

Idee in azione
per **UPSHIFT**



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UPSHIFT

EVALUATION REPORT 2022

Edited by



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UPSHIFT

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Do & think tank per l'innovazione sociale

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1. The UPSHIFT Programmeme

Situation analysis

In the Italian school system, **school dropout** remains among the main challenges regarding access to education. The level of early school leaving, although decreasing over time, is one of the highest in Europe (in 2020, 13.5% compared to 10.2% of the European average)¹, with marked regional² and gender³ differences. Similarly, the dropout rate of **students with a migrant background** rose from 30% in 2017 to 35% in 2018, well above the EU average of 20.2%.

It is also necessary to take into account the **“implicit” dropout**, i.e. students who, although have not dropped out from school in an explicit sense, after school do not have the necessary skills to enter the world of work. This phenomenon is closely related to underachievement, that is the discrepancy between students' academic potential and how they are actually performing in school (although the two phenomena are not always equivalent). In Italy, 2022 national assessments and surveys highlight that 9,7% of students are underachievers in both foundational and 21st century skills and that lower learning outcomes are strongly correlated with higher school drop-out rates.

Among the key factors that affect school dropout is the **socio-economic status of the family of origin**, in addition to school grades, participation in cultural and extracurricular activities and access to resources and environments that can facilitate the study activity of students (such as having a PC and an internet connection, a desk, a room and a quiet place to study).

Among other determining causes: the **characteristics of the school**, the **quality of teaching**, the **preparation of teachers**, the **relationship between teachers and students**, and the **influence of the peer group**. It is also important to take into account **individual factors**, such as predisposition to study, individual attitudes, and the presence of emotional discomfort or specific developmental disorders. Indeed, motivation and life skills also play an important role in accounting for school dropout or underachievement, especially for disadvantaged adolescents and youth. School dropout is in fact prevalent among all categories of beneficiaries considered to be priorities for the European Child Guarantee, including children with a migrant background.

UPSHIFT in the framework of the European Child Guarantee

UPSHIFT is UNICEF's 21st century skills building programmeme for adolescents and young people, especially those in disadvantaged conditions, to guide the orientation of their study path and school-to-work transition. Currently tested and validated in over 40 countries, UPSHIFT was introduced in Italy by UNICEF⁴ in October 2018, in partnership with Junior Achievement Italy⁵. First launched in Sicily, UPSHIFT is now also active in Lombardy and Lazio, with expansion into other regions of Italy in 2023.

“Ideas in Action for UPSHIFT” was born in Italy from the synergy between UNICEF’s “UPSHIFT” programme for the development of 21st century skills and “Ideas in Action”, the Junior Achievement Italy programme dedicated to entrepreneurship education. Thanks to a combination of social innovation courses and training, including support from young mentors from the private sector, from universities, and from start-up companies, UPSHIFT provides participants with interdisciplinary skills suitable to the demands of the 21st century and the necessary tools to identify problems and create solutions with social impact⁶.

Since 2020, UPSHIFT has been one of the programmemodels piloted as part of the European Commission’s “European Child Guarantee” programme, which seeks to “prevent and combat social exclusion, providing children in need with access to a series of fundamental services, thus contributing to the protection of children’s rights through combatting child poverty and through the promotion of equal opportunities.”⁷

The European Child Guarantee Phase III (piloting of models of intervention) is implemented by UNICEF in collaboration with the Ministry of Labor and Social Policies and the Department for the Family of the Council of Ministers. The objective is to develop a strategy throughout Europe to combat child poverty and social exclusion, and to develop a monitoring framework to ensure that every child has access to socio-health services, free quality education, and adequate housing. In this framework of action, UPSHIFT was implemented in response to the objective of contributing to the development of 21st century skills to support the school-to-work transition of minors in disadvantaged conditions.

The UPSHIFT programme includes schools that present indications of disadvantage, such as higher school dropout rate, lower learning outcomes (a score below the national average of the INVALSI test), and higher percentage of students with a migrant background.

Since 2022, UPSHIFT is promoted through a **Memorandum of Understanding between UNICEF and the Ministry of Education and Merit of Italy**, aimed at replicating and promoting the programme in lower and upper secondary schools, as part of the dual education system (PCTO) and the Civic Education programme. In collaboration with the National Institute for Documentation, Innovation, and Educational Research (INDIRE), the programme is also part of the documentation process of innovative models in the Educational Vanguard Movement.

¹ - European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice/Cedefop, 2014-2021

² - 16,3% in the South of Italy compared to 11% in the North of Italy.

³ - 15,6% for boys and 10,4% for girls.

⁴ - United Nations Children’s Fund, (UNICEF), operating in Italy since 2016 with an out-posted office in Italy, that is part of the Europe and Central Asia Regional Office (ECARO, based in Geneva, Switzerland), with the mandate of collaboration with the Italian Government in regard to the protection, education, and social inclusion of children and adolescents, especially those in disadvantaged conditions - in accordance with the recommendations and observations from the UN Committee on the Rights of Children and Adolescents.

⁵ - Junior Achievement is the world’s largest non-profit organization dedicated to entrepreneurship education in schools. JA Italy started in 2002 with the goal of assuming an active role in innovating education and disseminating educational initiatives in schools to orient young people in their future choices.

⁶ - <https://www.unicef.it/media/upshift-il-percorso-di-educazione-all-imprenditorialita-di-unicef/>

⁷ - Recommendation from the Council of the European Union no. 1004 of June 14, 2021, that establishes the European Child Guarantee, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/IT/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021H1004&from=IT>

Reference Frameworks on 21st Century Skills

The evaluation model adopted for the UPSHIFT programme for the development of 21st century skills takes into account two European frameworks for competences:

1. the European framework for entrepreneurship competence, “EntreComp”;
2. the European framework for key personal, social, and learning competence, “LifeComp”.

The EntreComp consists of three areas: “Ideas and Opportunities”, “Resources” and “Into Action”; in addition, each area is divided into five skills giving a total of fifteen subdivisions in eight levels (See Fig. 1). The first area of EntreComp, Ideas and Opportunities, includes skills such as: spotting opportunities, namely relying on one’s own imagination and own abilities to find opportunities and create value; creativity, namely developing creative ideas and proposals; vision, the capacity to imagine one’s own future and transform it through action; valuing ideas, knowing how to identify an idea’s value and potential; and ethical and sustainable thinking, knowing how to evaluate the impact and consequences of one’s ideas. The second area, Resources, consists of: personal resources (i.e., self-awareness and self-efficacy, motivation and perseverance), material resources (for example, means of production and financial resources), and immaterial resources (for instance, specific knowledge, abilities, and attitudes). The third area, Into Action, involves practical endeavors, such as taking the initiative, planning and management skills, the ability to cope with uncertainty, ambiguity, and risk in a decisive way, the ability to work with others, and the ability to learn by doing.

Entrepreneurship is interpreted as a key interdisciplinary skill that is useful throughout one’s life. It is defined as the ability to “act on opportunities and ideas to transform them into value for others; the value created may be financial, cultural, or social” (FFE-YE, 2012). The fifteen skills developed from the model are interdependent and interconnected; together they form the entrepreneurship competence.

The LifeComp, is divided into three areas: “Personal”, “Social”, and “Learning to Learn”; each area is subdivided into three skills (See Fig. 2), likewise, each skill has three descriptors that generally correspond to the model “awareness, understanding, action”.

The first area, Personal, includes:

1. Self-Regulation (knowledge and management of emotions, thoughts, and behavior);
2. Flexibility (ability to manage transitions and uncertainty and face challenges);
3. Wellbeing (pursuit of life satisfaction, care of physical, mental, and social health, and adoption of a sustainable lifestyle).

The second area, Social, includes:

1. Empathy (understanding of another person’s emotions, experiences, and values and the provision of appropriate responses);
2. Communication (use of relevant communication strategies, domain-specific codes and tools depending on the context and the content);
3. Collaboration (engagement in group activities and teamwork acknowledging and respecting others).

Finally, the third area, Learning to Learn, comprises the following skills:

1. Growth Mindset (belief in one’s and others’ potential to continuously learn and progress);
2. Critical Thinking (assessment of information and arguments to support reasoned conclusions and develop innovative solutions);
3. Managing Learning (the planning, organizing, monitoring and reviewing of one’s own learning).



Figure 1
EntreComp Model 2019

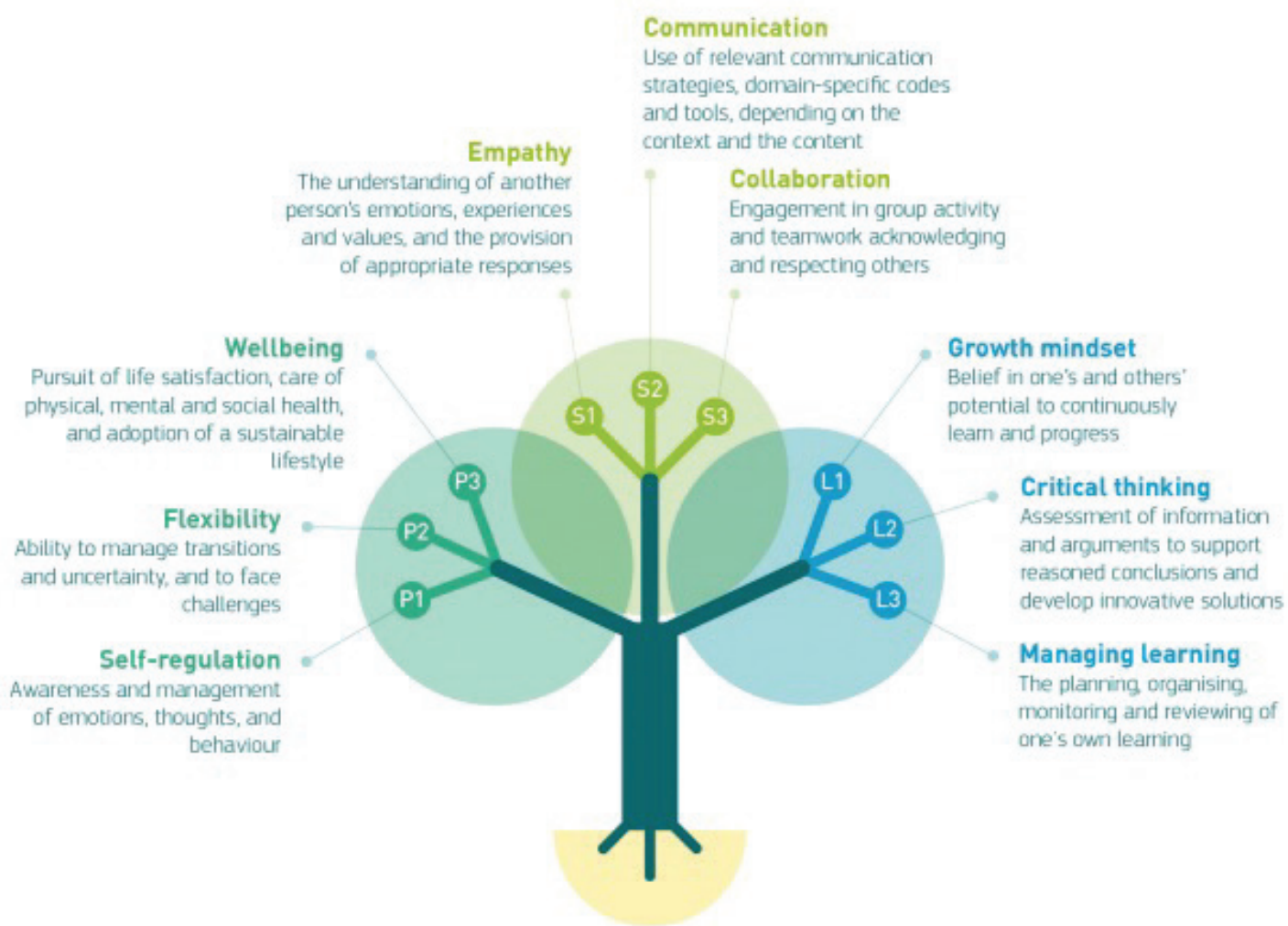


Figure 2
LifeComp Model 2020

Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurship Education according to UPSHIFT

The concept of entrepreneurship, which underpins entrepreneurship education and the UPSHIFT programme, is multidimensional in nature and therefore takes into account three OECD definitions:

1. Entrepreneurs - business people who aim at generating value through the creation or the development of an area of business;
2. Entrepreneurial Activity - entrepreneurial action with the goal of creating value through the expansion of an economic activity;
3. Entrepreneurship - the phenomenon associated with entrepreneurial activity.

This latter component refers to an entrepreneurial mindset that takes into account not only professional contexts and specific entrepreneurial production, but also some skills and interdisciplinary attitudes that are important to society. In this context, youth entrepreneurship goes beyond the creation of new future businesses and includes a person's capacity to convey their own ideas and transform them into action. This occurs through risk-taking, creativity, innovation, and knowledge of how to plan and organize projects to achieve one's goals.

The main entrepreneurial skills that UPSHIFT aims to develop in learners are:

1. ability to work in a group
2. ability to identify strengths and weaknesses
3. ability to anticipate events
4. motivation and determination to achieve predefined goals

These skills defer to the idea of a mindset, a proactive attitude that needs to be cultivated starting in school, as an indispensable condition for young peoples' adaptability to a global workplace, as theorized from the principles of the Oslo Agenda⁸ and reiterated in the "European Skills Agenda"⁹ of 2016.

Such entrepreneurship education promotes the acquisition of interdisciplinary skills that are necessary for everyone:

"Entrepreneurship is a fundamental skill for everyone: it helps young people to be more creative and gain more confidence in every activity that they undertake, encouraging them to act in a socially responsible way."¹⁰

The importance of entrepreneurial skills is emphasized in the European Commission's reports¹¹, according to which the awareness of fundamental entrepreneurial concepts must begin during the first years of school.

⁸ - Document that advocates for the first time that member nations launch national strategies for entrepreneurship education, defining clear goals regarding all levels of education. The agenda emphasized that such strategies must include all related interested parties (public and private) and form a general framework, while defining the precise actions to be taken, which may entail the inclusion of entrepreneurship education in national curricula, with support provided to schools and teachers, with the general goal of "guaranteeing that young people can (systematically) acquire entrepreneurial skills at all levels of the educational system".

⁹ - The agenda promotes collaborative work and seeks to achieve a common vision regarding the strategic importance of skills in the promotion of employment, growth, and competitiveness. The agenda for skills strengthens and, in some cases, streamlines existing initiatives to provide better support to member states in the context of national reform, in order to induce a change of mindset for those in the organizations. It invokes a common undertaking to implement reform in a series of sectors in which the European Union's action brings greater additional value. It deals with three main areas of intervention: increasing the quality and relevance of skills education, making the skills and qualifications more tangible and comparable, and improving analysis of the skill requirements and the corresponding information to improve professional decisions.

¹⁰ - Antonaci, A., Bellotti, F., Berta, R., Dagnino, F. M., De Gloria, A., Lavagnino, E., & Ott, M. (2014). Entrepreneurship Education: Reflection Points. TD Educational Technologies, 22(2), 67-73.

¹¹ - European Commission (2006). "Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions - Implementation of the community program in Lisbon: stimulating entrepreneurial spirit through instruction and learning

In fact, the UPSHIFT programme is based on the assumption, confirmed by literature on entrepreneurship and on the needs of young students, that:

- Entrepreneurship Education (EE) works to support employability. This is a statement supported by the analysis of ninety-one studies from twenty-three countries¹², at both the national and international levels, aimed at mapping the research conducted on the impact of EE. The results of these studies demonstrate that students who participated in training programmes on these subjects were more likely to launch their own businesses or put into practice more innovative professional behaviors. In the short term, a positive change in the level of the beneficiaries' knowledge, skills, and attitudes was noted, and in the medium term, a rise in the rate of start-ups being founded and in employability of the target group was observed¹³. It is also estimated that among students who participated in small business programmes in European secondary schools, between 15% and 20% went on to start their own businesses, a much higher figure than that of the general population¹⁴.
- The Action-based learning is efficient. An experiential learning model is central to entrepreneurship education methods. Gaining “entrepreneurial” skills requires direct experience of the student. The principle of learning-by-doing should be present for the most part in the training programmes in which practical activities, for example linked to the creation of mini-companies and business coaching, make up more than 50% of the educational pathway.

¹² - European Commission (2015). *Entrepreneurship Education: A Road to Success, A Compilation of Evidence on the Impact of Entrepreneurship Education Strategies and Measures*, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

¹³ - European Commission (2015). *Entrepreneurship Education: A Road to Success, A Compilation of Evidence on the Impact of Entrepreneurship Education Strategies and Measures*, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

¹⁴ - European Commission (2012). *Action plan. “Entrepreneurship 2020. Relaunching the Entrepreneurial Spirit in Europe”* Brussels.

The Goals of UPSHIFT

The “UPSHIFT” 21st century skills building programme requires students to resolve problems in their own communities by using initiatives aimed at enhancing their entrepreneurial spirit. Students analyze problems and transform them into opportunities and new ideas for solutions in the form of products or services with social impact. They learn to develop their own ideas and to practice management of roles and responsibilities of each member of the team, they experience first-hand how their product works and they have the chance to discover how their talents, inclinations, and skills can be used to start a business. Thanks to young volunteers and mentors from the private sector, universities, or business start-ups who share their hands-on experience, students acquire greater insight into the opportunities for personal and professional growth that arise after they finish their education, and have a greater awareness of the skills needed to reach their own goals in the transition from school to tertiary studies or to the world of work.

The main goals of the programme are:

- Facilitate the development of 21st century skills, which include life skills and entrepreneurial skills (including: creativity, innovation, teamwork, problem-solving, spirit of initiative, negotiation, critical thinking, communication...);
- Promote the acquisition of skills and tools necessary to identify problems in one’s own community and create innovative and sustainable solutions with social impact;
- Improve vocational guidance for the transition from school to tertiary education and/or the world of work, based on one’s skills, ambitions, inclinations and interests;
- Contribute to the social inclusion of participants, in particular adolescents and young people in disadvantaged situations.

More specifically, the UPSHIFT programme:

- Allows students to develop life skills and entrepreneurial abilities, such as the ability to identify opportunities and efficient solutions, to proceed from thought to action, to manage resources in an appropriate way. It also allows students to develop initiative, vision, creativity, and ethical and sustainable thinking.
- Promotes collaboration and teamwork, both face-to-face and online thanks to digital tools; the ability to achieve a common goal together; interpersonal communication; negotiation; the ability to plan and monitor the results of one’s work and those of one’s team.
- Enables understanding of opportunities and methods to create and develop solutions in the form of products or services of social benefit, starting from direct experiences in one’s local environment.

Phases and Activities of UPSHIFT

The proposed action involves the introduction of a methodology that aims to create a learning context based on an experiential and workshop-based approach, able to develop active participation and contribute to the empowerment of teenagers with the support of their teachers and mentors from the business world or universities. The programme is composed of three different steps:

1. Innovation & Creativity Camp

An 8-10 hour activity in which students need to find an innovative and sustainable solution to an actual, realistic social problem launched at the beginning of the Camp. In the initial stage, the students are divided into groups and guided in a creative design process which begins with the definition of the challenge and follows through to the development of an innovative solution. In the final stage, the different teams gather together to summarize and present their solutions to a multidisciplinary jury.

Goals:

- Introduce new basic concepts of innovation and entrepreneurship;
- Identify the needs of the community;
- Practice in identifying potential opportunities in the problems;
- Know how to create value;
- Identify new solutions;
- Inspire and support continuous innovation, including the social field;
- Belief in one's ability to attain the desired results.

2. Ideas in Action for UPSHIFT:

The course, which lasts 18-30 hours, is composed of four modules: "Being an entrepreneur"; "Searching for opportunities"; "Technical tests of innovation"; "Launching a business". It requires the students to find a solution to a local problem which will be of benefit to the community. Following a methodology inspired by Design Thinking, the students learn to analyze the different problems, suggest ideas for solutions, transform an abstract idea into a real product or service (in the form of prototype) and build a business model. At the end of the programme, the final presentation of the projects and products/services created during the course will take place.

Goals:

- Understand the opportunities and modes of how to do business, starting from the direct experience with one's context;
- Developing entrepreneurial skills like spirit of initiative, identifying opportunities, vision, creativity, ethical and sustainable thinking, other than the specific organizational skills such as teamwork, communication, negotiation and planning.

3. UPSHIFT Incubation:

"UPSHIFT Incubation" phase (80-120 hours) is the educational entrepreneurial programme for upper secondary school students. It is recognized as a form of dual education system (PCTO, Pathways for Transferrable Skills and Orientation) by the MoE (Italian Ministry for Education) and it aims to create a professionalizing experience by working closely with businesses and the world outside the school.

The educational pattern of the mini-business developed in this module requires every team of students to be organized as a real business, creating a management structure and operational roles, documents, procedures and rules, with the aim of simulating the development of an entrepreneurial idea (a product, a service or a digital app) and launching it on the market, thus creating a commercial micro-activity.

Thanks to the learning-by-doing method, the participating classes are considered mini-businesses with educational purposes and take care of their management. More specifically, students collect the capital to start their mini-business, go through the prototyping, production and sale of a product, starting from the concept of an idea until its launch on the market. Moreover, the team creates a brand and manages all communication activities, from printing brochures about the product to publishing a website and managing social media accounts.

At the heart of everything there is a correct analysis of the related background and the targeted clients, the research of suppliers to buy raw material from, and the definition of a pricing strategy and channels of

distributions. The goal is to promote skills and abilities which are typical of auto-entrepreneurship, which may be useful for the students' professional future.

Goals:

- Stimulate auto-entrepreneurship;
- Encourage positive attitudes such as resourcefulness, spirit of innovation and creativity;
- Introduce students to and prepare them for the professional world, presenting entrepreneurial models and procedures, professional roles, and fields which offer the most employment opportunities;
- Raise awareness about future entrepreneurial choices.

In this evaluation research, the young people involved were students who had participated in the first two phases of UPSHIFT (“Innovation & Creativity Camp” and “Ideas in Action for UPSHIFT”) in the school year 2020-21 and who completed the UPSHIFT programme with the third phase “UPSHIFT Incubation” in the school year 2021-22.

2. Evaluation Model

The following evaluation model is a continuation of the evaluation activities carried out in the previous years of the UPSHIFT programme, created thanks to the collaboration between UNICEF and Junior Achievement Italy. Indeed, the programme was modified due to the results of the 2020 final report and the implications caused by the global pandemic. Although it has not altered the main goals - which are, basically, to support the development of 21st century skills to facilitate the school-to-work transition for minors and young people from disadvantaged situations, both Italian and with migratory backgrounds - the course has modified some activities, included new roles, and expanded the pool of beneficiaries.

The greatest innovations included in the present year of UPSHIFT are:

- Replicating the programme in different territorial areas (Lombardy, Latium, Sicily) (
- Broadening the target to students in disadvantaged situations, including both Italian adolescents and others with a migrant background;
- Enhancing the education and active involvement of teachers;
- A greater focus on the topic of social inclusion and the creation of social impact solutions;
- Strengthening partnerships with young mentors from the private sector, universities, and business start-ups.

The evaluation model presented here contains a description of the approach used and the research questions; that is, questions which the contractor wishes to investigate about their work and the tools and techniques which have been used for evaluative purposes. On the other hand, the outcome map graphically represents the connection between the different concepts which have been considered, as well as the expected and desired results. The model was developed based on the programme's two macro-objectives: Il disegno è stato elaborato basandosi sui due macro-obiettivi del programma:

- Acquiring 21st century skills (life skills and entrepreneurial skills)
- Creating socially useful products

The evaluation is focused on these two objectives, while also considering the interdisciplinary micro-objectives that the programme aims to achieve with its actions.

Evaluative Approach

The evaluation of the UPSHIFT programme is part of the more generic framework of the experimental positivist approach¹⁵. This approach is based on the model of rationality, for which a project/programme is developed based on goals, adequate tools to attain them, and observation of the desired results. For this reason, the project cycle is based on a linear connection between decision-action-decision. According to this approach, the evaluation must check if the goals of the programme have been achieved and at what level. Within this approach the evaluation has purely summary or summative purposes (Scriven, 1967). In this regard, for each goal identified by the programme, appropriate markers have been established, in order to detect the degree of competence acquired by the students. Nevertheless, the experimental positivist approach has been contaminated by elements which recall the participative approach and the theory-based approach. The first requires the involvement of the project stakeholders on different levels to understand the relevance and the appropriateness of the instruments in general and the output and outcome markers created for the people involved in the project. Meanwhile, the theory-based approach emphasizes the importance of the reference theory and the programme for the development of outcomes and outputs to be assessed, thus allowing for the investigation of the effects and the changes of relevant hypotheses on the basis of last year's programme theory. The combination of these three approaches has made it possible to:

- Respond to the programme objectives identified by UNICEF and JA Italy ;
- Enrich the framework of the envisioned objectives with new research hypotheses;
- Create markers and required tools in a participatory manner in order to achieve greater coherence between objectives, course, and expected and non-foreseen outcomes of the UPSHIFT programme.

Research Questions

The research questions not only aim to understand whether 21st century skills, i.e. life skills and entrepreneurial skills, have been acquired, and whether the project has favored social inclusion, but also in what way and through what mechanisms the result has or has not been achieved. The evaluation results of the last school year (2020-21) identified the mechanisms that promoted learning and the achievement of the preset objectives and investigated the effectiveness of teaching methods, paying attention to teaching settings and relational dynamics between learners and teachers. For the year 2021-22, however, the evaluation focuses on testing the effectiveness of the programme in achieving its goals (goal-oriented evaluation) in a specific context area, on students in two upper secondary schools. In summary, this evaluation aims to understand whether the UPSHIFT programme participants have developed life skills and entrepreneurship skills useful in the future for their job placement in the relevant regional context. Specifically, the evaluative questions ask:

1. 1. Did the UPSHIFT programme participants meet the goals of entrepreneurial skills acquisition? If yes, to what extent?
2. 2. Did the UPSHIFT programme participants meet the goals of life skills acquisition? If yes, to what extent?
3. 3. Do the levels of 21st century skills acquired by the participants change according to the social category of reference (foreign or Italian students / Index of Cultural Participation / Index of Objectified Cultural Capital)?
4. 4. Did the contexts, teaching methods, and other factors not considered at the beginning of the project favor or disfavor skill acquisition and inclusion?
5. 5. Did participants acquire 21st century skills (life skills and entrepreneurial skills) that are hypothetically significant to their social inclusion?

In conclusion, the evaluative questions aim to understand the levels of life skills and entrepreneurial skills acquired and whether the acquisition of these skills and participation in the programme fostered forms of social inclusion and activated processes of reduction of the school dropout.

¹⁵ Based on the three approaches to evaluation identified by Stame (2001).

The Method

The evaluative research design is based on a mixed method that combines two methodological approaches in a single study: quantitative and qualitative (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). Choosing to integrate the two approaches, rather than consider them as two separate alternatives, allows the limitations to be overcome and the strengths of each methodology to be combined, and enables a deeper and more multifaceted understanding of the phenomenon that is object of the study. The mixed method is particularly useful in the case of complex research questions, as in the present case, and increases the validity of the results found. Adopting a mixed-method approach makes it possible to measure the effectiveness and impact of the project and also to understand the context of the intervention and its peculiarities. Specifically, the quantitative method is employed to measure and explain the changes generated by the project while the qualitative method is adopted to understand these changes more deeply. In terms of quantitative aspects, the research design employs a quasi-experimental logic based on only the post-test and a control group. Although pretesting is a deeply ingrained concept among those involved in educational and psychological research, it is by no means necessary for authentic experimental design. Nevertheless, the universal procedure most appropriate for eliminating initial bias between the two groups is randomization: within the confidence intervals set by significance tests, it may prove sufficient even in the absence of pretesting.

In addition, in the pedagogical field, it is necessary to frequently experiment with methods of presenting entirely new subjects to students, or if it is necessary to ensure the anonymity of the participants in the experiment, in such cases it is impossible to carry out a traditional type of pretest.

The proposed experimental design meets this need and is, moreover, applicable to all contexts in which designs with pretest, post-test, and a control group could be used, i.e., experimental designs that allow for true randomization.

Preexisting natural groups consisting of classrooms are easily accessible in schools, but it is impossible to randomly assign subjects to either group. The classes, then, can be selected to be maximally homogeneous with each other, and later, with the information collected, further matching operations can be carried out to compensate for the initial distance between the control group and the experimental group. The quasi-experimental design can be represented graphically in the following way:

		Only Post
Experimental Group	X	O ₁
Control Group		O ₂

Regarding the qualitative method, four focus groups were conducted in May 2022. One focus group involved teachers from the Falck Institute; the others were conducted with students from three classes, two from the E. Falck institute and one class from the Marignoni-Polo Institute. Classes were chosen according to the overall scoring criteria for the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills. Two classes with the best scores in terms of entrepreneurial skills acquisition and one class whose scores were the lowest were selected, also taking into account scores related to objective multidimensional poverty conditions. The focus group is a research technique for social research, based on discussion among a group of people, in the presence of one or more moderators, focused on a topic that one wishes to investigate in depth. (Corrao 2000, 2013; Morgan 1988). Focus groups were used to capture the relevance and significance of the outcomes for stakeholders and to understand the project implementation process.

Therefore, the qualitative collection aims to investigate these factors to better understand the phenomenon and identify strategies for improving design effectiveness.

The Composition of the Groups for the research

As mentioned above, the survey followed a quasi-experimental design. (Campbell and Stanley, 1963) The survey was carried out on both groups in the same manner and with the same timing (the survey was conducted in April in 2022).

The experimental group is composed of the entirety of the classes participating in phase three of UPSHIFT Enterprise in Action, and the control group is composed of an equivalent quantity to the first group in the same educational institutions.

The institutes chosen to carry out the research are the Marignoni-Polo Institute and the E. Falck Institute¹⁶ located respectively in central Italy and in a municipality in the metropolitan city of Milan. A total of ten classes for the treated group and ten classes for the control group participated in the study; they were divided between the two institutions as follows: Four treated classes and four control classes for the Marignoni-Polo Institute and six treated classes and six control classes for the E. Falck Institute, for a total of 157 students who participated in the UPSHIFT programme and 190 students for the control group.

The Evaluation Tools

The Questionnaire

Among the evaluation tools used is a student questionnaire. Although "a questionnaire may appear as a trivial and even somewhat obvious sequence of questions, and its drafting as an all in all elementary operation" (Corbetta, 2003, p.141), its development requires an effort to define the concepts, dimensions, and finally the indicators that comprise it. The literature defines the term "operationalization of concepts" as the stage of translating theoretical assumptions into empirically measurable operational definitions (Cannavò, 2007, pp. 79-126). This process is accompanied by an extensive literature search in order to define the concepts, dimensions, and indicators that will then make up the questionnaire and enable the "transformation" of the indicators into indexes capable of measuring, or at least quantifying, the phenomenon of entrepreneurship skills.

Model operationalization, i.e., the process of translation from a theoretical concept to an indicator and finally to a question, took into account the different questionnaires found in the literature. In the wake of previous studies (Autio et al., 2001; Chen, Greene, & Crick, 1998; Kolvereid, 1996a, b; Kolvereid et al., 1997; Krueger Jr & Brazeal, 1994; Krueger Jr et al., 2000; Krueger et al., 1993; Linan et al., 2009; Tkachev et al., 1999), questions and ways of measuring constructs were identified through scaling techniques on the topic of entrepreneurship.

Different theoretical models were referred to for the life skills dimension (WHO, 1994; USAID, 2015; Hadiyanto et al., 2017; Hoskins & Liu, 2019) and the following questionnaires found in the literature were considered: Social-Emotional Competence Questionnaire (SECQ) (Zhou & Ee, 2012); Social Skills Improvement System Rating Scales (SSIS-RATING SCALE) (Gresham & Elliot, 2008); Self-Awareness Outcomes Questionnaire (SAOQ) (Sutton, 2016); Employability Assessment Tool (Dershem, 2016; Save the Children, 2017); Adolescent Measure of Empathy and Sympathy (AMES) (Vossen et al., 2015); Creative Personality Test (CPT) (Williams, 1994); California Critical Thinking Dispositions Inventory (CCTDI) (Facione et al., 2001).

The questions in the questionnaire were readjusted considering both the training objectives of the UPSHIFT programme and through re-wording to allow for comprehensibility and methodological adherence to the evaluative research framework.

The questionnaires were implemented on the Limesurvey platform and filled out online from any device. Concerning the online questionnaire mode of data collection, although it poses the problem of statistical representativeness concerning the target population, it has several positive effects on the fidelity and quality of the data collected (Mauceri, Faggiano, Di Censi, 2020). In addition, in this specific case, the problem of representativeness was overcome due to completion by all participants and an equivalent number of students for the control group.

¹⁶ - The schools involved in UPSHIFT were selected based on indirect indicators of disadvantage: high percentage of students with migrant backgrounds, high dropout rates, and low learning outcomes (results of INVALSI tests).

The questionnaire collection phase was supported by teachers who served as facilitators in the filling-out phase.

The Focus Groups

The focus groups were aimed at teachers and students and allowed students to understand and deepen the cognitive dimensions to which the questionnaire failed to provide comprehensive answers. Meanwhile, the teachers investigated the enhancement of skills derived from participation in the project and the educational practices adopted in the classroom, as well as the difficulties encountered by both teachers and students during the implementation of the project's activities. The focus groups were conducted using the Questioning route method, which is a structured course of questions formulated based on the cognitive dimensions not saturated by the questionnaire. So the degree of structuring of the focus groups was as high as the control of the discussion. This method is mainly used in academic research. The types of questions were divided according to the degree of exploration that the dimension under investigation required.

The multilevel conceptualization, which guided the selection of properties in relevant hypotheses, concerning which empirical material was collected, can be schematized (Table 1), focusing evaluative research on several theoretically influential factors that, while belonging to different levels of analysis, collectively refer back to the social production process of the concept of multidimensional poverty and life skills and entrepreneurial skills.

Having selected bounded collectives (students and teachers from two schools located in the same geographic area) also allowed for a multilevel, integrated approach to the survey (Mauceri, 2012). This strategy allowed data processing to relate individual properties to contextual properties, with a view to multilevel analysis. The approach can be defined as integrated because it allowed standardized and non-standardized techniques of information gathering to be combined in the same research design from the perspective of Mixed Methods Research.

	Dimensions Explored in the Tools	Questions from the Questionnaire	Questions from the Student Focus Groups*	Questions from Teacher Focus Groups*
Master Data	Age, Sex	23, 24	Profiling	Profiling
	Country of Birth, Living Conditions	25, 26, 29, 31		
Family Socioeconomic Status	Parents' Educational Qualifications	32		
	Parents' Employment Status	33		
	Parents' Nationality	25, 27, 28		
Educational Poverty	Objectified Socio-Cultural Capital	4, 5		
	Cultural Participation	7		
	Inclination to Read Texts	8, 9		
	School Careers	11, 12		
Life Skills	Self-Awareness	13 (item 1, 2, 3)		
	Emotion Management	13 (item 4, 5, 6)		
	Stress Management	13 (item 7, 8, 9)		
	Effective Relationships	13 (item 10, 11, 12)	<i>Do you think that participating in Ideas in Action for UPSHIFT has helped you engage with opinions and viewpoints other than your own? ...Could you give us an example? Has participation in the Incubation phase improved your ability to work in a group? Do you think the activities in the programme Ideas in Action for UPSHIFT have enabled you to get to know your classmates better?</i>	<i>In your opinion, did the project activities improve the students' ability to work in a group and relate to each other in their peer group?</i>
	Effective Communication	23, 24		
	Empathy	25, 26, 29, 31		
	Creative Thinking	6 (item 7, 8, 9)	<i>Has participation in Ideas in Action for UPSHIFT provided you with inputs and tools to deal with your difficulties and problems constructively and creatively?</i>	<i>Has the implementation of Ideas in Action for UPSHIFT provided the tools to stimulate the students' creativity and inventiveness?</i>
	Critical Thinking	10 (item 1, 2, 3)		
	Decision Making	10 (item 4, 5, 6)		
	Problem Solving	10 (item 7, 8, 9)		
Entrepreneurial Skills and Professional Future	Self-Efficacy	16 (item 2, 3)	<i>Has the programme increased your self-confidence and resourcefulness?</i>	<i>In your opinion, did carrying out the project activities enable the students to increase their self-confidence and resourcefulness? If yes, how?</i>
	Greater Determination Regarding One's Educational Future	15	<i>Do you think participating in Ideas in Action for UPSHIFT helped you understand your potential and clarify your ideas for your educational and professional future?</i>	<i>Do you think that participation in Ideas in Action for UPSHIFT has helped make the students more aware of future educational and professional opportunities?</i>
	Increased Confidence in One's Professional Future	17, 19		
	Increased Interest in a Future Entrepreneurial Choice (Inclination)	14, 18 (item 1)		
	Vision of one's Future Entrepreneurial	20 (item 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)		
	Organization and Planning	20 (item 1, 2, 3)		
	Self-Perceived Entrepreneurial Skills	16 (item 1, 4, 5, 6, 7)	<i>What did you learn from participating in Ideas in Action for UPSHIFT that you would not have had the opportunity to learn in your educational path? (Budgeting, structuring business ideas, turning solutions into business ideas, labor market functioning, ethical economy...)</i>	<i>Has the implementation of the programme enabled the students to acquire entrepreneurial skills? Did the programme allow the students to engage with topics and issues that are different from those usually covered in school? If yes, what do you think were the benefits of this opportunity?</i>
	Improved Knowledge of Financial and Business Management	21		

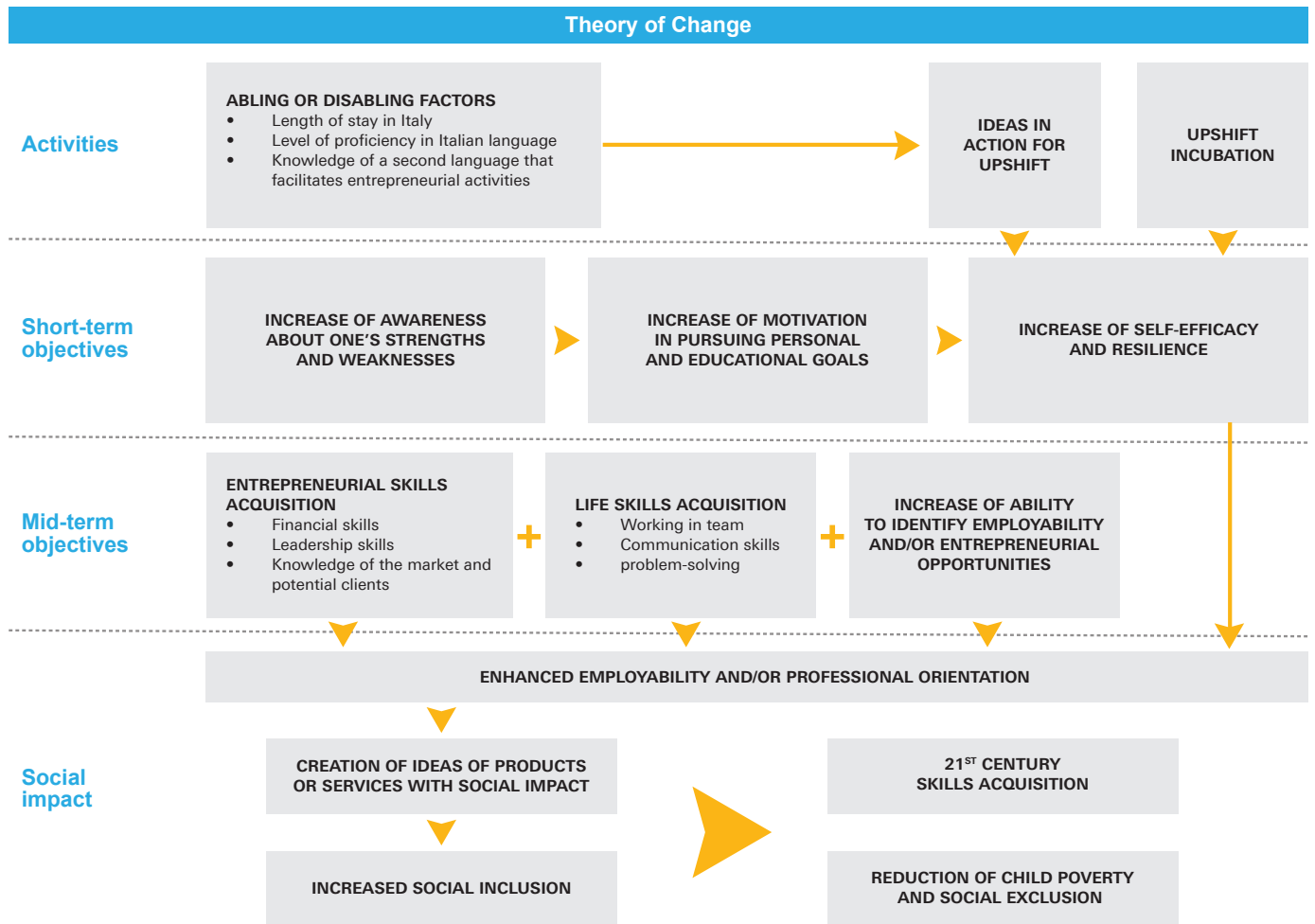
*The questions shown in the table refer to the semi-structured tracks used for conducting the focus groups and are a starting point for the development of the discussion conducted with the programme beneficiaries.

3. The Theory of Change

The main benefits of the programme for students are divided into three areas, which, for this Theory of Change, are defined as follows:

1. Knowledge: the "hard skills", that represent the basic technical knowledge in business, economics, and finance: the financial and business management skills;
2. Skills: the "soft skills", that represent the set of competencies acquired through training and the student's potential to apply them in a practical context;
3. Attitudes: the predisposition to a certain behavior or the performance of certain activities; in this case, the attitudes a student acquires are the indispensable basis for the entrepreneurship they progressively develop along the way.

The Theory of Change developed for the UPSHIFT programme evaluation is, in a nutshell, a logic diagram containing assumptions of how the programme is supposed to work (Funnell and Rogers, 2011). A complex programme, especially considering the individual order validating factors that can facilitate or hinder project implementation and subsequent achievement of goals and outcomes.



4. Evaluation Activities

Concerning the collection and analysis of empirical material, the evaluation required the following activities to be carried out:

- Desk review of documentary material
- Stakeholder engagement
- Participatory review and definition of the Theory of Change developed in previous evaluations for the "UPSHIFT" programme
- Processing evaluation design
- Development and validation of outcomes
- Development and validation of indicators used for evaluation
- Preparation of measurement tools (structured questionnaire, focus group outline)
- Administration of measurement instruments and implementation of focus groups
- Quantitative and qualitative analysis of empirical material
- Peer review report
- Drafting of the final report

The steps of the research were shared through monthly meetings with the working group consisting of JA, UNICEF, and HF. These meetings were essential to validating the tools and organizing the research activities.

The Limitations of Evaluative Research

The limitations of the present evaluative research turn out to be epistemological and methodological, with consequent fallout concerning the results obtained.

The approach used in the present evaluative research is pre-experimental with the control group; this ensures external consistency and responds to the problem defined as "counterfactual". This approach can show the results that would have been achieved in the absence of the programme under consideration while making considerations about the actual result obtained with the control group. In the evaluation presented here, however, since this was a pre-experimental design, a single observation was made at the same time on the two groups: the treated group that participated in the programme and the control group that did not. It is apparent, therefore, that the present experimental approach lacks the internal consistency it would need, namely to demonstrate how much programme participants have increased their skills during their participation.

The first limitation is, therefore, related to the internal validity of the research design. It would be desirable for future evaluations to use a quasi-experimental design with tests and pretests; this would ensure greater internal consistency of results.

Another limitation relates to the statistical representativeness of the evaluated sample and thus the possibility of extending the results of this evaluation to the totality of students participating in the UPSHIFT Programme. Specifically, the classes evaluated were selected based on representative but not probabilistic criteria, thus lacking the statistical representativeness useful for determining inference and extending the results to all programme participants.

To overcome this problem, it would be necessary to draw a sample of the classes to be evaluated, probabilistically from the totality of the classes adhering to the programme, with sufficient numerosity to ensure a high level of confidence and low sampling error.

5. Analysis of Empirical Material

Survey Analysis

Participant Profiles

The total participants involved (experimental group) in the evaluation process were 157 students¹⁷, of whom the majority are females (79%) and 43% are students with a migrant background¹⁸. Out of the total, 27.4% repeated at least one school year, 13.4% repeated two years, and 1.3% repeated more than two years (Graph 1). The rate of students who repeated the school year is higher among students with a migrant background compared to Italian students overall (Table 1).

The consistent entry of students with a migrant background into the Italian education system now dates back more than three decades. Since the earliest studies, a negative gap has been observed between the educational achievements of pupils of Italian nationality and those with a migrant background (Palmas, 2006); this gap in school careers is also recorded in the present evaluative research (Graph 2). Contextually, it is important to highlight the fact that the gradual increase of students with a migrant background in all levels of education in recent years can be interpreted as an investment by their families in education and culture to pursue a better quality of life in the future. In the following analysis, we will try to draw an outline both of the problems and the resources that generate this gap, in order to deliver explicative elements.

This gap in the academic performance originates in the socioeconomic inequalities regarding the index of objectified cultural capital (Table 2), that is the lower possibility of accessing some conditions, such as having a computer, their own room, or a desk to study at, between students with a migrant background (29.4%) compared to Italian students (15.7%). These conditions affect their academic performance. Indeed, the average grades per objectified cultural capital rise from the low to the high level by more than half a point (Table 3). This increment is mainly evident for students with a migrant background.

¹⁷ - The total was calculated based on the questionnaire survey that took place at the end of the project activity in the Enrico Falck Vocational Institute and the D. Marignoni - M. Polo State Higher Education Institute. The total over which the percentages were calculated could vary depending on individual responses, depending on whether or not the respondent provided the answer.

¹⁸ - The definition of young people with a migrant background adopted in this assessment includes a diverse typology of people: those born in Italy to immigrant parents; those who arrived in Italy after birth by age 6 (generation 1.75); and those who reunited with their parents in adolescence after experiencing the socialization phase in their country of origin (generation 1.5 and 1.25) (Rumbaut, 1997). Children of mixed couples or adopted children are also included by some scholars in this definition (Besozzi, 2001; Favaro, 2000; Ambrosini and Molina, 2004). Within the public debate, the term is often used in the broadest sense, encompassing all the categories mentioned above, and it is with this meaning that we will use the expression "students with a migrant background" in these pages.

Even the scores regarding the Life Skills Index record an increase with a higher objectified cultural capital (Graph 3). This proves that a stimulating and adequate environment increases the ability of students to acquire cognitive and interdisciplinary skills. In particular, in this historic context where the COVID-19 pandemic required distant learning, having some spaces in the domestic context dedicated to studying made a difference.

Another index which has been taken into consideration for this analysis is related to cultural participation. The weighted index consists of questions about the frequency of carrying out extracurricular activities and inclination toward reading. The importance of these activities is implicit in the subsequent benefit for minors regarding the acquisition of soft skills and a greater acceleration of the growth and transition process for adult life. For both groups, as shown in table 4, most students rank in the “low” mode, with a higher

Graph 1
Have you repeated any school year?

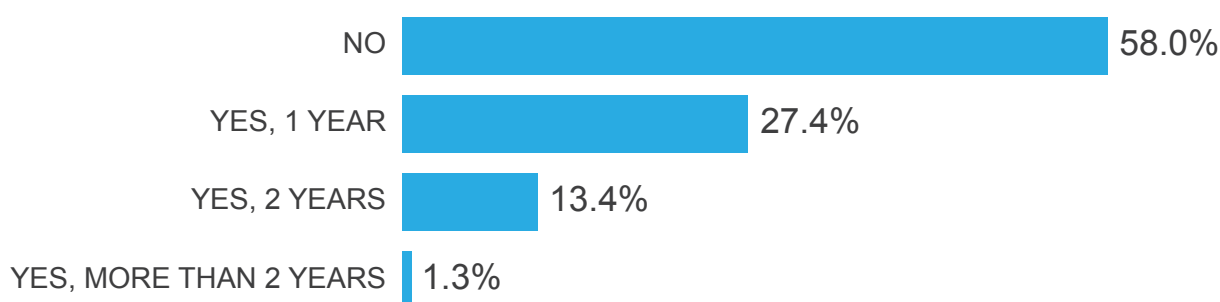
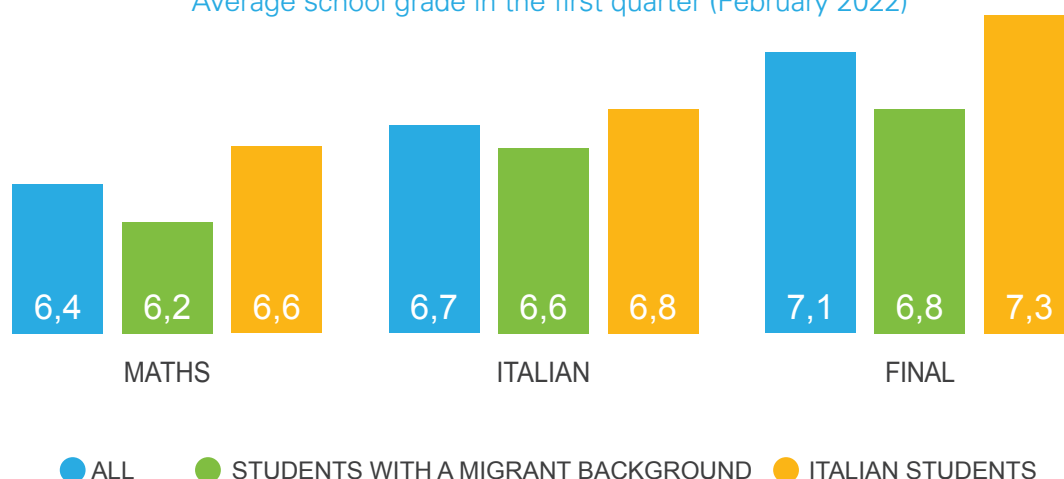


Table 1
Have you repeated any school year?
(per nationality of students)

NO	47,1%	66,3%	58,0%
YES, 1 YEAR	33,8%	22,5%	27,4%
YES, 2 YEAR	17,6%	10,1%	13,4%
YES, MORE THAN 2 YEARS	1,5%	1,1%	1,3%
TOTAL	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Graph 2
Average school grade in the first quarter (February 2022)



concentration of Italian students compared to students with a migrant background. This means that most of them carried out no more than two activities in the 12 months leading up to the compilation of the survey. Even with a slighter association compared to the objectified cultural capital index, we can see that speaking of educational success, the highest average grade has been achieved from students who rank in the “high” level of the cultural participation index (Table 5).

In the cultural participation index as well, the average grades obtained on the Life Skills Index observe an increase by condition of participation in extra-curricular and cultural activities (Graph 4). As widely confirmed by the literature, educational poverty is correlated with family socioeconomic status (number of books available, reading frequency, parents’ level of education), with consequences in the child’s cognitive and socio-relational development. Other factors connected to the socioeconomic gap may be the parents’

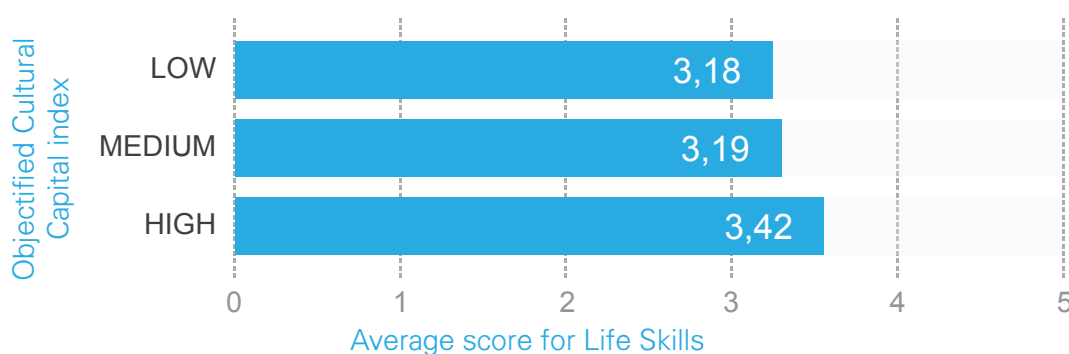
Table 2
Objectified Cultural Capital Index (per nationality of students)

LOW	29,4%	15,7%	21,7%
MEDIUM	35,3%	44,9%	40,8%
MEDIUM HIGH - HIGH	35,3%	39,3%	37,6%
TOTAL	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Table 3
Final Average Grade per Objectified Cultural Capital Index (per nationality of students)

LOW	6,60	7,21	6,85
MEDIUM LOW	6,71	7,10	6,95
MEDIUM HIGH	6,78	7,50	7,07
HIGH	7,20	7,52	7,41

Graph 3
Average score for Life Skills per Levels of the Objectified Cultural Capital Index



● ALL ● STUDENTS WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND ● ITALIAN STUDENTS

stress regarding the possibility to access material resources and the subsequent ability to create opportunities for the children to take part in extracurricular activities (sports, ballet, study trips, theaters, museums, etc.). Moreover, the socioeconomic status cannot only be related to the income component, but it has to take into consideration the parents' employment and their education level significantly. Many studies showed that early school leaving is influenced by a disadvantage of "cultural capital" of the family. Unsuccessful school careers are common among young people with low socioeconomic status, which proves to be one of the educational disadvantage factors (Bukodi and Goldthorpe, 2013; Kallio et al., 2014). In conclusion, the association between parents' socioeconomic status and children's cognitive skill development is meaningfully influenced by the parents' cultural capital, rather than the family income (Noble et al., 2015).

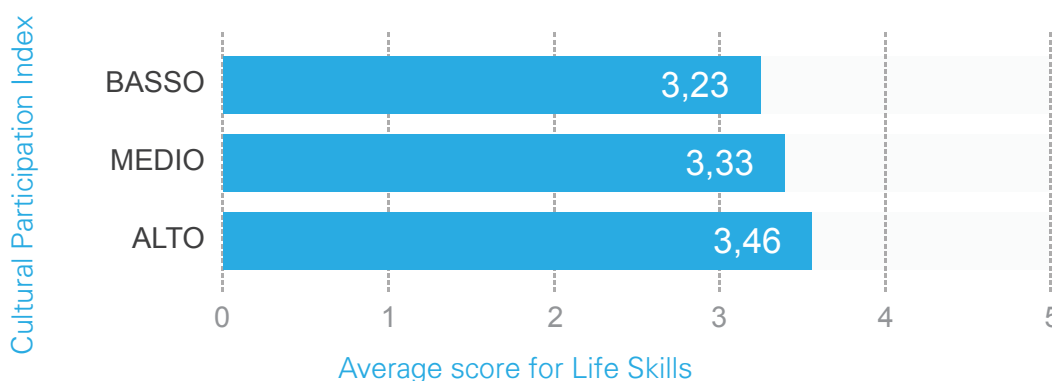
Table 4
Cultural Participation Index (per nationality of students)

LOW	55,9%	69,7%	63,7%
MEDIUM	35,3%	27,0%	30,6%
HIGH	8,8%	3,4%	5,7%
TOTAL	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Table 5
Final General Grade per Cultural Participation Index (per nationality of students)

LOW	6,87	7,18	7,06
MEDIUM	6,58	7,54	7,06
HIGH	7,17	7,33	7,22

Graph 4
Average score for "Life skills" per Levels of the Objectified Cultural Capital Index



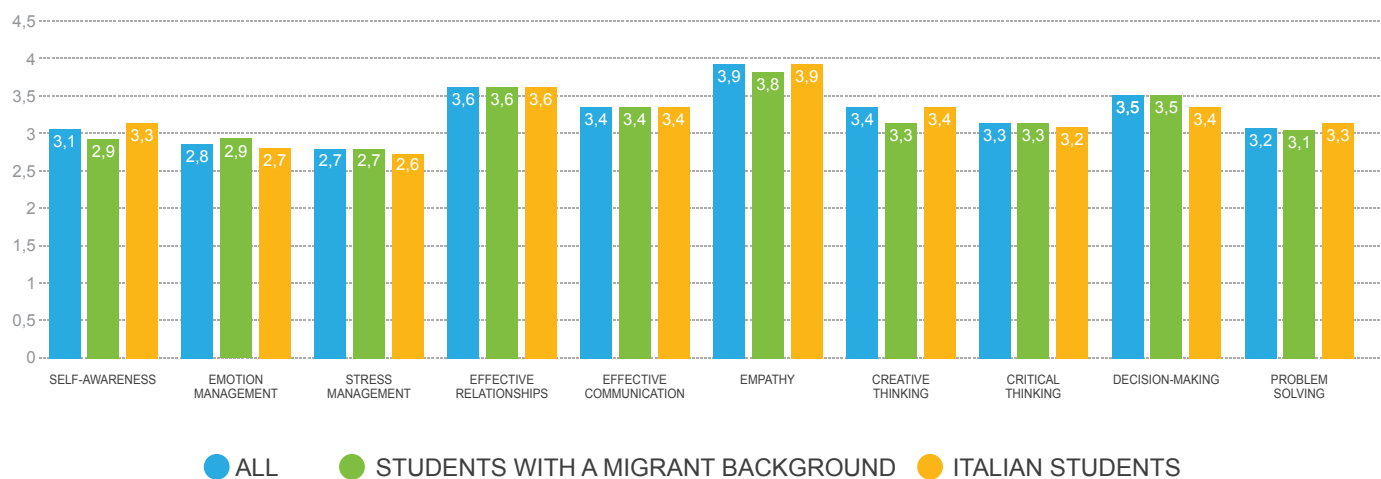
● ALL ● STUDENTS WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND ● ITALIAN STUDENTS

Life Skills

Life skills are a set of cognitive, emotional, and basic relational skills acquired thanks to learning or direct experience. They allow people to manage problems, situations, and common questions in our daily lives. To measure life skills, a scale has been created by adapting the validated instruments. The scale is composed of thirty items and it investigates ten skills identified by the World Health Organization (WHO). The scale registers a 0.853 Cronbach Alpha, which marks a great reliability of the instrument used to measure the life skills.

From this analysis, the differences between students with a migrant background and Italian students are irrelevant both for the overall index and the ten sub constructs. The scores are high enough for all dimensions, except for stress management and emotion management. These dimensions are tightly connected with one another. The dimension which registers the highest scores is empathy (Graph 5).

Graph 5
Life skills dimensions divided by students' nationality



Life skills deal with motivation, self-esteem, self-determination, self-efficacy, spirit of initiative, cooperation, communication, empathy, and interaction with others (Santerini, 2016), and are essential for decoding social complexity and successfully coping with life.

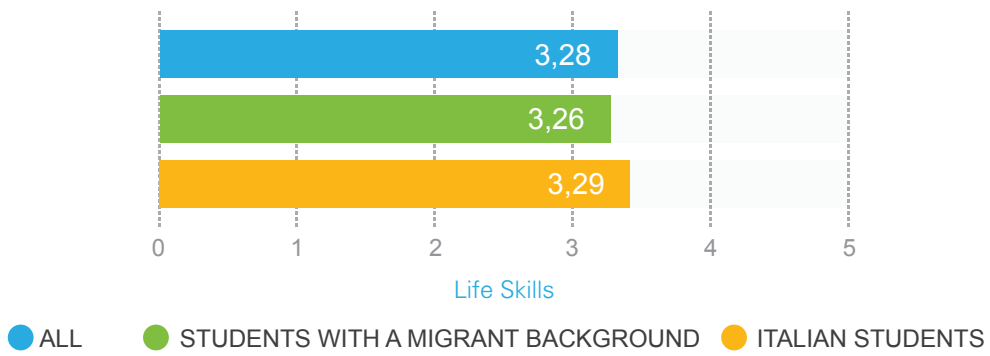
The lack of development of cognitive and life skills, which are essential to meet the challenge of competitiveness, is associated with poor development of social and civic skills that allow one to consciously live one's right to citizenship and to make a concrete contribution to collective well-being (Capperucci, 2017).

Furthermore, as shown by the data analysis, students who have a high level of life skills are among those who register the highest scores in the entrepreneurship indexes (Graphs 7, 8, 9).

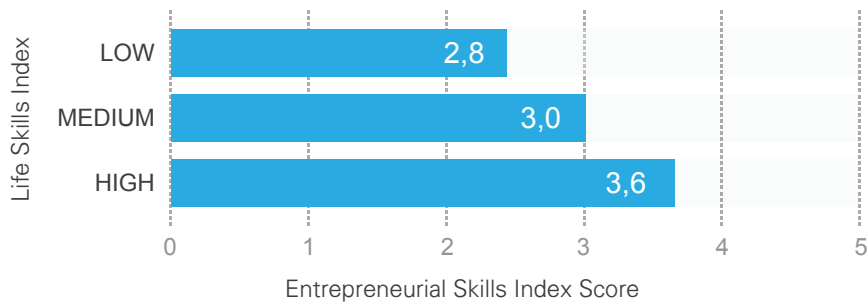
¹⁹ - For more details, please read the paragraph titled "The Evaluation Tools".

²⁰ - The Cronbach Alpha is a statistic marker used in psychometric tests to evaluate their reliability, that is, to verify the replication over time of the provided results with the same conditions. In general, high reliability values are those equal to or greater than 0.70.

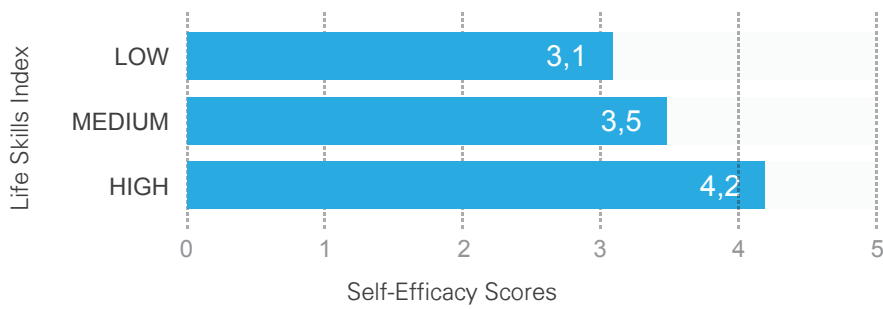
Graph 6
Life Skills Index per Students' Nationality



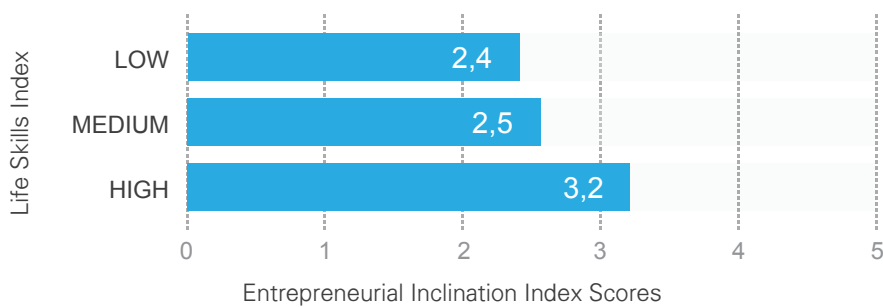
Graph 7
Average score of self-perceived Entrepreneurial Skills Index per Life Skills Index



Graph 8
Average score of self-efficacy index per life skills index



Graph 9
Average score of Entrepreneurial Inclination Index per Life Skills Index



Entrepreneurial Skills

Students rank at a medium-high level regarding all dimensions investigating entrepreneurial skills. The result is an auto-perception of one’s entrepreneurship skills enhanced by the UPSHIFT programme, especially concerning the motivational and organizational dimension of teamwork. The information derived from the focus groups helps to understand the lowest scores registered in some auto-perceived entrepreneurship skill dimensions, which are not to be considered as a decrease in one’s abilities, but rather as a greater awareness of one’s strengths and weaknesses. Indeed, this is the central topic of phase three of the UPSHIFT programme. The course has undoubtedly reduced the quantity of students who are uncertain regarding their future, increasing their ability to identify new work opportunities.

This course has helped the participants to define their qualities, flaws, potentials, skills, and weaknesses. More specifically, as also shown by the information included in the teacher focus group, the merit of this course was not only the definition of a set of technical skills, but also the enhancement of the students’ self-awareness as subjects able to take action in their life and define their future.

Regarding the entrepreneurial skills which were developed, these are overall of a medium-high level with a score always higher than 2.7 on a scale of 1-5, where 1 is the lowest and 5 is the highest.

Concerning their future, despite the historical period marked by uncertainty due to the pandemic and the recent war in Ukraine, the programme has succeeded in alleviating the fears and insecurities of young people who see themselves as workers or university students, as well as the lower number of young people who see themselves as entrepreneurs. The percentage of students who cannot project themselves in the future is 17.8%, with a higher number of Italians than that of their peers with a migrant background (Table 6). Undoubtedly, the choice of the students’ educational path is influenced by different factors, such as the socio-cultural level of their family of origin: as the socio-cultural level rises, the probability of being guided towards high school and then university rises. For students with a migrant background, this relation is weaker, since many studies pointed out that, even controlling the level of education of the family, students with a migrant background still show a higher likeliness to choose a professional path which can be useful in the working world in the short term.

The degree of complexity in which students with a migrant background live is an element which strengthens resilience and auto-determination skills to project their life (the number of students with a migrant background who can project themselves in the future doubles that of Italians), even if this ability is strongly influenced by the family background and not always towards a socio-cultural improvement compared to their context of origin.

The most predictive dimensions of the inclination to choose an entrepreneurial activity in the future are self-efficacy and a high objectified cultural capital.

The difference between Italian students and students with a migrant background regarding entrepreneurial activity is irrelevant; so, we can exclude the cultural element as predictive, at least for the present evaluative research.

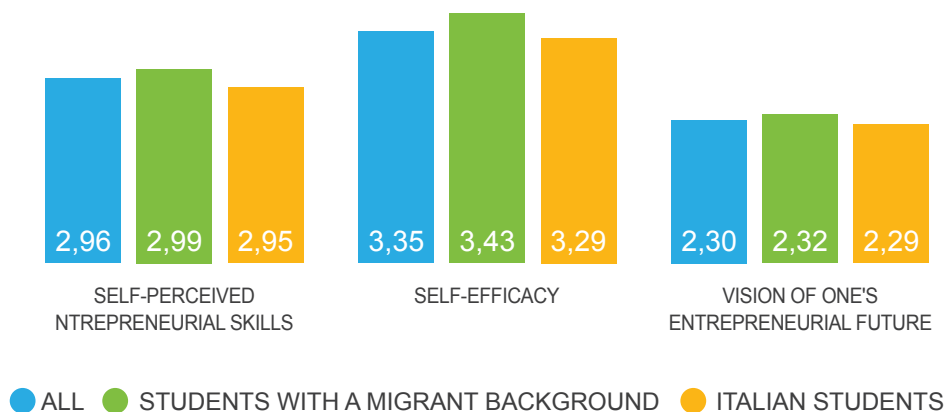
Table 6
How Do You See Yourself in 5 Years?

UNIVERSITY STUDENT	25,0%	22,5%	23,6%
TRAINEE	2,9%	2,2%	2,5%
WORKER	55,9%	46,1%	50,3%
ENTREPRENEUR	4,4%	5,6%	5,1%
UNEMPLOYED (LOOKING FOR A JOB)	0%	1,1%	0,6%
I DON'T KNOW	11,8%	22,5%	17,8%
TOTAL	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

● ALL ● STUDENTS WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND ● ITALIAN STUDENTS

²¹ - See e.g. Barban and White, 2011, on ITAGEN2 data related to secondary school students

Graph 10
Self-perceived entrepreneurial skills per students' nationality



Graph 11
Entrepreneurial Inclination Index by Students' Nationality

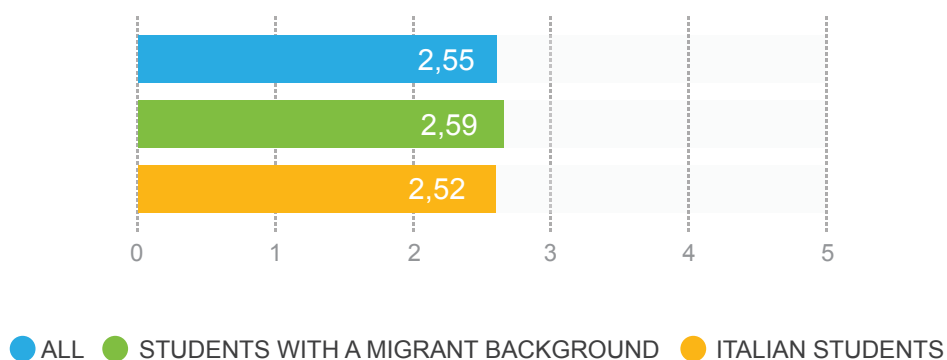


Table 7
Future Entrepreneurial Vision Index per Self-Efficacy Index

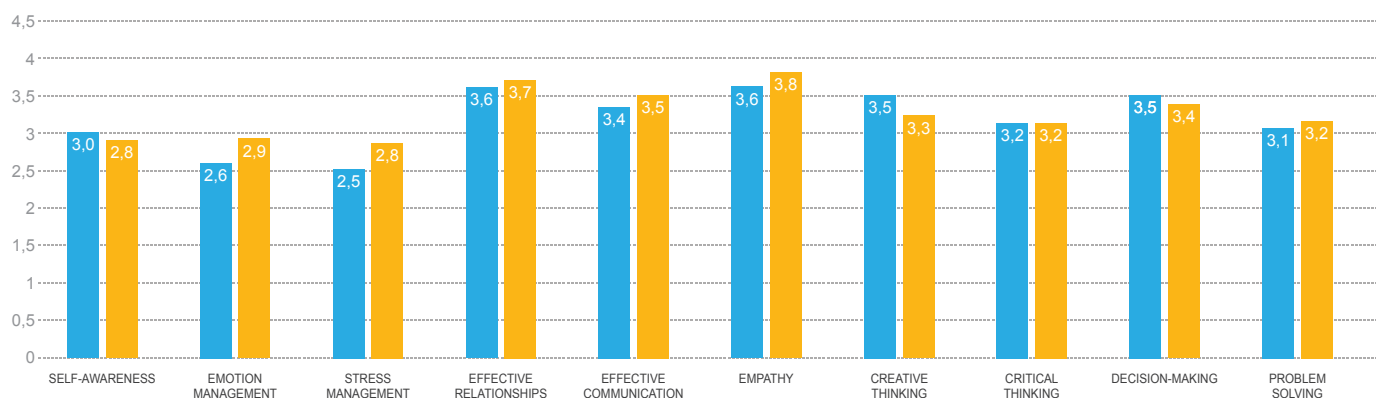
		SELF-EFFICACY INDEX			
		LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	TOTAL
FUTURE ENTREPRENEURIAL VISION INDEX	LOW	97,3%	80,6%	58,5%	77,1%
	HIGH	2,7%	19,4%	41,5%	22,9%
	TOTAL	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Counterfactual Analysis

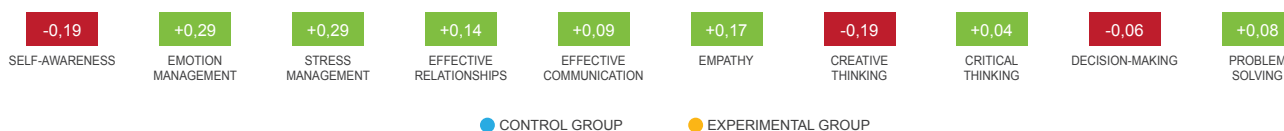
Before analyzing the data between the experimental and the control group, matching operations were carried out to balance the initial difference between the two groups and reach a pre-experimental equivalence which allowed the imputation of the observed results to the implemented intervention and not to initial differences pointed out in the natural groups, thus allowing a more precise quantification of the impact of the project regardless of all the events whose action might be considered an effect of the intervention. The variables that were chosen for the matching are: age, academic performance, repetition of one or more school years, the objectified cultural capital index, and the cultural participation index. In addition, the analysis was run only on the students of the D. Marignoni - M. Polo Higher State School Institute. The school has been participating in the Junior Achievement programmes for more than seven years and can, therefore, serve as an example for the impact of the UPSHIFT programme, since the teaching body is well aware of its strategic role and it has been trained to support the design interventions. The average causal effect was estimated calculating the difference between the expected value (average) of the outcome of the group that received the intervention and the expected value of the outcome of the control group. The significance of the estimate of the causal effect was estimated with an appropriate statistical test (the tests carried out are listed in Table 9).

In regard to the life skills, the differences between the experimental group and the control group registered different levels of intensity that were more or less marked (Graph 12); however, for almost all the sub-constructs positive values were detected, with the exception of self-awareness, creative thought, and decision making (Graph 13).

Graph 12
Life Skills divided per Control Group and Experimental Group



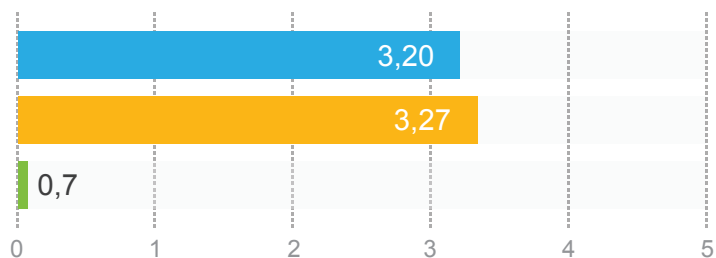
Graph 13
Differences between Control Group and Experimental Group for the life skills dimensions



Overall, the Life Skills Index appears slightly higher for the experimental group, pointing to a positive effect of the design intervention on the improvement of these skills (Graph 14).

With respect to the auto-perceived entrepreneurial skills, the three constructed indexes result in higher values for the experimental group, especially for self-efficacy and self-perceived entrepreneurial skills (Graphs 15 and 16). Therefore, even the overall Entrepreneurial Inclination Index appears higher in the experimental group (Graph 17). Taking students' nationality into consideration, a larger difference can be observed between the experimental and the control group for the Italian students.

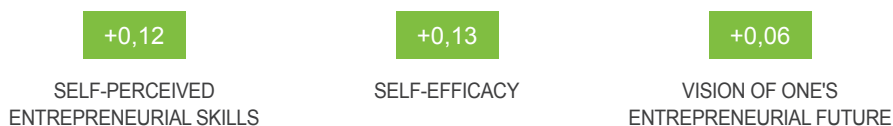
Graph 14
Average Score of Life Skills for the Experimental and the Control Group and their difference (EG-CG)



Graph 15
Average Scores of the Entrepreneurial Skills Index per Experimental and Control Group



Graph 16
Difference Between the Experimental Group and the Control Group for the Entrepreneurial Skills



Graph 17
Average Scores of the Entrepreneurial Inclination Index per Experimental Group and Control Group and their difference (EG-CG)

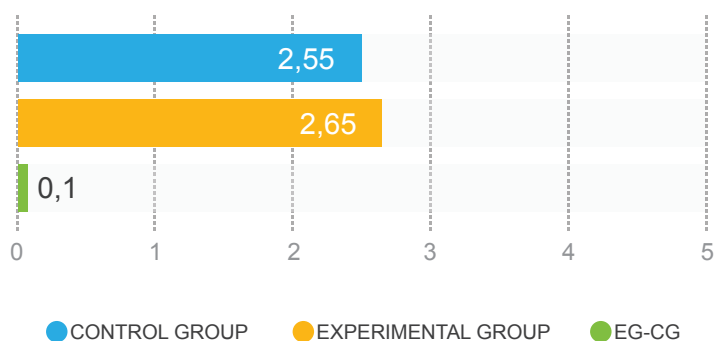


Table 8

	Students With a migrant background			Italian Students		
	Control Group	Experimental Group	DIFF	Control Group	Experimental Group	DIFF
SELF-AWARENESS	3,06	2,79	∨	2,95	3,14	∧
EMOTION MANAGEMENT	2,82	2,86	∧	2,08	3,10	∧
STRESS MANAGEMENT	2,69	2,79	∧	2,15	3,00	∧
EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS	3,68	3,75	∧	3,33	3,52	∧
EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION	3,33	3,44	∧	3,51	3,71	∧
EMPATHY	3,69	3,84	∧	3,54	3,67	∧
CREATIVE THINKING	3,39	3,22	∨	3,62	3,57	∨
CRITICAL THINKING	3,22	3,28	∧	3,13	2,95	∨
DECISION MAKING	3,77	3,45	∨	2,92	3,43	∧
PROBLEM SOLVING	3,04	3,09	∧	3,15	3,57	∧
LIFE SKILLS INDEX	3,27	3,25	∨	3,04	3,37	∧
SELF-PERCEIVED ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS	2,92	2,98	∧	2,94	3,46	∧
SELF-EFFICACY	3,27	3,39	∧	3,31	3,57	∧
FUTURE ENTREPRENEURIAL VISION	2,35	2,26	∨	2,23	3,09	∧
HIGHER ENTREPRENEURIAL INCLINATION INDEX	2,56	2,57	∧	2,53	3,19	∧

Table 9 - ANOVA

		SQUARE SUM	DF	ROOT MEAN SQUARE	F	SIGN
SELF-AWARENESS	Between Groups	0,849	1	0,849	1,601	0,209
	Within Groups	49,310	93	0,530	--	--
	Total	50,159	94	--	--	--
EMOTION MANAGEMENT	Between Groups	2,036	1	2,036	2,580	0,112
	Within Groups	73,395	93	0,789	--	--
	Total	75,432	94	--	--	--
STRESS MANAGEMENT	Between Groups	1,938	1	1,938	2,287	0,134
	Within Groups	78,810	93	0,847	--	--
	Total	80,749	94	--	--	--
EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS	Between Groups	0,490	1	0,490	1,343	0,249
	Within Groups	33,936	93	0,365	--	--
	Total	34,426	94	--	--	--
EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION	Between Groups	0,177	1	0,177	0,552	0,459
	Within Groups	29,839	93	0,321	--	--
	Total	30,016	94	--	--	--
EMPATHY	Between Groups	0,686	1	0,686	1,512	0,222
	Within Groups	42,180	93	0,454	--	--
	Total	42,865	94	--	--	--
CREATIVE THINKING	Between Groups	0,833	1	0,833	2,099	0,151
	Within Groups	36,903	93	0,397	--	--
	Total	37,736	94	--	--	--
CRITICAL THINKING	Between Groups	0,044	1	0,044	0,141	0,708
	Entro i gruppi	29,238	93	0,314	--	--
	Total	29,282	94	--	--	--
DECISION MAKING	Between Groups	0,093	1	0,093	0,156	0,694
	Within Groups	55,607	93	0,598	--	--
	Total	55,701	94	--	--	--
PROBLEM SOLVING	Between Groups	0,137	1	0,137	0,313	0,577
	Within Groups	40,733	93	0,438	--	--
	Total	40,870	94	--	--	--
LIFE SKILLS INDEX	Between Groups	0,103	1	0,103	0,657	0,420
	Within Groups	14,590	93	0,157	--	--
	Total	14,693	94	--	--	--
SELF-PERCEIVED ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS	Between Groups	0,342	1	0,342	0,862	0,356
	Within Groups	36,931	93	0,397	--	--
	Total	37,273	94	--	--	--
SELF-EFFICACY	Between Groups	0,425	1	0,425	0,531	0,468
	Within Groups	74,512	93	0,801	--	--
	Total	74,937	94	--	--	--
FUTURE ENTREPRENEURIAL VISION	Between Groups	0,076	1	0,076	0,145	0,705
	Within Groups	48,821	93	0,525	--	--
	Total	48,897	94	--	--	--
HIGHEST ENTREPRENEURIAL INCLINATION INDEX	Between Groups	0,227	1	0,227	0,572	0,451
	Within Groups	36,914	93	0,397	--	--
	Total	37,141	94	--	--	--

Focus Group Analysis

1. Teachers Focus Group

As anticipated, the focus group was used as a qualitative technique to examine some key dimensions of the programme by investigating participants' perceptions. This is in fact integral to the project's success, since it enables to understand to what extent the participants felt involved in the shared process of pedagogical experimentation and the growth of their own skills. With regard to the focus group of teachers, following qualitative sociology methodology, five teachers who participated in the UPSHIFT programme were selected. Questions regarding each of the specific UPSHIFT outcomes were designed, and then there was a collective discussion to establish the actual results achieved, starting with a reflective consideration from each teacher (Frisina, 2010).

First of all, it is important to highlight how, based on their own experience at school, teachers confirmed the socioeconomic background of the students and of their family of origin, characterized by a medium-low economic and cultural capital: *"The socioeconomic context is medium-low... I know that some of the parents graduated from high school, only a few are college graduates, and that's about it, not only economically but also culturally we have lower-middle class levels..."*. Implementation methods and related successes and/or critical issues were investigated keeping in mind such a context, also marked by a certain difficulty in the educational processes, in some of the classes in particular. With regard to one of the main objectives of the programme, namely the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills (intended in the multidimensional sense, see above), the teachers' impressions were decidedly positive. UPSHIFT has allowed young people to experiment with new ways of organizing work and developing creative visions that can transform their ideas into values (FFE-YE, 2012). In the teachers' words, especially regarding the division of labor, team work, and the students' ability to reorganize themselves:

I saw them very engaged and involved, plus it's not usually a very cohesive class and students who normally disagree came together and teamed up, something that was missing so much in that class. It was a positive experience from an entrepreneurial point of view as well as a human one, because they applied interdisciplinary knowledge, they talked to the teachers and they realized that they can help them, finally, and that if they collaborate they reach a point. (...) They went around looking for partners, simulating a company.

They managed to acquire new skills. They come from different academic pathways, but they have some of these things as subjects at school. The law and economics teachers entered the project energetically. In 4th D they did a cost analysis with the law teacher and it was very useful. In the second part we also optimized our resources, among us. Those who were good went there and gave their best. (...) Among other things, stepping into the shoes of a CEO or other roles allowed them to experience the company as if it were their own, and when they alternated school with work [dual education system], in structures such as health care residences (RSA), kindergartens... they could identify themselves with the other figure and understand that on the other side there was a job that they had already experienced in the programme.

As the two extracts effectively show, not only a significant involvement by the students was observed, who took on company roles and experimented with forms of work organization very similar to those of a company, but the project also managed to stimulate active collaboration with teachers, which has led to practices of autonomy and individual initiative. In addition, as a consequence of the students' activities, the teachers themselves have rethought their teamwork, revealing during the focus group that they have "also optimized our resources, among us". These are significant results that are in line with the programme's expectations.

Furthermore, the perception of educational success within the various dimensions included in the entrepreneurial sphere is confirmed with regard to the capacity for vision and creativity, especially when it comes to identifying problems in one's own environment and developing innovative solutions. Bearing in mind that the UPSHIFT programme has been implemented in various types of professional and technical schools, precisely with the purpose of a hybridization of fundamental knowledge to cope with the risks and opportunities inherent in the current postmodern society (Beck, 2013), the circumstance for which the students have developed the ability to apply an entrepreneurial spirit to themselves and the world around them is an important outcome. As described by the teachers, the students were very involved and combined

the UPSHIFT programme activities with classroom content:

During Health Class, we studied the autistic spectrum and the students took what they learned in Health Class and translated it into a sort of travel agency exclusively for autistic kids, so it was necessary to provide information to agencies and mothers on everything that autistic children might need. A really big project. I am very appreciative and proud. It wasn't a project that we handed down. They combined it with what we did in class, and it was great...

And:

I also teach Health and I am the coordinator of class 4th F. The 4th F students, too, used interdisciplinary knowledge, creating an app for kids with difficulties, especially SEN (Special Educational Needs, ed) and SLD (Specific Learning Disorders, ed). They went around to buy the shares and I saw them really enthusiastic, very pumped... really involved.

It is therefore a question of observing how, in the teachers' eyes, students managed to undertake growth paths that, far from being confined to a mechanical transmission of knowledge, imply an intersection of knowledge that is essential for the challenges of social life (Martuccelli, 2015). In this sense, and in line with the objective of acquiring life skills, it can be said that the project has contributed to what anthropologist Arjun Appadurai (2004) called the "capacity to aspire" of the people involved. Through this concept, the American anthropologist means the ability to imagine one's own future, nurture one's own aspirations, and move among the current resources to cultivate a life project and put it into practice, in spite of material and social inequalities. In addition to being a fundamental tool for the democratic vitality of a society (De Leonardi, Deriu, 2012), it can be considered an important dimension for social inclusion, and encompasses many aspects of life skills, which UPSHIFT aims to promote. This aspect emerged repeatedly within the focus group, with teachers emphasizing the students' "proactive" spirit, the ability demonstrated (stimulated by the programme) to design the work, the initiative in dialogue with teachers, who were previously considered a "distant" presence, and finally, the ability to develop ideas and perspectives focused on social innovation:

They managed to adapt their topics and interests to the business context. Many ideas emerged, all very innovative, and they also gave us adults a lot of material to think about. The same topics, when developed by the students, acquire a different perspective, which is uniquely their own...

Evidently, such a dynamic is a harbinger of that broadening of cultural horizons which is part of the project's objectives. In this regard, group work progress (and its effects on students) in relation to the class climate during the rest of the year deserves a space to be deepened. From the teachers' point of view, there was a nearly unanimous perception that peer relationships matured with a view to achieving the goals and overcoming the difficulties of the project. Throughout the duration of the work, the students were not only able to avoid being influenced by the conflicts and idiosyncrasies that often occur in daily school life but, on the contrary, they showed an unprecedented ability to manage conflicts productively where, for example, there were differences in envisioning the development of the business idea. This is another important dimension of life skills – that of conflict and stress management – which teachers highlighted with satisfaction.

Teamwork... I'll give you an example. There was a squabble between two small groups, and it continued for a couple of days, but close to the presentation, the week before the presentation, when they had to compete, they hugged, shook hands, and re-established friendly relationships, as if by magic. They looked at the common goal, and it was a beautiful thing... and once the competition was over, it didn't go back to the way it was before. The good relations continued afterwards, even now. They saw the conflict as a part of something that could exist in a work environment. We solve the situation because work comes first, and we have to do our best...

2. Student Focus Group

In line with the design and evaluation objectives, three different student focus groups were carried out, two at the Falck Institute and one at the Marignoni Institute. The asymmetric nature of this choice is due to the consideration that, in order to gather opinions and perspectives on the critical issues of the UPSHIFT programme, it was considered appropriate to dedicate part of the analysis to the class that obtained the lowest returns in relation to the expected outcomes, according to the questionnaires administered. This enabled us to collect useful material to understand the critical issues that emerged and to develop recommendations for implementing future editions of the programme, presented in the conclusions of this report.

First of all, it was about observing how the student focus groups largely reinforced and confirmed what emerged in the teacher focus group. Evidently, this was done from the students' specific point of view, allowing to articulate a consideration that takes into account the multiplicity of perspectives and actors involved in the process (Hennik, 2014). One of UPSHIFT's most solid and promising aspects is teaching an entrepreneurial mindset, not only in terms of opportunities to create new companies in the near future, but, above all, as the capacity and stimulus to propose ideas and to think of oneself as a person equipped with agency, able to transform these ideas into reality. In this sense, the students felt like protagonists in an educational context that did not confine them to a passive role as recipients of information, but rather contributed to shaping its contours. It is also important to emphasize how a continuity line emerged with the previous year's activities, which is an important indicator of perceiving coherence in the path undertaken, that is not limited to the activities carried out in the individual school year.

Last year we only did three days, I think... yes, three days... in remote learning... we did three days, in the mornings. Our class was divided into two groups and each of these groups helped by a mentor designed a mini-project, but not as detailed as this one, just to present in three minutes... on the third day... my group, for instance, had a project about elderly and fragile people, etc... their group had a project on SLD and learning problems... and on these platforms, we wrote a schedule with a tutor indicating the main goals of the project. On the third day, all schools made a three-minute presentation to a panel of judges...

- You have always developed websites then...

- Yes, starting from the website, but mine was a more concrete thing, with volunteers, for example, who went to homes... to deliver books, or during quarantine, some support for IT and digital skills... even to communicate with grandchildren, for example... while theirs was more focused on school aspects for students with SLD...

- Is there anyone who worked on the other project that can tell us what it was about?

- We wanted to focus on a method to help people in difficulty and decided to make something digital... and then we focused on students who had difficulties and then we pushed ourselves further in the field of SLD... and so we figured out that SLD needs concept maps and aids... hence the idea of designing the website with concept maps and quizzes.

The extracts clearly show the students' level of involvement, giving a perspective that demonstrates the results of their creation. As anticipated by the teachers, far from appearing to be a project imposed from top down, it underwent a process of creative re-appropriation by the participants, who adapted its spirit to the school institute's specific context. In the Falck Institute's case in particular, entrepreneurial skills were productively hybridized with the socio-sanitary assistance track, enabling the development of company projects focused on helping and supporting socially vulnerable target populations such as, precisely, those who received a SLD diagnosis or who were otherwise considered Special Educational Needs subjects and elderly people. One of the most interesting notes of the excerpt, moreover, concerns the demonstrated ability not only in suggesting a creative project but, at a second level, in the union between the two projects developed by the two different groups in the previous year. In essence, the students demonstrated that they had developed and practiced significant creative abilities, identifying opportunities and needs in their environment, and at the same time, offering a practical solution.

These reflections are also confirmed by the results of Marignoni Institute, where the students proposed and developed a company project more in line with the specificities of their training pathway, which is the commercial track.

It was born last year from a project about selling books... about selling and buying books, called Ecobook. Ecobook comes from the words eco and book because it keeps the ecological and sustainable name, while book is because our source of income and sales are still books. Our idea was to borrow books from school children, who would then have to give them up at the end of the year. Because, even with the used book market, you spend much more than just selling them at school. In fact, at the used book market, you spend four or five euros for a used book, so we thought of giving them a percentage, paying for the book and using the rest of the money for a school fund, to decorate the classroom in a way that makes studying more efficient.

Here, too, in line with UPSHIFT's hypothesis and objectives, students were able to creatively develop a business project, starting from their own context and identifying opportunities. Additionally, it is important to highlight a recurring aspect in the focus groups, namely the presence of elements of social usefulness when reflecting on the enterprise. As can be seen from the extracts, even where the academic track did not immediately appear to be related to social issues, the participants showed a sensitivity to the beneficial effects of the business that was far from obvious. Referring to Ecobook, for example, attention was also paid to economic inequality ("we thought of setting it up in all schools to save students and families money on buying books"), which, if analyzed in the context of the overall results, allows us to note the element of citizenship education inherent in UPSHIFT. This is probably an effect of success that is intrinsic in the development of life skills and interdisciplinary skills.

In addition, positive results also emerged in both schools regarding the dimension concerning learning financial skills and budgeting. Being part of one of the more technical aspects of the project, it seems natural that the students reported several difficulties in developing plausible corporate reporting, especially at the Falck Institute. At the same time, such tests can be considered the index of a real process of growth and stimulus: as was reported, the participants were in fact "forced" to become autonomous, seek the most suitable support among the various teachers, and set in motion virtuous paths of informal education. In this sense, as already noted in the teacher focus group, it can be affirmed that dynamics were created in which the entire educational community emerged strengthened.

- *How did it go? ...*
- *It went well...*
- *Yes, well, actually we were helped by the law teacher, who cared a lot about this part, so she assisted us... but without her, we wouldn't have been able to do it...*
- *Did the activity help you understand how to structure a budget?*
- *It helped us to understand the whole financial part of a company... and if it happened in the future, I would know what it is about...*

From the various excerpts shown so far, it is possible to get an idea of the centrality of peer relationships in the successful outcome of the project. Obviously, this becomes explicit when this specific dimension is analyzed, asking the participants both how their relationships evolved and how they organized the work. In both cases, we could distinguish between two different aspects in how the collective activity was carried out – one that was most important for developing interdisciplinary skills, and the other one more strictly entrepreneurial-related. Indeed, first of all, despite disagreements and misunderstandings that are natural in any class, students were able to understand the importance of moving beyond personal disagreements to collaborate in order to maximize results. At the Falck Institute, where the level of conflict was high, UPSHIFT did not contribute to improving their relationships. However, the students were still able to manage and organize a business structure in which everyone played their role, taking their own qualities into account:

- *How did the group work go?*
- *As the Business Plan suggested, we had to split up... into different managers and for every manager there was a small group that handled something... for example, I did the PowerPoint part and the assessments... so just like in a company...*
- *So every small group had a specific task...*
- *Yes...*

These observations lead to the second aspect of the group work, which is a better knowledge of the entrepreneurial world and the organization of work. In this regard, it is worth looking at the students' point of view at the Marignoni Institute, to confirm UPSHIFT's ability to stimulate and produce similar positive effects in the different contexts in which it is implemented:

Speaking about the experience, I think we matured a lot and in my personal opinion we have also learned to work as a team, something that we maybe never did before. We also grew professionally, since we are now doing an internship, which is an experience that some might have found frightening before, but now that we got together in this thing to create a small company... it helped us grow, so there was both personal and professional growth.

Moreover, about the group organization of the company:

- So everyone had their own role?
- *"Yes, some took care of marketing, some took care of advertising, some who instead... there were bosses, for example... in any case, the whole class has different jobs in this project... so no one was left out. At the beginning of the project we split the roles, with everyone's help we did it".*

In this case, the two identified dimensions are directly observed and explained by the students themselves, who highlight how the growth generated by the project is both personal, teaching them how to handle relationships with their peers, and professional, teaching the possibility to get to know and begin to own corporate codes and logic. It is important to highlight that for the Marignoni Institute, learning the necessary team work skills, in all of its nuances, is one of the fundamental successes obtained through UPSHIFT. This resulted in some democratic practices being necessary to consensually manage disagreements about which path to follow, which could occur at any stage of the process: "We talked openly in class and we voted by a show of hands on what would have been best to do... and from then on we all chose the same path." We are once again looking at the development of abilities that concern the competencies necessary for one's own professional life as well as transferable skills.

Finally, within these, it is important to highlight the project's positive effects on self-awareness and self-confidence. It is known that these sentiments start lacking when the students are faced with more complex social trajectories and find themselves in situations of deprivation (Fagg, Curtis, et al., 2013; Doi, Fujiwara, et al., 2019). Poor self-confidence and unsteady security can often be symptoms of a conflicting relationship with the academic institution and its grades. For these reasons, it is important to highlight that some of the students in the focus groups showed strong satisfaction towards the path chosen and the perceived growth.

I already knew what to do in the future (...) but it boosted my confidence because maybe at first I was a little shy. I struggled a little to work in a group, and now I don't, now less so.

It helped me to relate better to people... I mean for them to understand what I want from them, and what I can offer them, to work better.

I managed to make a presentation even though it was through a video, which some people find... I don't know... annoying. They can easily get intimidated in front of a camera... (I have grown, ed.) in being able to let people see me and listen to me through a screen...

As can be seen in particular from the last two extracts, it is clear that, in addition to having a positive effect on the relationship with oneself and others, and contributing to academic success through improved presentation skills, these skills are also important for the students' future social and professional life. In conclusion, while from the focus group analyses, the overall picture is consistent with the results obtained through the surveys, the qualitative technique used enabled to explore this further, showing a more detailed picture of the specific ways that UPSHIFT managed to have a positive effect in the context in which it was introduced.

3. Problems and Recommendations That Emerged from the Focus Groups

The qualitative analysis described in the previous pages provides a detailed description of the effects perceived by different individuals who participated in the activities of the JA/UNICEF programme. Although the overall results are very positive, the participants underlined several critical points. These can already be detected in the previous reflections (and related citations), but they emerge more strongly and clearly in the focus group of the class that achieved the lowest outcomes in relation to the project's expected results. It is expected and, moreover, scientifically consistent, that more difficult intervention circumstances may more clearly reveal the weak points that would need to be strengthened to be beneficial at all levels. In substance, the analysis of this focus group enabled us to clarify the ambivalences present in some of the opinions that we collected and analyzed in the other classes.

In any case, it is possible to state that all the main problems that emerged are related to a single aspect of the way the UPSHIFT programme was implemented, which was the perceived lack of clarity caused by the absence of a specific figure who would continuously coordinate the activities. Such absence was perceived in different forms in the teachers' and students' discussions (which is logical, considering the different positioning), but it was detected in the qualitative evaluation. In particular, the teachers noted how they had to intervene to compensate for this dimension, without having been given the proper tools to do so optimally.

- Any aspect to improve?
- Yes... maybe more interaction between JA and the students...
- (...) they did a great job but we should meet before starting, like we're meeting now... dedicate a couple of hours to understanding what we're doing. One of our suggestions can open your eyes to better understand things, and your point of view can help us better understand the situation, but it's better to meet like this and outline the situation instead of you giving us something to read...
- Actually, there was an initial meeting but it was too didactic... we're teachers of other subjects, so you need to talk to us as you would to the students... we need someone to explain how to go about with the different steps, because with slides... in this regard we are worse than the students, we don't study the slides at home...

As one can note, therefore, there was a sensation of confusion in the coordination. This led to some difficulties which, for the class with preexisting and exacerbating conflicts, hindered them from obtaining optimal results. The extracts all refer to the same necessity in a more or less detailed way.

- We were left on our own a bit... we didn't have all the support we needed to proceed...
(...)
- How could this be improved then?
- I would implement more interactive activities... reading gets tiring... I would implement interactive things so that you read, but you still have to interact and concentrate on what you are doing...
(...)
- This year we did everything alone... last year we were helped... only twice in one hour... we asked questions, but whatever...

Bearing in mind, however, that these strong perceptions may also be related to the specificity of the class context, it seems important to highlight how listening to them can contribute to further improvement in the results.

6. Conclusions

Based on the evaluation results of the UPSHIFT programme, it is possible to provide an answer to the five evaluation questions that were formulated.

Question 1 - Did the UPSHIFT programme participants meet the goals of entrepreneurial skills acquisition? If yes, to what extent?

The UPSHIFT programme was successful in strengthening students' entrepreneurial skills. The results showed an improvement in all the skills related to entrepreneurship. Students self-rated their entrepreneurial skills and inclination towards an entrepreneurial future as mid-high. The self-efficacy dimension appears to predict the inclination to start a company in the future. Counterfactual analysis confirms the programme's positive impact on the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills. In both the overall index of inclination towards entrepreneurship and its subdimensions, especially in self-efficacy and entrepreneurial skills as rated by the students, the experimental group shows higher values than the control group. The only difference found between the students with a migrant background and the Italian students relates to the future entrepreneurial vision. Students with a migrant background showed a lower value compared to the control group and the Italian collective. It is likely that the programme allows more insight to the path one has to take to become an entrepreneur, and this probably increases the level of hesitation in undertaking this career path, which is characterized by a high level of uncertainty, which makes the students with a migrant background more cautious.

The results are also confirmed by the qualitative analysis. As amply discussed in the section on the focus group analysis, the students interviewed reported positive changes thanks to the programme, especially concerning entrepreneurial skills, the stimulation of ideas and their realization, team work and work organization, as well as mostly technical competencies such as those related to finances and budget. Indeed, the teachers suggest that the programme has given students the chance to strengthen their skills, especially team work, structuring and assigning work, and organizational skills, encouraging new methods for organizing work and developing creative ideas.

Question 2 - Did the UPSHIFT programme participants meet the goals of life skills acquisition? If yes, to what extent?

Overall, the UPSHIFT programme proved useful in improving the participating students' life skills. The students' average scores in the Life Skills Index were on the positive side of the scale, confirming a good level of skills useful for life in general. Specifically, high scores on average were observed for all the 10 skills listed, especially empathy. The research also confirmed the relation between Life Skills and the competencies connected to entrepreneurship that were analyzed (entrepreneurial skills, personal efficiency, and inclination towards entrepreneurship). Students with high levels of life skills have high

levels of entrepreneurship-related skills, too. Counterfactual analysis shows the positive, although subtle, impact of the programme in improving life skills. The average score obtained from the experimental group is higher than that of the control group. It is important to highlight that the average higher score registered by the experimental group vs the control group regarded the ability to handle emotion and stress, both of which in the aggregate analysis seem to be harder for the students to obtain.

The qualitative analysis enabled us to better understand and confirm the results. The teachers who were interviewed emphasized the project's relevance in developing life skills, not only entrepreneurial skills. The students participated actively and in a stimulating way, experimenting and strengthening their life skills, their communication skills, and their ability to relate socially. The teachers were of the view that the programme also led to improved student-teacher relations, increasing trust and collaboration. Such results also emerge from student testimonies, which suggest that they improved in self-confidence and experienced personal growth, in addition to the commitment and willingness to help other people facing difficulties, creating ideas in social and health contexts, an aspect that could be linked to the project's positive impact on the empathy dimension. Fundamentally important results that synergistically unite both life skills and entrepreneurial skills are: improving the ability to think creatively and critically, decisiveness, the ability to detect important information, problems and resources in the environment, and to produce solutions relevant to the specific objectives of the community.

As previously anticipated, it is important to discuss the problems that emerged from the focus group led by the class with the lowest scores in the questionnaires. While it may be true that, as suggested by some teachers, the class demonstrated conflictual behaviors towards the academic institution, it is important to highlight how the programme by UNICEF and JA Italy may lead to significant improvements with regards to interpersonal relationships and the acquisition of skills that are useful to the students' future working life, even in contexts of low performance.

Question 3 - Do the levels of 21st century skills acquired by the participants change according to the social category of reference (foreign or Italian students / Index of Cultural Participation / Index of Objectified Cultural Capital)?

The analysis confirms the initial hypothesis that some contextual factors, such as lower cultural and economic levels of the family of origin, have an influence on skills acquisition, as confirmed also by the reference literature. As the quantitative data shows, the programme involved a large number of students coming from a disadvantaged social, cultural and economic context and a high number of students with a migrant background, which confirms the good capacity of the programme to implement actions that are relevant for the participants.

The students with a migrant background, indeed, have a higher rate of needing to repeat the school year, difficulties in their academic career, and low levels of objectified cultural capital. With regards to the skills acquired, there were not many differences regarding life skills. In the vision of their own future, on the other hand, the Italian students showed higher difficulties in envisioning themselves in their academic or professional careers.

The counterfactual analysis demonstrates that the UPSHIFT programme had positive results overall, and appears to have had a particularly positive impact on the class of Italian students. In all the dimensions and skills investigated, apart from critical and creative thinking, positive differences were observed in the average scores between the experimental group (students who participated in the programme) and the control group (students who did not participate in the programme). This contrasted with the students with a migrant background, who had negative differences in five dimensions: self-awareness, creative thinking, decision making, Life Skills Index, and future entrepreneurial vision. The lower scores registered in some auto-perceived entrepreneurship skill dimensions are not to be considered as a decrease in one's abilities, but rather as a greater awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, and a more objective vision of the level of acquisition of these skills.

As the results showed, low objectified cultural capital and cultural participation register lower average scores by the students. This trend emerges not only in relation to academic performance, but also in relation to 21st century skills. The higher the objectified cultural capital and participation in extracurricular activities, the higher the average score on the 21st Century Skills Index.

Question 4 - Did the contexts, teaching methods, and other factors not considered at the beginning of the project favor or disfavor skill acquisition and inclusion?

The qualitative data shows the difficulty that the teachers found in classroom educational work and the relevance of the project in developing life-related soft skills and entrepreneurial skills. The qualitative analysis demonstrated that the active participation of the teachers was a factor that helped the expected results to be reached. Teachers have a central role in the project and can facilitate skills acquisition, acting as educators and mediators, and encouraging inclusion. The teachers' collaboration is, in fact, described positively by the interviewees, and in terms of the results obtained thanks to the project: active participation, knowledge sharing and collaboration made it possible to optimize resources, enhance each teacher's skills, encourage personal initiative, and carry out activities effectively. As confirmed by the reference literature, the teaching method used, and the learning-by-doing model, were relevant in improving entrepreneurial skills. They enabled skills assimilation thanks to identifying with the corporate role, experiencing typical organizational aspects of businesses, and alternating school with work experience.

The successful synergy between the environment, the school subjects, and the UPSHIFT programme objectives facilitated the generalization of the knowledge and entrepreneurial skills acquired in the context of everyday life, allowing the emergence of innovative ideas which became concrete in the creation of products useful for the community; while the educational context and the methods adopted facilitated students taking center stage and actively participating in the activities.

Another positive factor is UPSHIFT programme's continuity over time. This is an aspect that is extremely important when it comes to generating positive social impact, as well as in terms of sustaining the resulting changes over time.

Question 5 - Did participants acquire 21st century skills (life skills and entrepreneurial skills) that are hypothetically significant to their social inclusion?

As discussed in the focus group analysis, even though the research did not investigate the social inclusion dimension through quantitative methods, the hypothesis that the UPSHIFT programme acted in favor of developing participant inclusion can be supported. The entrepreneurial skills overlap, both in a complementary and integrated way, with life skills – competencies that favor a higher adaptability to the environment and student success. Such skills are fundamental to realizing ambitions and aspirations, agency, and knowing how to structure one's own future, in addition to being a tool for democratic life and inclusion in society.

With regard to social inclusion, the research results show the students' commitment in suggesting useful alternative and creative social solutions, their sensitivity to social themes and the intention to help vulnerable people, and actions of an educational nature that could help to counter exclusion and social marginalization.

As reported in the Ministry of Education's National Guidelines for Lifelong Learning, the relevance of activities such as those of the UPSHIFT programme, that can orient students in their future choices, "provides permanent value in every person's life, guaranteeing their development and support in the processes of choice and decision, with the aim of promoting active employment, economic growth and social inclusion" (Miur, 2014).

School and formative orientation, therefore, can be considered as an educational process with a view to lifelong learning, which must necessarily operate on soft skills such as problem solving, creativity, critical thinking, and socio-relational and communication skills, to foster processes of inclusion. Social inclusion refers to opportunities, resources and capabilities, and it is defined as the extent to which individuals and populations have the ability to choose and participate in social life (Hayes, Gray, and Edwards, 2008; Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011). Training pathway and education are therefore central in the concept of social inclusion because they provide the individuals with the necessary skills to establish social bonds and networks, make choices based on relevant information, and participate in the cultural, economic, and political life of their community (Klasen, 2000; Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011), hence, representing a factor of protection against social exclusion. These considerations are even more relevant for "at risk" targets, such as those with disabilities, language difficulties, a different cultural background, or people with a disadvantaged socioeconomic status; the latter has also an intergenerational characteristic, especially in relation to economic condition and the risk of dropping out of school. In this sense, the programme acts as a protective action against social exclusion by mitigating and working in favor of minors' increasing needs,

especially in a period that has seen the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the last two years, the current Russian-Ukrainian conflict, and the exacerbation of the climate and energy crisis. These are all elements that have exacerbated the level of existential uncertainties, and that undermine the possibility of seeing oneself in the future, making the present difficulties even harder.

7. Recommendations

It is important to ask what strategies might improve the programme so that it can produce more impactful results through its educational activities, even in more disadvantaged school contexts, such as those with higher dropout rates or lack of motivation and distrust towards the possibility of teaching and learning success.

To fulfill this purpose, for the next year, it is recommended to take the following aspects into consideration, systematized below on the basis of the 6 OECD evaluation indicators (Relevance, Coherence, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact, and Sustainability).

Programme Relevance

- The programme has proven to be relevant in intervening on the needs of socioeconomically disadvantaged students and those at risk of dropping out of school. As observed from the student and teacher focus groups, both of the aforementioned categories involved in the project activities expressed the need to boost the acquisition and improvement of 21st century skills. Furthermore, the results of the evaluation research confirmed the importance of further strengthening the project activities for children with a migrant background and with a low level of objectified cultural capital, that is the group most at risk of dropping out of school.

Programme Coherence

- The programme is in line with the Italian Ministry of Education's policies and objectives, and those of the European Union institutions. Today, attention to developing soft skills and training towards citizenship that is active, aware and truly participating in decision-making processes, is one of the cornerstones of national and European policies. This is necessary for the growth of an inclusive and genuinely democratic society. In particular, it is suggested to pay more attention to the Ministerial Decree 774 of Sep 4th, 2019 on soft skills and orientation, as well as the guidelines on teaching civic education at school, adopted in application of Law no. 92 of Aug 20th, 2019. The two documents can in fact be of significant support in future implementations of the programme, so as to bring it further in line with the strategic objectives promoted by the Italian Ministry of Education and the European Union.

Programme Efficiency

- The teachers' role and commitment should be made clearer, starting from the beginning of the process of engagement of the teachers who will participate in the training.

- As noted in the section “Critical issues and recommendations from the Focus Groups”, the critical issues that emerged relate to the teachers’ and students’ difficulty in coordinating the activities, and the need to be more closely monitored throughout the different phases of the project. In order to effectively respond to these critical issues and further facilitate the teachers’ work in coordinating and supporting classroom activities, it would be advisable to increase the presence of the external facilitator. Having someone external to the institute, who provides supports for the project activities, could improve this aspect, as well as providing interactive tools to assist with the implementation process.
- The qualitative analysis revealed that a greater degree of autonomy is essential to build agency. The student focus group noted that greater attention should be paid to helping students with ongoing support in carrying out the UPSHIFT programme, so as to lead to autonomy by generating positive processes within the class.

Programme Effectiveness

- The qualitative analysis shows extremely positive results, even if the counterfactual analysis recorded a negative difference between the average scores of the control group and the experimental group with respect to self-awareness, creative thinking, and the ability to make decisions, especially for students with a migrant background. To improve and innovate learning, courses on soft skills for teachers would be recommended;
- About 1 student out of five shows difficulty in imagining their future (the double for Italian students compared to students with a migrant background), so it is necessary to enhance and expand educational and/or professional guidance. Orientation guidance should be the ideal continuation of the programme, aiding students in understanding the labor market and how it works. It would therefore be extremely useful to add a final step to the programme to map out the skills gained and reflect on one’s future.
- Skills related to the stress management and handling emotions had lower average scores. It is thus recommended to reinforce specific actions to enhance these skills. For the next year, it is recommended to carry out in-depth research (with a qualitative approach) on the life skills that recorded low levels of growth (self-awareness, creative thinking, and decision-making) in order to trace latent elements that negatively affect these skills, and implement more effective strategies for acquiring them.
- From the qualitative data, in class groups that had a high level of preexisting conflict, the programme did not seem to produce a lasting impact in improving relations within the class. In such cases, while students learned to manage conflicts, an objective that is relevant to self-maturation, relationships between classmates did not change. Where necessary, the programme could therefore envisage more actions aimed at strengthening socio-relational skills, giving greater emphasis to this aspect in the project’s existing group activities, which have produced extremely positive results in terms of team work skills, organization, and assigning roles and tasks.

Programme Impact

- As demonstrated by the results of the evaluation, the programme was effective in increasing 21st century skills, and has consequently had an impact on the paths of students and class groups who, after participating in the programme, were equipped with new tools to cope with social complexity. The impact of this path on school dropout rate cannot be stated with empirical evidence, since the pilot study, tested in parallel, showed its limitations right from the initial stages. The most relevant limitation was that it was impossible to access the disaggregated data of individual students, which would have made it possible to carry out accurate and timely analyses. To overcome this limit, it would be necessary to develop a pilot study in collaboration with the Ministry of Education so that data from the school registry can be used and a retrospective study could be carried out on students who participated in the UPSHIFT Programme, so as to be able to verify the hypothesis that the programme is effective in preventing early school dropouts..

Programme Sustainability

- Finally, it is recommended to enhance training and support for teachers. This means strengthening the skills of key players in the programme, which would ensure greater sustainability over time, allowing teachers to continue the work begun during the project, regardless of its formal duration. This suggestion, moreover, emerges from the very words of the teachers who, during the focus groups, cited the need to be monitored more continuously, including from a training point of view.

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Attachments

ATTACHMENT 1

Ideas In Action for UPSHIFT 2023 Questionnaire for upper secondary school students



Hello! Below we will ask you questions about yourself, your habits and future aspirations. Please fill out the questionnaire by ticking the box indicating your answer. For some questions you will find 5 options from 1 (the lowest score) to 5 (the highest score).

Please, read the questions carefully and answer them with the utmost sincerity. There are no right or wrong answers, only answers that are right for you. Your answers will be anonymous and treated in an aggregate way in accordance with the privacy policy.

What you think is important to us!

There are 35 questions in this survey.

1- Write the name of your school:

2- Indicate which class you are attending

- 1st year of upper secondary school
- 2nd year of upper secondary school
- 3rd year of upper secondary school
- 4th year of upper secondary school
- 5th year of upper secondary school

3- Indicate your class section:

- A F M
- B G N
- C H O
- D I P
- E L

4- How many books are there approximately in your home (excluding school books)? Please consider that each meter of shelf contains about 40 books.

- 0-10 books
- 11-25 books
- 26-100 books
- 101-200 books
- 201-500 books
- Più di 500 books

5- At home you have:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| A quiet place to study | YES | NO |
| A computer you can use when studying | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| A desk to do homework | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| An internet connection | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| A room of your own | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

**6- Below is a list of statements that relate to your feelings and abilities. Indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 how much you agree with the following statements:
(Give an answer for each line)**

(Give an answer for each line)
 1 Not at all | 2 Little | 3 Somewhat | 4 A lot | 5 Very much

I can make my ideas clear	1	2	3	4	5
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I listen and pay attention to understand and learn new things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I listen carefully before replying to someone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am sorry when a friend of mine feels sad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can often understand how people feel even before they tell me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel sad for someone who is treated unfairly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I encounter difficulties I try to find creative solutions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like to fantasize about things I could do	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8- Do you read daily newspapers (including online) at least once a week?

No

Yes, one or two days

Yes, three or four days

Yes, five or six days

Yes, every day

9- Have you read more than 3 books in the last 12 months? (Please indicate only books read for reasons not strictly academic or professional)

Si

No

7- In the last 12 months, how many times, roughly, have you gone to:
 (Give an answer for each line)
 Never | 1-3 times | 4-6 times | 7-12 times | More than 12 times

Theatre	1	2	3	4	5
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cinema	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Museum, exhibitions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Classical music concerts, opera	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other music concerts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Archaeological sites, monuments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10- Below is a list of statements that relate to your feelings and abilities. Indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 how much you agree with the following statements:
 (Give an answer for each line)
1 Not at all | 2 Little | 3 Somewhat | 4 A lot | 5 Very much

I try to understand situations without being influenced by my emotions and the opinions of others	1	2	3	4	5
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Before expressing my point of view I try to get informed as much as possible on the subject	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13- Below is a list of statements that relate to your feelings and abilities. Indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 how much you agree with the following statements:

(Give an answer for each line)

1 Not at all | 2 Little | 3 Somewhat | 4 A lot | 5 Very much

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| I understand my moods and feelings | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| I let people know when there is a problem | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| I am aware of my abilities and limitations | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| When I am angry with someone, I wait to calm down before arguing | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| I can control how I feel when something bad happens | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| I stay calm when things go wrong | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| I can keep calm in stressful situations | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| I can manage anxiety in new and unexpected situations | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| When I am agitated and stressed I can figure out how to behave to feel better | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| I can work together with others and respect their ideas | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| I always apologize when I do something that hurts my friends | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| I try to forgive others when they apologize | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| Before taking a position I reflect on the different points of view expressed by others | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| When I make a decision, I always consider the consequences of my choices | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Before doing something I think about the positive and negative aspects | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Before making a decision I evaluate the alternatives and the different possibilities | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| I am able to identify problems and propose solutions | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| I solve a problem using different information | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| I can observe a problem from different points of view and find the best solution | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

11- Have you repeated any school years?

- No
- Yes, 1 year
- Yes, 2 years
- Yes, more than 2 years

12- What grades do you currently have in the following subjects?

- | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Mathematics | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Italian | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Final overall grade | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

14- How do you imagine yourself in 5 years?

- University student
- Apprentice
- Worker
- Entrepreneur
- Unemployed (looking for a job)
- I do not know

16- 16 From 1 to 5 how much do you think about:
(Give an answer for each line) *

1 Not at all | 2 Little | 3 Somewhat | 4 A lot | 5 Very much

Being able to have a good business idea	1	2	3	4	5
Being confident in your abilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being motivated to achieve what you want	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being enthusiastic about your life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being able to manage money efficiently/without waste	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Understanding how the labour market works	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowing the advantages of starting your own business (economic motivations, personal growth, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15- What qualification do you intend to obtain? *

- None, I think I cannot even get my diploma of upper secondary school
- Upper secondary school diploma (high school, technical institute or vocational institute)
- Qualification higher than the diploma, other than the degree (e.g. Regional Professional Qualification, Academy of Fine Arts, Conservatory)
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree (at least two years beyond the Bachelor's Degree) or PhD

17- Do you already know which career areas you are interested in? *

- Yes, I have clear professional goals
- Yes, there are some career areas that might interest me
- Not yet, but I am starting to think about it
- No, I still do not know what kind of career I want

18- Indicate from 1 to 5 how much you agree with the following sentences.

(Give an answer for each line) *

- 1 Not at all | 2 Little | 3 Somewhat | 4 A lot | 5 Very much
- | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| In the future I will be able to create my own company | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| It will be easy for me to start a business | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I feel prepared to open a productive business | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Mi sento preparato ad aprire un'impresa produttiva | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I know the rules for opening a business | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I feel able to find the opportunities offered by the market to create a business | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I feel able to understand the characteristics of a potential target / customer | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

19- When you think about your future work, how do you feel? *

- Very optimistic
- Quite optimistic
- Neither optimistic nor pessimistic
- Quite pessimistic
- Very pessimistic

20- How confident you feel you can do the following things:

(Give an answer for each line) *

- 1 Not at all | 2 Little | 3 Somewhat | 4 A lot | 5 Very much
- | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Organize the tasks to be carried out for a project according to the needs and the level of priority | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Understand and play your role within a project | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Prepare to face a competition both for a project at school and in the activities you carry out in your free time | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

21- How much do you think you have knowledge in the economic-business and financial field useful for your future training and work path? *

- Not at all
- Little
- Somewhat
- A lot
- Very much

22- Write the LAST THREE numbers of your mobile phone: *

23- Write your month and year of birth:

(enter number format, e.g. 3/2007)

26- Can you write the Country where you were born?

24- Please indicate your gender: *

- Male Female Other

25- Where were you and your parents born?

(Give an answer for each line) *

You:

- Italy European Union Other Countries I do not know

Your mother:

- Italy European Union Other Countries I do not know

Your father:

- Italy European Union Other Countries I do not know

27- Can you write the Country where your mother was born?

28- Can you write the Country where your father was born?

29- If you were not born in Italy, how old were you when you arrived in Italy? *

- Up to 3 years
 Between 4 and 6 years old
 Between 7 and 9 years
 Between 10 and 12 years
 Between 13 and 15 years old
 I was born in Italy

30 - At home, which language do you speak most of the time?
*

- Italian
- Other language (specify in the box)

28- Who do you live with? (Multiple answers possible)

- Mother
- Father
- Brothers and sisters
- Other people

32 - What was your parents' last educational qualification?
(Give an answer for each line) *

- | | |
|--|--|
| Your mother | Your father |
| <input type="radio"/> No educational qualifications | <input type="radio"/> No educational qualifications |
| <input type="radio"/> Primary school license | <input type="radio"/> Primary school license |
| <input type="radio"/> Lower secondary school diploma | <input type="radio"/> Lower secondary school diploma |
| <input type="radio"/> Upper secondary school diploma | <input type="radio"/> Upper secondary school diploma |
| <input type="radio"/> Degree | <input type="radio"/> Degree |
| <input type="radio"/> I do not know | <input type="radio"/> I do not know |

29- What is your parents' current employment situation?
(Give an answer for each line) *

- | | |
|--|--|
| Your mother | Your father |
| <input type="radio"/> Unemployed | <input type="radio"/> Unemployed |
| <input type="radio"/> Takes care of the house | <input type="radio"/> Takes care of the house |
| <input type="radio"/> Has a full-time job | <input type="radio"/> Has a full-time job |
| <input type="radio"/> Has a part-time job | <input type="radio"/> Has a part-time job |
| <input type="radio"/> Is looking for a new job | <input type="radio"/> Is looking for a new job |
| <input type="radio"/> Cannot work for health reasons | <input type="radio"/> Cannot work for health reasons |
| <input type="radio"/> Is retired | <input type="radio"/> Is retired |

ATTACHMENT 2

Ideas in Action for UPSHIFT 2022 Semi-Structured Guideline for the Teacher Focus Group



AIMS OF THE FOCUS GROUP

- Understand the programme's intervention context.
- Understand the extent of student outcomes and the effectiveness of the programme.
- Understand the trainers' and teachers' perspective on the programme.
- Detect the project's strengths and critical issues and useful recommendations for future implementations of the project.

METHOD: Time: 90 Minutes, Online

1. INTRODUCTION

Human Foundation is a private research organization that promotes collaboration between profit entities, public administration, social enterprises, foundations, institutional investors, economic operators, and the world of finance.

It carries out social impact assessment activities to make projects and funding more efficient and sustainable. These evaluations use various methods to highlight the social, economic, and environmental value of the projects.

Human Foundation uses a participatory, mixed qualitative and quantitative method to detect the changes produced, which allows us to understand a project's positive and negative value from the perspective of those involved.

2. PROFILING

Please let us record the interview, not for publishing purposes, but to facilitate the analysis.

- First of all, please introduce yourself briefly (school, teaching subject, specific role in the programme, etc.)

3. REFERENCE CONTEXT

- In which school did you carry out this activity?
- What is the socioeconomic context of your school?
- What are the reasons you decided to take part in the Ideas in Action for UPSHIFT project promoted by Junior Achievement Italy and UNICEF?

4. CHANGES AND IMPACT (FOCUS ON SKILLS ACQUISITION AND IMPROVEMENT)

- How did the Ideas in Action for UPSHIFT project unfold?
- How involved in the programme were the students?
- Did the programme enable students to acquire entrepreneurial skills? (budget, business organization, division of tasks) [Improved Financial and Business Management skills]
- Do you think that participating in the Ideas in Action for UPSHIFT project helped make students more aware of future educational and professional opportunities? [Greater certainty about future career]
- Did the programme allow the children to engage with topics and issues that are different from those usually covered in school? If yes, what do you think were the benefits of this opportunity? [Greater open-mindedness]
- In your opinion, did the project improve students' ability to work in groups and relate to each other in the peer group? [Improved teamwork ability]
- Did carrying out the Ideas in Action for UPSHIFT project provide the tools to stimulate students' creativity and inventiveness? [Improved creativity and inventiveness]
- In your opinion, did carrying out the project activities enable the children to increase their self-confidence and resourcefulness? If yes, how? [Improved self-confidence and resourcefulness]
- In your opinion, are there any other needs that the Ideas in Action for UPSHIFT programme helped to meet?
- In your opinion, what are the strengths of the Ideas in Action for UPSHIFT programme? What are the critical issues? [Programme operation]

ATTACHMENT 3

Ideas in Action for UPSHIFT Programme Semi-Structured Guideline for the Student Focus Group



AIMS OF THE FOCUS GROUP

- Understand the effects of the activities on the skills of the minors involved.
- Observe the programme's strengths and possible aspects to improve.

METHOD: Time: 90 Minutes, In-Person

1. INTRODUCTION

Human Foundation is a private research organization that promotes collaboration between profit entities, public administration, social enterprises, foundations, institutional investors, economic operators, and the world of finance.

It carries out social impact assessment activities to make projects and funding more efficient and sustainable. These evaluations use various methods to highlight the social, economic, and environmental value of the projects.

Human Foundation uses a participatory, mixed qualitative and quantitative method to detect the changes produced, which allows us to understand a project's positive and negative value from the perspective of those involved.

2. PROFILING

Please let us record the interview, not for publishing purposes, but to facilitate the analysis.

- First of all, please introduce yourself briefly

3. PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Please describe the activities you participated in. (activities)

4. CHANGES AND IMPACT (FOCUS ON SKILLS ACQUISITION AND IMPROVEMENT)

- What did you learn from participating in the Ideas in Action for UPSHIFT project that you would not have had the opportunity to learn in your school studies? (budgeting, structuring business ideas, turning solutions into business ideas, understanding the labor market, ethical economy, etc.) (Improved Financial and Business Management skills)
- Do you think that participating in the Ideas in Action for UPSHIFT project has helped you understand your potential and clarify your ideas for your educational and professional career? (Greater determination regarding educational future - Greater certainty about future career)
- Do you think that participating in Ideas in Action for UPSHIFT has helped you engage with opinions and viewpoints other than your own? ...Could you give us an example? (Greater open-mindedness)
- Did participating in the programme improve your ability to work in a team? (Greater ability to work in a team)
- Did participating in the programme provide you with stimuli and tools to deal with difficulties and problems in a constructive and creative way? (Improved creativity and inventiveness)
- Do you think the activities in the Ideas in Action programme for UPSHIFT have enabled you to get to know your classmates better? (Improved interpersonal relations)
- Has the programme increased your self-confidence and resourcefulness? (Improved self-confidence and resourcefulness)
- Is there anything you would like to change about the programme? What did you like most? What activity did you like least? (Programme operation)
- Would you recommend this programme to a friend? Why? (Programme operation)

UPSHIFT

EVALUATION REPORT 2022