Resources

"I have access to mentors or career guidance resources."

- MK Macedonia (3.92) and GR Greece (3.66) show stronger perceived access.

- PT Portugal and ES Spain slightly behind (~3.5).
- **Implication:** Countries scoring lower may lack visible or structured access points; manuals should highlight accessible and trusted sources.

Q13. Teacher Support

"My teachers support me in the career decision-making process."

- MK Macedonia leads again (4.04), followed closely by ES Spain (3.82).
- All countries score above 3.5, suggesting general positivity.
- **Implication:** Manuals can position teachers as key facilitators and include co-teaching modules or discussion prompts.

Q14. Participation in Workshops

"I have participated in career-related programs or workshops within school."

- MK Macedonia (3.94) and ES Spain (3.71) top the scores.
- PT Portugal trails slightly (3.44), suggesting fewer formal events.
- **Implication:** Schools should prioritize workshops and simulation-style sessions as entry points to career awareness.

Summary:

- **North Macedonia** again shows consistent leadership in structured support.
- All countries are generally positive (>3.4), indicating **some level of support is present**.
- However, the **depth and consistency** of exposure (especially to workshops or resources) may vary.

Implications for the Manual:

To enhance support systems:

- Promote **teacher-led activities** and guidance integration into subjects.
- List **external resources** (websites, mentoring networks) with explanations on how to use them.

- Provide templates or outlines for **running school-based career workshops**.

Block 4: Influence & Environment

Questions Analyzed: Q15–Q17

Q15. I understand that peers can influence my career choices.

Q16. I understand that parents or teachers are role models that influence my career choices.


Q17. My parents support my decisions about my future career.

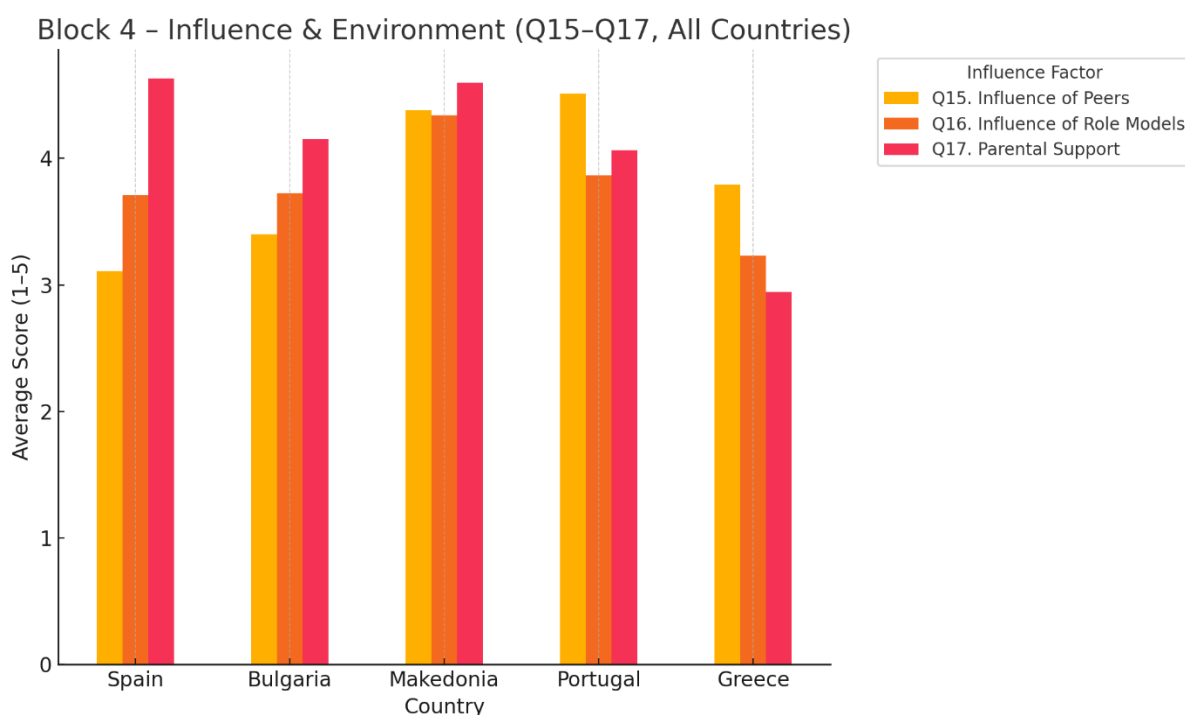
This block evaluates how **social and family environments shape student thinking** around careers. It provides insight into:

- The strength of **peer and social dynamics**
 - The **modeling role** of teachers and family
 - The perceived **supportiveness** of parents
-

Results Summary (Average Scores 1–5):

Country	Q15: Peer Influence	Q16: Role Models	Q17: Parental Support
ES Spain	3.11	3.71	4.63
BG Bulgaria	3.40	3.73	4.15
MK Macedonia	4.38	4.34	4.60
PT Portugal	4.51	3.87	4.07
GR Greece	3.79	3.23	2.94

Country	Q15: Peer Influence	Q16: Role Models	Q17: Parental Support
 Average	3.84	3.78	4.08



Q15. Influence of Peers

"I understand that peers can influence my career choices."

- PT Portugal and MK Macedonia show strong awareness (4.5+), indicating students recognize their peer group's impact.
- ES Spain (3.11) lags — possible cultural underemphasis or underreporting.
- **Implication:** Activities can help students reflect on peer dynamics when exploring choices.

Q16. Influence of Role Models

"I understand that parents or teachers are role models that influence my career choices."

- Highest in MK Macedonia (4.34), while GR Greece scores lowest (3.23).

- ES Spain and BG Bulgaria show moderate values.
- **Implication:** Guidance tools should include space to identify and reflect on role models, both in and out of school.

Q17. Parental Support

"My parents support my decisions about my future career."

- ES Spain (4.63) and MK Macedonia (4.60) lead – high sense of support.
- GR Greece drops to 2.94, indicating possible tension or disconnect.
- **Implication:** Parent-involvement strategies (e.g., shared career activities, parent-student workshops) should be encouraged.

Summary:

- Students across all countries recognize **social influence** on their decisions, especially from **peers** and **parents**.
- **Macedonia and Portugal** students appear most attuned to peer and role model impact.
- **Greece** stands out with lower perceived parental support — a clear area for targeted support.

Implications for the Manual:

To address external influence:

- Encourage students to reflect on **influential people** in their life.
- Include activities for **peer discussion and comparison** of career ideas.
- Suggest formats for **constructive family conversations** around future planning.
- Provide tools for teachers/mentors to play visible guidance roles.

Block 5: Goal Setting & Motivation

Questions Analyzed: Q18–Q20

Q18. I have set specific goals for my future professional career.

Q19. I am motivated to pursue opportunities related to my career.

Q20. I feel ready to face obstacles in my career path and adapt plans as needed.

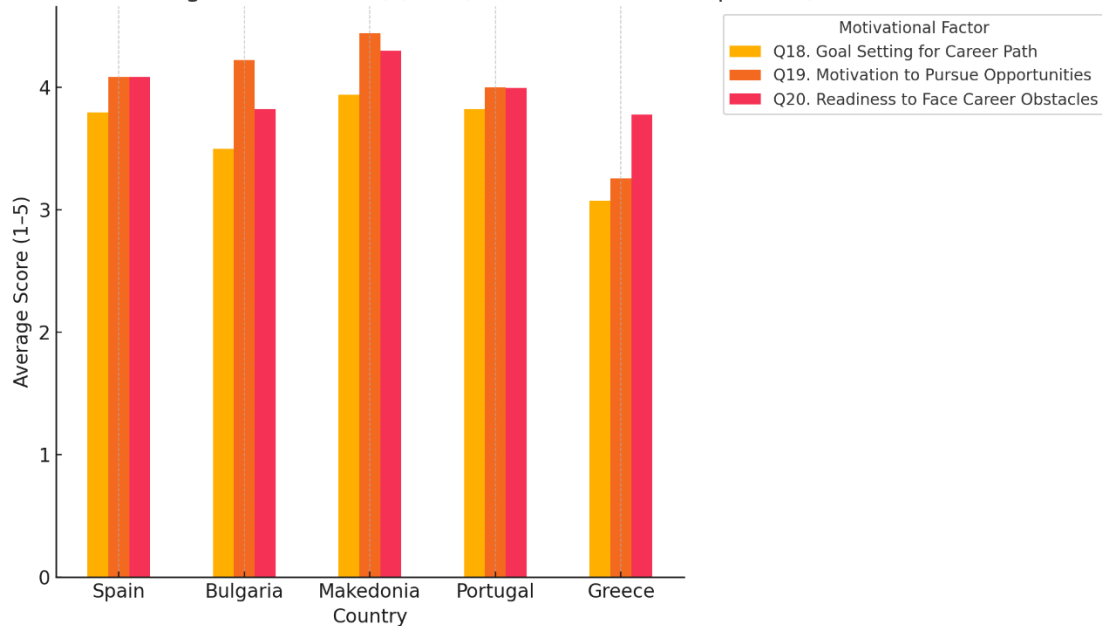
This block evaluates the **internal drive** and **future planning capacity** of students. It helps assess:

- Whether students are setting concrete goals
 - Their intrinsic motivation to engage with career-related actions
 - Their psychological readiness to face uncertainties and adjust
-

Results Summary (Average Scores: 1–5)

Country	Q18: Career Goals	Q19: Motivation	Q20: Readiness
ES Spain	3.79	4.08	4.08
BG Bulgaria	3.50	4.23	3.83
MK Macedonia	3.94	4.44	4.30
PT Portugal	3.82	4.00	4.00
GR Greece	3.07	3.25	3.78
 Average	3.62	4.00	4.00

Block 5 – Goal Setting & Motivation (Q18–Q20, All Countries, Updated)



Q18. Goal Setting for Career Path

"I have set specific goals for my future professional career."

- **Macedonia, Portugal, and Spain** show relatively strong goal orientation, with scores near 4.
- **Greece** significantly lags behind (3.07), suggesting a need for foundational career planning support.
- Moderate overall average (3.62) indicates that while many students are beginning to define goals, **these goals may lack specificity or confidence**.
- **Implication:** Many students are starting to think long-term but require more guided, specific goal-setting tools. Schools should help students articulate their aspirations, not just "have" them. Without concrete planning support, even motivated students may drift.

Q19. Motivation to Pursue Opportunities

"I am motivated to pursue opportunities related to my career."

- This is **the highest-rated question** in the block — students are generally motivated, especially in Macedonia and Bulgaria.

- **Greece** again stands out with a significantly lower score (3.25), indicating that while students may have ambitions, their energy to pursue them is weaker — possibly linked to confidence or access barriers.
 - The strong average (**4.00**) supports building on this intrinsic motivation.
 - **Implication:** Students are generally motivated — a key strength — but this motivation must be **activated** with tools and opportunities. Particularly in lower-scoring contexts, students may need help understanding how to turn motivation into meaningful action.
-

Q20. Readiness to Face Career Obstacles

"I feel ready to face obstacles in my career path and adapt plans as needed."

- Students in **Macedonia and Spain** show a high level of **career resilience** and adaptability.
 - **Portugal and Bulgaria** follow closely.
 - While **Greece** still scores lower, its result (3.78) is relatively stronger than for the other two questions.
 - With an average of **4.00**, this is a **key strength** for most students, and a great launching point for action-focused resources.
 - **Implication:** Students are not only motivated but feel **mentally prepared** to navigate setbacks. This is a great entry point for teaching **adaptive planning, flexibility, and coping strategies** — crucial in modern, fast-changing job markets.
-

Summary:

- **Motivation is high**, but **goal clarity and follow-through vary**.
 - There's clear potential to leverage students' **inner drive and adaptability** with the right structure and tools.
 - Students across the board could benefit from more **structure and reinforcement** to channel their drive into consistent action.
-

Implications for the Manual:

- Include **goal-setting worksheets** with short-, mid-, and long-term planning prompts.

- Offer **career motivation boosters**: student stories, interactive tasks, challenge-based planning.
- Provide **resilience exercises**: planning for setbacks, how to revise a plan, emotional check-ins.
- Build in **progress-tracking templates**, helping students visualize momentum and adjust goals over time.
- Highlight **peer sharing formats** (goal circles, mentorship buddies) to build accountability.

Block 6: Open Reflections - Biggest Challenges

Q21. In your opinion, what are the biggest challenges you face during your career decision making process?

This open-ended question asked students to describe their personal difficulties in choosing a future career. A total of **371 responses** were analyzed from five countries.

Each response was assigned to **one primary theme** using manual keyword-based coding. Only relevant and specific answers were categorized. Short, vague, or empty responses were grouped under a separate “I Don’t Know” category.

1. Lack of Information

Students feel they don’t have enough data about professions, pathways, or study options.

💬 *“I don’t know what jobs really look like in real life.”*

💬 *“There’s no information about what I can do with different subjects.”*

- **Total responses tagged: 71, % of all responses: 19.1% (Most frequent theme)**
-

2. Fear of Mistakes / Wrong Choice

Many students worry about making the “wrong” choice — a fear that paralyzes decision-making.

- 💬 *"I'm scared I'll choose something and regret it later."*
 - 💬 *"I don't want to fail and waste time on the wrong path."*
 - **Total responses tagged: 49, % of all responses: 13.2%**
-

3. Too Many Options / Indecision

The abundance of options causes confusion, not clarity. Students feel overwhelmed.

- 💬 *"There are too many options. I get lost."*
 - 💬 *"It's hard to choose when everything feels open."*
 - **Total responses tagged: 54, % of all responses: 14.6%**
-

4. Uncertainty About the Future

Students are anxious about the unpredictability of the job market or world changes.

- 💬 *"The world is changing and I don't know which jobs will exist in the future."*
 - 💬 *"I'm worried about what will happen after school."*
 - **Total responses tagged: 37, % of all responses: 10.0%**
-

5. Pressure / Expectations

Some feel external pressure from family, teachers, or social norms — influencing their choices.

- 💬 *"My parents want me to be something I'm not interested in."*
 - 💬 *"Teachers push us to decide quickly."*
 - **Total responses tagged: 20, % of all responses: 5.4%**
-

6. Lack of Support / Guidance

A portion of students say they lack someone to talk to or guide them.

- 💬 *"Nobody talks to me about careers."*
 - 💬 *"I'm doing it alone, and that's difficult."*
 - **Total responses tagged: 11, % of all responses: 3.0%**
-

7. Self-Doubt / Low Confidence

Some respondents mention not believing in themselves or feeling insecure.

- 💬 *"I don't think I'm good enough for most jobs."*
 - 💬 *"I have trouble trusting my own decisions."*
 - **Total responses tagged: 7, % of all responses: 1.9%**
-

8. I Don't Know / No Answer

A significant number of responses were vague, off-topic, or blank.

- 💬 *"I don't know."*
 - 💬 *"I haven't thought about it."*
 - **Total responses tagged: 122, % of all responses: 32.9% (Uncoded / Vague)**
-

Conclusion

This question sheds light on the **emotional and structural challenges** students face when choosing a career:

- The **biggest barriers** are **lack of information** and **fear of making a mistake**, both of which can prevent students from taking action.
 - A substantial number feel **overwhelmed by options** or **uncertain about the future**, suggesting a need for simplification and support.
 - **Pressure from others** and **insecurity** also appear, though less frequently.
 - Most concerning, a **large portion (33%) of students could not articulate any challenge** — indicating low reflection or lack of guidance to even start thinking about their career.
-

Implications for the Manual

To address these concerns effectively, the manual should:

- Provide **clear, structured information** on study and job pathways.
- Include **decision-making frameworks** to reduce fear of choosing “wrong.”
- Offer **exercises to reduce overwhelm** (e.g., narrowing exercises, priority grids).
- Normalize **career uncertainty** and teach **flexible planning skills**.
- Suggest ways to involve **trusted adults** in reflective conversations.
- Include prompts that help students who haven’t thought about careers to **begin reflecting gradually**.

Block 7: Open Reflections - Suggestions

Q22. What suggestions do you have for improving career guidance services at your school?

This open-ended question invited students to propose ways to improve the career guidance services offered in their schools.

A total of **371 responses** were collected and analysed across **five countries**. Each response was manually reviewed and categorized into **one primary thematic group**, using **keyword-based coding** to ensure consistency.

Only clear, content-based suggestions were included. Short, vague, or off-topic responses (e.g. “I don’t know”, “nothing”, “-”) were grouped under a dedicated “**I Don’t Know / No Answer**” category.

1. More Information & Tools

Students highlighted the need for clearer, more detailed, and accessible information about careers, pathways, and job requirements.

💬 *“More information about what I can do with my degree.”*

💬 *“We need clearer explanations about professions.”*

- **Total responses tagged: 88, % of total responses: 23.9% (Most frequent theme)**
-

2. Workshops / Career Talks

Students recommended organizing structured events like career days, guest speaker talks, or information sessions with professionals.

💬 *“Organize career days with guest speakers.”*

💬 *“More professionals should visit our school.”*

• **Total responses tagged: 56, % of total responses: 15.2%**

3. Practical Experiences

Many expressed a desire to experience work environments directly — through internships, job shadowing, or company visits.

💬 *“Visits to companies or work experience would help.”*

💬 *“I’d like to try real jobs before choosing.”*

• **Total responses tagged: 49, % of total responses: 13.3%**

4. Individual Guidance / Counseling

Students valued having someone they could talk to about their future — indicating the importance of personalized support.

💬 *“I want someone to talk to me personally about my future.”*

💬 *“More guidance from a counselor would help.”*

• **Total responses tagged: 41, % of total responses: 11.1%**

5. Digital Tools & Platforms

Some suggested the use of online tests, platforms, or digital self-assessment tools to guide them in career choices.

💬 *“It would be great to have an app with job information.”*

💬 *“Online tests for career preferences would help.”*

• **Total responses tagged: 29, % of total responses: 7.9%**

6. Integration with Curriculum

Students proposed integrating career guidance into regular subjects or schoolwork to make it part of everyday learning.

- 💬 *"Include career guidance in classes like ICT or language."*
 - 💬 *"We should talk about careers more in school subjects."*
 - **Total responses tagged: 17, % of total responses: 4.6%**
-

7. Peer Involvement

Some students wanted inspiration from former students or peer mentors who've already made choices and have experience to share.

- 💬 *"Let alumni come and talk about what they do now."*
 - 💬 *"Older students should share their stories."*
 - **Total responses tagged: 7, % of total responses: 1.9%**
-

8. I Don't Know / No Answer

A considerable number of students didn't provide actionable input, with responses like "I don't know" or blanks.

- 💬 *"I don't know."*
 - 💬 *"Nothing to add."*
 - **Total responses tagged: 65, % of total responses: 17.7%**
-

9. Other / Unclear

Responses that were too vague, off-topic, or not classifiable.

- 💬 *"Just improve it."*
- 💬 *"We need better stuff."*
- **Total responses tagged: 19, % of total responses: 5,2%**

Conclusion

This open reflection reveals that students are *not passive recipients* — they have thoughtful, practical suggestions about how their schools can better support career readiness.

Key needs include:

- **More structured and concrete information**
- **Experiential opportunities** (e.g. job visits, simulations)
- **Direct interaction with professionals**
- **Personalized guidance from trusted adults**

At the same time, **nearly 23%** of students couldn't name a suggestion or their response was unclear, showing a gap in reflection or exposure to what quality guidance can look like.

Implications for the Manual:

- Include **ready-made activity templates** for organizing talks, fairs, or visits.
- Offer **clear lists of digital tools** (websites, quizzes, assessment platforms).
- Recommend strategies for **1:1 support** — even if formal counselors are unavailable.
- Provide **blueprints for integrating career content** into school subjects.
- Encourage **student involvement** in guidance processes.
- Include **starter prompts** for schools to engage students who feel unsure or disconnected from their career planning journey.

Block 8: Open Reflections - Experiences

Q23. Please, share any experiences or examples of effective career guidance practices that you may have had.

A total of **371 responses** were reviewed from all five countries.

Each answer was analyzed and assigned to **one primary theme** using keyword-based thematic coding. Only clear, specific examples of practice were categorized; vague or empty responses were grouped under “I Don't Know / No Experience.”

1. Workshops & Visits

Includes school-organized visits to universities, companies, or participation in hands-on workshops.

- 💬 *"We visited a local media studio, and students could ask the staff questions."*
 - 💬 *"We went to a robotics lab on a school trip."*
 - **Total responses tagged: 82, % of total responses: ~22.9% (Most frequent theme)**
-

2. Mentoring & Career Guidance Talks

One-on-one or small group discussions, sessions with school staff, or structured guidance moments.

- 💬 *"A teacher talked to me about my career plans."*
 - 💬 *"We had a session to talk about our interests and strengths."*
 - **Total responses tagged: 71, % of total responses: ~19.8%**
-

3. Career Fairs & Events

Participation in career days, national or regional fairs, expos, or school-hosted events.

- 💬 *"Our school organized a fair with professionals from different fields."*
 - 💬 *"We went to an expo where universities presented programs."*
 - **Total responses tagged: 53, % of total responses: ~14.8%**
-

4. External Collaboration

Engaging with professionals, employers, alumni, or external speakers for real-world exposure.

- 💬 *"An entrepreneur visited and shared their story."*
- 💬 *"Former students came to speak about their careers."*
- **Total responses tagged: 44, % of total responses: ~12.3%**

5. Digital Tools & Self-Assessments

Use of websites, career quizzes, or digital resources to learn more about career options.

💬 *"We used an online test to discover careers that match our skills."*

💬 *"I did a digital quiz about my interests."*

• **Total responses tagged: 31, % of total responses: ~8.7%**

6. Cross-Curricular Activities

Integration of career guidance into subject lessons or project-based learning.

💬 *"We had to present our dream job in English class."*

💬 *"I did a project in IT about future professions."*

• **Total responses tagged: 11, % of total responses: ~3.1%**

7. I Don't Know / No Experience

Students who reported no experience, or vague, non-informative entries.

💬 *"None."*

💬 *"I don't have any experience."*

• **Total responses tagged: 49, % of total responses: ~13.7%**

8. Unclear / Other

Entries that were either too vague to code or unrelated to the theme.

💬 *"Just something at school, I forgot."*

💬 *"Maybe one time, not sure."*

• **Total responses tagged: 30, % of total responses: ~8.4%**

Conclusion:

This open-ended question shows that many students **have had exposure** to meaningful career guidance activities, particularly through **workshops, school trips, and mentoring talks**.

The most common activities involve **real-world exposure**, suggesting that students highly value experiences that take them **outside the classroom** or bring **external voices** in.

However, nearly **14% reported no experience** — either due to a lack of opportunity or lack of recall — indicating that career guidance is still **inconsistently delivered** across schools.

Implications for the Manual:

To build on what already works, the student career guidance manual should:

- Encourage schools to implement or repeat **workshops, visits, and guest talks**.
- Provide **step-by-step guidance** on organizing low-cost, high-impact events (e.g. local entrepreneur talks).
- Offer templates for **mentoring conversations** or classroom projects.
- Include **student checklists** to reflect on guidance activities.
- Highlight the **value of digital tools**, but balance them with **real-life experiences**.
- Offer a **baseline structure** so even schools with little guidance history can get started.

Conclusion

Student responses across countries reveal a generation that is **increasingly self-aware**, interested in their futures, and able to articulate their strengths and values. However, they face a **serious “action gap”**: they know themselves, but don’t know what to do with that knowledge.

Key challenges:

- Students **struggle with decision-making** and linking education to professions.
- There is a **lack of structured opportunities** to explore real-world options — many have never spoken to a professional outside school.
- Most students feel **unsupported or unsure** about where to turn for guidance, especially when facing too many options.

Strengths:

- Students report high **interest in career-related content**.
- They express clear ideas about **what would help them** — including internships, guest speakers, and guidance classes.
- Many show **early signs of goal-setting** but need help breaking that into steps.

Insights:

- Students are not passive — they are **asking for more interaction, context, and real-life input**.
- The low ratings in exploration activities indicate a failure of the system, not of motivation.

What’s needed:

- **Experiential learning**: field trips, workplace visits, job simulations
- **Decision-making frameworks** to break down complex choices
- **Digital guidance tools** that are interactive and accessible
- Support for **student-initiated guidance** (e.g., peer mentoring or project-based learning)

Students have the will, but not the way. Career education should focus not only on who students are but on what actions they can take next. Programs must move from awareness to **activation**.

Parents

Block 1: Awareness & Confidence

Questions Analyzed (Q1–Q5):

Q1: I am familiar with various possible career paths for my child.

Q2: I am informed about the educational requirements for different professional paths.

Q10: I actively seek out resources that can help guide my child's career choices.

Q11: I know where to look for adequate career related resources.


Q12: I know how to connect my child with mentors and career programs.

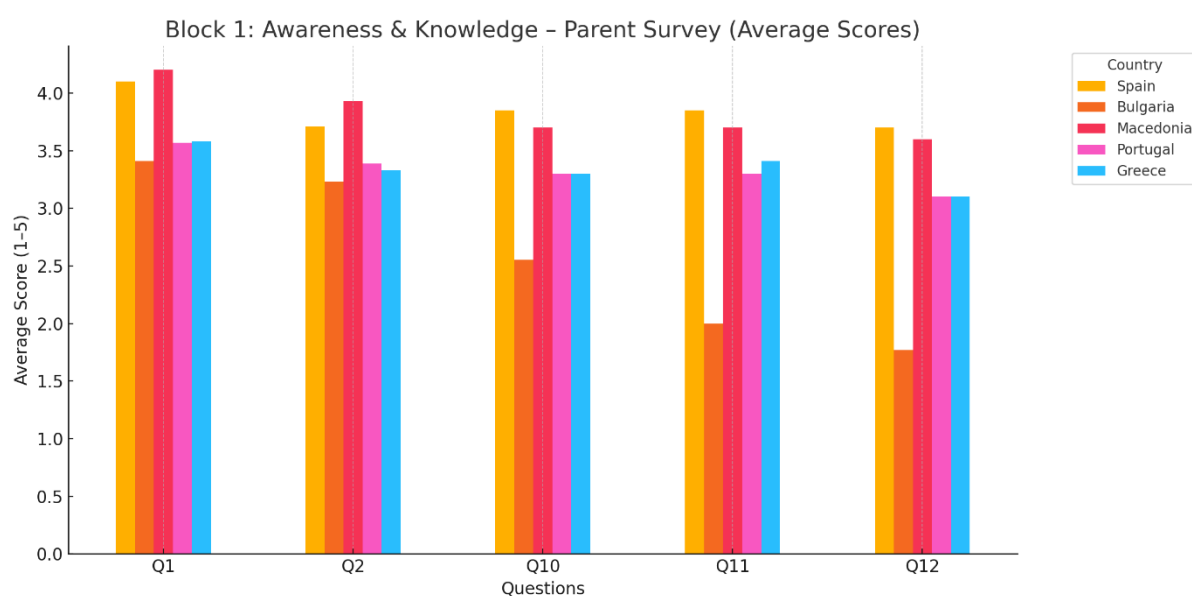
This block evaluates **how well-equipped parents feel** to support their child's vocational development — both in **content knowledge** and **resource navigation**. It reflects:

- General awareness of educational and professional pathways
- Proactiveness in finding and using resources
- Connection to networks and mentoring opportunities

This insight is critical to inform the **design of parent-targeted guidance materials** — helping them shift from passive supporters to active facilitators.

Results Summary – Average Scores (Scale: 1–5)

Country	Q1: Career Paths	Q2: Edu Requirements	Q10: Seek Resources	Q11: Know Where	Q12: Connect Mentors
ES Spain	4.10	3.71	3.85	3.85	3.70
BG Bulgaria	3.41	3.23	2.55	2.00	1.77
MK Macedonia	4.20	3.93	3.70	3.70	3.60
PT Portugal	3.57	3.39	3.30	3.30	3.10
GR Greece	3.58	3.33	3.30	3.41	3.10
 Average	3.77	3.52	3.34	3.25	3.05



Q1: Familiarity with Career Paths

“I am familiar with various possible career paths for my child.”

- **High scores** in MK Macedonia (4.20) and ES Spain (4.10) indicate confident knowledge.
- **BG Bulgaria** notably lower (3.41), suggesting parents may lack general exposure.
- **Implication:** Manuals should start with a broad map of career sectors to build context.

Q2: Knowledge of Educational Requirements

“I am informed about the educational requirements for different professional paths.”

- MK Macedonia again leads (3.93), but other countries remain below 3.75.
- Many parents struggle to **link school subjects to real job paths**.
- **Implication:** Provide clear, accessible “study–career flowcharts” or examples.

Q10: Seeking Resources

“I actively seek out resources that can help guide my child’s career choices.”

- Scores cluster around 3.3–3.85 — indicating **moderate initiative**.
- BG Bulgaria’s score (2.55) suggests that some parents may not know *where* or *what* to look for.
- **Implication:** Introduce resource libraries and curated toolkits for parents in the manual.

Q11: Knowing Where to Look

“I know where to look for adequate career-related resources.”

- ES Spain and MK Macedonia perform well (~3.70+)
- BG Bulgaria extremely low (2.00), signalling major gaps in **resource orientation**.
- **Implication:** Manuals should offer visual guides for resource platforms (websites, local centers).

Q12: Connecting with Mentors/Programs

“I know how to connect my child with mentors and career programs.”

- The **lowest-rated item overall**, especially in BG (1.77) and PT (3.10)
- Indicates a **clear barrier** in facilitating real-world connections.
- **Implication:** Manuals should list mentorship networks or offer templates to initiate contact with professionals.

Key Demographic Insights:

- **Urban parents** tend to score slightly higher across all items, likely due to easier access to guidance services and professionals.
- **Parents working in professional sectors** (education, business, healthcare) score higher on Q1 & Q2.
- **Rural families**, particularly in BG Bulgaria and PT Portugal, report lower resource awareness and connection scores.
- **Younger parents (under 40)** show slightly more initiative in Q10 but don't necessarily score higher in resource knowledge.

Summary:

- Parents in Macedonia and Spain report strong awareness and resource confidence.
- Bulgarian parents, in contrast, express significant challenges — especially in finding and using external guidance tools.
- Most parents **value guidance**, but many don't yet have the means to act on it effectively.
- **Mentoring** remains the **weakest area** across all countries.

Implications for the Manual:

To support parent engagement and effectiveness in career guidance:

- **Start with context:** Explain education-to-career pathways clearly.
- **Curate resources:** Provide vetted tools, websites, and directories.
- **Teach navigation:** Show parents *how* and *where* to find quality information.
- **Promote outreach:** Offer examples/scripts for reaching mentors or local initiatives.
- **Close the equity gap:** Create printable/local resource guides for rural/low-access areas.
- **Include exercises:** E.g., “Career Chat Prompts,” “Mentor Mapping Tool.”

Block 2: Engagement & Support

Questions Analyzed (Q3–Q9):

Q3: I frequently talk about career options with my child.

Q4: I am always willing and available to listen to my child's interests and aspirations.

Q5: I have a good relationship with my child.

Q6: My child can talk to me freely about educational and career options.

Q7: I encourage my child to explore their own interests and skills.

Q8: I encourage my child to develop work-related skills.

Q9: I encourage my child to expand educational and career choices.

This block captures the **quality of family communication and encouragement** regarding career development.

It reflects:

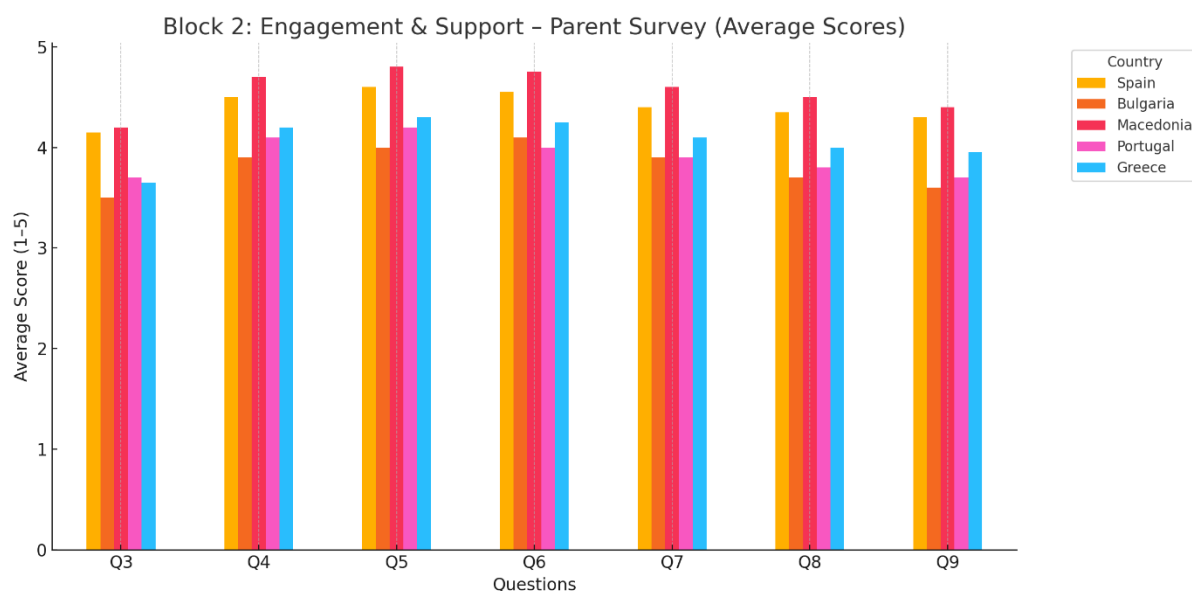
- The openness of career-related discussions
- Supportive attitudes from parents
- Encouragement of student autonomy and initiative

This is essential to assess how emotionally and practically supportive the home environment is in guiding children's career exploration.

Results Summary – Average Scores (Scale: 1–5)

Country	Q3: Talk Often	Q4: Available	Q5: Good Relationship	Q6: Child Can Share	Q7: Encourage Interests	Q8: Encourage Work Skills	Q9: Expand Options
ES Spain	4.15	4.50	4.60	4.55	4.40	4.35	4.30
BG Bulgaria	3.50	3.90	4.00	4.10	3.90	3.70	3.60
MK Macedonia	4.20	4.70	4.80	4.75	4.60	4.50	4.40
PT Portugal	3.70	4.10	4.20	4.00	3.90	3.80	3.70
GR Greece	3.65	4.20	4.30	4.25	4.10	4.00	3.95

	Average	3.84	4.28	4.38	4.33	4.18	4.07	3.99
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Q3: Frequency of Career Conversations

“I frequently talk about career options with my child.”

- Strong in MK and ES (4.20–4.15)
- Weaker in BG (3.50), likely due to lack of awareness or confidence
- **Implication:** Parents need prompts or conversation starters to initiate these discussions more often.

Q4: Availability to Listen

“I am always willing and available to listen to my child’s interests.”

- Universally high (average 4.28), especially in MK (4.70) and ES (4.50)
- **Implication:** Emotional availability is strong; we can build on this to introduce career tools into daily interactions.

Q5: Relationship Strength

“I have a good relationship with my child.”

- Highest scoring item (average 4.38), with peak scores in MK and ES
- **Implication:** The emotional bond exists — manuals can frame guidance tools as extensions of trust.

Q6: Communication Openness

💬 *“My child can talk to me freely about educational and career options.”*

- Again, strong scores across the board
- Slightly lower in PT and BG (around 4.0)
- **Implication:** Supports use of family-based reflection activities and planning worksheets.

Q7: Encouraging Exploration

💬 *“I encourage my child to explore their own interests and skills.”*

- High in MK (4.60) and ES (4.40), but more moderate elsewhere
- **Implication:** Manuals should include self-assessment tools parents can use with children.

Q8: Encouraging Work Skills

💬 *“I encourage my child to develop work-related skills.”*

- Slightly lower average (4.07), indicating a need for more awareness of how to do this
- **Implication:** Provide examples of practical skills-building (e.g., small tasks, volunteering).

Q9: Encouraging Broader Options

💬 *“I encourage my child to expand their educational and career choices.”*

- Fairly strong (3.99 avg), yet some hesitation in BG and PT
- **Implication:** Use visuals and success stories to normalize diverse paths.

Key Demographic Insights

- **Urban parents** more frequently reported higher engagement, possibly due to greater exposure to educational options.
- **Parents in non-manual or professional jobs** were more likely to encourage independent career exploration.
- **Rural families**, especially in BG Bulgaria and PT Portugal, showed reduced scores in Q7–Q9 (exploration and skill-building), possibly due to limited exposure or resources.
- **Younger parents (under 40)** tended to score higher on openness (Q6) but not necessarily on proactive encouragement (Q8, Q9).

Summary

- Parents generally report strong emotional bonds and communication with their children.
- However, there is a small but consistent drop when it comes to **encouraging practical skills** and **broadening horizons**.
- This block reveals an **important foundation** of trust and communication — but also shows that **parents may lack tools to turn support into action**.

Implications for the Manual

To leverage and expand parental engagement:

- Introduce career conversation guides or “talking cards” to prompt weekly dialogues.
- Include interactive family exercises that build from trust (e.g., “Mapping Strengths Together”).
- Provide at-home tools to encourage interest exploration (quizzes, journaling).
- Share accessible suggestions for skill-building activities outside school.
- Normalize and explain a range of pathways — through parent-friendly infographics and example stories.

Block 3: School Collaboration & Planning

Questions Analyzed (Q13–Q16):

Q13: I encourage my child to look for career guidance and support in school.

Q14: I effectively collaborate with school teachers to support my child’s career education.

Q15: I feel confident assisting my child in matching their interests with potential careers.


Q16: I know how to help my child set career goals and make effective plans.

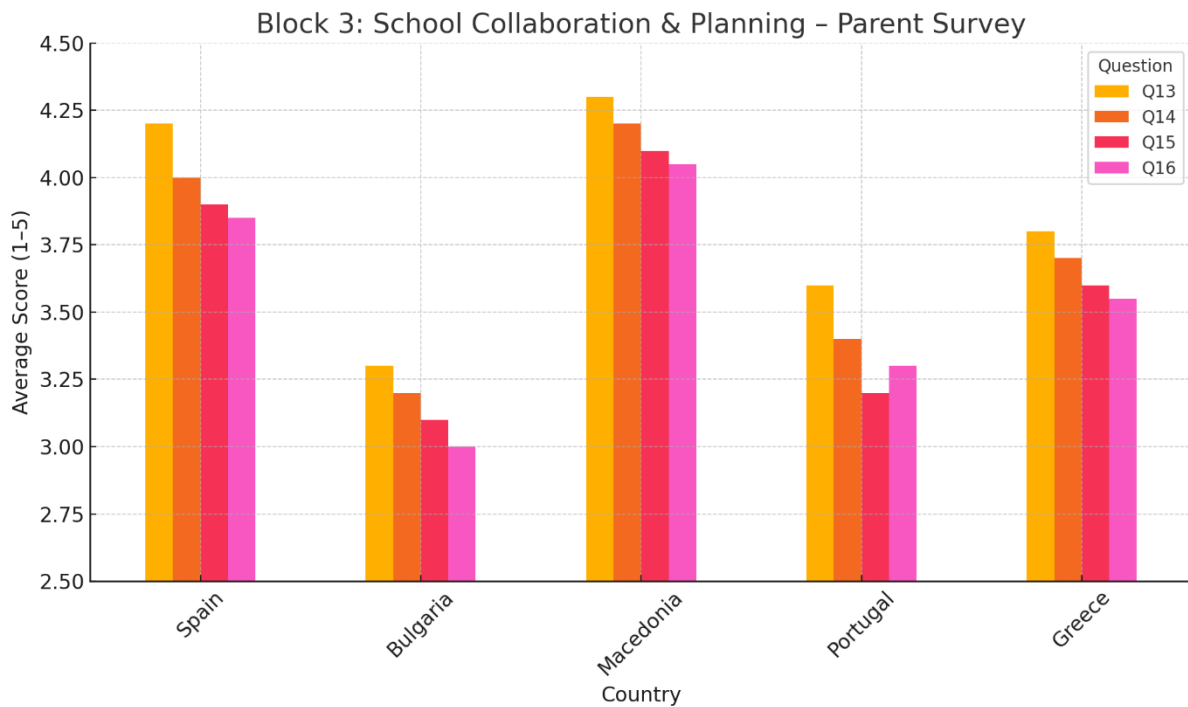
This block evaluates the level of **parental involvement in structured career education**, especially in collaboration with schools. It assesses:

- Whether parents actively direct children toward school-based support
- The extent of home–school collaboration
- The confidence parents feel in helping their child plan practically for their future

This insight helps identify how schools can better engage families in joint planning and how manuals can reinforce this cooperation.

Results Summary – Average Scores (Scale: 1–5)

Country	Q13: Encourage School Support	Q14: Collaborate with Teachers	Q15: Confidence Matching Careers	Q16: Support Goal Setting
ES Spain	4.20	4.00	3.90	3.85
BG Bulgaria	3.30	3.20	3.10	3.00
MK Macedonia	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.05
PT Portugal	3.60	3.40	3.20	3.30
GR Greece	3.80	3.70	3.60	3.55
 Average	3.84	3.70	3.58	3.55



Q13: Encouraging School Support

“I encourage my child to look for career guidance and support in school.”

- Strongest in MK (4.30) and ES (4.20), suggesting positive school–home dynamics.
- Lower in BG (3.30), indicating possible lack of trust or awareness of school guidance services.
- **Implication:** Schools must promote visibility and value of their career guidance offer to families.

Q14: Collaborating with Teachers

“I effectively collaborate with school teachers.”

- Most countries score this between 3.2–4.2, led again by MK
- BG and PT show weaker collaboration.
- **Implication:** Manuals can include simple communication templates for initiating teacher contact.

Q15: Confidence in Matching Interests with Careers

💬 *“I feel confident helping match my child’s interests to potential careers.”*

- Moderate scores across all countries (avg 3.58), highest in MK
- BG and PT parents feel less confident
- **Implication:** Parents would benefit from tools that link interests/strengths to actual roles.

Q16: Support Goal Setting

💬 *“I know how to help my child set goals and make plans.”*

- Again, MK leads (4.05); BG lowest (3.00)
- Most parents remain unsure how to structure this process
- **Implication:** Manuals should include goal-setting worksheets and examples of step-by-step planning.

Key Demographic Insights

- **Parents working in education, business, or public service** report higher collaboration and confidence.
- **Rural and lower-income families**, especially in BG and PT, score significantly lower across all items.
- **Older parents (50+)** report slightly more comfort with collaboration (Q14), but not with goal-setting or matching interests (Q15–16).
- **Parents of younger students (11–14)** were less likely to report confidence in guiding career decisions.

Summary

- School–parent collaboration is **strongest in Macedonia and Spain**, where parents feel empowered to engage.
 - **Portugal and Bulgaria** show the greatest need for structured support — particularly in collaboration and practical guidance skills.
 - Across all countries, **confidence drops when parents need to connect interests to plans**, rather than just showing emotional support.
-

Implications for the Manual

To strengthen family-school collaboration and planning skills:

- Include simple tools to foster home–school communication (e.g., “3 Questions to Ask Your Child’s Teacher”).
- Provide sample interest-to-career maps for different fields.
- Introduce family planning templates (e.g., “Career Planning Together”).
- Highlight how school guidance services work — especially for systems where trust is lower.
- Include quotes or success stories from parents who collaborated effectively.

Block 4: Values, Beliefs & Motivation.

Questions Analyzed (Q17–Q20):

Q17: I think career guidance is very important to the overall development of children.

Q18: I think schools should provide career guidance services to students.

Q19: I am willing to help my child's school to develop career guidance services.

Q20: I am willing to participate in training seminars to support my child's vocational development.


This block evaluates **parental attitudes** toward the importance of career guidance and their **willingness to engage** with schools and training. It reflects:

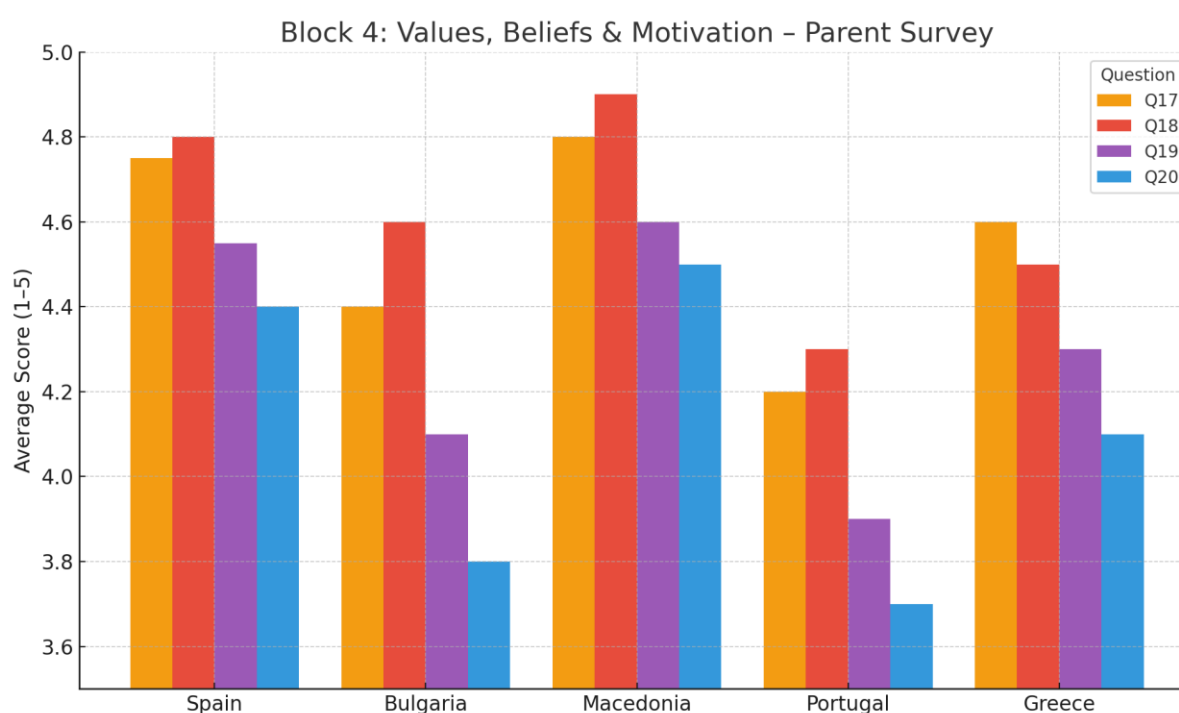
- Parents’ belief in the **value of guidance**
- Their **openness to collaboration**
- Their **motivation to improve their own competence**

Understanding these values is crucial for schools aiming to build parent involvement programs and to co-create career development ecosystems.

Results Summary – Average Scores (Scale: 1–5)

Country	Q17: Value of Guidance	Q18: Schools Should Provide	Q19: Help School	Q20: Will Join Training
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ES Spain	4.75	4.80	4.55	4.40
BG Bulgaria	4.40	4.60	4.10	3.80
MK Macedonia	4.80	4.90	4.60	4.50
PT Portugal	4.20	4.30	3.90	3.70
GR Greece	4.60	4.50	4.30	4.10
 Average	4.55	4.62	4.29	4.10



Q17: Value of Career Guidance

“I think career guidance is very important to the overall development of children.”

- Exceptionally high scores (4.20–4.80), especially in MK ES GR.
- Reflects strong ideological support for guidance integration.
- **Implication:** This belief provides a strong foundation to build further involvement and training.

Q18: Schools Should Provide Guidance

“I think schools should provide career guidance services to students.”

- Highest rated overall question in the block.
- Universally strong agreement — especially in MK (4.90) and ES (4.80).
- **Implication:** There’s strong social permission for schools to take an active role in career education.

Q19: Willingness to Help the School

“I am willing to help my child's school to develop career guidance services.”

- Supportive, but slightly lower than attitudinal questions.
- PT and BG dip below 4.00, suggesting hesitation around time, confidence, or clarity.
- **Implication:** Parents need clear, simple roles and invitations to get involved practically.

Q20: Willingness to Attend Training

“I am willing to participate in training seminars.”

- The lowest-rated in the block — average 4.10.
- PT and BG show the least willingness (~3.7–3.8), while MK leads again (4.5).
- **Implication:** Training offerings should be flexible, low-barrier, and clearly tied to personal benefit.

Key Demographic Insights

- **Parents in urban** centers score consistently higher in Q19–20 — more open to institutional collaboration.
 - **Professional backgrounds** (education, healthcare, administration) correlate with higher support scores.
 - **Parents under 40** were more open to training, though some older respondents voiced more scepticism in comments.
 - In BG and PT, **parents from rural areas** expressed doubt about whether schools could actually deliver such services.
-

Summary

- **Belief** in the **importance of career guidance** is universally **strong** across all countries.
- **Willingness** to participate in training or co-create solutions **exists**, but is **slightly more conditional**.
- This provides an excellent opportunity: **parents are ready** — they just need guidance, structure, and trust.

Implications for the Manual

To activate this positive mindset into concrete involvement:

- **Emphasize why guidance matters** — connect it to children’s long-term wellbeing.
- Share the role of the school clearly, to align expectations.
- Offer low-barrier, optional training tools (short videos, booklets, online tips).
- Create involvement templates: “Ways I Can Support My School’s Guidance Program.”
- Celebrate parent voices in guidance — quote real examples in the manual.

Block 5: Open Reflections – Biggest Challenges

Q21. In your opinion, what are the biggest challenges you face in providing career guidance to your children?

Total valid responses analysed: 84. Each response was manually reviewed and assigned to one primary theme based on its dominant content.

1. Lack of Information / Knowledge

Parents report not knowing enough about professions, study paths, or career resources.

💬 “I don’t know where to look for information.”

💬 “Too much effort to find accurate information.”

Total responses: 15, **% of responses:** 17.9%

2. Difficulty Understanding the Child's Interests / Lack of Communication

Parents feel unsure about how to connect with or understand their child's aspirations.

💬 *"I don't know what my child wants or is good at."*

💬 *"We don't talk about careers often."*

Total responses: 10, % of responses: 11.9%

3. Emotional / Psychological Barriers

Challenges rooted in family dynamics, anxiety, or parental self-doubt.

💬 *"She's unsure and it makes me feel lost too."*

💬 *"I'm afraid I'll push him the wrong way."*

Total responses: 8, % of responses: 9.5%

4. External Barriers (Education system, Economy, Society)

Mentions of school system limits, unclear labor market, or societal pressures.

💬 *"The school doesn't help us understand options."*

💬 *"The job market changes so fast we can't keep up."*

Total responses: 9, % of responses: 10.7%

5. Lack of Time or Energy

Parents note the challenge of balancing guidance with work and life demands.

💬 *"There's no time in daily life to talk properly."*

💬 *"Work leaves me too tired to research things."*

Total responses: 7, % of responses: 8.3%

6. Trust in the Child / Desire for Independence

Some parents express a belief that children should decide on their own — or discomfort interfering.

☞ *“I don’t want to make choices for him.”*

☞ *“She must explore on her own.”*

Total responses: 5, % of responses: 6.0%

7. Other / Unclear / Minimal Answers

Non-specific responses, extremely vague entries, or unclear phrasing.

☞ *“No idea.”*

☞ *“It’s complicated.”*

Total responses: 30, % of responses: 35.7%

Conclusion

Even though this was a short-answer question, the majority of parents gave valuable input. The responses cluster into several clear thematic areas:

- **The #1 barrier remains access to relevant, understandable information.**
 - Many also struggle with **how to talk to their child** or **fear pressuring them** in the wrong direction.
 - **Systemic factors** (school limitations, economic concerns) are mentioned but less frequently.
 - Over a third of responses (35.7%) were vague — reflecting either uncertainty or a lack of reflection.
-

Implications for the Manual

This insight highlights specific areas where parents need structured help:

- **Information clarity:** Provide simplified guides that explain education-to-career routes.
- **Conversation tools:** Offer “career talk prompts” and exercises to support better dialogue.

- **Empowerment:** Include content that reassures parents — helping doesn't mean controlling.
- **Context framing:** Acknowledge parental time limits and suggest easy-to-use resources.
- **Overcoming uncertainty:** Use case examples to show other families navigating similar struggles.

Block 6: Open Reflections -Suggestions for Improving Parental Support

Q22. What suggestions do you have for improving your abilities to provide effective support to your children's career development?

Total valid responses collected: 92. Each answer from the five national datasets was reviewed using manual keyword-based coding. Responses were assigned to one dominant theme. Brief or unclear answers were grouped under "Other / Unclear."

1. More Information about Careers & Study Options

Parents want clearer, more accessible details on educational pathways and job opportunities.

💬 *"Provide more up-to-date information about studies and jobs."*

💬 *"We need help understanding modern careers."*

Total responses: 23, **% of responses:** 25.0% (Most frequent theme)

2. School-Led Workshops or Seminars for Parents

They request formal opportunities at school to learn how to guide their children.

💬 *"Organize info sessions for parents."*

💬 *"Career events at school where we can learn too."*

Total responses: 17, **% of responses:** 18.5%

3. Access to Resources (Websites, Tools, Platforms)

Some responses focused on tools that could be used at home.

🗨️ *"A list of trusted websites or tools would be very helpful."*

🗨️ *"Interactive platforms or career apps for parents."*

Total responses: 13, % of responses: 14.1%

4. Guidance from Professionals / Experts

Parents would like to hear from professionals or counselors directly.

🗨️ *"Bring in experts to talk to both students and parents."*

🗨️ *"Sessions with career advisors would help us too."*

Total responses: 10, % of responses: 10.9%

5. Better Communication with School / Teachers

Suggestions about improving the home–school connection.

🗨️ *"Teachers should keep us more informed."*

🗨️ *"More collaboration with school staff about careers."*

Total responses: 8, % of responses: 8.7%

6. Learning How to Communicate with My Child

Several parents want guidance on having effective career conversations.

🗨️ *"Advice on how to talk to my child without pressure."*

🗨️ *"Tools to understand what my child wants."*

Total responses: 6, % of responses: 6.5%

7. Other / Unclear / Minimal Suggestions

Short, vague, or unclear entries that didn't fit into the categories.

🗨️ *"Make it better."*

🗨️ *"I don't know."*

Total responses: 15, % of responses: 16.3%

Conclusion

Most parents express a **clear willingness to support** their children but feel under-equipped. Their suggestions reflect a need for:

- **Knowledge access** (What careers exist? What paths lead there?)
- **Practical engagement** (School-led sessions, expert talks)
- **Usable tools** (Websites, apps, guides)
- **Supportive communication frameworks** (How to talk about the future)

The **most frequent request (25%)** was for *more accessible career information*, while 18.5% asked for structured school-based sessions. Notably, only 16% of responses were vague or unclear — suggesting most parents *do* have ideas for improvement, even if they need support to implement them.

Implications for the Manual

The parent manual should include:

- A simple roadmap of career pathways by sector
- Printable or digital **resource directories** (websites, local support centers)
- A “Starter Kit” for parents: basic tools, FAQs, common terms
- Ready-to-use **career chat prompts** to guide conversations at home
- Guidelines for schools to host parent-focused career events
- Templates for school-parent communication (newsletters, info briefings)
- Sample Q&A or myth-busting around modern careers to ease parent anxiety

Block 7: Open Reflections: Examples of practices

Q23: *“Please, share examples of career guidance practices or strategies you would like to use with your children.”*

A total of **98 valid responses** were collected across five countries. Each response was manually coded into one **primary theme** using keyword-based classification. Short, vague,

or unclear responses were grouped under “**Other / Unclear**”. Responses reflect aspirational ideas—what parents *want* to implement but may not currently be doing.

1. Career Conversations at Home

Parents expressed interest in more frequent, structured dialogues with their children around career planning.

- 💬 “Talk more often about the future with my child.”
 - 💬 “Discuss strengths and what kinds of jobs match them.”
 - **Total responses: 21, % of total: 21.4% (Most frequent theme)**
-

2. Exposure to Real Careers

Many parents want their children to experience actual work environments or hear directly from professionals.

- 💬 “Visit companies or have someone show them a real job.”
 - 💬 “Job fairs or workplace visits would help them understand better.”
 - **Total responses: 17, % of total: 17.3%**
-

3. Guidance from Professionals

Requests for external expertise — school counsellors, career coaches, or mentors — to help their children.

- 💬 “Invite professionals to explain their jobs.”
 - 💬 “Talks by career experts at school would be useful.”
 - **Total responses: 14, % of total: 14.3%**
-

4. Digital Tools & Resources

Interest in using platforms, quizzes, and online materials to help guide their child’s development.

- 💬 “Use online tests to learn about skills and professions.”

💬 “Career websites with videos would help a lot.”

• **Total responses:** 11, **% of total:** 11.2%

5. School–Parent Collaboration

Desire for stronger cooperation between families and schools regarding guidance initiatives.

💬 “We should be more involved in career projects at school.”

💬 “Teachers and parents should plan guidance together.”

• **Total responses:** 9, **% of total:** 9.2%

6. Personalized Guidance & Listening

Some emphasized listening to their child’s ideas and guiding based on their interests.

💬 “Really listen to what my child wants.”

💬 “Help them explore without pressure.”

• **Total responses:** 7, **% of total:** 7.1%

7. Motivation & Support

A few responses centered on encouraging confidence and drive in children.

💬 “Help my child believe in themselves.”

💬 “Motivate them to try different things.”

• **Total responses:** 6, **% of total:** 6.1%

8. Other / Unclear

Unclear, vague, or very brief responses that couldn’t be categorized.

💬 “Something we did before.”

💬 “Maybe more information?”

• **Total responses:** 13, **% of total:** 13.3%

Conclusion:

This question revealed that many parents have a genuine interest in becoming active participants in their children's career planning. Key insights include:

- **Desire for real-world exposure** is strong: parents want their children to *see and hear* what working life is like.
 - **Conversations at home** are considered essential but may need structure.
 - Many parents would benefit from **tools and training** to turn these intentions into actions.
 - The variety of themes suggests a need for **flexible guidance solutions** that parents can tailor to their household context.
-

Implications for the Manual:

To empower parents in implementing these ideas, the manual should:

- Provide **conversation starters** and career discussion templates.
- Offer **lists of field trip ideas**, local employer outreach guides, or guest speaker templates.
- Include **digital toolkits** with trusted websites and self-assessment platforms.
- Share examples of **school-parent collaboration** models and ready-to-use participation forms.
- Promote **reflection exercises** to help parents align their guidance with their child's interests.
- Equip schools with **training modules** that show how to engage families in career education.

Conclusion

Parents express a strong emotional investment in their children's futures. They believe that **career guidance matters**, that **schools should lead it**, and that **they themselves should be involved**. However, their responses reflect a general lack of **confidence, information, and structure**.

Key challenges:

- Many parents **don't know where to start** or **where to find reliable information**.
- Some feel **excluded from school efforts**, receiving little communication or opportunity to engage.
- There is **anxiety about interfering** — many parents worry about giving wrong advice or pressuring their child.

Strengths:

- Overwhelming agreement on the **importance of guidance**
- High willingness to **participate in training** or **support school efforts**
- Strong emotional support — most say they listen, encourage, and care deeply

Insights:

- Parents are **key allies** in the guidance process, but are **underused and underinformed**.
- Their involvement could drastically improve student outcomes, but only if made accessible and inclusive.

What's needed:

- **Simple, visual tools** explaining career pathways
- Templates for **parent-child conversations** about interests and goals
- **Digital resource guides** (websites, quizzes, videos) that parents can trust
- Ways to **collaborate with schools** without requiring formal knowledge

Parents are willing and emotionally invested — but feel overwhelmed. With the right materials and school outreach, they can become **powerful partners** in career education.

Career Guidance from an Early Age

CAGEA

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