

# BACK to LEARNING

Developing Key Competence of Adults for  
High Quality Learning Opportunities

Brochure of Best Practices

2021

Back to Learning



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# I. General Description of the Project and the Partnership

## General Description of the Project

With the aim of improving basic skills of adults, the two-year project entitled 'Back to Learning – Developing Key Competence of Adults for High Quality Learning Opportunities' has been implemented within the frames of the European Commission's ERASMUS+ programme by the 8-member consortium led by the Government Office of Békés County. Our government office also acting as an employment body has been collaborating in a consortium with a partner from Ireland, Germany, Estonia, Malta, Spain and 2 Hungarian organisations during the period of 1 October 2018 – 31 December 2020.

The lack of appropriate labour force is becoming a continuous issue in almost each EU member state today. Acquiring the qualifications demanded by the employers, taking up and starting such courses however all encounter difficulties mainly due to the lack of key competences essential for learning, employment as well as even for community and citizenship activities. The low level of basic skills indeed means a barrier for participating in lifelong learning.

In the project, under basic skills we meant essential numeracy, literacy, comprehension and digital skills needed especially for successful learning thus future employment as well.

The project aimed at exchanging best practices applied in the topics of organising basic skills development trainings for low skilled adults, in curriculum development and in sensitising and preparing professionals capable of improving the situation of adult education providers and low skilled adults.

One of the major project results is the current collection of best practices presenting the experiences of the methods and their operation in practice applied by the partners. A couple of them have even been tried and tested by the partner organisations, a summarising document has also been compiled on the adaptation and integration of them into the everyday practice.

As further results of the project:

- a proposal for a framework system/further education – to be applicable on EU level as well – of professionals facilitating adult basic skills development has been created, and
- each partner has made a recommendation for its own country's policy makers, adult education providers and for organisations enhancing and participating in basic skills development in any way on how basic skills development could be improved.

Besides introducing the partner organisations, 2 best practices, labour market programmes per country are presented – and 3 ones from Hungary are included because of the 3 organisations representing the country –, which directly or via the further education and sensitisation of professionals indirectly can contribute to adult basic skills development, their engagement in trainings thus labour market integration.

## The Partnership

### Government Office of Békés County, Hungary

On 1st January 2011 as the legal successor of the county's public administration body, and through the partial integration of the majority of the territorial state administration bodies, the government office was established as the top authority of territorial state administration. The government office harmonises and enhances the implementation of government tasks on territorial level – according to rules of law and government decisions. The Government Office of Békés County is made up of the core office directly managed by the government commissioner and 9 district offices. The Government Office of Békés County's Department of Employment, Labour and Occupational Safety and its divisions of employment – which operate within district offices – play a key role in improving the labour market situation in the county, enhancing employment, in preventing and moderating unemployment. As a state organisation it has been offering labour market services, employment fostering support, and operating complex labour market programmes both for employers and job-



seekers since 1991. It is a task of key importance for the organisation to satisfy the demand of employers with a labour-force having the appropriate skills and qualifications and to have job-seekers employed within the shortest period of time. For many years now the department has been implementing various projects in national and international cooperation aiming to develop a VET system better tailored to economic needs and to foster employment.

### Gál Ferenc University Vocational Secondary and Vocational School, Hungary

The **GFE Vocational Secondary and Vocational School** is one of the biggest vocational schools in the south-east of Hungary, in the city of Békés. It preserves and follows the traditions of the 'Békés Agricultural Practice School' established in 1902. As of September 1, 2015, our vocational training school serves as a basic education institution of the Gál Ferenc University of Szeged-Csanád Diocese.

Utmost attention has always been paid to strengthening communities in the spirit and virtues of Christian values and our mission has been supplemented to assist the University with valuable and applicable vocational and adult education and training. Over the years, the institution has changed many times, and so have the trainings. It was aimed at guaranteeing up-to-date education to the young people entrusted to our care. Within the framework of IVET, vocational secondary training is offered leading to a *baccalaureate* and professional qualification in the public service, catering industry, informatics, agro-mechanic, agriculture sectors. Qualifications which can be obtained after high school graduation include agricultural mechanical technician, agricultural technician, IT system operator, catering manager, public and civil service officer. The most popular trainings in vocational school training are: confectioner/pastry cook, salesman, welder, social care provider nurse, waiter, CNC mechanic/milling machine operator, agricultural mechanic. Number of students: 450 people. Member institutions are located in the cities of Budapest, Szeged and Gyula.

We provide dormitory in the city of Békés for each applicant. Numerous leisure activities and sports events help the students to relax in the afternoon and evening. We offer courses for class 'T' category driving license in the own driving school.

A wide range of adult education activities are available to clients (CVET). Each year approx. 500 adults take part in the courses. Both professional training and basic competence development training are offered for them.

### Kodolányi János University, Hungary

Kodolanyi Janos University (KJU) is a state-accredited non-profit university offering academic programmes in the fields of tourism & hospitality, business management, mass media & communication, social sciences, history, cultural and language studies. Besides the academic programmes KJU also offers a wide range of post-secondary, LLP courses for trainers and trainees as well as international semesters, summer courses, study tours and internship programmes.

In Hungary KJU has pioneered development of e-based training at all levels conforming to EU standards supported with specialist applied research. All programmes capitalise on the professional knowledge of qualified faculty and professional trainers as well as guest lecturers from the industry and international partners.

Our mission is to contribute to the efforts to strengthen the European competitive higher education system and the international integration of Hungarian higher education. As a leader among non-profit higher education institutions, the goal of KJU is to be a centre of excellence in education, innovation and research.

In the field of internationalisation KJU is very active with over 260 partnerships in 36 countries all around the globe. Our main task in an international perspective is cooperation and networking with European and international organisations and HE institutions in order to connect with current international developments and ongoing projects within a multicultural context. The policy aims at acquiring, transferring and valorising new knowledge and competencies, reflected in student and faculty mobility, transparent use of ECTS, the support of international projects through internationalising curricula, academic programmes, services and the study environment. Within the International Campus Programme KJU welcomes international students to its degree courses, exchange programmes, and project based short courses as well as the dual degree programme jointly developed with MEGU University and KROK University (Ukraine), URFU (Russia) and SSUS (Kazakhstan). In the field of interna-

tionalisation at home, KJU is proud of its International Week organised twice a year in November and April. The complex international event aims at serving our internationalisation policy by providing an intercultural experience for both our KJU students and international guest students, in addition, to bring together representatives of our partner institutions. The event welcomes conference participants, faculty, who wish to lecture and academic staff, who intend to participate in training workshops thus having the opportunity to spend a week together with our staff and students in a pleasant environment.

### Association of Estonian Adult Educators Andras, Estonia

Association of Estonian Adult Educators Andras (AEAE Andras) is a non-governmental institution established in 1991. Andras units, the representatives of different adult education providers in Estonia, include adult gymnasiums (upper secondary schools). Participating in the development of adult education policy, promoting life-long learning at national, regional and local level and supporting adult educators professional development are the main tasks of Andras. Since 1998 Adult Learners Week has been organised. Concerning the international cooperation, Andras has membership in EAEA & EBSN, involved in different Erasmus + KA2 projects and is a national coordinator of Erasmus +project 'AGENDA for Adult Learning'. Andras has been responsible for awareness raising activities and since 2016 Andras has been implementing national awareness raising campaigns as a partner to the Estonian Ministry of Education & Research.

### Grundbildungszentrum Potsdam, Germany

The project based Basic Education Centre Potsdam is part of the Volkshochschule, the municipal adult education centre in the state capital of Brandenburg<sup>1</sup>.

In 1919 many adult education centres were founded throughout Germany and also the Volkshochschule Potsdam celebrated its centenary in 2019. In the last hundred years much has changed but the aim has remained the same: Education for everyone! The Volkshochschule addresses everyone – regardless of origin, age, educational background or nationality.

As a modern and lively house of adult education and a meeting point, the Volkshochschule Potsdam is a firm place for adult education. It is financed by grants from the city of Potsdam, the state of Brandenburg and from raised third-party funds and offers methodically differentiated and varied courses in a pleasant learning atmosphere. There are lectures, excursions, workshops and exhibitions in fields such as people & society, culture and design, health, languages, career and computers or basic education.

The Volkshochschule offers many courses in which the participants acquire qualifications and skills that facilitate their professional entry and also supports people in finding their way back into a working life. In courses, free and open threshold-classes (e.g. Lernwerkstatt) people having difficulties in reading, writing or with mathematics find needed help.

The Basic Education Centre<sup>2</sup> as an integral part of the Volkshochschule Potsdam was established in 2015. It is funded by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MBSJ) of the state Brandenburg and the European Social Fund (ESF). The work of the Basic Education Centre is determined by the three following aims:

#### Guidance

The Basic Education Centre guides and advises adults on the subject of adult literacy and basic education. It helps them to find the right learning opportunity to improve their low skills.

#### Information and trainings

The Basic Education Centre informs stakeholders about all aspects of difficulties by reading, writing and calculating. Different courses such as "Recognizing and addressing reading and writing difficulties", "Introduction to Easy-to-read language" or "Guided tours in Easy-to-read language" are offered.

<sup>1</sup> vhs.potsdam.de

<sup>2</sup> vhs.potsdam.de/vhsneu/grundbildung/

## Networking

The Basic Education Centre Potsdam moderates the network of stakeholders working in the field of basic education. The network meetings are twice a year and consist of a large number of partners e.g. the Job Centre Potsdam, the Potsdam Chamber of Industry and Commerce, the Prussian Palaces and Gardens Foundation Berlin Brandenburg, the City and state library, the Museum Barberini, the Oberlinhaus.

## Universidad de Valladolid, Spain

The Universidad de Valladolid (UVA, [www.uva.es](http://www.uva.es)) is one of the most important centres of Higher Education in Spain. On average, nearly 28.000 students enrol each year, counts on more than 2.600 teachers and nearly 1.000 people dealing with administration tasks and other services. The UVA offers 29 Doctoral Programmes (13 of these are interuniversity programmes) through its UVA Doctorate School (EsDUVA). EsDUVA records 1.700 PhD students around the world each year and counts on an own fund for its Training Programmes of the Doctorate School (transferable skills and research oriented skills).

The Faculty of Education and Social Work is mainly focused on initial teacher training. This faculty has four bachelor's degrees in social sciences and education, four master's degrees in education and research and one doctorate programme in educational research. It is where the degrees related to the education of people (children, adults ...) are taught. In these grades, future teachers who will be teaching classes in educational centres for early childhood education, primary education and adult education are prepared. The University of Valladolid is committed to training professionals who are capable of offering the best opportunities to their students.

UVA has a wide network of contacts in the field of adult education as well as key and basic skills such as the 'Spanish Association of Adult Education Organisations', 'Federation of Adult Education Collectives of Valladolid', 'Popular University of Palencia' or 'Rondilla Foundation'. The University of Valladolid belongs to the European Basic Skills Network and works with them in researching about this topic. The University of Valladolid is the first centre in Spain to enable the use of career guidance methodology named 'balance of competences'. In November 2017 we were recognised with the European quality seal by the European Federation of Centres of Balance and Professional Guidance (FECBOP).

## Ballymun Adult Read and Write Scheme, Ireland

Ballymun Adult Read and Write Scheme (BARWS), is the provider of literacy and adult basic education programmes for the Ballymun, Whitehall and Santry areas of Dublin, Ireland. Adult learners are offered the opportunity to engage with a variety of literacy, numeracy and technology programmes to develop basic skills or as a step back in to education.

The Scheme was founded in 1986 and is funded through the City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETB), by the Department of Education and Skills and SOLAS, with assistance from the European Social Fund as part of the ESF Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning 2014-2020.

BARWS delivers adult learning programmes in small group format or, if required, on a one-to-one basis. One-to-one tuition for learners is provided by trained volunteer tutors.

Literacy difficulties impact on all aspects of an individual's life so our programmes also encompass personal development that includes building self-esteem, confidence, communication, motivation and teamwork skills. Innovative project work for numeracy and literacy learning is used to demonstrate a multi-sensory approach to ensure that individual learning styles are accommodated. Classroom technology, including the use of pc, interactive whiteboards and tablets are used to enhance teaching and learning experiences.

Strong adult literacy provision leads to the development of employability skills, improved health and increased civic and social engagement. Learners are encouraged to actively participate in all elements of



course work including speaking at local events and taking educational tours e.g. museums, art galleries, theatre and places of historical and political interest. This engagement enhances the educational experience by broadening perspectives and promoting active citizenship.

Learner referrals are received from agencies working in the local community such as; Ballymun Job Centre, Ballymun Social Protection Office, Community Employment Schemes, Health Services and CDETB Adult Education Guidance Service as well as self-referrals. Community networking meetings are held with these agencies to plan for the provision of a broader service for learners /clients who require a multi-agency support approach.

## **Directorate for Research, Lifelong Learning and Employability, Malta**

The Directorate for Research, Lifelong Learning and Employability (DRLLE) was established in 2009 within the Ministry for Education and Employment. The DRLLE is responsible for the design and implementation of Malta's Lifelong Learning Strategy and has three main units: Adult Learning Unit, including course provision and project implementation, Research Unit including research for schools and employees, Early Leaving from Education and Training Unit. The Directorate is guided by a vision that lifelong learning empowers citizens through more personalised and innovative approaches to adult education.

The Directorate coordinates and makes optimal use of the diverse lifelong learning opportunities by adopting the Action Plan on Adult Education as set out by the European Commission. It is responsible for the selection, recruitment and placement of adult educators within its different centres. The Directorate engages 20 employees in management and administration, 17 adult education centre coordinators and 180 adult educators for the teaching and support of adult learning classes. Training is carried out in various fields including digital competence; family learning; languages; maths, science and technology; sense of initiative and entrepreneurship; social health and civic competences; vocational and educational training. The Directorate received over 7, 600 applications for adult learning courses in the year 2020.

The DRLLE collaborates with the National Commission for Higher Education (NCHFE) to ensure that its courses are accredited according to the Malta Qualification Framework. Together with the Department for Local Government (DLG) it implements the scheme called 'Lifelong Learning in the Community' which was first launched in 2010. Of particular relevance to this project, the DRLLE offers courses in Adult Literacy (Maltese & English) and Numeracy (Maths).

The Directorate is the national agency responsible for the implementation of the EU Agenda for Adult Learning. It participates in the EU's Working Group on Adult Learning and the Expert Group on Adult Skills, and is a member of the European Basic Skills Network (EBSN) network. The Directorate is the National Support Service of EPALE in Malta, managed the 'EU Agenda for Adult Learning in Malta' project as well as two other Erasmus+ projects, namely Breaking Barriers – Embracing Literacy through digital media and Profi-Train – the professionalisation of trainers in workplace learning.

## II. General Overview of the National Situation of the Basic Education Development for Adults in the Partner Countries

### Estonia

In Estonia participation rate in adult education and training is raising - 2009-10,5%, 2019-20,1 % of population aged 25-64 (Statistics Estonia, Eurostat), but not similarly high for different groups of adults. Focus on awareness raising activities are adults with lower levels of education, incl. early school leavers, parents of young children; adults without professional qualification, adults whose professional skills need to be updated, adults whose digital skills need to be updated.

Regional support network led by regional coordinators, that is the main tool of popularisation of adult education, has been established in all 15 counties as well as in the capital Tallinn. Cooperation and working together within public and private sector; schools, NGOs, stakeholders, libraries, museums, adult learners etc, Andras coordinates awareness raising of adult learning. Related to basic skills the member of Andras, Tallinn Old Town Secondary School for Adults is involved in the current project. Within the framework of the current project the best practices are disseminated in adult gymnasiums.

### Germany

In Germany, basic education got a first institutional framework in 1984. Since then the following milestones helped to create a common understanding for the importance of basic education:

1984	Founding of the Federal Association of Literacy and Basic Education
2008	1st basic education centres in Lower Saxony
2010/11	Publishing of the Leo-Level-One Survey, the 1st scientific study in Germany related to lower literacy skills of adults by the University of Hamburg
2012 - 2016	Federal Strategy for Literacy and Basic Education
2016 - 2026	Federal Decade of Literacy and Basic Education
2018/19	Publishing of the 2nd scientific study in Germany related to lower literacy skills of adults by the University of Hamburg

The Federal association of literacy and basic education (Bundesverband Alphabetisierung und Grundbildung e.V)<sup>3</sup> was founded in 1984. As non-profit organization membership fees, donations and sales revenues finance it. Projects are funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). It works mainly on public relations issues like the ALFA–Telephone, where people with difficulties in reading and writing can call and get information on where they can go to get help and support. They also work with flyers and posters and do TV and radio spots. The association also cooperates with the ALFA-Mobil. This van drives through Germany and informs about support and the situation about illiterate people. They also share materials on teaching and learning.

<sup>3</sup> <https://alphabetisierung.de>

With the aim to sensitize for lower literacy skills of adults and to free it from taboos, the federal government, the federal state governments and partners claimed the period 2012 to 2016 as Federal Strategy for Literacy and Basis Education. It ended in 2016 and were followed by the proclamation of the “National Decade for Literacy and Basic Education 2016-2026”. With this AlphaDecade the Federal Government, the Federal States and partners are increasingly committed to improving basic education in Germany. The goal of the decade is to reduce functional illiteracy and increase the basic education levels between the years 2016 and 2026. The central success factors are seen in more basic education programmes and more people taking advantage of them. The question of how adults with low literacy skills can be reached and activated for learning is the central challenge of all measures. In a work programme to be updated annually, the Board of Trustees of the AlphaDecade has defined how these goals should be achieved on the basis of five fields of action. The five measures are:

1. public relations work - intensify, inform, generate demand
2. research - expanding, condensing, producing knowledge
3. learning opportunities - optimize, expand, carry into the area
4. professionalisation - training, further training, improving the quality of teaching
5. structures - developing, building up, optimising support services

Within the framework of the AlphaDecade, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research supports research and development projects and carries out funding priorities. On the basis of studies and the results of previous funding activities, the projects develop and test new concepts for action to provide adults with difficulties in reading and writing with tailored support. In addition, new findings on functional illiteracy are collected and disseminated. With this approach, Basic Education in Germany becomes professionalised and standardised which helps to increase the impact. A budget of 180 million Euros is allocated to the AlphaDecade. One of the projects within this decade is the project GRUBISO of the Volkshochschule in Potsdam. It offers everyday life related basic education.

The strategies and projects are based on scientific studies related to lower literacy skills of adults which are conducted by the University of Hamburg by Professor Anke Grotlüschen and her colleagues. The first survey was published in 2011 under the name Leo.-Level-One-Studie: Literalität von Erwachsenen auf den unteren Kompetenzniveaus<sup>4</sup>. In 2018 a second survey called LEO: Leben mit geringer Literalität<sup>5</sup> was published. After this survey, 6.2 million people throughout Germany between the age of 18-64 still were functional illiterate adults. These are 12.1 percent of the total population of Germany. That means that every 8th adult has difficulties in reading and writing. 62 percent of them work on a daily basis and 50 percent have German as their mother tongue.

## Hungary

In Hungary, skills and competences for adults aged 16 to 65 were measured (PIAAC) in the third round between 2016 and 2018. Before the PIAAC survey, however, initiatives were also carried out in Hungary in the area of the catching up of low-skilled adults.

Between 2006 and 2008 a programme entitled ‘Take a Step Forward’ was implemented, which aimed to increase the level of education and indirectly access to work for the low-skilled and unskilled adult population. In the 3-year programme the government spent HUF 6.2 billion to support the training of a total of 20.107 persons. The priority target group of this programme was adults with no primary education, who could complete grade 7 and 8 and could also acquire the public knowledge and professional competences necessary to take up vocational training. A total of 720 persons took part in the grade 7 and 8 catch-up programmes, and more than 2.000 people obtained a vocational qualification that did not require a primary school certificate.

<sup>4</sup> [uni-bielefeld.de/zpi/download/habil/leo\\_presseheft\\_web.pdf](http://uni-bielefeld.de/zpi/download/habil/leo_presseheft_web.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [bmbf.de/files/2019-05-07%20leo-Pressheft\\_2019-Vers10.pdf](http://bmbf.de/files/2019-05-07%20leo-Pressheft_2019-Vers10.pdf)



Subsequently, in the 2010s the implementation of EU-funded complex central labour market programmes aimed at catching up for adults especially with low educational attainment in most cases including support for services, training and employment was continued.

In the flagship project entitled ‘I Learn Again’, which is closely related to the lifelong learning programme, a total of 176 thousand low-skilled adults working in public employment were trained between 2012 and 2015. The learners also received public employment wages during the training period, and the costs related to the training were financed by the programme. Nearly  $\frac{3}{4}$  of this number participated in the so-called winter public employment trainings implemented specifically in the winter period, and out of 127,5 thousand 120 thousand passed successfully. In the winter of 2013/2014 more than 46 thousand people participated in 3-month long catching-up trainings designed for basic competence development for literacy and numeracy skills in their place of residence.

After the completion of the programme ‘I Learn Again’, another national flagship project was launched from 2016 entitled ‘Training of Low-skilled and Public Workers’ funded by HUF 30 billion aiming to involve 100 thousand people in trainings, ending in 2022. Of the number of persons to be involved, 92 thousand have completed primary or lower educational attainment. The aim of the project is to encourage the low-educated adult population without the competences or qualifications sought in the labour market to acquire the skills, knowledge, competences and qualifications relevant to this field. The training offer of the project includes basic competence development as well as programmes for the completion of 7th and 8th grade and the transfer of basic digital knowledge.

Hungary also pays special attention to the development of adults’ basic digital skills, with EU support in the programme period of 2015-2021, with HUF 22.9 billion allocated to the flagship project entitled ‘Reducing the Digital Gap’, training courses for the development of digital skills of at least 260 thousand people have been implemented. Adults with up to primary (ISCED 1) or lower secondary (ISCED 2) education could participate in the 35-hour-long trainings entitled ‘First Steps into the Digital World’ and ‘Using My IT Tools Independently’ free of charge.

The results of the Hungarian PIAAC survey were published at the end of 2019. In the case of reading literacy the result (264 points) was 2 points below the average of OECD countries, the proportion of persons with the lowest performance at level 1 or below level 1 was 18.5%. Adult numeracy skills were an average of 272 points, which significantly exceeded the average of 262 points of the OECD countries, with 17.7% ratio of those with the lowest performance, which is 6% lower than the average results of that of the OECD countries.

The proportion of low achievers is therefore high, but within each age group there is also a significant variation in the level of basic skills. The growing gap between those most affected by the lack of basic skills and those who perform excellently at international level poses serious risks especially for young people, as the relationship of this age group to lifelong learning and its integration into the labour market are a key factor both for the economy and for society, as well as for the individual.

According to surveys, approximately 1.4-2.7 million Hungarian adults of working age between 16-65 are unable to make optimal use of their labour market opportunities, continue to meet changing expectations, develop professional competencies and work efficiency at the necessary pace due to insufficient level of their basic skills. These people may be regarded both labour reserves and development potential, and also pose risks and form a vulnerable group in situations requiring a high level of adaptability.

In the year 2019-2020 the government of Hungary renewed the vocational and adult education system at system level. The system of vocational and labour market trainings that responds flexibly and effectively to the skills needs of the Hungarian labour market and Industry 4.0 challenges necessarily provides adequate competence development opportunities for everyone entering learning for the effective elimination of basic skills gaps hindering professional development and the acquisition of professional qualifications, as well as progress in the workplace. Thus, improving basic skills will also have a positive impact on labour productivity, business competitiveness, economic resilience and the resilience of the adult population in times of global crises (climate change, epidemics).

## Ireland

In Ireland, awareness and recognition of literacy difficulties amongst the adult population was developing in community settings from the mid-nineteen eighties. However, data from the 1997 International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) put the topic on the government's national agenda when it identified that one in four Irish adults had difficulty with reading basic text.

Reacting to this survey, the government issued a green paper on adult literacy followed by Learning for Life - The White Paper on Adult Education 2000. This led to the implementation of a national literacy strategy to address the issue with accompanying funding put in place with further initiatives in the following years;

- 2002 – 2006 National Literacy Plan
- 2007 – 2013 National Development Plan
- 2007 – 2016 National Action Plans for Social Inclusion
- 2016 – 2021 Capital Investment Plan
- Ireland 2040 Our Plan (Feb. 17)

Informed by further data from 2013 OECD Adult Skills Survey PIACC.

The Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIACC) was a comprehensive international survey of adult literacy skills with surveys conducted during 2011 and 2012. In Ireland, almost 6,000 people aged 16 to 65 years took literacy, numeracy and technology assessments for PIACC. The findings identified that 17.9% (1 in 6) of Irish adults were at or below the lowest level on a five-level literacy scale. Ireland was placed 17th out of 24 countries for literacy levels. The survey showed that 25% of Irish adults were at level 1 for numeracy placing Ireland at 19th place down the international scale. 42% of Irish adults scored at or below level 1 on using technology to solve and accomplish tasks such as using the internet to find information.

The 2002–2006 National Literacy Plan allocated funding for those working as educators in the basic adult education sector to take the opportunity to acquire a professional qualification in adult education. A specific course designed and delivered by Waterford Institute of Technology and accredited by Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC), now subsumed into QQI, was delivered at various venues throughout the country for practitioners to professionalise their practice. It consisted of a Higher Certificate in Literacy Development (12 modules) with, on completion, an additional opportunity to progress to an Ordinary degree in Adult Education followed by the option of an honours degree (6 modules each). There was a timeframe applied to this funding.

Having a relevant degree allows graduates to register with the Teaching Council of Ireland, membership of which is now a requirement if working through national funding. Other universities such as Dublin City University and Maynooth University of Ireland also accredit Adult and Community Education and Training degrees.

## Malta

The Directorate has extensive experience in basic skills and adult education and has devised initiatives to address literacy challenges especially for low skilled adults. The Directorate for Lifelong Learning offers numerous courses ranging from Basic Skills Courses to creative courses. Some of the Basic Skills Courses being promoted and carried out are Mathematics, Maltese, English and ICT, and such courses are being offered at various levels starting from a very introductory level. The Directorate has piloted literacy (Maltese and English) and numeracy projects (Mathematics) with industry players. These courses are aimed at adults who did not acquire qualifications in any of these basic subjects. These courses aim to reach Level 1 (15 credits) on the Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF) and this award gives access to the certificate holder to progress to the next level of education and training (Level 2). The DLLL decentralised these courses offering them in local councils, community centres and non-governmental organisations.

Further to that, the Directorate has also set out several initiatives through the EU Agenda for Adult Learning project, namely, the schools as community learning initiative. This pilot project was prepared to encourage the idea that primary schools can also be used for adult learning. The aim of this project was to help schools work with vulnerable parents who need to acquire basic skills. The course was also thought to help parents get other tools to be able to help their children in a more holistic manner and to fully participate in their education. The course unfolded between 2016 and 2017 and involved the use of innovative practices to enhance a more practical approach to learning. Topics learnt during the course were chosen by the participants themselves. Tutors then created the curriculum based on the topics chosen while also integrating literacy and numeracy within these chosen topics. The project will continue between the year 2017 – 2019. For the years 2020 - 2021, the project intends to develop the basic skills framework that will establish a transversal policy group to increase awareness raising among stakeholders to enhance information and guidance services and to reform the current structure and quality of course provision.

In relation to the development of competencies of professionals, it was found that locally few qualified adult educators were especially in the area of VET. That would mean that few courses specialised on techniques used in adult learning hence enhancing an internal need for the Directorate's Adult Educators to increase their competences. This was addressed by the creation of a National Diploma in Teaching Adults. This had the aim of bringing together and improving the skills of individuals working within the adult education sector while also making sure to recognise adult education as a profession. The Directorate focused on practical methods and techniques to help adults learn and develop in a holistic manner. The course was a three year MQF Level 5 qualification course (equivalent to an EQF Level 5) comprising of a total of 13 modules, of which some were compulsory and others optional, some units on instructional methods and a practicum. This course started in 2014 with around 190 applicants reading for the Diploma in teaching adults.

## Spain

The Spanish educational system is regulated at the national level through the laws: Organic Law 2/2006, of May 3, of Education Organic Law 8/2013, of December 9, for the improvement of educational quality.

Article 5 establishes the principle of lifelong education as the 'possibility that all people must have in order to acquire, update, complete and expand their capacities, knowledge, skills, aptitudes and competencies for their development. Personal and social'. The purpose of adult education is also established to 'offer all those over the age of eighteen the possibility of acquiring, updating, completing or expanding their knowledge and skills for their personal and professional development'.

The following objectives are established:

- Acquire basic training and expand knowledge and skills permanently.
- Facilitate access to the different teachings of the educational system.
- Improve professional qualification or acquire a new one.
- Develop personal skills.
- Develop the capacity for participation in social, cultural, political and economic life.
- Develop programmes that correct the risks of social exclusion;
- Anticipate and resolve peacefully personal, family and social conflicts.

The Adult Education offer is structured as follows:

- Basic education:
  - I Literacy and training in basic instrumental areas
  - II Training in the basic skills necessary to start Secondary Education for Adults Education
  - Secondary for Adults, aimed at obtaining the title of Graduate in Compulsory Secondary Education.



- Post-compulsory education:
  - Baccalaureate (with the choice of the itinerary by each person)
  - Professional Training (which includes Basic, Middle and Higher Level)
  
- Other teachings:
  - Access test to middle and higher education
  - ICT training
  - Mentor Classrooms
  - Language teaching
  - Spanish for foreigners
  - Courses in: education for health and prevention of occupational risks, road safety education, etc.
  - Validation of learning acquired in formal and informal education.

Kind of Adult centres:

- Specific Adult Education Centres (CEPAS)
- Adult Education Classrooms
- Education units in prisons
- Secondary Schools (IES)

# III. Good/Best Practices Applied in the Field of Basic Education Development for Adults

## III.1. Estonia

### III.1.1. The ESF Project ‘TERITA’ (Second Chance on Education)

#### 1. Aim and background of the programme

The project was launched in August 2016 and carried out till August 2018. The main objectives of the programme include increasing the number of adult students in formal education, preventing drop out and increasing the number of graduates. The project was funded by the European Social Fund (ESF).

#### 2. Target group of the programme

The target group involves adults with low levels of education or/and lacking basic skills.

#### 3. Activities implemented during the programme

To increase the number of adult students in formal education a systematic promotional campaign was launched that included the following activities: national television programmes, advertisements on the radio, social media campaigns, participating in job- and education fairs, spreading success stories of graduates and organising an adult learner’s week.

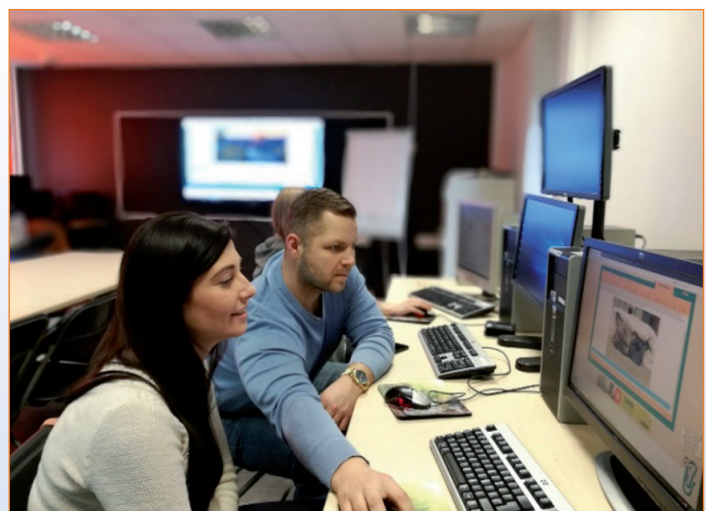
To prevent drop out and increase the number of graduates an extensive support net for students was created consisting of students counsellors, support students (a.k.a. students ambassadors), family therapists and psychologists. In addition to the latter, the funds provided by the ESF project enabled adult schools to provide free childcare to students with small children.

To increase the number of graduates the following courses were added to the timetable: 0-course (how to get back to learning), levelling courses (in Mathematics, Estonian, foreign languages, Chemistry and Physics) and IT courses. In addition, support teachers are available for the students who need some extra help acquiring academic knowledge.

To improve students’ Estonian language who are studying in Russian speaking adults’ schools, a temporary exchange student experience in other adults’ schools was offered. The main aim of this practice is to create opportunities for language immersion.

To solve the problems that rose during the project and were related to some of the teachers’ inadequate computer skills, teachers’ IT-courses were offered where they were educated on general IT-skills as well as practical knowledge on creating Moodle courses for students.

In their feedback, the students appreciated highly the additional courses created for weaker students. 0-course and levelling courses offered students, especially the ones who had been away for a longer time from formal learning environment, “a softer landing” and gave confidence that they are capable of graduating from secondary school.



The students of TVTG taking part in IT courses

#### 4. Results of the programme

Due to participating in the project and receiving extra finances for promotion, the society's awareness has risen as regards to educational options available for adults with low levels of education and/or lacking basic skills. The number of adults returning to formal education has risen. In 2018, the number of students studying in TVTG has risen by 68 students, reaching to 694 students, compared to year 2017.

Due to several steps taken to support academically and socially weaker students, the drop out has decreased and more adults receive their secondary education certificate. In 2018, the number of students graduating from TVTG has risen by 60 students compared to year 2016.

Due to extra funds provided by the project, the students have been able to take part in numerous non-formal learning methods/study tours (visiting museum, theatres, cinemas, science centers, different historical locations all over the country) that has widened their scope of knowledge in various areas.

Due to the programme, students' motivation and the will to continue and finish studies was increased thanks to the created support net (student counsellors, support students, 0-course, levelling courses, support teachers). The best proof of the benefit of these practices is the decreased number of drop out and the increased number of graduates.

Due to the programme, students' IT-skills were developed that will be beneficial in their studies and also in their future field of work.

Follow-up activities of the programme include enhancing students' information technology skills, employing an educational technologist to help students and teachers in need and availability of support teachers for students.



The students of TVTG visiting AHHA Science Centre in Tartu

### III.1.2. The Training and Motivating Information Activities (Training Sets) for Parents of Young Children with Lower Level of Education

#### 1. Aim and background of the programme

The aim of training sets was to support parents of young children with lower levels of education to return to education system and continue their studies. The training sets were held in ten counties of Estonia during the period from January till September in 2018 according to the recommended programme (at least 15 contact hours - motivating activities and study visits to schools). Altogether 122 persons participated (estimated number was 100).

The activity was founded and financed by the EU Erasmus+ project "The European Agenda for Adult Learning".

#### 2. Target group of the programme

Target group involves parents of young children under seven years with lower levels of education (without secondary or basic education and outdated skills).



### 3. Activities implemented during the programme

To hold the training sets we needed organisers-promoters and the juridical bodies which were mostly NGOs. We found the organisers-promoters through Andras networks. The task of these persons included compiling a group consisting of at least 10 people belonging to the target group, arranging training sets, collecting feedback and monitoring participants further steps.

In the beginning, the seminars for the promoters of training sets activities were held. Work plan and organisation of the activities was discussed and the respective practice was introduced.

Dissemination and finding the target group took place via community networking and personal contacts. For that organisers-promoters involved training organisations, nursery schools, regional department of Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund, Career Counselling Centre and everybody who could help at community level. The people of target group usually had very low self-esteem and self-confidence. For the target group to participate, a very safe and understanding environment had to be created – constant phone calls, personal meetings, encouraging and acceptance helped to bring back “lost people”.

Reaching the target group – tracking down people, motivating them to come out of their comfort zone and participating in the training proved to be the most challenging task. Childcare and coffee and common lunches were arranged.

After participation, all the participants were monitored in terms of continuation of their studies, professional development or activity in the labour market and social sphere.

In their feedback, participants appreciated highly the information regarding learning and labour market possibilities and the availability of support services. Career specialists helped them to analyse their personal abilities, needs and wishes as well as the existence of personal support network. The study visits to upper secondary schools and vocational education institutions were considered especially helpful. They analysed their abilities, needs and wishes, as well as the existence of support. In autumn, organisers monitored participants’ further steps in regards with their studies. For that all the participants and schools were contacted.



Training set in Pärnu county. Parents appreciate the childcare during the programme.



## 4. Results of the programme

42 out of 122 training set participants took up their studies. 24 participants continued their studies in formal education system - at the upper secondary schools for adults, and at vocational schools, 18 participated in refresher training.

In addition to progress in terms of studies, other remarkable changes have taken place in the lives of the participants: 2 have registered at the Unemployment Insurance Fund, 13 have joined non-profit organisations, 3 have applied for various support services, 15 have started employment. The participants valued the formation of the regional network the most – they got a sense of belonging.

As a result of these activities the participants gained information and knowledge for continuing their studies: they developed a support network and are willing to start their studies.

In conclusion we can say that personal approach and community network are main tools in supporting people's return to the education system. The implementation practice of the training sets has been introduced to various adult education networks.

Below you can find two videos of participants in English

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2\\_50JLmjWA&t=34s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2_50JLmjWA&t=34s)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mlPEFkoO4rs>

## III.2. Germany

### III.2.1. Easy-to-read-Language

#### 1. Aim and background of the programme

One of the tasks of the Basic Education Centres in Brandenburg is to raise awareness of the fact that over six million adults in Germany cannot sufficiently read and write. Therefore, the Basic Education Centres were supposed to offer free training classes. In 2015, we created a training class called 'How to identify reading and writing problems of adults'. Our target group for these free training classes were mainly employees of city government administration such as citizen service, employment office, housing office.

We found that more and more departments turned our free offer down saying that they do not have time to participate in this 4-hour training class. We knew that our topic is not a priority topic for the selected city government departments. So the question was: How can we make our training class attractive so that the targeted city government departments would like to book our free awareness class? That's when Easy-to-read-Language came into play.

#### The history of Easy-to-read-Language

The concept of Easy-to-read-Language was born in the 1970s in the United States. Mentally handicapped people wanted to have more access to information and demanded an easier-to-understand-language. That meant: short sentences with short and well-known words. Very often, information and letters from city government administration were (and are) very difficult to understand: long sentences with lots of technical or foreign words make it difficult



for every reader. But for mentally handicapped persons, this challenge is even bigger and often they could not understand the information because the sentences were too long and filled with too much information.

People First – this was the name of the organisation created in 1974 by a group of mentally handicapped persons in the United States. They started to rewrite texts in an easier way: that is how the concept of Easy-to-read-Language was born.

The idea and concept of Easy-to-read-Language came to Germany in the 1990s. In the year 2001, the first People First association in Germany was founded. They demanded better social participation. One of the most important conditions for better social participation was the accessibility to understandable written information.

In 2006, the network organisation ‘Network Easy-to-read-Language’ was founded in Germany. It is a network organisation with people from many European countries such as Germany, Austria, Italy and Switzerland. The network organisation offers information about the rules of Easy-to-read-Language and training programmes.

We created free training classes called ‘Introduction to Easy-to-read-Language’ and we solved our question: these training classes were attractive for city government departments because people working there know about the understanding difficulties of their texts and documents. With these free training classes we could offer a benefit to our target groups. In the same time, we used these training classes in order to raise awareness for the topic of basic education, mainly reading and writing problems.

Our main programme aims are:

- Raise awareness for the basic education topic (More than six million adults in Germany cannot sufficiently read and write.)
- Help our key target group, adults with reading and writing difficulties, by augmenting the numbers of written information which is easy to read and understand.

## 2. Target group of the programme

We offer our free training classes to the following target groups:

- Employees of city government administration such as citizen service, employment office, housing office
- Social workers from different institutions such as schools, family centres
- Companies employing or having contact with mentally handicapped persons
- Cultural institutions such as museums, libraries

## 3. Activities implemented during the programme

The target group is reached through mouth to mouth and through the website of the Volkshochschule Potsdam: vhs.potsdam.de. We also offer classes at the Government Administration Office where interested people can enrol. The Basic Education Centre has a wide network where free training classes are being offered through newsletters and in the regular meetings. When groups are interested tailor-made classes are being offered.

We offer our training classes in different sizes depending on the time frame available from our target group:

- Full-day training class (6 hours)
- Half-day training class (3 hours)
- Short training class (1,5 hours)

Since 2020, we offer two modules:

- Introduction to the Easy-to-read-Language
- Advanced training class

Both modules are also offered as a webinar on the internet.



All introduction training classes consist of the following topics:

- Background of Easy-to-read-Language
- Rules of Easy-to-read-Language
- Translation/writing exercises

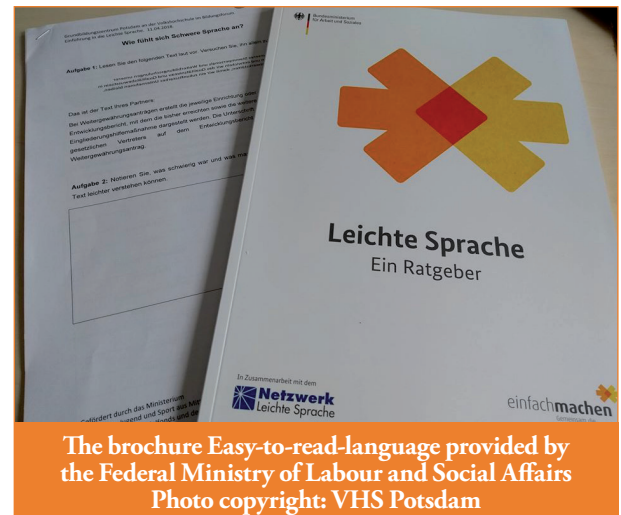
Participants are asked to bring an own, short text which they would like to translate during the full day training class into an Easy-to-read-Language text.

Since the project Basic Education Centre is funded by the European Social Fund, we can offer the training classes for free.

As long as the project Basic Education Centre runs (officially until 31.12.2020), classes can be offered for free.

If the project is not extended, it will be difficult to continue to offer these training classes for free.

A free brochure (in the internet as a pdf-document) with the rules of Easy-to-read-language is offered by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.



#### 4. Results of the programme

Between 2016 and 2020 we offered altogether 160 hours of the free Easy-to-read Language trainings with 257 participants. It is a good and effective way in order to raise awareness for the topic of reading and writing difficulties as well as helping to create more accessible information.

Detailed numbers of the training classes taught between 2016 and 2020:

Total number of training classes	29
Total number of teaching units	160
Total number of participants	257
Participants from city government administration offices	69
Social workers	91
Participants from cultural institutions	97

The impact on the individual and even the organisation is quite impressive. It is not only the awareness of the Easy-to-read-Language but also the awareness of each person to use this kind of language in different ways. The classes are kind of a first step into the usage of the language more often and therefore helping illiterate and people with reading disabilities.

## II.2.2. Lerncafés – Low Threshold Classes

### 1. Aim and background of the programme

The Volkshochschule (Adult Education Centre) moved into a bigger and more modern building in 2013. At that time the Lerncafés started for migrants and Germans with difficulties in reading and writing. In 2016 those groups were divided. As we had so many newcomers at the Volkshochschule an extra learning center was

opened. So the Lerncafé is now mainly for people with German as their mother tongue and people who have lived in Germany for quite a long time and speak German well.

The target group of functional illiterate adults is very heterogeneous. Many of them do have several difficulties, not only difficulties in reading and writing. That often leads to the fact that they cannot attend regularly classes. Sometimes people are also afraid to register for a class which will last for 2 or 3 months.

That is why we started this so called low-threshold classes where no registration is needed. Everybody can just drop by and attend this class. He or she does not need to register and give personal information. It is also not demanded to sign up for a certain period.

The beginning was difficult. Nearly for 3 months there was either nobody coming or only one person attending. But after this period and a lot of public relation works (informing network partners, publish a press release, distribute postcards with the information on it) some more people were coming. Soon we needed volunteers to help us. Otherwise, one teacher will not have sufficient time for everybody. After one year, every week 8 to 12 adults came to learn regularly.

### *Additional project in a district of Potsdam*

Since November 2018, we have another basic education project called GRUBISO whose main activity is to organise Lerncafés in one district of Potsdam.

GRUBISO is situated in one of the deprived areas of Potsdam. So, the Volkshochschule wanted to go where the people live. We also have two cooperation partners. One is a house, the Friedrich- Reinsch-Haus, where the neighbourhood meets for courses, choir practice, meetings in general, language classes and many other activities. The house has a big room where one Lerncafé can take part. The other cooperation partner is Tafel Potsdam e.V. (Care& Share), an association that rescues food from being thrown away. They give the food to people that need it. A Lerncafé cannot be offered in the rooms of the Tafel but we go there every second week, talk to the people who are waiting for their food, offer coffee, tea and books. We also offer little games while the people are waiting.

Before the Lerncafés were started a lot of work went into outreach work by taking part in festivals, meetings, visiting different institutions and meeting people. We tried to reach out to multipliers, as well as potential learners and volunteers that could support the Lerncafés.

The first Lerncafé started at the Friedrich- Reinsch – Haus on Tuesday afternoons after three months: first, nobody came. After a few weeks, people started coming and in June 2019 two more Lerncafés were opened in the area. One of them in the building where we have also our office and the other one is in the morning also at the Friedrich- Reinsch – Haus.

### *Special Lerncafés*

Every second month a ‘special Lerncafé’ is being offered. Lecturers are invited and tell interested people about different topics. One topic, for example, was healthy eating and food. It was a 2-day workshop. One day a lecturer talked about healthy food, did some quizzes with the group and taught about a healthy lifestyle. The second day involved a lot of preparing and cooking a meal by the participants. It ended with the whole group having a delicious meal.





## 2. Target groups for all Lerncafés

Target groups are functional illiterate German speaking adults who have difficulties in reading or writing. Migrants are not the target groups of this class.



Participants coming to these cafés do not need to register. The Lerncafés take place three times a week for 3 hours. We offer little snacks, drinks and also some fresh food like fruit or vegetables. There is always time for chat and we try to create a cozy atmosphere so people feel invited to stay. People can come during that time whenever they feel ready and they can also leave when they feel like it. It is like an open house.

The café is led by one of our pedagogical staff who is supported by 2-4 volunteers.

The learners learn in an individual way. We offer them different materials and he or she chooses whatever suits them or what they need to learn. They can also bring their own material or documents.

We offer reading, writing, some Mathematics, basic English and also computers. With the help of the volunteers and also pedagogical staff the students are quite successful after some time. Topics that are important imply financial basic knowledge, shopping and health. We also offer our own material which is divided into different Alpha - levels.

We have 12 convertibles and a mobile printer so we can use the internet, print or do some research online. The participants are very happy when they can take printed material home, and sometimes need things printed out.

But it is also important to talk and get into contact with the other learners. The social aspect is a main part of the Lerncafé.

The Lerncafés are one instrument of the basic education centre. There are 7 basic education centres in the state of Brandenburg and everyone is supposed to offer one free Lerncafé-class per week. Usually, one of the staff members from the basic education centre manages the Lerncafé. He or she is supported by volunteers.

The placement test is often the first thing we will do in the Lerncafé (after chatting and offering coffee and cookies of course). Then we will collect appropriate material and off it goes and the learners will start learning. We have 7 laptops and a printer in the classroom, which enable us to use online websites or com-

## 3. Activities implemented during the programme

There are about five to ten people coming to each Lerncafé in the Volkshochschule Potsdam. We are 2 teachers now supported by 4 volunteers.

Coffee, tea and cookies are important because they create a cozy atmosphere. That is why we call it Lerncafé (learning coffeehouse).

The Lerncafé starts at 4 pm and goes until 7 pm. The learners can drop in every time. They do not need to be there right at the beginning of the class.

In the deprived area in the district area Schlaatz we have three days where Lerncafés are taking place: Tuesday from 4 - 7 pm, Wednesdays from 4 - 7 pm and Thursdays from 9 - 12 am.



puter programmes as well. Usually, all the computer places are taken quickly and many learners like using the computer. Some of them have difficulties in using a computer so we can teach them two things at the same time: computer skills and reading and writing skills.

Online materials:

- Computer programme BELUGA (training of reading, writing and calculating),
- Oldenburger Lesekartei: Reading texts and tasks,
- VHS Lernportal: Reading, writing, calculating online and free of charge

Since we work individually with every learner, we need help from volunteers. Together with the library, we made a public call for volunteers and 12 people were interested in helping us. We offered a first information course for those 12 interested volunteers and everybody was invited to come to the Lerncafé and to see if this fits their expectations.

After that, 6 persons stayed with us and supported us for one year. Unfortunately, 2 dropped out because the public bus is not passing their home anymore and they have difficulties in reaching Potsdam (they live outside of Potsdam). 2-3 times a year we will offer a get together of the volunteers to exchange experiences and questions. After helping us regularly for a period of at least 6 months, the volunteers are qualified to attend one class at Volkshochschule for free. Besides the Lerncafé times, we started to offer free outings. About every two months we plan an outing together and we went for example to the local film museum, the local art museum, we went to see the German parliament (Bundestag) in Berlin, we also went to see a theatre play. Additionally, we do a summer and a Christmas party.

Many learners attend these activities and they became as important for us as the main Lerncafé times.

#### 4. Results of the programme

We are satisfied with the results: 5 to 7 learners come regularly every week in the Volkshochschule. In the district Schlaatz, where our additional basic education project is situated, about 22 people coming to one of the Lerncafés on a weekly basis.

In our classes mainly only 5 persons are in a class. We keep in close contact and get to know the people quite well.

The concept of just dropping by without registration, enjoying a coffee and cookies time and being part of a small community, works for us and for our learners.

The Lerncafés have quite an impact on the learners. It is the self-confidence that people get, also getting to know other people with the same difficulties and having a social group where topics can be discussed. The Lerncafés shall be a help for the people to help themselves. Also raising awareness for people coming to the Lerncafés that they are not alone with their problems is a big step into participation in everyday life.

There are only a few drop-outs. So most learners stay with us.

Of course, it is also a target to get the learners into the weekly Basic Education Courses at the Volkshochschule.

### III.3. Hungary

#### III.3.1. Labour-market Programme Supporting Local Employment-Economic Development Cooperation

##### 1. Aim and background of the programme

The Territorial and settlement development OP aims to support economic development directly and indirectly by providing labour force matching the needs of the local/regional employment-economic development cooperation (pact) in the given area.

The pact is based on wide-ranging cooperation, so as a result of the projects 1 county-level, 1 municipality-level and 8 district-level employment pacts were established in Békés County. They are composed of government, municipal and economic actors relevant to employment, that the programme has enabled to tell what skilled workforce they are in need of. Thus, a programme based on local cooperation that is flexible, taking into account real demand and supply and focusing on supporting and strengthening employment development cooperation is being realised.

An important objective was also to improve access to vocational training for disadvantaged adults with insufficient basic skills.

## 2. Target group of the programme

The programme may include jobseekers, disadvantaged and inactive people wishing to take up employment in our region.

## 3. Activities implemented during the programme

The project provides labour market services, training programmes and wage subsidies to the persons involved in the programme to facilitate their placement in the open labour market. The government office has launched trainings that respond to the needs of the employers. Participation in the training is free of charge for jobseekers; participants receive compensation as well as reimbursement of travel expenses for the duration of the training. The programmes also intend to provide support to employers with wage-cost subsidies for the employment of workers up to 100%.

In order to improve access to training for adults with low basic skills and thus unable to participate in lifelong learning, several interdependent measures have been implemented.

The government office organises its operations based on a wide range of social bases. The employment policy objectives are always pursued with appropriate professional preparedness and jointly with dedicated partner organisations in the field of operation. Over the past three years it has concluded to promote, inter alia vocational training and employment.

Several sectoral discussions took place during the project development period of the employment pacts of Békés County. During the discussions, a reoccurring problem on the part of the employers was that one of the main obstacles to the employability of the people in the target group of the project is the lack of general competences (literacy, numeracy), in short terms functional illiteracy.

In response to this problem, in 2018 the government office formed a working group on vocational training with organisations interested in promoting vocational training in the county and willing to cooperate, involving, inter alia, chambers, education and training institutions, higher education institutions and mainstream employers of the county. The work resulted in the adoption of short- to medium-term and long-term action plans in 22 thematic areas to be jointly implemented, which include but not limited to the measures to be taken for the access to adult learning and to adapt disadvantaged adults to vocational training.

During the implementation of the action plan for the development of basic adult skills a Working Group on training has been set up involving employers, training institutions and consortium partners within the framework of the employment pact at county level to support the measurement and development of basic skills. The task of the Working Group was to set up a series of questions to assess the existing competences of the target persons to be involved in the project to determine whose existing basic competences would be most effective to be developed through a training programme based on employer needs, as well as answer to two other issues identified as shortages, the willingness to move and the motivation of workers.

944 people took part in the research carried out among disadvantaged jobseekers. 16 of the test-probed jobseekers had a level of skills so low that their integration into the labour market could not be supported by training, and 61% of them are recommended to be included in vocational training only after competence development training. Only 23 of the respondents were able to get directly into occupational training.

In order to achieve the best impact, questionnaires were collected by staff of the district offices of the government office in the field of employment, however, in many cases they have had to face the fact that customers consider such testing a waste of time, the majority did not even start the mathematical-logical tasks- in addition to the fact that the sight of the basic calculating tasks alone was alarming, it is likely, that it was even difficult to understand the task.

The results above confirmed that skills development trainings were reasonable, however the first feedback – according to which customers could not cope with the questionnaire without assistance, the tasks were too long and complicated – it was tangible that the method as well as the tool need fine-tuning.

The competence questionnaire was further developed using the international experience gained through the project entitled "Back to Learning" to provide professionals with a tool to examine the skills that form the basis for defining tailor-made development directions. It is very important that colleagues who are involved in the carrying out of the questionnaire know the purpose and are sufficiently sensitive to the problems of the target group, know when and how to use the measuring instrument. Therefore, in the course of the development we took into account the feedback of the colleagues carrying out the questionnaire regarding the structure and usability of it and the reactions of the customers. On the basis of the feedback received, a small working group revised the questionnaire, in consultation with the heads of district employment departments, and determined the place of the questionnaire in the "customer-path" model. The questionnaire was presented to colleagues, with great emphasis on a detailed methodological guide, which gives detailed guidance on how to carry out and record the questionnaire.

The renewed questionnaires were piloted by colleagues for 3 months, after which they gave their feedback again. Based on this feedback, this version of the questionnaire is a well-developed, thorough survey of basic skills and abilities. The information obtained during the evaluation help the consultant work and formulating future goals for the client. The questionnaire indicates whether the employment plans are in line with personal skills and abilities.

Starting in July 2019, 11 basic competence development trainings were launched for 148 participants. All but 3 participants successfully completed the training; close mentoring was required for the successful completion. The success of the retraining is shown by the fact that several clients have already indicated during the training that they want to take part in the training following. In 2020 no further trainings were launched due to the pandemic, thus most of the participants are either waiting for training opportunities as registered jobseekers, or have been temporarily placed in public employment.

The topics of the training were as follows:

- tune-in, motivating course
- basic/refreshing development
- learning skills development
- lifestyle management competence development
- mental health development
- foreign language development

Under the 10 employment pacts in the county, the following services and grants were realised:

- Number of persons involved in services: 4189
- Number of persons involved in training: 480
- Number of persons granted wage subsidy for expanding employment: 377
- Number of persons granted labour cost subsidy: 2275
- Number of persons receiving support for entrepreneurship: 294

The total planned budget of the projects amount to HUF 5 912 000 000, of which the total amount is financed by the European Union, of which the total amount spent of the development of the competence questionnaire is HUF 6 825 000.



#### 4. Results of the programme

- A set of requirements has been developed for basic competence development labour market trainings, which will be made available in the future for adult education institutions in the call for proposals for trainings on the training register. This ensures that jobseekers participating in the basic skills development may participate in trainings organised according to the same criteria and requirements that provide appropriate input for further training.
- Close cooperation has been developed with employers, training institutions, municipalities and stakeholder organisations in the region. The results of the employment pacts also clearly demonstrate the effectiveness of local organizations and communities working together. Close cooperation between organisations committed to solving a specific local problem represents significant added value compared to individual actions. We see the solution in joint work even in the future in any area where our consortium organisations have a stake by their core tasks.
- The questionnaire revised based on practical experience – which measures basic competence, mobility and motivation – greatly contributes to the better understanding of the customer, gives a more accurate picture of the overall competence characteristics of the customer base, and the information obtained can be integrated into the process of getting to know the customer, and later in the preparation of the individual action plan.

### III.3.2. The ‘Together for Integration in Békés’ project

#### 1. Aim and the background of the programme

The city of Békés, with a population of nearly 20,000, is home of the largest Roma community in Békés county, with nearly 2,000 inhabitants. The former Roma settlement, which locals simply call „Paris”, is the most backward, or disadvantaged district in the city. Today, only a small proportion of the local Roma people live there with other impoverished families. Poverty and unemployment are much higher among them. Integrating and catching up with the residents of the district is one of the strategic goals of the city management.

The project of the Municipality of the City of Békés entitled ‘Together for Integration in Békés’ is closely related to the rehabilitation of poor neighbourhoods in the urban area. The project was financed from the European Social Fund and the budget of the Hungarian Government.

The objective of the project is to help the social catching up and integration of disadvantaged people facing segregation in their living environment and deep poverty. It provides and offers:

- development of the basic competencies for later learning,
- marketable vocational trainings promoting the integration in the labour market,
- family mentoring,
- job search/career counselling and career guidance,
- support for adults and children from segregated living environments to develop attitudes and build well-functioning, viable healthy communities with the aim to reduce negative socialization effects,
- improving housing conditions.

#### 2. Target group of the programme

The primary target group of the programme is 25% of the resident population aged 16-54 (1119 people) living in the residential area of Békés, ie 240 people, where the proportion of the Roma population is exceptionally high (47.1%) and who face social problems due to their disadvantaged situation.

In the residential area, there is a large proportion of people living in segregation with low income and low education and they face labour market exclusion.



The segregated area of the so called 'Paris'

### 3. Activities implemented during the programme

There are several institutions in the city to address the social and employment problems of the disadvantaged population. The goals of the project made it necessary for the institutions and organisations in our city to work together and coordinate their activities for social integration.

A key consideration in the selection of cooperating consortium partners was that they know the target group well and can effectively help the members of that target group in social integration.

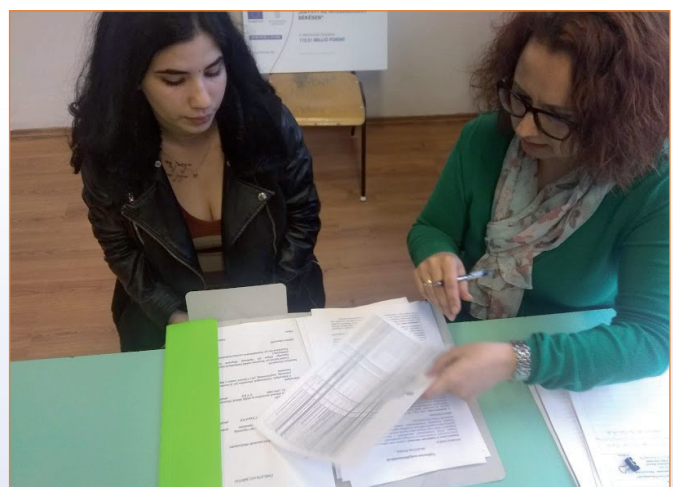
Mayor's Office of Békés established consortium with the Békés City Social Service Center, the GFE Vocational School in Békés and the Békés Communal Service Center LLC.

#### *Project activities*

- **Family mentoring activity:**  
Békés City Social Service Centre supported the employment and professional work of 8 social workers with good background knowledge of the situation and way of life of those, mostly Roma people, living in the area already mentioned. Social workers received methodological assistance to address the specifics of the target group, a situation survey was conducted in the field, and an individual development plan was prepared with clients who could be involved in the programme. The selection of clients was based on the willingness to change, learn, cooperate, being motivated, and ready to acquire new knowledge and - of course - being in need. The social workers kept regular contact with the client/family, supported the implementation of individual development plans and staying in the programme by providing financial, family and life management counselling and assistance in official matters.
- The Békés Communal Service Center LLC, in cooperation with local partners, organised programmes to promote labour market integration:
  - **Job search training:** the aim is to provide knowledge on how to search for and find a job and, to develop labour market competencies.
  - **“I have goals”:** group work. Special attention was paid to the programme that enables people to live independently and motivates them to enter the labour market, and to skills development sessions.
  - **Career counselling:** during the counselling to help career decisions, individual problems were thoroughly explored, and the labour department counsellor of the Békés County Government Office helped to achieve the goals by strengthening self-esteem.



**Training of jobseeking techniques**



**Individual counselling**

In the phase of planning and development of the activities, it was an important aspect to find and involve local partners and to take into account the specifics of the population living in the area involved in the project. The help of the local staff of the Roma Mission of Hungarian Pentecostal Church should be highlighted.



- The task of the 'Gál Ferenc University Vocational School' is to provide professional trainings for the development of basic competencies and in accordance with local needs (Basic competency training, carpentry industrial assembler, kitchen assistant, cleaning technology specialist, gardener and maintenance training).
- The Municipality of Békés, which leads the consortium, and its institutions, organised community development programmes: anti-discrimination event, Roma Day and Family Day. Health promotion activities included screening, early detection and a drug prevention programme. Training and awareness-raising programmes have also been organised to help prevent crime and strengthen public safety. The municipality was responsible for the financial support of the trainees and for the implementation of a related project to improve housing conditions.
- The Békés Communal Service Centre LLC organised employer training. Clients had a chance to learn about employer expectations as well as deepen knowledge in labour affairs.



Event of a family day



Programme for preventing recidivism



Programme for drug prevention



Practice at the training of gardening

#### 4. Results of the programme

The goals set by the project would have been impossible to achieve without the wide-ranging local cooperation of the organisations that could help. The expertise and experience of the professionals participating in the project helped families with socially disadvantaged backgrounds. A close network of contacts has been established between the participating organisations and their professionals, which can be useful in the future. The project is a clear evidence that integration problems cannot be dealt with by just one organization or body, and that the capabilities and tools of the current care system are not sufficient. The

active involvement of locals, citizens' groups, training and economic partners is also needed. Conscious and functional cooperation between institutions is one source of success.

The direct effect of the project is that we have developed the basic skills and professional competencies of those living in the disadvantaged district. The number of people with a qualification has increased, which facilitates their labour market entry.

166 people applied for training, 158 successfully passed the examinations, the dropout rate is 8 people (5%).

The number of programmes implemented in the project and the number of participants were as follows:

Activity	Quantity		Participants
Health promotion	3	times	130
Legal counselling	12	times	
Crime prevention, public safety	4	times	150
Family Day	1	time	150
Permanent social work	36	months	240
Anti-discrimination event	1	time	150
Competence survey		continuous	240
Training courses to promote employment	10	training programmes	152
Labour market integration programmes	4	For individuals and groups	75

The programme is an exemplary one as it not only focused on addressing specific social problems, but also sought to achieve lasting change in the community through coordinated educational, health, and community development activities. The project convinced those involved in social assistance and education that mentoring people from disadvantaged social groups, a system of direct support for individuals, is the most effective way to successfully achieve their goals, whether in the workplace, in learning or in human relations.

At the end of the project, we conducted a questionnaire survey and interviews among the participants involved in the project. The result shows that the goals have been achieved in the field of integration and catching up of the residents of the most disadvantaged district of the city of Békés. Employment has improved, numerous individuals joined further learning and expressed their plans to find a new, more qualified job. Cooperation with social workers has improved. The social rental housing programme related to the project will help young people to start living independently and reduce congestion in their homes. The local media regularly reported on the results of the project, the personal successes of some members of the target group, and thus the acceptance of the Roma population improved and prejudice decreased.

Competence development can be applied in other countries, its success can be ensured by several elements:

- close cooperation between organisations involved in development
- an active mentoring programme that involves not only members of the target group but also families
- coordinated programmes that also develop basic competencies/skills - trainings, courses
- providing vocational training opportunities – help to find a job
- crime prevention, health promotion, drug prevention programmes
- services and training should be available close to the place of residence

Related documents and information:

- <http://bekestop.hu/bekes/top-5-2-1-15-bs1-2016-00002/>
- <https://www.bekesvaros.hu/galeria-TOP-5.2.1-15-BS1-2016-00002>
- <https://epale.ec.europa.eu/hu/blog/egyutt-az-integracioert-bekesen-cimu-projekt-bemutata>



### III.3.3. Kodolányi János University's Online Distance Learning System

#### 1. Aim and background of the programme

Our institution uses software to train educators of disadvantaged target groups that is suitable for their education without personal intervention. The programme provides an online tool, and interface for holding adult training without personal involvement. Participants in training from larger areas can effectively master the appropriate curriculum. The aim of the programme is to reduce costs of travel, and time, minimise personal contact and implement flexible education in addition to individual activities.

#### 2. Target group of the programme

The target groups of the programme are adults who have appropriate basic digital competencies and intend to learn. Currently, we use the system in the training and further training of those working in the social and educational fields, and due to its simple use, it may also be involved in the development of the basic competencies of job seekers. Its target groups are currently: teachers, helpers working in the social and health care system. We implement the training of 300-800 people a year with its help.

#### 3. Activities implemented during the programme

By combining the Moodle and Skype for Business programmes, we implement blended-learning education with the participants in the training. The programme is **capable of administering different roles**: administrator, principal, course creator, teacher, non-editorial teacher, student, guest, etc. The software also supports android and iOS systems on mobile phones and tablets. The programme package supports education with the following features:

- News – in banner surfaces we provide news on our latest courses, our university, and programmes.
- Guide – written and illustrated video sources provide help for the usage of the platform.
- Follow-up of the progress – the participant can follow his/her curriculum unit in the courses that he/she attends
- Calendar/Schedule – in this function appear all important information e.g. appointments of courses, exams, and programmes from the university.
- Communication/Chat – an integrated platform capable to communicate with other course participants, administrators, and teachers.

Advantages for teachers and professors:

- they can easily follow the number and data of participants, the pace of succession, and attendance,
- edit unit of curriculum, upload texts, pictures, and videos – embedded and linked,
- keep contact via forum messages – schedule and content of courses,
- create links for online consultation – click this link she/he can directly join Skype conference,
- create tests, tasks for feedback – both practice and evaluation.

Advantages for the participants:

- they can learn with the help of texts and video materials,
- have access to links of online consultation,
- see the context of the subject matter in the courses. Links and videos help the understanding and explain the definitions,
- have access to presentations created during online lectures and the recorded videos from lectures,
- take online tests and real-time exams; participants can take exams on Skype on the subject matter of courses

We use the programme to reach, address, and motivate the adults belonging to the target group, to involve them in the programme/training. Our programme is able and suitable for online training in the individual time frame of the trainee with the help of uploaded content and realising a personal presence from remote locations.

In our programme, educators, health care workers, and those working in the social system are currently completing their compulsory credit-worthy in-service training and postgraduate courses.

We have developed the software package from our resources, and our colleagues are currently developing the programme. We are purchasing various modules for it to be able to apply it internationally.

In its everyday operation, we use the system in different language environments by translating content into other languages. The suitability of the programme during the virus situation is for the implementation of examinations and examinations without personal presence.

#### 4. Results of the programme

Based on the feedback from the participants:

- Course participants are suitable for use after brief instruction and/or video content and short personal mentoring. Good-quality internet access and basic IT knowledge are required to operate it.
- It is necessary to make the trainers suitable for the development of teaching materials, the display of live online educational content, and the selection between the applied methods (digital tablet, visual board, presentations, etc.)

Where possible, online education should be mixed with individual consultations. The first few times are necessary between the instructor and the participants in the training, because this way the training can take place in a more relaxed way and they know who is asking behind some pictures and pictograms.

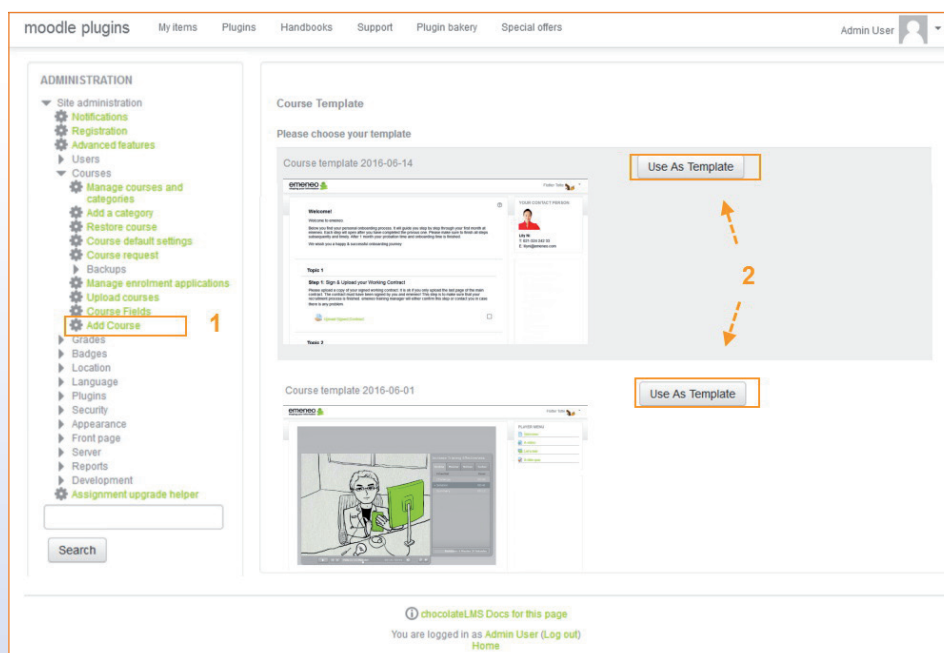
Some courses require personal presence. These are mainly courses that develop social skills and abilities (self-knowledge, cooperation), where a personal appearance is essential.

On the part of the instructor, distance learning at home requires significant preparation, while in terms of motivation, he/she receives less feedback from the participants in the training.

Feedback from trainees is 95% positive, although it requires social contacts at least at the beginning and end of the programmes. According to our representative survey of 550 people, more than 90% of those in training are completely satisfied or satisfied with our online education system. 45% of them indicated blended learning, while 39.7% indicated online education as the most appropriate form of education. Significantly, 79.3% of access to digital systems is on laptops, phones, and tablets, while only the remaining nearly 20% access our systems on a desktop computer. Technical support is needed to access online educational content with a personal presence to find someone who can be reached by phone or online at any time to help resolve technical issues.

The programme can also be used from other countries.

Moodle software website: <https://moodle.com/solutions/higher-education/>



## III.4. Ireland

### III.4.1. Themed Learning - Horticulture

#### 1. Aim and background of the programme

A number of learners have a low base of literacy, numeracy and technology skills when they first engage with BARWS. For this learner cohort the use of themed learning has proved to be very successful.

To meet this purpose we have offered and delivered a range of themed learning courses such as, Food, Nutrition and Healthy Eating, Health and Fitness, Personal Development, Child Development and Play, Shape and Space, Patterns and Relationships, Craft, Nature Studies, Horticulture, Container Gardening, Planting and Potting, History and Geography. During the delivery of these courses a variety of teaching and learning techniques and methodologies integrating reading, writing, spelling, numeracy and technology are used.

The learners also have an opportunity to gain a nationally accredited certificate, accredited by the QQI at levels 2 and 3. This is very often their first experience of receiving a national certificate. Learning programmes start from the point the learner is at, what they want from the programme and they can set their own goals.

In order to develop broad, creative and innovative learning experiences, learners are offered a themed programme to support the development of numeracy, literacy and technology competencies using a variety of hands-on practices that can be applied to their everyday lives.

The concept of themed contextual learning is the development of skills through building on learners' prior knowledge, experiences, interests and needs.

#### 2. Target group of the programme

The learners are, in general, urban, a long time out of education and of mixed ages, abilities and cultures. Some have had a negative past experience of education, many have literacy difficulties and associated poor self-esteem and confidence. For others, English is a second language.

#### 3. Activities implemented during the programme

The idea to develop a learning programme around the theme of horticulture originated following a discussion with learners about the possibility of creating a flower and vegetable garden in the empty courtyard in the CDETB Ballymun Adult Education Centre.

One group of learners had been attending literacy and numeracy classes for some time but believed that development of skills was slow. During a discussion with their tutor regarding the merits of 'hands-on learning' against sedentary style learning, learners expressed how they self-taught from doing basic hands-on jobs in their own homes or gardens.

While reflecting on the discussion, the group tutor started to research and develop a programme that would engage the learners and produce more impactful learning outcomes. The tutor has a professional qualification and background in the science field and is a keen gardener. She enlisted the support of tutors who have developed horticulture skills through membership of the local Community Garden initiative and were willing to mentor learners during the delivery of the new programme.

A learning plan and course schedule was drafted to include the development of core literacy, numeracy and technology skills integrated with hands-on horticultural tasks which would meet the learning outcomes for the accredited QQI Level 2 Horticulture module.

The first course activity involved learners drawing up written plans using the correct horticultural terminology for planting schemes, planning items to grow, estimating quantities of seeds, compost and pots required to get results and organising items that could be upcycled to use as resources etc.

The group tutor allocated tasks to learners according to literacy levels. Some learners were involved in using the class Ipad to create notices of planting schemes and maintenance rules in this way repeating and reinforcing



ing the language for the whole group. This proved popular as learners could take the instructions away to use elsewhere.

The Horticulture project included active learning of maths functions such as multiplication and division, working with data, comparing the growth of potatoes using three different methods; grow bags, the ground and in three different types of re-cycled containers and noting the results. Every day apps on phones were used by the learners along with class Ipads to write up notes on horticultural terminology and processes.

The learners enjoyed being creative and innovative to recycle or upcycle materials and resources for use in the courtyard for example, one learner made planting boxes from recycled timber and these were painted and used to plant out courgettes and tomatoes. Containers for courgette seedlings were made from old newspapers. Toilet roll holders were used to sow broad beans and peas. An old dustbin was painted and used to plant beans and peas.

At the end of the course, the group celebrated the term with a delicious lunch from their own container garden; new potatoes garnished with mint, broad beans, mangetout peas, salad with nasturtium leaves, chives and parsley, cherry tomatoes and baby courgettes.

Programme costs such as tuition hours and material costs were funded via the annual adult literacy grant from CDET'B.

Sustainability of this approach was evidenced by the requests from other learners to participate in future horticultural courses. Reflection on teaching and learning practice from the initial programme offered opportunities for the further development of skills learned during this programme to be applied to other themed learning courses at progressing QQI levels.

### *Photographs and learners' comments*



*"We made our own containers for the courgette seedlings from newspaper and chitted<sup>6</sup> early potatoes and planted them in builders' buckets. We divided up and re-potted chives and mint."*

*"I enjoy this course and I am learning a lot about horticulture. I hope to grow my own vegetables and flowers in my garden. I liked planting seeds and watching the progress."*

<sup>6</sup> Chitted: cut the buds from the sprouted potatoes and planted them as new stock.

#### 4. Results of the programme

This practical approach to learning was a great success with a nil drop-out rate which is considered to be relevant criteria for measuring programme impact. Learners came in to the Centre during holiday periods to look after plants with watering and feeding providing, evidence of learner motivation for participation as a second criteria for measuring programme impact.

Along with the development of literacy, numeracy, technology and gardening skills, collaboration with their peers enabled the development of teamwork, communications and organisational skills. Social interaction was increased through participants being asked questions about the horticulture programme by other learners. Advice sought from programme participants regarding planting and growing provided for the development of confidence and self-esteem which, while difficult to measure, did have a huge personal impact.

The learners created a wonderful display of potted flowers, plants, herbs and vegetables which encouraged broader discussion and positive commentary. The uplifting sight of the adapted courtyard garden was much appreciated by all those working in, attending classes or visiting the Adult Education Centre and became a source of pride for programme participants.

The new learned skills and information were transferable to learners own gardens and neighbourhoods. Some learners further developed their new skills and confidence by joining in the work of local Tidy Towns Committees and /or Community Gardens. The following term, learners progressed to and successfully completed the accredited QQI Level 3 Container Gardening module.

The concept of themed learning is so simple that a programme can be adopted and adapted to suit any group of learners in any country. There are no factors requiring special attention or focus while adapting the programme other than relevance to learner group demographic, needs, interests and skills level.

### III.4.2. CDET /BARWS Volunteer Tutor Training Programme

#### 1. Aim and background of the programme

This volunteer tutor training programme was developed in literacy service centres throughout the Dublin area over a number of years. Originally, the programme was developed as a collaboration between the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) and the literacy centres. In the intervening years it became apparent that variances in the training emerged, so much so, that in recent times the CDET carried out a review of all training being delivered and developed a standard programme to be followed for all volunteer tutor training in CDET adult literacy service centres throughout Dublin city. This guarantees a wide scale consistency and reliability in the delivery of a quality and professional programme.

When a person applies to work as a voluntary one-to-one literacy tutor they often lack an overall awareness of the reasons why people reach adulthood without a competency in basic literacy, numeracy and technology skills or of the effects these deficits have on their daily lives. Before working with an adult learner they need to be introduced to the philosophical and psychological theories informing adult education as well as the technical and methodological tools and resources used in teaching and learning.

When a person presents for help with basic skills it may be their first time to divulge the difficulty they have with literacy. Often accompanied with feelings of fear, shame, embarrassment, low confidence and self-esteem they are not psychologically or emotionally ready to join a group.

The aim of one-to-one tutoring is to help the learner overcome fears and negative feelings, learn how to learn, build trust and confidence and be encouraged to move to a group to engage with other learners and collaborative learning. It offers a learner time to get used to and become comfortable in attending an Adult Education Centre and to observe what happens there.

Trained volunteer tutors are a valuable resource that enables the delivery of one-to-one literacy support. The cost of providing this service via a qualified adult educator is prohibitive and the delivery method would not be cost effective. Furthermore, the experience gained by trained volunteer tutors may offer the opportunity to progress to literacy work as a part-time adult educator if the necessary professional qualifications are in place.

To sustain the practice of using one-to-one tutors BARWS maintain a panel of approximately 25 trained volunteer tutors to meet the provision needs of our learners. We aim to have a diverse demographic of tutors available varying in gender and age with a range of professional, trade and creative skills which allows for good profile matching of learner and tutor in terms of need and interests.

The overall aim of the tutor training is to impart the knowledge, to introduce the techniques, methodologies and resources available and to practice the skills necessary for a person to become an effective literacy tutor. It also shows, by good example, best practice by acknowledging multiple intelligences and different learning styles, how people learn and using a variety of teaching and learning strategies and materials to suit these differences. BARWS is confident that the initial tutor training for volunteer tutors is robust and competently equips those volunteering with the ethos and skills to work with people who present with low basic competences for everyday living.

## 2. Target group of the programme

The direct target group for the Volunteer Tutor Training Programme are volunteers who wish to support adults with low basic skills to develop literacy, numeracy and technology skills. A second direct target group are professional adult educators with no experience of providing literacy support or working in basic adult education and who may, in the future, wish to do so.

Candidates who volunteer for training as one-to-one literacy tutors are targeted through outreach/awareness activities in the local community, networking with local organisations and other sources and nationally through the advocacy of the NGO National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) on national radio and TV. Typically, BARWS would have up to 40 applications for volunteer tutor training and, following interview, 14 – 16 applicants are invited to participate in each training programme.

The indirect target group are those who present with low literacy skills base and fear of engagement with a learning programme.

## 3. Activities implemented during the programme

A programme of 37.5 contact hours is organised into 15 sessions of 2.5 hours duration. There is an additional requirement for participants to complete assignments including a reflective journal, sample worksheets and preparation of collaborative teamwork in-course presentations.

Input includes:

- Introduction, programme overview, aims and objectives
- definitions of literacy and numeracy
- causes and effects of literacy difficulties
- data regarding provision at local, national and international levels with reference to international literacy surveys
- philosophical and psychological adult education theories that inform practice with reference to adult educationalists and educational psychologists such as;
  - Malcolm Knowles - Androgogy
  - Vygotsky - Social interaction, Constructivism, Scaffolding
  - Paolo Freire – Pedagogy of the Oppressed
  - Jack Mezirow – Transformative Learning
  - Piaget – Cognitive Development
  - Carl Rogers - Experiential Learning and Facilitating Learning
  - Maslow – Hierarchy of needs
  - Howard Gardner – Multiple Intelligences
  - Lave and Wenger – Communities of Practice and Situated Learning
- building learner/tutor teaching/learning relationships



- teaching and learning techniques, methodologies, resources and materials for reading, writing, spelling, numeracy and technology
- resourcing and making materials for teaching and learning
- specific and general learning difficulties
- learning assessment and evaluation methods
- learner progression.

The course is delivered using a variety of techniques and methodologies, such as, presentations, power-point, brainstorming, paired, group and teamwork using, for example, techniques such as the flipped classroom. This doubles in showing good practice, that in, any teaching and learning situation it is very important to use variety in all aspects of the process. It also promotes active as opposed to passive learning and this is encouraged for transference to their own practice with a learner. Input from working tutors and learners is also an important aspect of the training and has a huge impact on the trainees' awareness of a learner's needs.

The Scheme has a dedicated professional adult education support tutor and uses a tutor mentoring system whereby working professional adult educators support volunteer tutors with the sharing of information regarding resources and methodologies. Throughout the course there is ongoing evaluation of suitability of the participants to work with learners.

The programme costs, such as, tuition hours and provision of materials, are funded via the annual adult literacy grant from CDET B.

The programme is sustained by keeping informed on latest advances in adult basic education teaching/learning methodologies and opportunities for volunteers to engage in further studies with national colleges and universities. Positive feedback from both newly trained and experienced volunteer tutors confirms the impact of the programme content. A continuous waiting list of applicants for training identifies on-going interest in the broader community for the programme. Regular requests from learner referral agencies for one-to-one literacy support for clients endorses the high standard of service delivery.

*Photographs and Volunteer Tutor Training Programme participants' comments*



1 to 1 volunteer tutor Patricia and student Thelma.



BARWS staff members who completed the Volunteer Tutor Training Programme and worked as 1 to 1 tutors. Some already had educational qualifications and work experience while others subsequently completed further studies in Adult Education and Community Training.

*"For me, the VTT programme really opened up the whole wonderful world of Adult Education. I had just completed my Higher Diploma in Further Education, but I felt that I learned so much more by doing the VTT programme. The content, resources and real life experiences from adults returning to education were so valuable to me as a Tutor."*

*"The VTT programme demonstrated different approaches to teaching & learning for working with those returning to education. Using a collaborative approach, we were able to learn from each other, and practice different methodologies before delivering training on a 1:1 basis."*

*"Our VTT Programme was delivered in a professional, interactive, and fun manner using both research based and practical material. For me, the take-away messages related to the importance of respect for adult learners who may have experienced the 'shame of illiteracy'; as well as the value of life experience that they can bring to their learning."*

#### 4. Results of the Programme

Over the years course attendance and participation has been very enthusiastic with a very small dropout rate (which usually occurs for personal life reasons). We observe how learners overcome fears and build self-confidence and self-esteem by working with volunteer tutors. We have positive feedback from community organisations who refer people to the service.

For BARWS, the success of the programme ensures that a continuous panel of well-trained volunteer one-to-one tutors is available when required to work with a learner. The diverse professional backgrounds and experiences of the volunteers provides for more choice of relevant skills when pairing a volunteer tutor with a learner.

The Volunteer Tutor Training Programme can be adopted and adapted to suit local needs for a group of adult literacy volunteers in any country.

Aspects of the course can be used for awareness training for those in contact with individuals who have low level literacy competences. These frontline staff are generally employed in public agencies, the police force, healthcare or community organisations. Literacy awareness training enhances professionalism for interaction with their specific client cohorts.

### III.5. Malta

#### III.5.1. Iċ-Ċavetta

##### 1. Aim and background of the programme

Whilst conducting basic literacy sessions to groups of people who were unemployed, it was identified that there was a need to develop teaching materials aimed at adults. This led to the design of teaching materials which was mainly based on the requirements of the clients and then further developed into the present 'Iċ-Ċavetta' toolkit. Then, eventually the app.

'Iċ-Ċavetta', meaning 'The Key', is a toolkit comprising of books, flash cards, a game and posters aiming to teach basic Maltese literacy.

The books comprising 'Iċ-Ċavetta' are three in number.

- Book 1 contains thirty chapters, one chapter for each letter of the Maltese alphabet. Each chapter contains a number of exercises aimed at introducing the letter in different contexts/words to create familiarity with it.
- Book 2 builds up these letters into words with activities aimed at helping the adult learners to familiarize themselves with the letters in different word combinations and thus meaning.
- In Book 3, the words are further built into forming short passages with an environmental theme, while others tackle the world of employment, CV writing and job application.

Learners do not need to have any knowledge of reading or writing the language since 'Iċ-Ċavetta' starts from very basic teaching of Maltese. In this work, words which are normally used with children have

been avoided, while words used by adults, for example in work contexts, have been adopted. Therefore, adult learners would feel that they are being treated with respect as adults who possess a specific learning need.

Besides this kit, 'Iċ-Ċavetta' has also been launched online and as an application, free of charge.

## 2. Target group of the programme

The target group of the programme are adults with basic skills needs, specifically, Maltese speakers who lack basic literacy.

## 3. Activities implemented during the programme

Personal contact and Individual attention

- Most of the participants were approached by the Paulo Freire Institute (PFI) personnel, mostly social workers, other members of staff or volunteers.
- The number of participants during the sessions varied from one to one, up to a maximum of one to four. This was done in order to give better individual attention and to keep it as informal as possible. Whenever possible, sessions' schedule was very flexible to suit the participants' needs and other commitments. All participants were followed by the PFI clerical staff, but special attention was given to those who were feeling discouraged, unmotivated or missing sessions. This was mostly done by regularly giving them a phone call and encouraging them to attend sessions.

Tailor-made programme

- The toolkit provides tailor-made programmes specifically designed to facilitate access of vulnerable groups to education and employment.

Technological appeal

- The App is more appealing to younger adults who like using mobile phones instead of books. They certainly do not feel inhibited using the App in public places such as waiting for a bus or an appointment etc. Besides the activities presented are in the form of games.

Since this project stemmed from a Christian NGO, the fifteen educators that were recruited were motivated by Social Justice. Once 'Iċ-Ċavetta' was launched, sessions were organised to equip and inform them on how to use the tool kit. These sessions included a presentation on the creation of 'Iċ-Ċavetta', its aims and perceived achievements. The educators were also invited to evaluate the tool kit. Descriptions of the workbooks and learners' expected attainments were made, nonetheless, this was always related to the educational and psychological learning needs of the learner. Therefore, adaptation to the different needs of each learner was taken into consideration. Seventy persons facing social exclusion, literacy and employment challenges were subsequently provided with training on basic literacy, work values and computer orientation skill.

'Iċ-Ċavetta', toolkit also includes a manual which was developed for educators to prepare them for the task of teaching basic literacy to adults. This explains very well and in good detail every type of activity expected to be done by the learner. Therefore, trainers have a guide specifically for their use to help them along, if they find any difficulty.

Initially, 'Iċ-Ċavetta', was a toolkit developed by PFI in collaboration with Jobsplus (the national employment agency), Inspire (a foundation which supports individuals and their families with different forms of disabilities) and Richmond Foundation (a foundation which supports individuals and their families with mental health difficulties).

After the publication of 'Iċ-Ċavetta', the programme was promoted in different educational institutions catering for adults and young people. The workbooks, flashcards and all the elements which comprise this project were cordially shared with other organisations who wished to use them.



Unexpectedly, since at the time, resources in the Maltese language were lacking, some sections of 'Iċ-Ċavetta' ended up being used at secondary school level. For the same reason, this toolkit was also used by some foreigners who wanted to learn basic Maltese.

The mobile app is free to download and used as needed.

The Institute has produced the original toolkit through the European Social Fund; ESF 3.66. The authors of the original project that was launched in 2011 were David Muscat and Carmen Mamo. Furthermore, Paulo Freire Institute was the beneficiary of financial assistance by the Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties (MSDC) through the NGO co-financing fund. Additionally, funding by Vodafone Malta Foundation for the digitalisation of the project was also made. The resulting web application and mobile app is available for free.

On a local level, Paulo Freire Institute has been offering adult literacy sessions in Maltese since 2000. In fact, the material used for 'Iċ-Ċavetta' developed slowly through this experience. Learners approach the Institute directly or are referred through social workers or through other agencies; NGOs and schools. These sessions continue to take place today.

On a National level, educators in various schools and other institutions often request 'Iċ-Ċavetta' resources. At present, the App is being promoted to encourage its use on a wider level, possibly through adverts on Maltese television stations.

#### 4. Results of the programme

The toolkit was disseminated to other NGOs working in the field; to schools and other entities across Malta and Gozo including government entities such as the Employment and Training Corporation and the Department for the Curriculum, Lifelong Learning and Employability (DCLE). Furthermore, the trained educators from the different entities were provided with kits and held sessions for their respective clients.

The programme's methodology wanted to do away with a formal educational setting, therefore, sessions were not held in a classroom setting but more in a home like environment. For this reason, it was decided that there would be no form of assessment. Participants could progress from one unit to another once a skill/unit was mastered.

Following the initial programme, a digital Maltese literacy toolkit was developed (sponsored by the Malta Vodafone Foundation) and a website was set up; <https://cavetta.org.mt/>. The App has a text-to-speech reader, so that absolute beginners can still navigate the App independently.

Furthermore, a Facebook page was created and has reached almost 2,000 people.

The Paulo Freire Institute continues to hold sessions for all those who wish to use 'Iċ-Ċavetta'. Requests are made for the toolkit in schools and different organizations and Community Centres. Furthermore, videos have been recently created with individual sessions and promoted on the Facebook page; <https://www.facebook.com/pfimalta/>

Iċ-Ċavetta is currently the only existing resource of its sort aimed at teaching basic literacy skills in Maltese which specifically target youth and adults who are low-skilled. All successful participants improved their self-esteem. As research points out, there is a good correlation between literacy and self-esteem. Participants who were enabled to read and write, even though initially at a basic level, felt proud of such a personal achievement, especially those who have been struggling to acquire these skills since their compulsory school days. This achievement also had a positive impact on their everyday life and families. They were able to motivate other family members with similar difficulties to take literacy seriously. It also helped learners make use of technology and enable them to communicate better with their loved ones, both locally and even abroad.

Educators who teach vulnerable adults literacy skills continue to order the three 'Iċ-Ċavetta' textbooks produced in the original project. Furthermore, the app has reached over 1,000 users.

A study on the impact of 'Iċ-Ċavetta' on individuals and the local community has never taken place but would be considered as a future follow up. This would be beneficial not only to quantify the success of this toolkit but better still, to seek ways of how it can be developed further.

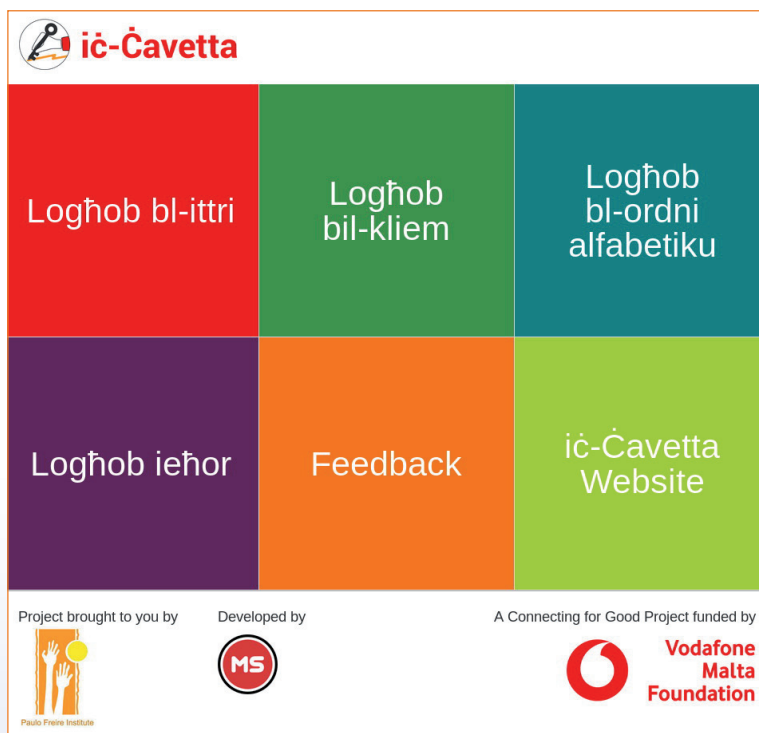
*The success criteria of the programme*

The three books form the basis of the kit, aimed at teaching letters phonetically and word recognition. It goes further to teaching the language through the reading of sentences and paragraphs. 'Iċ-Ċavetta' also makes use of words dealing with environmental awareness and employability skills. The intention is to help learners be aware of important issues in the contemporary world. It also presents actual practical ideas concerning employment through the writing of a CV and job application.

The actual use of the more recent mobile app can encourage these learners to become more conversant with modern technology, such as mobile phones and computers.

'Iċ-Ċavetta' won the Premju Nazzjonali tal-Ktieb (The National Book Prize) in the Textbook category by the National Book Council, the Best App Award at the Malta Communications Authority eBusiness Awards, as well as the best Digital Learning Project Award at the EPALE Awards.

For more details regarding this best practice, kindly refer to <https://cavetta.org.mt/>



## III.5.2. 'Schools as Community Learning Spaces' as part of the 'EU Agenda for Adult Learning'.

### 1. Aim and background of the programme

The 'EU Agenda for Adult Learning in Malta' is an EU funded project currently being implemented by the Directorate for Research, Lifelong Learning and Employability. One of the main aims of the project is to provide guidance and support to communities that need to increase essential skills learning.

The 'Schools as Community Learning Spaces' (SCLS) aims to support communities by experimenting with innovative learning methods to ensure flexible learning. The SCLS initiative has been established to create awareness on the importance of an adult-led informal community learning space which allows adults (parents, guardians and adults in general) to maintain a holistic adult learning pathway in an informal setting. The SCLS is an initiative that aims to improve the basic skills of parents and guardians whose children are in compulsory education. The aim remains that of empowering parents and guardians to recognise and further develop their own learning and basic skills. This enables them to re-engage with learning, to feel confident in discussing areas of difficulty and to ultimately enhance the skills of their own children.

### 2. Target group of the programme

The target group of the programme are persons with basic skills needs, specifically, parents and guardians whose children are in compulsory education.

### 3. Activities implemented during the programme

An online 'Call for Expression' for primary schools to participate in the SCLS programme was issued. Six primary schools applied, offering 13 courses within their school/community. Some schools decided to run the programme twice or more and it reached around 150 learners in total. Topics were chosen by the community (through research/needs analysis) and the school, to allow for a bottom-up approach. Topics chosen included literacy, numeracy and digital literacy along with coding, health and safety, mental well-being and basic parenting skills. The flexibility that was offered through the SCLS programme allowed the learners to keep their motivation intact and carry on this course.

The SCLS programme used both quantitative and qualitative features to ensure that the execution of the programme corresponds to the needs of the Maltese adult learning scenario. It used exploratory research to identify the needs of adults and provide adequate resources to equip all participants in dealing with their learning journey. Qualitative features included face-to-face meetings with heads of schools, community interaction and consultation with the community to allow for the flow of proper feedback and to ensure proper resource collection amongst schools and colleges. Several techniques of community mobilisation from one course to another were used to increase motivation and confidence.

The Directorate offered the possibility to schools to recruit their own educators (from the school community) and these were trained and financed by the programme. If the schools did not have this capacity, the Directorate provided a pool of educators (from the service provision wing of the Directorate) to be able to implement the programme within the different communities. The educators along with the school coordinator tailor-made the programme according to the need analysis questionnaire that was disseminated amongst adult learners.

Input was received from relevant policy makers, Government entities and Ministries, in particular the Ministry for Education and Employment, the University of Malta, the Malta College of Art, Science and Technology (MCAST), the Foundation for Educational Services (FES), the National Commission for Further and Higher Educations (NCFHE), community centres and local councils, trade unions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society organisations. This programme also focused on reaching adult education professionals, college principals, school management teams, job coaches, guidance teachers and parents' associations. Whilst engaging with public providers, the



EU Agenda for Adult Learning also tried to engage with private training firms in order to reach the overarching group, which includes low-skilled and low qualified workers, in particular parents of students in primary education, women, migrants, early school leavers, the EPALE community and the EPALE Ambassadors.

The programme was financed through the EU Agenda for Adult Learning in Malta project under the Erasmus+. Upon its completion, the Directorate decided to take on this programme and finance it through national funds. Funds are required for the recruitment of educators to draft learning programmes and to deliver the sessions within the community. Additional funds were earmarked to improve the appearance of the adult learning classes.

The final event of the project used qualitative methods in allowing adults to share their learning journeys. Adult learners were invited to give their testimonials to the attendees to share best practices. The event allowed the Directorate to open up a much needed debate on the needs of adult learners across different communities. It allowed the Directorate to properly identify what the next steps should be for next projects and to ensure sustainability of measures put forward.

Content creation for EPALE used mixed methods to ensure that reports/blogs/articles/news items presented are quality checked.

#### 4. Results of the programme

- An evaluation questionnaire was disseminated with learners, educators, Heads of Schools and Educator Officers to assess the SCLS programme and extract important information that could be used as indicators for future programmes. This evaluation points out the positives and negatives and maps out further improvements that could be included in the future programme.
- Evaluation during events/meeting/sessions through feedback sessions, evaluation sheets, and online evaluation questionnaires.
- Assessment of previous reports to determine what can be improved in new activities conducted.
- Post-mortem meetings with the Directorate's team and sub-contractor's team.
- Analysis of response on social media and other media channels.
- Analysis of EPALE engagement on content uploaded by the EU Agenda for Adult Learning Project Manager.
- Evaluation of basic skills courses and current provision through focus groups with management, coordinators, educators and learners.
- Production and distribution of a documentary and 1 minute trailer on the SCLS experience to further disseminate the importance of basic skills programmes for parents and guardians.
- The building of a framework for basic skills along with teacher-training courses to allow for better structure in basic skills learning. This is being done in conjunction with the EBSN.

By working with schools through the SCLS, the project advocated a new learning culture both within compulsory schooling and within the adult learning community. The flexible and innovative learning approach that was adopted allowed both parents and young learners to understand that learning can be a lifelong achievement. The programme satisfied the specific requirements of the different schools that participated, impacting the project target audience as well as the school adult target audience.

Based on previous results gathered from a pilot project carried out in 2017, it was found that when creating an environment which is comfortable for the learners to learn new skills, it allowed them to become more engaged within the community, with a much greater ability to communicate with their peers.

The success criteria of the programme

- Interaction with community
- Interaction with School senior management
- Flexibility in provision

- Time management
- Directed content (according to the needs of the adult learners)
- Funding
- Guidance

For more details regarding this best practice, kindly refer to the following link:  
<https://www.facebook.com/EPALE.MT/videos/532554580970110/>



## III.6. Spain

### III.6.1. Adult Education Centre of Olmedo (CEPA OLMEDO) Digital Competence and Multilingual Competence.

#### 1. Aim and background of the programme

We will present CEPA Olmedo's experience in learning digital skills and English language competence. The origin of the centre dates back to the 1970s, when adult education became popular and widespread in Spain in an organised way. CEPA Olmedo is a public and rural adult education centre. It includes 8 surrounding villages (Olmedo, Pedrajas de San Esteban, Íscar, Mojados, Alcazarén, Portillo, La Pedraja de Portillo and Valdestillas). In the year 2019-2020, there were 312 students and 5 teachers. The teachers travel to the villages in order to provide the classes.

Specifically, we will focus on learning digital skills and learning English multilingual skills. We highlight these experiences for their impact on students in terms of learning and motivation.

The reason why these competences are highlighted is because in rural areas they are difficult to acquire due to the context and resources available and, moreover, they are two of the most relevant competences in current and future society. Learning of these good skills is proposed from a perspective of practical utility for the student, so that once learned, they can use the acquired skills to develop.

#### *Objectives:*

- To acquire basic digital skills
  - Use digital tools to design and develop products of practical interest
  - Use word processing to design culinary recipes

- Use a visual design tool to create custom calendars.
- Use social networks to communicate activities and results.
- To acquire basic English language skills
  - Communicate with peers and English speakers in a solvent manner.
  - Work in an English-speaking country using English as the language of communication.

## 2. Target group of the programme

The purpose of basic adult education is to provide the basic elements of culture in such a way as to improve their possibilities of personal development and insertion in different social spheres. The formative itinerary of these teachings is not designed to be travelled through entirely by all people, but rather as a flexible system to which it is possible to incorporate at any of its levels depending on the training and experience of each person.

The participants in this programme are men and women between 50 and 70 years old with different cultural levels and contexts. Women predominate over men. Their level and contact with English and new technologies are very basic, being in an A1 level of learning in both cases.

## 3. Activities implemented during the programme

Learning digital skills will enable students to use word processors such as Word to write documents; graphic design to view images, edit them or combine text and image in a single document; and use social networks as a means of communication and as a source of information.

Learning English language skills is designed to enable students to use the English language as a means of communicating with peers and in English-speaking environments. The activities proposed for the acquisition of this competence are aimed at using English as a means of communicating, obtaining information or carrying out everyday actions. The learning of this competency culminates annually with a trip to an English-speaking country where students interact with the environment by communicating with people, interpreting signs and symbols and ultimately developing in that context using English as the language of communication.

### *Digital competence*

The set of activities carried out for the learning of digital competences are task-based activities, i.e. relatively broad tasks and their achievement requires a set of activities.

The tasks that are carried out are the following:

1. A Digital gastronomy recipe book
2. A Customised calendar

### 1. DIGITAL GASTRONOMIC RECIPE BOOK

This activity consists in the elaboration of a set of homemade recipes written in a Word processor, with a content and format elaborated completely by the student.

This training is mainly attended by female students and in the rural area where a common interest of most students is cooking. This connects the student's main motivation with learning.

This task has a training of two months, with two classes of two hours per week.

As we have mentioned before, the main task to be carried out by the group of students is a recipe book where each student contributes with his or her particular recipes. In order to achieve this task, different activities are proposed:

- Deciding on the recipe to be included in the cookbook. Agreeing on the recipes with their classmates.
- To choose the format that each recipe should have (images, format of ingredients, explanation...)
- To write each recipe according to the established format



- To review of all recipes according to the initially agreed approach and the agreed format.
- To publish all the steps achieved through the organization's social networks (Facebook and Twitter).

## 2. CUSTOMISED CALENDAR

This task consists of adding images and a custom format to a standard calendar using technological tools.

This activity is carried out by the students as a whole, who have all chosen the standard format of the calendar by consensus. Each student is then responsible for choosing or designing images for the calendar.

This task has a training of two months, with two classes of two hours per week.

The final tangible element is a personalised calendar that students' families, friends, and neighbours have physical access to and place on the walls of their homes. The set of activities carried out to perform this task are

- Deciding on the initial design.
- Deciding on the variety of images that accompany each month.
- To insert the images in the calendar
- To insert text on important community days
- To format the calendar according to the agreed structure.
- Printing of the calendars.
- Dissemination of the activities carried out during the process.

### Results:

The results have been very significant, all of them adjusted to the functional needs of the society of the 21st century.

- All students have managed to use the word processor in a basic way: opening and closing documents, saving, typing, formatting using styles and numbers, inserting images, etc.
- They have learnt notions related to art and design because they have had to present the results in a coherent and visually harmonious format.
- Students have learned to use social networks. This involves entering the application, deciding what content to publish, taking into account privacy and data security, writing the content of the publication, making images representative of the activity, inserting the image in the publication, adding the hashtag.
- The students have been recognised for their previous learning. The students had extensive previous knowledge of cooking, recipes that they made for their family for years. The students feel empowered to see that what they knew previously has been published in a book that can help others to cook.

**FLAN DE HUEVO** por Blanca Pérez García



**INGREDIENTES**

- 1 litro de leche
- Una tableta de turrón blanco
- 6 Huevos
- 150 gr de azúcar para el flan
- 3 cucharadas soperas de azúcar para el caramelo


**PREPARACIÓN**

1. En una cazuela echamos las 3 cucharadas de azúcar, lo ponemos al fuego y hacemos el caramelo moviendo la cazuela con cuidado para que no se queme.
2. Por otra parte batimos los huevos junto con los 150 gr de azúcar, el turrón y la leche.
3. Lo echamos en el molde del caramelo, y lo metemos al horno al baño maría media hora. Después de esta media hora, pinchar el flan con un cuchillo para ver si está cuajado.
4. Cuando esté cuajado, lo sacamos del horno, lo dejamos enfriar y lo echamos en una fuente honda.

**Egg custard recipe made by student Blanca Pérez García.**



**Students designing the format of the cookbook.**



**Calendars customised by students.**



- Students see their work recognised, feeling proud of what they have learned because their final task is visible in a tangible way and used by others. The fact that the calendar and the recipes can be used by the neighbours is a great recognition of what they have learned and an extra motivation to continue learning throughout their lives.

### MULTILINGUAL COMPETENCE, ENGLISH

In order to acquire this competence, a series of activities are proposed that focus on a trip to an English-speaking country. The simple fact of making such a trip, already supposes a great motivation for the students who want to learn everything possible about the place they are going to visit.

To learn different aspects of the site you are going to visit, English is used as much as possible. Through words, expressions, knowledge of the history or culture of that place the learning is built. All this culminates in a trip to the specific place where the students are able to move around and interact with the locals using English.

Results:

- Participants learn English in a motivating way.
- They learn basic vocabulary to hold a basic conversation.
- Learning the main cultural and artistic elements of an English-speaking place.
- Feeling of useful learning. Students have the feeling that the vocabulary, grammar and culture they have learned has a real usefulness which motivates them to continue a lifelong education.



Trip to the United States

Resources:

- digital board
- laptops
- projector
- class with computers
- internet
- library

#### *Promotion and financing*

The training activities carried out at CEPA Olmedo are financed by the Junta de Castilla y León (regional public body). CEPA Olmedo is a public adult education center. All adult education centers in Spain are funded by the regional government. The student participates in the training activities for free.

These activities are promoted in three ways:

- One is through the information that the government of the region offers to all citizens: official website, posters in the areas near the educational center or social networks.
- Another is through the center itself. The center itself has social networks and a website where it publishes the entire training offer; It also publishes photos of the students, while the activities are taking place, trips ...
- Another dissemination activity is based on the enjoyment and learning of the student. It is well known that word of mouth is a powerful dissemination tool. So teachers know that students must learn useful learning while enjoying or doing activities that are of interest to them.

It is necessary to add in this section that there are adults who do not dare to participate in adult education because they are prejudiced, they are ashamed or they think people are going to laugh at them. Promotional activities to involve these people in adult education are based on the third option described. Their own neighbours and friends motivate and convince them to participate; and that these people see the need and usefulness of what they learn, for example: learning digital skills to talk by videoconference with their families.

## III.6.2. Theoretical and Practical Training on the Design of Training Processes Adapted to Present and Future Needs

### 1. Aim and Background of the Programme

This good practice is a subject taught in the Social Education Degree of the University of Valladolid. In particular, we guide you through the module “Lifelong Education “. It is one of the modules that are worked in the last part of this degree, since it is needed other previous knowledge such as: Citizenship, Social Policies, Pedagogical Principles of Adult Education, ... Moreover, before knowing these plans, programmes and experiences, it is convenient that professional competences related to knowledge, understanding, planning, interaction and socio-educational evaluation in adults have been acquired.

In Spain it is not normal to have subjects related with adult education in the degrees related with education (pre-school, primary school, educational social work). So, it is almost the only way that a university student can learn about adult education.

The objectives to be achieved are:

- To perceive and understand the interaction between the demand and the needs of Adult Education and the approach of the corresponding plans and programmes.
- To analyse Adult Education policies, identifying the scope and characteristics of the different levels of decision-making.
- To understand, analyse, differentiate, and critically assess the main perspectives and models of Adult Education.
- To analyse and understand the characteristics, factors, possibilities and limitations that condition the different types of socio-educational intervention in Adult Education.
- To select, synthesize and process in an adequate way the information provided by the articles and bibliographical documents used.
- To analyse and assess different international, national, regional or local plans, programmes and experiences existing in the framework of Adult Education.
- To identify and manage the different levels of planning and design of Adult Education programmes, discriminating between the structure, characteristics, types of intervention and the specific elements that affect each one of the levels.
- To design socio-educational intervention programmes in the field of Adult Education, which implies ethical commitment and critical and self-critical capacity.
- To identify and assess the strengths and weaknesses of a plan, programme or experience of Adult Education.

The design of Adult Education plans and programmes (assessment of the possibilities):

- Different preferential research fields, types of training and elements that define the educational programmes for adults currently under development.
- Educational approach and curricula for Adult Education derived from national, regional and local policies.
- Teaching and learning strategies for Adult Education in relation to the different types of training
- Experiences of Adult Education in rural and urban areas
- Challenges in planning and programming for adult education in the 21st century.

## 2. Target group of the programme

The target group is students of Education, mostly people between 20 and 25 years.

## 3. Activities carried out during the programme

The activities are mandatory for all the students. It is optional the selection of the subject but these activities are mandatory in order to learn all the contents (knowledge, skills, attitude).

The work content:

- An analysis of the needs, the social model and the perspectives, policies and orientations of Adult Education in its different contexts of scope and development.
- The growth and diagnosis of the demand for Adult Education needs and programmes.
- To analyse:
  - The social dimension of learning and the communicative interaction in the teaching process among adults
  - The international perspective and models of Adult Education
  - The main lines of Adult Education policies at national, regional and local levels
  - Adult Education organisations, institutions and social initiatives
  - European Adult Education Programmes

The activities that students carry out during the process are of a theoretical and practical nature.

From the theoretical point of view, students analyse, contrast and deepen in aspects such as:

- Andragogy. Particular characteristics of adult learning.
- Past, present and future of adult education
- Different methodologies associated with adults:
  - Dialogical learning
- Contributions of the main authors: or Grundvig and the popular illustration;
  - Horton and the pedagogy of social movements;
  - Knowles and andragogy;
  - Freire and the pedagogy of dialogue;
  - Gutierrez and the pedagogy of total language.

From a practical point of view, students design educational projects, workshops and activities that respond to the needs of specific adults. This design responds to previously studied and detected needs and consists of the following parts:

- Justification and contextualization;
- Objectives
- Contents
- Concretion and sequencing of activities
- Methodology

- Resources and materials
- Spatial conditions
- Human Resources
- Evaluation

The promotion of the subject is the same as the rest of the grades of the University: website, regional TV, radio advertisement, newspaper and the website of the University.

We can say that in 2020, the grade where these contents are included were selected like as one of the best grades in Spain.

This subject is optional. This means that the student is the one that selects this subject. In the last years this subject is selected by almost all the students.

#### 4. Results of the programme

90% of students complete the process successfully. For completing the process it is needed to succeed in the theoretical and practical activities.

Students learn the characteristics of andragogy and more specifically the adaptation of educational processes to adults. During the training process, students design training processes that can be implemented in practice.

They are prepared to adapt learning situations to groups, specific collectives and sectors of the population, whose characteristics will be determined by the areas of intervention and the conjunction of various factors:

- By their age: children at social risk, adolescents or young people from a certain neighbourhood, preparation of adults when they reach retirement, ...
- In relation to the educational and cultural level: programmes for overcoming illiteracy, maladjustment to the school system, etc.
- In relation to difficulties of socialization due to the presence of physical, psychological, social or cultural factors: the physically, mentally and sensory handicapped; long-term, chronic or terminal patients; persons at social risk; persons in social conflict; ethnic minorities; drug addicts; transients; ...

Students learn, from a theoretical and practical approach, how to respond to the educational needs of the 21st century, where the key competences have a relevant role for a person to play in the present and future society. It is essential to have educators who know about the present and future of adult education so that they know how to adapt the training processes to the needs of the future and thus ensure that adults have greater options for active participation in society, thus improving their standard of living and that of the community.



## IV. Social Acceptance of People with Low Level of Skills, Best Practices Applied in Making Society Sensitive Towards the Target Group

### Estonia

The issue of bringing people with low levels of education and skills back to education system as a result of joint efforts is increasingly relevant in the society. The more open and forthcoming attitudes of the society are reflected by the Estonian Public Broadcast who has initiated yet another discussion on adult education. In November 2020, Estonian Public Broadcasting launched the special adult education programme titled “At School as an Adult” (“Täiskasvanuna koolipingis”) in the series of current affairs’ programmes “Speak your mind” (“Suud puhtaks”) at prime time. Fearlessly, different people of different age groups shared their personal stories in front of the potential audience of hundreds of thousands. People’s awareness has increased remarkably; they are no longer embarrassed to study in their adulthood, quite the contrary - they understand that learning helps them to adapt to the challenging needs of the labour market.

### Germany

#### Best practice in Germany - A.B.C. project and the Oldenburg reading index

Since 1981 the Adult Education Centre (Volkshochschule) in the city of Oldenburg, situated in the North-West of Germany, offers reading and writing courses for German speaking adults. Over the years, the range in offer has grown and diversified - evening courses, intensive courses in the morning and open learning workshops in the afternoon.

Since 2007, there has been a permanent team that applies its expertise both in teaching and in the implementation of model projects - since 2012 in the Regional Basic Education Centre of the Adult Education Center in order to continuously improve the quality of basic education work.

The staff of the Regional Basic Education Centre shares their experiences at regional, national and European conferences and invite visitors to participate in professional exchange. They also carried out many projects. One of them is the A.B.C. project and the Oldenburg reading index.

From 2007 to 2011, the A.B.C. research project<sup>7</sup> - funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research - examined the teaching and learning processes in an intensive learning group and evaluated specially designed teaching modules in order to make promising support systems for daily literacy practice available to course leaders and to contribute to further professionalization in the field of basic education for adults.

In September 2008, the A.B.C. project started the ABC-Zeitung, a regularly published online newspaper, written by learners from literacy courses at the Oldenburg Adult Education Centre and increasingly also from courses run by adult education providers in Germany and abroad.<sup>8</sup>

In October 2009, the A.B.C. project was awarded a plaque by the City of Oldenburg for its innovative approaches in the areas of talent, tolerance and technology. It was recognised that, in addition to written language promotion through a resource-oriented approach, skills and talents of learners are also discovered, promoted and presented in public space.

Within the framework of open teaching the Oldenburg reading index (Oldenburger Lesekartei) was developed by Kathleen Bleßmann. It is constantly being expanded and consists of photos on DIN A4 cards and short

<sup>7</sup> <https://abc-projekt.de>

<sup>8</sup> <https://abc-projekt.de/abc-zeitung>

reading texts suitable for adults. These texts consist of 50 - 200 words and are suitable for learners who have understood the reading technique and can read simple texts. The back of each card contains a list of difficult words and questions about the text.<sup>9</sup>

The documentaries, radio and television productions, a newspaper and the participation of learners in specialist conferences and public events created in the project have strengthened education, understanding and tolerance of functional illiterates in society. And finally, the company's own website, as a multi-author site and information platform with software programmes suitable for participants, has taken up a forward-looking technical aspect. A project's own website was created and has been available since then as a multi-author site and information platform to provide up-to-date academic articles, documentation and adult learning materials for free download.

## Hungary

### Open Learning Centre model

The Association for Lifelong Learning uniting non-profit organisations has been carrying out activities in the field of basic skills development for over 20 years, and it is also a member of the European Basic Skills Network.

The fundamental aim of the organisation, as stated in its constitution, is to establish professional dialogue and cooperation with educational, employment organisations, as well as social partners both within and outside national borders in order to facilitate the access to the development of basic skills and competences and lifelong learning for all.

Between 2017 and 2021 the Association for Lifelong Learning leading a consortium with the Ministry for Innovation and Technology has maintained and further developed the third generation Open Learning Centre model as an innovative model of basic skills and learning activities by applying the latest international experience.

The project entitled 'OPENING network for the development of labour market competencies' contributes to the following specific objectives defined in the framework strategy for the policy on lifelong learning for the period 2014-2020: adult training programmes for competence development, the expansion of non-formal, informal and flexible learning opportunities, support and development of workplace trainings.

The priority objective of the programme is to increase employability by developing key competences and transversal skills of active-age people in the labour market. The general objective is also to contribute to better match between supply and demand by linking the needs of adults and labour market actors with the supply of actors offering adult learning opportunities.

The direct target group of the programme is active-aged people between 16 and 64 whose social and labour market integration, job retention and career development are hampered by low levels of their basic skills and key competences, and those who are not given equal opportunities in terms of access to suitable learning and competence development opportunities. Members of the target group do not have full-time student status and live outside Budapest and Pest County.

The learning centres are located throughout the country, in 55 locations. The centres offer training courses for both traditional on-site and e-learning forms in many areas. Training offers include courses in the field of languages, information technology (e.g.: image editing, presentation, text editing), sectoral trainings (development of key labour market competences in automotive industry, engineering, construction, tourism, office services, etc.) and other training courses (entrepreneurial skills, conscious citizenship, self-management).

The National Basic Skills Development System (hereinafter NAR) was developed in the framework of the project, which aims to broaden the range of adults getting involved in trainings, promote the flexibility of the workforce and the effectiveness of vocational and labour market trainings. The three pillars of the system, together and complementary, provide the basic skills needed to move forward in

<sup>9</sup> <https://abc-projekt.de/oldenburger-lesekartei>

three different life situations by different objectives and means. NAR Pillar I. provides low-threshold entry into the world of learning for those who have been out of education for a long time and therefore face many uncertainties and doubts. NAR Pillar II. promotes effective participation in vocational and labour market trainings and prevents drop-out by personalised basic skills development and support, and by developing a more conscious operation of training institutions in the field of basic skills development. NAR Pillar III. supports necessary adaptation to job expectations and changes in the framework of basic job skills development tailored to company needs.

Further information is available at <https://nyitok.hu/> and <https://www.szett.hu/>

## Ireland

When the results of the 1997 IALS results were released for Ireland, the research identified that there was a significant lack of awareness in government circles and society in general of the extent of the problem of literacy difficulties within Irish society. Those that lived with these difficulties did so very much in isolation, keeping literacy issues hidden, possibly were unemployed or worked in low skilled, repetitive employment where literacy was not seen as a requisite skill for certain types of work. Many lived in areas of low socio-economic activity and were very often cut off from mainstream society.

In order to address this lack of awareness around literacy issues, redemptive strategies were undertaken. At a local level the literacy services adopted the good practice of awareness training with the management, staff and clients of local state agencies and community organisations in order to sensitise them to the literacy difficulties that exist and what these mean for those with low level skills. This awareness was and continues to be paramount for the sensitive treatment that individuals have a right to when dealing with agencies and community groups. It is addressed via networking with the relevant organisations and offering presentations and information workshops about the causes and effects of having literacy difficulties, understanding client behaviour and on how to offer and give support to clients. Learning how literacy difficulties can be recognised is helpful and relevant to all stakeholders.

Encouraging literacy services users, who are confident enough to do so, to speak at these workshops brings a sense of reality to the awareness training. This approach has had a great impact as there is no better way to raise awareness than hearing from those who have had the experience of living with literacy difficulties. Personal experiences of addressing the difficulties from the aspect of their interaction with agencies, family and friends along with their initial approach to the literacy service and their ongoing engagement with them re-iterates the need for awareness training in local communities.

Nationally, NALA is an NGO that advocates on behalf of those with literacy difficulties. They are recognised by the government Department of Education and Skills as having a negotiating role in matters relating to literacy. They promote ongoing awareness campaigns using radio and TV as well as providing conferences with a variety of topics that help address issues arising, teaching and learning, and specialist areas. NALA is also involved in related research projects and provide many supporting publications.

The effects of these local and national strategies have been very positive and there is a significant increase in understanding, sensitivity towards and empathy for those living with literacy difficulties. These are underpinned by a real desire to help people overcome their difficulties and to offer and provide support in a collaboration of enabling and provision. The strategies are endorsed by on-going annual funding for the delivery of adult basic education programmes at a national level through Education Training Boards and other providers.

In recent times, those living with literacy difficulties have increasingly become more open to talking about having and addressing these issues. There is greater personal recognition of the impact on workplace and lifelong learning opportunities. Trust has been built and literacy is now seen as an issue that can be worked on and solutions found, leading to more positive involvement in society and active citizenship.

## Malta

The pilot programme, Active Citizen Education Programme, (ACE), 2019 /2020, held by the Directorate for Research, Lifelong and Employability (DRLLE) within the Ministry for Education and Employment (MEDE), organised a series of activities in collaboration with different individuals, organisations and communities in order to explore the benefits of being an active citizen for the self and society. The activities involved various non-formal teaching and learning strategies and focused on different aspects and areas of becoming an engaged member of the community.

The programme included six different sessions. One of the sessions was a workshop introducing sustainability within the community, where a repair café also took place. The Directorate collaborated with Friends of the Earth Malta to provide more knowledge and different skills for adults regarding sustainability, and how to shift towards better practices for the environment. For the repair café participants brought broken objects that needed fixing. The Café encouraged sharing of knowledge, helping each other out, and learning of how to easily fix things. A lot of items we discard can easily be fixed with a little bit of care and help from people who are knowledgeable in repairs.

Another session which was more sensitive towards the social acceptance of people dealt with the sharing of migrant experiences through storytelling techniques. DRLLE in collaboration with the Swieqi Local Council and an expert practitioner, brought out the experiences of the local migrant community where a number of migrants and Maltese nationals came together as a group to explore what home and being a migrant means in this locality, Malta and the world. By the end of the storytelling workshop participants were able to define the terms migration, social inclusion and integration. They were also able to explain how to make a migrant feel welcome in the local community.

## Spain

### Best Practice 1:

**Title:** Campaign for employment. We work for employment

**Aim:** to promote the employment of people from the region in social situation of social exclusion and low skills.

**Promoter:** Cáritas Diocesana

**Link:** <https://fundacioncaritasgz.es/index.php/campana-por-el-empleo>

**Regional level:** Aragon

Given the current social context, Caritas has promoted and strengthened its actions in terms of employment, seeking at all times to favour access to the labour market for people who are at risk or in a situation of social exclusion with low skills.

One of the projects promoted has been the A TODO TRAPO Zaragoza S.L.U. For this reason, Cáritas Zaragoza proposes this Campaign for Employment around May 1st. A campaign that seeks to promote initiative, commitment and involvement of all, in terms of employment.

### Best Practice 2:

**Title:** Bonus contracts for workers in a situation of social exclusion.

**Target group:** people in situation of social exclusion, including low skills people

**Aim:** To give bonus to enterprises that hire people in situation of social exclusion.

National level

**Organization responsible:** National Government.

**Link:** <https://www.canaltrabajo.com/contratos-bonificados-para-trabajadores-en-situacion-de-exclusion-social>

### Features of the labour contract:

#### FORMALISATION, DURATION

The contracts that are the subject of the grants can be indefinite, including the discontinuous fixed modality, or



temporary through full or part-time contracts. They will be formalized in writing in the model provided by the State Public Employment Service.

It will be communicated to the Public Employment Service within ten days of its agreement.

## INCENTIVES

Each permanent or temporary contract will give the right to a bonus in the business contribution to Social Security of 50 euros / month (600 euros / year) for four years.

In the event that the contract is temporary, it will entitle you to a bonus of 41.67 euros / month (500 euros / year) for the entire duration of the contract.

## OTHER FEATURES

The established benefits may not, together with other public aid for the same purpose, exceed 60% of the annual salary cost corresponding to the contract being rewarded.

In the cases of obtaining aid without complying with the requirements for its concession, the amounts that stop entering due to the discount of contribution to Social Security will proceed with the corresponding surcharge and late payment interest as established in the collection regulations on the matter of Social Security.

### Best practice 3:

**Title:** We bring you closer to the job market

**Promoter:** Cruz Roja Española.

**Link:** <https://www2.cruzroja.es/que-hacemos/empleo>

**Target group:** people in situation of social exclusion, including low skills people

**Option 1:** active inclusion itineraries

18.257 people.

People far away or very far from employment identified their professional objective, acquired professional skills and accessed internships in companies.

**Option 2:** challenge + 45

3.551 people

People over 45 years of age have valued their skills and professional competencies, placing themselves closer to the job market.

## V. Afterword

This brochure is brief to present the intense work in full detail what has been done during a two-year period in this project therefore the methods, from which the reader can benefit the most are highlighted.

We would also like to raise the attention of experts and emphasise the importance of the professional material presenting the project impact developed on the experiences applying the methods acquired during the project.

During the implementation, we paid special attention to measure the impact. In the second half of the project, each member of the partnership selected some of the best practices seen, through the testing and later application of which they considered to significantly improve the professional work of its own and its stakeholders' national partnership network. The partners carried out measuring the project impact on a pre-defined system of criteria, through which they described what acquired methods and in what ways they had been integrating them into their organisational operation, what the experiences of testing are, and what amendments they would suggest to improve the method.

The study summarising the experiences of integrating the methods seen and acquired during the project into the organisational operation is also available for all people interested.

Ajánljuk továbbá a téma iránt érdeklődők figyelmébe a felnőttkori kulcskompetencia fejlesztésben közreműködő szakemberek felkészítésének keretrendszerére vonatkozó javaslatunkat, valamint a szakpolitikai döntéshozók, a felnőttképzési intézmények és egyéb szervezetek számára készült országspecifikus javaslatunkat egyaránt.

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Back to Learning

