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# EMoCC project: innovating career counseling for European job mobility

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**EMoCC**  
European Mobility Career Counseling

# The European Mobility Career Counseling (EMoCC) project

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# Introducing the EMoCC project

- European Mobility Career Counselling (EMoCC)
- Tackling challenges of low mobility in Europe
- Addressing psychological, cultural, and practical barriers
- Vision: Make job mobility accessible and realistic for all

# Key objectives of EMoCC

## 1. Understand barriers to mobility

- AToM Study; WoMSA Questionnaire; Needs and Preconditions Protocols

## 2. Basic training for Career Counseling Providers

- MOOC 1: Counseling for Labour Market

## 3. Advanced training for Career Counseling Experts

- MOOC 2: Advising for International Job Mobility

# Broader impact of EMoCC

- Comprehensive approach: Research, training, practical tools
- Over 1,000 individuals involved during the project
- MOOCs and WoMSA Questionnaire accessible for 6 years
- Collaboration across universities, research organizations, and NGOs

# Acknowledging the EMoCC Team

- Hochschule der Bundesagentur für Arbeit (HdBA)
- ESMOVIA
- Institut de Recherche et d'Information sur le Volontariat (iriv)
- Tür an Tür – Integrationsprojekte gGmbH (TaT)
- Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore (UCSC)



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# European career mobility: understanding and measuring the factors behind success and discontent

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# Introduction

## Context:

- Despite EU opportunities, Europe faces limited career and geographic mobility
- Understanding mobility decisions is crucial for personal, economic, and societal growth.
- **Goal of the EMOCC Project:**  
Promote and support professional mobility in Europe through research and practical tools.

# Bibliographic Research - Premises

## Focus:

- Gap in tools and studies for career counseling on mobility decisions.
- Importance of psychological, socio-economic, and cultural factors in mobility.

# Bibliographic Research – Theoretical Framework

## Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) – (Lent et al, 1994)

- Self- efficacy, outcome expectations and socio-environmental influences shape career decisions

## Personality Traits (McCrae & Costa, 1987)

- Big Five dimensions (extroversion, friendliness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience) play a role in migration behaviors

## Cultural and Policy Influences

- Societal norms and family proximity are crucial in decision-making

# Bibliographic Research – Challenges in Mobility

## Key Barriers Identified

- **Occupational Mismatch:** Skills vs. labor market demands.
- **Geographical Limitations:** Restricted access to regional and international opportunities.
- **Insufficient Labor Market Information:** Challenges in finding accurate and timely data.
- **Demographic Shifts:** Aging workforce and declining working-age population.
- **Split Labor Market:** Oversupply of low-skilled workers versus demand for high-skilled roles.

# The Attitude Toward Moving –AToM Methodology

- **Purpose:** Explore motivations and barriers to professional mobility.
- **Study Design:**
  - **Participants:**
    - Focus Groups: 128 individuals across 4 countries (students, au pairs, civil service).
    - Individual Interviews: 160 participants.
  - **Categories:**
    - Voluntary movers, company-assigned relocations, forced relocations, and non-movers.
- **Data Collection:**
  - Semi-structured interviews tailored to participant types.
  - Conducted between September and December 2022.
- **Ethics:** Standardized protocols and informed consent in all participating countries.

# The AToM Study – Results

## Participant Profile:

- Average Age: 40 years (19-82 yrs).
- Gender Balance: 50% male, 50% female (n°78).

## Country Representation:

- Italy (27.6%), Spain (25.6%), France (24.4%), Germany (22.4%).
- Category Distribution: Equal across all groups (25%).

## Key Insights:

- Mobility decisions are influenced by a combination of personal aspirations and systemic barriers.

# Key Variables – Overview

## Motivations:

- Refers to the underlying personal reasons, goals, and aspirations that drive individuals to consider or pursue mobility. These can be intrinsic desires, such as personal growth or career advancement, or extrinsic factors like economic opportunities or family considerations.

## Competencies:

- Encompasses the skills, knowledge, and abilities required to successfully adapt to and thrive in a new environment. This includes not only technical or professional skills but also emotional intelligence and adaptability in different cultural and social contexts.

## Satisfaction:

- Describes the extent to which individuals feel fulfilled by their mobility experience. This dimension evaluates the outcomes of the mobility process, considering factors like career progression, personal development, and the quality of relationships formed in the new environment.

# Key Variables – Overview

## Needs:

- Complete or partial lack of something fundamental to an individual, essential for survival and well-being

## Preconditions:

- Factors, requirements and circumstances that must be met or assessed before deciding to go abroad; necessary conditions to enable the professional to start a work experience outside his/her own country more easily and safe

# Motivation

- **Cultural Knowledge:** Interest in exploring diverse cultures and values.
- **Career Development:** Aspiration for growth and new opportunities.
- **Independence:** Value of self-reliance and autonomy.
- **Skills Improvement:** Desire for continuous learning and development.
- **Learning Languages:** Motivation to acquire language skills for integration.
- **Relationships:** Emphasis on building meaningful connections.

# Competence

- **Adaptability:** Adjusting to new environments and challenges.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Recognizing and respecting cultural differences.
- **Strategic Planning:** Creating actionable steps for mobility success.
- **Coping with Stress:** Managing emotional and physical pressures effectively.
- **Problem-Solving:** Tackling challenges with innovative solutions.
- **Effective Communication:** Clear, empathetic, and cross-cultural interaction.
- **Interpersonal Relationships:** Building and sustaining meaningful connections.

# Satisfaction

- **Professional Progression:** Career advancement and recognition.
- **Time Management:** Efficient work-life balance.
- **Personal Development:** Growth in self-awareness and confidence.
- **Home Country Re-Evaluation:** Renewed appreciation for cultural and systemic aspects of origin.
- **Interpersonal Relationships:** Quality and depth of personal and professional networks.

# Needs

- **Education:** Complete or specialize in a particular course of study
- **Job opportunities:** Seek work settings that offer more employment opportunities for one's professionalism
- **Family problems:** Relocate for family reasons
- **Professional satisfaction:** Seek work contexts that provide a higher level of job satisfaction
- **Turning points:** Make a decision that will turn one's life or career around
- **Government instability:** Escape one's country to ensure one's safety and freedom

# Preconditions

- **Family support:** Rely on the encouragement and emotional support of one's family
- **Economic availability:** Rely on initial financial provision to meet initial expenses
- **Professional support:** Rely on experienced and appropriate organizational, bureaucratic, and logistical support
- **Affective relationship:** Count on emotional and practical support in the host country from family members or others in one's community
- **Knowledge of the host country:** Count on reliable information about the socio-economic, political, and geographical characteristics, behavioral patterns, administrative procedures, and traditions of the host country
- **Higher Qualification:** Count on expendable and attractive professionalism in the host country

# Implications of the Findings

## Insights:

- Strong motivations and competencies are critical for successful mobility.
- Satisfaction dimensions highlight the importance of both personal and professional factors.

## Applications:

- Tailored career counseling frameworks.
- Policies addressing systemic and individual barriers.

# Introducing the WoMSA Scale

- Work Mobility Skills and Attitude Scale
- Helps assess readiness for working abroad
- Tool for individuals and career counsellors
- Based on AToM research findings

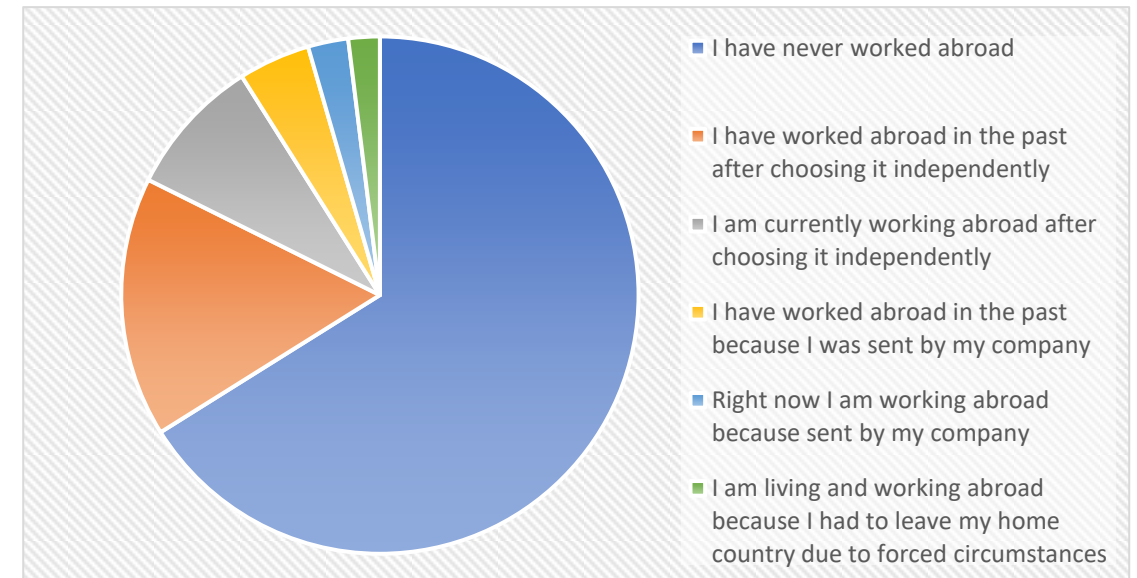
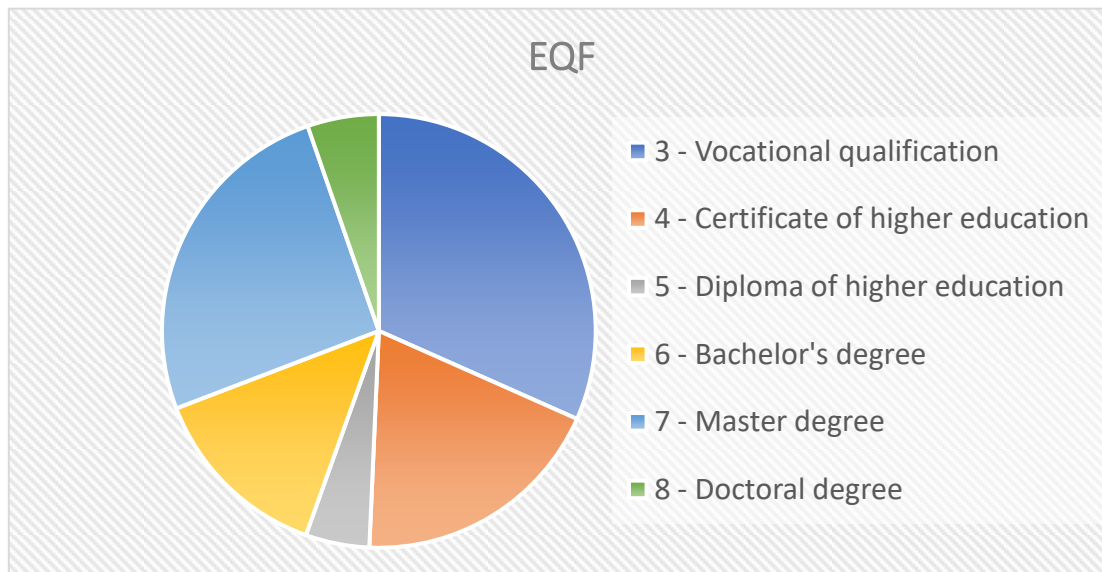


# Development of the WoMSA Scale: the pilot study

- 401 responses
- Multilingual translations using back-translation
- Principal Component Analysis and Omega coefficient
- Cleaned data for reliable 4-item scales

# Main study of the WoMSA Scale: work in progress

- 357 responses
- 32% males, 68% females



# Main study of the WoMSA Scale: work in progress

- **Motivations scale:** most of the Omega indexes have improved, only Indipendence need some attention
- **Competencies scale:** Omega indexes are similar to those of the pilot study, only Coping stress is a potential area for refinement
- **Satisfactions scale:** most of the Omega indexes have improved, all the scales have acceptable or optimum level of internal consistency

# Key results and impact

- Shorter scales (4 items) are practical and reliable
- A practical manual for experts
- Results generalizable across age and educational levels
- Tool supports decision-making and satisfaction analysis in work mobility

# Protocol on the exploration of needs and preconditions

## From AToM to Interview

### Definitions

- By **Needs** we mean when someone completely or partly lacks something important for their survival or well-being
- By **Preconditions** we mean the things that need to happen or be considered before deciding to work in another country



# Protocol on the exploration of needs and preconditions

## Mode of use

The protocols describe each dimension with its name, a short explanation, and example questions. These questions can help the counsellor or give ideas for others.

## The process has two steps:

- Understanding needs/preconditions
- Checking limits

