

The publication by Anna Bilon-Piórko PhD is an expert opinion on the possibilities and limitations of application of the Skills Audit Method (SAM) In intercultural vocational counselling, responding to current social challenges related to migration, multiculturalism and the need for professional integration of immigrants.

## **Part I: Cross-cultural career guidance**

In the first part, the author discusses the theoretical foundations and contexts of intercultural career counselling:

- **Terminology and definitions:** Differences between concepts such as: *multicultural*, *intercultural*, *cross-cultural counselling* is explained. The importance of intercultural competences and the interactive meeting of different cultures in the counselling process has been emphasized.
- **Counselling contexts:** Guidance is embedded in social, political, educational and cultural contexts. The impact of global events, e.g. the war in Ukraine, on the dynamics of the labour market and migration needs has been highlighted.
- **Characteristics of intercultural counselling:** Counselling is understood as a space for meeting and reflection - a "window" opening to new experiences and a "mirror" serving to understand oneself. Knowledge about cultures, intercultural competences and appropriate principles organising the counselling process are of crucial importance.
- **Cultural analysis (Hofstede):** Five dimensions of culture according to Hofstede are presented (e.g. individualism vs. collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance) and their impact on clients' expectations towards counsellors and on their perception of their own professional career.
- **Intercultural competences:** Reference was made to the UNESCO model - the tree of intercultural competences - pointing to the need to develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of counsellors.
- **Principles of counselling:** Key principles of effective work with people from other cultures have been presented, including: building an alliance with the client, identifying cultural barriers, exploring the impact of social factors (such as racism, sexism) on professional life.
- **Challenges of intercultural counselling:** Obstacles such as language barriers, recognition of qualifications, stereotypes, limited access to resources and differences in the understanding of work and career have been discussed.
- **Contemporary trends:** The shift towards narrative approaches, decolonisation of knowledge and embracing cultural diversity has been highlighted. The SAM fits into these trends as a biographical and personalised method.

## Part II: The Skills Audit Method as a tool for intercultural career counselling

In the second part, a detailed analysis has been made of **SAM** as a tool in working with people with migration experience:

- **The potential of SAM:** SAM is a method for identifying formal, non-formal and informal competences, supporting career planning. It is flexible, biographical, based on reflection and cooperation with the client. It can strengthen the agency and identity of people from different cultures.
- **Stages of cultural integration:** The way in which SAM is used depends on the immigrant's stage of integration. Counsellors should adapt their approach to the client's level of acculturation, resources and barriers.
- **Rules for using SAM:** Adaptations of the method for intercultural work have been presented - e.g. simplified language of forms, taking into account the country of origin, adapting biographical and behavioural interviews to cultural specificity.
- **Culture as a resource and a challenge:** In SAM, the client's biography becomes a source of knowledge about his/her competences, values, motivations and cultural experiences. It is important that the counsellor is open and competent in understanding cultural differences.
- **Barriers and limitations of SAM:** Factors that may limit the effectiveness of SAM in a multicultural environment have been identified , e.g. lack of training of counsellors, insufficient knowledge of the language, organisational rigidity or cultural stereotypes.

## Final conclusions

The publication proves that **the Skills Audit Method is a promising tool** in working with people with migration experience, if adapted to **intercultural specificity**. The key to success is not only the method itself, but above all the competences of the counsellor and their ability to create a safe and reflective space for the client. The SAM can support social justice and professional inclusion in culturally diverse societies.