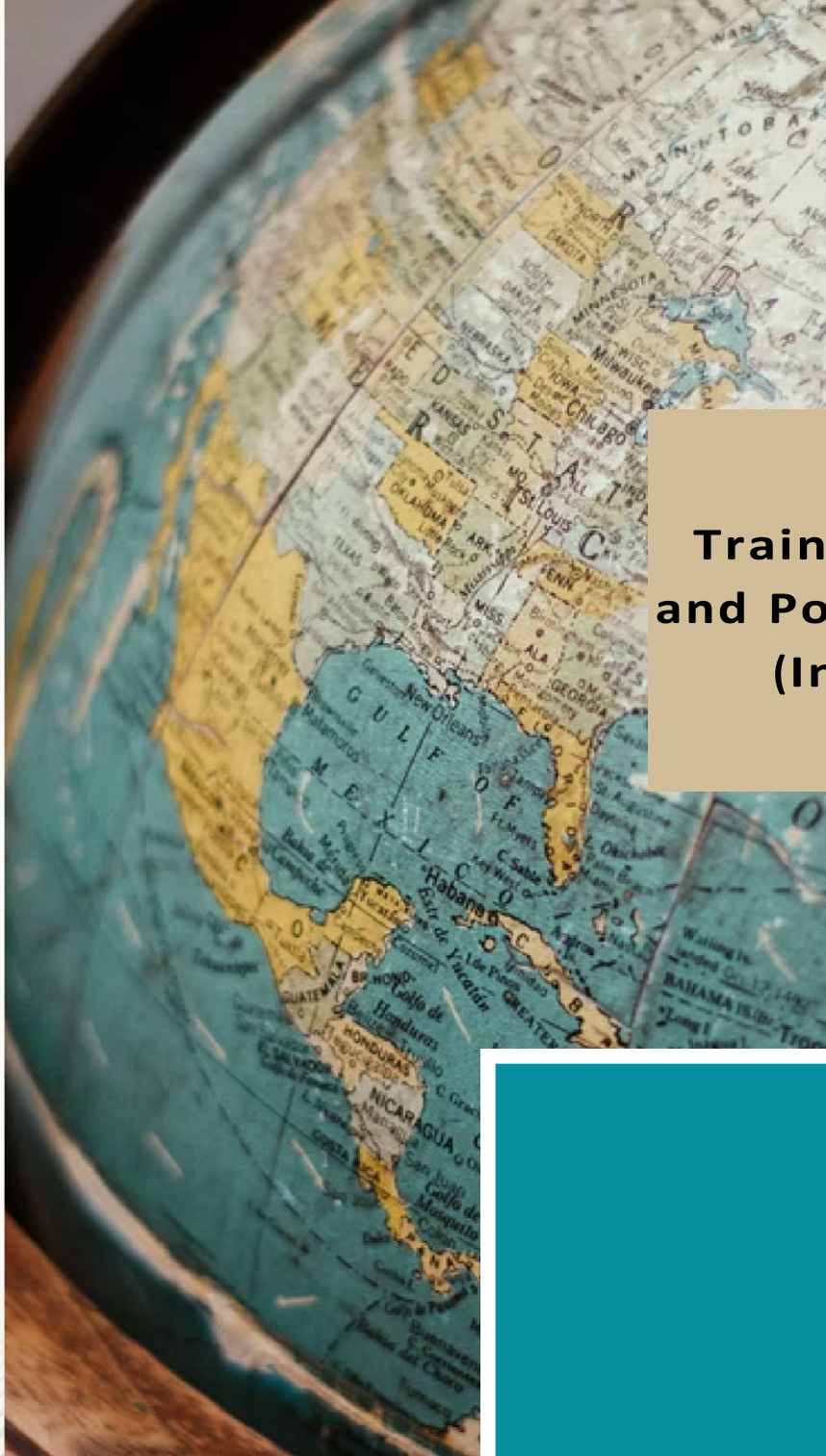




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Erasmus+ Programme
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IO3- Training/Methodological and Policy Adaptation Guide (Interactive eBook)



INTERMEDS
INTERCULTURAL MEDIATORS

**Fostering 'Intercultural MEDIators' as
a practice for establishing
communities coalition and mutual
understanding**

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InterMEDs Partnership

Organisation	Acronym	Country
PESHKAR PRODUCTIONS LIMITED	PESHKAR	United Kingdom
Asociación Caminos	CAMINOS	Spain
Center for Intercultural Dialogue	CID	North Macedonia
Center for Social Innovation Ltd	CSI	Cyprus
Mindshift Talent Advisory	MINDSHIFT	Portugal
Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences	PANTEION	Greece
XENIOS POLIS. Culture, Science & Action	XENIOS POLIS	Greece

Executive Summary

The project “InterMEDs-Fostering ‘Intercultural MEDIators’ as a practice for establishing communities coalition and mutual understanding” is co-funded by Erasmus+, KA2 Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices, KA204 Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education (2019-1-UK01-KA204-062112). InterMEDs is built on the special training of members of both communities, either local ones, or migrant communities to educate the individuals who will act as specific intermediators between the exchange of different cultures, with the key-skills of social responsibility and intercultural understanding and the skills to use all forms of promotion, such as arts, culture, media, training for the enhancement of respect, tolerance, cooperation and communities coalition.

Intercultural communication reflects an emerging need of contemporary societies, especially when it turns to the European societal environment. Multiculturalism is a growing phenomenon that has been intensified since the last decades, as the migration flows have been increased. Therefore, the integration of the newcomer migrants in the hosting societies needs to be prioritized in order to ensure the regular social function, social cohesion, and tackling cultural gaps and differences, as well.

Intercultural mediators play a key role in this challenging social matter resolution, as they are invited to be the meeting point of different cultures, civilizations, and values. They are expected to be the facilitators of communication and respect tackling differences and promoting the creation of new meeting points between different cultures; the overall goal of intercultural mediation is the creation of a new common culture that respects diversity and different cultural features.

The project InterMEDs includes 8 partners (PESHKAR, CAMINOS, CID, CSI, Mindshift, PANTEION, OTB, XENIOS POLIS,) from 6 countries (UK, Cyprus, Greece, North Macedonia, Portugal, Spain).

Based on these premises, InterMEDs objectives are:

- to make research on the training & methodological models regarding intercultural mediation and to investigate the learning needs of the different target groups. This task led to the creation and composition of an online training programme with the title **“IO1- Curriculum and Open Resource Toolbox”**.
- to accompany the first output taking advantage of the opportunities offered by ICT through the creation of an interactive digital platform, that corresponds **“IO2 - Interactive Online Learning Environment”**,
- to support educators on the intercultural mediation and adult learning. In this framework, the **“IO3- Training/Methodological and Policy Adaptation Guide (Interactive eBook)”** has its focus on educators training regarding the promotion of intercultural dialogue providing also wide knowledge on policymaking by combining practice and theory, academic knowledge and policy drafting,

In the present report the **“IO3- Training/Methodological and Policy Adaptation Guide “Interactive eBook”** will be discussed. The IO3 accompanies the Curriculum and Open Resource Toolbox (IO1) and the Interactive Online Environment (IO2) and is under the coordination of XENIOS POLIS.

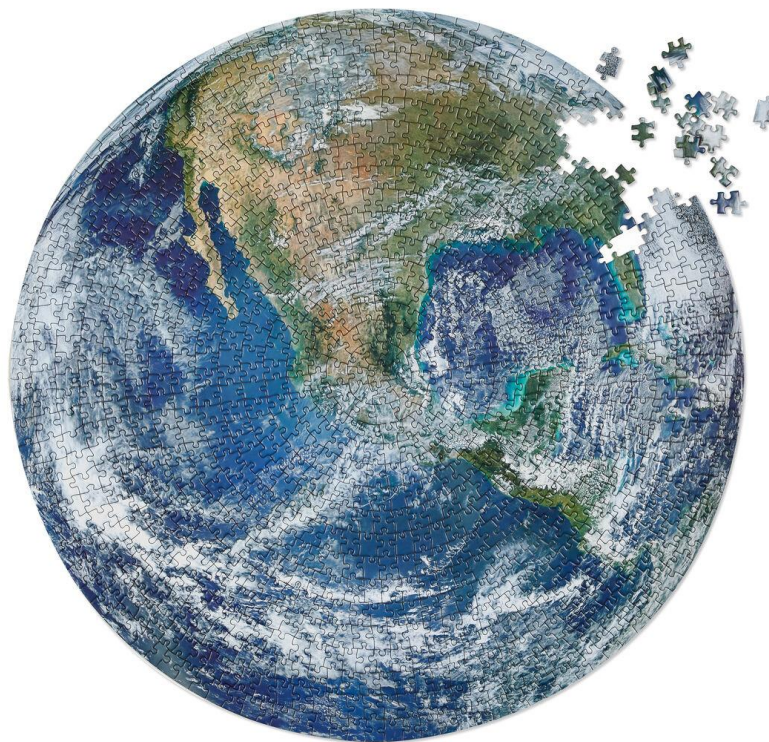
The aim of this “Interactive eBook” is:

- to give guidelines on how to train adults on intercultural mediation,

- to support trainers and adult educators in properly using the curriculum, the digital platform and its tools developed during the project,
- to provide adult educators with a collection of exemplary scenarios in dealing with training of different groups. All partners have contributed for the completion of this output,
- to provide policy suggestions towards policy makers on how improve the impact of the adult education policies and initiatives concerning intercultural senses and abilities, mutual understanding and cooperation.



PART A. InterMEDs Mosaic: Introduction to the project subject area and platform navigation guidelines



1. InterMEDs Landscape

About the project: Objectives/ Target Groups & Consortium

The InterMEDs project -Fostering 'Intercultural MEDIators'- aims to develop a practice for establishing communities coalition and mutual understanding based on the training of members of both communities, either local ones, or migrant communities. The key function of the individuals, as specific intermediators, is to establish the bridge between the exchange of different cultures, with the key skills of social responsibility and intercultural understanding, using forms of promotion, such as arts, culture, media, training for the enhancement of respect, tolerance, cooperation and communities' coalition.

Specifically, the InterMEDs addresses the objectives:

- a) to empower through training and specific tools society members as intercultural mediators- experts who will undertake the responsibility of improving understanding and cooperation among communities and their members; these intercultural mediators will contribute to the practical coalition of culturally different populations, conflict resolutions, intolerance, and discrimination combat.
- b) to recruit in their training beyond the traditional materials, other means, too, such as the common arts values, the traditions, the Media,
- c) to involve in this procedure members of both communities and give the chance particularly to youth and women of these local communities to be in the leading,
- d) to take advantage of the opportunities offered by ICT and digitize the quality of learning content,
- e) to create and deliver innovative products and training tools- as tailored needs learning resources – based on differentiation methodologies and adult education approaches.

The project includes 8 partners representing 6 different European countries, PESHKAR (UK), OTB EUROPE (Portugal), PANTEION UNIVERSITY (Greece), CAMINOS (Spain), Mindshift (Portugal), CSI (Cyprus), XENIOS POLIS (Greece), CID (North Macedonia).

The target group includes members, leaders or representatives of local communities, NGOs, civil society associations, associations of immigrants/refugees, organizations supporting the inclusion, the integration practices, the human rights, and the intercultural exchange. Additionally, among the target groups are public bodies staff and public servants-administrative staff in relative positions who are in need to acquire all these intercultural skills, necessary for the daily contact with different cultural background citizens.

The InterMEDs deliverables

1. IO1- Curriculum and Open Resource Toolbox- CID
2. IO2- Interactive Online Learning Environment- CSI
3. IO3- Training Methodological and Policy Adaptation- XENIOS POLIS
4. Multiplier events (national seminars, info days, workshops, final conference)

2. Curriculum Presentation and Modules

Structure of the “Curriculum and Open Resource Toolbox”, modules presentation, units & specialized topics, activities etc.

This output is the core output of the project: it is based on the aspect that beyond the any policies taken at the level of the national or European context, it is the local factor, the local human capital who should actively be engaged, involved in participatory procedures and thus, take the role of transferring local communities into a cell of inclusion, integration, respect, tolerance, exchange. Of significance value in this part is also the engagement and empowerment of women and youth from the local communities, two social groups who need more chances for activation and empowerment. Educating them to be the Intermediators in their communities, to transfer in turn knowledge or to act as ‘Access Point’ in their local context is an action of more inclusion and more participation as well. For the content development of the first intellectual output of the project, a significant contribution was provided by each partner organization, while the whole number of the activities was coordinated by CID (North Macedonia).

The methodology/ process followed the progress stages below:

- Systematic and content-based taxonomy of the obtained data from the research findings (characteristics, needs, motives, etc.) and linkage to the curriculum levels. Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, project activities for IO1 were organized mainly online. More specifically, the research activity, thus the focus groups and online questionnaires were implemented virtually. The research activity implementation served the following goals:
 - Mapping the best practices from local communities on intercultural mediation through culture, media, and arts and collaboration among various stakeholders. This process was conducted through various methods, review of documents, online surveys/interviews with representatives of organizations working in the field. This intensive activity gave the partner organizations the opportunity to share successful projects, activities in the field of intercultural mediation as well as exchange new ideas and suggestions and learn from them.
 - Gathering research data to understand the local context of intercultural mediation through culture, media, and arts, and identify the key learning needs of future intercultural mediators, as well. This was accelerated through the conduction of Survey Questionnaire and Focus groups. The research activity met active participation gathering 95 responses in the quantitative research activity (online questionnaire) and the implementation of 5 Focus Group sessions.
- Considering the results and the conclusions of the research activity the consortium proceeded with the design of the content, purposes, learning outcomes, addressing at all levels the variability of the target audiences, and taking into account their diversity; application of equitable, learner-centered & learner friendly approaches, coherent & consistent across different stages. The main outcome of this phase is the development of a specific curriculum upon which there will be built the whole training activity. It will be constructed on a distinguishing methodology and instructional approaches concerning our target groups.
- Accompanying learning materials creation with scaled & structured units addressing training (e.g. specific ‘lessons’, units, practice, consolidation ‘exercises’ on elevating the skills and knowledge base in a proper way), taking them from their own starting point to their needs completion. IO1 is primarily designed to be used by Intermediators, will serve as a base for other intellectual outputs of the project.

“Curriculum & Open Resource Toolbox” is organized in eight modules which compromises core competences necessary for successful performance of intercultural mediators.

This fundamental output of InterMEDs project is primary designed to be used by the intercultural mediators and other professionals who work directly with refugees and immigrant communities. Tools offer a flexibility to adapt in various cultural contexts, online and offline environments as well customize the learning material in accordance with learning needs of the participants.

The modules presented at this Toolbox also include diverse educational games, roleplays, debates, projects, simulations, and other creative methods that are based on non-formal education and Adult Learning principles. They stimulate best learning outcomes and trigger reflection among participants. Each partner presented a selected activity based on best practices and expertise and directly supports the goals and objectives of each module.

Activities are suitable for young people aged 14 and above. They offer flexibility to adapt for diverse groups of participants.

The Toolbox activities aim to support intercultural mediators to run various educational activities at schools, community centers, organizations, and other facilities with various target groups. Some of the activities offer the option to be carried out online.

Moreover, the published educational activities are not meant to be a collection of one-off activities but rather a tool to be used in the long run to effectively enhance the attitudes, knowledge, and skills of intercultural mediators as well as tools that mediators can use with diverse community members.

Each activity offers experiential learning, provides safe space for learning and development of various competences necessary for intercultural mediators. Activities presented are with various time length. The combination of different activities from each module provides a systematic program which enhances learning and change of attitude noticeable.

The methodological approaches during the development of the tools were constructed upon the conduction of the following tasks:

- Connecting the findings from the field research with the content of the curriculum,
- Design of learning outcomes addressing at all levels the variability of the target audiences and considering their diversity,
- Application of equitable, learner-centered & learner friendly approaches, coherent & consistent across different stages,
- Design of the content addressing the ‘learners’, the potential transferability to the wide audience of social representation.

Each partner organization developed a module based on their best expertise in the topic, developed high quality tools and educational activities for each module. Every module is unique set of activities which directly contribute to development of key competences of Intermediators and community members with whom they will be working with.

In the following section will provide a short overview of each of the modules and tools that each module suggests.

Module 1: Cultural Awareness and Mediation

The purpose of this module is to provide understanding of mediation practice, so participants will be able to develop the skills needed to deal with disputes within an intercultural environment. The module draws from the feedback and recommendations gathered by the research conducted about the needs and the analysis of the collected data and information.

This module will help participants to acquire the following competences:

- development of a structured conceptual background, supporting a better understanding of their role
- gaining cross-cultural communication skills and aptitudes
- highlighting a suitable, appropriate, and relevant cross-cultural mediation training
- growth by means of an innovative blended approach encompassing the provision of comprehensive online tools and services establishing a European-wide facilitators' network
- assess intercultural cases for suitability of mediation
- reflect on self-practices and challenging assumptions before, during and after mediation, and the way of dealing with disputes within an intercultural environment.

Module 2: Intercultural Competence towards issues of discrimination and Intolerance

This module provides diverse activities which brings learning and explores ways how to deal with issues of discrimination and intolerance in real life.

The main objective is to enable participants to develop a greater understanding of interculturalism and multiculturalism. Additionally, it aims to grow the value of respect towards the people who come from different backgrounds and bring different experiences.

The main subject areas this module addresses are the following:

- Intercultural Competence: fundamental principles
- Issues of discrimination: introduce the conceptual meaning of discrimination and differentiation of types of discrimination, ways how to combat it
- Intercultural Mediation: describes the role and the importance of intercultural mediation in the context of a multicultural society.

Module 3: Community Understanding and Co-operation

This module has been developed with a view to supporting intermediators to explore with their target participant groups how to achieve a sense of shared understanding, respect, and commonality in their process.

This module explores the different ways in which participants and those acting as potential mediators within communities can share stories, develop sensitive and active listening skills and develop an understanding of people with differing experiences to them. Leading on from this, they will then explore how people from different backgrounds and experiences can come together to make positive change in communities.

The tools that have been selected for this module are all designed to be undertaken in active workshops where participants share, talk, and discuss their thoughts and ideas and have the freedom to be open with one another. As such, we strongly recommend that time is spent in the design of the programme on developing a 'contract' or 'agreement' with the participant group that supports and encourages open and respectful conversation and debate. This contract should be led by the participants and can be as simple as asking them to define for themselves what respect and kindness in debate and discussion looks like. Ensure that is this recorded and

displayed in each session and, if you feel it will be necessary, encourage the group to also decide what happens when someone is in contravention of the guidelines.

The module develops the following competences:

- Getting deeper understanding how to make positive change in the community
- Enabling participants to develop a greater understanding of those in their communities who come from different backgrounds and bring different experience in the group
- Encouraging participants to think and apply collaborative change-making process for their communities
- Providing safe space for open discussions and debates of difficult topics in respectful and constructive way
- Promoting individual reflection on strengths and weaknesses for effective cooperation and change making.

Module 4: Guidance and mentoring skills

The Guidance and mentoring skills module present the main skills involved in mentoring and guidance practices, while relating them to the skills needed in a role as intercultural mediator. The module includes four tools designed to lead participants into learning, practicing and conduct self-assessment activities and exercises in these four core skills.

The proposed methodologies for the practical activities include debate and groups discussion exercises; community development and participatory actions; group dynamics and team building, exercises; inquiry-oriented practices.

Upon the conclusion of this module, it is expected the participants to gain factual and theoretical knowledge about effective and passive listening; the concepts of empowerment and encouragement, positive feedback and negative feedback; and inquiry-oriented learning methodologies.

It is also expected that participants improve their communications skills and conduct with autonomy self-assessment exercises on their abilities in the core areas presented in each tool.

An intercultural mediator is someone who boosts communication processes to help representatives of different cultures communities to communicate and understand mutually. To so, it is important to become fully proficient at listening.

The module is divided in four main knowledge areas:

- effective listening,
- trust building,
- encouraging and empowerment,
- inquisitiveness.

Module 5: Human Rights and Coalition Locality

Human rights module focuses on education of basic concepts of Human Rights and Declaration of Human Rights. It focuses on recognition and combating discrimination of any type, addressing importance of hate speech and how to combat at offline and online environments.

The main objectives of this module are to provide with the basics of Human Rights and Human Rights Education.

It will cover the following competences:

- Participants will be able to recognize and claim for the human rights enhancing and fight against violations

- Participants will meet and familiarize with strategies how to combat discrimination and react assertively when it occurs
- Participants will be more self-aware of their own stereotypes and prejudices they have for minority groups
- Participants will be able to recognize and react adequately against hate speech online and offline. Tools represent Human Rights Education and promotion of activism for depending Human Rights and promotion of respect and tolerance.

Module 6: Cultural Reflection and Positive Exchange

This module focuses on the concepts of “Cultural Reflection” and “Positive Exchange”. To foster greater intercultural understanding and sensitivity, it isn’t just necessary to understand the culture of others, but also the own culture. Through this self-understanding enhancement, the learner also acquires ways and methodologies on how to identify, evaluate and foster positive exchange between cultures.

This module tries to help develop the following competences:

- Critical reflection of the own cultural identity and how it is formed
- Ability to recognize cultural practices/properties that stem from foreign cultures and have a positive influence
- Increased ability to take a more differentiated picture of culture and cultural exchange
- Fostering better intercultural understanding by reducing the perceived cultural threat from foreign cultures and highlighting positive impact.

By the end of this module, it is hoped that participants have a greater understanding of what all encompasses culture, how cultural exchange works and have a more positive outlook on cultural interaction.

Module 7: Conflict Transformation

The “Conflict Transformation” module focuses on skills and competences intercultural mediator should have to effectively address, manage, and transform different types of conflicts.

The module is focused on following key priority areas:

1. Understanding conflicts,
2. Managing conflicts using mediating techniques,
3. Discovering some Educational tools to deal with groups.

The methodology includes input, discussions, role play and simulations with an idea to provide safe space for learning and experiencing. The final outcome of the module is improved knowledge, skills and competences to more effectively manage conflicts.

Module 8: Exploitation of Culture and Arts ‘tanks’ From Both Communities, towards Practical Intercultural Exchange

Exploitation of culture and arts ‘tanks’ from both communities, towards practical intercultural exchange, (such as masterpieces of cinematography widely known, music, paintings, famous monuments, theatre, etc.).

This module develops following competences:

- Familiarisation with various cultures around the world as well as with the concepts of tangible and intangible cultural heritage and with their interconnection with the broader concept of culture and identity.

- Development of intercultural understanding and appreciation towards global tangible and intangible cultural heritage.
- Recognition of the complexity of cultures and identities and cultivation of a sense of empathy and mutual understanding for people of other cultures.
- Enhancement of active listening and critical thinking.
- Cultivation of an understanding of the meanings and relevance symbols of nationalism have today.
- Understanding of the hidden meanings and stories behind portraits as well as the connection portraiture can have with culture and identity.

3. E-navigation

a. Introducing the InterMEDs Interactive Online Learning Environment

This Interactive Online Learning Environment is developed in the framework of the Erasmus+ project “InterMEDs -Fostering ‘Intercultural MEDIators’ as a practice for establishing communities coalition and mutual understanding” financed by the European Commission and implemented by a consortium of 8 partners from 6 European countries – United Kingdom, Cyprus, Greece, North Macedonia, Portugal, Spain.

The services, as well as all the material of the InterMEDs project have been developed by the consortium of the project:

Peshkar Productions (United Kingdom – Project Leader)

Asociación Caminos (Spain)

Center for Intercultural Dialogue – CID (North Macedonia)

Center for Social Innovation (Cyprus)

Mindshift Talent Advisory (Portugal)

Out Of The Box International (Portugal)

Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences (Greece)

Xenios Polis - Culture, Science & Action (Greece)

The InterMEDs is built on the special training of members of both communities, either local ones, or migrant communities. The members of these communities will be the InterMEDs, the individuals who will act as specific intermediators between different cultures.

The project offers a comprehensive, self-paced learning model through the professional user-friendly online platform. The material is offered in 5 languages: Greek, English, Spanish, Portuguese and Macedonian. The platform is addressed to people from the cultural sector, members, leaders or representatives of local communities, NGOs, Civil Society Associations, Associations of Immigrants/Refugees, organizations supporting the inclusion, the integration practices, the human rights, the intercultural exchange. It also targets public bodies staff and public servants-administrative staff in relative positions who are in need to acquire all these well and will later pass all of their knowledge to other members of local communities, people from

underrepresented groups and youth in order to establish communities coalition and mutual understanding. Those completing the InterMEDs online learning are supplied with an innovative set of training materials facilitated by a free-to-use online educational resource platform and structured into 8 didactic modules as mentioned above.

b. Platform access

The InterMEDs learning platform can be accessed through the InterMEDs official website:

<https://intermeds-project.eu/>

When on the website, you click on the 'Toolset' tab to enter the learning platform:



c. Platform Navigation

Modules, Units and Topics

The 8 modules of the online learning environment are structured as follows:

All the modules provide **theoretical background** regarding various things related to intercultural mediation and at the end of each module there are some **activities for the practical implementation of the theory**. The modules consist of the following structure of contents:

- Introduction** with the learning objectives of the module
- Units**, each one containing a number of **Topics** with theoretical knowledge and practical information
- Activities**, in different forms, including quizzes, questions and other assessment activities
- Further readings**
- References**

IMPORTANT: For the best use of the material, we recommend reading the material carefully, cross-checking with further readings, references and previous and next topics and forming your teaching lesson or mediation session based on the best combined material. Also, always remember that the mediation session or lesson needs to be formed based on important external factors, such as the number of learners, their nationality and culture, their education level, the facilities of the classroom, the timeframe of each class/session and other factors, which may differ depending on situation and per period.

Activities

Activities are designed to offer an assessment tool to evaluate your knowledge on the specific module after completing it. The activities can have the form of open questions, multiple choice questions, filling the blanks, interactive questions etc.

After the end of the units and topics of each module, you can find the 'Activities' section, containing a short assessment quiz to evaluate your knowledge on the topics of each module. You can also find the answers of the activities so as to self-evaluate your knowledge.

Further readings

The 'Further readings' section comes after the activities of the modules. Use the readings as extra material to broaden your knowledge on the subject.

References

At the end of each module, there is a 'References' section containing all the sources used for the development of the module. You can use the references as a cross-check or extra reading material.

Technical assistance

The InterMEDs online learning environment is developed and managed by the Center for Social Innovation (Cyprus). For any technical assistance, please contact info@csicy.com or georgia.nicolaou@csicy.com

4. Media and Text Exploitation/ additional sources

1. *Suggestions addressed to the end-users regarding the interaction with project partners*

If you are interested in topic of intercultural mediation, lifelong education, social cohesion and active citizenship our experts and team members will gladly transfer their knowledge to you.

The InterMEDs website offers detail overview of the project. You can find materials and information on <https://intermeds-project.eu/> in 5 languages: English, Greek, Portuguese, Spanish and Macedonian.

Follow the project on InterMEDs Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Culturalmediators?rdc=1&rdr>. Contact us through Facebook messenger and we will answer all your inquiries and share experiences as well as information with you. If you are interested in the project and would like to get more information concerning specific geographic scope and roles, feel free to approach the project partners individually through email or their own dedicated social media accounts. Your questions and comments are very important to us.

Project partner	Official website	Contact Email	Facebook account
Peshkar	https://peshkar.co.uk/	hello@peshkar.co.uk	https://web.facebook.com/wearepeshkar?_rdc=1&_rdr
OTB Europe	https://otbeurope.com/	info@otbeurope.com	https://web.facebook.com/otbeurope2015
Asociación Caminos	https://www.asoccaminos.org/textpages/imprint.html	office@asoccaminos.org	https://web.facebook.com/Asoccaminos/
PANTEION	https://panteion.gr/index.php/el	helpdesk@panteion.gr	https://web.facebook.com/-Panteion-University-Rector-107659331130521/?ref=page_internal
Mindshift	http://www.mindshift.pt/	geral@mindshift.pt	https://web.facebook.com/mindshift.talent.advisory?_rdc=1&_rdr
CSI	https://csicy.com/	info@csicy.com	https://web.facebook.com/CSI.CYPRUS
XPCSA	https://xeniospolis.gr/	info@xeniospolis.gr	https://web.facebook.com/Xenios-Polis-1722545584646845
CID	http://cid.mk/new5/	info@cid.mk	https://web.facebook.com/CenterforInterculturalDialogue/?_rdc=1&_rdr

2. Further dissemination and exploitation of the InterMEDs social media pages

Partners will continue informing any interested institutions, private or public services, professionals, trainers and individuals interested and will provide information asked about the project, after the planned activities are completed. Each partner will be free to develop its own synergies with local, regional, national and European organisations which they are in collaboration with, increasing the number of possible users of the project outcomes. Social media pages will be used to promote the project and its results. All posts on the project and partner social media will be public and available for sharing.

In order to ensure free access for the public to digital resources, the finalized InterMEDs project outputs will be shared on the Erasmus+ Project Results Platform, Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe (EPALE) and SALTO-YOUTH network in order for all interested actors to have access after the conclusion of the project activities.

The resources will be available under a 'creative commons license' which allows users to modify, adapt and re-use them (whilst acknowledging their provenance). Material will be available to be disaggregated and used separately if an institution wishes to adopt just one part. If requested, partners will provide guidance and advice on how these resources might be adapted.

Only requirement for the free access to resources shared is the completion of a declaration form provided on the partner websites, before the start of using the material, that it will not be used for commercial purposes.

3. Additional audiovisual material and further readings about the InterMEDs topicality

Topic	Link	Short description
Intercultural Communication	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RXWxg-6dUbE	This video provides a basic introduction to some key principles of intercultural communication: a contrast between an "other-centered" orientation and "intercultural communication competence," low-context versus high-context cultures, and Hofstede's dimensions of cultural difference.
Intercultural Mediation	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INNDEndwg2E&list=PLEYtLTrf6_7riW8LOpNhK2Q4TSefcjASY&index=2	The video provides an introduction to the role and competences of a mediator, phases of mediation and mediation principles.
Intercultural Communication Theories	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y_zFm6PLpfE	Overview of 6 intercultural theories: Symbolic Interaction Theory, Social Learning Theory, Cultural Studies, Face Negotiating, Genderlect Theory and Proxemics Theory.
Cross-Cultural Management	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rJ4IbhXrqnc	This short video describes the 3R approach to working effectively in a cross-cultural environment. The 3Rs consist of (1) Recognizing cross-cultural differences, (2) Respecting differences, and (3) Reconciling differences.
Tips for Effective Cross-Cultural Communication	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZX5vgok5QpQ	This video presents 10 tips for Effective Cross-Cultural Communication.
Barriers to Intercultural Communication	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKcVeM_Ps7w	In this video the 6 barriers to intercultural communication are presented.
Protection Through Cultural Mediation - Handbook on Cultural Mediation	https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/83858	This Handbook is based on the definition and principles of cultural mediation developed by NGO Crisis Response and Policy Centre (CRPC in further text) in Belgrade, Serbia.

Lifelong learning	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MJNCLkRxQBA	In this short video you will find meaning, definition and explanation of lifelong learning.
The Lifelong Learning Platform	http://llplatform.eu/policy-areas/xxi-century-skills/active-citizenship/	Platform provides comprehensive information and documents on lifelong learning, active citizenship, cultural education, social inclusion and more.
Active citizenship	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xtEIH-h3Jc	This short video introduces active citizenship and showcases how an individual can become active in EU context.
Active citizenship	https://www.eesc.europa.eu/eptac/en/quickguide-to-active-citizenship.html	European Economic and Social Committee web page and quick guide to active citizenship.
Active Citizenship For a better European Society	https://www.eesc.europa.eu/resources/docs/eesc-2011-35-en.pdf	European Economic and Social Committee publication on active citizenship with EESC members sharing about their active citizenship initiatives.

PART B. Intercultural mediation & Adult learning: Exploring policies, educational scenarios and available data



This part is dedicated to the adult learning support and enhancement within the context of intercultural mediation. More specifically, it includes reviews of European Union (EU) policies and actions relating to Adult Learning (AL), showing how education and training policy challenges regarding the improvement of the knowledge based on AL and the monitoring of the AL sector have been identified and addressed. AL is a wide-ranging area of education and learning and it can extent between all age ranges that start after the end of compulsory education.

It is important to highlight that COVID-19 brought up significant effects to the adult learning with both positive and negative impact. More specifically, according to the European Commission 2020, the restrictions of the pandemic resulted in:

Negative Effects of COVID

- Increasing closing of face-to-face institutions, with a shifting to digital learning
- International exchanges have been cancelled and work-based-learning programmes have been affected
- A great number of adult education programmes have stopped due to the crisis meaning that learning has been disrupted for many adult learners
- Adult learning courses and learning provided in the workplace no longer taking place given that workers are not present in the workplace
- Gaps in the digital competences of adult learning providers have affected the quality of training offered during the crisis
- Adult learners often do not have devices through which they can access online learning environments; others have to share these devices with other members of their household.
- Adults may lack self-directed learning skills and the skills to self-motivate to learn.

Positive Effects of COVID

- Adult learning is increasingly seen as a potentially important 'tool' in the response to the crisis, due to the role of adult learning in supporting local communities, intergenerational connections and learning through digital tools.
- An increase in freely available learning opportunities via digital forms of learning, which can be useful in further stimulating and facilitating adult learning.
- Some companies have encouraged workers to engage in training in online form
- Financial arrangements have been made to support the adult learning sector. For example, online courses being made freely available, online platforms receiving more government support, online data used for educational purposes not being charged, increasing the overall budget for job-related adult learning in 2020 and following years (this is the case of Sweden)
- Providing information on available adult learning courses and making the course offer in the country more transparent

Challenges in Adult Education due to COVID

- Transforming face-to-face courses into online courses, establishing online relationships with learners, and securing the required equipment and infrastructure.

- Social aspects, empowering aspects and work-based learning parts of adult learning appear to be more challenging to move online
- Assessment and examinations
- The shift to online delivery causes difficulties for adult learners from specific vulnerable groups. Learners lacking digital competences, and/or ICT tools, as well as those that face health-related challenges cannot always find and access adult learning activities online
- whether funding is and will continue to be available for adult learning providers
- Balancing their learning with their working and caring responsibilities is also a challenge for adult learners.

To respond to this broad area, especially in this demanding period, the learning material that have been developed in the framework of the 'Interactive eBook' development of InterMEDs project, the partnership involved and developed material beyond traditional educational methodologies but also innovative ones that exploit common art values, traditions and media facilitating the educators to achieve the learner's engagement.

EU actions and initiatives are pointed out to enhance the understanding of how to respond to challenges in the field of adult learning. Furthermore, they can also provide support to institutions and individuals and enable them to achieve a better exchange of knowledge and experiences between different countries and cultures. InterMEDs learning material is keeping pace with the below mentioned European policies, actions and activities, and directions aiming to inform the knowledge base of adult professionals regarding intercultural mediation. This will also secure the relevance of the learning material as well as its value for the European context. Conclusively, as the material will be available in various European languages and will feature in an online form (through our learning portal), it will enable better exchange of knowledge and experiences in a European level.

I. Exemplary Educational Scenarios and exploitation of the InterMEDs products

This task consists of the collection of **3 Exemplary Educational Scenarios (EES)** for professionals and trainers empowering them at the very practical level and providing them with a high capacity when dealing for example with specific conditions. Its innovation is perceived as that provides a structured framework where an educator can follow guidance steps and build an educational scenario. These steps are presented as fields to be completed to selected topics the “Curriculum and Open Resource Toolbox”.

1. Cultural awareness & mediation

SCENARIO IDENTITY	
Element/ Information	Content – Activities
Title of the educational scenario	<i>Experiential understanding of mediation as a complex task</i>
Module	<i>Cultural awareness & mediation</i>
Target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff/servants or volunteers, NGOs or CSOs members, public bodies - Intercultural mediators-experts, immigrants - People or specialists who contribute in the practical coalition of culturally diverse populations, conflict resolution, intolerance and discrimination combat - Young refugees /employers/ women /youth - Future intermediators
Prior Knowledge	<i>The Roleplay Scenarios/scripts are a series of orchestrated actions that focus on one or more disciplines. Actually, they are educational activities often used in classroom and are part of the roles we play with our trainees to achieve a specific educational goal. Trainees are required to have a minimal understanding of the basic terms, as presented in the introduction to the Module.</i>
Key-note papers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Savage, C. A. (1996). Culture and Mediation: A Red Herring. Journal of Gender & the Law, 5, 269-309. 2. Munin, N., & Efron, Y. (2017). Role-playing brings theory to life in a multicultural learning environment. Journal of Legal Education, 66(2), 309-331. 3. Mayer, C. H. (2021). Intercultural Mediation and Conflict Management Training: A Guide for Professionals and Academics. Springer Nature.

Duration	<i>The activity is divided into 4 sessions</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Session 1: around 50 mins. • Session 2: around 180 mins. • Session 3: around 90 mins
Learning environment	<i>This educational scenario is designed to be delivered face-to-face or online, depending on the digital skills of the learners.</i>
IT Requirements & Possibilities	<i>Material needed for the sessions: Laptop/PC/Tablet; access to internet; pen and notebooks. If conducted online facilitators/trainers can use collaborative panels to collect participants feedback and work results.</i>

SCENARIO APPLICATION FRAMEWORK	
Element/ Information	Content – Activities
Brief summary of the educational scenario	The “Experiential understanding of mediation as a complex task” educational scenario aims at offering a series of experiential understanding of the different levels of cultural identification, beyond ethnic origins, providing the trainees an empathy-based experience of the full meaning of the term ‘intercultural’ as including differences in a set of roles within society that modify the cultural/ethnic element. Such an experience will improve their sensitivity vis a vis such issues, and hence their mentoring skills.
Theoretical framework	Culture is a multi-layer reality: it is related to the ethnic origin in a multicultural society, but it is also dependent upon the duration of stay in the host society, as well as the person’s integration. Age, sex, educational level, as well as the distinction between immigrants and their descendants, are crucial in intercultural mediation. According to Cynthia Savage, “To explore the impact of culture on the mediation process in a meaningful way it is necessary to define an accurate and useful theoretical framework for characterizing ‘cultural’ differences; to examine the goals of the mediation process; and to explore how this framework might be applied in the mediation process to more effectively accomplish the goals of mediation.” Such an understanding cannot be solely conceptual, but should include an experiential element. The use of role-playing scenarios allows for an experiential setting, developing capacity for action.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role-playing: As long back as the 1950s it was recognized that role-playing may have an impact upon trainees, facilitating opinion changes as well as a better understanding of issues being taught. • Experiential learning is a powerful and proven approach to teaching and learning that is based on one incontrovertible reality: people learn best through experience (David A. Kolb). • Capacity for action: Acting requires commitment and involvement in the practical world of real consequences. In a sense it is the “bottom line” of the learning cycle, the place where internal experiencing, reflecting, and thinking are tested in reality. Role-playing supports preparedness for action, not only in settings similar to the scenarios used.
Goals/ Objectives	<p>By implementing this educational scenario, trainers will support the intercultural mediators developing the following competences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conceptualise cultural differences. • Position themselves within the spectrum of such differences. • Relate their involvement either as mentors or as mediators in intercultural relationships. • Achieve a profound understanding of theoretical concepts.
Methodology/ Educational Practices	<p>The methodology proposed in this educational scenario is role-playing learning. Adult educators or other educational professionals will guide learners into participating in a gamified situation describing a setting of intercultural conflict where they have to mediate taking into account not only culture or ethnic origin, but also sex, age, educational level etc.</p>
Detailed description of the educational scenario	<p>Session 1: presentation of the roles and the setting (around 50 min.)</p> <p>In this session the facilitator introduces the objective of the educational scenario and presents the project that the learners must complete in session 2&3. This will require the facilitator to prepare a scenario-based exercise (either by modifying, in which the learners are asked the following question: What is included in the term ‘culture’ and ‘intercultural mediation’? The scenario-based exercise will have to cover the following features:</p>

	<p>A setting where an intercultural exchange takes place (such an exchange may be of several kinds: from a friendly meeting to an argument taking place at the courtroom). At least one intermediary (beyond the role of the mediator per se, other mediating roles may be introduced to showcase atypical mediating, or mediating that is underestimating intercultural differences). Case solved (participants should find a way to solve the scenario quest in a consensual manner).</p> <p>Session 2&3: Role-playing scenarios (around 180 min.) Intercultural mediators should act according to their roles. The facilitator must provide remote support when requested. Trainees not having a role should attend, while waiting for their turn in the next scenario.</p> <p>Session 4: conclusion and evaluation (around 90 min.) The last session should be planned for discussion among trainees about their experience. Trainees that were not part for one of the scenarios should offer an outsider's perspective. The trainer will facilitate the discussion by asking questions. The final part of the session will be dedicated to evaluation of the scenarios and their impact upon the stereotypes held by the participants. The trainer will also evaluate the learners' performance based on the results achieved. Alternatively, this can be done using online platforms (e.g. Microsoft Teams, Zoom). In this case, online engagement must be organised as a discussion forum where players take turns in expressing their part. An online platform like Second Life may be also used in order to have the avatars as indicators of the several different aspects of 'culture'.</p>
<p>Further bibliography Alternative e-sources</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Othlinghaus-Wulhorst, J., & Hoppe, H. U. (2020). A Technical and Conceptual Framework for Serious Role-Playing Games in the Area of Social Skill Training. <i>Frontiers in Computer Science</i>, 2, 28. 2. De Jong, M., & Warmelink, H. (2017). Oasistan: An intercultural role-playing simulation game to recognize cultural dimensions. <i>Simulation & Gaming</i>, 48(2), 178-198. 3. Kolb, D. A. (2014). <i>Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development</i>. FT press. 4. Cherif, A.H., & Somervill, C.H. (1995). Maximizing Learning: Using Role Playing in the Classroom. <i>The American Biology Teacher</i>, 57(1), 28-33.

	5. Hurn, B.J. (2011). Simulation training methods to develop cultural awareness. <i>Industrial and Commercial Training</i> , 43(4), 199-205.
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2. Guidance & Mentoring Skills

SCENARIO IDENTITY	
Element/ Information	Content – Activities
Title of the educational scenario	The Intercultural Mediator: boosting mentoring skills
Module	Guidance and mentoring skills
Target groups	Adult educators Education professionals
Prior Knowledge	A mentor is a trusted adviser, an experienced individual who gives counselling, support and guidance to someone less experienced (mentee). The relationship between the mentor and the mentee is known as mentoring. The “Guidance and mentoring skills” module, of the InterMEDs curriculum, introduced the main skills involved in mentoring and guidance practices, while relating them to the skills needed in a role as intercultural mediator. In this educational scenario, the aim is to lead the newly trained “intercultural mediators” in to deepen their knowledge in formal mentoring practices.
Key-note papers	Cannata, Ana, Garringer, Michel. (2006). Preparing participants for mentoring. Mentoring Resource Center, retrieved from: https://educationnorthwest.org/sites/default/files/resources/training_initial.pdf Effective mentor programs: recruiting and training mentors. (November 6, 2017). Retrieved from Training Industry: https://trainingindustry.com/articles/leadership/effective-mentor-programs-recruiting-and-training-mentors/ Jucovy, Linda. (2001). Training new mentors. National Mentoring Center. Retrieved from: https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/71356731.pdf

	Oesch, Taryn. Effective mentor programs: recruiting and training mentors. (November 6, 2017). Retrieved from Training industry: https://trainingindustry.com/articles/leadership/effective-mentor-programs-recruiting-and-training-mentors/
Duration	The activity is divided in four sessions with a total of 320 min. (around 5h30m), with the following time distribution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Session 1: around 50 min. • Session 2&3: around 180 min. • Session 4: around 90 min.
Learning environment	This educational scenario is designed to be delivered face-to-face or online, depending on the digital skills of the learners.
IT Requirements & Possibilities	Material needed for the sessions: Laptop/PC/Tablet; access to internet; pen and notebooks. If conducted online facilitators/trainers can use collaborative panels like to collect participants feedback and work results.

SCENARIO APPLICATION FRAMEWORK	
Element/ Information	Content – Activities
Brief summary of the educational scenario	The “Intercultural Mediator: boosting mentoring skills” educational scenario aims at offering a set of practical materials, techniques, tools and tips to support adult educators and education professionals to lead the trained intercultural mediators, within the context of InterMEDs training, to acknowledge, develop and improve their mentoring skills.

<p>Theoretical framework</p>	<p>Mentoring can be formal or informal. In informal mentoring, both mentor and mentee establish a relationship without a structured definition of objectives and goals to achieve. A formal mentoring relationship requires a set of conventional procedures to frame the mentoring process, namely: mentorship agreement; regular mentoring meetings and ending the mentoring relationship (revise initial goals and compare it with the final outcomes). There are different mentoring models:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One-on-one mentoring: traditional type of mentoring, involving a mentor and his/her mentee. ▪ Group mentoring: one or more mentors working with a group of mentees. ▪ Peer mentoring: peers in the same professional field, or area of interest, or with shared experiences, pairing up for mutual support. ▪ E-mentoring: the use of digital platforms to deliver the mentoring relationship. ▪ Reverse mentoring: when a junior employee mentors a senior professional.
<p>Goals/ Objectives</p>	<p>By implementing this educational scenario, adult educators or other educational professionals will support the newly trained intercultural mediators developing the following competences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conceptualise mentoring. • Compare the mentor and mentee skills. • Relate the mentor and the intercultural mediators' skills. • Justify the advantages and disadvantages of a formal mentoring relationship. • Distinguish the different phases of a formal mentoring relationship. • Select and use the most appropriate digital tools for e-mentoring.
<p>Methodology/ Educational Practices</p>	<p>The methodology proposed in this educational scenario is project-based learning. Adult educators or other educational professionals will guide learners into design a formal mentoring relationship.</p>
<p>Detailed description of the educational scenario</p>	<p>Session 1: presentation (around 50 min.)</p> <p>In this session the facilitator introduces the objective of the educational scenario and presents the project that the learners must complete in session 2&3. This will require the facilitator to prepare a scenario-based exercise (see</p>

	<p>resources for session 1), in which the learners are asked the following question: How would you design and implement a formal mentoring relationship? The scenario-based exercise will have to cover the following features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mentorship agreement (clear aims and objectives, rules and boundaries, action plan). ▪ Regular mentoring meetings (clear structure and purpose). ▪ Ending the mentoring relationship (revise initial goals and compare it with the final outcomes). <p>Session 2&3: learners work on their projects (around 180 min.)</p> <p>Intercultural mediators should be encouraged to work autonomously, and the facilitator must provide remote support when requested.</p> <p>Session 4: conclusion and evaluation (around 90 min.)</p> <p>The last session should be planned for projects' presentation and the facilitator will evaluate the learners' performance based on the results achieved. Alternatively, this can be done using online platforms (e.g. Microsoft Teams, Zoom). In this case, online engagement must be organised as a discussion forum where intercultural mediators are encouraged to share their projects and ideas and learn from each other experiences.</p>
<p>Further bibliography Alternative e-sources</p>	<p>Resources for session 1: (facilitator)</p> <p>To prepare the scenario-based exercise:</p> <p>BROWN BROTHERS HARRIMAN. (2006). Mentoring Guide. Retrieved from https://cdn2.sph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2015/10/Mentoring_Guide.pdf</p> <p>Scottish Social Services Council. (2014). Mentoring: Supporting and Promoting Professional. Retrieved from https://www.stepintoleadership.info/assets/pdf/SSSC%20Mentoring%20guidance.pdf</p> <p>Resources for session 2&3: (learners)</p> <p>Dezuanni, M., Marshall, A., Cross, A., Burgess, J., & Mitchell, P. (2019). Digital Mentoring. Retrieved from https://eprints.qut.edu.au/129677/1/digital-mentoring-in-australian-communities.pdf</p> <p>The Gift of Listening: a guide to mentoring peers. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.uvic.ca/research/centres/cisur/assets/docs/Peer-mentoring-WEB.pdf</p>

	These references are suggestions; the facilitator must provide learners with additional relevant references so that learners can properly develop their projects.
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3. Cultural reflection and positive exchange

A. SCENARIO IDENTITY	
Element/ Information	Content – Activities
Title of the educational scenario	Cultural Reflection and Positive Exchange
Module	Cultural Reflection and Positive Exchange
Target groups	Adult Educators Learners
Prior Knowledge	Participants have a concept of culture and what culture can entail. They know culture is non-static and evolves over time. Cultural reflection is the analysis of the own culture, cultural exchange defines the exchange of practices and beliefs among differing cultural backgrounds. The module tries to help reflect on ones own cultural background and thus foster cultural exchange in a positive manner.
Key-note papers	Wignall Nick. The Elements of Self-Reflection. Retrieved from: Link
Duration	Estimated to be 120 minutes per session for a total of 240 minutes.
Learning environment	The course is designed to be held in classroom, but exercises can be adapted for individual exercises or self-exercise online.
IT Requirements & Possibilities	Classroom setting: Access to PC/laptop and text editor (e.g. MS Word) to document own reflection. Online setting: Same as above, access to the internet.

SCENARIO APPLICATION FRAMEWORK	
Element/ Information	Content – Activities

Brief summary of the educational scenario	This educational scenario is designed to support trainers by providing them some overview and inspiration on how to structure their trainings on the matter and to provide insight into how the training was envisioned to be held.
Theoretical framework	<p>As culture is a complex, multi-layered and often very emotional issue, especially as part of the own identity, critical self-reflection capabilities are key to understanding the own culture in what we define as cultural reflection - The critical analysis of the own culture and its influence.</p> <p>Cultural exchange describes the interaction in between cultures and the mutual influence they have on each other. Cultural exchange occurs whenever two different cultures come into contact with each other, on the smallest scale when two individuals of differing cultural backgrounds interact. Positive exchange is defined as a cultural exchange marked by openness and respect, if not outright appreciation for the other.</p>
Goals/ Objectives	<p>This training should help participants develop the following competences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical reflection of the own cultural identity and how it is formed • Ability to recognize cultural practices/properties that stem from foreign cultures and have a positive influence • Increased ability to make a more differentiated picture of culture and cultural exchange • A better intercultural understanding by reducing the perceived cultural threat from foreign cultures and highlighting positive impact <p>Participants are to be sensitised for the interaction between cultures and to be trained in reflection so as to allow them to be more secure in their own culture and approach other cultures with a more positive outlook from this position of security.</p>
Methodology/ Educational Practices	Much of the educational practice will be individual, with interspersed group exercises. As a great part will focus on self-reflection, it is important for the participants to be able to exercise this on their own. For online training, this also means many parts can be exercised by the participants without being present in a classroom.
Detailed description of the educational scenario	<p>First session:</p> <p>The trainer introduces the outline of the content and objectives of this module. The first session will mostly revolve around reflection processes and trying to be</p>

	<p>aware of one's own cultural influences, thus the trainer can prepare a first exercise to raise awareness (consult the listed exercises in the module, we recommend something like the onion model of identity). Try to identify with the participants what aspects of culture there are and which they deem important for their own cultural identity.</p> <p>Participants then are taught about the different key elements of self-reflection to help structure their thoughts and analysis. An emphasis should be put towards the cultural aspect of self-reflection, to help understand the own culture and how it influences our own decisions. The exercise "Intercultural Challenges" might be applied here.</p> <p>If held in a group session, participants are asked to share their thoughts (on a voluntary basis). This not just helps structure thoughts (as participants have to put it into words for others to understand), but also might provide glimpses among participants into other cultures that are not their own or into similarities with themselves that they overlooked.</p> <p>Lastly, participants are given the task to write a reflective paper (no more than a couple pages) on the subject until the next session, as an assessment of their learning progress.</p> <p>Second session:</p> <p>The second session serves to build on the ability to identify own cultural values and habits and tries to now extend this twofold to foster greater intercultural understanding. Participants should try apply the things they learned in the first session to how they approach other cultures, second-guessing their own decision-making and evaluation of others when being in contact with other cultures. They should also, if possible, try to consider potential ways others might interpret their cultural actions, though they should be careful with accepting such assumptions as final.</p> <p>Similarly, participants should reflect on their own culture and consider what influences of other cultures exist. What innovations were brought from others that they might appreciate now or even consider part of their own. This can be discussed in a group or put into word when self-exercising online.</p>
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<p>Further bibliography Alternative e-sources</p>	<p>Bennett J.M., Intercultural Competence: Vital Perspectives for Diversity and Inclusion. in: Diversity at Work: The Practice of Inclusion. 2013. Retrieved from: https://www.academia.edu/11210010/Intercultural Competence Vital Perspectives for Diversity and Inclusion</p>
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II. European policies: Exploration in legislation, conventions and indicators

1. Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality

From the research done at European level regarding different policy papers for the topic of Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality we found different ones coming from different stakeholders. Policy papers coming from 1970s and till nowadays.

Policy 1: Lifelong learning programs of the European union and their impact on the Macedonian educational system

<https://cyberleninka.org/article/n/446247>

Analysis and description

Considering that in 2005 Macedonia gained the status of a candidate country for EU membership, it is in the process of gradual harmonization of its own policies with those outlined in the EU documents in all areas of social life. In particular, this paper focuses on one segment of the educational policy of the EU, specifically the Lifelong Learning Program (LLP), and analyses its impact on the educational policy in Macedonia. Although the right to education is one of the fundamental human rights, guaranteed by international conventions and national legislation of the states, and the demands imposed by the labour market, global economy and information technology, there are some groups that still do not have access to education. The right to education is a privilege not only for young people but also for the elderly and those who left school early; they have now found themselves before new educational challenges, which means considering individual and professional advancement as continuous duty. In this regard, the role of LL is assumed to be the key for handling all categories of the population with general problems and challenges of education, while building a comprehensive strategy for LL in Macedonia can contribute to the development of social cohesion, employment and meeting the individual requirements of citizens.

Policy 2: EU Lifelong Learning Policy Framework

https://www.solidar.org/system/downloads/attachments/000/000/213/original/29_IIIpolicyframe.pdf?1457601278

Analysis and description

The EU's lifelong learning¹ programme (Lifelong learning is defined as encompassing "all learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences, within a personal, civic, social and or employment related perspective." Definition of the Communication from the Commission "Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality", 2001a. The European Employment strategy definition of LLL reads: "all purposeful learning activities, whether formal or informal, undertaken on an ongoing basis with the aim of

improving knowledge, skills and competences”), as a part of the education and training policy is not only sustaining human capital development but also endows people with skills, knowledge and competences that enhance their employability, improve their adaptability to a changing and flexible labour market, and foster the contribution to innovation. In light of the European Union key strategies adopted in the course of last 10 years, there is still a need to strengthen the social dimension of education as a public good to achieve decent work, social cohesion and social inclusion.

Policy 3: Lifelong learning for all policy directions

[https://www.oecd.org/officialdocuments/publicdisplaydocumentpdf/?cote=DEELSA/ED/CERI/C D\(2000\)12/PART1/REV2&docLanguage=En](https://www.oecd.org/officialdocuments/publicdisplaydocumentpdf/?cote=DEELSA/ED/CERI/C D(2000)12/PART1/REV2&docLanguage=En)

Analysis and description

Five key systemic features are identified here. First, all learning should be recognised, not just formal courses. Systems for transferring credit are improving but gaps remain, especially in recognising informal learning. Good systems for informing and guiding learners, especially adults, remain elusive. Second, lifelong learning requires good foundation skills among both the young and adults: particularly those with poor initial education. Motivation must be at the centre. This requires fundamental changes in curriculum and pedagogy, emphasising willingness to learn as much as content mastery. Third, equitable access to learning requires a lifecycle perspective. Under-served groups such as pre-school children and adults must be a priority. Equally important is the quality of opportunities – diverse learning methods, courses and settings to cater for multiple learning needs. Fourth, countries must evaluate resources according to lifecycle needs and deploy them effectively. Additional public resources may be needed, and new incentives to attract private resources. Finally, the scope of lifelong learning goes beyond a single ministry. Policy co-ordination must involve many partners.

Policy 4: Making Lifelong Learning a Reality for All

<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/e764d1fa-a157-4218-85f5-6d9162e3afc2>

Analysis and description

As the term suggests, lifelong learning is about learning throughout life. It involves all phases and forms of learning from pre-school to postretirement, including the years of formal schooling. People may learn to fulfil personal ambitions, get a job, develop their career, or shape their community. The lifelong learning approach is primarily about meeting the needs of learners. Skills and knowledge can be acquired in many different places. These include schools, universities and training establishments as well as work, leisure or the family. An important feature of lifelong learning is to overcome barriers between these environments so that people can follow their own learning pathways and build on knowledge wherever it is acquired. Indeed, by making it possible

to have skills valued throughout the European Union, it will be easier for people to move freely between jobs and learning environments in other countries as easily as in their own.

Policy 5: The future of adult learning in Europe

<https://eaea.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/The-future-of-adult-learning-in-Europe.pdf>

Analysis and description

The European Union is standing at the crossroads. Education, and adult education in particular, can play a vital role in shaping the future of Europe. It equips people with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to become active, responsible and engaged citizens that can impact their environment to create an inclusive and sustainable future for all. Adult learning is key for personal development as well as the development of communities as society at large. It helps to answer the needs of the labour market for re-skilling and upskilling of workers, and it promotes social inclusion and well-being of the individual and society.

According to estimates of the OECD, about 14% of workers are at a high risk of having most of their existing tasks automated over the next 15 years, and another 30% will face major changes in the tasks required in their jobs and, consequently, the skills required.

Policy 6: ADULT PARTICIPATION IN LIFELONG LEARNING FOR BETTER EMPLOYABILITY IN SELECTED EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

<https://www.utmsjoe.mk/files/Vol.%2010%20No.%201/UTMSJOE-2019-1001-03-Dumicic-Milun-Antic.pdf>

Analysis and description

Data analysed in this paper, originate from the EU Labour Force Survey, where the APinL refers to persons aged 25 to 64 who received training or education for four weeks preceding the survey (numerator). The denominator is comprised of the total population, excluding those persons within the same age group who did not answer to participation in education and training questions. All education or training information, regardless the relation to the respondent's employment status, have been collected. The authors found the motivation for this study in the previous research described in Dumicic and Milun (2018), where only statistical education of employed Croats was analysed. This paper presents the logical continuation of the research on the variable APinL in general, in 33 European countries in the recent period of 2002 to 2017. In this paper, authors want to test the research hypothesis that the Gross Domestic Product per capita (GDPpc), the employment rate, as well as the high educational level and digital society development indicators, all have positive impact on the APinL. For this purpose, the influence of selected six variables on the APinL was explored using statistical data exploration, linear regression and cluster analysis methods. The six included explanatory variables, for 2017, have been as follows:

- Two economic development indicators: Gross Domestic Product per capita in Purchasing Power Standards (PPS), Index EU-27=100; and Employment rate, as a percentage in total, age group 20–64 years;

- Three variables for Participation rate in education and training, as a percentage in total, of persons from 15 to 64 years with: less than primary, primary and lower secondary education (levels 0–2); upper secondary and post-secondary nontertiary education (levels 3–4); and tertiary education (levels 5–8); and, finally
- One digital skills development indicator defined as the Individuals who have basic or above basic overall digital skills, as a percentage of all individuals aged 16–74.

2. Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training

Policy 1: Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality” (Commission 2001)

Target: Establishing a context for the development of a coherent strategy for LLL across the EU, aiming to connect the historical ‘silos’ of education, training and the labour market, and to make learning something that occurs throughout life, in many places (school, college, workplace, home etc.), and in many contexts (formal, informal, non-formal etc.).

Identifying needs of better information about learning opportunities, guidance and advice to help motivate learners to engage with opportunities and invest their time and money in learning and to show that their learning would have ‘value’.

Efficiency: Basic skills needed to be improved, learners should benefit from new and innovative pedagogies, and that the Commission and Member States (MS) would need to collaborate in achieving the vision.

Target Group: Learners

Policy 2: “Adult learning: It is never too late to learn” (Commission 2006)

Target: The financing of adult learning on reforming programmes to take a coherent view of adult learning at the national level, on engaging with all stakeholders in the development of policies and on sharing policy maker experiences and practices (peer learning) across the EU.

Efficiency:

- Improve educational attainment and providing key competences for all
- Foster of social cohesion, active citizenship and personal fulfilment in European societies
- Develop their full potential through lifelong learning.
- Cooperation with stakeholders in the community, for instance in areas such as non-formal and informal learning activities.

Target Group: Stakeholders in the development of policies and on sharing policy maker experiences and practices across the EU.

Policy 3: Action Plan on Adult learning - It is always a good time to learn” (Commission 2007)

Target: Five areas of activity were identified which could be supported through the European Social Fund (ESF) and Lifelong Learning (LL) programmes.

1. Ongoing reforms across MS in the education and training systems needed to be analysed.
2. The quality of adult learning provision needed to be improved.
3. Adult learners needed to see clear progression occurring in their learning.
4. The mechanisms to assess skills and competences, and to validate and recognize learning outcomes, needed to be faster operationally.
5. The overall AL sector needed stronger and more consistent monitoring.

Efficiency:

- Promotion of equity, social cohesion and active citizenship
- Eliminate age discrimination
- Enhance job opportunities and reduce social exclusion
- Create equal and competitive opportunities for adults

Target Group: Adult learners

Policy 4: “Council conclusions of 22 May 2008 on adult learning (2008/C 140/09)” (Council 2008).

Target: Ongoing education system reform, improvements in the quality of provision of learning opportunities, opportunities to identify and share good practice, to further raise awareness and motivation for adult learning and to embed adult learning in LLL strategies.

Efficiency: Ensure equitable education and training systems that are aimed at providing opportunities, access, treatment and outcomes that are independent of socio-economic background and other factors which may lead to educational disadvantage.

Target Group: Adult learners

Policy 5: EU Strategic Framework for Education and Training (ET 2010).

Objectives:

- Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality.
- Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training.
- Promoting equity, social cohesion, and active citizenship and
- Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training.

Efficiency

Target Group: Stakeholders in the development of policies and on sharing policy maker experiences and practices across the EU.

Adult learners

Policy 6: Framework for Education and Training (ET 2010)

Objectives:

- Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality.
- Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training.
- Promoting equity, social cohesion, and active citizenship and
- Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training.

Efficiency: Fulfil learners’ potential

Facilitate equal access to labor market

Increase employability and work opportunities

Enhance work sustainability accordingly to the needs’ labour

Target Group: Adult learners

Policy 7: Framework for Education and Training (ET 2020)

Objectives:

- At least 40% of people aged 30-34 should have completed some form of higher education
- At least 15% of adults should participate in lifelong learning.

Efficiency: The target of 15% reflects uneven adult learning participation levels across MS. It also shows the size of the challenge to significantly widen adult participation in learning. ‘Thematic Working Groups’ of MS and other invited representatives made recommendations regarding AL policies, specifically on Quality Assurance and Financing. These groups were replaced in 2014 by the ET 2020 Working Group on Adult Learning which will provide policy guidance specifically on: the effectiveness and coherence of AL policies, provision of basic skills for adults, and the effective use of ICT and OER in adult learning.

Target Group: Adult learners

Link:

<http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=groupDetail.groupDetail&groupID=2995&NewSearch=1&NewSearch=1>

Policy 8: EU Renewed Agenda for Adult Learning (Council 2011b)

Objectives:

1. Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality: Stimulate demand and supply; motivate adult learners; workplace learning; flexible learning; validate informal and formal learning.
2. Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training: Quality assurance; training educators; transparent and viable funding mechanisms; effective linkage to labour market needs; strong stakeholder collaboration.
3. Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship through adult learning: Improve skills in numeracy, literacy, and digital skills; improve inclusive access to adult learning in both disadvantaged groups (poverty, ethnicity etc.) and those in specific circumstances such as hospitals or prisons; encourage active learning by older adults.
4. Enhancing the creativity and innovation of adults and their learning environments: Transversal skills and competences; Involving cultural organisations; Using ICT; Collection by MS of comparable evidence at national, regional and local levels.
5. Improving the knowledge base on adult learning and monitoring the adult-learning sector: Analysis and communication of the Adult Education Survey (AES), the Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS) and the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC); Monitoring of adult learning policies as part of the ET 2020 monitoring process.

Efficiency:

Target Group: Adult learners

• Policy 9: “Education and Training Monitor 2014” (Commission 2014d)

Objectives:

- Strengthening the offer of high-quality vocational education and training.
- Facilitating lifelong learning after initial education.
- Enabling the validation of qualifications and competences

Efficiency: Monitor the increase of international competitiveness, labor need changes and design or adapt educational or training methods respectively

Target Group: Stakeholders in the development of policies and on sharing policy maker experiences and practices across the EU.

Adult learners

- **Policy 10**

Objectives:

- Skills linkage to the labour market: Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Lithuania, Romania, Spain, UK.
- Policy and system reform and modernisation: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Hungary, Luxembourg, Spain.
- Quality and effectiveness: Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Latvia, Portugal, Romania.
- Promote attractiveness of LLL and increase access and participation: Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia.
- Increase employability of older people: Finland, France, Germany, Netherlands.
- Recognition: Austria, Italy.
- Inclusion: Germany, Romania, Slovakia
- Workplace training: Ireland, Italy, Slovakia and
- Stakeholder involvement: Slovenia, Spain.

Efficiency: Thus, the period from 2001 has seen a development from a broad EU vision for lifelong learning to a detailed agenda specifically for the development of AL policy and provision. The availability and quality of comparable statistics provided a basis for a more evidence-led approach to policy, as the CSRs show. Increasingly, the EC was active in bringing Member States and other actors together to share practices, evaluate evidence and thereby make progress in policy development.

Target Group: For some MS there was emphasis on the inclusion of marginalized groups in learning, better workplace training, and more integrated engagement with stakeholders.

Modernising Education and Training

- **Policy 11: “An Agenda for new skills and jobs: A European contribution towards full employment” (Commission 2010c)**

Objectives: “To make Europe's labour markets function better, equip people with the right skills for employment, improve job quality and working conditions, and create jobs”.

This meant that the ‘places’ of learning needed to be more attuned to the needs of learners than providers, including the development of learner-friendly workplaces where learners could balance work and learning requirements, communicate and cooperate with other learners, as well as being able to learn independently (CEDEFOP 2013).

Target Group: Learners / the ‘places’ of learning

- **Policy 12: “Council conclusions on the social dimension of education and training” (Council 2010b).**

Objective goal/target: In this context research undertaken for the Commission aimed to better understand the barriers (noted in section 3) learners face to access learning resources, and the strategies that might be used to overcome “structural, situational and psychological barriers” (Commission 2012i).

Efficiency:

- Provision of key competences for all and of making appropriate provision for those who due to educational disadvantages need particular support to fulfil their educational potential.
- Ensure equitable education and training systems

Target Group: At-risk adults

• **Policy 13: “The Bruges Communiqué on enhanced European Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training for the period 2011-2020” (Council 2010a)**

Objective/target: To be accepted across borders, learning and training needed to be both validated at the source of provision (for example, quality assured learning resources), through quality assuring and accrediting providers (Commission 2013i), and at the outcome stage (recognition of learning achievements). Adult learning needed to be fully transportable across borders in ways that are transparent and understandable to employers and organisations

Efficiency:

- Improve adults’ qualifications and their access the labor market
- Eliminate age discrimination/social exclusion
- Enhance access to equal job opportunities

Target Group: The source of provision

• **Policy 14: “Validation of non-formal and informal learning”**

The EU has taken significant steps in identifying the need for the mobility of learning and learning outcomes by adults. Learning outcomes needed to benefit both the adults and the economy, and to be relevant for the needs of the labour market at a time of significant demographic change and economic crisis. Accompanying these developments was a policy focus on how learning opportunities could be provided to more adults, to be more focused on their individual needs, to have high-quality content, and how the learning outcomes could contribute to the ET 2020 and Europe 2020 objectives.

That focus identified the potential of Information Communication Technologies (ICT) and Open Education Resources (OER), and the following material reviews the key policy developments. The development of Internet connectivity enabled learning resources to be accessible regardless of place. Building on and reflecting such advances, an EU Digital Agenda was launched as the strategy to help citizens, governments and businesses to benefit from the latest ICT innovations, and to ensure that the core broadband infrastructure is ubiquitously available at capacities and speeds commensurate with their needs (Commission 2010a). The strategy contained seven key priorities, including establishing a regulatory environment to ensure full broadband availability, developing digital skills and jobs, and updating the copyright environment to liberate content. If content could be consumed across the Internet regardless of place, then learning could be ‘liberated’. However, to facilitate this, a clear regulatory context to enable content to flow (copyright conditions) was needed, along with an accompanying change in the mind-sets of content developers. They would need to relinquish their historical position of protecting their intellectual property with copyright and IPR (e.g. patents) protection. This would lead to openly sharing content (Open Education Resources) especially in the context of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs).

However, liberating content is one thing. Discovering it and assessing whether it can be used effectively (re-purposed) in enhancing learning resources is another. It means changing the ways

in which teaching and learning systems and organisations needed to ‘behave’ towards learners, and in this context the Commission moved to consider fundamental ‘modernisation’ of education and training systems, and ‘re-inventing’ the ways in which learning takes place. ICT is at the heart of these processes.

Objective/Target: The need for learning to be recognized effectively, (for example beyond formal education and training, through access to OER, or through mobility experiences) and agreed that by 2018 MS should have in place “arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning” (Commission 2012b; Council 2012b)

Efficiency: Validation and recognition of different learning forms at the workplace increase participation, particularly that of the low-skilled in continuing vocational education and training that is key to an active inclusion approach and eliminate unemployment in cases of labor and social change.

Target Group: Adult learners

• **Policy 15: CEDEFOP policy handbook on continuous vocational education and training (CVET)**

Target: Sharing of good practices and policies

Efficiency: Put into context the challenges of making learning and training accessible ‘any time, any place’, especially for the most vulnerable groups of learners (who as noted earlier were experiencing a growing gap in learning achievements compared to the most capable learners). It identified the need for quality assurance, collaboration of all stakeholders, cost-effective resources, and responsive and flexible organizational human resource policies which allow for flexible learning (Cedefop 2014)

Target Group: Vulnerable groups of learners

• **Policy 16: “Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes” (Commission 2012h)**

Objective/Target: Increasing the levels and quality of workplace learning, on funding mechanisms “to strengthen commitment to a skilled and continuously trained and re-trained workforce”, and analysis of the impact to be gained from EU support in increasing the take-up of ICT and OER teacher skills needed to be improved

Efficiency: Creation of new work possibilities improving basic skills and employability.

Can demonstrate corporate social responsibility by better anticipating structural changes and providing opportunities for retraining.

Strengthen guidance and counselling activities and relevant teacher training

Target Group: Teachers

• **Policy 17: “Conclusions on Rethinking Education” (Council 2013)**

Objective/Target: Further emphasized the need to develop partnerships at national and EU levels to accelerate the production and availability of OER in different languages (Council 2014a).

Efficiency: Cooperation with a variety of environments, involving multiple stakeholders (including public and private sectors, higher education institutions, local communities and NGOs) and covering learning for personal, civic, social and employment-related purposes, is central to reaching disadvantaged and at-risk groups.

- Ensure a broad dissemination of research results.

- Reduce social exclusion through education.

- Knowledge's language is one of main factors that facilitate and enhance social and labour inclusion

Target Group: Partnerships at national and EU levels

• **Policy 18: “Opening up Education: Innovative teaching and learning for all through new Technologies and Open Educational Resources” (Commission 2013c)**

Opening up Education set ambitious challenges to develop and share OER, in making learning environments flexible and accessible, and in working with “all stakeholders (teachers, learners, families, economic and social partners) to change the role of digital technologies at education institutions” (Commission 2013c). Open Education Europa, 14 a multilingual portal, was developed to bring together information about OER (Commission 2014g). The portal also hosts a “network15 to foster web talent through Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)” (Commission 2014e).

A study into MOOCs noted that while they were proliferating, there were significant challenges in their achieving widespread recognition in the labour market. Equally this study noted that, being largely virtual in their operation, learning with MOOCs required “more practical, hands-on learning experiences grounded in real life” (Commission 2014f).

Thus, the EU policy context shows a synergistic approach to adult learning in a lifelong context. Attention has been given to the removal of historical barriers between education and training policy domains. A clear need is stated for organisational change and system modernization. Conditions are being developed for the liberation and sharing of intellectual property rights (IPR) in a more systematized way (for example through major portals). There is an understanding of the risks of the gap between the most educated and most vulnerable groups becoming greater, with this needing explicit policy attention and attention in funding programmes. Individualization of learning is an important objective, but learning outcomes must have relevance to the Europe 2020 goal of sustainable jobs and growth.

Target: Innovative teaching and learning using ICT was at the core of ‘opening up’. The Communication noted that teachers and learners would need new skills, while highlighting digital literacy for consumers as an example of a mechanism to improve adult digital skills (Commission 2014a). A need for the broader development of e-skills for the modern labour market was also noted, given that the “demand for jobs requiring digital skills is growing rapidly – and likely to create a skills shortage that may leave up to one million positions vacant by 2020 in Europe” (Commission 2014b).

Efficiency: Increase international competitiveness that requires high professional skills combined with an ability to create, innovate and work in multicultural and multilingual environments.

Target Group: Teachers and learners

Link: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/more_info/consultations/skills_en.htm

3. Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship through adult learning

Policy 1: REGULATION (EC) No 1717/2006 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 15 November 2006 establishing an Instrument for Stability (2006)

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:2006:327:FULL&from=EN>

Analysis and Description

It establishes a programme for Community action in the field of lifelong learning, hereinafter referred to as 'the Lifelong Learning Programme'. The Community Action Programme will receive all the necessary and proper support in the field of education and training and will promote bodies and authorities that present high activation in European level. The Lifelong Learning Programme shall comprise support for:

- a) the mobility of individuals in lifelong learning;
- b) bilateral and multilateral partnerships;
- c) unilateral and national projects;
- d) multilateral projects and networks, to name a few.

Additionally, through this ambitious European initiative, there promoted specific values and principles in regards with:

- linguistic diversity
- provision of the mobility needs of the students
- development of quality lifelong learning,
- high performance and innovation promotion
- creativity, competitiveness and employability growth.

Policy 2: Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning (2006)

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:394:0010:0018:en:PDF>

Analysis and Description:

That Member States develop the provision of key competences for all as part of their lifelong learning strategies, including their strategies for achieving universal literacy, and use the 'Key Competences for Lifelong Learning. More specifically, this Recommendation puts emphasis on the contribution and the crucial role of lifelong learning in the enhancement of active citizenship, social cohesion, social & civic values. In any case, the education contributes substantially to the social and cultural diversity comprehension and enables people to increase their employability strengthening in that way the social cohesion.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS, Action Plan on Adult learning It is always a good time to learn (2007)

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2007:0558:FIN:EN:PDF>

Analysis and Description

The general objective of this Action Plan is addressed mostly to disadvantages and vulnerable social groups (migrants, older people, women or persons with a disability) that are dealing with inadequate work and social skills. In detail, this present policy aims to implement the five following key messages

- It is never too late to learn
- to remove barriers to participation;
- to increase the quality and efficiency of the sector;
- to speed up the process of validation and recognition; to ensure sufficient investment;
- to monitor the sector.

Policy 3: Education and Training 2020: Improving Policy and Provision for Adult Learning in Europe (2015)

https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/education/library/reports/policy-provision-adult-learning_en.pdf

Analysis and Description:

This present report's main objectives are:

- to address adult basic skills,
- to promote the use of new technologies and Open Educational Resources (OER) in adult learning,
- to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency and coherence of adult learning policies.

In broad terms:

- Member States act on the findings of PIAAC and other key studies to reduce the number of adults with poor basic skills and increase the number with high skills levels.
- Member States should establish and support adult basic skills programmes aimed at improving the literacy, numeracy and digital skills of citizens, and providing in all types of programmes for improving adult basic skills, including language for adult migrants and refugees.
- Member States should provide high quality, well-targeted courses, and generate demand for formal, non-formal and informal basic skills learning.
- Member States should promote the inclusion of digital competence in adult basic skills programmes, even at the lowest levels, making proper use of ICT and open educational resources (OER) as a tool for learning and to provide increased flexibility and relevance.
- Member States should adopt coherent, sustainable long-term strategies for adult learning.

Policy 4: Council recommendation of 22 May 2018 on key competences for lifelong learning (2018)

https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.C_.2018.189.01.0001.01.ENG&toc=OJ%3AC%3A2018%3A189%3ATOC

Analysis and Description

The European Pillar of Social Rights prioritises the right to quality and inclusive education, training and lifelong learning in order to maintain and acquire skills that allow full participation in society and successful transitions in the labour market as one of the most fundamental principles. Additionally, it puts significant weight to the right of everyone 'to timely and tailor-made assistance to improve employment or self-employment prospects, to training and re-qualification, to continued education and to support for job search'. In this spirit, the Reference Framework sets out eight key competences:

- Literacy competence
- Multilingual competence
- Mathematical competence and competence in science, technology and engineering
- Digital competence
- Citizenship competence
- Entrepreneurship competence
- Cultural awareness and expression competence.

Policy 5: Council conclusions on the implementation of the Council Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways: New Opportunities for Adults (2019)

[https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52019XG0605\(01\)&rid=1](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52019XG0605(01)&rid=1)

Analysis and Description

The present report focuses on some basic and crucial policy papers that formulate and shape the image of the adult learning in the contemporary societal environment. First of all, it is of vital importance to keep in mind that the inclusive and equitable quality education and the promotion of lifelong learning opportunities is included in the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals. Additionally, it is underlined that the educational, social, financial background should be taken into account when it comes to education, as it is a basic right of all people to receive tailor-made education that will perfectly fit to the contextual educational needs. Also, the investment in upskilling and reskilling is expected to bring up strong economic comparative advantage promoting higher productivity and economic growth. As the report indicates, “a more skilled and competent population able to stimulate innovation and technological progress”¹.

for individuals, upskilling and reskilling can lead to enhanced employability, higher earnings, better health and wellbeing, more active citizenship and social inclusion. However, individuals and employers may have difficulties in recognising these effects and therefore underinvest in upskilling and reskilling, which calls for setting the right incentives to stimulate awareness and motivation to engage in further education and training;

Policy 5: Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030)

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32021G0226%2801%29&qid=1617706323424>

Analysis and Description

This policy paper presents the establishment of the right to quality and inclusive education and training. The promotion of the right to tailor-made assistance to improve employment or self-employment prospects, which includes training and re-qualification is one of the main spots where emphasis is put on. In addition, measures should be strengthened “to enable and motivate adults to acquire basic skills, so that equal opportunities can be guaranteed, and greater social participation could be ensured, thus enabling a holistic approach to adult learning”².

4. Enhancing the creativity and innovation of adults and their learning environments

Rationale of boosting creativity and innovation in culturally diverse learning environments

The policy paper “Enhancing the creativity and innovation of adults and their learning environments” is the result (Intellectual Output) within the Project “InterMEDs- Fostering ‘Intercultural MEDIators’ and its primary aim is to be used for advocacy purposes at the European and National level. The aim of the InterMEDs project is to contribute to the development of society members-human access points who will act as intermediators in the communities, who will have the potential, the capacity and increased intercultural competence, the key-skills and available tools, to act towards understanding and cooperation and coalition among community

¹ [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52019XG0605\(01\)&rid=1](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52019XG0605(01)&rid=1)

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32021G0226%2801%29&qid=1617706323424>

members and at the same time who will be empowered to react to any forms of intolerance, discrimination, human rights abuse. The importance and originality of the InterMEDs project lies in the creation of spaces to exchange culture and knowledge in a learning setting. This enables the local and the migrant communities to learn and respect one another.

A good practice example is Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe (EPALE)³ which provides a multilingual online space to exchange, showcase and promote best practices in adult education, as well as to promote peer learning, aiming to become the main point of reference for adult learning professionals in Europe. Likewise, La Ligue de l'enseignement de Dordogne (La Ligue 24)⁴ with focus on the field of adult education on social and cultural activities, training courses and workshops on everyday life serves as good example of boosting adults' creativity and innovation.

Numerous projects and initiatives across Europe serve as good examples of how to enhance the creativity and innovation of adults and their learning environments. By enabling access to culture and information for all, by using technology a whole new sphere of learning environment is created that consequently boosts creativity and innovation skills. As per example "Everybody's library, libraries for everybody", project which aims to improve the autonomy and the participation in lifelong learning of adults with communication problems. The Socially Inclusive ICT-based Adult Learning project showcases how ICT-supported adult education can reinforce the social inclusion of different groups of adults. Considering the impact of the COVID-19 it is needless to say that incorporating ICT-based adult education in the teaching and learning approach is a preventive tool for social and digital exclusion. This new sphere enables adults to emerge in through the world of non-formal and informal learning, voluntary activities and acquire new creative and innovative skills and competences.

Based on successful examples, in order to reduce cultural gap between different groups, it is necessary to continue implementing initiatives that enable integration, learning momentum, tolerance, respect, cooperation and understanding starting in the local communities but supported and promoted by National and Europe authorities.

The context of adult learning environment: "Trends, policies and promising practices"

The **European Union** began the focus on adult education in the White Paper on Education and Training from 1995. Since then, numerous decisions, communications, recommendations, resolutions, or conclusions have followed one another (see Annex 1). Under the *Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('Education and Training 2020'–'ET 2020')*⁵, the Member States agreed on reaching at least 15% of adults participating in lifelong learning by 2020. This strategic framework was renewed by *The Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in*

³ Last visited 09.09.2021. https://epale.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/epale_webinar_7th_july_final.pdf

⁴ Last visited 09.09.2021. <https://laligue24.org/>

⁵ Official Journal of the European Union volume 52, The Council of the European Union, 28.05.2009, pages 2-10, Last visited 09.09.2021. [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528\(01\)&from=EN](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52009XG0528(01)&from=EN)



*education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030)*⁶, which set a 2025 goal to have at least 47% adults participating in learning during the last 12 months.

The European Union agency “Eurostat”⁷ gathers lifelong statistics on adult participation and education and training (formal, non-formal and informal learning) through the Adult Education Survey (AES) mainly. The main data available concerning adult learning is as follows: **First**, the average EU-27 participation rate in education and training in the last 4 weeks has consistently increased between 2011 to 2019, growing from 14.5% to 16.8%. **Second**, there is a wide variation across EU countries, with Sweden leading, and Romania with the lowest participation rate in education and training in the last 4 weeks (38.6% and 7% in 2019, respectively). **Third**, the survey validated differences between genders. On average, 11.9% of EU women participated in formal and non-formal education and training in the last 4 week, compared to 9.8% of male participation. **Fourth**, the 2016 AES shed light on the main reason why Europeans do not participate in education or training: 79.8% did not want to, and 19.5% encountered personal difficulties. Different patterns across countries were also found. **Fifth**, data showed a positive relationship between the educational attainment level and the participation rate in education and training; higher levels of education correlate with higher participation rates. In 2016, two out of three of those with higher educational attainment levels participated, whereas less than one quarter of those with basic levels did. (For more information check Annex 1).

Nonetheless, these results could be affected by the outbreak of **COVID-19** in 2020/2021. It is still undetermined if we will be able to achieve the goal of reaching at least 47% participation of adults in learning during the last 12 months by 2025, due to its positive and negative effects on adult learning. The main consequence has been a shift from face-to-face learning to online learning; this has positively and negatively affected adult learning.

On the one hand, online platforms have eased the pursuit of learning opportunities, some adults might feel more confident to receive distance instruction, adults have seen the COVID pandemic as an opportunity to increase their potential, there has been an increasing number of free online learning resources, or some companies have promoted employee trainings. On the other hand, low-skilled workers have relatively suffered more the consequences of shutdowns due to the impossibility to learning physically at work (high-skilled continued working remotely), some adults might not have access to devices, proper internet and the competences to join online activities, which is why adult learning attendance has dropped, and their motivation and their mental health has worsened since they care of their families, work, and engage in learning all at the same time. The EC and EP are invited to boost joint policy processes or redesign already existing ones⁸⁹ and

⁶ Official Journal of the European Union 66, The Council of the European Union, 26.02.2021, pages 1-21, Last visited 09.09.2021 [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021G0226\(01\)&from=EN](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021G0226(01)&from=EN)

⁷ Last visited 13.09.2021 <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>

⁸ Example 1: The European institutions should take into account the Intercultural dialogue promoted by the Council of Europe, to develop policies in the field of Education, Multiculturalism, Culture or Integration and Integration.

⁹ Example 2: European Parliament, Resolution of 19 January 2016 on the role of intercultural dialogue, cultural diversity and education in promoting EU fundamental values, 19.01.2016, accessed 23.06.2021. Another example is the 2016 European Parliament resolution on the role of intercultural dialogue, cultural diversity and education in promoting EU fundamental values, which already recognised the necessity of allocating resources from the Erasmus+, Creative Europe or Horizon 2020 programmes to support cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and education

in promising practices to boost creativity and innovation, we see current **European trends that** seek to boost the latter.

The European Skills Agenda sets objectives to be achieved by 2025¹⁰, based on well-established quantitative indicators. The objectives by 2025 to achieve are to increase by 32% the participation of adults aged 25-64 in learning as well as participation of low-qualified adults 25-64 by 67%. Share (20%) of unemployed adults aged 25-64 with a learning experience in the last 4 weeks. Addressing new digital needs the objective is to equip 70% of share of adults aged 16-74 with at least basic digital skills.

The first two indicators measure the share of adults aged 25-64 and the share of low-qualified adults (ie, those having completed at most a lower-secondary education) in the age group 25-64 who report having participated in at least one formal or non-formal education and training activity over the last 12 months (data from the Adult Education Survey, excluding guided on-the-job training). This differs from the methodology used to monitor progress from the third indicator on the participation of unemployed adults, which looks at training undertaken over the last 4 weeks (data from the Labour Force Survey). According to the European Commission, the use of a 4-week rather than a 12-month reference period captures better the provision of education and training to the unemployed as part of national active labour market policies. The fourth indicator is from the Community Survey on ICT usage in households and by individuals. Digital skills are measured as a composite measure based on a series of yes/no questions, measuring to what extent someone has performed a number of activities, such as seeking information online, sending emails, installing software or using word processing software. An individual is then deemed to have “at least basic digital skills” if there is at least one “basic” but no “no skills” in all four domains.¹¹

By carrying out innovative and creative policies, we will achieve a more educated and talented society that will be better prepared to face future challenges. Nonetheless, these cutting-edge initiatives not only necessarily can be applied to higher education. They can also play an important role to include migrants and to boost the productivity of low-educated European citizens. (See Annex 1 for more practices in this field).

Policy Recommendations

Despite the differences among countries, there was a general EU trend to increase adult participation in learning and training. However, the forced shift to online learning during the COVID pandemic has triggered new challenges that must be addressed to reach the 47% adult participation in learning during the last 12 months by 2025.

Recommendation I (European): There is an urgent need to reduce differences across EU countries concerning the policy and educational practices in adult education that enhance the creativity of adults. Universal Values (such as diversity, intercultural dialogue or social inclusion) must be reinforced through innovative educational practices and learning environments that promote adults’ creativity.

Recommendation II (National/ Local): Local authorities should seek to bridge urban and rural areas by providing joint educational workshops focused on social entrepreneurship, digitalization,

¹⁰ Last visited 13.09.2021. <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1223&langId=en>

¹¹ Last visited 13.09.2021. <https://www.feps-europe.eu/attachments/publications/lifelong%20learning%20-%20a4%20-%20def%201%20-%2088%20pages%20%204%20cover%20pp.pdf>

circular economy and green jobs for adults which will consequently boost creativity and innovation with the exchange of know-how and foster culturally diverse learning environment.

Recommendation III (National/local): In order to achieve the 2025 goal of 47% of adults participating in learning, Member States should foster innovative education by boosting creativity through employee training and service-learning programmes. Developing internal policies to promote and stimulate practices in the workplace that aim to increase intercultural competences will enhance adult learning environment but also the competences of the staff.

Recommendation IV (Local): Local authorities should organise local initiatives (Service-learning programmes, volunteering activities, campaigns) in which adults and citizens could actively develop their creativity to boost intercultural dialogue in their communities. The learning process should be facilitated by competent practitioners (InterMEDs) in order to encourage adults to design innovative projects and ensure effective learning process.

Recommendation V (National/local): National & Local Stakeholders (CSOs, Ministries, Cities, Schools) should build cross-sectorial initiative for effective strategy for capacity building of practitioners, empowering them to provide quality InterMEDs activities on the local level. The strategy should address the lack of intercultural and digital competences especially bearing in mind latest trends and learning needs of adults.

5. Improving the knowledge base on adult learning and monitoring the adult learning sector

European level actions and initiatives for the support of adult learning

Actions and initiatives at the European level enhance our understanding of how to respond to challenges in the field of adult learning. They can also provide support to institutions and individuals and enable a better exchange of knowledge and experiences between countries. (EUROPEAN COMMISSION, n.d) In particular, **Europe's 2020 strategy** for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth acknowledges lifelong learning and skills development as key elements in response to the current economic crisis, to demographic ageing and to the broader economic and social strategy of the European Union. The crisis shed light to the importance of adult learning in achieving those goals, by enabling adults — in particular the low-skilled and older workers — to improve their ability to adapt to changes in the labour market and society. Adult learning provides a means of up-skilling or reskilling those affected by unemployment, restructuring and career transitions, as well as makes an important contribution to social inclusion, active citizenship and personal development. (EUROPEAN COUNCIL, 2011)

Policy 1 – Memorandum on Lifelong Learning (LLL)

After the **European Year of Lifelong Learning in 1996**, European Commission published its **Memorandum on Lifelong Learning (LLL)** in 2000 which argued that Lifelong Learning “must become the guiding principle for provision and participation across the full continuum of learning contexts”. (COMMISSION, 2000) This stressed that “integrating learning more firmly into adult life is a very important part of putting lifelong learning into practice” (COMMISSION, 2000). In 2001, the Commission set out the vision for “**Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality**” (COMMISSION, 2001), founding a framework for the development of a consistent strategy for LLL across the EU, aiming to link the historical ‘silos’ of education, training and the labour market, and to make learning something that develops throughout life, in many places

(school, college, workplace, home etc.), and in many contexts (formal, informal, non-formal etc.). (ECORYS & Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2015)

Policies 2&3 – Copenhagen Declaration for “enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training” and ‘Lisbon Agenda’ Communication

In 2002, the pan-European collaborative focus of LLL was highlighted in the **Copenhagen Declaration for “enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training”** (COMMISSION, 2002). Accentuating the voluntary and collaborative processes, it links education and training more closely. The declaration forms an integral part of the ‘Education and training’ (ET 2020) strategic set of rules and contributed to achieving the education-related targets of the Europe 2020 strategy. Enabling actions were identified to be undertaken between 2000 and 2004, including the “Political dimension aiming to establish common European objectives and reform national VET systems”; “Development of a single transparency framework, credit transfer in vocational education and training and development of quality tools”; and “cooperation to foster mutual learning at European level and to involve all relevant stakeholders at national level” (COMMISSION, 2002). (ECORYS & Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2015) The **‘Lisbon Agenda’ Communication** in 2005 built on the vocational education and training (VET) developments, placing VET in the context of wider goals to “raise employment and productivity and strengthen social cohesion” across the Single Market (Commission, 2005).

Policy 4 – European Parliament Resolution of 16 January 2008: “It is never late to learn”.

A more specific focus on adult learning came with the **European Parliament Resolution of 16 January 2008: “It is never late to learn”**. The resolution encourages Member States to promote the acquisition of knowledge and to cultivate a culture of lifelong learning, notably by implementing gender equal policies designed to make adult education more attractive, more accessible and more effective. (EUROPEAN COUNCIL, 2011) More specifically, attention was given on the financing of adult learning; on reforming programmes to take a coherent view of adult learning at the national level; on engaging with all stakeholders in the development of policies; and, on sharing policy maker experiences and practices (peer learning) across the EU. (ECORYS & Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2015) A detailed **“Action Plan on Adult learning - It is always a good time to learn”** came one year later identifying five areas of activity which could be supported through the European Social Fund (ESF) and Lifelong Learning (LLL) programmes. Initially, continuous reforms across MS in the education and training systems needed to be examined. Then, the value and quality of adult learning provision needed to be advanced. Moreover, adult learners needed to see apparent advancement occurring in their learning. In addition, the structures evaluating skills and competences, and validating and recognising learning outcomes, needed to be faster functionally. Finally, the overall AL sector needed stronger and more consistent monitoring.

Policy paper 5 – “Council conclusions of 22 May 2008 on adult learning (2008/C 140/09)”

The year after, the **“Council conclusions of 22 May 2008 on adult learning (2008/C 140/09)”** (EUROPEAN COUNCIL, 2008) were adapted by the European Council. The conclusions accentuated the need for: continuous system reform; developments in the value of learning opportunities provision; opportunities to recognise and share good practice; to further raise awareness and motivation for adult learning; and, to embed adult learning in LLL strategies. (EUROPEAN COUNCIL, 2008) The Council conclusions of May 2008, which formulated for the first time a set of

common priorities to be addressed in the adult-learning sector, opened the way towards intensified European cooperation between the various stakeholders, and proposed a series of specific measures for the period 2008, aimed at boosting participation in, and advancing the value of, adult learning. (EUROPEAN COUNCIL , 2011)

Policy 6 – “Europe 2020. A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth”

The establishment of the “Europe 2020. A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth” (EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 2010) was a response to the global economic crisis (from 2008 and onwards) which changed fundamentally the economic landscape. Additionally, the next year the “Council conclusions on the role of education and training in the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy” (European Council, 2011) actively emphasised the role of education and training in achieving the Europe 2020 jobs and growth objectives. Education and training was to become more synergistic with Europe 2020 on its operational level (work cycles, reporting, and objective setting). (EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 2010).

Policy 7 – The EU Renewed Agenda for Adult Learning

In 2011, **The EU Renewed Agenda for Adult Learning** (EUROPEAN COUNCIL , 2011) which was adopted by the Council identified five headline priorities, with specific actions under the priorities. In summary these were:

1. Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality: Stimulate demand and supply; motivate adult learners; workplace learning; flexible learning; validate informal and formal learning.
2. Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training: Quality assurance; training educators; transparent and viable funding mechanisms; effective linkage to labour market needs; strong stakeholder collaboration.
3. Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship through adult learning: Improve skills in numeracy, literacy, and digital skills; improve inclusive access to adult learning in both disadvantaged groups (poverty, ethnicity etc.) and those in specific circumstances such as hospitals or prisons; encourage active learning by older adults.
4. Enhancing the creativity and innovation of adults and their learning environments: Transversal skills and competences; Involving cultural organisations; Using ICT; Collection by MS of comparable evidence at national, regional and local levels.
5. Improving the knowledge base on adult learning and monitoring the adult-learning sector.

Priority 5: Improving the knowledge base on adult learning and monitoring the adult-learning sector

For the purposes of this chapter, we will be focusing on priority number five: Improving the knowledge base on adult learning and monitoring the adult-learning sector. With that priority, Member States are invited to focus on:

— Participating actively in and implementing key messages resulting from major international surveys and studies such as the Adult Education Survey (AES), the Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS) and the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC). (EUROPEAN COUNCIL , 2011, p. C 372/6)

The **Adult Education Survey (AES)**, is part of the European Union (EU) Statistics on lifelong learning. For the purposes of the survey, interviews are conducted with people aged 25 to 64 regarding their participation in education activities (formal, non-formal and informal learning)

during the year before the interview. The survey takes place every five years and its results are published on Eurostat website. (EUROSTAT, 2021) The following information is available from the AES:

- Participation in formal education, non-formal education and training and informal learning
- Volume of instruction hours
- Characteristics of the learning activities
- Reasons for participating
- Obstacles to participation
- Access to information on learning possibilities
- Employer financing and costs of learning
- Self-reported language skills

(EUROSTAT, 2021)

The **Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS)** is an enterprise survey which is part of the EU statistics on lifelong learning. (EUROSTAT, n.d) The survey addresses proportionated statistical information on continuing vocational training in enterprises and covers the following topics:

- Continuing vocational training, skills supply and demand, training needs
- Measurement of the forms, contents and volume of continuing training
- The enterprises own training resources and the use of external training providers
- The costs of continuing training
- Initial vocational training

CVT surveys were carried out for the reference years 1993, 1999, 2005, 2010 and 2015. The next CVTS is planned for the reference year 2020. (EUROSTAT, n.d)

The Survey of Adult Skills (OECD, n.d) is an international survey conducted in more than 40 countries as part of the **Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)**. The survey measures the essential cognitive and workplace skills required for individuals to participate in society and for economies to flourish. The evidence from the Survey has assisted countries better comprehend how education and training systems can nourish these skills. The Survey is executed every 10 years and has had two cycles so far. In the First Cycle, there were three rounds of data collection, between 2011-2018. In 2018, the Second Cycle of the Survey has begun, with results for this cycle to be published in 2024. (OECD, n.d)

The Survey is implemented by:

- interviewing adults aged 16 to 65 in their homes – 5 000 individuals in each participating country;
- answering questions via computer or via the traditional way of pencil-paper;
- evaluating literacy and numeracy skills and the ability to solve problems in technology-rich environments;
- accumulating various information, including how skills are used at work and in other contexts, such as the home and the community.

(OECD, n.d)

The Survey is designed:

- to be accurate cross-culturally and internationally;
- for countries to be able to conduct the survey in their national languages and still collect comparable results;
- to provide comparative analysis of skill-formation systems and their outcomes, and international benchmarking regarding adult skills;

- as a survey that will be repeated over time to allow policy makers to monitor the development of key aspects of human capital in their countries.

(OECD, n.d)

— Stepping up efforts to collect sufficient baseline data on, for instance, participation, providers, financing, the outcomes, and wider benefits of learning for adults and society and extending the data coverage to the age range beyond 64 in keeping with the prolongation of working life.

(EUROPEAN COUNCIL , 2011, p. C 372/6)

— Strengthening the monitoring and impact assessment of the development and performance of the adult-learning sector at European, national, regional, and local level, making better use of existing instruments where possible (EUROPEAN COUNCIL , 2011, p. C 372/6)

— Intensifying research and in-depth analysis of issues relating to adult learning, extending the range of research to include new fields, and encouraging more inter-disciplinary and prospective analysis. (EUROPEAN COUNCIL , 2011, p. C 372/6)

— Strengthening the knowledge base on adult learning in Europe by commissioning studies and reinforcing the capacity of existing research structures relevant for analysing adult-learning issues, including cooperation with Eurydice and Cedefop and other relevant institutions and making full use of their information and research capacities;

— pursuing and intensifying cooperation with relevant international organisations such as the OECD (in particular by exploiting the results of the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competences — PIAAC), the UN (in particular Unesco) and the Council of Europe, as well as other relevant regional or worldwide initiatives such as the Europe-Asia lifelong-learning ‘hub’ (ASEM);

Renewed Agenda Theme and Actions (2011)	Links to UNESCO, OECD
Improving the knowledge base on adult learning and monitoring the adult learning sector	
Participating actively in and implementing key messages resulting from major international surveys and studies such as the Adult Education Survey (AES), the Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS) and the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC).	Strong coordination of media coverage, analysis and policy lessons. For example (Commission 2013f; Commission 2013h; Council 2014b)
Stepping up efforts to collect sufficient baseline data ... Strengthening the monitoring and impact assessment ... Intensifying research and in-depth analysis of issues relating to adult learning ... Reporting on adult-learning policies as part of the joint progress report on ‘ET 2020’.	The adoption of ICT into adult learning needs to be accompanied by evidence-led assessment of the impact of ICT-enhanced learning. (OECD 2014c; UNESCO 2014a) Collect timely information about demand for and supply of skills. (OECD 2014c) Eurydice research outputs. (Eurydice 2015) 2012 Joint Report on ET 2020. (Commission 2012a)

*Adult Learners in Digital Learning Environments (EAC-2013-0563) – Final Report (2015)

— Reporting on adult-learning policies as part of the joint progress report on ‘ET2020’.
Taking into account the specific circumstances within each Member State, and in accordance with national priorities, European Commission invites Member States, where appropriate with the support of the Commission, to focus on those areas outlined above which are most relevant to their particular needs.

References



III. Indicators: Current patterns in adult learning

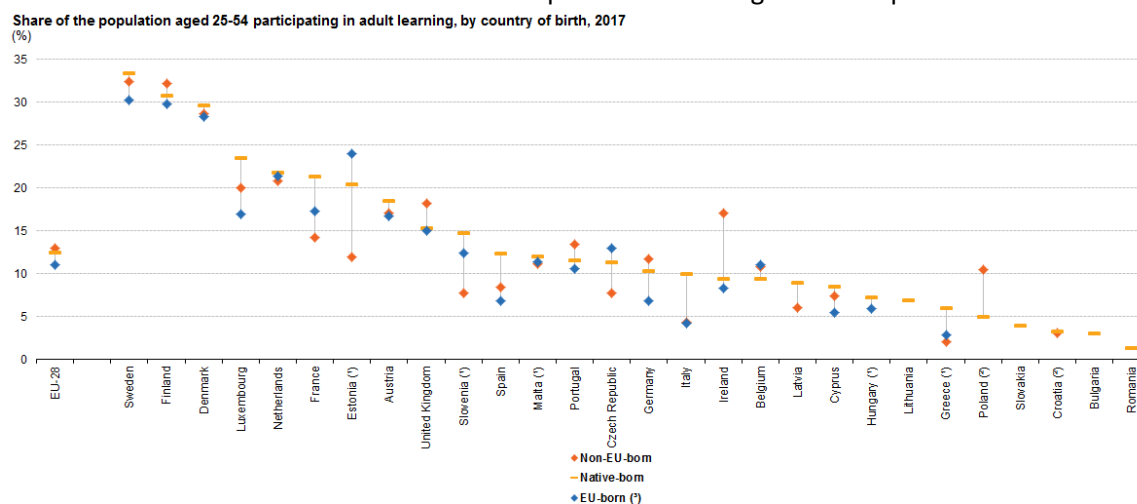
1. Current participation patterns in adult learning

General Patterns

Over the past decades, the importance of adult education has grown substantially. This is reflected not just in an increase in efforts to promote adult education but also in an increase in participation. This increase in importance is to a large part due to systemic requirements posed by a changing labour market. Three reasons can be identified for this change:

- the frequency of disruptive new technologies revolutionising the workplace has been increased drastically. This leads to a need to frequently be trained on new trends, methods and technologies at the workplace.
- increased competition from low-wage countries and global supply chains (especially for high-income countries such means the need for a highly educated workforce to stay competitive)
- increase in life expectancy and corresponding increases in the age of retirement that caused an overall increase in the time period people have to work, increasing the amount of technological challenges they face, compounding with the first issue.

These three reasons have caused a growing focus on adult education opportunities, be it on the job or in adult education centres. This can also be observed in the participation rates of adults in adult education, which are comparatively high in countries like Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, Finland, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, France and Austria, while within the EU the member countries tailing behind in this regard are Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Croatia, Greece, Cyprus, Poland and Hungary (see figure 1). In general, there's an observable tendency for adult education participation to correlate with average income and for higher average income to lead to higher participation rates. Additional factors such as the country's willingness to promote and provide adult education and make it accessible to the public had also significant impact too.



Note: Bulgaria, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia: EU-born and non-EU-born, not available. Croatia, Latvia and Poland: EU-born, not available. Hungary: non-EU-born, not available.
 (*) EU-born: low reliability.
 (*) Non-EU-born: low reliability.
 (*) Other than in the reporting Member State.
 Source: Eurostat (online data code: trng_ifs_13)

Figure 1.

OECD studies also show that when compared among industrialised nations, participation rates are not tied to the arrangement of the welfare and education sector, with for example Nordic countries leading the charts, while similarly affluent Anglo-Saxon countries remain in the middle ground, while Eastern and Southeastern European countries are typically lagging behind.

Migrants in Adult Education

The importance of adult education might seem more important for migrants, who often already face an uphill battle when it comes to competing in the labour market, thus can benefit even more from gaining some competitive edge, yet, they often feature lower participation numbers than natives, mostly due to barriers to accessing adult education. Engaging in adult education requires not just having the ability to apply for such offers, but also to be able to afford education, deposit the direct cost of the education services or the indirect cost in form of opportunity cost regarding time spent in training in comparison to time spent on work, family or life necessities. Thus, migrants not only might have lower access to education offers due to not meeting prerequisites, but also, they usually lack the socio-economic support that would enable them to take part in adult education. Additionally, migrants often face difficulties in receiving reliable information on educational matters and offers than the natives.

On average, the level of education among migrants is lower than natives, but it is also common that the qualifications of migrants are not acknowledged in the new country. Thus, the adult education provides a venue of assessing and certifying certain skillsets migrants may possess and which can help them integrate into the labour market and society at large.

For the EU average in 2017, migrants were actually about as engaged in adult education as natives, with a reported participation rate of 12.4% for natives, 11.1% for migrants from other EU member countries, yet 13.0% for non-EU migrants. Among member states this diverges quite significantly, with the majority of EU countries reporting a higher participation rate by natives than by migrants.

However, according to OECD data (2015) present an even sharper difference when it comes to the more broadly defined Lifelong Learning (LL). In terms of LL, while again Nordic countries report high participation rates for their population, migrant and native, larger discrepancies were reported for other European countries, with especially pronounced gaps in favour of natives for Germany (16 percentage points), Spain (15 percentage points), Flanders (as part of Belgium) and Denmark. These were noted in studies as indicative of systemic issues, whereby in terms of lifelong-learning, which includes training on the job, low-skilled migrants are at greater risk to only find employment in low-skilled work that in broad terms lacks opportunities for further training and creates a vicious cycle that prevents picking up better employment paths. Meanwhile more educated natives take on decent employment options to a bigger extent, leading to more job-related training, thus higher chances of promotion along with a career path.

Sources

OECD (2018), *Skills on the Move: Migrants in the Survey of Adult Skills*, OECD Skills Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264307353-en>.

Eurostat (2018), *Migrant integration – adult learning rates*, retrieved from: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/ddn-20180726-1>

2. Skills levels in the adult learning population

• Eurostat – Adult learning statistics

https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Adult_learning_statistics

Eurostat provides information of adult education in the EU based on the data collected by the Labour Force¹² and the Adult Education Survey¹³, regarding **participation rate of adult in learning in the last four weeks (2019)**, participation rate of adults in learning in the last 12 months (2019), participation in informal learning activities and provider of non-formal education and training activities.

The strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training adopted in May 2009 sets a number of benchmarks to be achieved by 2020, including one for adult participation in learning, namely that an average of at least 15% of adults aged 25 to 64 years old should participate in lifelong learning. In 2019, the proportion of persons aged 25 to 64 in the EU who participated in education or training was 10.8 %; a share that was 0.7 percentage points higher than the corresponding share for 2014. The adult learning indicator refers to participation in formal and non-formal education and training and the reference period for the participation is the four weeks preceding the interview as is usual in the labour force survey.

• OECD – Adult education level

<https://data.oecd.org/eduatt/adult-education-level.htm>

This indicator looks at adult education level as defined by the highest level of education completed by the 25–64-year-old population. There are three levels: below upper-secondary, upper secondary and tertiary education. Upper secondary education typically follows completion of lower secondary schooling. Lower secondary education completes provision of basic education, usually in a more subject- oriented way and with more specialised teachers. The indicator is measured as a percentage of same age population; for tertiary and upper secondary, data are also broken down by gender.

Below upper secondary (% of 25-64 year-olds, 2019 or latest available)						
OCDE Average	United Kingdom	Greece	Spain	Portugal	Cyprus	North Macedonia
21.360	NA	26.044	38.686	47.824	NA	NA

NA: not available

Tertiary (% of 25-64 year-olds, 2019 or latest available)						
OCDE Average	United Kingdom	Greece	Spain	Portugal	Cyprus	North Macedonia
38.013	NA	31.890	38.597	26.284	NA	NA

¹² LFS: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Labour_force_survey_\(LFS\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Labour_force_survey_(LFS))

¹³ AES: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Adult_education_survey_\(AES\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Adult_education_survey_(AES))

Upper secondary (% of 25-64 year-olds, 2019 or latest available)						
OCDE Average	United Kingdom	Greece	Spain	Portugal	Cyprus	North Macedonia
41.034	NA	42.066	22.717	25.892	NA	NA

• **Education at a Glance 2020 : OECD Indicators**

<https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/69096873-en/1/3/2/1/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/69096873-en&csp=b68ed930151b9d0f354aa48ee27178db&itemIGO=oecd&itemContentType=book>

Indicator A1. To what level have adults studied?

- Younger adults (25–34-year-olds) are better educated than they were a decade ago. On average across OECD countries, the share of younger adults without upper secondary education has decreased from 20% in 2009 to 15% in 2019.
- On average across OECD countries, 40% of younger adults have upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education as their highest attainment. Of these, 59% held a vocational qualification. However, the share of adults with a vocational qualification has decreased over the generations: the share is 66% among 35–44-year-olds and 72% among 55-64 year-olds.
- Tertiary education is the most common attainment level among 25–34-year-olds on average in OECD countries (45%). However, the share varies substantially across countries, ranging from 24% in Mexico to 70% in Korea. A bachelor's degree or equivalent is the most common tertiary attainment level for younger adults in most OECD and partner countries.

OECD also conducts a survey on **adult skills – the PIACC: Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies**. It is an international survey conducted over 40 countries and it measures key cognitive and workplace skills needed for individuals to participate in society and for economies to prosper.

Adult learning frameworks

• **European policy cooperation (ET 2020 framework)**

https://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/european-policy-cooperation/et2020-framework_en

Adult learning benchmarks at European level by 2020:

- at least 40% of people aged 30-34 should have completed some form of higher education
- at least 15% of adults should participate in learning
- at least 20% of higher education graduates and 6% of 18-34 year-olds with an initial vocational qualification should have spent some time studying or training abroad
- the share of employed graduates (aged 20-34 with at least upper secondary education attainment and having left education 1-3 years ago) should be at least 82%

• **European Agenda for Adult Learning (2011)**

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.C .2011.372.01.0001.01.ENG>

The Renewed European Agenda for Adult Learning (2011) defines the focus for European cooperation in adult education policies. The Agenda highlights the need to increase participation

in adult learning of all kinds (formal, non-formal and informal learning) whether to acquire new work skills, for active citizenship, or for personal development and fulfilment.

Adult learning is key for personal development, active citizenship and social inclusion. Adult learning is also needed to meet the need for new skills and answer the needs of the labour market but also of life in society and as an individual.

Participation of adults in learning varies greatly between European countries: overall, the numbers are stagnating and go from 1.4% to 31.6% (2012 figures). Participation rates are especially disappointing for low-skilled and older adults. Urgent action is needed at European level to increase knowledge about successful policies, provide support, and enable a better exchange of experiences between countries.

- **Adult Learning policy and provision in the member states of the EU (2019)**

<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/fc3abdf9-ced3-11e9-992f-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

This report illustrates the complexity of adult learning policy and financing frameworks, across the EU Member States, as well as their strengths and weaknesses and the reforms needed in the systems that are in place in Member States.

Employment and participation in adult learning in the EU p.16

Increasing the employment rate of those aged 20-64 as a minimum to 75% in the Member States is one of the key objectives included in the Europe 2020 in addition, 15% of adults aged 25 should participate in adult learning by 2020, in line with the ELI target. Against this backdrop, participation in adult learning in 2016 and employment levels are discussed in this sub-section.

Participation in education and training for adults (25 and 64 years of age) and employment rates vary considerably between the Member States:

- **The highest performing countries** (those exceeding the headline targets for both employment levels and participation in adult learning) were **Sweden, Denmark, Netherlands** and **Estonia**.
- A number of **countries reached one of the two targets** (either employment levels or participation in adult learning): the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Lithuania, Luxembourg, United Kingdom.
- Most EU Member States, however, **reached neither target**: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain.
- Among the final cluster, those which were above the EU average on at least one indicator were Austria, Hungary, Latvia and Slovenia. The rest of the Member States were below the EU average on both indicators.

- **Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills:**

Cyprus: https://epale.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2021-05/25.01.2019_ALN_CY-TOC.pdf

Greece: https://epale.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2021-02/28.01.2019_ALN_EL-TOC.pdf

Portugal: https://epale.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2021-02/23.01.2019_ALN_PT-TOC.pdf

Spain: https://epale.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2021-02/28.01.19_ALN_ES-TOC.pdf

United Kingdom: https://epale.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2021-02/24.01.2019_ALN_UK.pdf

3. Types of ICT used in adult learning

- **European Commission, Shaping Europe's digital future: New Report shows digital skills are required in all types of jobs**

<https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/new-report-shows-digital-skills-are-required-all-types-jobs>

Analysis and Description

This report contains interesting findings on ICT skills importance. What is unprecedented is that they can be useful in various types of jobs e.g. farming, health care, vocational training and construction. This resource includes statistics that can enrich our module material. Digital technology is an emerging sector that is more and more integrated in the labour market and the demand skills of the labour force, as well. According to the present report, 93% of European workplaces possess and widely use desktop computers, while 94% use broadband technology to access the internet. It has been also noticed that larger workplaces report a higher use of digital technologies than smaller ones.

This rapid growth of digital technologies use in the workplaces creates a growing need this need is not other than the well-structured and constant training of the employees in the digital and ICT skills. |As a matter of course, it has to be underlined that Digital Literacy must be introduced regularly in the educational process as core pillar of the training curricula. This need is even more emerging when the adult learning is pointed and the possibilities for a "class" to be consisted of digital immigrants are higher.

It is interesting to highlight that 15% of workplaces report employees that digital skills. Digital skills gaps are presented more intensively in high- and medium skilled than in low-skilled jobs.

88% of employers have not been active in regards with the tackling digital skills gap of their employees. Training is the most common action undertaken as there are mostly financial barriers to support the employees' further training and in most cases, it is downgraded.

Although, the digital skills gap is proven to have a significant impact in the function and the efficiency. 38% of workplaces state that the lack of digital skills negatively influences the business performance bringing up loss of productivity (46%) and decrease in the number of customers (43%).

«The digital economy is transforming the way people work and the skills they need at work. This represents a major challenge for employers, workers and public authorities. The study presents data and policy recommendations that could support the transformation of the labour market into opportunities for all».

- **Sources of individual differences in adults' ICT skills: A large-scale empirical test of a new guiding framework. PLOS ONE 16(4): e0249574**

<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0249574>

Analysis and Description

This research is a conceptual framework that aims to explain individual differences in the ability to use ICT skills. The framework highlights that ICT use is itself possible upon individual preconditions. It contains various tables, socio-demographic data and characteristics, including

gender, age, and migration. It is undoubtful that the rapid paces the digital transformation has been transferred across the globe has leading to a surge in the importance of ICT skills for individuals. Hence, it is expected to for the societies to be changed and adapted to this technological evolution. This present study aims to effectively exploit the data from previous studies in regards with the use of ICT skills in digital transition era, to compile the conclusions of these studies and compose a well-structured and verified secondary research analysis that aims to explain individual differences in ICT skills. Thus, social practices in terms of ICT use have been featured as prerequisites to the complete acquisition of ICT skills. It is also proven that the majority of the adults currently have not received efficient formal education and/ or training to support their digital literacy acquirement. Therefore, these skills rely mostly on informal learning processes and self-learning, as well. In the following graphic, there are some fundamental demographic information sourced in this publication in regards with digital skills rates among people with different sex, age, educational background etc.

	PIAAC		NEPS	
	mean/percent	S.D.	mean/percent	S.D.
<i>Sex</i>				
female	48.90		48.38	
male	51.10		51.62	
<i>Level of education</i>				
high (ISCED 5–6)	44.77		55.92	
medium (ISCED 3–4)	49.02		40.38	
low (ISCED 0–2)	6.21		3.7	
<i>Migration</i>				
German	83.85		84.82	
1st generation immigrant	9.10		5.78	
2nd generation immigrant	7.05		9.40	
Age	39.06	.24	49.19	9.45
ICT skills	293.27	1.07	.15	1.19
Literacy skills	288.08	.89	.24	1.28
<i>Using digital technologies in everyday life</i>				
zero to 20%	11.86		–	
more than 20% to 40%	15.79		–	
more than 40% to 60%	24.09		–	
more than 60% to 80%	27.41		–	
more than 80%	20.84		–	
several times a month or rarely	–		4.63	
several times a week	–		9.08	
daily or almost daily	–		86.29	
<i>Using digital technologies on the job</i>				
zero to 20%	22.77		–	
more than 20% to 40%	19.44		–	
more than 40% to 60%	23.77		–	
more than 60% to 80%	21.40		–	
more than 80%	12.63		–	
none	–		13.24	
one	–		34.60	
two	–		28.57	
three	–		11.56	
four	–		8.65	
five	–		3.37	
N	2,495		2,786	

Figure 2: Basic statistics of individual-level variables Figure 2: Basic statistics of individual-level variables. Source: <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0249574>

• EPAL, Digital Skills & Competences for Adult Learners Open Educational Resource

https://epale.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/epale_oer_digital_skills.pdf

Analysis and Description

As the available data from Eurostat 2016 indicate, people with low educational background and also people that belong to low socio-economic classes are dealing with the risk of digital exclusion.

An other defining factor of the digital skills possession in the age range.

For example, 96% of 16–24-year-olds living in the EU-28 use the Internet at least once a week, while only 57% of people aged 55–74 despite the progress that has already been noted since the last decade. There is still the emerging need of the digital inclusion in order to encourage the social, political and economic life of contemporary societies in regards with the active citizenship. The adult social groups that have been found to face the risk of social inclusion are:

- Older people

The ageing population faces a significant risk of social exclusion and remaining socially active is one of the most important challenges this target group deals with. In the digital transformation era, this social gap escalates for digitally unskilled older people with severe implications for their civil and social relationships. The promotion of digital education among the elderly people should be addressed to the use fundamental digital tools and skills that will facilitate their communication, social contacts, lifelong learning processes. Also, there have been observed that “peer tutoring” works efficiently and can be expected to bring up substantial change in the digital gap of the older people.

- Migrants

Nowadays, migrants need more than ever to be digitally literate. This is because many typical and legal processes are now being conducted online and the job searching has been also transferred within the digital world to a significant extent. More specifically, this target groups needs to be trained in both basic and advanced digital skills and competencies. In this way, these people will have the possibility to exploit this knowledge and information in many levels of their life such as job seeking, family ties retention. The usual obstacle for the digital literacy of people with migrant background is the linguistic limitation and lack of the local language familiarization.

- Youth with disabilities

Despite the fact that digital technologies harness significant opportunities for the young adults with disabilities to claim for their access to training and learning, sense of belonging to a community, job seeking etc., they are often deal with barriers. Additionally, it is a fact that the level of digital competencies needed to implement sufficiently the above tasks and activities is considered as advanced. Thus, the basic digital skills are falling short for the expected use and skills of this target group. Web accessibility is a prerequisite condition for this specialized knowledge in the ICTs. In different case, the digital technologies can be converted to additional barriers to the social development and integration of these young adults. To sum up, tutoring and coaching are crucial in supporting them to the point that they can specialize in the digital environment being employed exclusively as digital workers.

Conclusions & Forward Momentum

Intercultural mediation within a context of tackling conflicts and achieving social cohesion constitutes one of the main priorities in EU policies. However, the empowerment and actual involvement of the effective communication between different cultures in regards with different levels of life is still largely undeveloped. The main reason is that most people face difficulty in understanding the concepts of tolerance and conflict resolution and their expected impact on the social development and harmony. All the above demonstrate the main role of proper education and training in intercultural issues. In this framework, InterMEDs through the development of the present output aims to create a digital and wide accessible toolkit that will be used by members, authorities, leaders' representatives, public staff, NGOs and private public key-players in the adult learning sector.

The IO3- Training/Methodological and Policy Adaptation Guide (Interactive eBook) is designed to assist users and more particularly educators, as they get prepared to use this online educational toolkit produced for the purposes of InterMEDs project. The efficient and effective use entails that educators should:

- understand the structure of a curriculum about intercultural mediation and dialogue,
- learn how to use the InterMEDs online platform and its courses, InterMEDs social media and mobile application regarding the special needs and characteristics of their learners and then putting theory into practice,
- take into consideration the applied educational scenarios provided in this “eBook”,
- develop their own educational strategy, widen their teaching approach, and adopt more interactive methods,
- meet and familiarize with AL European policies realising the importance of lifelong learning,
- shape a spherical knowledge and information regarding the AL educational framework,
- adapt the InterMEDs learning material to different educational context and diverse educational needs.

For this purpose, the present ‘eBook’ suggests three (3) exemplary educational scenarios, based on differentiation methodologies and adult education approaches. Such preparation will enable educators to take the best advantage of InterMEDs courses. Once the major themes of intercultural mediation are fully comprehended, educators will create their own variations contributing to the initial purpose of InterMEDs project: to promote the engagement and empowerment of local communities, especially women and youth- two social groups who need more chances for activation and empowerment. Educating them to be the intermediators in their communities, to transfer in turn knowledge or to act as ‘Access Points’ in their local context is an action of claiming for further inclusion and social participation as well. Also, for this purpose, it has been created a complete and structured policy guide to help the educators get acquaintance with the AL educational context in the contemporary societal environment. This policy guide is divided in two main parts; a. “Policy papers: Theoretical framework”, b. “Indicators: Current patterns in adult learning”

To sum up, the following recommendations aim to indicate the European directions of AL within the context of intercultural mediation:

- Development of national adult learning sector-wide strategies to:
 - support adult learning providers in making the transition to more high quality blended and online learning,
 - provide adult educators with further training in online delivery and instructional design in online environments,
 - promote cross-sectoral collaboration to reach out to all, especially vulnerable groups,
 - improve the transparency of the (online) offer.
- Constant refreshment of the adult learning policy agendas at the European level through:
 - the substantial adoption of the renewed European Agenda for Adult Learning.
 - the strengthening of sustainable competitiveness, to achieve the European Green Deal and putting its digital and industrial strategies into practice,
 - the ensuring social fairness, putting into practice the first principle of the European Pillar of Social Rights: access to education, training and lifelong learning for everybody, everywhere in the EU,
 - the building up of the resilience to react to crises, based on the lessons learnt during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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