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Motivating adult learners' participation and persistence in lifelong learning processes

Training methodologies and learning techniques in adult education – a collection of best practices

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CONTENT

1. INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, individuals should be able to cope with constant changes. Our rapidly changing world causes a large share of its population to be forced into new and challenging working environments, which call for new skills and attitudes. In many European countries, teaching has been geared towards preparing individuals to become lifelong learners by helping them develop learning skills as early as in primary school. Some EU member states' educational systems are more advanced in implementing an engaging style of teaching and in supporting the development of learning skills, including in the case of adult education, while other systems lag far behind.

The partnership of the Create-Motivate-Learn project aims to identify key factors related to motivating participation and persistence in lifelong learning processes of a wide range of adult learners, including special needs and disadvantaged groups.

The present collection of best practices of training methodologies and learning techniques in adult education is the final result of the research into training practices carried out within the CreMoLe project. The research aimed to collect best practices in adult education in nine European countries: Austria, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland by analysing training courses offered by various adult education providers to a variety of groups: teachers, people in difficulty in relation with themselves or with others, banking experts, adult migrants, young women qualifying for university admission, senior staff in administration, young Roma unemployed women, adult educators in formal and non-formal education, workers and association managers working with disabled people, unemployed and job seekers, members of deportee families, social workers, parents, etc. We looked into 40 training programmes, and after analysing and assessing them we decided on 16 to share with our readers as very good training practices we believe are worth promoting.

Although the collection includes a diversity of training practices, they all share the following features:
- they all contain elements that aim to motivate adult learners;
- they all contain innovative issues;
- they are all practice oriented;
- they are all transferable;
- they all encourage and engage the adult learners to participate in lifelong learning processes;
- they all aim to empower the participants;
- they are all sustainable.

This publication addresses adult educators and adult education providers who strive to motivate learners to engage in lifelong learning processes. The authors hope to offer some useful creative and critical thinking strategies to be applied in a variety of adult learning contexts for experienced adult educators.

The collection of best practices of training methodologies and learning techniques in adult educationcontains the description of the research methodology that was carried out (Chapter 2) and the presentation of the 16 selected training practices, grouped by countries, introduced to readers as case studies (Chapter 3). After an overview of the situation of adult education in each partner country, each description of the case study presents the training background, the detailed description of the best practice by pointing out the elements related to participants motivation and empowerment, innovative methodologies and transferability of the training practice, the detailed description of the outcomes/ benefits of the training and the summary and conclusions which are the author's personal reflections on the case study.

We do hope that this publication will support adult educators and adult education providers in improving the quality of lifelong learning processes.

2. METHODOLOGY

This collection of best practices in adult education emerges as a result of the previous Survey of European adult education providers and their learners.
A selection of 6 best practices identified during this survey has been included in the present document. The selection was done by applying internal and external evaluation criteria.

Good practices from nine European countries: Austria, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Spain and Switzerland have been collected.
Firstly a definition of adult education and the characteristics a training practice should meet in order to be considered a good practice were agreed by all partners. We used the same definition of adult education as the one provided by the European Commission in the framework of Lifelong Learning Policy:

"All forms of learning undertaken by adults after having left initial education and training, however far that process went. It includes learning for personal, civic and social purposes, as well as for employment-related purposes, and can take place in a variety of environments in and outside formal education and training systems"
Communication from the Commission "Adult Learning: it is never to late to learn" 2006

Training practices had to meet the following elements in order to be considered good practice in adult education:

1st –Training practices contain elements that aim to motivate adult people.

2nd –Training practices represent an innovative specific methodology and learning techniques for adult people.

3rd – It must be possible to transfer the experiences to different geographical or thematic contexts.

4th – They must be practice-oriented.

5th –Training practices empower learners by providing access to new resources and information, by ensuring increased participation, and by demonstrating social inclusiveness.

Each country identified 2 to 6 experiences and conducted around 5 interviews with trainers and 10 to 15 interviews with trainees in order to get to know each practice in depth. Switzerland, as a silent partner, identified only one good training practice and conducted 2 interviews with trainers and 4 to 6 with trainees.

An internal evaluation of the good practices they identified was carried out by each partner organization (See annex 1).

The description of training experiences identified in each country during the survey was exchanged in order to facilitate the peer evaluation process. Each partner organization assessed the good practices proposed by another organization according to the same criteria.

Good practices were assessed among partners as follows:

Who is doing	What is doing
Latvia (LV)	Evaluates Romanian GPs
Romania (RO)	Evaluates Italian GPs and Swiss GP
Italy (IT)	Evaluates Slovak GPs
Slovakia (SK)	Evaluates Spanish GPs.
Spain (ES)	Evaluates Latvian GPs
Austria (AT)	Evaluates Lithuanian GPs.
Lithuania (LT)	Evaluates German GPs
Germany (both German partners, DE)	Evaluates Austrian GPs

Scores from internal and peer evaluation were added up and the training practices which scored highest were included in the Collection of Best Practices. (See Annex 2)
Next you can see final scores of selected good practices.

No.	Training practice- name	Proponent	Final Score
1	Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking	MDC - LT	15
2	Possibilities of civic education for schools and in the local community	EDC - LV	15
3	From Coexistence to Cooperation	TVVe.V. - DE	15
4	Action Research	RWCT IC - RO	14
5	ROMFASHION	IFI - ES	14
6	Blended Learning	Iberika - DE	14
7	KEMP	IFI - ES	13
8	Training of Trainers (TOT)	IZ - AT	13
9	Communication in complicated situations	MDC - LT	13
10	Language & Culture (L&C)	IZ - AT	13
11	Training Format: one school at a time	OravaADE - SK	13
12	LAUTC	CE.S.I.E. - IT	12
13	Personal Development	OravaADE - SK	12
14	Education of unemployed and employment seekers in Adult Education centre of Kuldiga region	EDC - LV	12
15	RAVT	CE.S.I.E. - IT	12
16	Training for volunteers acting as mentors in the mentoring program MUNTERwegs	ARIADNE - CH	14

3. DESCRIPTION OF BEST PRACTICES

3.1 Austria

General background[1] of adult education in Austria

Actual situation of adult education in Austria

Adult education in Austria is organized on several levels. On the federal level, the Ministry for Education, Art and Culture is the major decision-maker, but other ministries also supervise specific agendas of adult education. The federal states' network Weiter Bildung connects the responsible departments of the administrative bodies in the federal governments. On the level of the federation, adult education is managed by the council of adult education Austria (KEBÖ), which includes the ten federations for further education. These work together with further partners in the cooperative system of adult education. University and non-university research institutions form a further category of adult education providers.

The Austrian scenery of adult education is in constant development. Developments in society and political priorities concerning education within the EU and Austria influence not only the supply, but also the providers.

In Austria there is no law stipulating that the state should finance adult and further education, but there is willingness to promote such a law in support of adult education. The Austrian model of mixed financing, including funds provided by the federal government, the federal states, towns and public bodies, sponsors and increasingly costs covered by beneficiaries of adult education, doesn't allow very clear statements about the overall capacity of the effected financial expenses for adult and further education per year. Estimations talk about an overall amount of at least 3 billion Euro for the year 2004.

Participation and persistence of trainees in LLL processes

The often promoted call for lifelong learning can be seen in the increasing interest for further education throughout the population. The increasing demand is met by the wider and more diverse offers of adult and further education providers.

According to the Austrian Institute for Educational Research in the Economy (ibw), participation in further education programmes of the adult population was 25.3% in 2003 (other sources mention 12.5% and 50%). Mainly job-related further education is seen as vital from the viewpoint of the economy. The significance of general further education seems to be decreasing. In Austria, 70 to 80% of the population don't participate in further education.

A significant but not surprising fact is that most beneficiaries of further education are people who hold a degree and who see specific possibilities for their job careers rather than people from less educated groups. Even though participation in further education programmes is stagnating, the number of older people seeking general further education programmes and that of people seeking job-related programmes is rising. It is also interesting that the supply of general adult education programmes targets people who are wealthier, whereas job-related further education attracts people that are asked by their employers to complete a course, or who enrol out of consideration for their career (see Lenz 2005, page 45) Overall, the more advanced the level of education of the potential beneficiaries, the more likely it is that they will participate in further education programmes.

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1 see ref. www.erwachsenenbildung.at

<u>National laws</u>
Austria has a specific law concerning adult education but education policy and organizational structure of the adult education system are regulated by a variety of legislative acts. All these laws, as well as the federal law concerning the provision of support for adult education, fail to state anything related to the participation and persistence of trainees in LL processes.

According to the Federal law concerning the support of adult education (171, March 1973), the federal state shall support the institutions of adult education as follows: object to the provision of this federal law are the institutions and their activities and such that provide for the acquisition of skills and knowledge, as well as the ability and the willingness for responsible judgement and actions and further the individual development of one's capacities.

Actions to enhance trainees' motivation for participation and persistence in LL processes (by state, by education providers etc.)
Although there are no such actions implemented by state or education providers, such actions could be:

    job related
- career opportunities within the company;
- better salary;
- more challenge;
- independent work;
- more responsibility;
- further education should be made possible during work time and should be supported financially by the company;

    provider related
- the provider should offer more evening classes and more in-house training;
- should see individual needs and learning should be "fun" again;

    community colleges
- should get more financial support from the government so that they can be affordable for a wider group of participants (currently, community colleges are organized as businesses, and therefore are cost and output oriented).

3.1.1 Language and culture

Good training practice background
The **Language and culture** course is a pilot project developed in cooperation between Intercultural Centre (Interkulturelles Zentrum, IZ) and the University of Vienna. The reason for this pilot project was the fact that intercultural subjects on offer only touch upon language marginally as one issue amongst many, and on the other hand, language teaching courses only skim over the cultural aspect. The purpose of this course is to focus on both these topics, as it is one of the great challenges for teachers.

The objective of this university-guided course is to support teachers in their work by giving them the possibility to deal with "language and culture" in depth and to develop answers to their questions that arise in practice. Unlike current further education courses for teachers, which relate to either language or culture, this course covers both fields equally and in relation to each other for the first time.

One specific feature of this course is that, beyond simply transferring knowledge, it inspires reflection on personal practical experiences using scientific findings, and also prompts participants to examine

theoretical models using their practical experiences. Course participants are seen as experts in their field of work, who will receive support in order to plan and master their teaching tasks to their greater satisfaction. This always involves critical reflection on their own role, as well as the positioning of their work in society and a general reflection of the social mission of education.

The course lasts one year. A total of 7 modules are offered approximately every 7 weeks.
Each module comprises 20 units, whereby 13 units are with instructors, 2 hours with guided supervision and 5 hours for self-oriented learning and peer group work.

The tools used in developing the training are
- Work in peer groups, continuous reflection;
- Three paths: personal, thematic and methodological paths are followed in the course;
- Action research, project work.

Work in peer groups serves to develop the content of the individual modules. Content and focal points can be chosen freely in each peer group.

At the beginning of the course, participants are asked to state and clarify their learning objectives and expectations from the course. These form the starting point for the individual learning process which participants document and also evaluate in a process portfolio on the one hand. On the other hand, the learning objectives and expectations of participants represent important points of orientation for the course leadership when shaping the course content. This means there can even be modifications to the course curriculum at the beginning.

Each lecturer is evaluated in writing by way of anonymous surveys once they have completed their contribution.
After the third and the seventh module, there is a moderated evaluation which gives the possibility of further modifying the curriculum after the third module and to form a tentative final image after the seventh module.

A final evaluation of the course takes place in written form approximately one month after the end of the course. The time interval is meant to ensure that the course assessment can be carried out without possible emotional concernments triggered by group dynamics-related processes and other experiences in the course. This enables a distanced assessment focussed on the applicability of the course in practice.

The partners in this training course implementation are IZ and the University of Vienna – Institute for German as a second language. The pilot course is sponsored by the Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture. The cooperation between a public educational institution and a private NGO is positive.

The course is aimed at active teachers who have at least three years of work experience and who require an in-depth analysis of the issues they are faced with in the course of their work.

Participants come from all fields of educational work (nursery schools, compulsory education, secondary schools and adult education). The variety and heterogeneity is felt in the groups of participants and the inherent potentials become perceptible through common learning experiences.

The participants of this pilot course are mostly women between 20 and 50 years of age.

The supporting materials are interactive exercises, presentations, forum theatre, and a workspace on www.iz.or.at to download documents, interesting links, and to facilitate networking.

By and large, there are few limitations, also because this course is a pilot project, in which there is a lot of room for experimentation. Both trainers and learners take part with great interest.

The major barriers are time-related (too much other work, private matters etc.). This sometimes means that participants cannot take part in all modules or in specific parts of a module. The biggest issue, however, is whether there will be the financial resources to continue delivering the training after this pilot course.

In part, the evaluation and action research data will provide information about the necessity and usefulness of the course. There are also considerations of offering this course to other target groups, such as for people in public service who work in public relations. For these target groups, the analysis of this matter would be very important and new sponsors could be found for this.

Detailed description of the good practice

The modules are structured in "paths", whereby there is a personal, a thematic and a methodological path.

The personal path is about self-reflection, the participants' own role, subjective theories and personal development. Based on the principles of Gestalt education (Fritz Perls) and theme-centred interaction (Ruth Cohn), personal experience and reflection on this experience are at the focal point. As a result, perceptual capacities and scopes of action are expanded and differentiated.

The thematic path is about analysing content, themes and scientific theories. Spontaneous reports, theoretical inputs and discussions with experts offer information and background knowledge. Case work makes issues tangible by way of real situations, whether fictional or real cases raised by the participants.

The methodological path is about the implementation and transfer of content and knowledge to practice. Here, participants are seen as experts. Participants' positive and successful experiences from the field offer ideas, motivation and guidance for activities and projects. The individual modules drive the exchange of experiences and discussion amongst colleagues. Peer group work completes the course. Participants support one another cooperatively in their learning and development process, including with the intervision tool. In addition, groups are supervised during the course in order to bring group learning to fruition in their own work as teachers.

The innovative aspects of the training are:
- Personal experience as the starting point and action research in own field of work. Participants become researchers themselves.
- Diversity of participants in relation to age, field of work (unfortunately, not so much as concerns gender).
- Thematic combination of language and culture, which is an innovation in Austria. There are numerous proposals in language that take too little consideration of the cultural aspect, and vice versa.

Practical elements and practical orientation:
Fundamentals
Personal path: Reflection of own professional identity; Self-conception as teachers; Practical experiences; Conceptions of education and images of humanity behind this;
Thematic path: Language - Identity - Culture
Methodological path: Presentation of methodological didactic concepts of the course; Formation of peer groups; Supervision;

Migration
Personal path: Stories of migration - personal and familiar experiences;
Thematic path: Data and facts about migration; Migration as a process and its effects on societal and individual levels; Language - migration - culture;
Methodological path: Action research and its application during the course Intervision;

Integration
Personal path: Reflection of personal experiences on language and identity as well as language and power
Thematic path: Data and facts about integration; Minorities and majorities; Integrative models in education; Language - integration - culture;
Methodological path: Biographic approaches in educational work; Supervision;

Racism and discrimination
Personal path: Presentation of personal prejudices; Awareness of discrimination experiences;
Thematic path: Emergence and functions of stereotypes and advantages; Structural discrimination; Language - stereotyping/discrimination - culture;
Methodological path: Strategies and instruments against discrimination, racism and xenophobia; Dealing with discrimination in groups; Supervision;

Communication and conflicts
Personal path: Reflection of own communication and conflict resolution approaches in teaching;
Thematic path: Intercultural and non-violent communication; Forms of conflicts; Language - communication/conflict - culture;
Methodological path: Conflict resolution methods and instruments; Supervision;

Methods and didactic approaches
Personal path: Reflection of personal methodological and didactic approaches and of the image of man and concepts of learning;
Thematic path: Systemisation of methods and didactic concepts; performance evaluation and competence assessment; Language - teaching/learning/testing - culture;
Methodological path: Forms of advice; Supervision;

Theories and research approaches
Personal path: Reflection of subjective theories and their effectiveness;
Thematic path: Relevant research results on language acquisition, multilingualism and intercultural educational research; Language - science and research - culture
Methodological path: Critical analysis of theoretical findings and their transfer to practical challenges; Supervision;

The method of the three paths can certainly be transferred to other educational courses, because this is a methodological approach that can be used for different issues. But this approach is more suitable for training of teachers or other professionals who are themselves involved in transferring knowledge.

Aspects concerning participation, engagement and motivation cannot be answered because this is a pilot project. In any case, there are two participants who had already taken part in another course on intercultural competences and who are enrolled in this **Language and culture** course.

We have different elements in the course that encourage participation and empowerment, such as peer group work, starting point of the personal path with personal experiences, participants as researchers and experts in their field.

Sustainability depends on the evaluation; there will be discussions with sponsors or other providers of education and training for teachers in order to offer this course in regular form.
Another consideration is to adapt this course for other target groups, such as for public servants active in public relations.

Outcomes/ benefits
As the course will only be completed in November, we don't yet have a final evaluation of the results. Nevertheless, the interim assessment is positive.
The research accompanying the course serves as information to be used in the field by participants and also to see whether the perspectives of participants change during the course. They will shed light on the teachers' actual potential as well as the potential of institutions in relation to responding to linguistic and cultural diversity. This will also show the obstacles, some of which can be overcome in the course, but some others of which can only be revealed. Yet some other barriers are of a structural nature and lie outside the remit of teachers.

Practical questions
- How is practice and the realities experienced by teachers formed?
- What attitudes (idea of man and education ideal) are represented by teachers?
- How can the school system adapt to the changed societal conditions?

Questions in relation to the course (evaluation)
- Can changes to attitudes and practices of teachers be observed during the course?
- To what extent are the expectations from the course fulfilled?

Methodological approaches:
Secondary research will be a part of the course, i.e. it will take place largely within the scope of the time for reflection in the modules and in selected parts of the modules. Within this scope, data is obtained with creative methods which are assessed with regard to the questions.
2-3 interviews are going to be held and the information gathered will be processed to inform the

course.

Also, participants are supported on a voluntary basis in their own action research process workshops, and the discussions during these coaching events are evaluated. Dissertations are also expected to present relevant data.

Creative data collection using:
• Posters (expectations from the course, perception of own role, ...), diagrams (topography of diversity/language regimes in the education institution, language portraits, ...), log book/diary/audio/image recordings (critical moments when dealing with linguistic and cultural diversity in teaching)

Data collection by way of interviews:
• 	Sound recording, paraphrasing and selected transcription, guiding observations;
Data assessment
• 	Qualitative content analysis, discourse analysis, data triangulation, researcher triangulation, communicative validation.

Summary and conclusions
This course was developed based on various courses on the subject of intercultural competences and based on the experiences of the Institute for German as a Second Language in the field of language teaching. This means that many experiences were incorporated in the development.

Participants' feedback until now confirms the innovative character of the course and some of the objectives have already been achieved.

Interest in the subject and in the combination "language and culture" is a significant factor for the motivation of participants. A further factor is the learning group itself, the heterogeneity in relation to fields of application on the one hand, and the openness to reflection on personal practical experiences on the other hand. Equality between reflection on personal experiences and input of new knowledge is definitely also an important factor that motivates participants' engagement.

3.1.2 Training of trainers

Good training practice background
Based on the assumption that there is a lack of qualified trainers and of international teams of trainers for European youth training projects, this course was designed with the following major aim: to further develop the network of trainers and facilitators who have the skills and the motivation to implement training projects within European Youth Projects.
From the beginning, the course was organised by Interkulturelles Zentrum (IZ) in close co-operation with the network of National Agencies and the European Commission. IZ was the National Agency for the European Youth Programme at that time(2000).Consequently, the courses have all been financed so far through funds of the YOUTH Programme. Participants have not had to contribute financially to

the costs of the course.

The major aim of this training course is to train trainers who have the competences and the motivation to contribute to the improvement of the quality of projects within the Youth in Action Programme of the European Union.

The specific objectives with respect to the trainees of the training course are to further develop and improve the following competences of participants:

- The competence to design and implement training activities for youth workers and other actors involved in the development and implementation of projects within the European Youth in Action Programme;
- The competence to co-operate in international teams of trainers/facilitators;
- The competence to deal with ambiguity and change;
- Intercultural competence;
- The competence to facilitate learning;
- The competence to direct one's own learning.

Furthermore, other objectives have been:

- To increase participants' understanding of the educational context (i.e. Non-Formal Education, Life-Long Learning) in which this training course is placed;
- To encourage participants to further develop and make explicit their personal training approach.

"Training for Trainers" is a training course for youth workers, trainers, and staff of the National Agencies of the European Commission's Youth in Action programme.

The long-term character of the course secures the possibility to make the train process- and learner-oriented. The methodology allows us to follow the learning process of the individual participants. The course starts from the assumption that participants arrive with various levels of competences and therefore have various learning needs. The course aims to support first and foremost the development of the participants' competence of learning; in this way they strengthen their capacity to pursue their professional development as a trainer in a self-directed way once the course is completed.

This course requires a considerable time investment from the participants: in total at least 57 days:

- 30 seminar days (including travel)
- 12 days overall for the training project (preparatory work, preparatory meeting and the course itself)
- 15 days (on average, 1-2 days per month) for carrying out the personal learning project, e-learning, discussions with the mentor, etc.

The good practice described here was developed in 1999-2000, so it has been delivered for more than 10 years.

The course consists of the following elements:

- 3 residential seminars (altogether 26 days) from September to June of the following year;
- A training project to be completed within an international group (with other participants of the course);
- A personal learning project;
- Learner coaching provided by one of the trainers throughout the whole year;
- e-learning aspects.

The methodology is based on non-formal education principles with a special emphasis on peer learning, learning to learn and supporting individual learning processes (through learning coaching).

Description of the training content
Seminars:
Seminar 1: The initial seminar focuses mainly on laying the foundation for the whole course: Group Building, Youth in Action Programme and the political context of the course (especially European Citizenship), Developing an adequate learning environment, How do I learn and how do I assess learning (YouthPass), Essentials of Training, Group Dynamic, Starting of the preparation of the project phase, Identifying a Personal Learning Project for the next phase, Setting learning objectives for the year, Roles of a trainer; and last but not least the Forming of the Project Teams.

Seminar 2: Largely based on the training needs of the group, this seminar provides opportunities to further develop specific training competences; a special focus is laid on teamwork, training design, intercultural learning and methodology. The design of this seminar is greatly shaped by inputs from participants – it provides several options for practising skills within the seminar. The project teams have the chance to gain experience working as a group within several parts of the programme.

Seminar 3: evaluation and closing seminar. In a relaxed manner, participants get the chance to evaluate specific aspects of their training projects in groups. Furthermore, the seminar provides the opportunity to reflect on the individual learning path throughout the year and to re-visit some training topics or have short workshops on some aspects. Last but not least it facilitates exit from the course and entry into the next stage of development as a trainer.

Normally our training courses always start with developing a group atmosphere which supports learning from each other – trust, knowing each other's resources, principles for group interaction, etc.
We work a lot with the resources participants bring with them in terms of prior knowledge and experience. For the initial seminar we always have a box full of games and juggling materials to support the interaction in the group and – especially with the juggling games – to support the use of the left as well as the right part of the brain; in addition, if the participants prefer this, it provides them with the possibility to learn something new in the course which is not strictly part of the curriculum.

This training course is for trainers who have the competences and the motivation to contribute to the improvement of the quality of projects within the Youth in Action Programme of the European Union.
The training is delivered in partnership by Salto Youth and Interkulturelles Zentrum.

Participants who want to join the training course are expected
- To have been involved at least three times in a team of trainers designing, implementing and evaluating a training course in the framework of Non-Formal Education.
- To have international experience with a function of responsibility (not only as a participant) in the field of Youth in Action projects/Youth work (such as Youth Exchanges, EVS-projects, etc.).
- To have the potential and need to develop training competences and act after the course as a trainer for European YOUTH IN ACTION projects and/or for Training courses organised by the National Agencies of the YOUTH IN ACTION programme.
- To show initiative and willingness to self-direct his/her own learning process.
- To develop, implement and evaluate an international training project (in the framework of YOUTH IN ACTION programme) together with other course participants as part of this training course.
- To be able to run training courses in English.
In the course, we work with a variety of exercises supporting experiential and constructivist learning:

group work, reflection groups, simulation exercises, problem-solving exercises, team-building exercises, feedback questionnaires, etc. The most important "materials" are the practical elements of the course: running workshops/sessions within the residential seminars, as well as the training project the participants have to design, implement and evaluate in teams.

Additionally, participants have a LAB (Learning Achievement Book) which serves as a kind of diary throughout the course.

An important material to support the learning is a so-called "self-perception inventory" – a self-assessment tool based on the 7 key competences for trainers identified by the course team.

The course is very well received and evaluated by the participants. Every year there are around 100-120 applications for 24 places. The aspect of limitation can be seen from different point of view.

There are limitations the trainers face: three trainers working with 24 participants considering the participant-centered methodology we have is very challenging. Especially having 8 "mentees" to follow throughout the year is very demanding. Sometimes the trainers cannot devote as much time and energy to the needs of the single participant as desired.

Limitations the learners face: The great variety in expertise, competences and prior knowledge within the participant group poses challenges to the cooperation for the practice projects especially. Some participants are almost beginners when it comes to training, while others have 10 years or more experience.

Limitations for the management: The recruitment of participants depends solely on the National Agencies of the Youth in Action programme, where the funding comes from. Therefore as manager of the course you have to deal with many stakeholders who often pursue diverse interests.

The National Agencies as recruiting and funding bodies, and SALTO youth as the coordinating institution influence the status quo of the programme the most. Their strategy in the field of training widely impacts the course.

The great diversity with respect to experience, prior knowledge and competences as trainers within the participant group can be seen as crucial "issues". There are always a number of participants for whom the course is too challenging, which sometimes has a negative impact on the participation and learning of other participants.

Crucial to contribute in solution finding is the communication between the trainers and the learners on the one hand, and collaboration with the recruiting and funding bodies on the other hand. The documentation of the course has to improve respecting the needs of the institutions so that they can understand better what kind of participants the course is designed for.

Detailed description of the good practice

The methodology framework is based on the Constructivist learning and experiential learning.

Constructivist learning: The term refers to the idea that learners construct knowledge for themselves: each learner individually (and socially) constructs meaning as he or she learns. Constructing meaning is learning; there is no other kind. The dramatic consequences of this view are twofold:

1) we have to focus on the learner in thinking about learning (not on the subject/lesson to be taught),

2) there is no knowledge independent of the meaning attributed to it by experience constructed by the learner, or by the community of learners.
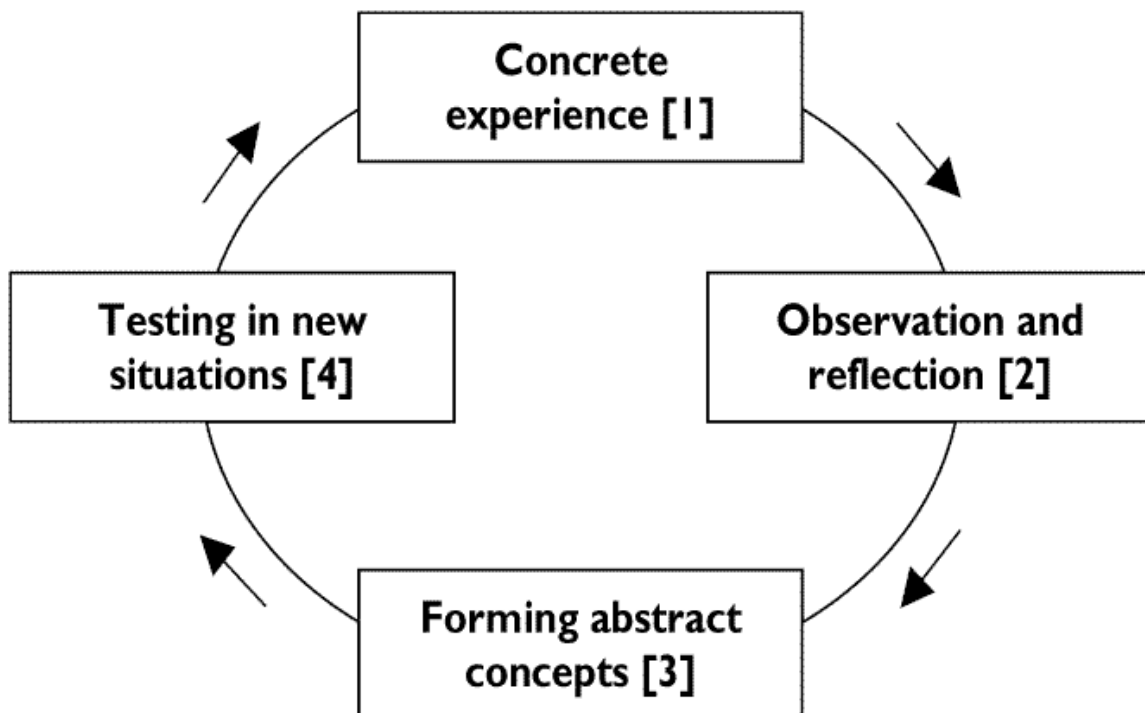
Experiential learning:

Figure 1: Experiential learning

The reason why this methodology was chosen by the provider can be described as follows:

Since participants arrive with a diverse background in training, with different levels of prior experience and thus different deriving training needs we had to design a methodology that leaves room for responding to these different needs - a truly learner-centred methodology.

Training for trainers has the advantage that the course itself and how it is run is already a "training input" – you have a model where you can implement a lot you want to pass on about training. Therefore we developed a so-called "here-and-now" methodology aiming at using the common experience of the course as much as possible as a source of learning.

The most original aspect of our programme we would consider the emphasis on learning to learn. We believe that developing as a trainer is a long-term process accompanying the professional life-span

– one course, even if a long one – does not do the job; nor two courses neither three. A lot of the trainers' competences are life-long and life-wide competences – communication, critical thinking, dealing with ambiguity, conflict resolution, interculturality etc. Therefore we focus a lot on strengthening the capacity of trainers to direct their own learning, have an awareness of themselves as learners and be able to draw from learning resources around them.

Elements such as personal learning projects, practical training projects and learning coaching are parts of this methodological approach. In seminar 2 there are two days completely managed by participants based on their learning and training needs.

The training offers many possibilities for participants to develop life-wide and life-long competences such as communication, interpersonal, conflict resolution, learning to learn. The fact that as a part of the course they have to plan, implement and evaluate an international training course in an international team supports the development of competences such as team work, dealing with ambiguity, and conflict resolution.

Developing the competence of learning to learn is essential for succeeding in private and professional life. It supports making choices in life, continuous updating of resources and competences, adapting to changing conditions.

The focus on transversal life-long and life-wide competences such as learning to learn and dealing with ambiguity can be transferred to many other educational settings; a methodology based on learning to learn could be a horizontal feature in many training activities.

The trainings are always filled to capacity. The engagement and motivation of trainees is generally very high. Our whole methodology (focus on learning to learn and self-directed learning) is based largely on the intrinsic motivation of participants. In the seminars we have several parts where there is no fixed programme for everybody, but rather self-organised time. From the beginning, we make it clear that we are not assessing them but they are assessing themselves: they have to see what they want to get out of the course, and the more they put in, the more they get out; this is also held valid for peer learning.

We can assess how motivated participants are judging by the way theydo their assignments and use the self-organised time. In addition, every evening before closing the day we have so-called reflection groups, i.e. fixed groups facilitated by one trainer, which serve the purpose to reflect about the day and to provide the possibility to release tension or frustration that can block learning.

The training programme will be delivered till 2013, and depending on the new youth programme it may be extended beyond that time.
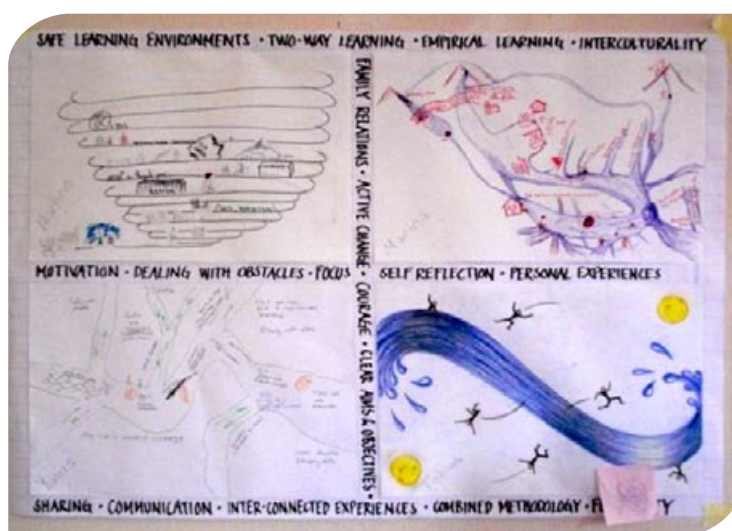
Detailed description of the outcomes/ benefits

The outcomes are predominantly measured through the self-assessment done by participants as well as the evaluation by participants and the team after each residential seminar, and at the end of the course. Very often participants learn much more or different things than they had expected. A surprising learning element for many is their increased competence in learning to learn. They have an increased awareness of themselves as learners; which is very relevant for their further professional and personal development as a trainer. As we state in the very beginning: the end of the course is the beginning of a next phase of learning and development as a trainer.

Summary/Conclusions

The good practice we have shared above is a truly learner-centred methodology aiming at empowering adult learners. The course is designed within the understanding of life-long learning: it is not a classic vocational training course which declares at the end that the participant is now a fully qualified trainer, but rather it demonstrates the learning achievements over a year, and defines the areas where there is still need for improvement and development.

The learning to learn approach motivates and empowers participants to better direct their learning. The approach targets potentials and not deficits. A lot of people are very competent but have very little self-esteem and self-confidence. We work a lot to strengthen participants' self-confidence so they are able to act out their competences.

General background of Adult Education in Germany

Adult Education/ Continuing Education
Adult education in Germany comprises various roots and traditions; "liberal art enrichment for developing individuals, enlightenment for emancipation and political understanding, action and empowerment, as well as value-based social education and improvement, and training for better performance in work and private life."[2] Currently, the terms "adult education" and "continuing education" are often used synonymously. While the term "continuing education" has rather vocational-oriented connotations, "adult education" is generally non-vocational.[3]

In the 1970s, the "Deutscher Bildungsrat" defined "adult education as the continuation or re-starting of organized learning after finishing a first education and an intermediate phase of working."[4] Critics say that this definition focuses on organised and intentional learning, while education and learning in adulthood occurs in a variety of situations. Trainees and students in higher education are not counted as being in adult learning and education. Furthermore, in Germany a distinction is made between continuing vocational training and continuing education of general, political or cultural nature.[5] All considered, one of the grounding principles in adult education is voluntary participation.

Political Responsibility
In Germany it is the responsibility of each federal state to regulate education and culture. Adult education/ continuing education is less regulated by the state than other areas of education. It features a high level of pluralism and competition among providers. The activity of the state is limited due to the federal regulations. So its activities are mostly focused on the stipulation of principles and basic parameters and on the introduction of rules to ensure that the activities are properly organised and supported. These rules are then incorporated into the laws of the federal states.
Some federal states have a so- called "Erwachsenenbildungsgesetz" (adult education act). For reference, information about the Thuringian adult education act (ThEBG) is available at www.thueringen.de/de/tmbwk/bildung/schulwesen/gesetze/ebg/.

Sources of funding
With regards to the pluralistic structure of adult education in Germany, funding is based on a variety of sources such as:[6]
- the federal states and the communities;
- the (private) economy;
- sponsoring bodies;
- private households;
- federal labour agency';
- projects by the EU or ministries of the federal states or the state of Germany;
- admissions.

In the year 2000, the amount of public expenditures on adult education added up to 36.7 billion EUR.[7]

2　　　REISCHMANN 1999
3　　　NUISSL 1994
4　　　DEUTSCHER BILDUNGSRAT 1970
5　　　BMBF 2008 p. 146
6　　　DIE-Bonn 2004
7　　　DIE-Bonn 2004

Major actors

According to several studies of the "Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung" (DIE/ German institute on adult education), the major actors in adult education provision in Germany are:

- adult education centres;
- ecclesiastical education providers;
- education providers of employer associations and chambers;
- trade-union education providers;
- providers with the legal status of an association;
- other public law education providers;
- foundations;
- other education providers managed as private companies.

Range of courses and programmes

The spectrum of course supply is as wide and varied as the major actors in adult education provision. They cover general, vocational, civic, cultural and academic programmes. One can attend courses, lectures, seminars on a daily or weekly basis, or participate in weekend courses or educational trips.

The subjects covered by adult education are various. They range from language learning, to political and intercultural education, health education, art, cooking, computing and improvement of vocational skills, including courses designed to support learners to get a degree.

Actions to attract participants and to enhance motivation for persistence

Actions to attract participants

To attract participants, providers use different ways such as:

- Professionally designed programmes;
- Establishment of adult education centres;
- Cooperation with different organisations and institutions such as libraries, schools, foundations etc.;
- Use of new media such as internet, computers, social networks, YouTube;
- Regional and national level advertise ment (radio spots, cinema advertising...).

Actions to enhance motivation for participation and persistence in LLL processes

- Provision of acknowledgement certificates such as TELC (language tests), Cambridge examinations, Xpert ;
- Financial support (education bonus);
- Counselling;
- Steady ambition to professionalise teacher and trainer;
- Strive to offer modern courses;
- Various types of learning, such as educational trips, flexible course time (morning course, evening course, etc.), adaptation of TV shows, such as cooking duel or blind-date dinner, courses for specific target groups (learners over 50, students preparation courses, parents etc.).

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URL: www.thueringen.de/de/tmbwk/bildung/schulwesen/gesetze/ebg/

3.2.1 Blended learning

Responsible Provider:	Berufsschule für Tourismus (Vocational Training School for Tourism)
Web address:	http://www.berufsschule-tourismus.de/
Vocational Training:	http://www.berufsschule-tourismus.de/bft/berufsausbildung/ staatlich-anerkannter-touristikassistent
Responsible trainer:	Paula Gómez Hernández, paumgh@yahoo.de

Good training practice background

The method of Blended Learning is used by the Spanish teacher Paula Gomez in the "Spanish Course Intermediate" as a part of the formal vocational training "International Tourism Assistant".
In this class the teacher combines face-to-face instruction and E-Learning, called Blended Learning. This method exists since the 1990s. The Spanish course lasts 1 year. The participants of the course are 3 young women between 20 and 25 years old who all have a diploma from German secondary school qualifying for university admission.

Paula Gomez

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The course takes place at the "Berufsschule für Tourismus" (Vocational Training School for Tourism), a private school in Berlin, Germany. During the E-learning phase the trainer can give guidance and support to trainees from anywhere.
The trainer has 10 years of experience in language teaching and approximately two with the method of Blended Learning.

The main objective of the course is to learn Spanish. The trainees will probably qualify for the vocational training required internship in Spain, which will be facilitated by learning the language.
In general the participants can improve their communication skills. Through the method of Blended Learning they can furthermore advance in the use of new media.

Blended Learning consists of the ideal combination of the positive features of E-learning and face-to-face instruction, for example through balancing the benefits of facilitated communication by E-learning with its lack of social interaction that can be found in face-to-face instruction. It facilitates the exchange of knowledge and information overcoming space limitations, in combination with the exchange of experiences, role-plays and personal encounter of the classical face-to face instruction.
The two methods should be composed according to the educational objectives and to the needs of the target groups. To reach an ideal result the trainers and the trainees have to agree on the proportion of responsibility between instructed and self-determined learning. Furthermore a non-disturbing, comfortable, and well-equipped learning environment has to be created for success.
The combination of E-learning and face-to-face instruction should be based on a concrete instructional model and be more than summing up individual components.

Target audience

Educational objectives

Self determined learning phases
Face to face learning phases
Technical resources

Concrete instructional model of Blended Learning:
Combination of E-learning and face to face instruction which is more than summing up individual components
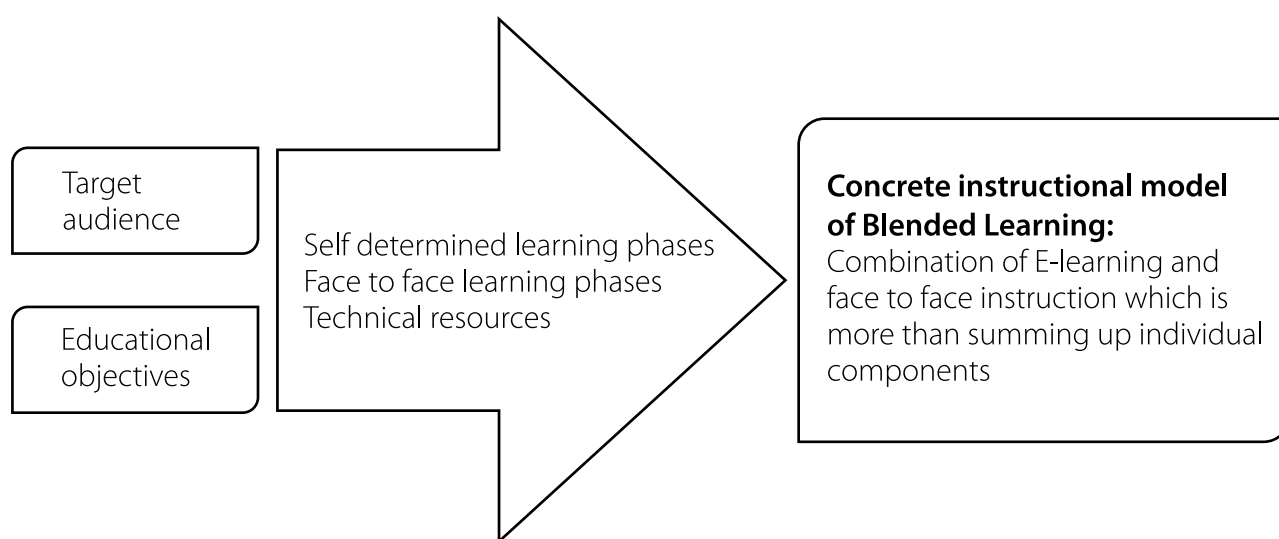
Figure 2: Learning model of the Blended Learning Training

Detailed description of the good practice and of the outcomes/ benefits
The method of Blended Learning can be used in many different ways. The way Ms Gomez uses it within the Spanish language class is by providing training blocks consisting of four lessons in which they have to develop a certain project in teams. Therefore she gives the students different subtasks.
First of all the trainer or the students themselves make a suggestion on a topic for the development of a project, e.g. a particular country, a culture they are interested in or news etc. Then the trainer provides tourism specific vocabulary related to the chosen topic.

The next step is that the students do research on the Internet in class. By looking on Spanish websites they learn new vocabulary and more about different countries, cultures etc. After the trainer has provided the structure for the teamwork, the trainees start working on the project in groups. Therefore they can use the vocabulary provided by the trainer. If needed the trainees continue the research and teamwork at home. During this self-learning phase the trainer may provide additional grammar and vocabulary exercises, to intensify what the students have learned so far. For this purpose the E-learning platform of the Vocational Training School for Tourism could be used.

In the next class each group gives a presentation as an outcome of its group work. It can be IT-based, by presenting a poster or anything else. The trainer and the rest of the class give feedback. The presentation is generally followed by an exchange and collection of opinions and a reflection on lessons learnt. Additional exercises to enhance vocabulary and grammar may be provided.

Ms Gomez chose to use the approach of Blended Learning in this Spanish course because the school promotes it and is technically well equipped.
The small size of the class is also a good pre-condition for the use of Blended Learning.
Through the combination of IT-based self-learning phases the trainer can deal with another class she teaches in the school at the same time.
She regards it as an advantage that the participants can work independently with new media and that she can give guidance to them and offer them language tools through the face-to- face instruction.
In addition, the participants practice teamwork and exchange ideas through the project , which she regards as a mutual enrichment.

The language class is for the participants of the vocational training only. To be able to participate in this they have to have a diploma from a German secondary school qualifying for university admission as a formal requirement. Furthermore, they or their parents have to be able to pay the school fee.
Normally vocational training schools in Germany are public. A vocational training traditionally consists of a working phase in a company or institution and school based instruction (dual education system). One difficulty encountered by the interviewed trainees is the lack of public schools and the offers the few public schools provide (in this case the variety of different language classes).
In general the lack of employment in companies or institutions as a part of vocational trainings is also a problem in Germany. Because of this the number of private offers increases where the students are often not integrated into the real life working process, which is a great advantage of the dual education system.

Blended Learning as a teaching method can be used by anyone. The E-learning part requires a computer at home or ideally in class and, if possible, an E-learning platform. In Germany private schools are usually better equipped technically, which disadvantages adult learners with less financial recourses. In order to include groups from poorer social backgrounds work groups can be founded which are composed according to the technical recourses and make sure that everyone has access to a computer. Technically less equipped learning institutions can transfer the E-Learning part to the participants´ homes, if needed, also in teamwork. In general the face-to-face instruction part can be weighted more than the E-learning part. (see also figure 2)
The combination of E-Learning and face-to-face instruction can be regarded as innovative because of

an alternate use of new media and because of using the positive features of both methods.
According to Ms Gomez the use of new media supports the individualisation of learning, because they offer the students the possibility to grasp the contents on different paths rather than in a linear way. In this particular Spanish language course the method of Blended Learning can be used in an ideal way through the equipment that is available in the school.

When it comes to practice orientation, learning the Spanish language has a very high relevance for the students because they can use it for their internships and later for their jobs in the tourism sector. Through the combination of group work and face-to-face instruction as provided by Blended Learning they can furthermore improve their computer and communication skills.

Blended Learning can be used in many other contexts than language courses. For E-learning the provider, or at least the students, need to be equipped with computers and Internet connexion. The trainer needs to give guidance to the students during the E-learning phase. For this purpose an E-learning platform should ideally be provided where the trainer can provide the students at any time and from anywhere with information or additional material, open online forums, make quizzes etc. The Vocational Training School for Tourism provides technical resources exclusively for its students, but there exists open source software with which an E-learning platform can be created easily.

In general Blended Learning can only be efficient if the learner is intrinsically motivated and comes to terms with the affective demands of learning.
The participants of the course are highly motivated which is due to the self- determined choice of themes and the working process. The teacher usually tries to offer themes that the participants can relate to their experience.
Another empowering factor is that the students can see the direct advantage they will have, which is using Spanish for their job and their required internship in Spain.

If the students stay longer in the course because of the use of Blended Learning cannot be said in this particular case though, because the structure is already given within this vocational training programme. In the interviews they highly appreciate the use of Blended Learning, and recommend it to any other providers of adult education.
In general an important aspect in providing motivation for participants in the life long learning process and encouraging them to persevere is flexibility. In the 13 interviews conducted by Iberika altogether this factor was mentioned by many of the trainers and trainees.

Trainees: Alina Winkler and Virginia Falkner

The course can be regarded as socially inclusive, because it provides the ability to communicate in other languages which can improve job opportunities for instance, especially in the tourism sector. Through learning more about different cultures the good practice promotes critical thinking to a certain extent. The national and foreign cultures can be reflected on. By using the method of Blended Learning foreign cultures can be integrated into the training more easily.
As Ms Gomez said, it promotes cooperative work through organizing and putting into practice projects

in teams. Within this process the participants can exchange ideas and experiences.

It motivates the students because in the E-learning phase they can take over responsibility for their own learning process.

Summary and conclusions

"I consider Blended Learning to be very sustainable because it combines the positive features of face-to face instruction and E-learning and contributes to motivating the participants.

I think its use will increase in the future because the use of new media will rise. They will be used in a more thoroughly designed way, like in Blended Learning, based on a concrete instructional model. Blended Learning will be more and more important for professional trainings, universities and adult education institutions. For a better understanding of the learning processes and consequently the effectiveness of Blended Learning, pedagogical research has to be further advanced. To this purpose assistance and tools can be offered in order to help trainers and organizers to develop Blended Learning approaches that are more than a pragmatic alternative.

Furthermore language learning will become more significant in times of globalisation and the merging European community. Delivery should and will be oriented towards modern and innovative teaching methods." - Ms. Gomez

3.2.2. From coexistence to cooperation

Good training practice background

In 2005 the Federal Ministry of Migration and Refugees introduced the new regulations for naturalisation. To become a full German citizen, migrants have to pass two tests: a) the B1 level in German language and b) the naturalization test. In order to support migrants to pass both tests the so-called "integration course" was introduced by the Ministry. The course consists of 600 learning units for German as a second language and 45 "orientation" units. Topics covered by the latter are "politics and democracy", "history and responsibility" as well as "humans and society". The aim is for migrants to be able to communicate properly as well as to participate in the German society.

The integration of migrants within the society is a challenge due to various factors.

On the basis of the statutory integration courses the project "from coexistence to cooperation" was developed in order to improve the integration of migrants.

Within a „normal" integration course the motivation to learn German goes down significantly after 3 month. Participants are wondering why they should learn the language. "What can I do with my knowledge of German afterwards?" Exactly at this point the project joins in. After 3 month the language course will be halted and the participants have the chance to do an internship in a local company such as a restaurant or kindergarten. Within this internship, they enhance their German vocabulary, get an idea of a possible job career, etc. This increases their motivation for language learning and integration. The internship is monitored by social pedagogues.

The project "From coexistence to cooperation" was developed as a pilot project by the adult education centre in Apolda. Apolda is a small town in Eastern Thuringia. The pilot project was first delivered in 2007. The testing was a great success, so in 2008 the Thuringia Association of Adult education centres took the pilot project on a new level.

The aims of the project "From coexistence to cooperation" are:
- to increase the success of integration;
- to improve the vocational skills of migrants;

- to improve the integration of migrants within their community/ cities.

Beside the concrete aim to successfully integrate and improve the competences of migrants the project aims on the other hand for the further development of the professional integration work within the Thuringian adult education centers.
The initial course developed by the adult education center Apolda served as a pattern for the courses created by the involved adult education center. The new courses also had their focus on strengthening cooperation with companies within the region in order to reduce the time and effort to acquire internship places for the participants.

Detailed description of the good practice

The concept of the course "From coexistence to cooperation" is divided into 6 parts:

integration course part 1	social language internship	integration course part 2	potential analysis of vocational skills	final presentation

Within the course, participants can test their mastery of the language in concrete situations such as consultations with the social pedagogue as well as within the internship and during the final presentation. The use of ICT as well as other media such as TV, video or CDs, offers a wide range of practice opportunities.

As mentioned above, the motivation to learn German goes down significantly after 3 months within a „normal" integration course. Exactly at this point the project joins in. After 3 month the language course will be halted and the participants have the chance to do an internship in a local company. This internship lasts for 6 weeks. The halted integration course will start again after the internship has ended. The course is complemented with the potential analysis of vocational skills as well as the final presentation.

Social language internship: The duration of the internship is 6 weeks. It is planned to be a full-time internship so that the participants have to work 8 hours a day. The aim of the internship is to consolidate the learners' German language skills as well as to automate the learned language structure and to lower language barriers. This shall be achieved through an expedient and self-contained employment within a German speaking team. Furthermore, the internship gives the interns a good opportunity to get to know specific cultural aspects within the German speaking work and daily life. How many hours a participant will work as well as the work field depend on the interest and skills of each participant. It is important that the participants attend the internship continuously. Due to the fact that the language knowledge of the participants covers most likely only the basics it is important to facilitate an intensive social pedagogical monitoring by the course facilitator.
- Once a week, there is a consultation day taking place at the adult education centre. This is important in order to facilitate reflection on one's language and social skills as well as to consolidate the learning group.
- The process of self-reflection is supported by the use of internship journals as well as of the European language portfolio and the "profilpass". Nevertheless, self-reflection demands intensive monitoring.
- The responsibilities and tasks of the social pedagogical monitor are to clarify and control the

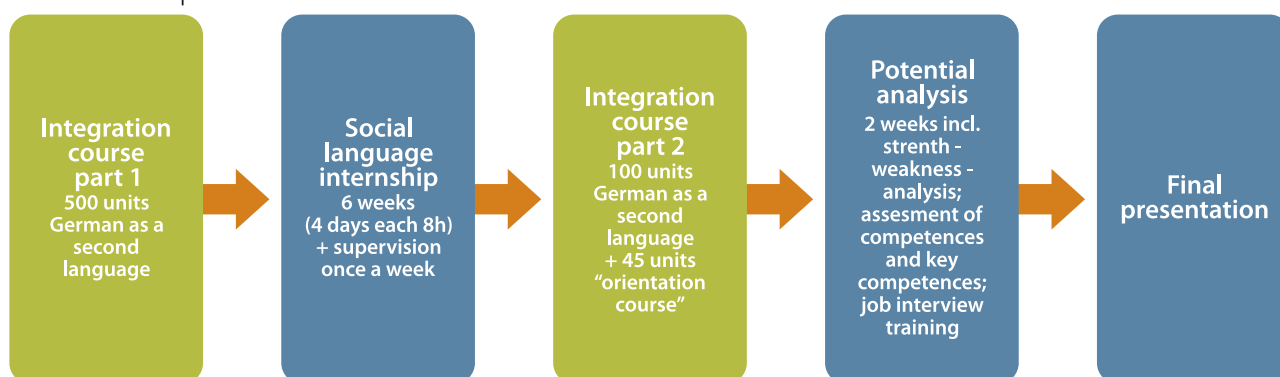interns' daily work load, their progress, as well as to liaise with the company that takes in the interns.

Vocational potential analysis: The potential analysis runs for 2 weeks. It covers the strengths – weaknesses analysis, as well as the assessment of key and specific competences which are relevant for a specific profession. Also it includes a reconciliation of interests and affinity.
This segment also includes:
• Consultation about existing degrees and the recognition of foreign degrees;
• Skills assessment for the labour market.
• Assessment of skills is carried out within group work as well as individual interviews. This covers also intensive job application training and support for participants to prepare their application documents.

Final presentation: The final presentation provides an opportunity for the participants to show a wider public what they have achieved within the integration course. It is the platform to present impressions, experiences and results in front of all participants and all involved partners such as social pedagogues, teacher/ trainer, internship providers as well as representatives from the local media.

The course is planed as follows:

Integration course part 1
500 units
German as a second language

→

Social language internship
6 weeks
(4 days each 8h)
+ supervision once a week

→

Integration course part 2
100 units
German as a second language
+ 45 units "orientation course"

→

Potential analysis
2 weeks incl. strenth - weakness - analysis; assesment of competences and key competences; job interview training

→

Final presentation

The above described course plan is not a rigid concept. It can be changed according to the needs and options of the learners as well as the education centre. For example, some centres changed it so that the integration course was delivered as one block. So the internship started right after the language course ended.

Besides the concrete aim to successfully integrate and improve migrants' competences, the project aims to promote professional integration work within the Thuringian adult education centers. In order to achieve the latter aim, the centres provide further education for the involved teachers/ trainers and social workers. The professionals involved received training in order to use the competence assessment concept "profile pass" as well as the European language portfolio. The project also included training aimed at developing cultural communication skills (Xpert CCS), as well as supervision work and project team meetings for the involved staff.

Outcomes/benefits

According to the evaluation of the project the courses that took place in 2008 and 2009 were successful.

Rise of success rate for the integration course: The participants clearly improved their German language skills. Especially their speaking abilities (talking about everyday life topics) enhanced significantly. Of the total number of participants, 50% achieved test results above average in the oral exams.

Improvement of vocational skills: The participants gained understanding of the concrete work habits and developed their own work habits in areas such as punctuality, and accomplishment of the assigned task within a specific time frame. There competences were described and discussed in preparation for job interviews. The companies who offered internships estimated that approx. 75% of the participants increased their knowledge concerning the necessary competences to work in a German company. Also 20% of the companies who had interns showed interest to employ them as regular employees.

Improvement of integration within communities: Thanks to the integration course as well as the internship, 75% of the participants see their integration perspectives more positively than at the beginning of the project. Of the interviewed employees who worked at the companies that offered internships, 50% stated that working together with the migrants opened up their perspective concerning the company and cohabitation with migrants.

The training course certainly encourages participants to learn German. Also it encourages the learners to deal with the job market and with their own future and possible career. They gain self confidence and experiences with language, daily work routine, how to do a job interview, how to apply for a job, etc.

In addition to the positive effects on the learners, there are also improvements made by the adult education centers. So the project helped to connect local companies with adult education centers and to create networks among important stakeholders. Moreover, by training their involved staff, the adult education centers were able to widen their range of service for migrants 9e.g. by including counselling).

There were a number of obstacles encountered. According to the teachers, a number of potential participants did not want to take part in the course due to the fact that some were afraid that their knowledge of German was not adequate. Others, especially those who already had vocational training in their home country, refused to go into a company as an intern.

Summary/conclusions

The combination of language learning, internship (vocational skills improvement) and assessment of skills and competences can be seen as an innovation as most courses are only focused on language learning without the direct link to everyday life and the workplace. The course increased the migrants' chances of integration in the local job market.

The strategy adopted in this course can certainly be transferred to other target groups such as illiterates or young learners with low educational background. The combination of learning, vocational practice and self-assessment is very attractive and highly motivating for learners.

General background of adult education in Italy

Italy cannot keep up pace with Europe in the field of education and adult education. We rank low in evaluations of literacy and numeracy skills, familiarity with new technologies and the degree of participation in the training system for adults, especially with regard to the weakest. One third of young people between 20 and 29 years have not obtained a primary school diploma, and only 1% of people between 24 and 65 years participate in lifelong learning, as compared to a European average of 2.3%.[8] The Italian Government does not allocate sufficient resources to education for adults. Although the Italian arena is full of education and training initiatives, they need a process of rationalization and strengthening. Today this heritage is likely to disperse because it lacks a comprehensive framework of reference, as well as sound strategies and funding. In addition, the agreement between State, Regions and Local Government, signed in March 2000, has been completely disregarded. The Agreement, by transposing the EU guidelines concerning knowledge-based society, laid the foundation for building an integrated system in our country to train local citizens in adulthood.

Italian non formal education started along with the institution of UNIVERSITA DELLA TERZA ETA (University of Third Age). Lifelong learning has found in this country different ways to progress, by adopting different channels such as the updating of continuous education, remedial classes in school, social volunteering and evening classes for adult learners, special classes for immigrants and refugees, e-learning, equal rights and opportunities classes for women, environmental associations, free-time classes etc.

All these institutions develop independently without the support of National or local organizations: lack of team-work and cooperation is therefore penalizing this work in progress, which in turn fails to meet the public expectations and sometimes even wastes resources. State and private institutions should work together to upgrade the offer, set priorities and quality standards including in favour of minorities and disadvantaged groups. For the time being, this does not happen in Italy and our present Institutions are often responsible for further confusion in all these often overlapping initiatives.

3.3.1. Learning About Us Through Culture - LAUTC
Good training practice background

LAUTC demonstrates the need for the development of Intercultural dialogue (ICD) within European local communities in order to create an inclusive European identity promoting the common cultural heritage and the importance of cultural diversity. "*Understanding the multi-cultural and socio-economic dimensions of European societies and how national cultural identity interacts with the European identity is essential*", states the Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Key competences for lifelong learning.

The type of training used for the implementation of this course is non-formal education.

The main objectives for the participants are:

- to enter or re-enter the educational sphere;
- to value their cultural heritage;
- to innovate LLL opportunities (through strategy and methodology effectively tested in different contexts, thus becoming good practices) adapted to their intercultural learning needs;
- to encourage social cohesion by improving their interpersonal, intercultural and social competences.

At the local level, the training lasted for one year, while at the global level for two years (1 December 2007 – 30 November 2009).

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8   Data from AUSER RisorsAnziani-ONLUS

LAUTC was developed in three phases:

1st phase: analysis of the intercultural learning needs and development of an EU level strategy and methodology for cultural events;

2nd phase: developing the EU "parcours" of cultural events by employing the strategy and methodology developed, and

3rd phase: evaluation and dissemination of the strategy and methodology developed into good practices through creation of materials and realization of an EU level seminar.

The heart of this European project was the creation of a roadmap of cultural events answering intercultural learning needs, implemented consecutively in each of the 5 partner countries participating in the project.

LAUTC was the response to a situation identified as characterized by:

(1) growing issues of social inclusion in marginalized European urban areas with high levels of immigration;

(2) absence of the sense of "community", lack of positive images of some cultural identities, ICD difficult to achieve;

(3) the intercultural learning needs of second generation migrants and autochthones were not met, their understanding of each other was poor and civic spirit within the communities was low.

Some other issues identified and answered by LAUTC were:

(1) the disjuncture between the cultural events promoting ICD and the target groups' intercultural learning needs;

(2) the elitist and inaccessible conception of cultural events;

(3) the fact that the usefulness of cultural events as an educative and intercultural tool was not clear or fully grasped.

Thus, there was a need for an EU strategy and methodology for ICD to enable people from these communities to enter or re-enter the educational sphere; to value their cultural heritage; to innovate LLL opportunities (through strategy and methodology effectively tested in different contexts, thus becoming good practices) adapted to their intercultural learning needs and to encourage social cohesion by improving their interpersonal, intercultural and social competences. Moreover, the project showed how the development of ICD within European local communities was needed to create an inclusive European identity promoting the common cultural heritage and the importance of cultural diversity.

The project implementing partners were:
IT - Centro per lo Sviluppo Creativo "Danilo Dolci"
UK - OAKE - Europe ltd
DE - CJD Frechen
GR - Mediterranean SOS Network
FR - Pistes Solidaires

The course was open to **20 adult migrants (four from each partner country)**: second generation migrants living in marginalised European urban areas and 20 adult non-migrants (four from each partner country), coming from the same marginalised urban areas. The **common needs of these two catego**ries of target groups were to break stereotypes and to create a positive ICD, to be valorized by people learning from them, by expressing their own ideas and culture.

During the project activities some supporting materials such as brochures and books about the LAUTC project were developed. They are available in all the partner organizations and on-line (http://www.lautc.eu/it). On the website one can find a section called "Resources and Materials". All these elements are open to public use.

Several challenges were also faced by the organizations during the implementation of the activities, such as the disjuncture between the cultural events promoting ICD and the target groups' intercultural learning needs, alongside the elitist and inaccessible conception of cultural events. Nevertheless, the main difficulty was to convey the message about the usefulness of the training course to the participants, and maintain their interest in the activities throughout the course, as well as overcome the difficulties of expression and comprehension of participants due to their different background and culture.

The growing problem of social inclusion in marginalised European urban areas with high levels of immigration and the absence of a sense of community are the main factors that influence the ICD. The intercultural learning needs of second generation migrants and the people from non-migrant background are not met, their understanding of each other is poor and civic spirit within the communities is low. In this case, the trainer has a key role in addressing the above problems encountered as s/he should convey to trainees the usefulness of the training they are receiving and the enthusiasm to continue learning, also emphasizing the advantage of innovative methods.

Detailed description of the good practice
The methodology used in this project was UNESCO's "4 Pillars of Education". In detail, the four pillars are divided as follow:

▪ *learning to know* - the working groups (migrants, autochthones, and staff working on ICD), supported by pedagogical and cultural facilitators, analyse intercultural learning needs and gain interpersonal and intercultural competences through the ICD process, whilst also promoting each individual's personal pedagogical methodology;

▪ *learning to do* - the groups participate in action-research by applying the strategies built on the findings of the needs analysis to cultural events and by developing pedagogical materials, thus gaining personal and professional skills;

▪ *learning to live together* - the EU ICD strategy developed and spread through the cultural events promotes the role of non-formal learning in creating social cohesion;

▪ *learning to be* - ICD promotes reflection on one's own identity, and of a collective European identity and heritage within and between cultures.

The most original aspect of the Training Course was the methodology applied, which offered everyone access to cultural activities made of focus groups and four pillars of education, adjusted to the particular target group.

The innovation of the project at a European level is primarily linked to the development of cultural events and the strategies used to build up a network of connected events in different parts of Europe and a network of people sharing the same objectives. This methodology can be applied successfully in other training fields: the project was tested in five different countries within European Union.

One of the four pillars used in this training course (learning to do) makes room for practical application, by the fact that the groups of participants are involved in action-research in which they apply the newly acquired strategies to cultural events.

Thanks to these elements, the participants were very motivated and active during the course and this was monitored during the whole duration of the project. However, it is important to note that the par-

ticipants' engagement may have been enhanced by the fact that their participation fee was paid for.

Concerning the sustainability of the project, it is important to underline that other projects were developed on the basis of LAUTC. These projects adopted the developed approach to intercultural and interactive learning:

ALCE (LLP – Transfer of innovation): created as a follow up of LAUTC;
SLOW MED (ENPI med): based also on the concept of interculturality developed during LAUTC project.

In addition, one of the participants subsequently gained an internship in Ce.S.I.E. Other three participants prepared a "Youth in Action" application.

Two participants in the LAUTC project wrote their theses for a university degree building on learning from the LAUTC project, focusing their work on the methodology used and on the results obtained.

Participation in the training activities allows sharing of experiences related to the participants' life context. It helps them also to know themselves better and to instill self-confidence in an intercultural context, because in this context it is possible to acquire competences on a civic and social level. In addition, participation was useful because the participants developed their self-confidence and capacity of expression.

Outcomes/ benefits
The main objectives of the project as listed in the beginning were completely achieved. Around 50% of the trainees participated in new training activities in the next year. Throughout the project, evaluation was carried out with the help of the participants, whilst recognizing that the progression of change (i.e. knowledge, attitudes, skills and behavior) is built into the evaluation. In our evaluation process we were interested in defining and recognizing shared interests among those conducting the project work (the project participants and stakeholders) in order to extract coherent conclusions. To this end, a questionnaire was employed for collecting data and building up indicators of good practices and thus contributing to the emergence of a common EU strategy.

Summary and conclusions
We consider the LAUTC was good practice because it fully achieved its objectives, and it granted access to culture and education to all, using a methodology that involves participants directly. The methodology offered access to cultural activities to everyone and the adult learners understood the usefulness of the training and its practical aspect.

3.3.2 Real and Virtual Texture - RAVT
Good training practice background
RAVT took inspiration from the existence of opposite points of view between the needs for real application of EU principles (active citizenship, integration and subsidiary) and the different approaches to general disability and in particular to adult disability. In fact political-legal, social and training approaches of Member Countries are far from one integrated model and there is a widespread difficulty to cope with the needs of adult disabled people in this European society - moving more and more towards a cognitive and technological economy.

The project aims and objectives were as follow:
- to activate processes of professional innovation to favor the social inclusion, the active citizenship and the participation in the democratic process of disabled people;
- to promote the collaboration between different professions with a collaborative and cooperative dimension, mediated by computer;

- to support methodological and structural innovation of education and training in person and at distance;
- to make the learner able to access training processes based on the production of tools, models and actions mediated by ICT and able to reduce handicap and to promote the disabled;
- to take individual and professional awareness, intended to change the behaviors and manage interactive teaching models.

The type of training used for the implementation of this course is non-formal education.

The project had a total duration of two years (2005-2007), while its local level activities lasted for one year.

Blended e-learning approach, ICT and multimedia were the main tools used for the project implementation.

RAVT (Real and virtual texture) was aimed at educators, workers and association managers in four different geographical, cultural and social contexts; Italy, Latvia, Poland and the UK. We developed a training model which is applicable to everybody in the EU countries.

The RAVT training system used the blended e-learning approach, ICT and multimedia as tools to cope with social isolation and marginalization of disabled people, opening up the possibility to improve their quality of life.

The project promoted pedagogical open dialogue, continuous and open confrontation, social, pedagogical and ethical skills related to adult disability and ICT in European context.

RAVT was designed for professionals in training (managers of association and institutions, trainers and educational staff) from the four partner countries, who were working with adult disabled people.

For these professions, today there is a demand not only to contribute to the implementation of the rights in relation to equal opportunities, but also, and especially, to take action to support the integration of disabled people into productive social systems.

The training course was divided into 3 modules:

Module 1 – Accessibility and multi-media for the web

      1.1 Analysis on structures and Web languages (iconic, graphic, sound, musical)

      1.2 Means, methods of use; critical analysis on the linguistic-structures of Web

      1.3 Presentation and application of the e-learning platform

      1.4 Using the e-learning platform

Module 2 - Hardware and software for disabled people

      2.1 The relationship between ICT and disability

      2.2 Analysis of practical case studies

      2.3 How to use the e-learning platform

      2.4 Administration of the e-learning platform

Module 3 - Co-operative learning and Teleworking

      3.1 Tele-working through co-operative and collaborative working

      3.2 Practical uses of Tele-working

The partnership of the RAVT project involved CE.S.I.E, the lead partner, and :

IT - Centro Danilo Dolci

PL -Danmar Computers

UK -e2000 International

UK - Toucan Europe

LV -Tukums Centre

The main target group of RAVT was adult educators, workers and association managers working with

disabled people. It was a requirement of the course for the participants to have basic computer skills.

RAVT was in fact training for trainers and not for the end beneficiaries directly. The training course was also designed for those who already have a basic understanding of ICT (e-mail, use of text editing softwares, etc.).

Materials about RAVT are available in all the partners' organizations as well as on-line at the web address: www.ravt.org. Concerning the training materials the most important is the e-learning platform (Moodle). All these elements are open to public use, including the e-learning platform, which is an open source.

For the proper implementation of the project we needed to find solutions to several problems of dual nature: Formative and informative obstacles, in particular:

- Poor awareness of the actual opportunities offered by telework by companies, public and private bodies, regarding the integration of disabled people and productivity issues;
- Lack of awareness of new hardware and software systems, costs and the issues of commuting.

The status quo was influenced by obstacles caused by stereotypes and prejudice such as the belief that people with disabilities are not productive; that training of people with disabilities is inefficient; that people with disabilities need assistance; that people with disabilities present a cultural difficulty regarding work flexibility and regarding telework; that little knowledge of other languages means lack of opening in the European job market. However, the biggest problem was the lack of time to be dedicated to these kinds of activities. All these challenges could be overcome by the trainers' ability to keep the participants' interest and enthusiasm at a high level, showing them the usefulness of the course, but also using the innovative methods as an important tool for motivating trainees.

Detailed description of the good practice

The methodology used was learning by doing. The methodology framework is constructivist in nature. It basically means that students build their own training course. In light of this theory, humans generate knowledge and meaning from their experiences. Constructivist theory suggests that as students learn, they do not simply memorize or take on others' conceptions of reality; instead, they create their own meaning and understanding.

This methodology is very suitable for adults, because we start by doing, not by lecturing. The innovative aspect is the use of the e-learning method. During the implementation of the course it was demonstrated that the use of electronic platforms is very stimulating for adult learners.

Being based on the method of the learning by doing, the Training Course was highly practical.

This training practice is very easy to transfer or adapt in other contexts because of its nature, based on the methodology of the learning by doing. For example, the project VOIP (Training for over 50, developed under the LLP – Leonardo da Vinci – Transfer of Innovation, which delivered a series of training modules targeted to people over 50) was created on the basis of the RAVT project and it was developed in a different field.
RAVT was implemented in four EU countries, getting the same level of success due to its ability to adapt to different contexts and situations, thanks to the method used.

The level of participants' engagement was very high, in fact only one participant (from Italy) was substituted by another during the training. The same situation was encountered in the other partner countries, the reason being lack of time.

At least 50% of participants were later involved in other training courses on the same issues. The participants were very motivated and active during the course. This was due to a good initial selection and thanks to the use of new technologies, which also stimulates social dynamics. Internet is a good vehicle for social participation, which stimulates social relationships. The trainees were engaged in cooperative and collaborative learning activities in the classroom, as well as online.

The good results obtained by the RAVT project led to the development of a new project titled VOIP.

Outcomes/ benefits

The project provided an evaluation structure that included feedback questionnaires administered during the implementation period. This evaluation showed that the objectives of activating processes of professional innovation to favor the social inclusion, promoting the collaboration between different people, supporting the methodological and structural innovation of education and training face-to-face and at distance, were fully achieved.
After the end of the project it was important to maintain the relationships among the participants, in order to obtain feedback from them about the application of the knowledge and skills transferred during the course, in their professional and private life.

Summary and conclusions
We consider this project an example of best practice because it is a project that has fully achieved its objectives, taking into account also that the data on the low percentage of dropout by the trainees confirm the great success of the project, in terms of perception of usefulness of the training and interest shown by adults in it.

The main reason that motivates trainees to continue to participate is found in the innovativeness of training course provided. The training is based on the use of new instruments combined with the methodology of the learning by doing, which is highly effective especially in adult education.

General background of adult education in Latvia

In Latvia the state guarantees free primary and secondary education. More than 90% of children attend state schools which provide free education. Nine years of primary education are obligatory. Most of the students attend state universities. Apart from state-financed educational institutions, there are also private schools and private universities. Adult learning and education (ALE) in Latvia is part and parcel of lifelong learning process. As such, it is part of the educational system that is covered by Education Law. Attention paid to ALE implies recognition of the exclusive role of education in the life of the individual and society: "Education is the most important pre-condition for the existence and development of society. It plays an important role in the development of both individuals and society and belongs to human rights as well as serves as important means for achieving such aims as equality, gender equality and the growth of economy and civic society." (Basic Guidelines of Lifelong Learning Policy for 2007–2013. Ministry of Education and Science LR, 2007).

The basic principles of ALE have been formulated in line with relevant European documents concerning the primary role of ALE for general progress and welfare: - **"Memorandum on Lifelong Learning"** worked out by the European Council and signed in Brussels on 30 October, 2000; - Communication of the Commission of European Communities **"Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality"** (adopted in Brussels, on 21 November, 2001); **Lisbon Strategy** that defines the directions of the economic development of the European Union until 2010, and sets forward, as one of the main targets, social cohesion – employment and social integration, and development toward a knowledge-based competitive society in Europe; Communication of the Commission of the European Communities **"Adult learning: It is never too late to learn"** (adopted in Brussels, on 23 October, 2006); Communication of the Commission of the European Communities **"Adult learning: It is always a good time to learn"** (adopted in Brussels, on 27 September, 2007). The basic guidelines of Latvian lifelong learning are developed on the basis of strategic, political and other kinds of planning documents, such as: **Latvian long-term economic strategy** (approved in meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers on 17 July, 2001, protocol No. 34); **National development plan** for 2007-2013 (2006); **"The Growth Model of Latvia: People First"** - a long-term conceptual document (adopted in the meeting of Saeima (Parliament) on 26 October, 2006); "State cultural policy guidelines for 2006-2015. National state." (Adopted by the Decree of RL Cabinet of Ministers No 264 of 18 April, 2006); Latvian National Lisbon Programme for the years 2005–2008, basic guideline project **"Basic guidelines of educational development for 2007–2013"** (confirmed by the Decree of RL Cabinet of Ministers No 742 of 17 September, 2006). Apart from the above-mentioned legal basis for ALE, the policy environment regarding ALE related issues is harmonized with such legislative documents as: **Education Law** (1998); **General Education Law** (1999); Professional Education Law (1999); **Law of Higher Education Institutions** (1995).

According to the established educational system in Latvia, the supervising authority for ALE is the Ministry of Education and Science (MES). The system of ALE, nonetheless extends over to other sectors, as envisaged by the Education Law (Article 17), stating that "regional local governments shall organise adult education". In fact, ALE functions at a much broader scale; it covers vocational, in-service training for the business or sector needs. Large state owned companies have Learning centres (e.g., The National Bank, Latvian Mobile Telephone, Lattelecom, the Latvian Railway, the Latvian Postal service, big market centres, etc.). The specific needs and requirements of individuals are taken care of by a network of private and non-governmental educational institutions and undertakings that are run on private funding, and some of them are profit oriented.

Adult learning in Latvia has long and stable traditions. However, it attained a nation wide momentum in the mid-1990s when different separate educational societies, groups and undertakings across the

country were consolidated in an attempt to create a monitoring system in the Latvian Adult Education Association – LAEA (1993 – Latvijas Pieaugušo izglītības apvienība) enabling to gather both the intellectual, human and financial resources available for adult education.

Priority goals for AE are: availability, quality and cooperation and shared responsibility. Each of these goals contributes to better access to education for all, irrespective of previous educational level, economic, geographical, social, ethnic, age, gender or other factors. Each of these goals aims to attain inclusive learning environment. Each of them promotes ALE as a continuous and ongoing process.

With the financial support of ESF and the Government of Latvia, the LAEA has carried out a study of the situation in lifelong learning availability in Latvia. The above mentioned research has also studied motivation issues. The main factors that motivate the adult learners are as follows: the level of previously acquired education; employment and the position at work; professional requirements and a possibility of advancement at work; the age group (younger adults are more education oriented); the system of communication and availability of transport facilities or proximity to the place of work or living; emotional, psychological, social support from the nearest environment. To increase the trainees' engagement in ALE the following tasks are to be dealt with: to increase the role of social partners in order to promote their participation in determining government procurement for adult education corresponding to the territorial demand; to introduce more widely professional educational programmes for the students whose level of previous knowledge is poor; to promote the implementation of profession-oriented educational programmes; carrying out of occupational and career guidance measures at educational establishments of all types. Specific attention is paid to socially vulnerable groups: ethnic minorities, in particular Roma; unemployed; disabled and handicapped, people with health impairments; elderly and below poverty rate; people in custody; others (immigrants, asylum seekers etc.).

In conclusion, the achievements in ALE have three dimensions in Latvia: ALE has covered the whole country geographically; it extends over all the sectors of economic and social activities, it embraces all population groups, the endangered and neglected ones included. In view of the changes in the economic, social and geographical dimensions, it has made significant progress in providing accessibility of education for all and in ensuring diverse educational possibilities for all the levels of previous education. In the process of development, the regional aspect has been emphasized in ALE. Thus at present, the chance of training or updating one's professional skills, or continuing one's academic or professional education, as well as information about these possibilities has come closer to the potential adult learners.

3.4.1. Possibilities of civic education for schools and in the local community

Good training practice background

The Education Development Centre (EDC) is a non-governmental organization the aim of which is to contribute to the development of an educated, democratic society by promoting the people's individual professional capacity, competitiveness, cooperation and civic participation in the modern world. The working area of the EDC is the whole Latvia as well as the international arena. At present EDC is active in the following fields: civic education, intercultural education, inclusive education, development education and cooperation development, development of critical thinking, support to socially marginalized risk groups, professional development courses, participation in the processes of developing state education policy, international cooperation and promoting the exchange of experience, raising the management capacity, attraction of resources, promoting the accessibility of information and its identification.

The target audience of the EDC is the educationalists, employees of state and municipal institutions, specialists of the most diverse professional fields, representatives of NGOs, active population of local communities, school youth, socially marginalized groups.

The mission of the Civic Education programme is to contribute to the development of an

educated, democratic society, by promoting the professional capacity of the individuals, their competitiveness, cooperation and civic participation in the modern changing world.

The key objectives are: to strengthen the civic society and to promote social integration by increasing the number and range of people who are educated for civic participation and influencing the local politics, who are able to cooperate effectively in order to improve their own quality of life and that of the society, and to provide theoretical and practical support to improving and diversifying the education content and methods, to facilitating the quality of life in all stages of education and in life long learning.

In order to achieve the aims and objectives, such strategies are used as to educate teachers, young people and local community members on how to ensure for children and young people the necessary knowledge and skills for mutual cooperation and civic participation; how to identify problems in the local community and how to solve them by attracting the public power institutions and a broader civic society.

The interactive approach used by the civic education programme "Possibilities of civic education for schools and in the local community" is based on participants' personal experience, activity and cooperation in identifying and solving problems in the local community. The adults participating in the programme acquire new knowledge through hands-on experience. The most essential gain among the adult participants is the improvement of participants' skills. They develop their skills to plan different activities and actions and the spin-off training in other target audiences. Their leadership and management skills improve; they acquire knowledge about how to work with the community and mass media. At the end of each training day, the participants receive theoretical materials to be used in everyday work. When developing the course materials the participants' professional needs are taken into account. The participants, in their turn, broaden their professional contacts and gain cooperation partners in other regions of Latvia. The adults have a possibility to share their experience and to seek common solutions to similar problems. A relatively large part of civic education has international content and as regards the methodological aspect it can be applicable to any country. However, the content should be adjusted to the local context.

Civic education competences are largely connected with value education, intercultural education, global education and other educational spheres. Civic education can be used both for teaching other content and other target audience. This approach can definitely be used in another social environment because the programme respects the people's needs, interests and the training is based on using the participants' personal experience and knowledge.

The programme is developed and implemented taking into account the participants' needs. The programme starts with the discussion of the education policy and requirements, theoretical aspects of the theme and latest developments in the field. The largest percentage is taken up by learning the theoretical aspects of the theme through practical activities. When developing the programme much attention is given to the selection of appropriate methods for each thematic unit. A considerable amount of time is allotted to participants' reflections and discussions, the possibilities to express their comments on what they have learned. The programme also envisages individual tasks, which help to apply the knowledge into practice. The content of the programme, the methods and the work of the teachers is evaluated at the end of the programme.

The programme includes individual work, work in pairs and small groups followed by larger group work. All forms of work are balanced. Support for individual learning is respected and promoted. The programme is developed so that the participants have a possibility to apply in practice what the have acquired in terms of knowledge and skills and to reflect on it, therefore attention is paid individual tasks. The participants plan their actions, considering also the use of appropriate strategies and methods. The teacher supports this process with suggestions.

The partners of the programme are local municipalities, education boards, Ministry of Education and Science, Young guards' centre of the Defense Ministry.

The target group of the programme is the educationalists in all level educational institutions of Latvia, education policy makers, experts on youth education, NGO representatives, employees of the local municipalities, and members of pupils' families.

Most often the participants of the programme are:

- teachers, educationalists, youth leaders. The interest of the group is to acquire the content and methodology issues, to share experiences with specialists in other fields;
- young people. Their interest is to improve their leadership skills, the skill to organize and implement different activities and projects;
- adults, representing different age groups, nationalities and social status. Their interest is to broaden their knowledge on the activities of the state, their possibilities to participate in defending their interests and improving the quality of their lives;
- immigrants from other countries. Their interest is to get support in order to adjust to a full-fledged life in Latvia.

Each session of the programme is thoroughly prepared: there are presentations, theoretical and methodological materials, support materials for the participants.

During the programme the participants develop their own materials which contains samples of good practice The programme materials are available in the EDC homepage: (www.iac.edu.lv)

During the programme, the adult participants who also work may face difficulty in finding free time to attend the training. Sometimes the difficulties are caused by the habits of the community and the unwillingness to change anything in their life. Sometimes, when promoting civic education activities which are taught in the programme, the adults face the passivity of public servants. An essential obstacle is the income which has decreased due to the economic crisis leading to a pessimistic and passive mood of the people.

The trainer Inguna Irbite (EDC, LATVIA) running a workshop

In order to promote participation of adults in lifelong learning, the training should be organized in the time and place that is convenient for them; they should be given psychological and emotional support; they should be given knowledge on how to work with the diverse community.

Traditionally the time factor causes difficulties. The participants need time in their daily schedule to allocate for training, the time to restructure the teaching process in their educational institutions and to practise the acquired knowledge and skills in their everyday work.

The financial factor is also important. It is necessary to attract funding not also for organizing the training but also for covering the transport expenses, as well as expenses related to catering for participants and the teaching materials.

Description of the good practice

The programme is based on several approaches: interactive learning process which envisages the active participation of the participants in the educational process; taking into account the participants' prior knowledge and experience; inclusion of themes and life situations in the training; relating the

latest research developments to the practice and everyday life; respecting the participants' opinions and experience; the use of critical thinking methodology and framework; simulations of civic actions; performing civic actions in the local community.

Handouts are prepared and used for each training session. The handouts are developed so that the participants can use them later when implementing different activities in their work places. IT is also used in the sessions: powerpoint presentations, internet resources, video, etc. The information is offered in diverse ways according to different types of perceiving information and different learning styles. Each training day starts with introductory questions and preparation for learning. The introductory activities are connected to the theme of the session and participants' experience. At the end of the training day the participants evaluate the training, express their comments on the content of learning and process. The session is structured so that it encourages discussions, exchange of opinions and practical activities based on particular content issues.

At the beginning of the programme, the participants' needs are studied, and the specific programme is partly adjusted to meet the actual learning needs of the participants. The content of the training sessions is connected to topics from the political and social life at national or local level.

The adults acquire new knowledge through practical cooperation. The essential acquisition in the adults' group is the increase of their didactic skills. Participants increase their skills to plan the implementation of different activities and provide further training to other target groups. The participants' leadership skills improve; they acquire knowledge on how to work with the people, with mass media.

The trainers Daina Zelmene and Inguna Irbite (EDC, LATVIA) getting ready for the workshop

After each training participants receive theoretical materials which they can use in their everyday work. Materials are developed in order to meet the professional needs of the participants. Participants broaden their professional contacts and obtain cooperation partners in other regions. The adults have a possibility to share their experience in a wider community and to seek common solutions to solving similar problems. The young people have participated in the environment projects.

Many course participants continue to be involved in other similar programmes, e.g. a programme on strengthening the rule of law, the programme about sustainable development of globalization

This civic education programme promotes the increase of participants' civic participation. Participants:

- try out the acquired strategies, methods and organize discussions at their workplace, meet with the media representatives, politicians and officials;
- themselves after finishing the programme start to implement projects that promote civic participation;
- organize civic participation activities and actions in their communities of residence, e.g., they collect signatures for petitions on some issues, prepare anti-corruption posters, organize days of justice at schools, etc.;
- actively participate in political life, establish NGOs;
- start to involve in voluntary work, help elderly people, participate in environmental actions after finishing the programme, etc.;

- write articles for local press, publish their experience on the Internet.

The approach of the programme includes respecting the participants' experience, interactive training, consolidation of knowledge in practical activities, development of teaching/learning materials which can be used in participants' daily work after finishing the programme. The participants understand that the change of values and attitudes in society takes time, that it is necessary to educate people about the rule of law and justice in a civic society.

A comparatively large part of civic education has international content; the methodology of this programme can be applied almost fully in any country. The content should be adjusted to the local context.

Outcomes/ benefits

The programme reaches its aim because it improves the participants' professional life: they acquire knowledge on the latest developments in their profession; they obtain and strengthen professional contacts; they learn new methods on how to implement various activities; they learn where to look for support and information on different themes, the rate of professional "burn-out" diminishes.

The learning in the programme also improves the participants' personal life:

- they receive psychological and emotional support;
- they broaden their world outlook, obtain new cultural experience;
- they improve their communication and presentation skills;
- they participate in discussions on value issues which promote thinking and ethical action;
- they strengthen the idea that every person is valued and respected.

Summary and conclusions

Such a programme can easily be transferred. Civic education in this interpretation can be used both for teaching other content and other target audience. This approach can definitely be used in various social environments because the programme respects the participants' needs, interests and the training is based on using the participants' personal experience and knowledge.

The programme will preserve its timeliness and will continue along with the development and improvement of a democratic society. The sustainability of the programme is determined by the needs of the state and a democratic society and the regulations of the education policy. The sustainability of the programme in the life of the individuals determines the fact that it offers practical ways which show how the person should act to improve one's own quality of life.

3.4.2. Education of unemployed and employment seeker in Adult Education Centre of Kuldiga region

Good training practice background

The mission of the programme is to educate the employment seekers and unemployed inhabitants of Kuldiga region in order to increase their competitiveness on the labour market, by developing the professional skills and personal qualities necessary to attain this aim.

This is non-formal education, its length is 120 hours (1- 1.5 months).

Using the learning by doing approach the course participants have a possibility to apply the theoretical knowledge they have gained in practical tasks and to achieve the desired results as well as to receive immediate feedback about what they have done.

The offer to the potential participants is divided in four content modules and each of them uses the

interactive approach Learning by doing which helps to consolidate the acquired theoretical knowledge in practice, active use of the Internet resources for obtaining and processing information, the development of critical thinking skills in the learning process and the development of participants' skills to form and justify their argumentation.

The packet of the offer includes the following course programmes: *Project management (without prior knowledge), Au-pair program, Computer skills (beginner level), English (beginner level).*

The aim of the course "Project management" is to provide participants with theoretical and practical knowledge on project management skills, techniques and instruments which are necessary for developing and managing projects.

Different instruments are used in implementing the programme, including seminars in which participants acquire theoretical knowledge, workshops - practical activities in which participants prepare home assignments, their presentation and assessment, preparation of a real project application for the competition, a set of hand-outs and a portfolio each participant prepares while attending the program.

The programme is implemented in cooperation with the State Employment Agency of Kuldiga region, Kuldiga Regional Board. The programme is funded by ESF. Participation is free of charge. During the courses the participants receive a grant on condition that they are registered as unemployed in the State Employment agency.

The target group is the unemployed and employment seekers registered in Kuldiga region; they are people from different professional fields and educational level, because representatives of every profession need the skills to prepare a good project application. The Adult Education centre of Kuldiga region offers courses to the neighbouring regions as well. Each group usually consists of 12 participants.

The successful implementation of the programme firstly depends on the trainers' professionalism in the field of adult education. It must be noted that unfortunately, not all school teachers are able to work with adults. The solution is that the Latvian Adult Education Association has developed a special training programme and methodological materials for adult educators.

The adult learners are influenced by the offered learning content, time and place of learning. If adults themselves pay for the learning, then also the cost of learning influences the participation in the programme.

Every lecturer has prepared presentations. All lecturers use multimedia, boards and other materials that are necessary for individual and group work. Hand-outs are available to all participants.

This programme can be used in any domain, flexibly changing the emphasis, e.g. using the specifics of a particular field in the practical assignments.

Detailed description of the good practice

The content and methods are carefully selected to achieve optimal results, as well as balanced theory and practice, with an emphasis on the latter. When implementing the programme the following preconditions are observed: the unity of theory and practice, participants' needs analysis, adjustment of the content and methods to the participants' needs, the use of participants' prior knowledge and experience and their needs for further development, use of individual and group work, preparation of real project applications for the announced project competitions.

The programme of the course is focussed on practical work and cooperation among the participants – work in groups, individual work, searching information on Internet, processing it and preparing presentations during the course and upon completion of the course. At the beginning of the programme the needs and personal aims of the participants are clarified, this is followed by a seminar in which participants acquire theoretical knowledge and model practical tasks working either individually or in groups. The programme offers the following themes: aims and objectives of a project, defining the

problem, SWOT analysis and problem tree, establishing a quality project team and distribution of re-sponsibilities,, terms of implementing the project, accounting in the project, logical framework struc-ture, developing a project and preparation for application, etc. According to participants' interests and wishes the themes about developing a business plan, the comparison between project/business plan, and the role play "Making the toys" and practical work "Bank" which promote the consolidation of theoretical knowledge in practical activities are included in the programme. Additionally participants prepare home tasks, e.g., doing SWOT analysis, etc.

At the end of the programme participants prepare a project application to one of the announced competitions, in this case the Mortgage bank competition. The guidelines of the priorities include the priority spheres: environment, preservation of the cultural and historical heritage, enriching public wealth, developing the image of the region. The projects developed and submitted by the partici-pants responded to these priorities.

The interactive teaching/learning process is innovative ensuring active involvement of the partici-pants, the use of their knowledge and experience; laying emphasis on practical work, taking into account each participant's needs, e.g., preparation of a real project application for obtaining funding in order to attain the set aims. The approach *Learning by doing* has been taken over from the Nordic countries where adult education is highly developed.

The programme places special emphasis on participants' practical activities: their independent works (SWOT analysis), working in groups to identify the problems, preparation of a real project application and its submission.

The programme can be used at any level from the local to the regional and European, because the approach is flexible and allows inclusion of diverse methodological strategies in the acquisition of the material; correlations are possible in the acquisition of the content depending on participants' inter-ests, while preserving the basic theoretical framework.

The program is popular among the potential participants, the feedback is positive (professional, knowl-edgeable trainers, interesting forms of work, real gain at the end of the programme); the information is provided in cooperation with the State Employment agency of Kuldiga region.

The participants are motivated to attend other courses, e.g. English, (according to the answers in par-ticipants' questionnaires). However, the regulations issued by the State Employment agency deter-mine the number of participants and the number of programmes offered to unemployed persons or employment seekers.

The programme is socially inclusive. It is developed to maximally promote the cooperation of the par-ticipants, their professional and personal growth, by developing their communication, critical thinking skills, etc. It is socially inclusive because it facilitates the inclusion of knowledgeable and enterprising citizens in the life of the community and on the labour market; it helps to preserve the intellectual po-tential in Kuldiga region as well as promotes looking for innovative approaches in solving the regional problems.

At the beginning of the training participants come with different motivation and desire to learn. They often share the negative idea that they will have to put a lot of effort into learning on a daily basis – participants, especially those who have recently lost their jobs, come with their hurt, their feelings of guilt, etc. The trainer has to be a good psychologist in the first place to make the people interested and to provide them with motivation to work from the very first session. The last lesson is devoted to urging participants to keep on learning. During the programme each participant has a possibility to receive individual consultations on the particular project he/she is developing as well as information on the available resources on Internet.

Outcomes/ benefits

The set aims have always been reached:

- at the end of the programme the participants present their projects. The results are measurable as the product is a project. If the training is scheduled to agree with some project competitions, these applications can be immediately submitted for experts' assessment;
- the programme promotes the cooperation of the participants, their professional and personal development by improving their communication, critical thinking and other skills;
- the programme is socially inclusive because it facilitates the inclusion of knowledgeable and enterprising citizens in the life of the community and on the labour market; it helps to preserve the intellectual potential in Kuldiga region as well as promotes looking for innovative approaches in solving the regional problems;
- the adult educators learn how to work with adults because their professionalism is the cornerstone of further successful implementation of the programme, including maintaining participants' motivation for further education;
- the participants of the programme express their desire to continue learning; they highly appreciate the work of the trainers and their ability to enhance inquisitiveness, to encourage them and to raise their self-esteem.

Summary and conclusions

The programme will continue as long as there are unemployed people and there is funding for their education. The participants have already suggested working out the next stage for the program "Project management" for those who have prior knowledge and it will be the first step towards starting their own individual businesses.

General background of adult education in Lithuania

In Lithuania, adult education is described in all documents as an integral part of the whole education system. The Ministry of Education and Science has the Department of Professional and Continuous learning, which is responsible for professional teachers' improvement and initial training, professional schools, formal and non-formal adult education. The Ministry has established the Centre for Adult Education and Information (LCAEI). It is the state institution working under the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania. The Lithuanian Centre for Adult Education and Information was established by the Ministry as one of the main institutions assisting in the coordination and implementation of the means of national Lifelong Learning strategy. But in fact, adult education is separated and considered less important (with the exception of professional education).

Adult Education is governed by the following documents: Law on Education (1991, last edition 2010); Law on Non–formal Adult Education (1998, actual edition 2010); National Education Strategy 2003–2012 (2003), National Education Strategy 2003–2012 Implementation Program (2005, actual edition 2010); Strategy of Life-Long Learning and the plan of actions for its implementation (2004, actual edition 2008; National Lisbon Strategy Implementation Program (2005). Nevertheless, those, well written documents and really true and correct statements are more declarative than real. Priority is given to general, secondary, higher and professional education. Non-formal education is not recognized officially, has quite low prestige and lacks financial support. Adult education is very poorly developed in comparison with other European countries. Adults in lifelong learning processes mostly participate as secondary or professional school pupils.

In 2010, the total population of Lithuania was over 3.3 million (2010), with 52.4 per cent of the population aged 25–64. Formal education in Lithuania includes about 18 thousand learners per year. The number of those involved in non–formal education is constantly increasing. According to data provided by the Lithuanian Department of Statistics, in 2006 non–formal education in Lithuania involved about 55% of Lithuania's population. In 2003, this number had been merely 28%. According to 2008 Eurostat data, the percentage of Lithuanian population aged 25–64 participating in education and training was 4.9, while the EU average is 9.7%. In urban areas, the percentage of adult learners is 60.7, while in villages it is 42%. The largest number of Lithuanians (45%) prefer independent studies, 31% participate in the process of learning while attending various courses and seminars, and 6% learn at universities, colleges and schools. Regardless of the place of residence, age or gender, the highest demand is for foreign language learning, followed by IT, and entrepreneurship, legal and economic studies, which are considered to be useful in everyday life. The number of young persons who participate in education (aged 18–34) is by far higher, including persons with higher education and living in major cities.

In spite of the increasing number of learners, adults are still not motivated to participate in the continuous, lifelong learning process. One of the reasons is the low prestige of adult education, lack of financial support and official recognition of non-formal and informal education. On the other hand, there are personal reasons, such as:
- Lack of positive learning experiences or earlier acquired negative experience (at school, university);
- Age related issues: the majority of persons lacking motivation to learn are under 45 years of age.
- Education: most unmotivated persons only completed basic primary education.
- Residence: in larger cities people are seemingly more willing to learn.
- Unemployment: in most cases the incentive to learn is related to the labour market: increasing requirements, wishing to get a better or additional job. Employed persons improve their qualification more frequently and have higher motivation than unemployed people.

- Insufficient information: most citizens do not know where they can get non-formal education, or what institutions work in the area of adult education.

3.5.1 Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking

Good training practice background

Critical thinking is necessary for everyday life because it helps our thinking to be less biased, partial and uninformed. Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking (RWCT) becomes as necessary as any social and professional skills. This is the reason why this programme started to run.

The mission of RWCT trainings is to promote open, independent critical thinking and literacy among all age group learners. The goal is to introduce critical thinking philosophy and methodology as practical tools for teaching and learning.

Objectives:
- To introduce the RWCT scheme and be able to use it practically;
- To create an open and safe teaching and learning environment;
- To learn to use cooperative strategies;
- To learn to use active teaching and learning methods;
- To learn to use planning schemes for critical thinking activities;
- To learn to use a variety of assessment and evaluation methods;
- To become familiar with and use active reading strategies;
- To learn to use a variety of writing strategies;
- To apply and reflect on different critical thinking strategies used in daily, practical work;
- To learn to use other people's critical reflections for personal and professional improvement;
- To develop the habit of reflection on personal activities.

The RWCT training programme has been delivered for over ten years in Lithuania. In order to develop this training programme, multiple tools were used, such as seminars and workshops, as well as learning materials, such as manuals, books, learning CDs.

The Lithuanian RWCT programme consists of 120 workshop hours. Its short version covers 48 hours (or 64 academic hours), offering the possibility for participants to choose different, separate modules of 6 hours and to make an original programme according target group needs.

The whole programme consists of the following modules:
- A Framework for Critical Thinking Across the Curriculum (6 hours). This course presents the rationale for critical thinking and interactive learning, and demonstrates the model of evocation-comprehension-reflection. Participants learn a preliminary set of teaching strategies that exemplify the model.
- Methods for Promoting Critical Thinking (6 hours) presents ways of using different levels of questioning and discussion strategies to evoke discussions of fictional and non-fictional texts.
- Reading-Writing-Discussion (6 hours). Stressing the interrelatedness of different skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) and their importance to learning, the course focuses on techniques applicable to different activities that use reading and writing for learning.
- Further Strategies for Promoting Critical Thinking (6 hours). Revisiting the evocation-comprehension-reflection model, this course considers further methods for use in all three phases. Special emphasis is laid on strategies for

debate, and on the use of debate as rehearsal for writing.

- Creating Classroom Environment for Facilitating Critical Thinking (6 hours). This course focuses on the creation of learning environments in which the role of the teacher/tutor is changed from authoritative dispenser of knowledge to a facilitator of learning in a community of learners.
- Readers' Workshop: Creating Lifelong Readers and Thinkers (6 hours). Readers' workshops are intended to offer a range of choices of what to read, while still providing encouragement for deep reflection. The goal is to create reading experiences that are less contrived, and foster genuine inquiry, as well as the habit of voluntary reading. Techniques for setting up and managing reader's workshops, including carrying out "mini-lessons" on reading, are presented here.
- Writing Workshop: From Self-Expression to Written Arguments (6 hours). Writing workshops grew out of an effort to model the conditions and the processes that skilled writers rely upon when they write. The approach taken here shows not only how to use this workshop style teaching, but how to move the products from personal expression to more academic exposition and argument. In addition, a workshop for future RWCT trainers and mentors on '*How to teach adults*' is included in the training programme.

Workshops are delivered in a format which consists of the following:
1. Introduction – including the rationale for the techniques or strategies.
2. Demonstration – in which the method or strategy is experienced directly by the learners who participate in the demonstration as if they were students.
3. Reflection – in which the purposes, appropriateness, and procedures of the teaching techniques are explained and discussed.
4. Guided practice – in which the participants now practice using the techniques as a teacher, mentor or tutor would.
5. Application – in which participants make and discuss detailed plans for trying out the techniques in their own work environment.
6. Implementation – in which the participants apply the techniques to various environments
7. Reflection and refinement – in which participants come together with other learners to share and discuss their conclusions on implementation, and decide on needed refinements in the implementation.

The partners who benefited from RWCT trainings were organizations that requested the whole programme or separate seminars as service. The programme is supported by educational institutions – schools, universities, and adult learners unions.

The training programme is available all over the country and it is paid for by donor organizations or by the participants. The participants are from different age groups, with various educational and professional backgrounds, mostly employed. Most of the unemployed participants are pensioners. The audience of the trainings is usually made up of teachers, librarians, social workers, social educators, psychologists, school administrators. In 2000-2009 the programme involved 11,747 participants (a total of 3,076 hours of training), of whom 915 were international participants (306 hours).

The trainers who deliver this programme are highly experienced. They themselves use critical thinking strategies in daily professional life; many of them are certified trainers according to international standards: '*trainers have a lot of experience, are open for changes, orientated to the needs and experience of participants*'.

The training practice is supported by numerous materials: the book "Critical Thinking: Theory and Practice", methodological material "Reading Workshop", methodological material for higher education professors and students, a set of handout materials for learners, the journal "Permainos", the leaflet "Critical Thinking", video materials; RWCT Guidebooks (1-8). Books, journals, leaflets are available for all interested, while handouts and methodical materials are used exclusively for trainings.

The main limitation that learners and trainers faced in the past was that adult learning was not supported financially by the state and the outcomes of non-formal learning were not recognized officially. Learners have very limited support that influences their motivation to learn continuously. One of the participants stated that *'it's hard to integrate fully in a learning process, to combine work and training'.* Individual counselling was one of the factors which helped keep a high level of motivation. When good practice is applicable in school or other teaching environment, each teacher and trainer gets personal consultations, tutoring.

Detailed description of the good practice

RWCT is built on constructivism and meta-cognitive philosophical-pedagogical approach (Bloom, 1956; Taba, 1966; Lipman 1988, 1991; Erikson, 1963; Dewey, etc.). The whole programme is built on a 3-step framework: evocation, comprehension and reflection, applied to the majority of teaching/ learning activities. The framework is theoretically sound (Vaughn & Estes 1986; Ogle 1986; Temple & Gillet 1996; Tierney, Readence & Dishner, 1985) and practically demonstrated. The programme uses B. Bloom's questions taxonomy. It distinguishes between "lower order" and "higher order" questions; between questions that require the recognition or recall of facts and the comprehension of concepts and ideas, versus questions that invite the application of ideas, the analysis of arguments, the synthesis of several ideas to reach new solutions, and the evaluation of a whole line of reasoning.

Programme participants have the opportunity to be active learners and experience various roles: that of students, teachers, mentors, tutors and others. It shows that the selected methodology helps to achieve the aims of training and promotes critical thinking in all life situations.

This practice is considered to be good and innovative because it is learner-centred. The starting point of the learning activity is the students' previous knowledge and experience. It does not require any specific preparation of learners, and it is adaptable to all age and social groups. In addition, it makes connections between past, present and future knowledge, experience and skills. It is flexible in what concerns the content (the content may be developed according to the situation, learners' needs, and expectations). It provides a variety of teaching/learning strategies. This practice creates open, safe and joyful learning environment, stimulates further learning and is applicable in daily life. It has solid, stable philosophical and methodological background, but at the same time it is modern, as it easily reflects all contemporary issues, daily problems and brings them on the stage for analysis and critical reflection. One participant thinks: *'these trainings are not single injections but clear, logical continuous, going from one theme to another, from seminars to learning in practical activities'.*

The good practice we have shared is practice-orientated because it encourages better learning and teaching practices, it teaches learners to analyze and reflect on events critically. Also, this programme is easily adaptable to different contexts and situations. For example, reading workshops were organized for elderly people in care homes. Other trainings were organized for mixed international adult groups (Comenius and Grundtvig courses). Moreover, this programme has been present in numerous other countries.

The number of participants grew from the beginnings of the programme in the late 1990's until 2007, when it started decreasing due to lack of financial resources. The programme is absolutely empowering for participants as it promotes critical and creative thinking, cooperative work, it increases learner curiosity and motivation for lifelong learning. Moreover, this programme is sustainable as Modern Didactic Center takes ownership of it. It has huge potential as it is required by modern and contemporary life, in the view of many local and global issues, personal and social problems.

Outcomes/ benefits

The outcome of this training programme is better thinkers and better learning and teaching. The participants and trainers create a safe and open teaching and learning environment where participants learn to use the RWCT approach in their professional and personal life. They can use cooperative strategies, active teaching and learning methods, different assessment and evaluation methods. In addition, the learners are able to use active reading and different writing strategies. The training programme helps learners to use RWCT in their daily life, as well as to reflect upon it and develop personal and professional skills. One of the participants said: *'I think that I got new experiences, improvement as a specialist, my social circle became wider. I think it also contributed to my professional growth'.* The success of the programme is demonstrated by participants' feedback, filled out questionnaires, and reflections, as well as survey results, which point out the benefits of the RWCT programme and its potential for growth in the future.

Summary and conclusions

This good practice helps to develop critical thinking, which is one of the main features of a person trying to understand and reflect on his/her everyday life activities and make life one long active learning process. This training programme does not focus on one single concrete aspect but helps learners to develop understanding of how they need to learn and think, to be part of a group, to have opinions of their own and know how to state them and make positive criticism. The above-presented good practice shows how strong motivation to learn new things can be, creating the premises for life-long-learning. This motivation starts from the desire to know, to be involved in a variety of groups and learn new things, to use the developed skills and accumulated knowledge for creating new awareness.
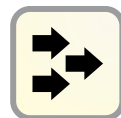
3.5.2. Communication in complicated situations

Good training practice background

Communication is information transfer from a sender to a receiver. It is interaction between people, which requires a set of special skills. These skills are very important for each person in order to have a productive professional career and personal life.

The goal of the training programme we are describing here is to provide an opportunity for learners to improve their conflict management and communication skills and experience various learning strategies and methods. These trainings have been continuously organised since 2007. The training programme was carried out in various ways, through seminars-workshops, practical learning and self-learning materials, such as manuals, books, learning CDs.

The good practice we share here is orientated to the development of practical learners' skills. The conflict management and mediation models presented in the training can be easily applicable at the workplace and in personal life situations. Training helps learners not only to recognize growing conflicts, but also to choose appropriate conflict resolution methods, while it provides opportunity for reflection during seminars and trainings. The conflict resolution model is useful for all adult learners; mediation can be used by upper secondary grade students and university students as well.

The programme includes the following topics:
1. When does conflict appear? Different types of conflicts. Is conflict always negative? Open and secret reasons for conflicts. Discussion "When and how is it worth getting into a conflict"?
2. Conflict resolution. Styles of conflict resolution: adaptation, compromise, non-involvement, domination, cooperation, etc. Selection of the best conflict resolution style depending on the situation. Conflicts in different situations. Algorithms of their management.
3. Effective mediation. Mediation model. Emotions in a conflict, their management.
4. Conflict resolution by mediation. Video training.
5. Final discussions and conclusions.

The partners who have supported communication trainings are organizations that request the whole training programme or separate seminars as teaching-learning service. The programme is also supported by educational institutions – schools, universities, and adult learners unions.

The training programme is available all over the country and is paid for either by donors or by the participants. Participants are from different age groups, with various educational and professional backgrounds, mostly employed. The audience is mostly made up of teachers, social workers, social educators, psychologists, school administrators, university students, parents. The programme involved 400 participants during 2007-2009. The trainer who delivers the training programme has a master's degree in teaching and management. He has teaching experience in primary school, and is currently the director of an art school for children. The trainer has experience teaching adults and providing consultancy, is author/co-author of professional articles and of methodological materials.

The training programme is supported by the following materials: a set of handout materials for learners, video materials, books, methodological materials. Books are available for all those who are interested, while video materials and handouts are used exclusively for training.

The main limitation for this and other training practices is that adult learning is not supported finan-

cially by the state and skills gained in non-formal learning settings are not recognized officially. Learners have very limited external support that influences their motivation to learn continuously. Some more specific obstacles are:

- insufficient duration of the training (participants are not always able to allocate enough time and participate in a programme that lasts longer than 2 days);
- group size (too big groups of learners)

In order for theory to become practice and words to turn into action more time and effort are needed. Also, participants are not used to analysing personal behaviour openly and critically. According one of them *"it wasn't always pleasant to hear about our mistakes, but we looked at this professionally, not personally. So we overcame this issue".*

Detailed description of the good practice

The main methodology of the training practise is based on a conflict management model in an accusation situation; and effective mediation model in conflict situations.
The training includes theoretical parts, discussions, individual tasks, video training, reflection, conclusions based on theoretical material and practical experience.

The time allotted to various activities is flexible depending on the learners' interest or need for more case analyses. Each theoretical part ends with a discussion or practical activity and helps to answer the questions: why it is important for me? How I can use it in my daily life? What will change if I make corrections in my behaviour? The practical part is organized by demonstration training. Each participant chooses an individual situation closely related to his/her work or personal life experience, and acts out the situation by impersonating a specific role. Following this, the demonstration of mini-sessions is reviewed and discussed according to agreed criteria. Each participant is allowed to repeat the task until he/she is satisfied with it. Participants sometimes have homework to do, such as to observe and recognize conflict situations and reflect on personal behaviour during such situations.

The learning techniques used include observation, discussions, reflections, individual and group work, modelling/demonstration activities and video training. The programme is based on humanistic psychology and pedagogy. The major principle is that each person is free to choose personal behaviour models in various situations and should take responsibility for the outcomes. The programme seeks to explore "win-win" situation as an alternative to "win-not win" situation. This shows that the chosen methodology helps to achieve the main goal and mission of the programme, i.e. effective communication.

This practice is considered to be good and innovative owing to three distinctive features:
- Interconnection of theory and practise. Each theoretical statement is supported by practical examples.
- Orientation to the educators and school administration representatives as the main target group (there is a common misconception that educators have enough competencies to manage different conflict and communication situations because of their work specific, but it is not true).
- Sharing alternative behaviour examples showing how they can influence the outcomes of our actions.

One of the participants said that this training is innovative, because "*it is very relevant nowadays, as it's almost impossible to avoid conflicts, therefore understanding how to manage them is very important.* '

This reason why we share this training programme as good practice is because of its high applicability. Hands-on activities cover one third of the whole programme. Learners acquire knowledge and ability to recognize, understand and manage complicated communication problems and personal behaviour. The good practice can be easily adapted to different contexts, countries and situations. It is flexible – it can be adjusted even during training, according to specific needs and situations. The programme is accessible to anyone in terms of participants' age, social and professional profile, experience, and other individual features.

Participants are encouraged to participate actively in the training from the very beginning to the very end. The training starts off by securing common agreement on work rules, behaviour patterns in different situations. Participants are encouraged to share their personal experience in daily activities. Personal reflections are used "to check" theory: to see how it works in different situations. Participants themselves come up with various situations, and participate in demonstration sessions and video trainings.

This programme is absolutely empowering – it promotes active participation in conflict management situations, personal reflection and change of behaviour patterns. The programme is personally and professionally beneficial if participants decide to apply the acquired knowledge and skills after the programme in everyday life and professional life. Moreover, this good practice is sustainable as Modern Didactic Center takes ownership of it. It has huge potential as it is required by modern and contemporary life.

Outcomes/ benefits

The good practice is considered successful if all the set objectives are achieved. The main indicators of success are the participants' improved communication, conflicts management and resolution skills. Participants have a chance to look at conflicts from the "other side", to improve their self-knowledge, self-understanding in conflicting situations. Learners are able to recognize the starting point and the dynamics of conflicts, to choose better ways and methods for their resolution. The training programme enables the participants to look positively at such "negative" concepts as conflict: *'I have a new approach to my style of conflicts resolution, I acquired new knowledge on how to resolve conflicting situations in a more professional way.' 'For me it became easier to communicate with people, not be hot-headed in a conflict situation, to be calm and make correct decisions.'* Feedback from participants during and after training is always very welcomed and positive.
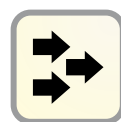
Summary and conclusions

This training programme is considered to be best practise example because of several reasons. *Firstly,* communication skills are among the most important personal skills. An effective and positive communication process helps to overcome troubles and even very strong conflicts can lead to positive changes and be beneficial, because cooperation and collaboration always start from effective communication. This process is transferable and necessary to all areas of life: home, work, community. New skills and knowledge, methods which allow us to look into a situation from outside and to reflect upon mistakes are the main elements which motivate trainees to participate in LLL. *Secondly*, the good practice is based on an effective methodology that allows participants to translate theory into action, and to experience how conflict management techniques work in real life situations. *Thirdly*, the open and encouraging training atmosphere helps to concentrate on teaching-learning activities and overcome personal biases. *Fourthly*, the trainer's mastery helps to manage unpredictable and changing training situations in order to achieve training goals and objectives with a variety of audiences.

General background of adult education in Romania

<u>Overview of the present state of adult education in Romania</u>
Adult education in Romania is the shared responsibility of two ministries: the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport, and the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection, which are the national level policy-makers and managers of the delivery processes of adult education and training. Concerning lifelong learning, Chapter IV, Article 133 of the Romanian Law of Education (Law no. 84/1995) states that "the Ministry of Education collaborates with the Ministry of Culture and other interested ministries as well as the media, religious organizations, people's universities, cultural foundations and other societies and institutions to facilitate access to knowledge and culture for all citizens, regardless of age, with the aim of supporting their adjustment to the major changes that occur in social life."

Adult education policies are articulated in a series of government ordinances and other legal documents regulating the organization of adult education and training and lifelong learning. Another national-level office that has been a significant stakeholder in education, including adult education, is the commission set up by the President of Romania in 2007 to analyse the current state in education and research, and develop post-accession policies in the two fields to ensure, among others, the integration of Romanian education and research into the European area and to ensure Romania's international competitiveness within this area. In a report produced in 2007, the Commission found that as concerns adults' participation in lifelong learning (one of the Lisbon indicators), in 2007 only 1.6% of adults benefited from it, as compared to the European Union average of 10.8%, and the target for 2010 of 12.5%.[9] In 2008, the Presidential Commission for the Development and Analysis of Education and Research Policies developed a strategy entitled "Education and Research for a Knowledge-Based Society", which sets a number of targets to be achieved by 2015. Specific objective 6 of the Strategy targets lifelong learning, setting the aim of "[m]aking lifelong learning a current social practice in each public or private institution. Increase the rate of adult participation in lifelong learning by 20%". Building on the above-mentioned Strategy, one of the objectives of the platform devised by the current government (2009-2013) in the field of education concerns fostering lifelong learning and the development of new qualifications, as well as continuous professional development. The measures envisaged in the above-named strategy include developing a law of lifelong learning (a draft law has been produced by the Commission); involving the media in promoting lifelong learning; encouraging schools and higher education institutions to become centres of lifelong learning; and setting up a system of public contribution for financing lifelong learning for each newborn in Romania (a bank account to be opened for each newborn and a 500 Euro start-up sum to be contributed by the state, and subsequently annual contributions of tax-free 500 Euros to be made by the parents). As concerns financing of lifelong learning, the draft law for lifelong learning stipulates that each public institution must allocate a minimum of 2% of its annual budget to staff development.

The Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection is another important stakeholder in shaping the state of adult education and training in Romania. The draft law for Lifelong Learning prepared by the Presidential Commission foresees that regulations in the field should be produced together by the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport, and the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection. However, it is not yet obvious how the two ministries cooperate and correlate their efforts. For instance, in 2005, the latter ministry prepared a *Short and Medium-term Strategy for Continuous Professional Development for 2005-2010*. While the provisions and actions of the Ministry of Education,

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9   The Short and Medium-Term Strategy for Continuous Professional Development for the period 2005-2010 of the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection states that by 2010, the target rate of adult participation in continuous professional development is 7%.

Research, Youth and Sport are centred on psycho-educational strategies of human resource development, the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection focuses on thematic contents of the training programmes.

Adult education in Romania leaves room for numerous improvements. Ezechil (2005) pointed out that there are pessimists who claim that adult education in Romania is still in the stage of seeking its social and institutional identity. The difficulties that arise from the internal organization of the process are increased by a number of external difficulties, such as the allocation of financial resources necessary for the development of a variety of training programmes for adults.

Participation and persistence in lifelong learning processes in Romania

As pointed out above, in Romania there is insufficient participation in lifelong learning. According to the document entitled *Short and Medium-term Strategy for Continuous Professional Development for 2005-2010*, insufficient participation is caused by a number of obstacles including lack of flexibility of the current continuous professional development (CPD) system, which means that courses are too long, and therefore it is impossible for interested people to participate in training while being employed. In addition, recognition is granted only for competences resulting from the formal education system, while those developed in informal or non-formal settings are hardly ever acknowledged. Employers state that access to continuous professional development and lifelong learning opportunities is hindered also by the cost of training and the lack of locally available training programmes.

Some of the challenges referring to the poor quality of training programmes that the strategy document of the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social protection points out, and which we would like to highlight here are related to the insufficient institutional capacity to implement and monitor CPD policies, coupled with the weak institutional framework of the public providers of CPD, and the insufficiently developed network of private providers that cannot cover all the sectors or domains of qualifications, but especially the authorisation system of the training providers which focuses on *controlling inputs to the detriment of outcomes of training programmes*.

The good practice that we are sharing below aims to show how training programmes *can and should focus on outcomes* as a means of achieving the strategic objectives[10] of increasing adults' motivation for and persistence in lifelong learning processes, including continuous professional development.

3.6.1. Action research as a means of authentic assessment of trainee teachers

Good training practice background

In December 2009-June 2010, with the financial support of the Swiss Foundation Open Society Institute, the Romanian Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking Association (RWCT Romania) implemented the project entitled *Promoting authentic assessment in the Romanian in-service teacher training system*. The goal of the project was to promote an innovative assessment policy in the Romanian in-service teacher training system. This new assessment policy should ensure a significant positive impact of the in-service training programmes (teachers' continuous professional development) on the community of learners where the training beneficiary teachers work.

In order to achieve the goal of the project, among other activities, RWCT Romania developed and tested an in-*service training module* for teachers. The training module aimed to develop the participants' competences to plan and experiment with action research in order to improve instruction and

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10   Two strategic objectives and two transversal actions are articulated in the Short and Medium-Term Strategy for Continuous Professional Development for the period 2005-2010 of the Romanian Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection.

to share the findings and the experiences gained during the action research project with fellow teachers. The specific objectives of the training module were for the participants to:

- explain the concept of the action research process;
- identify the phases of the action research process;
- identify the stages of a project that involves action research;
- explain the role of action research projects in the improvement of the teaching-learning and assessment processes;
- develop an action research design in order to improve their instruction and the students' learning and prepare to implement it;
- reflect on the need for professional development.

The training programme was delivered to the participants in a 15-hour face-to-face workshop format as part of continuous professional development / in-service teacher training in January 2010. Subsequently, the participants developed the final version of their action research project and implementation plan, implemented their projects, and wrote up their research reports. The entire set of activities therefore spreads over a period of up to 6 months, including 15 hours of face-to-face training in a group, an estimated 10 hours of individual planning (lessons and developing teaching materials), an estimated average of 10 hours of classroom work (experimenting with the designed intervention to address the identified problem), around 4 hours of meeting with the trainer at the workplace for direct support and monitoring; and an estimated 15 hours of work for analysing the collected evidence, writing up the findings and the results (including work on 2-3 drafts as a result of feedback from trainers).

In addition to the 15-hour workshop, the trainers provided individualised guidance to the teachers throughout the implementation of the action research projects: mentoring visits were made to the trainees' schools, on-going constructive feedback was provided for the trainees to develop their projects and the materials they used (including lesson plans, teaching materials), to implement the teaching activities, to collect evidence of the process of implementation, to analyse the materials and write up their findings in reports. The research reports are in fact articles to be published in the training provider's on-line professional journal. Specific constructive feedback was provided all along the writing process. In addition, the participants were given with reflection instruments.

Our project involved 7 teacher participants, members of the Romanian RWCT Association, who had completed the *Critical Thinking. Active Learning* in-service teacher training programme (provided by the Romanian RWCT Association), a derivative of the Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking training programme (see 3.5.1.). All the teachers chose to participate in the training. Although they all work in urban schools, they had diverse backgrounds, in that

- they teach in a variety of schools: arts and crafts school, technological highschool (vocational), elementary private school, sports school;
- they are teachers of a variety of subject matters: technologies (engineer teacher), Romanian language and literature teachers, a social studies teacher, a school counselor, a French teacher (foreign language), and a primary school teacher;
- they teach students of various age groups: highschool (5 teachers), lower secondary (1 teacher), primary education (1 teacher).

The products of the project within which the present good practice was developed targeted Romanian in-service training providers primarily, but also the international Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking (RWCT) community. Although the training programme was designed for and tested on teachers, with minimal adjustment it can be transferred to virtually any professional job profile.

The outputs of the project included training materials (training curriculum, agenda of training, hand-outs, worksheet), as well as a guidebook for training providers on authentic assessment in in-service training programmes and a set of policy recommendations (see http://www.alsdgc.ro/proiecte/view/id/29/lang/en). These materials can be accessed and used freely, by simply acknowledging the source.

Thinking about the limitations that both the training provider and the learners faced, we must point out time issues. As is the case of all profound learning processes, this approach is time consuming. Although the training curriculum did not specifically aim to develop the participants' academic writing skills, in the process of writing up the findings of the action research projects, due to their inadequate academic writing skills, the participants needed a lot of support, which added extra burden to the trainers' job.

The current state of affairs concerning the future delivery of the programme is influenced by *securing accreditation of the training* from the Romanian National Centre for Teachers' In-Service Training (CNFP – the agency in charge of managing accreditation of in-service teacher training programmes) so as to be able to further provide it to teachers who could also gain credit for completing it. In addition, as articulated in the policy recommendations[11], the cooperation of several stakeholders is needed: besides the improved framework expected to be provided by CNFP, training providers' efforts should be correlated with those of the school management teams and the beneficiaries themselves. Otherwise, no authentic assessment – whether action-research or other similar methods – can be implemented.

Provided accreditation for the training programme is secured, funds to cover training expenses are needed. Despite the envisaged legal provisions that public institutions should spend at least 2% of their budget on staff development, in the conditions of the economic recession and of doubtful priority attributed to human resource development by employers, funds are not easily identified / available. In general, private organizations such as RWCT Romania make efforts to secure funding for training through grants (given by international private foundations) as an alternative to asking teachers to pay a participation fee, especially in the current economic situation marked by a 25% cut in teachers' salary.

Detailed description of the good practice

The methodology of training delivery involves a workshop-type approach. The basic concepts (action research, action research process and projects – see below) are taught in a highly interactive manner, involving cooperative learning strategies. The trainers provide a couple of models of action research projects. Next, the participants identify issues of their concern in their daily teaching / classroom activity, and draft an action research plan. The plans are shared in the workshop, and feedback is provided by both the participants and the trainers. The trainees then finalise their action research plans, and implement them with guidance from the trainers.

11 http://www.alsdgc.ro/userfiles/Policy%20recommendations%20ENG%281%29.pdf

The content of the 15-hour training is structured around three subtopics as follows:

    1. The action research process (3 hours)
    1.1 The teacher researcher
    1.2 The action research process: definition, phases
    2. The action research project (6 hours)
    2.1 Action research projects; collaboration among teachers to carry out action research projects
    2.2 The stages of an action research project
    2.3. Case studies: action research projects
    3. Designing an action research project (6 hours)
    3.1 Guided practice – drafting an action research project.
    3.2. Planning for implementation.

During the implementation of the action research projects, a participatory monitoring and evaluation system is applied; the trainees collect evidence of their work and of the changes noticed in the aspects that they had decided to improve in their classroom work. Reflection is encouraged all through the process. When the projects are completed, the trainees write up the results to be shared with fellow teachers.

The methodology suits the training style employed by RWCT Romania. The workshop format has been found effective in other training programmes as well. Moreover, when the point to be made is that authentic assessment needs an authentic context and authentic tasks, action research seems to be the answer. Therefore, the innovative element built in our training programme was the focus on authenticity of assessment by the inclusion of action research. Action research is recommended as a dimension to be included organically into the teachers' learning process, and as a premise of improvement of the competence or level of performance targeted in the training programmes. Furthermore, by including action research in the training process the programme providers can obtain information about the impact of their training programme, thus focusing the continuous professional development process on the outcomes of training rather than on the inputs.

The present good practice is a forerunner in its nature in Romania because *authentic assessment* is a concept that Romanian educators are hardly familiar with in theory or practice. While action research is being practiced to some extent in Romania, its use for purposes of authentic assessment is a completely new aspect (as also demonstrated by the feedback received from the recipients of the guidebook and other products of the project in which the good practice was developed).

The practical elements presented in the good practice consisted in carrying out action research starting from *real workplace issues* that pose difficulty to the teachers as practitioners. The interventions that the teachers designed for tackling the challenging issues identified were delivered in practice; the monitoring and evaluation of the interventions (results in the students' learning) were all highly practical. Writing up the research report (including aspects of methodology, findings, interpretation of results, conclusions) was another practical aspect which helped improve the teachers' academic writing skills.

The present good practice can be adapted to any country context as far as the education system and teacher training (in-service or pre-service) are concerned. A degree of flexibility in the approach to teaching is necessary. However, the curriculum does not require changes. Moreover, as it is tailored to the needs of the professionals taking part in it, and driven by the beneficiaries of the training, and also exclusively based on hands-on experimenting with new ways of doing a job for improved results, the

good practice can be transferred to other professional fields especially where working with people is involved. We highly recommend it for adult education and training.

Outcomes/ benefits

We have not yet set as our goal to achieve increased quantitative indicators, but rather we looked at the current good practice in terms of profoundness of learning and sustainability of professional development (so far tested on teachers). It empowers teachers to make more substantially informed decisions about their professional development. We believe that *Action Research* has contributed to their becoming more responsible and accountable teachers, who have a sense of professional dignity conferred by the satisfaction of doing their best in the classroom.

The training programme is socially inclusive in that the teachers came from a variety of backgrounds in terms of types of schools and students they work with. Action research promotes critical thinking in all aspects – from questioning, to analysis, interpretation, synthesis, evaluation, development of improved approaches in the classroom. Action research also relies on cooperation: among the trainees, the trainees and the trainers, the trainees and the people they work with (students; other teachers). Interest or curiosity are inherent in research, therefore *Action Research* genuinely and explicitly promotes training beneficiaries' inquisitiveness.

Summary and conclusions

We believe that the training programme detailed above promotes good practices in adult education and training in terms of supporting adults' participation and persistence in lifelong learning processes first and foremost *by shifting emphasis from inputs to outcomes, but also by empowering adults to pursue individually designed genuine professional development plans*. In addition, it encourages collaboration among the trainee, the workplace management structures, and the training provider.

The prospect of sharing their expertise, their improved practice, their enhanced competences and increased performance with peers and with the larger professional community are strong motivators for adults. Ensuring for such sharing opportunities is also the responsibility of the training provider.

General background of adult education in Slovakia

The right to education for all citizens and the right to a free choice of occupation and preparation are guaranteed by the Constitution of the Slovak Republic. Adult education in the Slovak Republic constitutes an integral part of the lifelong education which has been part of the Policy Statement of every government of the Slovak Republic.

Education at schools is generally qualified as a formal education. Continuing education is part of the informal education. Adult education in the Slovak Republic takes place in both types of education.

Adult informal education in Slovakia is mainly regulated by the following legal provisions:

-*Act No. 386/1997 Coll. on continuing education in the wording of Act No. 567/2001 Coll.*, which defines continuing education as a part of lifelong education. The Act also defines the establishment of the Accreditation Commission as an advisory body of the Ministry of Education of the SR, whose task it is to assess the capacity of the educational institution to implement educational activity based on the fulfillment of conditions established by law. The activities of the Accreditation Commission and accreditations are regulated by the statute of the Accreditation Commission issued by the Ministry of Education. Approximately 900 to 1100 adult education programmes are accredited annually and education programmes which are not accredited are implemented along with them. Their number is unknown, but the estimate is from 500 to 700 programmes annually[12].

-*Act No. 311/2001 Coll. Labor Code as amended*, which establishes the obligation of the employer to take care about the deepening or enhancing of the qualifications of its employees.
The Act also establishes the obligation of the employee to constantly deepen his/her qualifications for the performance of the job.

-*Act No. 5/2004 Coll.* on employment services and on changes and supplements to some Acts as amended. Upon Section 44 of this Act, education and preparation for the labor market is a theoretical or professional training that enables to achieve new professional skills and practical experiences for the purpose of finding a proper job for a job seeker or for the purpose of keeping an employee at work. When developing a content and extent of a specific training for the labor market, current level of the knowledge and professional skills of the applicants are taken in consideration, so that these were effectively used at obtaining of the new knowledge and professional skills.

Education and training for the labor market does not mean the enhancement of the level of formal education. It also does not count as completion of compulsory education.

Education and training for the labor market do not include:
- theoretical or practical training that an employer has to provide for his/her employees upon the relevant legal regulations and which an employee has to complete in relation to the performance of his/her work,
- training, which the employee completes from his/her own interest, without a necessary need of the employer to change his qualifications.

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12   The National Report on Development and Status of Adult Learning and Education in the Slovak Republic, Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic, March 2008

Education and training for the labor market upon this Act is provided by:

- the labor agency for the job seekers,
- the employer for his employees,
- job seekers from their own initiative on their own costs.

The labor agencies are responsible for developing projects and programmes of education and training for the labor market for the job seekers, for the purpose of completion, upgrading or extending of their professional skills and practical experiences so that these fulfill the requirements on professional skills and practical experiences needed for the performance of the working activities at the working positions demanding by the employers.

Education and training for the labor market can be provided by a legal or physical entity upon a written contract made with the central or regional agency of labor. The agency may provide a contribution for the education and training for the labor market for a job seeker covering 100% of the related costs. These costs include mainly board, accommodation, and travel. If the participant drops out of the training without any serious reasons, he/she has to return the contributions.

3.7.1. Personal Development

Good training practice background

Accession of the Slovak Republic to the EU means also new working opportunities for the Slovak citizens in other EU countries. Home nursing work became one of the most frequently sought jobs, mainly because of its attractive compensation. Slovak nurses work mainly in Austria and Germany, as well as Britain, Italy, or Ireland. Among the major duties of the nursemaids is ensuring care, assistance in keeping hygiene, assisting the client in getting dressed/undressed, supporting the client in shorter walks and other small services. Because one of the conditions for a successful placement of a nursemaid abroad is speaking the language, many training agencies provide language courses. Following the successful completion of the course, the participants obtain certificates allowing them to work as nursemaids in many EU countries.

The selected good training practice offers a total of 224 hours of training, out of which 160 hours are theoretical, 24 hours of practical preparation, and 40 hours of practicum in institutions of social and medical care.

Objectives of the entire programme:
- Preparation for the labour market;
- Provide participants with efficient professional knowledge and skills in the area of nursing and care for clients;
- Train in proper professional practices of nursing services and understanding sick person's mentality.

Objectives of the selected good practice – Personal development
- To develop participants' personal qualities, provide them with conflict resolution skills and assertive communication skills, and provide them orientation in the job requirements.

This course in nursing is aimed at the unemployed job seekers. It is a vocational retraining course provided as part of informal adult education.

Among the main tools of the training are:
- a) Seminars;
- b) practical trainings;
- c) practicing at social and medical care institutions;
- d) final examination: written test and oral examination.

The course includes the following content areas:

Theme	Hours	Theory	Practice
Introduction: Mission and contents of home nursing	8	8	0
Basic Personal Psychology	8	8	0
Social Skills and Communication	8	8	0
Physiology of human body and basic demonstrations of diseases	8	8	0
Principles of rational nutrition and life style	12	12	0
Hygiene and epidemiology, basic hygiene habits	12	12	0
Household care	8	8	0
Mobility and dressing	16	16	0
Basic social activities	8	8	0
Care of the client	24	24	0
Care of the child	16	16	0
First Aid	16	16	0
Working therapy, learning, hobbies	16	16	0
Practical preparation	24	0	24
Practicing at the institutions of social and medical care	40	0	40
Total	**224**	**160**	**64**

To motivate adults who lost their job to become lifelong learners requires a special approach. The selected good practice creates the first part of the entire training course for the unemployed, focusing on the participants' personal development.

The Personal Development component (24 hours) includes:

1. Introduction: Mission and contents of home nursing
- Mission and contents of home nursing
- Activities of home-nursing services
- Legislation: Acts on social services
- Rights of the disabled people and rights of the nursemaids
- Ethics and morals at nursing services.

2. Basic Personal Psychology
- Definitions of the concept of personality
- Description of the particular elements of the personality:
    - o Dynamic personal qualities

    o Activation and motivation
    o Relationships, attitudes, performances, self-regulation
- Personal types.

3. Social skills and communication
- Basic assertiveness and conflict resolution skills
- Importance and principles of successful communication
- Work with minimal signals in communication with the client
- Interventions in problem situations: anxiety, stereotyped reactions, aggressiveness, depression, etc.
- Stress management, positive influence on the client, protection from the consequences of stress
- Application of the anti-stress techniques.

For this training, the provider IVAKS s.r.o. collaborated with the local Agency of Labor and Red Cross. The training was aimed at the job seekers registered at the local Agency of Labour. Specifically in this training all participants were female, who wished to work as nursemaids abroad or at home. They had lost their job after having worked in the machine industry or agriculture. Some were unemployed for a longer period, some had lost their jobs just prior to the start of the training programme. The participants are of all age groups, and of various levels of education. As an interviewed trainer said: *"Their common feature is that they all are unemployed and they would like to work in the area of social and health care at home or abroad."* It is a specific target group that requires a special and sensitive approach.

Among the difficulties mentioned by the participants was a selection of the training room, which was quite cold and noisy (it was a classroom at a high school). Any other special difficulties were not observed. Among the main supporting materials were handouts provided at each part of the course, films, case studies, etc.

Detailed description of the good practice

Innovation of this training programme is in the addition of the Personal Development as the introductory part of the vocational training for the job seekers. Before the participants begin professional training, they learn to communicate, ask questions, work in groups, resolve conflicts, share experiences, develop their own sense of humour, etc., so that their further participation at the training was more productive and involved.

This vocational training is designed to balance theory and practice. The theoretical parts are delivered interactively and provide a number of practical model situations, simulations, work in groups, case studies, etc.
40 hours of the training take place directly at the institutions of social and medical care and 24 hours are focused on practical preparation. The course is accredited by the Accreditation Committee of the Slovak Ministry of Education. Upon the successful completion of the course, participants obtain a certificate allowing them to work in many EU countries.
The training programme is very easily transferable and can be adapted as an introductory part in any other courses for adults.

This good practice helps participants to persist in the course. It increases their self-esteem and communication skills. There were no dropouts from this course.
The training focused on personal development provided at the beginning of the course motivates

and encourages participants to stay in the course and become active learners, be open, ask questions if they don't understand something, etc. As one of the interviewed trainer said, *"The participants are forced to think, solve difficult situations, compare experiences."*

Because the participants are all unemployed, the course also keeps their working habits. Completion of the course gives them real chances to get employed at home or in other EU countries.

Professionalism of the trainers also significantly contributes to the success of the course. The trainers of this course are all practitioners (for the selected training programme, the trainer was a clinical psychologist).

The trainers emphasise that a good trainer should:

- Build a good team of the participants;
- Have good relations with participants;
- Be charismatic;
- Have good communication skills;
- Establish partnership relations with the participants;
- Be able to admit his/her mistakes;
- Listen to the participants' problems;
- Get continuous feedback from the participants and respond to it.

All interviewed participants confirmed the above characteristics of the trainers that fit with the actual performance of the trainers.

Outcomes / benefits

The main goal of the course is to prepare for the labour market and provide professional knowledge and skills. The majority of the participants decide to do this job before starting the course and their chances to get employed are very high. After successful completion of the course, the participants receive a certificate that is valid in all EU countries.

We think that the objective (i.e. personal development of the participants) was achieved and was rightfully included in the training of the nursemaids. As one of the interviewed trainers said: *"The participants were very different at the end of the course as compared with the beginning. They were more courageous, with higher self-esteem, they did not hesitate to ask questions, share their experiences and ideas, often accompanied with humour and good temper!"*

To start any adult training with the personal development is a good idea how to motivate and encourage adults to persist in the training. *"If a participant has a negative experience from the former trainings, he/she will have difficulties to start another one, if he/she does not have to,"* said one of the trainers. *"It is important to start with the personality part, so that the participants become engaged and enthusiastic for the training. They need to get rid of any worries, obstacles, uncertainty, and shyness to communicate and ask questions if they do not understand something. They need to be open and then they can absorb new information more easily,"* one of the interviewed participants explained.

A good training programme for adults should improve both professional and personal skills. *"The course gave me many tools from the area of nursing. Before it, I had had none of them. Last, but not least, the course taught me to believe in myself, not to worry about new and unknown things".*

Most courses for adults are challenging in terms of time, because adults have many other activities and duties. This time needs to be spent effectively and meaningfully. This training seems to take into ac-

count this fact, as one of the participant mentioned: *"I have refined my brain a little, I found new contacts and friends. Well, it was a meaningfully spent time."*

Conclusion

Personal development was selected as a good practice because it helps to motivate and engage adult learners in lifelong learning, and makes them persist in such processes of learning. This practice is transferable to virtually any other adult trainings and it is worth thinking of it before starting any type of learning activities for adults.

3.7.2. Training format: One school at a time

Good training practice background

Professional development of teachers is a process of deepening, improving, and expanding the qualification and professional competencies in accordance with the latest scientific knowledge, social needs, and requirements on the performance of pedagogical and specialized work (Section 25 Subsection 1 of the Act No. 317/2009 Coll. on pedagogical and specialized workers and on alternations and amendments of some acts). The system of lifelong learning of teachers in Slovakia is also specified and directed by the Regulation No. 445/2009 on continual education, credits, and attestations of the pedagogical and specialized workers of 19 October 2009.

Main reason leading to the adoption of the above and other appurtenant legal measures regulating teachers' professional development was a crisis of teacher's profession, specifically a loss of teachers' social status, a loss of the attractiveness of teacher' profession, a feminization and ageing of teachers, insufficient system of teachers' pre-service and in-service training, lack of qualified teachers in some regions, as well as   insufficient quality of personal strategy of the Ministry of Education and school administrators.

Among the providers of teachers in-service training are schools or school institutions, universities, governmental institutions of the continual education, other governmental educational institutions, other physical or legal entities (with education focused activities).
Types of in-service training are: adapting, specialized, functional, updating, innovating, specialized innovating, and functional innovating.

Providers of the above trainings apply for the accreditation of their programmes at the Accreditation Board, which is an advisory body of the Ministry of Education. Their members are named by the Minister upon the nominations provided by the state and municipal authorities, professional organizations and in-service specialists. Accreditation is given for a maximum of 6 years. By the completion of an accredited training, the participants can obtain certificates with appurtenant number of credits that mean professional promotion.

The training format: One school at a time began in Slovakia in 2007 within the project called "School that Is Thinking", as a reaction to the needs of schools and the public to contribute to the ongoing grassroots school reform. Later, in February 2010, the training was included in a new system of professional development for teachers.

Among the major project's goals are:
- training of the entire pedagogical staffs of schools (min 75% of the pedagogical staff

- of the school) in innovative methods of teaching that promote thinking and independent learning,
- providing of an accredited Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking programme within the system of the professional development of teachers (teachers in-service),
- promote communication and collaboration among teachers,
- promote communication and cooperation of schools, families, and public.

Since 2007, the staff of 50 Slovak basic and high schools were trained within this programme of the lifelong learning / continuous professional development for teachers. The training has two levels with a total number of 120 hours.

Each level includes:

a)   introductory sessions – "Appetizers";
b)   workshops: 40 hours per one level (structured in 5 modules);
c)   practical applications: 20 hours per one level of participants' practical application of the learnt strategies in the their own classrooms;
d)   final presentation of the participants' portfolios in front of a panel.

The second level also includes 4 classroom observations in which colleagues observe the lesson taught by the trainee teacher.

Among the main features of the training are the following:
- Training of the whole teaching staff of the school. The trainers go to the schools to train, so that school teachers do not need to travel. The entire school staff are trained together. They have the opportunity to share experiences and ideas not only during the time of the workshops, but also between them.
- **"Open classes"** – the classes are led by the volunteering school teachers in their own classes, while the other colleagues and trainers observe the teaching and learning processes. Each class period is followed by a reflection session.
- **Portfolio** as a tool for assessment of teachers' participation and practical application of the presented content. The participants develop their own portfolios including lesson plans, reflections, students' works, photographs, etc.)
- Following the successful completion of the programme, the participants receive **certificates** with credits (completion of two levels means 6% increase in the teachers' salary).
- After completing two levels of the programme, the school receives **"School that is Thinking" Certificate.**

The project is conducted by a the Orava Association for Democratic Education in cooperation with the Central European Foundation, Slovnaft a.s. , and involved schools. The schools send their applications upon the call. Schools are selected proportionally from each of the eight administrative regions of Slovakia. About 20 schools are trained each year. The target group is formed by teachers of all age categories (the whole teaching staff of the school need to create one training group). When applying for the programme, agreement statements of the heads of the departments are required.

The participants receive handouts developed by the trainers and provided for each workshop. They also receive a journal that publishes innovative strategies (2 copies per school). Older issues of the journal are accessible from the website: zdruzenieorava.sk. Supporting publications can be ordered by

individuals or schools. The website serves as a forum and a source of lesson plans, articles, contacts, information and news for the participants.

Among the difficulties encountered as part of the project management the most serious ones related to the motivation and encouragement of the entire teaching staff of the school to participate. Not all applying schools were able to guarantee a minimum of 75% of the pedagogical staff to participate. One of the trainees pointed that „*It is not easy to change peoples' thinking. There are the ones who hardly give up their old paths, if ever. Lucky are those who understand that completing high school or university education is not the end of learning.*"

Another problem arose when small schools applied for the training. Because of the financial challenges, the training would be too expensive to be done for a group of approximately 5 teachers. In such situations, the project managers offer the small schools the opportunity to join bigger schools to receive the training. This solution worked well in practice. A participant from an affiliated basic school evaluated it this way: *"The fact that because of being a small school we were affiliated to a bigger school turned out as a very positive experience – both school staffs became friends and had been sharing their experiences in all areas of their work. We hope that in the second level we will also be affiliated to another school."*

Participants complained that the training programme kept them busy during their free time because when all staff were being training, the sessions could only be conducted on the days when the schools are closed (weekends, public or school holidays). This problem had been anticipated by both sides. One way to eliminate the attendance issue is if a schedule of particular meetings is arranged and agreed by both sides (school staff and provider) to choose the best alternatives. Moreover, school administrators have their own measures how to assess and compensate participants for their time spent on professional development.

Detailed description of the good practice

The novelty of this practice lies in the training format, when the entire staff of the school is trained as one group. The trainers come to the schools to deliver the training (not the other way round). The school staff are trained together. They have the opportunity to share experiences and ideas not only during the workshops, but also between them, during their regular working time.

Another new aspect was the inclusion in the training program of the "open classes" – the lessons are taught by volunteering participants (teachers) in their own classes, while the other colleagues and trainers observe the class. Each class is followed by reflections led by the trainers.

Maria Rothensteinova, the trainee from Bratislava basic school is sharing her group work.

To assess the teachers' participation and practical application of the presented content, portfolios proved an effective tool. Among the criteria of assessment of the teachers' portfolios are: portfolio content and structure, methodology of portfolio development, evidence of applying innovative methods in teacher's work (lesson plans), evidence of applying innovative methods in students' work (examples of students works, both positive and negative), and informational weight of the portfolio (teachers' comments and reflections).

The programme takes place directly at the work place (school), participants apply the presented methods in their classes and collect materials for their portfolios. Within the workshops, open classes are held. As pointed out by a trainee, *"the programme is from practice for practice and for life".*

The training format is fully or partially adaptable in other countries. Training of the whole staff has its advantages and can be transferred to any working area. Partially, because in some specific details it depends on the particulars of a professional development system. However, we think that it can be easily modified to specific conditions in each country.

In the fall of 2010, the training is going to start its fourth year. Each year about 80 schools apply for the programme, many of them apply repeatedly (out of which about 20-30 are selected). After completing the first level, most schools continue in the second level. So far 57 basic and high schools were trained. Next year 34 schools will be trained.

The content of the programme includes Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking, and as such it promotes critical thinking, cooperative work, and presents interactive teaching and learning methods. Moreover, the course is accredited as a programme of teachers' carrier development. Upon completion of the programme, teachers receive credits (15+15) which allow them to progress professionally.

Content of the first level

Theme	Hours	Presented hours	Practical application
Framework of critical thinking and learning	12	8	4
Asking questions and critical thinking. Reading methods promoting critical thinking.	12	8	4
Writing methods promoting critical thinking.	12	8	4
Cooperative learning.	12	8	4
School – family – community cooperation.	12	8	4
Total	**60**	**40**	**20**

Content of the second level

Theme	Hours	Presented hours	Practical application
Development of the environment stimulating higher quality of learning.	12	8	4
Further methods promoting critical thinking.	12	8	4
Assessment as a tool of learning.	12	8	4
Readers' workshop.	12	8	4
Writers' workshop.	12	8	4
Total	**60**	**40**	**20**

Outcomes / benefits

After the first year of the programme, an external evaluation of the programme was carried out. The achievement of the objectives was also assessed by collecting feedback from the participants (evaluation sheets after each workshop), trainers, coordinators, and collaborating institutions.
The findings resulting from evaluations are used for the improvement of the programme each year.

As a major benefit of the training, elementary school teachers (K-9) see the possibility to learn new teaching strategies and methods presented through practical activities experienced directly "on their own skin" and the group discussion and ideas for the applications in practice. They also positively assess the trainers, who know what they are presenting, because they each have practical experiences with the presented content (each trainer is also a teacher). A number of the trainees agreed that without active engagement in such training (just by self-learning) they would never achieve such benefits.

They would not know where to look for such information. As one participant pointed out, *"the training teaches us the importance of life-long learning."*
The participants also expressed satisfaction with the atmosphere of the meetings, the opportunities to discuss, share experiences and openly express their opinions. They felt encouraged and motivated to their further work and they were glad that the training positively influenced interpersonal relations in the pedagogical team of the school. They were also contented with the materials and handouts they received. They said that they were starting to teach in a modern way and that they were keen to do so.
They however realized that they would not be able to apply everything immediately, but

Monika Kolinska with her colleagues – teachers from Bratislava basic school during their work group learning new innovative strategies of teaching and learning.

definitely step by step. According to the participants, thanks to the training, the atmosphere in the lessons and students' motivation will change, which means that their own work will be more interesting. When responding to the question how participants' involvement, interest, and motivation could be increased, one participant said: "*Simply this course should be a never-ending story.*"

Highschool teachers appreciated the fact that the training offers examples of concrete situations and that the knowledge and skills learnt in the training are all applicable in the school. They also appreciated the opportunity to learn new methods that motivate their students to learn actively and keep their attention. They positively assessed the open discussions on the ways how to deal with problematic situations in the classroom. As they expressed it, they realize some things often only later, when they encountered them in their job. They realized that thanks to the training, they became more reflective teachers trying to better understand their students. To improve the training, the participants suggested to focus the content mainly on such activities where the participants realize the necessity of the change in thinking about and approaching their pedagogical work.

When planning further steps of the project, the following ideas and recommendations were taken in consideration:

- Expansion of the programme (both qualitative – new contents, and quantitative – more involved schools) necessarily requires training of the new as well as the current trainers. Summer schools for the trainers turned out to be a good response to this need. Moreover, training in couples (certified trainer with multipliers) provides an opportunity for the multipliers to develop their training skills and later become certified trainers.
- Once a school got involved in the programme and completed the first level of training, further needs emerged. This is why the programme offers continuation at the second level leading towards achieving of the school certificate. Hopefully, in the future, there will be more levels developed.
- Each year at least one new school from each Slovak administrative region is involved in the project. With eight regions, each year at least eight new schools cumulate. However, in practice there are usually more then eight new schools, because the demand from some regions is higher than from the others.
- The platform of a continual exchange of experiences should be improved. The website platform needs to be more intensely promoted among the participants.
- Each following level of the training should focus more on practical examples, open lessons, and their assessment.

Summary/conclusions

This course was selected as the best practice because of the outcomes described above. The training format which requires training of the whole school pedagogical staff turned out to be a good solution to the current situation and the problems that the system of teachers professional development is facing (e.g. lack of the good trainings focused on practice, problems of teachers traveling to the trainings, lack of understanding, communication and cooperation among school teachers, etc.). Increasing interest from among the school staffs, support from the school administrators, programme's connection to the national system of teachers' professional development, and the sponsor's willingness to support the programme gives this project a promising and realistic future.

General background of Spanish adult education

Formal adult education in Spain comprises the whole process of education from literacy to the diploma in secondary education. In Spain, adult education is defined in the Ley Orgánica de la Educación, LOE (Organic Law on Education) and its regulations are developed by the Autonomous Communities. LOE offers people over eighteen (and exceptionally those over sixteen years old) the possibility to acquire, update, complete or extend their knowledge for their personal development. After this stage higher education is available for any adult in Spain. (See diagram in Appendix 1)

BASIC PRIMARY EDUCATION (CINE -ISCED 1)	142,302
SECONDARY EDUCATION FOR ADULTS (CINE – ISCED 2)	122,716
PREPARATION FOR GRADUATES OF SECONDARY EDUCATION TESTS	10,089
TOTAL	275,107

Table 1. Number of adults taking part in adult education 2006-2007[13]

The other type of permanent education for adults is integrated into the Professional Training for Employment. This kind of training aims to promote and extend among enterprises and employed/ unemployed workers training courses which cover their needs and also contribute to the development of a knowledge-based economy. The Public Employment Service, with the collaboration of and support from the Tripartite Foundation for Vocational Training plan, manage and control vocational training at state level. At regional level, the Autonomous Communities design the bodies/ entities in charge of the plan, management and control of vocational training.
Both, the Public Employment Service and the bodies with liabilities at regional level collaborate, coordinate and cooperate in vocational training through the Sector Conference on Labour, and guarantee the participation of social partners (trade unions and employers' associations).
Spanish Vocational Training System is regulated by Law 395/2007, 23rd March, from Ministry of Labour and the Organic Law of Qualification and Vocational Training 5/2002, 19th June.
Vocational Training for unemployed and employed adults is divided in two types:

1. Training on demand: This kind of training responds to the specific needs established by companies and workers. It can be totally or partially financed by public funds. It could be training actions run by companies or individual leaves for training.

2. Training on offer: it provides training to workers or unemployed people, adapted to the needs of the labour market, productiveness and competitiveness of companies and the professional objectives of the target group.
   Priorities, general objectives and recommendations on these training programmes are established by the Ministry of Labour according to workers' professional needs, demanded by the most representative business organizations or trade unions at national and regional level.

3. Training alternating with employment: It allows workers to combine training and on-the-job professional work experience.
   Non-formal adult education in Spain is basically integrated into the Professional Training for Employment. Except for training offer related to the acquisition of a certificate of professionalism (Royal Decree 34/2008), adult education will be considered non-formal education.

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13 Source" Las cifras de la Educación en España: estadísticas e indicadores, Edición 2007, Ministry of Education, Social Policy and Sport.

	CINE – ISCED 0 -2				CINE – ISCED 3 -4				CINE – ISCED 5 – 6			
	POPULATION	EMPLOYED	UNEMPLOYED	INACTIVE	POPULATION	EMPLOYED	UNEMPLOYED	INACTIVE	POPULATION	EMPLOYED	UNEMPLOYED	INACTIVE
EU 25	6,5	9	7,6	2,8	16,4	18,9	14,8	6,7	30,9	33,7	22,7	13
ES	4,9	5,9	8	2,7	12,5	13	18,8	8,3	21	21,2	31,9	13,7

Table 2. Participation in non-formal education/training by educational achievement and employment status, 2005 (%)[14]

3.8.1. Keep employment by developing e-skills – KEMP

Good training practice background

KEMP course was born as an initiative of the Lifelong Long Learning Programme and specifically as a Grundtvig Project focused on trying to respond to the education challenge of an ageing population in Europe, supporting the development of ICT based contents, services and practices for lifelong learning; and equipping senior workers with tools and skills that they need in order to cope with change and keep in employment, with special emphasis in ICT skills.

Partners from seven European countries collaborated in this course. Contents were designed, piloted and supported by the partnership. Participants in this course were also coming from these different countries adding a multicultural component which was very much appreciated by all.

The KEMP training course aims to:

- Promote the importance of lifelong learning for senior workers.
- Improve their competence by developing e-skills, in particular ICT tools/solutions and internet in professional and educational/training contexts.
- Diminish their resistance to the daily use of ICT-based tools and services at work and at persona level
- Raise awareness among active senior workers on how ICT and Internet can make their daily life easier, especially their professional life.
- Exchange experiences with colleagues from other countries

The course has a duration of 32 hours and it is structured in 6 training modules, each of them focused on a subject related to technological skills and Internet, to improve the service sector adult employee's competences.

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14   Source: Eurostat

The duration of each training module is decided depending on the contents of each of them, as well as on the thematic difficulty, on the importance to achieve the aims of the course and to obtain the highest benefit for the target group and finally the practices included in each of them.

The contents of each module are detailed as follow:

Module 1 - Vocational orientation (6 hours)
Lesson 1	>>	Introduction to KEMP Project
Lesson 2	>>	Introduction to the process of professional orientation and guidance through lifelong learning
Lesson 3	>>	The process: to be, to relate, to proceed

Module 2 - E-communication (11 hours)
• Electronic mail (e-mail)
Lesson 1	>>	Basic email (e.g. Structure email address, the benefit of using email, structure of mailbox, email etiquette)
Lesson 2	>>	Configuration and creation of an e-mail account
Lesson 3	>>	Receiving and sending e-mail
Lesson 4	>>	Adding attachment e.g. document, picture, scan
Lesson 5	>>	Managing an account and mailbox (address book, option account, advanced function e.g. Rules and Alerts)
Lesson 6	>>	Storing information - (e.g. backup, delete e-mail, manage folders)

• E-communication
Lesson 7	>>	Instant Messaging (Installation, Configuration and manage account, using messenger, advanced option e.g. conference meeting)
Lesson 8	>>	VoIP system (basic information: What is VoIP, the benefit of using VoIP, tools)
Lesson 9	>>	Forum (basic information, forum thread)
Lesson 10	>>	Chat (basic information; chat room, tools)
Lesson 11	>>	Video conference (basic information, tools)

Module 3 - E-learning (6 hours)
Lesson 1	>>	Basic information about e-learning
Lesson 2	>>	Tools use on the e-learning
Lesson 3	>>	How to participate in e-learning courses?

Module 4 - E-banking (3 hours)
Lesson 1	>>	History of e-banking
Lesson 2	>>	What is e-banking?
Lesson 3	>>	Why e-banking? (benefits)
Lesson 4	>>	Security of virtual banks

Module 5 - E-business (3 hours)
Lesson 1	>>	What is e-business?
Lesson 2	>>	e-business and e-commerce types and models
Lesson 3	>>	Why to buy by Internet
Lesson 4	>>	Security recommendations to buy by Internet
Lesson 5	>>	e-shops and e-auctions

Module 6 - E-government (3 hours)

Lesson 1   >>   History of e-government
Lesson 2   >>   What is e-government?
Lesson 3   >>   E-government in the European Union

Each module provides an overview of why the topics are relevant by identifying how the information is applied in the real world. Each module is divided into lessons. Most lessons contain practice-oriented material with one or more hands-on exercises and realistic case scenarios. These exercises give participants opportunity to use the skills which will be explored. Each lesson ends with a short summary, key terms, interesting links and references, which will be helpful to understand the subject matter.

The course is addressed to senior workers +45.
- Administrative staff working in training institutions, private schools (including senior universities), SME (small and medium enterprises) providing training activities and HR departments.
- Trainers and administrative staff from trade unions, business associations, non-profit associations, NGOs involved in training activities.
- Administrative staff, trainers and managers from vocational education and training providers.
- Teachers of public schools.

Participants receive a notebook, a folder and a pen. They also have available a manual containing the training modules and the lessons included in each of them. See other materials in Appendix 2. The manual consists of an introduction with information about KEMP project, the aims of the course, six thematic modules divided into lessons, a set of basic terminology, a list of reference books and interesting links for the trainee.

Each module consists of:
     1.   Introduction – Why this module?
         a)   >>   Preliminary information about a module
         b)   >>   What a participant will learn in this module
         c)   >>   Content list of the module
         d)   >>   Technical requirements to complete this module
         e)   >>   Objectives achieved
     2.   Lesson
         a)   >>   Introduction to the lesson
         b)   >>   Time schedule (estimated time to go through that lesson)
         c)   >>   Content list
         d)   >>   Exercises
         e)   >>   Short summary (after each lesson)
     3.   Module Summary
     4.   Key terms used in the lessons
     5.   Practice, case scenario
     6.   Interesting links and further recommendations
     7.   References
     8.   User Help

When writing the contents of each module, some important recommendations were followed in order to make material more comprehensive and handier.

The following are some of the aspects that were given special attention:
- use one paragraph for one concept – better too many paragraphs than too few;

- use many examples related to realistic scenarios;
- make sure examples relate to the specific target group;
- provide 'shortcuts' for expert users;
- clear communication of requirements (easy reading);
- transparency;
- simplicity and user-friendliness;
- use simple and natural language;
- make instructions as concise and direct as possible;
- avoid technical jargon ;
- try to avoid the use of synonyms for style variation - a term once introduced should be used consistently throughout the course.

For further information, see "Trainees manual".

Some of the difficulties identified by trainers and trainees during this course are related to the short duration and extension of course contents. Some participants think working sessions were too long.

The lack of time to attend the training sessions or the fact that schedule is not very appropriate according to their personal or professional commitments is one the common difficulties adults have to face when enrolling on a training activity. The solution to this issue was to organise a full-time course lasting for one week.

One of the trainers explains it this way: *"Adult trainees never have the opportunity to dedicate one week to learn starting from the basics of what ICT is and how it affects their lives. KEMP trainees had this chance."*
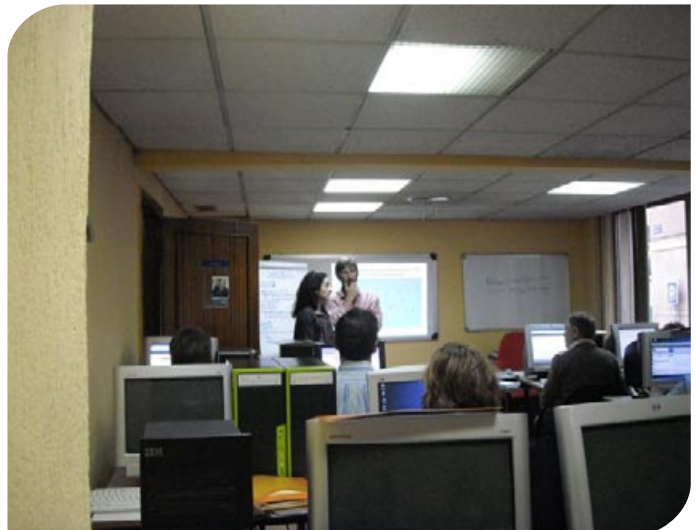
Participants were not familiar with ICT culture so they were unaware of its impact and usefulness in their professional and personal life. That was a motivation aspect the trainer had to emphasize from the beginning in order to let them understand the importance of this topic.

Some trainees also recognized that sometimes adult people experience difficulties in adapting to changes. It is also hard for adult people to admit they have lack of knowledge.

Trainees show this feeling like this: *"I must also agree that some adults are tired and don't feel like "growing" and improving their skills, because they can't see a future. Society casts them away. The world belongs to young people, so they feel old and demotivated very soon".*

Trainers explain it this way: *"I think that adults, especially the older ones, are afraid to admit they need training, and in general, they do not want to admit that they do not have enough competences in some subject. They think that this is going to harm them".*

Detailed description of the good practice

The learning process has been based on the alternation of theoretical and practical knowledge, on progressive and gradual presentation and on the use of audiovisual techniques such as videos, slides, practical examples, etc.

Therefore, the presentation of the theoretical content by the trainers has been accompanied by practical exercises and cases that will allow the application of the knowledge acquired to find solutions to real situations. This practical application has been combined with group training techniques that stimulate and encourage the trainees."

The development of the structure and content of the course and Trainee's Manual aimed to provide a hands-on approach, a strong link between theory and practice and encourage concrete work done by participants as a tool to increase their motivation and satisfaction with the course.

The content of the course is structured in modules which in turn are divided into lessons. The structure of each module is as follows:

> 1) Definition of goals: a presentation of objectives to be achieved by the students at the end of each module.
>
> 2) Presentation of theoretical contents by the teacher: To develop an oral presentation of the content of each lesson necessary for the achievement of goals.
>
> 3) Implementation of practical and/or theory and practice exercises, practical cases and practices. Practice by doing exercises and working on practical cases make the achievement of goals easier. During the training sessions the theoretical presentation and performing practical activities will be mixed.
>
> 4) Summary of the exposed contents: synthesis of the most important elaborated aspects.

The method followed has been the one of meaningful learning, based on the theory that the student builds, with the help of the trainer, his or her own learning from prior experience and knowledge. Starting from the students' previous knowledge, the trainer, as a mediator of the learning, introduces the contents of the course. This is the way a relationship is established between the new concepts and what participants already know making learning meaningful.

Therefore, the communication between teachers and students has been encouraged as a useful tool to help the learning process and, from the interactions, create team awareness and avoid the student's isolation. At the same time, the trainer allowed for individualization, so that the different rhythms of learning and ways of working are respected depending on the knowledge of each student's specific characteristics. Moreover, the trainer was prepared to face the demand and progress of each participant in order to give immediate solutions and avoid loss of interest. This was also possible because of a reduced number of trainees (15 participants).

The fact that the motivation for a person to develop his/her skills to learn depends on the willingness to get involved in a training process was taken into account, as well as the fact that motivation is improved by creating a proper environment through the described methodology.

The training programme includes the following activities:

- Practice and/or theory and practical exercises: students have to do different exercises individually or in groups depending on the contents of each module.
- Practical cases: the trainer uses different techniques such as group discussions and talks, cases studies, simulations, games, etc. where different situations, problems or questions are raised that the student must solve; they reflect on different situations of the labour environment related to the contents of the training actions.
- Demonstrations: the trainer demonstrates exercises and examples by using the computer systems, so that the student can visualise and fulfil different tasks, actions, etc.

At the end of the course, a summary of the main concepts is provided, achieved goals are reviewed, so that participants can apply the learnt concepts in their everyday life.
This training allows participants to spend a whole week to learn from the beginning what ICT is and how it affects their lives. It is a complete immersion in the training process.

One of the trainees stated: *"Because the programme held was outside my place of residence I was able to focus only on it for a whole week".*

Little time was devoted to theory and plenty of time to practice. It also gives the participants the opportunity make use of their knowledge from their professional and personal life.

"A real advantage of this course is that they start to use what they learn in the classroom right away, they do not have to wait to put all they have learnt in practice after the course".

The intercultural component enhanced personal interest and implication of participants.
"The contact with people from other countries and the exchanges with them were very interesting for me."

Outcomes/ benefits
At the end of the course, participants:

- Were able to use ICT tools/solutions and the Internet both in professional and personal contexts.
- Were aware of the advantages of the use of Internet and the exchange of information through new ICT.
- Improved their careers and their inclusion in the Information Society.

All participants agree on their improvement on professional and personal skills. We can see that when a trainee says: *"The fact is that my participation in the KEMP programme gave me the strength and confidence to believe in myself, my skills and my capacity to go on learning and being pro-active."*
Internal and external evaluation has been run and good results were achieved. Evaluation of each module was conducted and also an overall evaluation questionnaire for both trainers and trainees.

Trainees assessed the course with satisfaction concluding: *"It has been the best course I have done compared with others".*

KEMP course is completely transferable and it has been transferred already. Participants from Spain, Italy, Poland, Portugal, the Czech Republic and Austria were involved in this first course. Participants from all over the EU have taken part in the following sessions.

"Training contents could be addressed to other target groups with the same training needs. The training model is completely transferable since it is adaptable to other training subjects. It can be adapted to a rural context or for people at risk of social exclusion or workers experiencing difficulty integrating in the labour market."

None of the participants has dropped out the course. Two modules are on the webpage of the project that can be consulted: e-communication and e-business.

Conclusions

KEMP course has been selected as a best practice example because it contributed to overall increase in the participants' professional and personal skills. It increased their confidence in their potential and their skills to learn at an old age. It also increased specifically their e-skills in one or more thematic areas: e-communication, e-Learning, e-Business, e-banking, e-Governance. It contributed to their ability and motivation to use and explore the Internet, the ICT tools. It opened new perspectives and increased their interest in future LLP opportunities and networking.

KEMP includes a lot of elements that allowed it to become a very successful educational and training activity.

Further information: http://www2.spi.pt/kemp/welcome.htm

3.8.2 Training Roma Women in traditional fashion - ROMFASHION
Good training practice background

Training Roma Women in traditional fashion was inspired by the historical situation of the Roma community. Roma people in Europe constitute an ethnic/cultural/linguistic group that suffers severe discrimination and social exclusion. Several reasons are quoted as causing this situation, but lack of employment and of relevant vocational qualifications rank among the most important.
Roma women are particularly affected since they rely traditionally on men for household income. In this context their cultural specificity is under threat as they are led to live under increasingly worse conditions that seriously undermine their traditional way of life.
The project Romfashion, was designed in such a way as to provide Roma women with specific vocational skills directly targeting the advancement of their socio-economic state, while safeguarding Roma cultural identity.
During the past, Roma people have suffered discrimination by political, social and religious power but nowadays, Roma are gaining space in the Spanish society. Roma history has been proposed to be included in school programmes with the objective that Spanish society could become aware of it and of Roma culture.
It has been considered that the lack of education among the Roma is the original cause of their actual situation: nowadays, the big challenge for the Spanish Roma community is to improve their cultural and educational level, in order to find employment and improve their life condition.
ROMFASHION aims above all to train Roma women in a job: women used to drop-out of school at the age of 12, and they were usually not labour market participants, but rather stayed at home and cared for the household and their children.
ROMFASHION project and training in traditional fashion aims:

- To motivate Roma especially young Roma women and give them chances to engage actively in training aiming to improve their life.
- To improve the skills and competences of Roma women with a view to facilitate their integration into the labour market.
- To contribute to the gradual establishment of Roma women as household or communal producers in the market; which will change their image in society and improve their social and economic situation.
- To promote Intercultural Dialogue, since its primary objective is to contribute to the improvement of the conditions of life of a disadvantaged group, whose disadvantage arises primarily due to existing negative stereotypes, frequently leading to discrimination and social exclusion.

ROMFASHION partnership collaborated while designing the training programme and organisational tasks but training course was carried out by ROMI-Serseni.

Detailed description of the good practice and outcomes/ benefits
Training modules were focused on the following topics:

- Start Programme: Getting to know each other
- Introduction to the drawing of the design, cutting and sewing traditional ROMA clothing.
- Types of women flamenco dresses
- Techniques - Methods - Principles and Systems for Cutting – Sewing.
- Tools for Cutting – Sewing.
- Designing
- Materials for Cutting – Sewing: Fabrics
- Marketing - Management –Self-employment.
- Search techniques and job search.
- Health and Safety at Work.

This course has been focused on design systems, cutting and sewing women's clothes. Explanations about the way to understand and use cutting and sewing tools were provided, considering low educational trainees background, in order to guarantee the trainees' homogeneous knowledge about these aspects.

The general principles of design, cutting, sewing women's clothes, basics about materials, fabrics and tools were also provided, as well as the variety of Roma traditional clothes and decorations. Roma trainees carried out Roma clothes designs, and after voting them, the final flamenco dress was chosen by participants encouraging them during the rest of the training course, until the finalisation of the dresses.

Participants were women from Roma community, unemployed with a low educational level (primary school), and in the 16 - 30 age bracket. Participants' selection was carried out through interviews. The Roma women's motivation and commitment, and their unemployed situation were taken in account during the selection process.

Managing childcare and home duties have been the main difficulties faced during the training according to trainees. Also their lack of calculation skills has made it difficult for most of trainees to understand measurements and cutting procedures.

"For me, and I think for most of Roma women the hardest part of enrolling in a training activity is that we have to leave our children at home. I'm lucky because my husband takes good care of our children when he's home, but unfortunately they are not all like him."

"The hardest part for me was measuring and cutting. I had to ask so many times to get to understand that. But finally I understood it. Loli (trainer´s name) is so patient with us".

No other supporting materials were provided except for fabrics and specific sewing materials. But those were very much appreciated by trainers and trainees.

"In this course we had very good materials. As a trainer it's the first time I have had access to so much and such good fabric at this level of instruction. Usually trainees have to wait until they reach the level of a highly specialized course to have this kind of materials. I think this also motivated them, because they felt they were

doing something really important so they should care about it".

This training encouraged participants who are not usually involved in training activities and with a low educational level to engage actively in the course, and to consider the skills learnt as a possible key to entering the labour market. It linked professional development to a cultural component since the trainees were designing traditional Roma dresses.

"In my opinion I still need some more training in sewing to be able to get a job, but I have already started to sew some clothes for my family or neighbours: small things… I don't get paid for that but I think maybe with some more practice I could start earning some money working as a dressmaker."

"I know I still need to keep practicing but I decided to go ahead and buy a sewing machine. It has been a big investment for us, but my husband supported me and we bought it. So now I can sew at home and one day hope to get a job"

Training was completely practice oriented: 90% of the training was devoted to sewing practice. And it can be also considered completely transferable since it has been run also in Greece, Turkey, Slovakia and the Czech Republic with the same target group and methodology. Few adaptations to local specificities were made.

"We spent the whole time sewing. If we had any doubt we asked Loli (trainer´s name) or other participants. Because we usually worked in couples, usually with someone that knew a little bit more than you."

Training is based on daily sewing practice. Groups of two or three trainees are arranged according to their performance. Trainees with a good performance level worked with trainees with a lower performance level. Peer learning strategies are used on daily basis. The fact that the trainer is part of the Roma community facilitates communication and development of training sessions.

No theory or background introduction is made by the trainer at the beginning of the course or each training session. Theoretical concepts are explained by trainer while trainees are performing / sewing.

Dresses produced were agreed by all participants at the beginning of the training course. The final products strongly reflect the participants' cultural origins, which established a very personal link between the participants and the training contents.

"From my point of view they were a lot more engaged with this course than previous courses they may have done because they felt connected with this kind of dresses. They considered it part of them, part of their culture".

The tangible nature of the training outputs helped participants to see and to have access to every stage of their working progress.

"They are used to short-term tasks. They need to see results immediately. They are better at hands on activity than on-paper activities. They prefer doing and undoing a piece of clothing a thousand

of times and realising what they have done wrong rather than spending some time working on the paper, taking measurements, etc…"

The number of participants was the same from the beginning until the end of the course. 3 women were substituted by 3 other women because of personal reasons related also to cultural or social matters within the Roma community.

This training extremely increased the target group's interest in training generally speaking and particularly in sewing activity, not only as a personal interest but in a professional field.

"I would like to participate in another course next year. I really enjoyed this one, so I'm looking forward for the next one."

At the end of this training, trainees had to deliver 4 traditional Roma dresses. A fashion show was held after the completion of the training period in order to promote the final products of this training. Several exhibitions will be arranged with the collaboration of different social organisations.

"I was one of the girls that wore a dress at the fashion show. I was very nervous at the beginning but I really enjoyed it. We were so happy. And everyone congratulated us for our work".

A trainer and a social mediator were in charge of carrying out the training. Both of them are part of Roma community so they have an excellent knowledge of the target group. The trainer and the mediator had been working for the integration of Roma women for 15 years. The mediator served as a link among the trainees, the community and stakeholders supporting their personal and professional development and their labour integration process.

Even though the training was run in a small group, additional individual classes were provided if necessary in order to guarantee a homogeneous level and to facilitate the trainees' learning process, motivation and participation during the regular training period.

"Sometimes I stayed longer with Loli (trainer´s name), so we could work on specific thing I was not getting during the class".

This training course was completed and no other calls have been scheduled yet. But some trainees have invested in sewing machines for future professional development and that will ensure project sustainability.

Conclusions

Methodological aspects such as peer learning, practice based training and cultural connection have been crucial in order to guarantee course success.

A low educated target group together with a strong cultural background have made this course a real educational challenge.

The trainers had a key role during the implementation of this course. Being part of the Roma community made them a reference person for the participants. Their origins changed trainees' perception of the goals of the course. The training was not something imposed anymore but something "recommended", sometimes useful or maybe rewarding.

Course contents were valued by the trainers, emphasizing the importance of these skills and jobs related to this activity. So trainees understood how important this learning process they took part in was.

Contact information: Asociación de Mujeres Gitanas ROMI Serseni
http://www.romiserseni.com/

Appendix 1 - Formal Educational System

© Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia
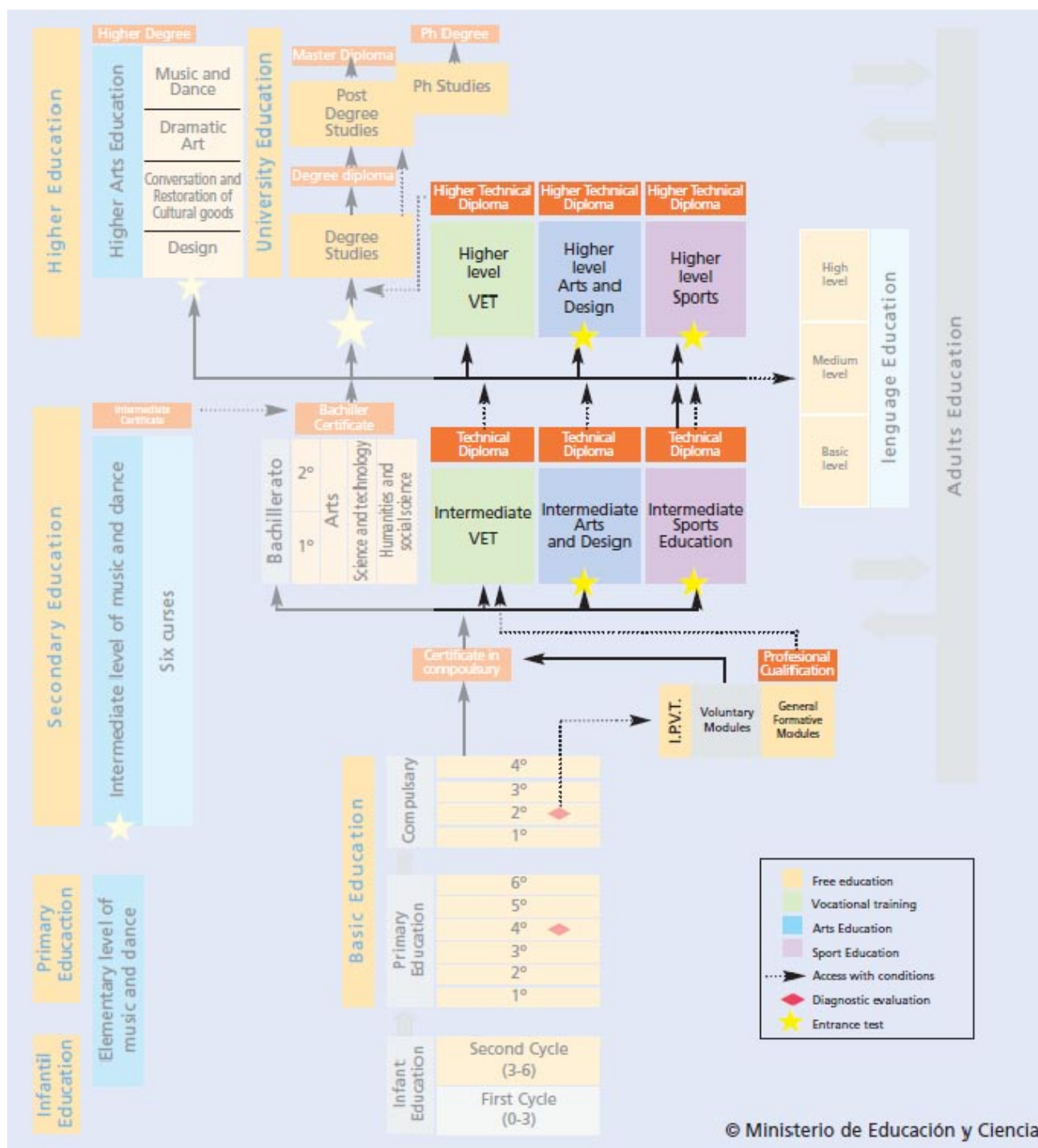
Appendix 2: Information leaflet

Keep employment by developing e-skills

COME TO SPAIN TO DEVELOP YOUR E-SKILLS FREE!

If you are over 45, you work in a SME of the service sector, you want to develop professionally and you have a good command of English, enrol in this course of the Kemp project. You will use new technologies and Internet in your job post and at home, comfortably and saving time.

During this course, you will be able to know and put in practice all the opportunities Internet offers to communicate, attend online courses, do shopping online, deal with enterprises, banks or the Public Administration.

Besides, you will have the chance to share your experiences with adult workers from several countries: Portugal, Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Spain, Italy and Poland.

The Kemp project will foot the expenses of the trip, the accommodation and maintenance. For further information or to register for the course please contact us at the address given bellow.

CONTENTS	
Modules	Duration
Module 1 – Vocational Orientation	6 hours
Module 2 – On-line communication	11 hours
Module 3 – E-learning	6 hours
Module 4 – E-banking	3 hours
Module 5 – E-business	3 hours
Module 6 – E-government	3 hours
Total	**32 hours**

COURSE: PRACTICAL USE OF ICT AND INTERNET IN THE PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENT
From 23 to 27 of March, 2009
Venue: Madrid
Duration: 32 hours. Classroom training
Sessions in English

Retrain yourself in the use of new technologies and you´ll see how your personal and professional life improves!

Contact us to send the registration form or if you need more information:
INSTITUTO DE FORMACIÓN INTEGRAL
Alicia García-Madrid Colado
C/ Alcalá nº 21, 3º drcha. 28014 Madrid
e-mail: aliciagarcia@unihost.org
Telephone: 91 531 21 00 ext. 2103.

This course belongs to the Kemp project. For more information, visit the web page: **www.spi.pt/kemp**

General background in adult education in Switzerland

The education system in Switzerland is very diverse, because the constitution of Switzerland delegates the authority for the school system mainly to the cantons. In continuing education, issues and requirements regarding transparency, coordination and quality assurance in particular have increased in recent times and have led to the founding of the Forum for Swiss Continuing Education and the Inter-Cantonal Conference for Continuing Education.

With regard to the legal basis, the Federal Law on Vocational Education and Training has led to the improvement of vocationally oriented continuing education. Continuing education has found its way into the Federal Constitution by means of the revision of education regulations. The Confederation has the competence to specify principles of continuing education.

In Switzerland there is a diverse offer in the field of training. This includes courses, seminars and post-graduate courses, but also learning opportunities outside of formal education and training structures, including: museum visits, workshops, lectures, field trips or conferences, etc. Another popular way of training is e-learning, learning at the workplace and the use of self-learning materials and professional literature or learning in self-organized groups. The range of providers goes from small private schools to big organisations for training and from schools run by public institutions, associations or trade unions to small businesses, and freelance instructors. The private providers clearly dominate: they make up about 80% of the total provision of course hours available, while the public institutions - mainly universities, colleges and public vocational schools - only offer 20% of training hours.

Diversity also characterizes the content taught during the training. The most popular are the long-running language learning courses with a share of 16% of all visited in course hours in one year. A very important role is played by the healthcare sector (with a share of about 10%), management courses and training programmes in computer science. Most of these courses are attended for both professional and personal reasons. What is studied for the profession is also used in private life, voluntary work or leisure activities - and vice versa: the professional life benefits from adults who acquire different skills in their spare time. So it is not possible to draw a clear line between vocational and general education at the level of the course content. Education experts have now accepted this challenge and developed concepts to meet today's reality. In Switzerland these approaches come under the name "Lifelong Learning."

The population of Switzerland includes a high percentage of immigrants (29% in 2008). Many migrants show a high motivation to update their skills by using the various educational opportunities. Language courses and job-training programmes are of particular interest. The participants aim to gain information concerning a better integration into the new home, the possibility of acquiring the skills for acceding better working conditions, welfare and social mobility.

According to statistics, the share of 25-64 year old residential population that has taken part in at least one learning activity (formal, non-formal education) is at 58.8%.

Official statistics cited in government reports show the different reasons why the permanent resident Swiss population aged 20 to 74 years participates in non-formal education. According to available data, 35.5% attend only professional activities, whereas only 9.5% participate in non-occupational activities. A percentage of 49.4% however do not attend any non-formal education activities at all.

In Switzerland, adult education is legally defined as the type of education that „imparts, in the context of lifelong learning, knowledge and skills to cope with changing demands in society, economy and to undertake new, required tasks. The District can assist the general adult education through contributions." The Cantons may provide grants or student loans for a range of learners who need it, including people interested in further training. The Swiss legal regulations also define that students are entitled to benefit of an age-approprate and a level suitable education.

3.9.1 Training for volunteers acting as mentors in the mentoring programme MUNTERwegs

Good training practice background

The association MUNTERwegs (www.munterwegs.eu) offers a mentoring programme for children from socially deprived family background. For this purpose, the association uses volunteer mentors, mostly people aged over 50. In order for the mentors to perform their work successfully, they are regularly provided with a special training programme.

The training programme consists of six modules that on the one hand enhance the mentors' specific skills, but also serve as an opportunity to share experiences and provide mutual support, while also building up support networks.

The modules that are delivered within the mentor training target different priorities. One example is the module addressing language and learning support. The training courses are described by MUNTERwegs as "coaching events", with built-in elements of intravisions, supervisions and practical assistance in addition to theoretical inputs.
The training programme is provided throughout the mentoring programme delivered by MUNTERwegs, for a period of about eight months. During this time, mentors meet six times for approximately two hours for the coaching events. The MUNTERwegs specialists who offer these coaching sessions use elements of supervision, but also work with tools described in "Gestalttherapy" or methods of psychodrama (Moreno pedagogy). According to the various subjects of the coaching sessions, they also work closely together with experts from the social services (integration representatives, social workers from the community, etc.) or the school (speech therapists, teachers for German as a second language, etc.).

Coaching is offered only to those mentors that are enrolled in the MUNTERwegs mentoring program (mentors need to apply and meet specific criteria). The training is offered in the same group composition of approximately 10 mentors. The mentors have diverse backgrounds: many are retired, have adult children, but possibly still no grandchildren, and therefore with a significant amount of time to volunteer. Others reorientate themselves and see mentoring as new work experience. Still others seek compensation for their daily work and like to be socially active.

In a similar context, MUNTERwegs provides guidance for students of social work. This type of mentoring is accredited and embedded in the curriculum as a form of hands-on training.
Monitoring of the mentors, as well as the coaching sessions in this programme are labor intensive and the personnel costs for this are not covered fully. MUNTERwegs is dependent on donations and the financial support of municipalities.

The trainers have a high non-profit engagement, which could be a threat to the sustainability of the programme. A special challenge of the coaching sessions is the heterogeneity of mentors. The biographies differ significantly in some coaching groups: 25 year-old students work together with 65

year-old retired persons, academics together with housewives, etc. The trainers handle this challenging situation with high flexibility and by employing a wide range of methods. Finally, the themes of the various coaching sessions depend on the group members and have to be varied in accordance. It goes without saying that mentors accompanying children on their way to or back home from kindergarten have different needs from those mentoring 10-year-old schoolchildren for the development of school-related skills.

Detailed description of the good practice
The table below shows the curriculum of the mentor's education and provides an overview of the objectives of the various coaching events and meetings:

	Objectives and activities
Kick-off	Getting to know each other and personal motivation to join the programme, introduction into mentoring, Definition of mentoring, getting to know the duties and rights as a MUNTERwegs mentor
Welcome party for mentors and children / parents	First meeting for the pairs, getting to know each other, ice-breaker activities An intercultural interpreter helps with the translation for families with migrant background. Parents and mentor sign a contract for the wellbeing of be child in the mentoring programme. Mentors fix the first date with parents and child. The pairs get a personal MUNTERwegs diary. The mentor guides the mentee and his family home.
Coaching 1 *(Coaching events are only for the mentors, normally a group of 10 volunteers)*	Getting to know one's mentee and status quo. Exchange of mentors' experiences. Joining – theoretical input on communication and exchange of ideas on how to relate to the child's world, his family setting, etc. Finding out about the mentors' resources and interests, joint hobbies etc. The mentors are given their first compensation money (pocket money). Collecting ideas and topics for the next coaching.
Coaching 2	Exchange of good practice on free time activities with the mentee. Theoretical input on intercultural awareness and competencies. The training addresses the importance of cultural competency, including empathy, responsiveness to families, and respect for individual differences. Introducing the school visit. Collecting ideas for the first group meeting.
Group meeting 1 *(for mentors and children)*	Handicraft work offered to the mentors and the mentees (if possible according to the season – Christmas or Eastern).

Coaching 3	Feedback on the mentors' well being in the project. Exchange on the status quo in the mentoring relationship (SWOT Analysis). Sharing the MUNTERwegs dairies (where the mentors and mentees write or paint about their activities). Looking back at the school visits and the last group meeting. Theoretical input on how to improve literacy and German as a second language, introducing materials, games and books. If possible, a teacher of the local community is invited who is specialized in this field and who could also inform on the various language programmes for migrant families in the community.
Coaching 4	The mentor as a bridge builder between school / kindergarten and family. Input and practical exercises on how to improve the learning skills of the mentee. Input and discussion on how: a) the mentors could help to create a home environment that encourages learning; b) the mentor communicates high, yet reasonable, expectations for the mentee's achievement and future careers; c) the mentor could bridging the gap between the culture at home and the learning institution; d) the mentor could encourage the mentee's parents to become involved in their child's education at school and in the community. Collecting ideas for the second group meeting.
Group meeting 2 *(for mentors and children and their family)*	For example: barbecue in the nearby forests – out-door games at a playing ground etc. The project team promotes a variety of informal activities that facilitate the interaction of parents and mentors. International food – shared picnic.

Coaching 5	Feedback on the mentors well being in the project. Exchange on the status quo in the mentoring relationship (SWOT Analysis). Looking back at the last group meeting. Reflecting parents' work – measures to improve it. Input on local supporting social networks, on programmes for integration in the community and the region. Introducing various professionals working in counseling centers in the community, getting to know all the clubs for children and activities of the community addressed to the mentees' age group. To reach a goal of improving the mentee's integration process, the mentor is encouraged to help develop a strong network of support for the child. Reflecting on the sustainability of the mentoring relationship after the official MUNTERwegs programme has finished (period of 8 months). Discussion on how the various objectives regarding the mentee's well-being and development can be supported on a long term basis. „Homework" for the mentors: deciding on how they want to organize their future relationship to their mentee (either finish the meetings after MUNTERwegs is over or still keeping in touch individually).
Coaching 6	Face-to-face interviews with each mentor about their status quo in the mentoring relationship (SWOT Analysis) and how they want to proceed / organize their relationship with the child (according to this decision a letter is send to the parents from MUNTERwegs). Mentors answer the feedback-form and give suggestions on how to improve the project/ coaching etc. They are also given a feedback form for the mentee's parents. Collecting ideas for the farewell party and organize it. The Swiss pass for volunteer work is signed and stamped. Second payment is given to the mentors (pocket money). Group photo of the mentors.
Workshop for mentors and parents of the mentees *(also open to other interested parents and school teachers)*	Workshops on educational issues like learning skills, motivation, healthy food, physical exercise, health promotion etc. Intercultural translators are invited to this workshop according to the language skills of the participants. Theoretical input with hands-on exercises. Joint meal. Time for exchange. Ideally, the mentors attend this workshop together with their mentee's parents. So the mentors can again act as bridge builder and promote a situation where the parents feel comfortable.
Farewell party	Mentors and mentees are invited to a boat trip. They make paper boats, right their afterglow on it and put it on the lake. Mentors are given a certificate. The local press is invited and the participants are interviewed. Everyone is having a picnic on the boat. Group photo is taken.

At the beginning of the coaching sessions the trainers motivate the mentors by asking them about their experience with the children or their parents in the past few weeks. To get the mentors talking, the trainers also use elements of psychodrama, provide visual input or news articles. This type of introductory activity is an opportunity for the group members to get to know each other in different situations. They gain confidence in themselves as members of a group and thus their readiness to share increases. In order to prepare for special difficulties in the mentoring relationship, the trainer offers relevant concepts or theories from the field of sociology of religion in addition to sharing their own psychological, therapeutic professional experiences. These experiences also serve as a starting point for further discussions and together the group then think about how the theoretical approaches can be implemented in the personal mentoring relationship. The trainers combine lecture (often accompanied by a power point presentation with well illustrated slides) with group discussions and small group work.

One of the significant dimensions of the present training practice is that coaching events provide a lot of room for the mentors to gear the discussions that take place during the coaching meetings toward real-life issues that they are confronted with in their daily work.

Thanks also to the friendly environment where the coaching meetings take place (the room is pleasant, with a large roundtable in the centre), and to the fact that everybody is bound to discretion, the relationship that is built among the mentors and the trainer is defined by deep trust. In addition to the trainer-initiated coaching events, the mentors organize monthly roundtables often in an informal context, such as a local restaurant, to exchange their personal mentoring experiences.

Outcomes/ benefits
MUNTERwegs has had the training programme evaluated twice. The University of Applied Sciences in Social Work of Central Switzerland concluded in their study that the mentors appreciate the guidance through the project team and the trainers, and highly value the coaching events.

Summary and conclusions
In MUNTERwegs' opinion, the above-described training program provides teaching and learning methods that are highly adequate to adults. Throughout the program, the participants are assisted by facilitators. However, most of the mentors' work needs to be done independently with the mentee child, or in group work. This requires high levels of self-reliance, but at the same time grants sufficient space for the trainees to develop according to their own interests and objectives.
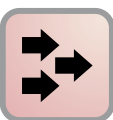
Participation in the coaching meetings is not compulsory and anyone can personally contribute as far as they wish. People who do not wish to bring their personal matters into the group exchange can talk privately with the trainer either by mail or phone. Sometimes the support requested by the mentors is that the trainer provides contacts for specialists, organisation, etc. In fact, the trainers work rather as network builders or facilitators. What the trainers especially value is that the senior mentors' rich experience makes a valuable contribution to the whole group and the educational programme, although the senior mentors also benefit from sharing with the young mentors. In this respect, the programme is a relevant example of an intergenerational learning project. It is MUNTERwegs' belief that the constant attitude of respect and appreciation of all actors is one of the reasons why the mentors and trainers are so highly motivated to further deliver this complex training programme.

4. Annexes

ANNEX 1: Self evaluation and inter evaluation sheet

No.	Training practice	Motivation-related training practices (0-1-2)	Transferability of the training practice (0-1-2)	Empowering the learner (0-1-2)	Innovation-related methodology and learning technique (0-1-2)	TOTAL

Motivation-related adult training practices;
>> 0: not motivating
>> 1: motivating to some extent
>> 2: highly motivating

Transferability of the training practice (clarity of framework or structure)
>> 0: cannot be transferred
>> 1: rather difficult to transfer
>> 2: easily transferable

Empowering the learner:
>> 0: Does not facilitate access to new resources
>> 1: Facilitate access to some new resources (i.e. course support)
>> 2: Facilitates increased access to new resources (i.e. training teaches trainees to look for new resources and actively encourages this approach or skill)

Innovation-related aspects of methodology and learning techniques
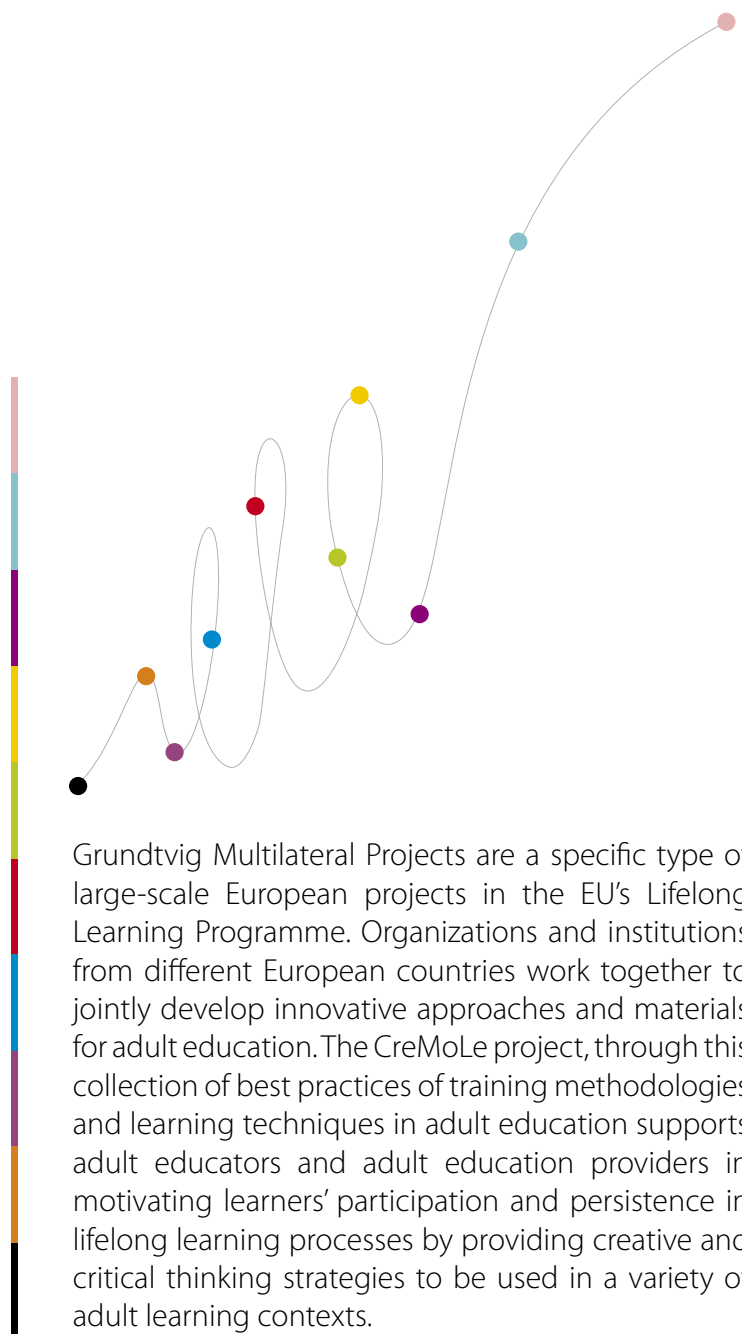>> 0: no innovative methodologies involved.
>> 1: some innovative methodologies involved.
>> 2: several innovative strategies, methods and techniques involved. No knowledge of any other similar experience

ANNEX 2 Final scores

Good practice proponent: *(name of the partner organization)*

Final scores of the good practices.

No.	Training practice - name	The name of the file	Self- evaluation score (1)	Inter-evaluation score (2)	TOTAL (1) + (2)

Grundtvig Multilateral Projects are a specific type of large-scale European projects in the EU's Lifelong Learning Programme. Organizations and institutions from different European countries work together to jointly develop innovative approaches and materials for adult education. The CreMoLe project, through this collection of best practices of training methodologies and learning techniques in adult education supports adult educators and adult education providers in motivating learners' participation and persistence in lifelong learning processes by providing creative and critical thinking strategies to be used in a variety of adult learning contexts.