

UPSKILLING ADULTS 45+ WITH MIGRANT BACKGROUND

Inspirations, Considerations, Suggestions

HANDBOOK

developed by adult educators in
Romania, Germany, Greece,
the Netherlands and Spain



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INTRODUCTION

This handbook focuses on the specific obstacles that (return) migrants and refugees 45+ are commonly facing when they are seeking employment in their new residency. Their specific needs and concerns are often neglected in adult education and left behind by institutional support, and there is dire need for more effective strategies to promote the economic, social, cultural and political integration of migrants. When we speak of migrants and refugees, we refer to individuals who, for any reason, left their native country. Return migrants are individuals that emigrated in the past and then returned to their home country after a long stay abroad. While migrations from within as well as from outside of the EU are considered, only migrations to EU countries are addressed here, since all organizations that contributed to this handbook are placed within the EU.

The opportunities for adult education. While, for example, the Netherlands, Greece, Spain, and Germany are facing increasing levels of immigration and related social tensions, Romania experiences high levels of remigration, and, together with Greece and Spain, an economic tension. Both phenomena trigger challenges in terms of reintegration in the local labour market as well as in local communities and society as a whole. Adult migrants and refugees aged 45 and older constitute an especially vulnerable group and are thus even more exposed to these difficulties. For them, it is even harder to find housing and employment and to develop a social network; in addition, they are facing discrimination and exclusion on a daily basis.

This manual, developed as an indispensable working tool for trainers, was developed within the project "Upskilling Adults 45+ with Migrant Background" by the experts and educational specialists of the consortium, having as premise the empowerment of adult trainers / educators with an informational support and useful resources in their work with adults with past migration.

This working tool focuses on the specific obstacles that (return) migrants and refugees 45+ are commonly facing when they are seeking employment in their new residency. Their specific needs and concerns are often neglected in adult

education and left behind by institutional support, and there is dire need for more effective strategies to promote the economic, social, cultural and political integration of migrants. When we speak of migrants and refugees, we refer to individuals who, for any reason, left their native country. Return migrants are individuals that emigrated in the past and then returned to their home country after a long stay abroad. While migrations from within as well as from outside of the EU are considered, only migrations to EU countries are addressed here, since all organizations that contributed to this handbook are placed within the EU.

In the field of adult education and upskilling, in particular those migrants who are facing unstable working conditions or unemployment due to their migration or flight history are addressed. Therefore, this compendium is designed to aid professionals in adult education, counsellors, or trainers in their work with this target group by providing helpful tools and guidance. It is the first of a three-part training package that addresses the needs of trainers and their target group and compiles a knowledge pool and data base of openly accessible educational resources.

In this endeavor, the identification and validation of existing competences and qualifications in an essential necessity. While skill gaps do need to be addressed as well, the focus of this project lies on the consideration and empowerment of existing resources and the improvement of digital and soft skills. With this approach, migrants and refugees 45+ are intended to be supported holistically in terms of social and professional inclusion. In order to identify qualification needs and other elements to consider, a need analysis was conducted prior to the development of the presented articles in the form of a survey of institutions and organizations that address migrant issues and a series of interviews with migrants and refugees as well as adult educators. This educational need analysis report can be accessed at project website <http://www.upskilling.ilabour.eu/>

Therefore, this handbook, developed in consortium of organizations of this innovative project: *UPSKILLING ADULTS 45+ WITH MIGRANT BACKGROUND*, has the mission to familiarize trainers, counselors and all those who develop and implement educational services for migrants and return-migrants with issues and the challenges that this target group faces. This tool is designed to develop the skills of those who use it in creating and developing curricula and courses for migrants and return migrants, in order to facilitate their insertion in the workplace and in society, given the development of new knowledge and skills; the specific

learning of migrants in adulthood 45+ and return migrants, barriers and the challenges they face in the process of training and insertion on the labor market, how integrated solutions can be offered through educational and career counseling, how to achieve the process to validate the previous competencies of migrants, how to correctly identify their transversal competencies in accordance with the labor market, how we can help them create useful tools to participate in the labor market, how to engage them sustainably for active participation in society.

All this information and inputs having as sources various studies, official European documents of public policy proposals and European agendas of the priorities of integration of migrants on the market, work and in society, examples of practices provide an overview of migrants and return migrants. . In addition to the theoretical part, each chapter also offers some examples of activities and exercises that can be used and integrated in the course plans or can be adapted depending on the topic addressed.

This handbook is structured into three parts: challenges and specificities of the target group, methodological recommendations, and practical applications and reflections. The first and the second chapter address two specific challenges: the specificities of learning as an adult, and particular difficulties induced by a migrant background in economic, social, cultural, and political spheres of society - including common discriminations, policies that affect migrants' inclusion, and how the public perceives all of this. Subsequent to the identification of challenges and needs, guidance recommendations in terms of educational and career possibilities are presented, and the benefits of a combination of the validation of existing competencies with further trainings are assessed.

The last chapter of the second part examines possibilities of identification and evaluation of transversal competencies: especially due to a prevailing deficit in the institutional recognition of professional degrees and qualifications, it is necessary to include competencies acquired throughout life in the assessment of existing skills. Transversal competencies refer to the competencies that people have and that are relevant for various activities and occupations. The building of a personal and professional portfolio as one possible practical step will then be examined and explained, and in the final chapter, the political dimension of integration and reflections on the question of active citizenship and community participation are discussed.

1. HOW WE RELATE TO THE SPECIFICS OF LEARNING AT AGE 45+?

ABSTRACT

For effective adaptation, in a world of rapid change, the adult is in a position to learn every day. "It is never too late to learn" The European Commission's statement (2006) emphasized the essential contribution of adult education and training in terms of competitiveness, employment and social inclusion. This communiqué was followed by the Action Plan on Adult Education "It is always a good time to learn". A feature of adult education is that it takes place largely outside external constraints and is individualized. There are no such exams, grades, certificates, or tests that can affect the learning process. There are, therefore, in adult education, great chances for learning to be oriented exclusively to topics of personal interest that will be the central content of learning. Thus, non-formal learning becomes very important (Kolland, 2005; BMFSFJ 2005), especially for seniors familiar with the study, who often do not realize the importance of learning in their daily lives.

This article aims to provide an overview of the learning process at 45+, which is particularly useful for trainers in their adult education, while emphasizing some principles and characteristics of adult learning, that are meant to guide the work of planning and implementation of the training program carried out by the teacher or trainer. In this article you can see an overview designed to support trainers who develop courses for migrant adults and return migrants over the age of 45+, given the learning style for migrant adults, the knowledge being extremely relevant for those who provide programs formal and non-formal learning for adults 45+, especially in language or training centers, but also the human resources departments of companies.

INTRODUCTION

The term "adult education" is relatively recent, although historically, since 1919, the Committee on Adult Education has been established in the United Kingdom. In a way, ASTRA, as an association for the culture of the Romanian people, founded long before, can be considered an institution of adult education. In the current language of education sciences, this term entered especially after 1960, when the profile institutions were amplified a lot, as well as the researches on such a problem. There is more and more talk about adult education, about advanced

training, retraining and even about universities for the elderly. Gradually, the concept of "adult education" undergoes major changes that it is going through today. In recent years, lifelong learning (LLL) has become a priority of global education systems. Even if the role of basic, formal education remains essential, lifelong learning, together with non-formal education, come to personalize and develop skills as close as possible to the requirements of the market and society, on the one hand, and the skill and soul of the learner, on the other.



(source: <http://www.frolifeplanning.com/adult-education>)

This concept not only improves social inclusion, active citizenship and personal development, but also competitiveness and employability. The term recognizes that learning is not limited to childhood or the classroom, it takes place throughout life and in a number of situations. Over the last fifty years, scientific and technological innovation has had a profound effect on learning needs and styles. Learning can no longer be divided in a certain place and at a certain time in order to acquire knowledge; the school representing the place and the service the place where the acquired knowledge can be applied. Intentional or not, learning is related to and determines personal development (Sava, 2015) and not only, another direct beneficiary is both the community / society in which we live and operate; acting on the quality of life we lead in society.

LLL as Sava says, “is closely related to all areas of society; we could say that it is not a field in the society in which LLL does not take place”, we must constantly “update” ourselves or re-orient ourselves in life in order to face its challenges with dignity. Lifelong learning is not new, in fact, it has existed throughout human existence because it is a part of social reproduction and is deeply rooted in all cultures and civilizations. We live in a complex and dynamic social, economic, political world and human beings must adapt by acquiring new knowledge, skills and attitudes in various contexts. An individual will be able to meet life's challenges only if he or she becomes a lifelong student, and a society will not be sustainable if it does not become a learning society. It is not enough to state moralizing doctrines such as “man learns as long as he lives”, he must learn, even in combination with the threat of consequences if he does not do it, falling behind (Sava, S., 2015).

A feature of adult education is that it takes place largely outside external constraints and is individualized. There are no such exams, grades, certificates, or tests that can affect the learning process. There are, therefore, in adult education, great chances for learning to be oriented exclusively to topics of personal interest that will be the central content of learning. Thus, non-formal learning becomes very important (Kolland, 2005; BMFSFJ 2005), especially for seniors familiar with the study, who often do not realize the importance of learning in their daily lives. The innovative element of this project is that non-formal learning is linked to a theory of learning (Holzkamp 1993) strongly oriented towards daily activities and life issues. Starting from the motivation to learn, the concept of participatory learning was created and as a result it was stated that the learner, if he expands his skills to deal with daily problems, will anticipate an improvement in his quality of life.

FEATURES OF THE ADULT LEARNING PROCESS AGED 45+

Adult education is a special dimension of lifelong learning and has become a priority in education systems worldwide. It is a response to modern society and aims to train adults in areas of interest such as: information technology, foreign languages, economic and entrepreneurial education, education for a democratic citizenship, health education, management, parental education, etc. It places the adult who learns at the center of the education process, thus contributing to the increase of his possibilities to play an active role in the society. In adulthood, the

need for learning, the accumulation of knowledge and skills is felt. It is therefore not only a technique, a science but also a social movement to help people understand their place in society, making them able to adapt to the requirements of this century, the demands of the contemporary world, to become more balanced, more efficient.

The definition of the learning process today is made from several perspectives: "transformation of the psychological consciousness of the individual" (J. Piaget); "To complete and promote changes in the behavioral organization of man" (P. A. Osterrieth); "Changing the meaning of human experience" (A. Quellet); "The modification of the positive value in the human rational behavior" (I. Cerghit); "Process of assimilation and practice of information, values and actions specific to man" (N. Vintanu) etc.

Learning processes can be described as linear or consecutive, transformative or expansive. They are considered linear when operating with the assumption that learning helps to acquire skills, in which case skills are gradually achieved. The same processes are, however, transformative when it induces individual and social change. For individual and social change, reflective, critical and self-directed learning is essential. Expansive learning is self-directed in nature, and the subject expands his or her skills through learning. It is only expansive when the subject has specific reasons to engage in it. Practical interest is always necessary to determine motivation in learning. Fears and dealing with fears play a much underestimated role in this context. Adults must exercise their cognitive abilities and must not accept forgetting as an inevitable destiny. Learning potential can thus be realized within the limits of individual specificity, if the person is able to identify and use his or her own learning strategies, and partly his or her subconscious abilities.

While in 1960 political programs focused on the educational integration of disadvantaged people, since the late 1990s they have focused on the self-directed activity of the elderly. This corresponds to the new didactic and methodological approaches pursued in adult education and continuing education. The so-called new learning culture encompasses all programs that promote self-care, self-understanding and learning. Self-determination and self-perception of control are unequally distributed throughout the population. Most theories that deal with the perception of one's own control capacity recognize that life expectancy changes. Consequently, Buboltz-Lutz (1999) argues that not all 45+ people are able to act in a way of self-determination and self-determination in learning, this action remaining limited to an elite group of

the population. People with low qualifications perceive self-directed learning processes as an unreasonable demand (Kolland & Ahmadi, 2010). In order to facilitate self-education for all social groups and to maximize the subjective potential of older learners, scientists have proposed different methodological approaches in this regard. A popular concept is habilitation didactics (Arnold & Schuessler, 2003), which underlies the didactic principles of geragogy (BUBOLZ - Lutz, 2010). In this sense, the purpose of hierarchy is not to teach or make a person learn, but to learn how to learn. Building self-learning skills is essential in ensuring equal opportunities for people aged 45+, eager for lifelong learning, no matter how familiar they are with learning.

The starting point of the learning process is therefore the life problems of the adults, which must be transferred to learning problems. Starting from this premise, “it is in the person’s interest that the issue of daily (temporary) activities be transferred to learning content” (Holzkamp 1996, 28). Thus, a transfer from a life issue to a content is achieved. Through a learning process, the subject acquires new skills that, indirectly, allow him to successfully address the issue of life. By participatory learning, aged 45+ become the subject of their own learning process. Adult education is also identified with the effort of socialization, of developing a cultural world starting from the specific experiences in the given situations. It is also a way of communicating with the members of the group to which they belong. From any point we analyze adult education, it always relates to their learning abilities. Hence the fundamental principle of lifelong learning: Learning to learn.

Learning to learn improve are requirements of lifelong learning, through which contemporary man learns to be himself, receptive to change, to anticipate and adapt to them by offering himself as a participant in the social program, through its intellectual and moral-civic autonomy. It means the acquisition of the means of efficient search of information, the ability to verify the information and its use in the learning process, the capacity to work in a team and to be solidary and useful within the group. Contemporary research in psychology refutes the idea that entering adulthood would lead to stagnation and aging of training and education capabilities. Lifelong learning leads to continuous development into old age. It emphasizes that the essential role in adult education has the learning abilities previously achieved, the type and reasons for learning and not age as such. The educational system of a society includes:

- Informal education (The vast majority of knowledge and practical experience gained by an individual during his life takes place in an environment, unstructured by informal education. In this way language, cultural values, everyday behaviors are acquired. Contributing factors in this meaning are: family, church, media, libraries).
- Non-formal (extracurricular) education - represents any form of training that both the educator and the educated deliberately support, the mutual relations being desired by both parties. It is optional or optional.
- Formal education (school.) It is distinguished by teaching in schools by permanent teachers, in some study programs.

Adult education is oriented towards forms of extracurricular education because he represents a trained personality, eager to improve, to overcome himself. Adult education is also related to lifelong learning. "Lifelong learning is the education of all people throughout their lives". Education as a complex activity begins in the first year of life and continues throughout life through the three forms: formal, informal and non-formal education. Hence the permanent nature of education. The need for permanent education individually and historically was intuited by Comenius states: "For every man his life is a school from the cradle to the grave." Being a social phenomenon and society being subject to a permanent becoming (change) the human being is also subject to the same process of education throughout life.

In most cases, learning takes place when, on its own initiative, self-organize. During the process of self-organization, the adults discover new learning and training needs. Faced with daily problems, the individual is always facing new challenges so he will approach learning as an opportunity to solve them. This means that adult education means not only formal learning processes (usually in the form of institutionalized courses), but also non-formal learning (such as in citizens' initiatives) and informal learning (daily learning). In general, adult education pursues three objectives:

1. Continuous personality development,
2. To facilitate civic engagement and
3. Participation in the socio-political life of a "mature" citizen.

These three goals are intertwined with the acquisition of skills and abilities to manage complex daily life. It should be noted that these three aspects are not additional, but they can be considered unitary and interdependent.

Fundamental to determining the purpose of learning in old age are the learning needs of people aged 45+. Findsen (2007, 546 et passim) distinguishes, according to Mc Clusky, four learning needs according to:

1. economic environment of life and physical condition (coping needs)
2. participation in activities - according to their own interests - (expressive needs)
3. contribution to the community (contributive needs) and
4. developing the capacity to actively act on social change (influence needs).

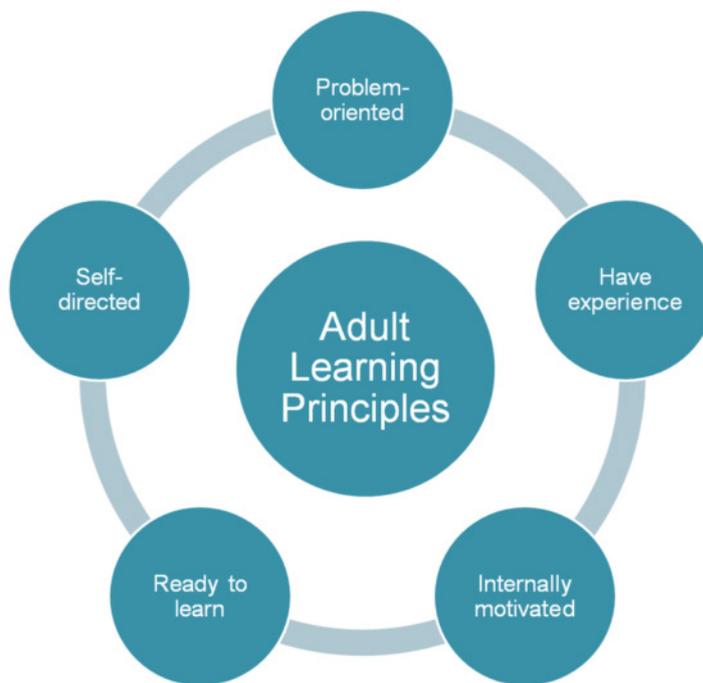
For most adults, the first two learning needs are a priority. There is a positive and mutually beneficial relationship between older adult education and citizenship education. This is not just an individual responsibility, but seniors, as social beings, must act together critically. Adults thus become both actors and subjects of social change. Determining the directions of action depends on the living conditions of adults. This concept is explained below.

PRINCIPLES OF ADULT LEARNING

The learning process in adulthood reflects a situation of restructuring and reorganization, its motivation being much more complex than that of the student. This process leads to a continuous transformation of ideas, the accumulation of new knowledge, and independence in the process of structured thinking, based on logic. The adult has well-formed psychic processes and makes more complex emotional associations with the factual material, assumes responsibility for the quality of knowledge acquisition and knows exactly what he wants to learn or know. It is motivated by intrinsic needs or desires. In general, the adult learner participates in training programs because he wants or needs informational content to exercise his profession or develop personally.

Adult learning is achieved when the learning process:

- ***is directed by the adult;***
- ***responds to recently identified needs;***
- ***is participatory;***
- ***it is experiential;***
- ***it is reflective;***
- ***provides feedback;***



(source: <https://www.startschoolnow.org/the-basics-of-adult-learning-theory/>)

Among the elements that generate an efficient learning process in adulthood can be mentioned: individualization of the learning process, the existence of a psychological climate of mutual trust, the possibility to express their point of view, have the possibility to associate new knowledge with previous experiences, exchange of experience. Starting from the particularities of the adult learning process, the specialized literature has identified certain principles that underlie the adult learning process:

1. Adults contribute to the learning situation with their own life experience
Adult learning is based more on revaluing one's own experience, the role of the trainer being primarily to facilitate the process of self-learning. In the learning process, sometimes adults need support in identifying relevant life experiences, such as volunteer work, group work, etc.

2. Adults give the best results when their independence is cultivated
The process of adult training is based on a permanent partnership, in which the central role is played by the learners and not the trainer. Thus, it is important for adults to become aware that they can handle themselves in any learning situation. The learning process in adulthood requires the creation of different contexts and opportunities for independent work and reporting of the experience gained, in which adults must learn that they can manage on their own. It is necessary for the trainer to carefully follow the way to create for the

student's different opportunities of independent work and to report the acquired experience.

3. In adults, learning tends to focus on problems rather than topics, being more practical than theoretical

The adult learning process focuses more on problem solving than on abstract topics and themes, being more practical than theoretical. The theory is useful in forming a framework for understanding the case, but it is difficult to sustain if it is not related to practical aspects. In this process it is advisable to use current cases and situations because they are the main concern of students.

4. Adults learn by putting into practice

The adult learning process must provide a framework in which they can do different things, including mistakes they can learn from. They want to see how they find what they learn in everyday life. This is the only way I can be sure of what I know.

5. The effectiveness of adult learning depends on the clarity of requirements and expectations

This principle is explained by the fact that adult workers must know what is expected of them, such as deadlines, in what form, to what degree of completion.

6. Adults learn best when approached at their current level of understanding and competence

Each person's knowledge and skills are unique, even if they have similar professional experiences. The role of the trainer being that of facilitator of the learning process. The trainer does not assume the role of expert in the field, but equally, the process of adult training, acquiring the characteristics of a process of Peer Education, ie peer education. The trainer and the trainees build the training program together starting from the concrete experience and the current level of knowledge of the trainees. Training needs assessment is a useful tool in this direction.

7. Adults retain concepts rather than facts

In the learning process in adulthood, students must understand the big picture, the place that occupies its activity in achieving the general objective of the case, the department or office and the organization.

8. Learning is not linear

This principle emphasizes that the pace of adult teaching must be adapted to the availability of students. Adult education is normally based on one's level of competence.

Therefore, we can highlight some principles of adult learning, principles that are meant to guide the work of planning and implementing the training program conducted by the teacher or trainer:

- Recognizing the need to learn
- Applying new acquisitions to the workplace
- Integrating past experience into new acquisitions
- Preference for concrete
- The need for a variety of methods
- The need for an informal and comfortable environment to learn
- The need to solve realistic problems
- Preference for interactive learning methods

Currently, the andragogical theory is considered the most eloquent. The foundations of this theory, intended to help adults learn, were laid by the researcher M. Knowles (1913-1997). Andragogy is based on humanistic ideas about the adult. She approaches the adult as a person capable of independent self-conceptualization, with a strong intrinsic motivation and vast life experience. Thus, a series of specificities of the adults involved in the learning process were outlined, namely the fact that adults: have an intrinsic motivation and are oriented towards a well-defined goal; have a rich life experience that must be valued in the training process; are autonomous and direct their activity independently; are attentive and selective regarding the relationship of knowledge; they have a higher degree of responsibility and conscientiousness, they have a special respect for teachers and they want to be respected by them, they have a life-centered educational orientation. Regarding the barriers that can stop adults from studying, there is a tendency to group around the following justifications: lack of time, lack of money, family responsibilities, schedule organization, motivation problems, lack of self-confidence.

Some of the methods of intrusion in adult education are the following: the expository method (oral presentation of a topic in a logical organization, characterized by the density of ideas and their fluent and powerful presentation), interrogative method, practical-demonstrative method (get a

special importance, due to the use of heuristic principles, the discovery of ideas, meanings or skills of major interest), the project method, the group work method, the experience exchange method.

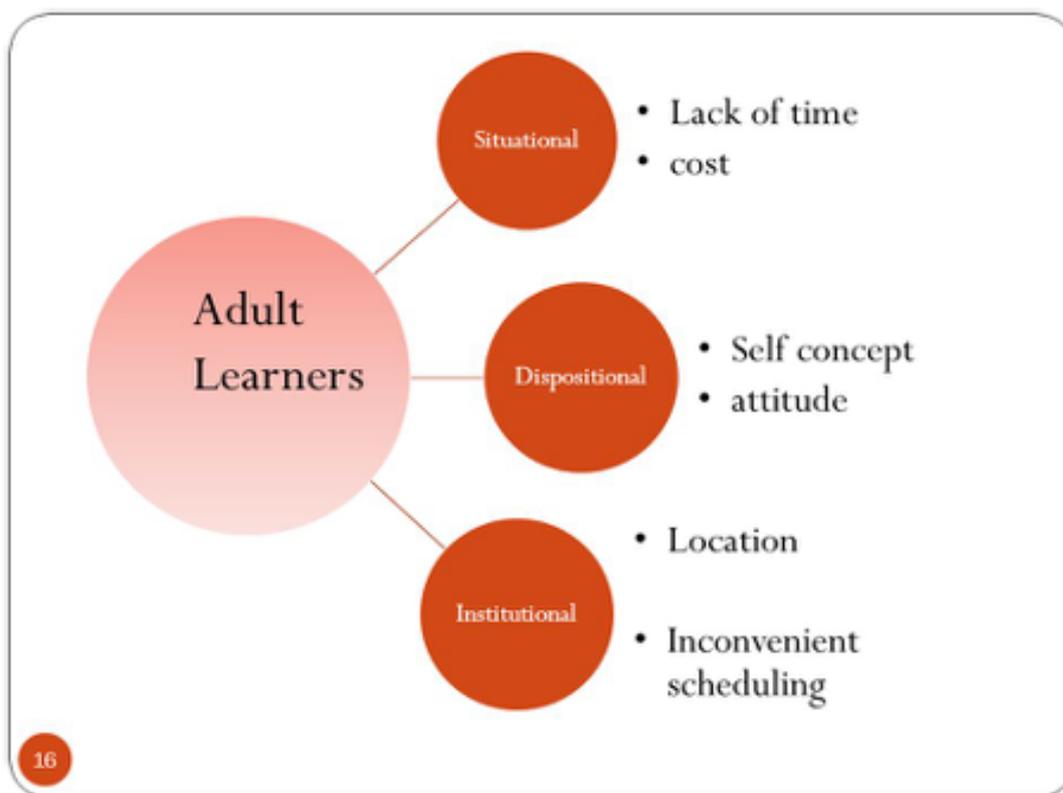
ADULT MOTIVATION FOR LEARNING

Another important aspect of adult education is motivation. Adult motivational sources:

1. Social relationships: Adults come to refresher courses or other instructional activities to make new friends or to be with friends / colleagues / relatives.
2. Social expectations: Adults engage in instructional activities at the insistence of an authority, on the recommendations of close people.
3. Social welfare: In order to develop their willingness to be in the service of the community, adults take courses without tangents with the basic profession.
4. Professional advancement: adults engage in the training process to obtain material benefits, professional advancement, social prestige, to face the competition.
5. Refuge or stimulation: To get rid of boredom, to avoid the routine at home or at work, adults find salvation in learning.
6. Cognitive interest: Most adults learn for the sake of learning, looking for new information to satisfy their curiosity.

BARRIERS IN ADULT EDUCATION WITH MIGRANT BACKGROUND

Unlike children and adolescents, adults have more responsibilities, which implicitly creates more barriers to engaging in an instructional process.



(source: <https://slideplayer.com/slide/7253276/>)

Reasons most frequently mentioned by adults:

1. Lack of time: regardless of whether there are evening or short courses, anyway it pays to "lose" some time (to lose by actually winning)
2. Lack of money: currently there is a very small number of institutions that provide free training services, so the problem of money is one of the most important, especially in countries with a low economy.
3. Family responsibilities: caring for children, relationships with family members, domestic obligations occupy much of the time predestined for studies.
4. Schedule organization: service obligations, family requires a lot of time, and involvement in the study process also involves schedule changes, sacrifices, etc.
5. Motivation problems: the adult must learn because he was forced to do so
6. Lack of self-confidence: low self-esteem, an unforgettable failure or other things that have marked the adult, will prevent him from overcoming his frustrations and fears.

Related to culture, adult education is presented as a factor in supporting and promoting cultural values. Culture stimulates more than any other field, self-education and self-training. Self-education is a "self-education". The educational process involves an effort of will and major involvement on the part of the subject of the educational act, being in this sense a complementary one to the initial education. The relationship education-permanent education-self-

education is a dialectical one. The educational ideal presupposes the perfection of the human personality. »Formation of self-awareness« - essential condition for the development of self-education processes.

There are different methods in adult education, of which we will list some of them below.

Exposure method:

- Exposure;
- Popularization conference;
- Master class.

Interrogative method:

- Debate;
- Symposium;
- Colloquium;
- Interview;
- The round table.

Practical-demonstrative methods:

- Industrial training method;
- Carrard method;
- Project method;
- Group work method;
- Experience exchange method.

CONDITIONS FOR EFFICIENT DELIVERY OF ADULT LEARNING AGED 45+ WITH MIGRANT BACKGROUND

The phrase experiential learning, conveyed mainly when we talk about education achieved in adulthood, is a term equivalent to that of evolution or change. Research conducted in this direction speaks of the existence in the human being of a natural inclination towards the act of learning (Rogers, 1969), in this case, the teacher have the role to facilitate the production of the act of knowledge and create a favorable educational environment. This involves:

- creating a positive learning environment;

- clarifying the goals of the trainees;
- ensuring the resources to be used in the learning process;
- maintaining a permanent balance between the intellectual side and the emotional one within the learning process;
- dissemination of information and ideas specific to the teacher, but without imposing them;
- achieving a learning focused on a specific issue;
- adult involvement in a relevant learning experience;
- ensuring the existence of a permanent feedback in the direction of the level of progress reached by the one being formed.

The application of these learning principles in training programs involves:

- treating participants as responsible adults, able to pursue their interests;
- involvement of participants in the structuring of the program;
- engaging participants in the use of questionnaires and other assessment tools to self-diagnose skills, before and after the training program;
- the formulation of their own objectives by adults, in relation to the training topic;
- creating cohesion at the level of the training group and a warm atmosphere conducive to free expression;
- highlighting the links between the objectives of the training program and the concrete field of activity of the participating adults;
- highlighting the relevance of adult learning or their awareness of the benefits they will have, as a result of completing the training program through concrete examples;
- the use of adults' experiences in the instructive-educational approach;
- active involvement of participants in the learning process, using learner-centered activities, structured experiences and opportunities to consolidate content;
- ensuring the self-evaluation of their own acquisitions by the participants, through concrete activities throughout the education program.

In any other form of education through courses, seminars, universities or people who teach what is not accompanied by the participant's strong interest and joy together with his joy, enthusiasm and understanding, learning is not recorded or imprinted in the lives of adults. The process of adult education is summarized in purpose. Why learn as adults? The goal is to arouse interest and continuity, and this type of effort brings happiness.

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES

Note: These activities can be done in the first session of the course, to introduce the participants and to create a suitable atmosphere for the rest of the course.

1. FIRST PRESENTATIONS - OVERVIEW OF PARTICIPANTS

This is a good activity to break the ice and lower the pressure when someone is in a group where they don't know anyone.

The facilitator asks the participants to form a circle and present themselves using movements: they assign a gesture to their names and, one by one, perform the movement while saying their name. Each time one of the participants says her name, the rest of the group and the facilitator repeat it.

After assigning a gesture to their names, participants will receive a blank sheet of paper on which they will have to write or draw their names in the way they want the rest of the group to remember. The facilitator will provide them with colorful doodles, pens and scissors to personalize their name. Under their name, participants can write down the date of their arrival in the host country, as well as the names of other countries in which they lived.

Meanwhile, the facilitator will hang an empty piece of brown paper on the wall and draw a series of bubbles, each identifying a participant, and then each will hang the drawings that represent their name. After all this, the participants will explain to the group how they want to be shouted.

2. HOW ARE THEY? WHAT DO I IDENTIFY WITH?

The facilitator gives participants several magazines that illustrate aspects of daily life (eg different women in everyday situations, performing various tasks, alone or with other people).

Participants will then choose images that they feel are related to their lives, what they like, what they are, their past and present experiences, future plans, and so on. After choosing the images, they will cut them out and make their own collages; I can add sentences and expressions to them in writing.

When the collage is ready, participants will explain it to the group and hang it on the group wall in their personal bubble.

3. WHO AM I?

The facilitator will give each participant a white paper and a pen to write - clearly and legibly - their name and five skills that each one considers they have, answering the question: Who are they?

Participants will hang their paper on their chests so that others can see who they are. The facilitator tells the participants to form groups to introduce themselves and so that each can read the skills of the others.

They will answer in the group a series of questions such as: How did I feel when I wrote: Who am I? And how do I feel when they know?

At the end of the activity, the group will share comments on the important issues discussed and will reflect on the similarity of the emotions mentioned.

4. WHO AND WHO?

This is an activity that helps participants remember each other's names and get to know each other. It is also relaxing and creates a pleasant atmosphere.

The participants stand in a circle and practice body language through the activities presented by the facilitator, related to the presentation process.

Participant A looks at participant B, says her name, and walks over to take her place. Immediately, participant B looks at participant C, going towards her and so on. There will always be someone moving inside the circle.

If a participant gets stuck and can't say someone else's name, she will sit in the middle of the circle, and the rest of the group will be allowed to ask her two questions about her life. After answering, she will say the name of a participant and take her place.

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2. CHALLENGES OF THE MIGRANT BACKGROUND

ABSTRACT

The integration of migrants and their active participation to the labour market is amongst the most important questions in the European Union (EU). It is high on the public agenda, often covered in the news and also the public opinion is concerned about these questions. Integration process is important not only because of the economic aspect but also for promoting social cohesion. However, integration process has not been without problems. One of the main obstacles to integration is migrants' higher unemployment rates and lower incomes than native-borns' (see e.g. OECD/European Union 2015). There are many reasons for this, for example lower education levels and national peoples' discriminative attitudes towards migrants. Many countries also have problems with recognizing education and qualifications acquired outside the EU. These obstacles have to be eliminated in order to have employment level up to 75% until 2020 as EU aims.

For integration and inclusion, it's important first to identify the needs of the target group and which challenges are the most important for employers and for persons with migrant background, as potential employees. Migrant integration has gained prominence on the global agenda with the advent of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda's call to "leave no one behind"—including migrants. The field of migrant integration, however, has traditionally been polarizing and related data are generally limited to high-income countries. Integration cuts across different policies and various aspects of migrants' lives and therefore data on migrant integration cover a wide range of information, including whether migrants are integrating into the economic, social, cultural, and political spheres of society, the discrimination they face, how policies affect migrants' inclusion, and how the public perceives migrants and immigration. Migrants and persons with migrant background have to face many challenges, that can be opportunities as well, for upskilling and integration in labour market in equity and fair conditions.

INTRODUCTION

Today, migrants seekers are a major challenge for the whole of Europe. Migrant integration It has become a topic of constant debate throughout Europe. The new debate is now on how to promote integration approaches, policies, theory and practices. Civil coexistence and mutual respect must be built through educational and welfare interventions, also in the field of work. Integration processes often

lead to xenophobic attitudes. According to this fact, learning has become the only way for migrants to defend themselves against prejudice and stereotyping and integrate in society and labour market.

Main Challenges and opportunities for labour integration for persons with migrant background:

- Cultural gap; Lack of knowledge of national structures: need to acquire information about the host country's institutions and organisations. Including Social rules and Working Etiquette: Clothing, Behaviour, Punctuality.
- Legal roadblocks: legal experts can provide advice on how to navigate legal issues.
- Different economy: migrants will have to adjust to a new kind of economy.
- Tools to change challenges into opportunities:
- Cultural Awareness; Cultural Competence; Working culture; Digital competence and Multimedia Advantage for Cultural Exchange

FEATURES AND TOOLS FOR FACING THE CHALLENGES OF PERSONS WITH MIGRANT BACKGROUND

- Improving Cultural awareness.
- Definition of Cultural Awareness.
- Ability of standing for ourselves and becoming aware of our own and others' cultural values, beliefs and perceptions.
- Cultural awareness becomes central when we interact with people from other cultures.
- People see, interpret and evaluate things in different ways; what is considered an "appropriate behavior" in one culture is frequently inappropriate in another.
- We have learned to see and do things at an unconscious level since we are born.
- Our experiences, values and cultural background lead us to see and do things in a certain way.
- Step outside of your cultural boundaries in order to realize the impact, which our culture has on our behavior.
- When interacting and communicating with other people, especially those with different cultural background, you have to be aware of their norms, values and beliefs.

CULTURE AWARENESS IN THE WORKPLACE

With the globalization of business, increased diversity in the workplace and multicultural emphasis in society, cultural awareness has become one of the most important business tools in almost every industry. Understanding the cultures of those around you will enhance communication, productivity and unity in the workplace. Formal cross-cultural awareness training might be helpful for problem solving on multicultural business teams, but there are several cultural awareness techniques, which you can use in the meantime.

Go deeper into Cultural Knowledge

- One of the easiest ways to understand your multicultural coworkers is by researching cultures and increasing your cultural knowledge. Reading books and searching the Internet are the most accessible sources of relevant information (keep in mind that there are also plenty of false information in the Internet).

Put Cultural Knowledge to Use

- If you learn something interesting about a coworker's culture, ask about it or mention it in a relevant situation. This might seem uncomfortable at first, but your coworkers will recognize your effort to educate yourself.
- Using acquired information as it comes up will serve to break down multicultural barriers, help everyone on your team to be more comfortable and teach others about different cultures

Use Cultural competence as a skill for mutual understanding and integration

- Culture is everywhere where people are, and it is an important aspect, which connects people with the same social heritage. In every culture, there are different patterns of norms, values, beliefs and attitudes, which guide people's actions. Sometimes cultures are very different from one another and may cause gaps, which prevents mutual understanding. The confusion may be caused by customs, language or behaviors in general. When encountering a foreign cultural environment, some may experience a cultural shock, which can appear as discomfort and disorientation.
- To help adapting into the new culture environment and thriving in work life, it is important to improve one's cultural competence. Cultural competence has many names; it can be called global competence (in social work), cultural intelligence, international mindedness, multicultural competence, global citizenship and even global learning. It consists of knowledge, skills, behaviors,

policies and attitudes, which are effective and appropriate in intercultural interactions, and help cross-cultural groups and individuals to work more professionally in various situations. Cultural competence is also sensitivity to cultural differences, it refers to the ability to honor and respect the beliefs, language, interpersonal styles and behaviors of individuals and families.

- At the individual level, the focus needs to be in one's own values and attitudes, but also in acquiring the needed knowledge and skills, which help to work appropriately in cross-cultural situations. At organizational level, it is essential to value and adapt to diversity and the cultural contexts of communities they serve, and conduct self-assessment regarding the skills around cultural competence. In addition, organizations need to have defined set of values, principles and policies to carry out in practice.

WHAT DOES CULTURAL COMPETENCE INCLUDE?

1. Knowledge

When encountering intercultural context and cultural competence, knowledge can be about other cultures and languages. It is understanding foreign vocabulary and grammar, and how the language is used, but also having deeper understanding about specific cultures, and how the values and attitudes affect when thinking about a status of a certain group of people. Knowledge can also be contextual, in which case it is about the cultures history, politic and economic systems, religion, and particular interactions when, for example, using health care. The last important aspect is to have cultural self-knowledge and awareness, meaning one understands how people with different cultural backgrounds are “built” to behave and communicate.

2. Skills

Culturally competent person is skilled in listening the interaction that happens between individuals, observing and paying attention to the nonverbal communication. He or she is aware of various communication styles and able to see things from other perspectives. The skills are not only focused on other people's actions, but toward the person themselves too; reflecting own thoughts and actions is just as important.

3. Attitudes

Attitudes towards other people have remarkable impacts on getting along with one another. Curiosity to learn more about other cultures and open-mindedness, not judging beforehand or making any assumptions, are remarkable strength when thinking about cultural competence. Most importantly, respecting and valuing other peoples 'worth and existence is essential. Without respect and understanding, one cannot be competent to work in intercultural environment. Every person is different, and therefore it is important to have tolerance regarding ambiguity, diversity and constantly changing situations.



EMPOWERMENT WITH EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION APPROACH

Equality, diversity and social are important aspects of life in the modern world. Dividing people onto groups and categorizing things is a natural thing for humans to do as it helps us to make sense of the world. It is important to question our own beliefs and attitudes towards others as well as learn ways on how to handle discrimination when it happens to us. This material will determine the meaning of equality, diversity and social inclusion and help to reflect on these subjects to create greater self-awareness.

Equality

Social equality, in which all people within a group have the same status. Social equality concerns the distribution of social goods and burdens, such as income, wealth, opportunity, education, and health care. Social equality occurs when some good, like income or happiness, is equally attained. However, this not an easy question: how do we define the “goods” and the units to which they are distributed.

Gender Equality

Is the act of treating women and men equally: gender equality does not imply that women and men are the same, but that they have equal value and should be treated equally. Gender equality is not just women’s issue but should concern and fully engage men as well. Equality between women and men is seen as both a human rights issue and a precondition for and an indicator of sustainable, people-centered development.

Racial Equality

Racial equality is about individuals, regardless of their racial characteristics, being morally, politically, and legally equal and treating them as such. Furthermore, it is about thinking that different racial groups are equal, with none being inherently superior or inferior. The term is commonly linked to the idea of equal treatment under the law as well as equal opportunity.

Diversity

Cultural/ethnic diversity is the mixture of races and religions, which makes up a group of people. Diversity is any dimension that can be used to differentiate groups and people from one another. Briefly, it is about empowering people by respecting and appreciating what makes them different, in terms of e.g. age, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, education or national origin.

Diversity allows for the exploration of these differences in safe, positive, and nurturing environment. It means understanding one another by surpassing simple tolerance to ensure people truly value their differences. This allows us both to embrace and to celebrate the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual and place a positive value on diversity in the community and in the workforce.

Social Inclusion

Inclusion is an organizational effort and practice, in which different groups or individuals having different backgrounds are culturally and socially accepted and welcomed, and equally treated. These differences could be self-evident, such as national origin, age, race and ethnicity, religion, gender, and socioeconomic status, or they could be more inherent, such as educational background, training, sector experience, organizational tenure; even personality, such as introverts and extroverts.

Inclusion is a sense of belonging. Inclusive cultures make people feel respected and valued for who they are as individuals or groups. People feel a level of supportive energy and commitment from others so that they are able to do their best at work. Inclusion often means a shift in an organizations mindset and culture and has visible effects, such as participation in meetings, how offices are physically organized or access to particular facilities or information. In simple terms, diversity is the mix and inclusion is getting the mix to work well together. In addition, without equality there is less diversity and at the same time, less people included in the society.

In a cohesive community, there is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all. The relationships between group members are strong and positive, and they develop in various environments, between people with various different backgrounds. The cohesion helps appreciating and valuing diversity, but also makes possible for all people to have similar opportunities when it comes situations and choices in life. The community cohesion is therefore based on extensive contacts between numerous groups, equality of opportunity and positive acceptance of diversity. Most of the time, the strong bond between the groups and group members move people from strong identifications of religious, ethnic or other tension causing groups that are linked to hatred and wrong kind of solidarities.



Discrimination

Discrimination means unequal or different treatment or harassment that causes harm. Discrimination is the unfair or prejudicial treatment of people and groups based on characteristics such as race, gender, age or sexual orientation.

The human brain naturally puts things in categories to make sense of the world. For instance, very young children quickly learn the difference between boys and girls. However, the values we place on different categories are learned – from our parents, our peers and the observations we make about how the world works. Discrimination often stems from fear and misunderstanding.

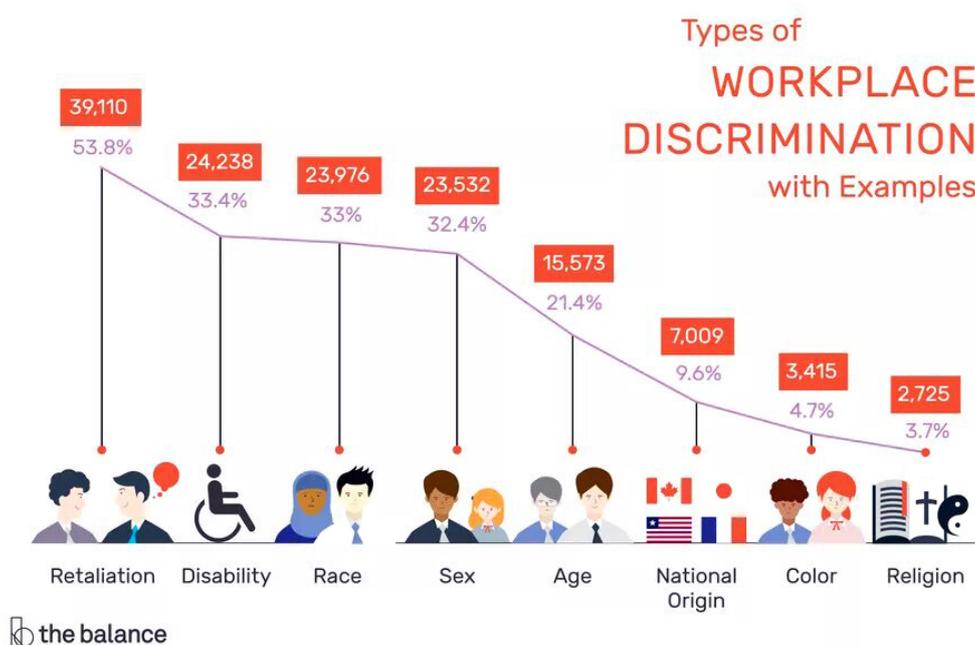
Discrimination can be damaging even if you haven't been a direct target of overt acts of bias. Regardless of your personal experiences, it can be stressful just being a member of a group that is often discriminated against, such as racial minorities.

The anticipation of discrimination creates its own chronic stress. People might even avoid situations, where they expect poor treatment, thus even missing educational and job opportunities.

Finding healthy ways to deal with discrimination is important, for one's physical health as well as mental well-being. Here is some useful advice on how to deal with discrimination:

- Focus on your strengths. Focusing on your core values, beliefs and perceived strengths can motivate people to succeed, and may even buffer the negative effects of bias. Overcoming hardship can also make people more resilient and better able to face future challenges.
- Seek support systems. One problem with discrimination is that people can internalize others' negative beliefs. You may start to believe you are not good enough. Family and friends can remind you of your worth and help you to reframe faulty beliefs.
- Family and friends can also help counteract the toll that microaggressions and other examples of daily discrimination can take. In a world that regularly invalidates your experiences and feelings, members of your support network can reassure you that you are not imagining those experiences of discrimination. Still, it is sometimes painful to talk about discrimination. It can be helpful to ask friends and family, how they handle such events.

- Your family and friends can also be helpful if you feel you have been a victim of discrimination in areas such as housing, employment or education. Often, people don't report such experiences. One reason for this is that people often doubt themselves: Was I actually discriminated or am I being oversensitive? Will I be judged negatively if I push the issue? Your support network can provide a reality check and a sounding board to help you decide if your claims are valid and worth pursuing.



Get involved. Support doesn't have to come from people in your family or circle of friends. You can get involved with like-minded groups and organizations, whether locally or online. It can help to know that there are others, who have had similar experiences. Connecting with those people might help you figure out how to address situations and respond to experiences of discrimination in ways you haven't thought of.

- Help yourself to think clearly. Being a target of discrimination can stir up many emotions including anger, sadness and embarrassment. Such experiences often trigger a physiological response, too; they can increase your blood pressure, heart rate and body temperature.
- Try to check in with your body before reacting. Slow your breathing or use other relaxation exercises to calm your body's stress response. Then you will be able to think more clearly about how you want to respond.

Currently, regulated migration and the integration of immigrants from third countries are important topics of debate at European Union and national level in each Member State. For some Member States, the phenomenon of immigration is relatively recent compared to other countries, which have been facing this phenomenon for a long time. In both cases there is a challenge to integrate immigrants, either by developing and implementing mechanisms and policies for the integration of immigrants, or by reviewing existing mechanisms and policies. In addition, the lessons and answers provided by countries that have faced a high level of immigration seem to show that migration is not easy to manage and that the consequences of inefficient management will be visible in the short, medium and long term. A coherent approach requires achieving synergy between the two areas targeted by public policy: integration and immigration. The coherence of the approach and the regulatory framework is built on the basis of common values such as: equality in rights and responsibilities between immigrants and citizens of the host state; civic citizenship in an inclusive society built through the participation and involvement of all citizens - immigrants and nationals; interculturality as a model in which not only the presence of the other is accepted, but the meeting between the two cultures, immigrant and national, has the capacity to produce change and transformation of both; seeking consensus through a process of permanent consultation and negotiation, through an understanding of immigration and the challenges posed by managing the phenomenon of immigration.

An example of good practice for the social and labor market inclusion of migrants and return migrants: Creating and managing a platform- overcoming challenges

The need to create a space where they can find all the necessary information for migrants about the community in which they live, information about public services where they can address various specific issues, creating a common space to share with others their fears, ideas, good practices, etc. is very importance for their social inclusion. Political decision-makers often call for dialogue to reassure the population as a result of extensive journalistic material on social conflicts. These conflicts can denote greater problems related to inequality and disadvantages in a diversified society (ie exclusion from the labor market, disadvantaged urban areas, racism). In this situation, such tensions will eventually require negotiating the answer appropriate policy in the field of integration to solve the problem. A platform for dialogue can be seen as a starting point for negotiating this appropriate policy response. It can be a first point of contact for overcoming a lack of understanding and trust. It initiates conversations about a

certain issue, providing a civic space for an open and polite exchange of views. Depending on the area where there is a lack of trust and understanding, this exchange can take place between immigrants, other residents and public authorities. Participants engage in a process of mutual learning. Their different perspectives are integrated into a common understanding of the problem, and they develop an elementary trust and find a common basis for collaboration to solve that problem.

A platform for dialogue is a civic space for initiating an open and polite exchange of views between immigrants, other residents or public authorities. The aim is for participants to develop a common understanding and trust on a given issue and to find a common basis for collaboration to address it.

Desired results and the impact of a dialogue platform

Successful dialogue platforms lead to the formation of working relationships between participants, which create joint public activities, partnerships and new mechanisms for permanent consultation. This continuation of the platform's activity offers new spaces for meaningful interaction, this time with a wider audience. In the medium term, it stimulates new and stronger social and associative networks and government consultation. The partners form a new organization or integrate the cooperation within the main field of activity of their organization. In any case, this cooperation should be independent, without the need for the support of a dialogue platform. In the long run, the process initiated by a dialogue platform can reduce social distance and mutually reinforce the social capital and well-being of all residents. It can help bring together and change identities at the neighborhood level, at the urban level and maybe even regionally, nationally or European. Political and civil society leaders can use these civic spaces to integrate diversity into a stronger, broader sense of identity and to develop a more inclusive language to discuss common issues. Immigration can raise questions in domestic and foreign policy about the common values of an increasingly diverse Europe. The EU answers these questions through the motto "unity in diversity", defined in the preamble of the EU Treaty as wishing to strengthen solidarity between their peoples, respecting their history, culture and traditions ”.

The Council of Europe's White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue reiterates this idea, making it as relevant to immigrant integration as it is to European integration; "The lack of dialogue does not take into account the lessons learned from Europe's cultural and political heritage. European history has been peaceful and productive whenever a real will to communicate with neighbors and co-operate outside the boundaries has prevailed [...] Only dialogue allows people to live in unity in diversity.”

More ideas and examples of intercultural dialogue and practices in the field of platforms can be found in:

Activities carried out in the framework of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, 2008:
www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu

The Rainbow Paper — Intercultural Dialogue: From Practice to Policy and Back, by The Rainbow Paper — Intercultural Dialogue: From Practice to Politics and Back

The platform for an intercultural Europe:

<http://rainbowpaper.labforculture.org/signup/public/read>

White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue: Living Together as Equals in Dignity prepared by the Council of Europe: www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/default_en.asp

CONCLUSION

Migrants and persons with migrants background face relevant challenges in order to integrate in society and labour market, like lack of knowledge of national structures and need to acquire information about the host country's institutions and organisations; legal roadblocks and how to manage with legal issues; different cultures and perspectives, and different economy to which these persons will have to adjust. Some of the tools that can help in the process are soft skills like: Cultural Awareness; Cultural Competence; Equality, diversity and social inclusion; Gender issues; Working culture; Different rules and expected behaviours related to Working Etiquette: Clothing, Behaviour, Punctuality; Digital competence and Multimedia Advantage for Cultural Exchange can be an opportunity for migrants and persons with migrant background.

Challenges:

Lack of knowledge of national structures: persons need to acquire information about the host country's institutions and organisations

Legal roadblocks: legal experts can provide advice on how to navigation legal issues

Different economy: migrants will have to adjust to a new kind of economy

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES

1. Culture Awareness

Watch a video about cultural awareness in a workplace:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4GwglS50J30>

- 1 What do you need to consider, when there are people from different cultural backgrounds in your workplace?
- 2 What are the benefits of a multicultural work atmosphere?
- 3 What kind of experiences you have from different cultural backgrounds in a workplace?

Cultural competence

Watch this video: Weird or just different?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1K5SycZjGhI>

Plenary debate

- What is the message in this video?
- What kind of self-evident assumptions do you have?

2. Digital competence and multimedia

Self-directed learning activity. 5 questions are distributed in open space, creating an environment for reflexion (targeted to facilitators or trainees)

1. In what purpose you use social media channels?
2. What productive have you done or could do in social media?
3. How often you check your social media accounts? Do you always react, when there's a new message in some of them?
4. Do you act differently in conversations, which you have in social media, compared to face-to-face? If so, how and why?
5. Think about the possible affects that your culture has to your social media usage. Does it have an effect? If so, why?

3. Working culture

„The comprehension of different roles at work “

Time – 0,5 hour

Aim – to analyze the peculiarities of different roles at work.

Proceeds:

Six volunteers are selected from the group. Three of them are employers of one company looking for new employees, while the other three are individuals who

come to a job interview, in which they receive a non-standard task (they cannot prepare in advance). For example, employers are three women, and job seekers are three men who are given the task to introduce a new eyelash mascara intended exclusively for women (preparation time 5 minutes, time of a performance - 3 minutes). The presentation must be professional, original and forcing women to purchase a new product.

After the task, both groups (employers and jobseekers) speak out how they felt during the task, what was successful and what failed, what challenges they encountered and how they overcame them, what they did not expect in this task, and so on. Later, all the people who monitored the situation start up the discussion and express their opinion on the situation observed: what they liked and what they did not, what could be learned from a particular situation, what should not be repeated in the future, what mistakes or weaknesses were noticed, etc.

The results of the discussion are summarized by the leader of the group.

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Erasmus + Strategic partnership: <http://www.migrempower.eu/en/> Itineraries and resources for migrants & refugees' Empowerment & integration

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3. EDUCATIONAL AND CAREER GUIDANCE

INTRODUCTION

Choosing a career and taking the necessary steps to train an adult as a specialist in the chosen field is a complex process that has a defining impact on his professional future. Studies show that this process without any external support is often associated with wrong choices in the field of study or career, hesitation, abandonment, procrastination, poor professional performance, continued dissatisfaction with professional life, including depression.

Choosing and preparing for a career is not an irreversible process that cannot be changed, but the right choice of career and the existence of mechanisms to help develop all the skills needed to transition to the labor market can be a guarantee of a good investment of time and resources in a person's education. In this respect, the existence of career counseling and guidance services seems more than necessary, both for the individual benefits they bring to those who use such services and for the benefits to society. It is recognized that career counseling and guidance services can contribute to maximizing the professional potential of citizens according to their abilities and aspirations, reducing early school leaving, the transition of young people between different levels of education, increasing participation in education, developing social inclusion and equity in the education system or increasing employability by facilitating access to the labor market.

CONCEPTUAL DELIMITATIONS FOR COUNSELING

Counseling is a psycho-educational technology if it elaborates rules for creation, transformation and control (M. Bunge, 1978) of specific processes for positive and beneficial purposes (for example the rule of orientation-learning). Counseling is art because it acts on a sensitive field (educational issues - in the case of educational counseling) applies methods, techniques, and procedures for modeling the subject's personality in a differentiated and creative way, adapts the reality of the subject's ideas, feelings, will and behavior to environmental reality (educational). (Iucu B. R. & Panisoara, I. O., 2000).



(source: <https://aim2excel.in/latest-blog/how-a-career-counsellor-can-help-you-to-decide-the-right-career-path/>)

Educational counseling does not act on the objective reality as such but on the psychological image of this reality reflected in the mind, personality and behavior of the subject (educational).

Vocational counseling and guidance has the role of helping students or those who are looking for a professional direction to take the first step in building a curriculum and career. In a broad sense, counseling is a complex action that "aims to suggest how to proceed or how to behave in a given situation or, in general, in everyday life and activity" (Tomşa, 1996). Counseling is a relationship governed by principles, characterized by the application of one or more psychological theories and a recognizable set of communication skills to the intimate concerns of the subject (client), his problems and aspirations.

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THE CONCEPT OF CAREER

In the literature there are a multitude of career definitions. Of the existing definitions, we focus only on 2 of them, which each emphasize a certain aspect of the career and which, taken together, give us a complete and complex vision of the concept of career.

A first definition belongs to D.E. Super, which, in the middle of the 20th century, defined career as "a succession of professions, occupations and positions that a person has during the active period of life". After about 2 decades, D.E. It concludes that the definition of a career can extend beyond the limits of the active period of life, including pre-vocational and post-vocational functions, such as those of students (preparing for a career) and those of retirees (who replace after reaching pension). The emphasis in this definition is on the duration of the career, which extends throughout the life of the individual. The concept of life career risks being much too personal and non-specific.

The second definition was given by G. Johns in 1998. This author defines career as an 'evolutionary succession of professional activities and professional positions that a person achieves, as well as attitudes, knowledge and skills developed over time'. G Johns distinguishes 2 types of career: external career, conceived as an objective succession of a person's positions; and the internal career, which aims at the subjective interpretation that the individual gives to the objective professional exigencies. The authors who use the typology introduced by G.Johns specify that when they talk about the external career, they take into account either the professional positions held by individuals or the external factors (salary, type of work, etc.) involved in a career, and when they use the term Internal career refers to how the individual perceives and represents the career.

The main contribution brought by G. Johns consists in specifying the 3 defining elements of the career: a) the professional movement of the individual over time; b) the interaction of individual factors with organizational ones, in the sense that

people's reactions to a job depend on the fit or mismatch between the concept of occupational self and the constraints of that job; c) the specification of the individual in the sphere of the occupational environment, the career being the one through which the man acquires an occupational identity.

R.P. Weatwersby and J.M. Tarule offers short characterizations of the stages of adult life, placing a special emphasis on their impact in the sphere of the labor market. It has a double meaning:

as an element of introspection and understanding of one's own growth and development tendencies;

- understanding of others.

The distribution of the stages is modeled after a typical American social, ie it describes mentalities, ideas, attitudes, specific interests in American society. The stages established by the two authors are characterized by major mental tasks, significant events and characteristic phases (Pânișoară, 2005). We list these steps, mentioning that we will perform a series of specifications:

- Leaving the family: 16/18 years to 20/24 years.

- Entering the adult world: the age of 20, up to 27-29 years.

- Transition: towards the 1930s.

Stabilization: the early 1930s. Major mental tasks: a deeper involvement; greater self-investment in work, family and the interests they value: sets timelines for long-term goals. Highlights: death of loved ones, further pursuit of work, family activities and other interests. Characteristic phase: focused on establishing order and stability in life, on how to apply long-term goals and how to meet them.

- Becoming an independent person: 35/39 - 39/42 years.

- Early 1940s: strengthening autonomy

- Restoration: around the 45s.

- The transition to the 1950s: the late 1940s to the mid-1950s.

Such a modeling of career evolution has a large dose of arbitrariness and artificiality. The exploitation of such a classification for the Romanian socio-cultural conditions is very unlikely.

Another model is developed by Arnold and Feldman, van Maanen and Schein, Dalton, Thomson, Price. Steers described various stages of his career.

CAREER STAGE	AGE	CAREER ASPECTS
Exploring	15 – 22 years	Identifying interests and choosing a career. Obtaining education that allows its exercise.
Early career (trial)	22-30 years	Obtaining the first job and adapting to its requirements and that of supervisors.
Early career (stabilization)	30-38 years	Transfers and promotions. Choosing the level of involvement; deepening the perspective on occupation and organization.
Average career (development)	38-45 years	Establishing professional identity. Choosing between different career paths. Technical versus managerial etc.
Average career (maintenance)	45-55 years	Providing independent contributions to the organization. Attracting more responsibilities.
Late career (plateau)	55-62 years	Development of subordinates. Active contributions to the development direction of the organization. Confrontations with the threat of the position by the youngest.
Late career (decline)	62-70 years	Retirement planning. Dealing with reduced responsibilities and diminished power; the development of a successor.

There is an appreciable number of researches on the construction of the criteria underlying the establishment of the competence system. Competence means a person's ability to meet the requirements in a particular field. In the most general sense, the subject's competence represents the ability to act responsibly. Social competence refers to relationships with people and the ability to act and appreciate in social or political fields. Currently they are highly appreciated and trained, for the requests from the activities in management, marketing, public relations, communication skills. These are abilities to present one's own intentions, needs and to perceive the interlocutor in order to initiate a dialogue.

Following Dreyfus' model, there are five stages in the evolution of the professional career: novice, beginner-advanced, competent, specialist and expert.

In the first stage, that of the novice, a person performs an activity that has been entrusted to him relatively rigidly, using the information and rules he has learned; the situational comprehension is reduced to a minimum, the action of the novice being weakly adapted to the particularity of the conditions that produced the problem in front of which he is put.

In the beginner-advanced stage, performance is improved with the accumulation of lucrative experience. The understanding of the phenomena goes beyond the learned facts and rules, but the situational comprehension is still limited - each working condition is uniformly treated in terms of importance.

The third stage is individualized by ensuring competence. The employee appreciates the perspective and the level of the entrusted tasks, notices differences regarding the importance of some elements in comparison with others and can discern the long-term objectives. The person begins to use lucrative stereotypes and standardized procedures in the activity.

The fourth stage is considered to belong to a specialist level. In this phase, the employee perceives the situations he faces as belonging to a system, as a whole with interacting elements; it also observes what is most important in situations and can deviate from rules and regulations in cases of necessity.

The last stage involves acquiring the quality of expert. The stage is marked by a deep understanding of the situations they face. The employee has mastered and effectively uses a wide range of plans and strategies to manage a set of changing situations and demonstrates a vision of ways in which he can effectively solve most work situations.

Career management must follow the professional evolution of the employees by ensuring, at the level of multiple competencies, the path from the novice to the expert stage. A key aspect is the integration and development of skills in a balanced functional system that requires the human resources specialist to assist the top levels of the organizational hierarchy in establishing a customized or, rather, personalized career management. The perspective is based on the idea that, although the organization must provide its employees with specific career management conditions and programs, it is necessary that those specific career management conditions and programs be customized for each of those involved. Starting from the top of the hierarchy when the procedures were made known and experienced by managers, they are in a position to become a support for the programs of direct subordinates, thus extending the system to all levels and all employees.

There are 4 possible steps in the activity:

1. Under the advice of the manager, the employee will first list the tasks that involve his responsibility (taking over and developing what is in the job description. There is a double utility: firstly, it supports the career management process and, secondly, offers the employee the opportunity to become aware and resume the tasks arising from the job description, but also from the specific place occupied by him in the organization;
2. The employee is placed in the situation of registering all the necessary competencies in order to perform in good conditions each of the tasks that he has categorized as being in his own responsibility. All the skills will be

listed here, both those that the employee already has and those that he wants to develop. Another step is to select from the set of skills those that are needed in the daily tasks (routines) of those that the employee needs to cope with unexpected changes or in a crisis situation. It can be noticed, at this level, that different tasks require the same skills;

3. After all the competencies have been listed, the employee will identify those that already represent strengths (advantages) of the way he carries out his activity;

4. After establishing the matrix, the employee will set priorities for future personal development. These priorities, in the formation of competencies, can be thought in accordance with the way the employee sees his future in the company (Pânișoară, 2005).



(source: <https://www.smcdesign.com/about-us/careers/>)

THE STRUCTURE OF THE CAREER COUNSELING PROCESS FOR MIGRANTS AND RETURN MIGRANTS

In an attempt to learn more about the specific elements of career counseling, many researchers have focused on identifying the structure of this process. Continuing and developing such approaches, NCGysbers et al. (1998) proposed a career counseling structure consisting of 2 stages and 6 sub-stages.

The first stage consists in establishing the client's objectives, identifying, clarifying and specifying his problem involves 3 sub-stages:

- a) openness to the client or the formation of the working alliance, in which the initial identification of the client and his problems, listening to his thoughts, deciphering the feelings and highlighting their dynamics, clarifying the relations and responsibilities of the client and counselor take place;
- b) gathering information about the client, in which the counselor, using various tools and procedures, explores the client's perceptions of himself and others, of how he represents his roles in life, places and events (past, present and future, he determines whether the client is aware of possible barriers or constraints and identifies the decisional styles:
- c) understanding and formulating hypotheses on the client's behavior, in which the counselor applies the theories of choice and career development, counseling and personality to formulate hypotheses about the obstacles encountered by the client, in order to choose the mode of intervention.

The second stage consists in solving the client's problems and objectives, it involves three sub-stages:

- a) the action, in which the counselor uses counseling techniques, quantitative and qualitative evaluations to help the client to solve his problems;
- b) the development of the career objectives and of the action plans, in which the advisor elaborates together with the client, action plans meant to contribute to the achievement of the objectives or to the overcoming of the possible obstacles:
- c) evaluating the results and concluding the relationship, the sub-stage that occurs when the client's objectives have been achieved or when his problems have been solved.

NCGysbers and its collaborators also make some recommendations or suggestive clarifications in connection with this approach of the career counseling process, namely: a) the stages and sub-stages of the career counseling process, can take place in a single session, but most likely they will cover a larger number of meetings, depending on the concrete situations, b) in practice, the respective stages and sub-stages may not take place in the order described, c) not all persons requesting help will want or need to pass through the whole process of career counseling, in the sense that some need limited assistance, and others show resistance, which must be treated.

TYPES OF EXAMINATIONS PERFORMED IN THE CAREER COUNSELING PROCESS

E.L.Herr and S.H.Cramer (1996) make a classification of the types of examinations that can be performed in the career counseling process. The classification criterion is the finalities of this process. The 2 authors identify 4 types of final examinations: predictive, discriminatory, monitoring and evaluation itself. Each type of examination is important and useful, in different situations, to support the individual in the process of self-knowledge, information, counseling and guidance:

The predictive examination facilitates the anticipation regarding the potential of the clients in terms of the results of education, training and work, in terms of occupational mobility, in terms of social positions or of the possible performances that they can achieve. In this type of examination, the following questions of the clients are answered; what is it possible to achieve in the future? In which directives will I be successful? Is it worth making personal investments in this direction?

Discriminatory examination allows judging, in particular, the qualities and performances of clients in relation to certain interests, values and preferences for certain occupations, as well as their compatibility with certain work environments in which those employees are practiced. This type of examination answers the following questions of clients: am I suitable for this occupation? Does this work environment suit me? Can I adapt and will I be effective in this occupation?

The monitoring examination provides information on the state of preparation of clients to make choices in terms of occupations, about their maturation to start a personal project in terms of career development, about the quality of decisions made and the direction of opinions on work. Cognitive and moral-attitudinal variables are involved here. These examinations allow clients to be offered role models in choosing a career and teach them to be independent and choose between equal alternatives.

The actual evaluative examination aims at measuring the level reached in achieving the objectives of counseling and career guidance. Here are considered the results of various programs operating in the area of career counseling, the effects of strategies and action projects in the field of information, counseling and guidance, individually institutional and social. The results of the quality evaluations

Examples of problems that may be the subject of this method: ways of exploring occupations; career decision making; resolving conflicts with parents related to the choice of studies or career, etc. There are two variants of brainstorming as a method of career education:

-Brainstorming with role attributes, a situation in which roles are assigned to different students to produce ideas from several perspectives. Example of the problem: how the students' flight from class is appreciated from the point of view of the teacher, the parents, the principal, the counselor, the school principal of the colleagues, etc.

-Philips 6-6, which involves dividing the class into groups of six students, who try to find solutions to a problem for 6 minutes, at the end of which the modeler of each group presents a list of solutions obtained.

Role play It is a method in which participants adopt different positions in terms of motivation, the role they play and the educational training they have. This allows them to familiarize themselves with other perspectives on the situation in question. Examples of role-playing games: assertive communication, job interview, etc.

Debate This method consists in presenting the arguments for and against an idea. Students can be divided into two groups or they can work in pairs to present and argue their different positions on a problem. Examples of debates: arguments for and against a healthy lifestyle; arguments for and against choosing a career; arguments for and against opening a business, etc.

Interview This is a method that consists of a list of questions asked to obtain information about a person's attitudes, knowledge, and opinions about certain issues. They can be done individually or in groups, directly or by phone. There are three types of interviews:

- the structured interview, where all the questions that will be asked by the interviewer are established in advance;
- the semi-structured interview, where the interviewer can ask other questions than the established ones;
- the unstructured interview, where the interviewer has a list of issues that he can address in the conversation, without having clearly established questions from the beginning.

Examples of problems that may be the subject of an unstructured interview: exploring professions, educational or professional paths.

Portfolio It is a method that involves gathering together the most relevant products of the student's activity in relation to a certain purpose. In career education, it is recommended to use the development portfolio. It includes various products of the student that highlight the process that took place in its development, in relation to achieving a goal. A portfolio includes the following components:

- introduction page, which includes the person's name and identification data (address, age, school);
- a summary of the portfolio content;
- products of the student's activity, accompanied by a short description (what he learned from the respective activity, why he chose the respective activity for the portfolio, the support received in carrying out the activity, the period of time in which the activity was performed);
- career plans and goals;

Examples of portfolios: developing interest in a field (books read, chosen courses, activities done) developing a competence (tasks completed, courses attended, types of exercises) knowledge of an occupation (materials read, interviews conducted, work experience).

Realization of projects. This method involves analyzing a real situation that can be greatly improved, identifying the desired situation and specifying the ways in which it can reach the desired situation. The project specifies the remediation strategies, as well as the necessary resources - time, support, personal resources, etc. in this respect it is important that the project is applicable and realistic.

Examples of projects: developing self-esteem, developing learning strategies, reducing stress, etc.

Self-assessment It consists in the process of reflection on one's own behaviors and the results obtained in order to monitor the progress in reaching an established objective or as a support of the self-knowledge process. In the case of self-assessment, questionnaires, reflection on one's own products, self-knowledge activities, etc. can be used. The results of the self-assessment are discussed in the group only insofar as the student needs his colleagues or if he agrees to share his reflections with others.

Examples of self-assessment situations: assessment of interests, identification of own values, etc.

Case study It is a method that involves the group analysis of real scenarios on certain topics or on certain problems. The case study can be done in writing or

orally, aiming at developing the skills to identify the relevant aspects of a situation, as well as their implications. Examples of case studies: successful career, types of communication, negotiation, etc.



(source: <https://bohatala.com/how-to-write-a-case-study/>)

According to John Holland, the choice of profession is an expression of personality; inventories of interest are personality inventories; members of the same field of activity have similar personalities, as well as similar histories of personality development; the individuals of a vocational group, having similar personalities, will respond, in many situations and to many problems, in a similar way, putting their imprint on the work environment, giving it certain characteristics; professional satisfaction, stability and achievement in the profession depend on the congruence between one's personality and the environment in which one works. People are looking for environments and vocations that allow them to exercise their skills and abilities, to express their values, to solve problems or to play pleasant roles and to avoid unpleasant ones.

As a conclusion, counsellors have the complex task of assisting people looking for a job, especially in finding their way into the labour market, looking for a job that might fit their competencies and interests, to their life and learning experiences, and plans, building up a more sustainable career plan. Identifying the right mix of interests, capabilities, real competencies of the person looking for employment is one of the most difficult parts of the

counsellor's job. A lot of the knowledge, skills and competencies are acquired by adults in informal learning settings, in their everyday life, in the workplace, and therefore not being formally recognized. Mostly for the people with low level of education, working as non-qualified workers or volunteers in companies or other settings, identifying, valuing and recognizing the existing real competencies acquired in non-formal or informal contexts would be very helpful, especially in their attempt to move into better jobs and to gain new qualification.

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES

1. ACTIVITY Listen to each other

The aim of this activity is to get to know each other, presenting things about ourselves that we want to say, at the beginning of the relationship.

Ask the client to present:

- choosing a word to describe their personality (could be a characteristic, a colour, an animal, a flower etc)
- specifying the best moment in family life
- sharing an expectation regarding their professional life

This exercise will help you to discover things about your client, to stimulate communication between client and you, in order to develop a supportive environment.

2. ACTIVITY Me and my life

This is a method which helps us to reveal the main moment of our life, to raise awareness about the opportunities and threats that we have already had, the happy moments and the sad ones. It's a good opportunity to reflect on our future life.

The client will receive a big piece of paper, as well as red, blue and green stickers. He/She is asked to draw or to write words that express the main events from their lives (from personal and professional point of view). He/She will draw a line/curb divided from 5 to 5 years. He/She are asked to put the green sticker on their age. For the happiest moment in his/her life he/she will put a red sticker and for the unhappy situations he/she will put the blue one. Based on this, the client is asked to develop some personal aspects related to those words/drawings.

As an alternative, you can ask the client to imagine how he/she will look like after five or ten years from a personal and professional point of view.

3. ACTIVITY Non-academics-Valuing different forms of knowledge

The aim of this activity is to find out about types of knowledge which are non academic. Ask the client to write a short story about his/her work and/or

educational trajectory in a thoughtful and reflexive way. Encourage him/her to include his/her decisions, motivations, difficulties, tips, people who motivate him/her, those who did not and so on. This experience is to be used as a resource for your client or yourself, to inspire, to provide a point of reference and to offer an account of this trajectory as an educational tool.

4 ACTIVITY: “Don’t look back in anger”

Try to think of 5 important points in your life which you consider have had a positive effect on it. They might be events that affected you, people, who have had an influence on you or actions you did or did not undertake. Go as far back as you can recall.

Now do the same, but with 5 points, which you consider have had a negative effect on your life. Again, they can be of different sorts and as far back as you can remember.

Write down all 10 points in chronological order in a notebook with plenty of pages between them, so every point plays the role of a “chapter” in a book. Now everyday go through the notebook and under EACH of the 10 “chapters” (positive and negative) try to think of a positive outcome that has come out of them in your professional life. It might be a direct or indirect result, it might be something much later in time, a future problem avoided, a lesson learned etc.

After 10 days you should have 10 outcomes under each “chapter”. Now once every few days try to write a short 250 word essay that explains the original “event” and the positive outcomes that you identified it has had on your professional development. Start the essay with the words “One of the best things to have happened to professionally is...”

Do this for all 10 events.

Example: “One of the best things to have happened to me professionally is the birth of my child. It made me much more aware of responsibility towards others.”

N.B. This exercise can be adapted so to be used in pairs with a colleague or with a client

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4. COMBINING VALIDATION OF COMPETENCES WITH TRAINING COURSES / MODULES

ABSTRACT

Skills are a driver for competitiveness, innovation, and growth as well as for individuals' well-being and personal and professional fulfillment. This is the rationale for the first principle of the European Pillar of Social Rights, which states that “everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training and life-long learning in order to maintain and acquire skills that enable people to participate fully in society and successfully manage transitions in the labour market” (European Commission, 2018a), Citing the European Pillar of Social Rights, this article provides tools and paths to combine validation of skills and competences with training for basic skills development of adults aged 45+ and with a migrant background.

The skills and attributes of migrants and adults aged 45+ represent the significant economic potential for the countries. However, in order to make it be fully realized, well-planned, and coordinated efforts by a range of actors and entities are required at national levels. By analysing the institutions working with and for migrants, it is acknowledged that the Netherlands has numerous organizations that are committed to supporting communities, as well as migrants themselves, to harness and maximize that potential. There are institutions working together in a range of ways to evaluate policies and disseminate good practice, to identify promising innovative approaches for recognition of competences, and to counter xenophobia and prejudice by providing sound evidence of the challenges migrants face and the contributions they can make to labour force in The Netherlands. Searching for the institutions working with adults 45+ and persons with a migrant background, it is seen that the Netherlands has a gap in policy, effort, and tools by means of identification, assessment, and recognition of skills and competences of the respected target group. The use of new validating competences tools efficiently in identification, assessment, and recognition and improving the quality and relevance of skills formation may fill this gap. Besides, making qualifications easier to understand, equipping everyone with a minimum set of basic skills, reskilling and upskilling of individuals, and spreading mobility of workers and learners in the rapidly changing labour market are among the key solutions.

All these efforts are committed to fostering dialogue amongst all stakeholders working with adults 45+ and with a migrant background, providing them sustainable guidance to improve the livelihoods of these people and eventually contribute to better integration outcomes in the country.

Keywords: 45+with migrant background, validation of competences, upskilling, integration

INTRODUCTION

Targeting the adults 45+ with a migrant background, the article briefly sets a frame for a national perspective on skills, competences, standards, and qualifications in the first part. In the second part, it deepens knowledge and understanding of the skills match in the Dutch labour market. The article finally reviews adult education services for people with migrant backgrounds in the third part. In this study, the Netherlands is studied as a case for the exchange of good practices. Thus most of the information reflects the conditions and standards in the Netherlands.

SKILLS, COMPETENCES, STANDARDS AND QUALIFICATIONS

European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations

ESCO (European Skills, Competences, Qualifications, and Occupations) is the European multilingual classification of skills, competences, qualifications, and occupations. ESCO is managed by the Commission, who is responsible for updating the classification. ESCO works like a dictionary in 27 languages (24 EU languages, plus Icelandic, Norwegian and Arabic) describing, identifying, and classifying professional occupations and skills relevant for the EU labour market and education and training area and systematically showing the relations between those occupations and skills. It is available in an online portal where its dataset of occupations and skills can be consulted and downloaded free of charge. Its common reference terminology helps make the European labour market more effective and integrated and allows the worlds of work and education/training to communicate more effectively with each other. (ESCO, 2020) In order to support the Europe 2020 and Skills Agenda for Europe, ESCO is composed of 2 pillars:

occupations and skills/competencies linked to relevant international classifications and frameworks, e.g.

- α International Standard Classification of Occupations,
- α International Standard Classification of Education Fields of Education and Training
- α European Qualifications Framework
- α By using ESCO, jobseekers can document and describe their knowledge, skills, and competences to match job openings more accurately. Employers are able to more precisely state the skills and qualifications they expect from employees. Education and training institutions are able to:
 - α use a multilingual reference terminology to describe the learning outcomes of their qualifications, thus making qualifications more transparent,
 - α adapt their programs based on feedback from the labour market,
 - α work more closely with employment services and career advisors.

The Netherlands Qualification Framework

Netherlands Qualification Framework (NLQF) is, for the Netherlands, an important step to put the aims of lifelong learning on the agenda. The NLQF covers all qualification levels within the Netherlands. These descriptions are matched to the standard descriptions of the European Qualification Framework lifelong learning (EQF). All education sectors can be ranked in the levels of the NLQ, from professional education to general education, from initial education to adult education and including both formal and non-formal qualifications. This facilitates and stimulates the lifelong learning system, as the comprehensive NLQF adds to the transparency of the Dutch formal, non-formal, and informal learning systems. It also increases the ability to validate earlier acquired competences, which can be equated to the NLQF to gain a comparable level (EAEA, 2011).

Classifying the qualifications within a framework means that levels become comparable. This concerns government regulated qualifications (formal qualifications that lead to legally recognized certificates) and non-formal qualifications that are not regulated by the government.

The NLQF was set up to support life-long learning and aims to contribute towards the national and international mobility of employees and students. The framework clarifies the level at which a person can learn or function in the Netherlands or in another European country. In order to encourage

international mobility and the comparability of educational levels in the European Member States, the NLQF refers back to the European qualification framework (EQF) (NCP NLQF, n.d)

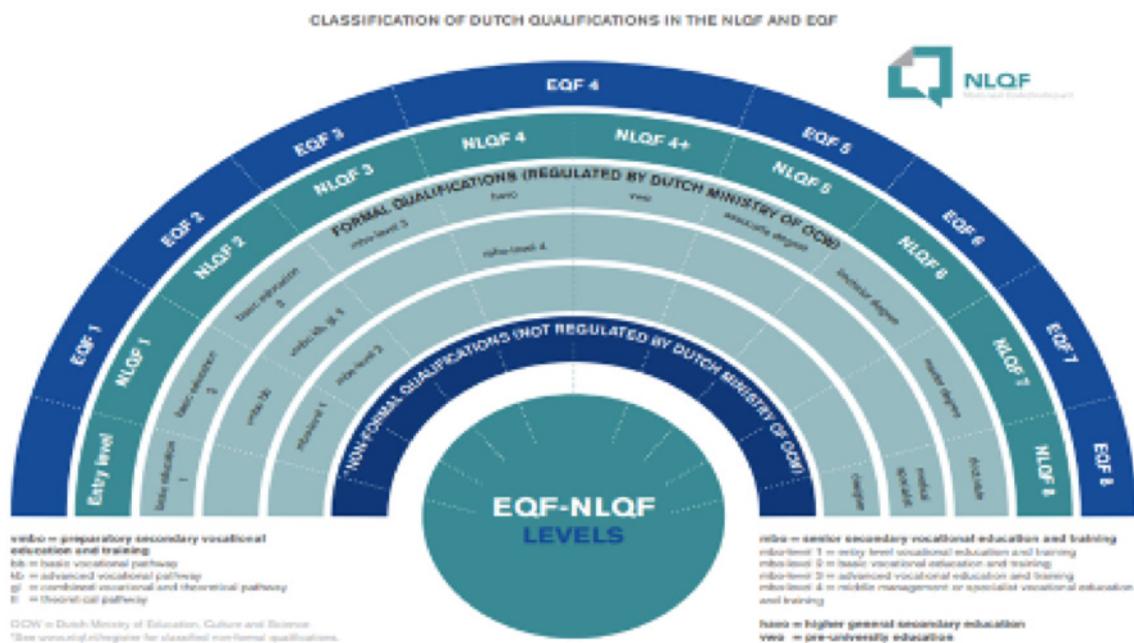


Figure 1: Schematic overview NLQF

https://www.nlqf.nl/images/downloads/English2018/Schematic_overview_NLQF_2020.pdf

In the Netherlands, the 17 Ministry-regulated qualifications were related to the eight levels (plus Entry Level) of the NLQF. This was achieved by working with experts from the different educational sectors and the main stakeholders (including social partners) in education and by consultation with a wider public, including providers of education and training. The NLQF has been operational since 2011; this means that, since then, it is possible for non-formal qualifications to apply for classification into the EQF/NLQF. Procedures for quality management system have been developed in order to back-up the classification of non-formal qualifications.

Entry Level	Basic Education 1 (for adults)
NLQF Level 1	Basic Education 2 (for adults)
	Pre-vocational secondary education - basic vocational pathway (vmbo bb)
	VET level 1 (mbo1)
NLQF Level 2	Basic Education 3 (for adults)
	Pre-vocational secondary education - advanced vocational pathway (vmbo kb)
	Pre-vocational secondary education - combined theoretical pathway (vmbo gl)
	Pre-vocational secondary education - theoretical pathway (vmbo tl)
	VET level 2 (mbo 2)
NLQF Level 3	VET level 3 (mbo 3)
NLQF Level 4	VET level 4 (mbo 4)
	Higher general secondary education (havo)
	Higher general secondary education for adults (vavo-havo)
NLQF Level 4+	Pre-university education (vwo)
	Pre-university education for adults (vavo-vwo)
NLQF Level 5	Associate Degree
NLQF Level 6	Bachelor Degree
NLQF Level 7	Master Degree
NLQF Level 8	Doctorate
	Designer
	Medical specialist

Figure 2: 17 Ministry-regulated qualifications relate to the NLQF/EQF levels (NCP NLQF, n.d)

The NLQF is an elaboration of the EQF in line with the levels of the Dutch education and labour market. The differences between the EQF and the NLQF are as follows: the EQF descriptors are further elaborated in the NLQF, the NLQF has an entry-level below EQF level 1. The NLQF also includes a level 4 and 4+.

In the NLQF, the EQF-descriptor 'skills' are divided into five skill descriptors: application of knowledge, problem-solving skills, learning and development skills, informative skills, and communicative skills. The concept of competence is translated into Dutch into the concepts of responsibility and autonomy.

At the entry-level, only basic education 1 for adults with a learning disability has been classified. Here, the focus lies on the development of social skills and basic abilities in terms of reading, writing, and numeracy. The fact that the intake level is lower than EQF level 1 means that qualifications that are classified at this level cannot be allocated an EQF level.

Higher Academic Education (vwo), one of the aspects of Dutch secondary education, is positioned at level 4+ because of the substantially higher level of the 'vwo' (preparation for university) compared to the 'havo' qualification (preparing for higher vocational education) which was classified at level 4.

Non-formal qualifications that are not regulated by the government are offered by private training providers, companies, sectors, or examination bodies and often focus on additional education for adults. Compared to other countries, there is a large range of this type of qualification in the Netherlands. 84% of adult learning takes place in this sector. The turnover in this context amounts to 3.2 billion.

The owners of a non-formal qualification can submit an application to NCP NLQF to classify the qualification in the NLQF. This classification covers two stages. The validity check ensures that the organization is eligible for a classification application. This ensures that only trustworthy organizations can indicate an NLQF/ EQF level on certificates and diplomas. This check evaluates the legal personality, the ownership of the qualification, the continuity of the organization, and the organization's examination and quality management process.

If the owner has an externally validated quality management system (e.g. accreditation by the Dutch/Flemish Accreditation Organisation or NVAO, or is supervised by the Education Inspectorate), it is eligible for a limited validity check. This means that an organizational audit will not take place. This validity lasts for five years. During these five years, the owner can submit the qualification for classification. The Quality Commission assesses the application independently and then the Programme Council of the NCP NLQF accepts or rejects the validity of the organization.

If the validity of an organization is assessed positively, the applicant can have their qualifications classified in the NLQF. The applicant justifies the level of the qualification via self-evaluation on the basis of learning results.

The best-fit method is applied for this evaluation. This means that all descriptors are reviewed individually and the level that best fits the qualification is then determined. For example, a qualification may equate to level 5 in terms of problem-solving skills but only level 4 in relation to knowledge. Ultimately, the evaluations per descriptor are combined into a single evaluation of the level of the entire qualification. The classification is then valid for 5 years.

A team of independent experts assesses the application and the supporting documents; the Classification Commission then issues a recommendation to the Programme Council. In the event of a positive recommendation from the Programme Council and the allocation of a level, the classified qualification is added to the NCP NLQF register.

As an example of organizations that have the first-hand experience of the advantages of NLQF. NOC*NSF would like to assure the quality of sports-based training. Take the trainer of an amateur hockey team, for example. Is he/she a well-meaning volunteer or a well-trained sportsman/woman that knows exactly what a trainer must do? Well, both, in fact; just like a professional coach in football or table tennis, for example. The sporting umbrella organization NOC*NSF would like the underlying qualifications to be allocated an NLQF level so that they are (internationally) comparable and enable us to estimate the level of the coach that comes from Romania, for example (NCP NLQF, n.d)

Validation of Competences

Validation is the process of confirmation by a competent body that learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, and/or competences) acquired by an individual in a formal, non-formal, or informal setting have been assessed against predefined criteria and are compliant with the requirements of a validation standard (Cedefop, 2014).

As the two main purposes of validation, professional and academic recognition has consequences for the life chances of immigrants. Possessing certain qualifications, education, experience and competencies that are necessary for the position person is going to fill can be a necessity for labour market-oriented entry for non-EU nationals in some EU member states. This assessment can be based on crude “points systems” which commodify individuals, rather than on sophisticated validation methods (Souto-Otero and Villalba-Garcia, 2015)

The importance of lifelong learning is being highlighted in the Netherlands through the recognition of non-formally acquired competencies called “Eerder Verworven Competenties (EVC)” in Dutch. The move is designed to validate formal, non-formal and informal learning. An EVC procedure entails collecting data about someone's knowledge and skills. Evidence is assessed in relation to nationally recognized occupational standards. Relevant certificates and life/work experience all count towards the assessment. The collected evidence is recorded in a certificate of competence and then people are given the opportunity to receive college credits for skills and knowledge gained through training, life, or workplace experience (European Commission, 2018b).

The certificate of competence recognizes the competences that the holder has acquired by non-formal and informal means. To obtain a certificate of competence, an applicant first initiates an EVC procedure. They then compile a portfolio containing evidence of their knowledge and skills. A coach is available to offer guidance. Evidence may include:

- testimonials
- letters of recommendation
- reports of job performance interviews
- products made by the applicant
- certificates

When the portfolio is ready, it is assessed by two examiners from the EVC provider. They will also consider whether the applicant needs further testing in order to establish their level of competence. It may also be necessary to assess the applicant's skills through a practical test or question and answer session. It takes an average of three months to obtain an EVC which is recognized by the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science (Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur ve Wetenschap).

There are currently some 70 EVC providers in the Netherlands, whose job is to map the knowledge and skills of individuals who apply for certificates of competence. The EVC procedures finder indicates which existing providers cater to the skills mix offered by an individual applicant. The applicant can also apply directly to the EVC provider, or seek advice from the relevant contact at their workplace or training and employment helpdesk.

EVC provides a number of benefits for businesses such as obtaining an objective portrait of employees' competencies, getting accelerated and personalized training for employees, retaining employees, and to have employees' competencies officially recognized (Rescue Nederland, 2020)

A certificate of competence can be used for individual purposes to improve employability and income and create career mobility in the labour market. An adult who wants to follow vocational (MBO) or higher professional (HBO) training can use EVCs to gain exemption from parts of a new course and thus shorten their study time. The importance of lifelong learning is gradually being recognized.

Organizations working in Validation of Competences

Fortunately, a number of tools and services are available to validate competencies. Declarative Method, Europass CV, Test and examinations, Knowledge and Skills Portfolio, workplace training, Buddy System, peer work, and EU Skills Profile Tool are some tools for adult trainers in the identification of competences. Besides, competence Cards, my-professional-experience, MYSKILLS, Open Badges, Scout Badges, ProfilPass, EUROPASS, and E-Portfolios are among these solutions. Besides, the following organizations are active in the field. Their web sites and resources are accessible to all users.

Organizations in the Netherlands

www.nrto.nl

www.mбораad.nl

www.s-bb.nl

www.rijksoverheid.nl/ministeries/ocw

Organizations in the field of quality

www.nvao.net

www.onderwijsinspectie.nl

Foreign organizations

www.cedefop.europa.eu

www.ec.europa.eu/eqf

www.ec.europa.eu/esco

www.schengenvisainfo.com/eu-countries

Other Lifelong Learning Tools

www.ecvet.nl

www.eqavet.nl

www.nationale-kenniscentrum-ecv.nl

www.cinopglobal.com

Education and career

www.euroguidance.nl

www.europass.nl

www.nivvo.nl/vacatures-onderwijs

www.metafooronderwijs.nl

www.nl-techniek.nl

A proposed competence validation methodology uses the terminology and concepts established in a European learning space:

- Learning in a formal context represents an organized and structured learning, which is realized in an institutionalized framework and is based on an explicit didactic design. This type of learning has associated objectives, durations and resources, depends on the will of the learner and ends with the institutionalized certification of acquired knowledge and skills.
- Learning in non-formal contexts is considered as integrated learning within planned activities, with learning objectives, which do not explicitly follow a curriculum and may differ in duration. This type of learning depends on the intention of the learner and does not automatically lead to the certification of acquired knowledge and skills.
- Learning in informal contexts is the result of daily activities related to work, family, leisure and is not organized or structured in terms of objectives, duration or support for learning. This type of learning is not dependent on the intention of the learner and does not automatically lead to the certification of knowledge and skills acquired.
- learning outcomes represent what a person knows, understands and is able to do at the end of a learning process and are defined in the form of knowledge, skills and skills
- the evaluation of learning outcomes represents the process by which it is established that a person has acquired certain knowledge, skills and competencies;
- validation of learning outcomes is the process by which it is confirmed that the outcomes assessed learning, acquired by a person, meet the specific requirements for a unit of learning learning outcomes or a qualification;
- certification of learning outcomes is the process by which it is confirmed in a way formally the learning outcomes acquired by the learner in different contexts, following a evaluation process;

PURPOSE

The methodology for validating and certifying migrants' prior learning aims to create a framework for assessing needs. training in order to establish a professional development route.

Principle	Description
Validity	The evaluation method provides information directly related to the subject of the evaluation?
Authenticity	Evidence is directly related to the activities made by the candidate?
Validity	Is the proof current?
Quality	Demonstrated knowledge and skills do they correspond to the established minimum level?
Transferability	Can the candidate apply knowledge and skills in a diverse range of contexts?
Sufficiency	Does the evidence demonstrate full competence?

Target group

Methodology for validation and certification of migrants' previous learning and return migrants

STEPS

1. online registration of the candidate for the evaluation process

The candidate will have access on the project website to an online registration platform in which he will fill in the following information:

- name surname
- Address
- phone
- email address and all data from the target group form

2. conducting online self-assessment

The candidate will have the online self-assessment form, with the possibility to tick the option YES, PARTIALLY, NO with reference to each descriptor structured on categories of information (I KNOW) and abilities (can). At the end of the form, the candidate will be able to attach supporting documents. The stage ends by activating the option to send information and documents. An email confirming the registration in the validation process will be automatically generated at the address mentioned by the candidate.

3. analysis of the candidate's documents

The experts will analyze the candidate's file, completing a check list of the received documents (portfolio)

4. validation interview

The candidate will be invited by email to the contact address mentioned in an interview, in which elements related to self-assessment will be discussed, with emphasis on the contexts in which the candidate has acquired the declared competencies. Other supporting documents will be established that will complete the file: recommendations from the workplace / volunteering, intervention project and the deadlines for completing the file. An evaluation plan will be developed and the checklist will be completed with additional documents.

5. completing the process by establishing the professional development route

The process ends by establishing the competencies that are validated and partially validated, and the result will be communicated online to the candidate. Based on the results, a professional development route will be developed by training on the elements of competence that are not held by the candidate.

6. Evaluation of the process by the candidate

The candidate will complete an evaluation questionnaire online with reference to the validation process. The results will be centralized and a general evaluation report will be prepared.

PROCESS MANAGER: The trainer

RESPONSIBILITIES

Establishing the completion fields in stage 1
Development of tools
Approval of instruments
Analysis of the candidate's file
Validation interview planning
Communication with the candidate
Validation of competencies
Establishing the professional development route
Process evaluation

CONCLUSION

Migrants have very diverse socio-economic backgrounds. Some are highly educated and worked as engineers, medical doctors, or researchers before their arrival from home countries. Some have managerial or entrepreneurial skills while others were employed in professional occupations or skilled trade jobs. Others again have not yet completed their education or have only a few years of schooling, if any. This diversity of profiles is both a challenge and an opportunity. It requires, as a starting point, to identify the skills that they already possess at arrival by taking stock of their formal qualifications, previous professional experience, and, more generally, of their abilities and motivation.

Upskilling employees through career guidance, training, and development have a positive return on human capital. It can boost employees' performance, and more importantly, it reduces the costs for employee turnover. Providing additional skills to workers with migrant background makes a difference only if public and private companies value them. In this sense, the importance accorded to human capital in addressing the problems of low-skilled workers or migrants with a lack of skills are parts of a larger tendency to over-play its role in tackling a broader range of economic and social problems in the community.

Adults with a migrant background often face difficulties in adjusting to a new learning environment. Education and training practitioners can benefit from guidance and the sharing of good practices to be able to address the learning needs of adult learners in an increasingly diverse labour market. So, this article put the Dutch example forward as a good practice on combining validation of competences with training courses.

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5. HOW TO IDENTIFY AND EVALUATE TRANSVERSAL COMPETENCES?

ABSTRACT

The labour market of the present day is changing rapidly. The mass automation is creating a deficit in Organizations, workforces, and individuals are constantly undergoing complex, unprecedented changes: rapid and radical technological advances, the challenges of globalization, climate and environmental change, demographic change and migration, political uncertainty, pandemics.

In this context, there is an urgent need both institutionally and at the individual level to focus on competencies acquired throughout life such as transversal competencies.

Transversal competencies refer to the competencies that people have and that are relevant for other activities and occupations than those that they currently carry out or that they have recently carried out.

These competencies may also have been acquired through extra-professional activities or through participation in education or training.

These are competencies that have been learned in one context or for mastering a certain situation/problem and that can be transferred to another context. (Cedefop 2008).

The consortium involved in the implementation of the project focused on methods on how to identify and evaluate transversal competencies, relevant to the target group of the project, ie adults 45+, with migrant background for (re) insertion on the labor market

In this article we have tried to identify some of these competencies, the competency elements and the assessment criteria that demonstrate competence in different situations with an emphasis on relevant competencies in the workplace.

We want to offer a useful tool to those involved in working with the target group of the project, especially professionals in adult education, counselors or trainers for integration into the labor market and social life.

INTRODUCTION

The Council of the European Union adopted in May 2018 the new Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning.

The Recommendation aims to improve the development of basic skills and key competences for all throughout life. It encourages Member States to better prepare people for changing labour markets and active citizenship in more diverse,

mobile, digital and global societies and proposes good practice examples to help Member States do so

Vocational education and training (VET) programs can help connect migrants to the labor market and find jobs that match their skills and qualifications.

Returning migrants, as well as refugees (with the right to work), often face many challenges in the labor market, including a lack of recognition of skills and abilities acquired abroad or in the country of origin. Recognition of these skills is a key factor in the smooth transition to decent work for migrants, but is often overlooked by institutions that can facilitate this process.

In our project, a special emphasis was also placed on studies dedicated to return migration.

Upon returning home, migrants of all skill levels also have the potential to make a positive contribution to economic development through financial investment, as well as human and social capital gained abroad, such as new skills, ideas and know-how.

If international migration continues to seek a consensus on the definitions of migration in general, return migration has a much lower consensus. Excluding the return of contract workers who spend time with their families before leaving abroad again, migrants may return for their well-being at certain points in their careers or at retirement age or may return for an extended period, but then they will migrate again.

The lack of a clear definition creates confusion in assessing the needs and possibilities and estimates of the size of return migration. In addition, the absence of administrative tools for the registration of returned migrants means that in many countries the number of non-returners is unknown, as well as the interventions that could be provided for reintegration into the labor market and for assistance and support.

Most immigrants have jobs and, among low-educated migrants, employment rates are similar to those of their native-born colleagues.

Paradoxically, the employment rates of highly educated migrants are lower than those of their native counterparts, despite the growing dependence of EU economies on the skills of foreign-born workers.

All adults need literacy, numeracy and problem-solving skills to fully participate in modern societies and labor markets, but when immigrants face a language barrier, this can not only make it difficult to find a working place that corresponds to the level of skills, but also to develop a sense of integration in the host country.

Adults with a migration history express a high demand for participation in training programs that could help them improve their skills, but also face greater barriers to participating in such training programs. These barriers are often financial in nature, although family responsibilities also play an important role

Individuals, when looking for a job, or making decisions on learning, studying or working, need access to information and guidance on what opportunities are available, on how to assess their skills and on ways to present information about their skills and qualifications. '(DECISION (EU) 2018/646 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 18 April 2018 on a common framework for the provision of better services for skills and qualifications (Europass) and repealing Decision No 2241/2004/EC'

PERSPECTIVES ON THE ISSUE: THEORETICAL AND/OR METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Transversal competencies

The competence is the proven ability to select, combine and use appropriately knowledge, skills and other acquisitions (values and attitudes), in order to successfully solve a certain category of work or learning situations, as well as for professional or personal development in conditions of effectiveness and efficiency.

The transversal competences represent value and attitudinal acquisitions that exceed a certain field / study program and are expressed by the following descriptors: autonomy and responsibility, social interaction, personal and professional development

They are relevant to finding a job or occupation in areas other than the present or past, (e.g., people's skills such as oral and written communication skills,

organizational skills, motivation or team leadership, problem solving and decision-making, recognition and respect for diversity and multiculturalism, technical skills related to ICT skills, entrepreneurship, openness to lifelong learning, etc.)

In the age of permanent innovation, lifelong learning has gradually turned from an idea into a necessity. Thus, the acquisition of transversal key competences is essential for the successful adaptation to changing conditions in the labor market, as they represent a range of skills different from the specific skills of the profession, which increase a person's employability.

Transversal competences may differ somewhat from one field of activity to another. For example, knowledge of a foreign language is a professional competence, specific to the profession of translator, while ICT knowledge, organizational skills, promotion are transversal skills. On the other hand, digital skills are a job-specific skills for an IT programmer, while communication in the mother tongue and knowledge of foreign languages are, for the same person, transversal skills.

Transversal competences require new ways of learning and teaching, which go beyond the conventional limits of school subjects, competencies such as entrepreneurial initiative, leadership and cultural awareness can be stimulated and developed only through specific techniques.

Workers are much more flexible and usable when they have a good initial education and training, high-level and transferable key competencies, including teamwork, problem solving, information and communication technology (ICT), and communication and language skills. This combination of skills allows them to adapt to changes and challenges in the labor market.

The European Union developed the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) as a translation tool to make national qualifications easier to understand and more comparable. The EQF seeks to support cross-border mobility of learners and workers, promote lifelong learning and professional development across Europe. The EQF is an 8-level, learning outcomes-based framework for all types of qualifications that serves as a translation tool between different national qualifications frameworks. This framework helps improve transparency, comparability and portability of people's qualifications and makes it possible to compare qualifications from different countries and institutions. For more details access the website [europa.eu](https://europa.eu/europass/en/european-qualifications-framework-eqf) is the official website of the European Union. <https://europa.eu/europass/en/european-qualifications-framework-eqf>).

How to identify transversal competence for migrants and return migrants

The main categories of transversal competences appropriate to the target group of the project (migrants over 45 years of age) were taken into account the following approaches.

The UNESCO proposal provide five groups of transversal competences:

- 1) critical and innovative thinking (Example: Creativity, entrepreneurship, resourcefulness, application skills, reflective thinking, reasoned decision-making)
- 2) interpersonal skills, (Example: Communication skills, organizational skills, teamwork, collaboration, sociability, collegiality, empathy, compassion)
- 3) intrapersonal skills, (Example: Self-discipline, ability to learn independently, flexibility and adaptability, self-awareness, perseverance, self-motivation, compassion, integrity, self-respect)
- 4) global citizenship, (Example: Awareness, tolerance, openness, responsibility, respect for diversity, ethical understanding, intercultural understanding, democratic participation, conflict resolution, respect for the environment, national identity, sense of belonging)
- 5) media and Information literacy, (Example: Ability to obtain and analyse information through information and communication technology (ICT), ability to critically evaluate information and media content, ethical use of ICT)

COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 22 May 2018 / on key competences for lifelong learning (Text with EEA relevance) / (2018/C 189/01)

The Reference Framework sets out eight key competences:

α Literacy competence

(This competence involves the knowledge of reading and writing and a sound understanding of written information and thus requires an individual to have knowledge of vocabulary, functional grammar and the functions of language. It includes an awareness of the main types of verbal interaction, a range of literary and non-literary texts, and the main features of different styles and registers of language.)

- α Multilingual competence,
(Essential skills for this competence consist of the ability to understand spoken messages, to initiate, sustain and conclude conversations and to read, understand and draft texts, with different levels of proficiency in different languages, according to the individual's needs)
- α Mathematical competence and competence in science, technology and engineering,
(Necessary knowledge in mathematics includes a sound knowledge of numbers, measures and structures, basic operations and basic mathematical presentations, an understanding of mathematical terms and concepts, and an awareness of the questions to which mathematics can offer answers)
- α Digital competence,
Digital competence involves the confident, critical and responsible use of, and engagement with, digital technologies for learning, at work, and for participation in society. It includes information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, media literacy, digital content creation (including programming), safety (including digital well-being and competences related to cybersecurity), intellectual property related questions, problem solving and critical thinking
- α Personal, social and learning to learn competence,
Personal, social and learning to learn competence is the ability to reflect upon oneself, effectively manage time and information, work with others in a constructive way, remain resilient and manage one's own learning and career
- α Citizenship competence,
Citizenship competence is the ability to act as responsible citizens and to fully participate in civic and social life, based on understanding of social, economic, legal and political concepts and structures, as well as global developments and sustainability.
- α Entrepreneurship competence,
Entrepreneurship competence refers to the capacity to act upon opportunities and ideas, and to transform them into values for others. It is founded upon creativity, critical thinking and problem solving, taking initiative and perseverance and the ability to work collaboratively in order to plan and manage projects that are of cultural, social or financial value

α Cultural awareness and expression competence.

Competence in cultural awareness and expression involves having an understanding of and respect for how ideas and meaning are creatively expressed and communicated in different cultures and through a range of arts and other cultural forms

List of the top 10 key competencies that employers use when recruiting candidates (by the <https://www.wikijob.co.uk/>)

1. Teamwork
2. Responsibility
3. Commercial Awareness
4. Decision Making
5. Communication
6. Leadership
7. Trustworthiness & Ethics
8. Results Orientation
9. Problem Solving
10. Organisational skills

In order to establish the most representative transversal competencies for the target group of the project, the consortium applied and interpreted questionnaires to a representative group of experts in the field of education, vocational training, counselling and working with adults over 45 years with experience of migrants and to a group of migrants over 45 years of age.

Thus, we selected, described and why these skills are relevant for the social and labor market integration of the target group of the project.

We sought to identify possible aspects that can be assessed to prove that a transversal competence is already acquired, with examples of performance criteria (assessment) that are often found in a real situation, at a workplace.

Selected transversal competencies are:

- Communication
- Digital competence
- Organizational (managing) skills
- Entrepreneurship
- Decision-Making and Problem-Solving
- Tolerance and respect for gender and diversity
- Being personally effective

How to evaluate transversal competence

Communication

Description: The ability to understand written/ spoken texts, express concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written form (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and to interact linguistically in an appropriate and creative way in a full range of societal and cultural contexts

Why? Excellent communication skills are essential to any job. What employers really want to know is that you manage to convey information in a fair, professional, and easy-to-understand way for others, regardless of their level. This may involve communicating information to colleagues, communicating with clients or why not negotiating successful contracts.

In general, employers are looking for good written and verbal communication skills. Sometimes they will also examine your presentation and listening skills

Possible aspects to be evaluate

Elements of competence	Evaluation criteria (example)
<i>Listening and speaking skills,</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- engaging in dialogue, listening attentively and eliciting opinions, views and emotions- listens, understands and can explain orally in situations common to the work profile (ex. talking with a client/ customer or colleague, listen to news or instructions and other message types related to work)- understands technical wordings and communication styles provided by speaker(s)- can use appropriate wording and language level according to the working context(formal or informal); replying to listened messages shows- understood the message
<i>Reading skills, understanding of written text common to the work profile</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- understands written text types typical to the work situation (ex. a letter or email related to work, invoice and can understand the full text and message transmitted; understands written technical terms used in typical work situations)

<p><i>Writing skills, producing of written text common to the work profile and specific means of communication</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - can produce texts of various length used in the work situation/ profile (e. a business letter, email, invoice, accident report or complaint and appraisal) - use proper techniques and specific means of communication in order to send / receive the messages
<p><i>Negotiating skill</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - discusses aspects related to the work profile ranging from employment contract to client discussions with the aim of finding an agreements - can use phrases to support an argument in oral discussions, listens actively to her/his counterpart and responds constructively - get opinions and emotions from others through the appropriate use of questioning and answering strategies
<p><i>Engaging in dialogue, listening attentively and eliciting opinions, views and emotions</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - listen attentively to what others have to say elicit opinions, views and emotions from others through the appropriate use of questioning and responding strategies develop empathy by imagining the situation from other peoples' point of view respond perceptively to contributions made by others
<p><i>Presenting skill using a variety of media</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - can identify the main purpose of a communication and relate its form and nature to the purpose - make choices about what medium to use, taking account of audience and purpose - make appropriate adjustments depending on whether they are making an oral or a written presentation use of range of general ICT tools effectively (e.g., PowerPoint, video clips, and more specialized ICT if appropriate)

Digital competence

Description: Digital competence is the most recent concept describing technology-related skills and refers to the confident and critical usage of the full range of digital technologies for information, communication and basic problem-solving in all aspects of life.

Why? Because the "digital skills" indicator is one part of the many indicators to measure Human Capital which is needed to take advantage of the possibilities offered by a digital society. Digital skills can be anything from answering emails to uploading a document to a company's Google drive - now essential skills in today's labour market.

The European Commission is developing the Europass Digital Credentials Infrastructure (EDCI) to support efficiency and security in how credentials such as qualifications and other learning achievements can be recognised across Europe.

A credential is a documented statement containing claims about a person issued by an educational organisation following a learning experience.

Europass Digital Credentials describe a learning achievement.

They can describe:

- activities (e.g. classes attended),
- assessments (e.g. projects),
- achievements (e.g. skills developed),
- professional entitlements (e.g. registration as a medical doctor) and
- qualifications.

Possible aspects to be evaluate- - Self-assessment grid

Competence area / Competences	Self-assessment grid / BASIC USERS http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu
Information and data literacy 1.1 Browsing, searching, filtering data, information and digital content 1.2 Evaluating data, information and digital content 1.3 Managing data, information and digital content	<p>I can look for information online using a search engine. I know not all online information is reliable.</p> <p>I can save or store files or content (e.g. text, pictures, music, videos, web pages) and retrieve them once saved or stored.</p>
Communication and collaboration 2.1 Interacting through digital technologies 2.2 Sharing through digital technologies 2.3 Engaging in citizenship through digital technologies 2.4 Collaborating through digital technologies 2.5 Netiquette 2.6 Managing digital identity	<p>I can communicate with others using mobile phone, Voice over IP (e.g. Skype) e-mail or chat – using basic features (e.g. voice messaging, SMS, send and receive e-mails, text exchange).</p> <p>I can share files and content using simple tools.</p> <p>I know I can use digital technologies to interact with services (as governments, banks, hospitals).</p> <p>I am aware of social networking sites and online collaboration tools.</p> <p>I am aware that when using digital tools, certain communication rules apply (e.g. when commenting, sharing personal information).</p>
Digital content creation 3.1 Developing digital content 3.2 Integrating and re-elaborating digital content 3.3 Copyright and licences 3.4 Programming	<p>I can produce simple digital content (e.g. text, tables, images, audio files) in at least one format using digital tools.</p> <p>I can make basic editing to content produced by others. I know that content can be covered by copyright.</p> <p>I can apply and modify simple functions and settings of software and applications that I use (e.g. change default settings).</p>
Safety 4.1 Protecting devices 4.2 Protecting personal data and privacy 4.3 Protecting health and well-being 4.4 Protecting the environment	<p>I can take basic steps to protect my devices (e.g. using anti-viruses and passwords). I know that not all online information is reliable.</p> <p>I am aware that my credentials (username and password) can be stolen. I know I should not reveal private information online.</p> <p>I know that using digital technology too extensively can affect my health. I take basic measures to save energy.</p>

<p>Problem solving</p> <p>5.1 Solving technical problems</p> <p>5.2 Identifying needs and technological responses</p> <p>5.3 Creatively using digital technologies</p> <p>5.4 Identifying digital competence gaps</p>	<p>I can find support and assistance when a technical problem occurs or when using a new device, program or application.</p> <p>I know how to solve some routine problems (e.g. close program, re-start computer, re-install/update program, check internet connection).</p> <p>I know that digital tools can help me in solving problems. I am also aware that they have their limitations.</p> <p>When confronted with a technological or non-technological problem, I can use the digital tools I know to solve it.</p> <p>I am aware that I need to update my digital skills regularly.</p>
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Competence area / Competences	Self-assessment grid / INDEPENDENT USER http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu
<p>Information and data literacy</p> <p>1.1 Browsing, searching, filtering data, information and digital content</p> <p>1.2 Evaluating data, information and digital content</p> <p>1.3 Managing data, information and digital content</p>	<p>I can use different search engines to find information. I use some filters when searching (e.g. searching only images, videos, maps).</p> <p>I compare different sources to assess the reliability of the information I find.</p> <p>I classify the information in a methodical way using files and folders to locate these easier. I do backups of information or files I have stored.</p>
<p>Communication and collaboration</p> <p>2.1 Interacting through digital technologies</p> <p>2.2 Sharing through digital technologies</p> <p>2.3 Engaging in citizenship through digital technologies</p> <p>2.4 Collaborating through digital technologies</p> <p>2.5 Netiquette</p> <p>2.6 Managing digital identity</p>	<p>I can use advanced features of several communication tools (e.g. using Voice over IP and sharing files).</p> <p>I can use collaboration tools and contribute to e.g. shared documents/files someone else has created.</p> <p>I can use some features of online services (e.g. public services, e-banking, online shopping).</p> <p>I pass on or share knowledge with others online (e.g. through social networking tools or in online communities).</p> <p>I am aware of and use the rules of online communication ("netiquette").</p>

<p>Digital content creation</p> <p>3.1 Developing digital content</p> <p>3.2 Integrating and re-elaborating digital content</p> <p>3.3 Copyright and licences</p> <p>3.4 Programming</p>	<p>I can produce complex digital content in different formats (e.g. text, tables, images, audio files). I can use tools/editors for creating web page or blog using templates (e.g. WordPress).</p> <p>I can apply basic formatting (e.g. insert footnotes, charts, tables) to the content I or others have produced.</p> <p>I know how to reference and reuse content covered by copyright. I know the basics of one programming language.</p>
<p>Safety</p> <p>4.1 Protecting devices</p> <p>4.2 Protecting personal data and privacy</p> <p>4.3 Protecting health and well-being</p> <p>4.4 Protecting the environment</p>	<p>I have installed security programmes on the device(s) that I use to access the Internet (e.g. antivirus, firewall). I run these programmes on a regular basis and I update them regularly.</p> <p>I use different passwords to access equipment, devices and digital services and I modify them on a periodic basis.</p> <p>I can identify the websites or e-mail messages which might be used to scam. I can identify a phishing e-mail.</p> <p>I can shape my online digital identity and keep track of my digital footprint.</p> <p>I understand the health risks associated with the use of digital technology (e.g. ergonomics, risk of addiction).</p> <p>I understand the positive and negative impact of technology on the environment.</p>
<p>Problem solving</p> <p>5.1 Solving technical problems</p> <p>5.2 Identifying needs and technological responses</p> <p>5.3 Creatively using digital technologies</p> <p>5.4 Identifying digital competence gaps</p>	<p>I can solve most of the more frequent problems that arise when using digital technologies.</p> <p>I can use digital technologies to solve (non-technical) problems. I can select a digital tool that suits my needs and assess its effectiveness.</p> <p>I can solve technological problems by exploring the settings and options of programmes or tools.</p> <p>I regularly update my digital skills. I am aware of my limits and try to fill my gaps.</p>

Competence area / Competences	Self-assessment grid / PROFICIENT USER http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu
<p>Information and data literacy</p> <p>1.1 Browsing, searching, filtering data, information and digital content</p> <p>1.2 Evaluating data, information and digital content</p> <p>1.3 Managing data, information and digital content</p>	<p>I can use advanced search strategies (e.g. using search operators) to find reliable information on the internet. I can use web feeds (like RSS) to be updated with content I am interested in.</p> <p>I can assess the validity and credibility of information using a range of criteria. I am aware of new advances in information search, storage and retrieval.</p> <p>I can save information found on the internet in different formats. I can use cloud information storage services.</p>
<p>Communication and collaboration</p> <p>2.1 Interacting through digital technologies</p> <p>2.2 Sharing through digital technologies</p> <p>2.3 Engaging in citizenship through digital technologies</p> <p>2.4 Collaborating through digital technologies</p> <p>2.5 Netiquette</p> <p>2.6 Managing digital identity</p>	<p>I actively use a wide range of communication tools (e-mail, chat, SMS, instant messaging, blogs, micro-blogs, social networks) for online communication.</p> <p>I can create and manage content with collaboration tools (e.g. electronic calendars, project management systems, online proofing, online spreadsheets).</p> <p>I actively participate in online spaces and use several online services (e.g. public services, e-banking, online shopping).</p> <p>I can use advanced features of communication tools (e.g. video conferencing, data sharing, application sharing).</p>
<p>Digital content creation</p> <p>3.1 Developing digital content</p> <p>3.2 Integrating and re-elaborating digital content</p> <p>3.3 Copyright and licences</p> <p>3.4 Programming</p>	<p>I can produce or modify complex, multimedia content in different formats, using a variety of digital platforms, tools and environments. I can create a website using a programming language.</p> <p>I can use advanced formatting functions of different tools (e.g. mail merge, merging documents of different formats, using advanced formulas, macros).</p> <p>I know how to apply licenses and copyrights.</p> <p>I can use several programming languages. I know how to design, create and modify databases with a computer tool.</p>

<p>Safety</p> <p>4.1 Protecting devices</p> <p>4.2 Protecting personal data and privacy</p> <p>4.3 Protecting health and well-being</p> <p>4.4 Protecting the environment</p>	<p>I frequently check the security configuration and systems of my devices and/or of the applications I use.</p> <p>I know how to react if my computer is infected by a virus.</p> <p>I can configure or modify the firewall and security settings of my digital devices.</p> <p>I know how to encrypt e-mails or files. I can apply filters to spam e-mails.</p> <p>To avoid health problems (physical and psychological), I make reasonable use of information and communication technology.</p> <p>I have an informed stance on the impact of digital technologies on everyday life, online consumption, and the environment.</p>
<p>Problem solving</p> <p>5.1 Solving technical problems</p> <p>5.2 Identifying needs and technological responses</p> <p>5.3 Creatively using digital technologies</p> <p>5.4 Identifying digital competence gaps</p>	<p>I can solve almost all problems that arise when using digital technology.</p> <p>I can choose the right tool, device, application, software or service to solve (non-technical) problems.</p> <p>I am aware of new technological developments. I understand how new tools work.</p> <p>I frequently update my digital skills.</p>

Organizational (managing) skills

Description: The ability to organize and plan own work, time and (re)sources; linked to achievement orientation and analytical thinking

Why? At any workplace being organized is highly appreciated. An employer will look at how you get results by prioritizing workload, efficient time management, showing efficiency with available resources, and monitoring progress.

Possible aspects to be evaluate

Elements of competence	Evaluation criteria (example)
Identify the tasks to be performed and the requirements related to them	-can structure her/his work load and estimate time and effort needed to fulfil the task
Coordinating one's own work with the work of others	-correspondents proactively with other people involved to agree on tasks, deadlines and responsibilities and shows reliability in the fulfilment of her/his part - clarifies the misunderstandings related to the tasks received, appealing to the competent persons
Time management	- combines planning, scheduling, strategy, delegation, and adaptability in order to adapt to new problems and readjust as needed to complete an assignment: creating and keeping deadlines, making schedules, problem solving, productivity, teamwork, multitasking.
Split the whole into sections and understand interactions	- can structure work into smaller chunks and process one after the other considering links between them and time needed for each
Work-life balance	- avoids unwanted negotiations, look good to senior staff, and work towards being the go-to person. - applies better time planning by reducing wasted hours, keeping deadlines and looking good at work. - learns to become less "perfect", to become physically healthy, to socialize better
Setting priorities	- can evaluate the importance of different tasks considering time, effort and deadlines for each and is also able to delegate

Entrepreneurship

Description: The ability to turn ideas into action, including creativity, innovation and risk-taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives

Why? Because the entrepreneurship it has the ability to improve standards of living and create wealth, not only for the entrepreneurs, but also for related businesses. Entrepreneurs also help drive change with innovation, where new and improved products enable new markets to be developed

Possible aspects to be evaluate

Elements of competence	Evaluation criteria (example)
Identification of new ideas and how to apply them to specific situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- is able to identify and generate new ideas as a response to specific situations;- is able to making search and research on the sector and field of the situation, analyzing existent solutions and developing new aspects and proposals.
Identification of the resources needed for a project implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- is able to identify the resources needed for the implementation of a specific project or goal; like information and data, material resources, economic and financial resources, human resources, support from team members, approval from superiors, etc.
Management of the resources needed to develop a project	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- is able to manage the resources needed to carry out a project or to achieve a specific goal, like information and data, material resources, economic and financial resources, human resources, support from team members, approval from superiors, etc.

Decision-Making and Problem-Solving

Description: The ability to think critically using reflection, induction, deduction, analysis, challenging assumptions, and evaluation of data and information to guide decision-making, identifying all the options and comparing them in terms of both costs and effectiveness

Why? Because the problem solving and decision-making are important skills for business and life. Problem-solving often involves decision-making, and decision-making is especially important for management and leadership.

Possible aspects to be evaluate

Elements of competence	Evaluation criteria (example)
Identification, define and clarify the issue	- is able to correct identification of the problem, the cause of the problem (for example using the method, answers of the question Why?)
Identification of a range of different options regarding a particular situation	- is able to identify different options in response to a particular situation; like established protocols, reasonable steps to follow, foreseen results of an action, persons responsible to contact for, etc.
Apply decision making process	- is able to apply the steps of the decision-making process: identify the problem, generate alternative solutions, select the optimal alternative, implement the chosen alternative, get feedback in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the decision taken
Apply decision making methods	- is able to apply adequate decision making methods, like command (take decision without involvement of others), consult (inviting others for an input), vote (discuss options an ask for the support of a majority of team members) and consensus (talk until all team members agrees on the decision)

Tolerance and respect for gender and diversity

Description: The ability to support and promote an environment that holds opportunities for all, regardless of race, gender, culture, and age. Understanding tolerance means respecting, recognizing and appreciating the richness of our world, which also consists of different cultures.

Tolerance is nurtured by knowledge, openness, understanding, freedom of opinion, conscience and human belief in humanity. Tolerance is the observance of differences. This is not only a moral obligation, but also a political and legal necessity.

Why? Because this ability implies: to work enthusiastically with all employees at all levels, capitalizing on their strengths; to actively seek opinions and ideas from people of varied background and experiences to improve decisions; to value and incorporate contributions of people from diverse backgrounds; as well as to demonstrate respect for opinions and ideas of others

Possible aspects to be evaluate

Elements of competence	Evaluation criteria (example)
Tolerance at work and in society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identifies forms of discrimination based on religion, culture, nationality and sex - has the knowledge about different ways of dealing with cultural differences at work - apply the principles of tolerance in the workplace
Promote diversity by means of supporting an environment of tolerance and respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - has a worthy way that everyone has equal value regardless of their different background - is aware of the opportunities in each individual, understands that everyone has a place to fill, everyone can do something that can add dynamics to the working group

Being personally effective

Description: refers to making the best use of your time and making use of the resources at your disposal, in order to perform to the best of your ability in your workplace.

Why? Because Personal Effectiveness is a universal need. Having effective living skills can lead to more control over daily life, more focus and sense of achievements. Those who live effectively feel more energized and they are able to manage themselves when necessary. They are better prepared to deal with the unexpected and are much more likely to manage stress and trust in their own capabilities and strengths.

Possible aspects to be evaluate

Elements of competence	Evaluation criteria (example)
Ability to evaluate yourself, evaluate your own performance, receive and respond to feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identifies their own aspirations and what they would like to achieve - take time to take into account one's own achievements and with the help of others, to engage in an honest assessment of strengths and weaknesses - shows the resistance to receive and the meaning of feedback - identifies areas of action and moves forward
Ability to identify, evaluate and achieve personal goals, including the development and evaluation of action plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sets realistic personal goals to be achieved over time - builds action plans to help achieve targets and identify methods for monitoring how well the plans are working (eg deadlines, feedback from others) - identify any aid and resources needed to implement the plans and achieve the objectives within a specific time frame, - assesses the extent to which the objectives have been achieved - assumes responsibility for decisions and actions, making informed choices - identifies informed election strategies
Developing personal qualities that help in new and difficult situations, such as taking initiatives, being flexible, being reliable and being able to persevere when difficulties arise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - recognize that new situations are likely to be uncertain and present personal challenges - take the initiative on some occasions and not always leave it to others - be flexible and be prepared to try a different approach - show that they are reliable in following through with tasks and undertakings - show persistence and not give up at the first sign of difficulty
Confident and able to assert oneself as a person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - recognizes the need to follow one's own initiative properly - enjoys personal achievements - develops strategies for maintaining a positive sense of self in the face of disappointment and frustration

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Assessment should be a learning tool and comments should be tailored to the individual person from our target group, migrants over 45 years.

It is usually thought that assessment and evaluation of migrants' knowledge should be undertaken by tutors or external examiners, and this mode certainly has its place at the final stage of a course when a certificate is to be issued.

There are, however, at least three other modes that can be applied to our target group, migrants over 45 years: self-evaluation, peer evaluation, and evaluation negotiated between the tutor and the evaluated person.

Carried out sensitively, the assessment/evaluation process itself becomes part of the learning, enhances motivation, and assists migrants in their future progress. Assessment and evaluation by tutors, furthermore, should also achieve these aims.

For example, if a piece of work is weak, it is better to pick out two or three areas for the migrants to work and improve on, rather than highlighting every fault.

The latter would be de-motivating and it is unlikely that a migrant would have enough time to address all problems in the time before the next piece is due.

Migrants should be told not only the main areas that need improving but also why they need more study and how they will benefit their future work. At the same time, if the piece of work has any merit, this should be pointed out in a positive way.

Given some hints on how they can stretch their minds further, for example, by suggesting further reading or a more advanced activity.

EXAMPLE

GIVING FEEDBACK ON ASSIGNMENTS: EXERCISE

Goals

- To help tutors focus on feedback as a teaching method and
- To give them practice in giving feedback.

Description

Advise the tutors that feedback should include:

- What was good in the assignment;
- What could have been more developed (perhaps it was not expressed clearly or the section was too short);
- What could usefully have been included (i.e. it was missing from the migrant's assignment!);

- What the migrant might like to think about, beyond the assignment (optional - and principally for migrants with advanced skills).
- The tone should be friendly, positive and supportive. Feedback on assignments is a form of tuition.

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES

1. You have received a rather poor essay which, nevertheless, contains some useful material. Draft feedback in a friendly, constructive manner.

2. You have received a brilliant essay which answers the question perfectly!

Draft feedback that shows your appreciation of the essay and suggests that they might like to think about the subject further

! It is essential that migrants get feedback on their written work that will help them to improve.

, 50 minute:

, 10 minutes introduction of the rationale for the exercise;

, 20 minutes drafting feedback and

, 20 minutes reflecting on it, either alone or with another tutor

Worksheets

FEEDBACK CHAIR

Goal

To allow teams to practice feedback during and after the training event.

Description

Find a comfortable space for your team. Sit in a circle, place one chair in the middle.

One by one, team members sit on this 'hot chair'.

From there, tell your team colleagues what you would like to get feedback about: your performance as a trainer, your role in the team, and so on. The other team members will then answer you, bearing in mind the guidelines you have agreed on.

Set a time limit for each person's visit to the hot chair.

While sitting on the hot chair, you cannot react to individual comments, but you have some time for reactions and questions once the feedback round is over and before the next team member takes the chair.

Variable

Attention!!!

This can be a very sensitive exercise. Remember to agree some basic rules for giving feedback beforehand!

, 20 minutes per team member

FEEDBACK VEHICLE

Goal

To practice feedback during and after the training event.

Description

In pairs or individually, imagine this team as a vehicle. It can be anything you wish, a car, tractor, steamboat or plane. The vehicle should express what you feel is the essence of the team.

Make a drawing of this vehicle!

Try to place the different team members in the vehicle. Which parts of the vehicle do you see them corresponding to? Who is the sail, motor, compass, seat, brake, global positioning system, and so forth?

Why? - Explain your drawings to each other.

Debrief – What did we get out of this?

, About 1 hour for a team of 4 people

FEEDBACK RULES

The rules are needed for a concrete, constructive feedback that helps the learner and does not hurt him/her, whenever a group or a team reflects a process or exchanges experiences or in counselling situations.

Description

The feedback rules describe,

- how feedback should be carefully worded;
- how the group members should act within a feedback phase;
- how the one, who is getting feedback should behave /react.

Remark

In groups that do not know feedback rules, they should be presented and explained. They might be visualised in the room for the whole learning process.

, About 1/2 hour

Worksheets: Copies of the feedback rules and/or posters

Rules for feedback and collegial consultation

For (mutual) feedback we recommend to stick to the following feedback rules in order to allow for a constructive and productive process.

- Only give feedback, when the person is ready to receive it.
- Feedback should be as detailed and as concrete as possible.
- Communicate your perceptions as your perceptions, your assumptions as your assumptions and your feelings as your feelings.
- Feedback is not to analyse the person, but to express your personal impression. Therefore form sentences using the first person singular.
- Feedback expresses subjective impressions, perceptions and constructive suggestions. These are neither correct nor wrong and should therefore not be commented.
- Feedback will also comprise positive perceptions.
- Feedback can only refer to specific, concrete behaviour – people and perceptions keep changing permanently. Generalisations are out of place!
- You should only ask for feedback when you are ready to receive some.
- When receiving feedback, just listen. Do not interrupt the other person.
- Consider the feedback you received and see which aspects you can accept and apply, which help you to develop. You do not need to justify yourself, since feedback is the other person's subjective perception. Reminder of past success or decisions taken autonomously can give the migrant some confidence.

Key Competences for Lifelong Learning – European Commission

https://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/school/competences_en

The Digital Competence Framework 2.0 - DIGICOMP (EU, 2013)

<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/digcomp/digital-competence-framework>

Assessment of Transversal Competencies – Policy and Practice in the Asian-Pacific Region:

<http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/go.php?q=TVETipedia+glossary+A-Z&filt=577>

Assessment of Transversal Competencies Current Tools in the Asian Region (2019)

<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000368479?posInSet=1&queryId=ad6b28da-bc88-45c9-b395-f268b3dfdab5>

When you propose a meeting,
/unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000368479?posInSet=1&queryId=ad6b28da-bc88-45c9-b395-f268b3dfdab5

The new Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning was adopted in May 2018.

(link: <https://europa.eu/fB67yH>).

European Alliance for Apprenticeships

<http://ec.europa.eu/apprenticeships-alliance>

European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32018H0502%2801%29>

European Vocational Skills Week

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/VocationalSkillsWeek>

Erasmus+

<https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/>

Upskilling Pathways

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1224>

The European Commission's science and knowledge service - DigComp

<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/digcomp>

Scientific and policy literature frameworks on the professional (re-) integration of adults with poorly qualified migration history - PhD student Ana-Simona Bululoi (Negomireanu)

6. BUILDING A PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO

INTRODUCTION

▮ What is a portfolio?

A portfolio is a collection of items that showcase the accomplishments, experience, skillset, and capabilities of an individual (Brine & Feather, 2003). What is more, it is customary to include not only the past achievements, but also the future professional (and sometimes personal) goals and plans. The portfolio is usually in the form of a book, either in physical form, or in digital (e-book).

▮ How can a portfolio be used?

A portfolio has various uses. Once a basic form has been created, it can be customized depending on the purpose or the audience, by making a different selection of items to be highlighted. In the case of (re)migrants over the age of 45, it is of vital importance to be able to identify, analyze, categorize, and promote their skills, as it is often difficult to promote the vast experience they own in their country of residence, where customs, certifications, and other crucial aspects may be different from the country of origin.

A portfolio can be used to:

Identify skills, knowledge, and experience:

- Show education or learning examples
- Record self-assessment results
- Collect work samples
- Ease the transition between jobs

Identify future choices:

- Assess knowledge and skills collectively and identify opportunities for the future

Identify needs for further development

- Find gaps in training, skills, or certification and fill them
- Become a better professional even when there is no lack of employment

Plan a career in a more organized manner:

- Identifying skills
- Exploring career options
- Make informed decisions

Improve job searching:

- Promoting self to employers
- Developing a targeted CV and cover letter
- Preparing for an interview
- Support all skills, abilities, accomplishments and experience that are mentioned in CV and cover letter
- Earn professional licensing/certification

Typically, as mentioned above, it is advised to create one master portfolio which will be the default way of approaching new employers, and multiple targeted portfolios that will be focused on a specific employer or sector of work.

▫ **Master Portfolio**

The master portfolio typically contains all the information that is relevant to its owner's skillset, experiences, and accomplishments. The purpose of the master portfolio is to be an archive containing all life and professional experiences, and skill certifications (if applicable), in order to assist in creating a CV and cover letter, to prepare for an interview, and to act as a basis for the targeted portfolio. For the master portfolio, all original documentation and certification should be kept together, and key items (such as driver's license, education degrees etc.) should be copied and stored safely. It is usually advised to organize the contents of the master portfolio according to a category so that they can be found easily. An example of the title page and the contents of a master portfolio can be seen below:

Title Page

Career Portfolio

Name:

Address:

Phone Number(s): (work)
 (home)

E-mail:

Fax:

I declare that all the information in this portfolio is accurate and true.

Date:

Signature: _____

Master portfolio title page example

Table of Contents

Letter of Introduction

Resume

Career and Education/Training Plan

Inventory of Knowledge and Skills

Documentation Index

Documentation

Master portfolio table of contents example

As can be seen in the table of contents above, a master portfolio should at least include a Letter of Introduction, which translates to a personal statement of the professional. An introduction which lists the main skills and accomplishments of the professional, as well as a vision for the future. This Letter of Introduction should not exceed one page, and it is usually advised to include not only the professional path and aspirations of the professional, but also skills, accomplishments, and future plans related to personal life as well.

Next, the professional CV or resume will be included in the portfolio. A CV is a document which includes a summary of education and work experience in an organized manner, in order to help the employers to identify skills and experiences of applicants easily. It is the most important weapon in the hands of job seekers, as it is usually the first glimpse of an employer in a potential candidate for a position. Usually, the CV should be tailored to be targeted to the position of application, but there should be a master CV (as an analogy to a master portfolio). In the case of migrants and return migrants over 45 years of age, building a strong CV that can showcase their experience should be one of their first concerns. An example of a CV of a professional cleaner can be seen below:

Cleaner CV Examples - Template

Your name -tel number
1 Job Hunter Way, Employmentville, UK. EM1 5LD

Your email address here
<http://www.learnist.org>

Professional Profile I am a time served and enthusiastic cleaner. I pride myself in keeping spaces and places clean and tidy. I know many various methods of removing unsightly things such as stains, graffiti and sticky things. I am well trained and follow all the relevant health and safety rules.

- Efficient.
- Sensible and practical.
- Approachable and Friendly.
- Focussed and attentive.
- Highly organised.
- Confident.
- Friendly.
- Flexible.
- Adaptable.

Professional Qualifications. Health and Safety certificate.

Work History **January 2010 - Present**
Cleaner, Hissan Car Plant, London
Working in this large manufacturing environment it was my job to ensure that the factory was kept clean and tidy. I had responsibility for ensuring the manufacturing floor was kept free of debris and hazards, as well as ensuring that the canteen and rest areas were kept clean and hygienic.

January 2008- January 2010
Cleaner, Big Supermarket, London.
As a Cleaner in this large 24 hour supermarket my position as an in store housekeeper saw me responsible for the general cleanliness of the store as a whole, as well as attending to any spills or damages in store. I would have to cordon the area if the spill was hazardous such as creating a slip or cut hazard, and report the loss to the stock controller.

January 2007 – January 2008
Cleaner, Auto Offices, London
Working for this large offices company as a cleaner it was my duty to ensure that the office spaces were clean and tidy at all times. This meant an entire vacuuming of each floor on a night, ensuring that all cups and cutlery etc. was washed and stored correctly, and attending to staff members desks where they were overly mucky and giving the workstation and keyboards etc. a thorough cleaning. I also was responsible for cleaning up after office parties and conferences which I did not mind.

Education GCSE 10xA Grades including English, Maths and Science.
Londonberry Comprehensive School
London
2001

References References are available on request, or in writing to the above previous employers.

The next inclusion to the master portfolio is a career and education/training plan. This part is a rough timeline of the future (to a maximum of 5 years into the future) where the main plans for career and education are included. This timeline is most useful for the professional him- or herself, as goal-setting with specific end dates, clear steps, and plans for obstacle overcoming is of vital importance. The following step in the portfolio is an inventory of knowledge and skills. Similarly to a CV, the professional can add a list of skills (both technical skills and soft skills) that they possess, in order to have a clear view of their capacities as a professional.



An inventory of skills can help the professional identify their strengths and points of improvement

The next and final two important additions to a master portfolio are the documentation and the corresponding documentation index. In order for the skills and experiences to be demonstrated, it is crucial for the professional to have the proof to go with it. The documentation is in the form of certificates, letters of recommendation from previous employers, and other proof such as photographic evidence of previous work. The purpose of the index is to help the professional categorize the documentation and ensure that the skills and experience are properly matched to the documents.

Targeted Portfolio

The targeted portfolio follows the same format as the master portfolio. However, its contents are tailored for a specific purpose. More specifically, it can be used to:

- Demonstrate the achievements and skills in order to apply for a promotion or a wage increase
- Demonstrate achievements and skills during a professional job interview
- Attract new clients or customers

The first step is to gather all the relevant information and context regarding the purpose of the targeted portfolio. That is, if the professional aims to use it to apply for a position, the most crucial activity is to analyze the job description. This means that all the required knowledge, technical and soft skills, education, and any other quality need to be listed. The list of requirements can work as a list to guide the professional to review the master portfolio and decide what to include in the tailored, personalized, targeted portfolio. The items can then be selected from the master portfolio, and placed in a folder, binder, or USB stick to be taken together to the professional interview. During the interview, the targeted portfolio can be used to demonstrate how the professional's knowledge, skills, and abilities match the requirements of the position.



A professional interview can be stressful when preparation is not adequate.

Preparing the Master Portfolio

Building the master portfolio is a complex process that takes time and effort, but it is also a very rewarding process, both practically but also psychologically. Practically, because it will help build a library of personal accomplishments, skills, and abilities, that can be used for professional improvement, and psychologically, because it provides the professional with a sense of personal accomplishment, by appreciating the road that has been travelled so far.

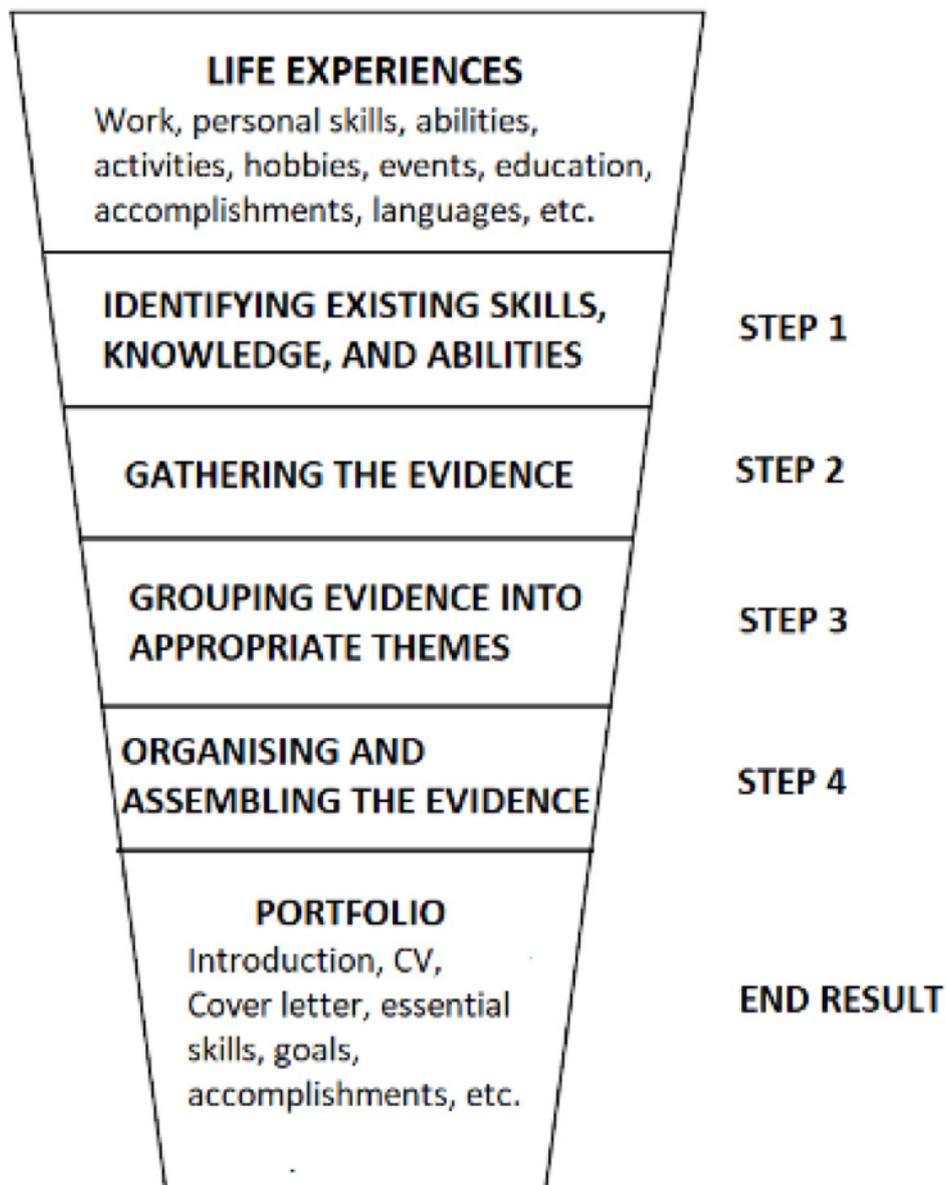


This is particularly true for the seasoned professionals, aged 45 or higher, because their accumulated accomplishments might start to fade from memory already, therefore refreshing them and making them salient can have long-lasting effects on their sense of self-worth.



The actual process of portfolio-building has a number of steps that will be presented below.

1. Identifying existing knowledge, skills, and abilities
 - What do I know?
 - What can I do?
 - How can I demonstrate my skills and knowledge?
2. Gathering the necessary evidence
3. Grouping the evidence into appropriate themes
4. Organizing and assembling the evidence



STEP 1: Identifying existing knowledge, skills, and abilities

A professional, especially an individual over 45 years of age, has accumulated a plethora of skills throughout their life. These skills could have been developed through work experiences, educational courses, internships, volunteering, and other sources of life experience. Some skills are closely related to an occupation (for example operating a machine, painting a house, etc.) and other skills (soft, or transferrable skills) are useful for many occupations (teamwork abilities, creativity, problem solving, time management, etc.).

STEP 2: Gathering evidence



Gathering evidence may sound like arduous work, but it is worth the time and effort.

In the beginning, a professional should collect all evidence that seems relevant. During the assembling of the professional portfolio, the best skills to be showcased can be chosen. Looking at the evidence, the professional should be thinking the following questions:

- “Will this evidence have a positive impact?”
- “What does this item show about my skills?”
- “How does this item show what I have learnt?”
- “How can I present this evidence as part of my portfolio?”

Evidence of skills and experience should be collected from all activities, education, training, employment, projects, community service, hobbies, and accomplishments. The professional should choose items that create a positive image. Especially in the case of migrants and return migrants over the age of 45, it is crucial to ensure that there are no flaws in the professional portfolio, as it can make a difference between candidates during job searching. Every item in the portfolio should be reviewed in order to make sure that:

- It is free of mistakes (such as spelling mistakes)
- It is reliable and authentic
- It is current and up-to-date
- It follows a consistent format

Examples of evidences, items, and objects that can be included in the portfolio are the following:

- Reference letters
- Thank-you letters
- Degrees and certificates
- Transcripts of education
- Awards
- Documents such as examples of writing
- Technology skills examples
- Photographs

An important note to make here is that the professional needs to make sure that no confidential information is included in the evidences from past employers or organisations. In case it is absolutely necessary, the professional can get permission.

STEP 3: Grouping evidence into appropriate themes

The content that is mentioned in step 2 can be divided in several categories. Below lies a checklist that can help the professional categorize the content.

Category: Personal

- Cover letter
- Biography
- Reference letters
- Thank-you cards
- Self-assessment results
- Hobbies
- Interests
- Travel experiences
- Languages
- Personal statement

Category: Education

- Transcripts or report cards
- Assignments
- Exam marks
- Presentations
- Project photographs
- Computer skills
- Internship/practicum
- Languages
- Awards/scholarships
- Degrees, diplomas, certificates
- Training courses
- Learning exchanges
- Teacher evaluations
- List of schools attended
- Publications/research

Category: Teamwork and Leadership

- Involvement in sports
- Involvement in other clubs (for example, drama)
- Involvement in associations
- Leadership/teamwork certificates

- Communication skills
- Teamwork abilities
- Leadership position descriptions

Category: Employment

- Job descriptions from past employment
- Skills, knowledge, abilities acquired from past employment
- Performance evaluations
- Reference letters
- Recognition awards (for example, employee of the month)
- Professional certifications and licenses
- Examples from cases where problem solving abilities were demonstrated
- Information regarding promotions
- Customer satisfaction reports
- Technical skills certifications or abilities
- Publications and research

Category: Community

- Descriptions of volunteering work
- Certificates of participation
- Reference letters from volunteering supervisors or colleagues

The aforementioned categories and examples are merely an indication that can be used as a guide for the professional.

STEP 4: Organising and assembling evidence



Organized evidence makes it easier for both the writer and the reader to follow.

Portfolio themes can be organized in different ways, depending on the professional's goal and personal preference.

They can be organized in:

- Targeted skills (for example fixing cars, teaching foreign languages, etc.)
- Types of experience (for example customer service, gardening, cooking, etc.)
- Soft skills (for example teamwork, communication skills, etc.)

Folders, binders, bookmarks, and other organizing tools can be used to help the professional group the items of the portfolio into themes. The themes do not need to be grouped at the same place in the portfolio, but they can be color-coded to help facilitate both the professional and the reader of the portfolio.

Once the content is sorted, the professional can create a table of contents. It is up to the professional to decide which themes are considered more important, and they should be placed in the beginning of the portfolio. A sample table of contents can be found below:

- Title page (Introduces you to the reader)
- Table of contents (directs the reader to the appropriate sections)
- Introduction (summarizes the goal of your portfolio)
- Occupational (job) goal
- Personal statement (describes the person you are, personal characteristics and work ethic)
- CV (describes paid and unpaid work history, skills and abilities)
- My Skills Profile (working with others, organizational skills, critical thinking)
- Letters of recommendation (Letters from employer, volunteer organization)
- Documentation (provides evidence of knowledge, skill and experiences)
- Professional development (Certificates, transcripts, class assignments)
- Community/Volunteer participation (newspaper clippings, samples of work)
- Evidence Sample work (presentation outline, charts, graphs, writing samples)

▫ Personal Statement

The personal statement that is mentioned in the table of contents above is a crucial part of a professional portfolio. It gives the reader the opportunity to know the professional at a level higher than a list of skills, accomplishments, and a CV. In a paragraph, the professional needs to identify and project their

personality, core attitudes and goals in career and life. The personal statement can also be a guide for the professional, to help keep the focus on what is most important. An example of a personal statement can be seen below:

»My goal is to approach tasks focused, determined, and with a highest standard of excellence. When I work with others, I apply the spirit of cooperation and teamwork skills that I obtained during my work experience as a retail employee that had to work in a team, and in the personal level, during my training as a basketball player. My experience in retail also provided me with high-level customer service skills.«

▸ Using the Professional Portfolio

Once the portfolio has been created, the professional needs to consider how it can be used effectively. The most common uses of a portfolio are the following:

Career planning

The portfolio is a fantastic tool to help plan one's career. It can store information to take stock of skills and determine how they can be transferred to different positions, or how they can be utilized and built on in order to reach the professional's goals. In the case of (re)migrants over the age of 45, being able to plan their career could also help them make a career change. For example, a teacher of Bulgarian language might need to consider a career change in a different country where Bulgarian might not be sought out as a foreign language. This would mean that they could take stock of their teaching, and language learning skills, and transfer them to a different or slightly similar profession.

Evaluating job opportunities

The portfolio can also help evaluate whether or not to devote time and energy to apply for certain jobs. Once the job requirements are reviewed, the professional can go through the portfolio to see where there is a match in skills, abilities, and experience with the job listing. What is more, in this way the gaps between obtained and required qualifications can be identified. If there is indeed an experience gap, it can be filled in many ways, such as:

- Courses, workshops, training programs
- Job shadowing (spending time with a seasoned professional to acquire tips and experience)

- Volunteering
- Doing an internship

Showcasing skills in interviews

Reviewing the portfolio before an interview is a good way to refresh the professional's memory regarding their skills, abilities, accomplishments, and qualifications. Bringing the whole portfolio to the interview is generally not recommended. The employers are usually more interested to meet the person that sits in front of them, than reading through a binder. Instead of presenting a whole portfolio to an interview, the key skills and experience can be identified in order to be highlighted to the interviewer. What is more, as the professional's personal statement is a part of the portfolio, the professional can be reminded of their core values and attitudes, as well as their own career goals. Oftentimes, during an interview, the professional might focus on the tree and not the forest, that is, focus on getting the job, instead of questioning whether the employer's values match their own, which could result to reduced job satisfaction in the future.

Every time the portfolio is used, the professional should consider the person that it will be shared with. If possible, the priorities and values of the reader should be taken into account, so that the portfolio will be targeted to showcase and highlight these characteristics, skills, and qualifications which will be appreciated the most. In order to prepare for an interview, the professional can be helped by the portfolio in the following ways:

- Organizing which items from the portfolio to bring along
- Making extra photocopies of certifications
- Ensuring that only relevant items are brought
- Incorporating the portfolio items in relevant interview responses
- Using the portfolio to reflect on the professional's soft skills
- Practicing speaking clearly and making eye contact

▫ E-Portfolio

In the current times, when face-to-face interactions, physical documents, and offline information are becoming obsolete, it is advised to keep the portfolio in an online form as well. The e-portfolio can have a simple form of a traditional portfolio, only in a digital form, or it can be enriched with interactive content such as video, which is not possible to be included in a physical form. What is more, the e-portfolio can take the form of a website,

which can be accessed anytime by a potential employer or client. The website can include the traditional website contents, such as an introduction to the professional, a page with accomplishments, a page with relevant media, and a contact page with all the necessary contact information. A website portfolio is additionally a medium that can attract potential employers from the digital sector, as possessing one demonstrates an affinity with digital technologies. This is especially important for a professional over the age of 45, as digital skills are considered a major weakness of this age group by employers. Possessing an e-portfolio can alleviate the danger of generalization in this aspect. Websites that offer templates such as Wordpress, which make the creation of an e-portfolio easier, are available online.



Building an e-portfolio can help massively when you are looking for a position in a digital sector

Portfolio Example

Giannis has already identified his skills, his achievements, his knowledge on his sector, his strengths and weaknesses. He has collected all the necessary evidence in order to support his claims, and he has organized it in a correct way, so that the potential employer can easily navigate through Giannis' skills. The following items are presented in his portfolio.

Title Page

Giannis Freaksakis' Portfolio

Contents:

Letter of Introduction

Professional Goals

Personal Statement

Resume

Organisational Skills

- Example: Schedule

Critical Thinking

- Example: Certificate

Letter of Introduction

Letter of Introduction

To whom it may concern,

My name is Giannis Freaksakis. My place of residence is Athens, Greece, and I have 10 years of experience in retail. During these years, I have gained considerable experience in multiple areas in retail, such as operating the cashier, providing excellent customer service, solving problems independently, and even assuming managerial duties, and managing the team when the manager is not present. The following are some highlights of my professional achievements:

- I have been employee of the month for 25 months straight
- I have attended successfully multiple seminars about management in retail
- I attended night university while I was working full-time
- I coach underprivileged kids as a volunteer during the weekends

I would like to thank you for taking the time to read my portfolio.

Best regards,
Giannis Freaksakis

Professional Goals

My short-term goal is to be employed in a large retail chain, preferably in a position that will allow me to utilize my skills to have contact with customers, solve problems, and manage a team in at least one department of the retail store. My long-term goal is to evolve and develop my managerial skills, in order to manage the entire store, which I believe I can handle perfectly, and to develop my marketing skills, in order to provide the chain with increased revenue and more customers.

Personal Statement

My driving force is providing the customer with excellent support, and making sure that the store is running perfectly, with no delays and complaints from customers. What is more, I strongly believe that if the employee is happy, they are able to transfer their positivity to the customer, and customer service is elevated. What is more, I believe that team work is the heart and soul of retail, and coworker relations should be kept to their best quality. I strive to live up to these standards day after day.

Resume

Giannis Freaksakis
Alexandras 30
Sepolia, Athens
17332
+306944444444

Desired Position: Team Leader, Retail

Summary of Qualifications

- Experienced team leader in retail, for over 10 years
- Attended multiple teamwork and leadership seminars
- Completed multiple university courses
- Exceptional organisational and problem-solving skills
- Solid communication skills
- Strong teamworking skills
- Demonstrated leadership skills

Employment Background

- Retail team leader 2010-2020
Clothes for large men, Sepolia store
- Retail worker 2008-2010
Sep Inc.
- Basketball coach for children (volunteer) 2010-2020
Sepolia Bucks (basketball team)

Education

- University mini-degree (ongoing) 2018-2020
- High school degree 18/20 1990

Special Skills

- Driver's license

Languages

- Greek (native)
- English

References available upon request

Organisational skills

I am a very organized person, and creating schedules helps me keep focused and follow through with all my tasks in a professional manner. Below you can see one of the training schedules I made for the basketball team I coach.

Schedule for Training of Sunday, 25/10/2020			
Time	Task	Issues?	Done
9:00-9:15	Players join		
9:15-9:45	Warm-up exercises		
9:45-10:15	Shooting exercises		
10:15-10:45	Passing exercises		
10:45-11:15	Dribbling exercises		
11:15-12:00	Warm-down exercises		

Critical Thinking

Seeking additional training and keeping my mind active and focused is one of my main goals in life, as I believe that evolving my skills makes me a better person. Critical thinking is vital in making decisions; therefore, it is one of the skills that I aim to develop the most. Below is presented a certificate of a critical thinking course I attended and completed successfully.



CONCLUSION

Job searching is a difficult task for everyone. Being in between jobs can be stressful and frustrating. This is even more so the case for people who are living and working in a country which is different from their own, where they have to face barriers such as language and communication, lack in networking, etc. What is more, the situation becomes more complicated when (re)migrants reach an age above 45 years of age, in which they possess ample work experience, but due to the barriers mentioned above, it is often challenging for them to showcase their experience and skills.

In order to help these professionals to overcome the aforementioned difficulties, building a professional and personal portfolio can prove to be an invaluable ally. A portfolio contains a list of skills, abilities, accomplishments, and personal achievements, and can help the professional showcase them to a potential employer, plan their career, and help them assess job opportunities. Taking advantage of the benefits of a portfolio can help migrants and return migrants over the age of 45 protect and advance their career, identify gaps in their knowledge and skillset, build upon them, and improve overall as professionals in the ever-changing job-seeking environment of today.

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7. HOW TO ENABLE FOR ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION?

INTRODUCTION

The words integration or upskilling are not usually associated with civic education and civic participation. And yet this particular type of general education can make an important contribution to supporting both immigrants and locals so that everyone can cope with the new situation. But what does integration mean? And what does civic education or political education mean? How can it motivate migrants and long-term residents to become active in civil society or to become politically involved?

This article places civic education in the context of democracy development. Against this background, a more theory-based part will deal with the conceptual field of exclusion, integration and inclusion and discuss the connection between social change and civic education or political education. The focus is on non-formal and informal education, where there is no link to mandatory curricula. One will not necessarily expect this form of education to lead to an expansion of competences. And yet - so it is argued - this is the case. Nevertheless, the orientation of political education focuses on more, the so-called empowerment. What this is all about and how it is usually interpreted is the subject of the following chapter. Empowerment is not only understood in terms of empowering individuals to act. Empowerment for citizen participation and for making democracy live on a small or large scale is described in a more systemic perspective and for several levels of action and groups of actors. Practical considerations are included in this part of the article. On the one hand, they reflect the experiences of our educational institute, on the other hand, answers from the interviews with migrants and adult educators. In line with this socio-political approach, integration is also seen as political and empowerment is discussed from a corresponding perspective.

Civic education or socio-political education - these terms are used synonymously here - is differently developed in the European countries. At the level of the European Union it has been given priority in recent years. Adult education itself, however, is the responsibility of the European Commission's Directorate General for Employment.



Picture: Markus Spiske on [Unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)

DEMOCRACY NEEDS DEMOCRATS

European societies and the European Union are committed to democracy. Turning to the American example, one of the most well-known and historical definitions of democracy given by Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States (1860-1865), simple but clear definition: "Democracy is government of the people, by the people, for the people". It implies that democracy depends on democrats, and this not solely to give this form of state and society legitimacy, which is a quest of governments in dictatorships likewise. In fact, democracy thrives on the flow of ideas from everyone, on participation and co-determination, involvement, publicity and transparency, speech and counter speech, proposals for solutions, criticism, the discussion of alternatives, of position and opposition, freedom and diversity of opinion, the limitation of power by counter power ("balance of power"), the tension between freedom and equality of all people. Democracy ideally is revolved by the impulses of all, and democracy in best case facilitates for both, diversity and thus difference on the one hand, exchange and connection on the other. Moving something together, shaping something together: be it a street

festival, be it educational events of an association or be it as part of the labour movement in the 19th/20th century – it enhances the experience of belonging and being part of a community.

What however should make cohesion possible in diversity is the shared reference to values: respect and tolerance, the recognition of the dignity of EVERYONE regardless of skin colour, religion/non-religion, lifestyle and political attitudes; the peaceful resolution of conflicts, the acceptance of rules and the orientation towards the bonum commune, the common good. For this reason, and how this may become tangible in different situations - for example in the family, at work/employment office, in the club – time and again will be struggled.

There is also a struggle about how they are materially shaped: how the claim to fairness, formal equality, equivalence and justice becomes visible in social relations: in the relationship between rich and poor, between the sexes, the organisation of work, etc. Hence, democracy isn't something given or not. The term covers a process. It would therefore be better to speak of "democratisation" or "democratic development". We can study this by using history as an example. In the wake of the French Revolution, bourgeois-representative democracy gradually established itself in the states and territories of the continent. This was accompanied, for example, by the struggle for the right to vote. While women and the dispossessed were excluded from this, the 19th and 20th centuries saw the successive struggle for universal, equal and free suffrage. Without the pressure from the population, without the women's movement and other social movements, this would certainly not have been possible.

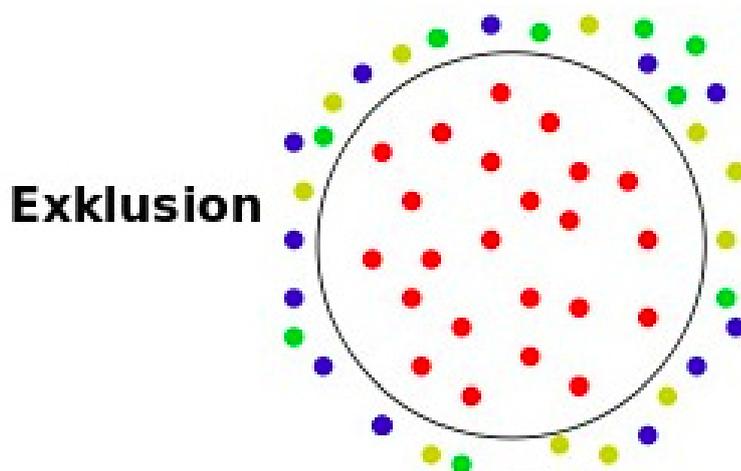
Democracy therefore needs active citizens: it must be alive, it must be renewed and at least come close to its ideal. This implies not only a political commitment of citizens. Many people are involved in the common good in very different ways: in the voluntary fire brigade, in visiting the elderly, in the pastoral telephone service, in urban gardening or in helping refugees. The neighborhood management and volunteer agencies that are widespread in Germany are also not political in their self-image.

Nonetheless, even with non-political engagement, questions arise as to how democratic the coexistence is. Does everything go through the boss? Or can everyone get equally involved? Is there a need for a leader at all? Are

decisions perceived as fair? Is it transparent and understandable for everyone what is being done - and what is not? Commitment by citizens: whether openly political or not, is always a practice in democracy, on a small scale. They participate in shaping the process, take on responsibility, try things out, experience what they can do, see that their words and actions make a difference, gain (more) self-confidence, train their social and conflict behavior, allow opportunities to partially become realities - and develop new skills.

FROM INTEGRATION TO INCLUSION

When people move in from other regions and countries (or return to their home country), changes occur that affect the whole of society. Before I outline my understanding of integration, I would like to talk about the opposite: **Exclusion**. It stands for "lockout" or "segregation" - someone is excluded or segregated from a group, or segregates themselves. Exclusion not necessarily only concerns people who are placed at the lower levels of the social ladder, but can also include persons (groups) who see themselves as elite and therefore try to maintain a strict distance from the general population. An example of this is apartheid in South Africa officially until 1994, are the latrine cleaners in Ancient Rome, are wealthy people who now live in gated communities, or many members of the largest minority in Europe, the Roma. Exclusion can be depicted with this figure:



Picture: White Hotaru, Wikipedia,
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stufen_Schulischer_Integration.svg

The point of reference and prerequisite for judging whether one belongs or not is a collective or a group, one could also say: a society and what is considered its centre. For where there is a fringe or an outside, there must also be a centre. And this society is presented as homogeneous. Seen negatively, exclusion therefore means the loss of social and political participation. Examples are long-term unemployed or precariously working people, slum dwellers, non-whites and often migrants 45+.

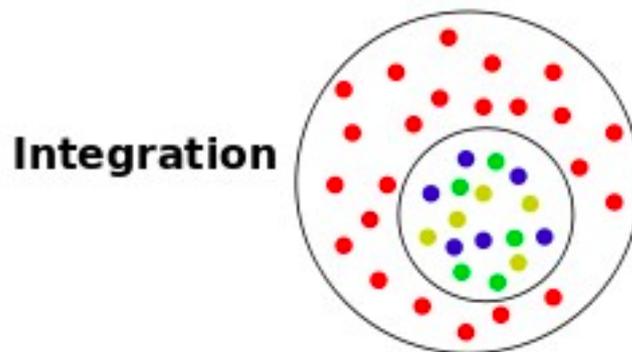
It is noteworthy that all too often the excluded internalize their devaluation and thus the judgement of the "normal", the "general public", and thus turn against themselves. It is useful to be aware that terms such as exclusion, integration and inclusion all too often serve to help people put their minds in order. They help to grasp the complex world to some extent. This also means that these concepts are historically created and made by people.

Integration, on the other hand, means the inclusion of persons or groups into a whole. In the dictionary of foreign words the translation of "integrating" is found as "supplementing", "joining together", "belonging to a whole". The classical philologist Peter Kruschwitz pleads for the term "renewal", from which I derive: integration means "renewal of a whole". In which sense? Relationships - whether in the family or as social relationships - are often characterized by the need to strike a new balance. Between closeness and distance, between work and leisure time, loneliness and community, etc. Integration can therefore be interpreted in this way: A process takes place in which what is given gradually comes together; in which a new balance develops. The word "integration" itself is a good example of this: it has found its way from Latin into German and other languages - and it has become unthinkable doing without it.

If integration is to take place in this sense, it requires the willingness to learn and to change. This requires openness on 'both sides', the search for common ground, the identification of differences, learning the language and customs, the granting of civil rights, protection against discrimination and, finally, material participation and personal contacts between immigrants and members of the host society. Integration ultimately means for everyone: change and acceptance of change, but also the formation of new social power and power relations. At the same time, differences remain. For example in "cultural identity". There are subgroups in society. There is a "as well as".

However, according to many people's understanding, integration is interpreted more in terms of inclusion. This is often associated with the view that it is the

migrants' task to become involved, preferably, to adapt to a large extent. The view of society as a whole and of the structures that would make integration possible, e.g. in the education system and the labour market, is then not taken into account. The immigrants would be perceived as a special group or foreign body rather than as part of a society that is very diverse in itself.



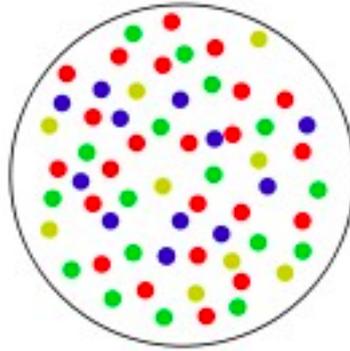
Picture: White Hotaru, Wikipedia,
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stufen_Schulischer_Integration.svg

What is also lost sight of in such a view are political aspects. On the one hand, there is the question of which political decisions are taken. Do they promote integration? How do they promote integration? Do the measures primarily benefit immigrants? All of them or just some of them? Do the decisions taken to support migrants correlate with those taken to support other groups of the population who perceive themselves as 'excluded'? Or do integration and disintegration policies take place in parallel?

On the other hand, this raises the question of the political participation of new citizens. Can they vote and be elected? Do political leaders include people who speak several languages or grew up with different cultures because they or their ancestors came to our country? Do they be present in the courts, the police, in the established media?

This is where the idea of **Inclusion** comes in. It means the commingling of the different and the same. Society is here not understood as a uniform entity, but as heterogeneous. Social conditions that produce exclusion are changed and overcome. "Others" - as persons, as a group - do not exist, because everyone appears "different" and therein again equal.

Inklusion



Picture: White Hotaru, Wikipedia,
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stufen_Schulischer_Integration.svg

In other words, inclusion is thought in terms of the framework conditions. If, for example, disabled and non-disabled people are to learn together, the question is how the school system as a whole is to be designed so that inclusion can be lived. In terms of society and the inclusion of migrants, this means that the social conditions must be worked on in order to make real inclusion possible. Against this background, the understanding of engagement and active citizenship should be framed in such a way that it encompasses both the dimensions of the actions of individuals and groups and the overall social conditions and political patterns. Integration and inclusion are political, whether or not this level of impact is taken into account.

When the term integration is used in the following, it encompasses a) individual efforts to get into the new environment, b) social and c) political aspects of change in order to rebalance what is familiar and what is new. Integration and inclusion are used synonymously in this sense.

DARING THE CHANGE: CITIZEN'S PARTICIPATION THROUGH CIVIC EDUCATION

As shown, integration or inclusion aim at the renewal of a whole and the finding of new balances. It is important to make them democratic - so that democracy is also being renewed under changing circumstances, whether in the district and/or the society of a state. Hence Socio-political education is also democracy education. And this means more than just enabling. Civic education is oriented towards empowerment and thus towards the ideal of

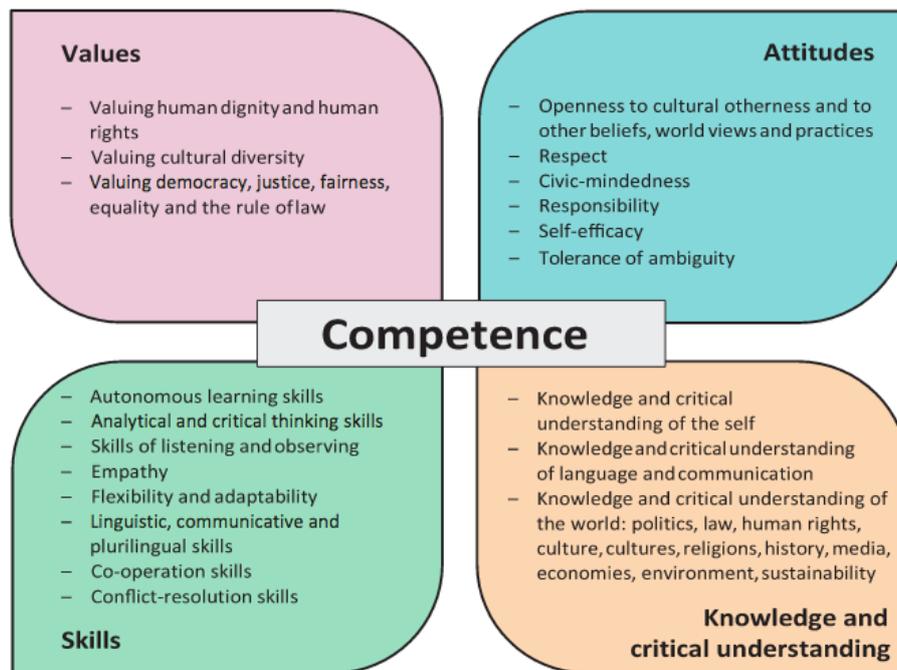
the politically and independently thinking, 'responsible' citizen who is able to trust her perceptions, to inform herself, to weigh up critically, to reach a well-founded judgement - and to keep herself open to corrections if a change in the state of knowledge suggests that this is necessary. Civic Education or Socio-political education is oriented towards the values of human dignity, respect, tolerance, freedom and equality already described. It encourages people to have a say and to become involved. It promotes communicative action, i.e. the ability to join forces with like-minded people and to organise oneself, but also to listen and to be capable of dialogue and conflict when differences have to be dealt with.

Socio-political education happens everywhere. When people walk past a kiosk and pick up newspaper headlines, see advertising signs at train stations, listen to the radio, view posts on Facebook, Instagram or other social media, discuss history, climate and crises with colleagues and friends, at the bakery or the hairdresser's, etc, it is always interesting to hear what is being said - and what is not. Active, conscious political education with and for adults is characterised by being multi-perspective and reflexive, discussing the pros and cons of facts, giving space to different arguments, illuminating contexts where fragments are in the foreground and asking about backgrounds and causal relationships, where symptoms are discussed. Of interest are the framework conditions as set by economic and legal systems, political orders and political decisions and their tensions with the actions of individual citizens and groups. This kind of civic education cannot be 'educating', be 'folk-pedagogical' or even provide correct answers as 'civic education', as was customary in GDR times. Rather, the aim is to combine enlightenment and discourse, to debate controversial and cultivated situations, problems and solutions - and thus to encourage self-thinking.

A Socio-political education understood in this way is deliberately also a 'dictatorship prophylaxis'. After the disruption of civilisation caused by two world wars and German National Socialism, it has taken on a special form in Germany since 1945. In addition to adult education centres, foundations, NGOs, associations, trade unions, churches and political parties, also state institutions such as federal and state centres for political education, municipal educational facilities and others offer workshops, discussion groups and publications on political education.

CIVIC COMPETENCE

The training of competences through offers of Socio-political adult education is still often underestimated. But they are quite considerable, as the graph from the issue "The Future of Adult Education" of the Journal of the National Agency for Europe at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training shows:



Picture: Competences for a Democratic Culture, Source:
<https://rm.coe.int/a-model-of-the-competences-required-for-democratic-culture-and-intercu/16809940c3>

Detailed explanations of these „Competences for a Democratic Culture“ are compiled on the website of the Council of Europe. In addition, a guide to implementation is provided for each of the various educational sectors. However, it is striking that these are intended for use in schools, although it remains open whether they are also intended for use in adult education. These are not explicitly mentioned. The special attention paid to competences is obvious, since education is usually aimed at promoting personal growth and thus also the development of skills and abilities. However, if the plateau of competences presented here is meant to implicitly justify socio-political education, criticism is in order: to subsume education under the concept of competences would run the risk of subjecting it solely to the imperatives of its existing or non-existing usefulness. This may correspond to the understanding of adult education as it is common in some

European countries. Even in the European Commission, adult education is "politically located" in the Directorate General for Employment.¹ However, this would deprive socio-political education and adult education of their autonomy. It is a value in itself and extends beyond the training of individual competences. Political education is empowerment. It is a value in and of itself, involves the training of individual, democratic competences and yet goes beyond this. Socio-political education is empowerment. What can be meant by this is outlined below.

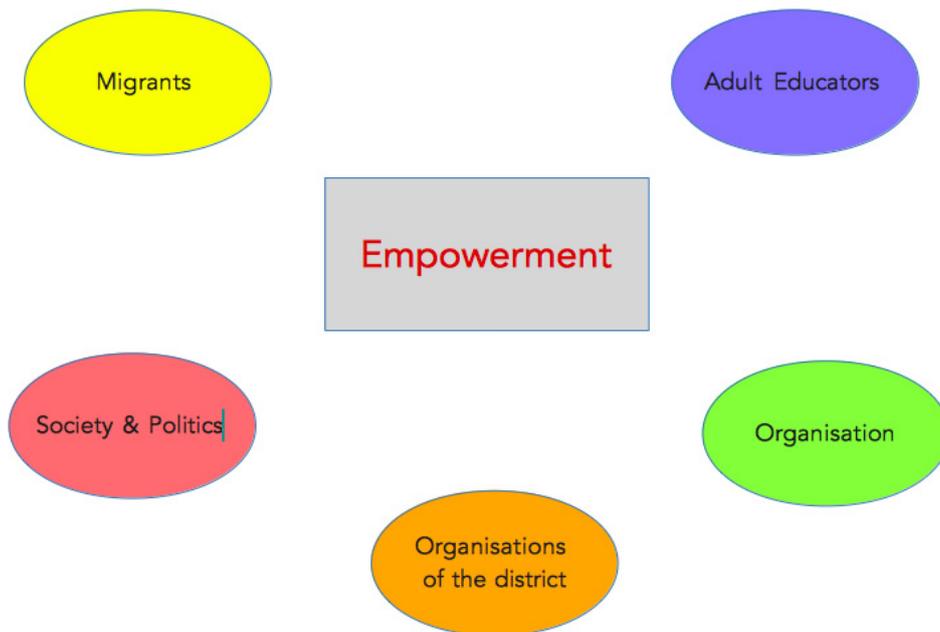
EMPOWERMENT

„Empowerment is a method that goes far beyond helping people to cope with their own lives. It is precisely not about a person with professional training helping people in need of support. Empowerment is a collective achievement of people who come together to raise their confidence in their own strengths. Powerlessness, resignation and hopelessness should be overcome. Life is taken (back) into one's own hands. This ability is not simply imparted, but is experienced and worked on collectively. Empowerment encourages people to trust in their own resources.“

Seen in a dimension that is not only individual, but also social and political, empowerment is a process by which people are encouraged to trust themselves, overcome feelings of powerlessness, join forces with other people, assert their views and interests, and organise their own life and work and joint activities with others. The contents also include the collective development of utopias, the exploration of possibilities for social change and emancipation, overcoming divisions and much more.

The competences mentioned (values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and critical understanding) can be developed precisely through empowerment, so to speak "from the bottom-up", starting from the participants. At the same time, empowerment explicitly stimulates personal thinking, autonomous thinking and behaving, participation and commitment, responsibility for oneself and for others.

Empowerment for civic participation concerns various groups of actors and levels of consideration:



Below you may find a list of considerations and suggestions resulting from the interviews and reflecting our own positive experiences. Clear references to individual actors or groups of actors cannot always be made always by distinguishing from one another, because, for example, social factors also influence district organisations and the didactic concepts of adult educators. Nonetheless, this distinction may sensitise people to the fact that integration is complex, a matter of the whole society, and that various interrelated situations shall be taken into consideration.

► Migrants

☼ It is of central importance to make regular offers and create drop-in centres. It has proved to be a good idea for migrants to know that they can come to a certain place once a week for a certain meeting, for example. Both offers of individual support and those for groups are welcomed (for more information see ► Adult educators).

☼ Many migrants come from cultures and countries where they have lived in a larger family setting and where the orientation towards relationship and togetherness in a group is of great value. Therefore, reliable group offers can create a framework to enable participants to feel secure and valued and to build

trust. The focus is thus not only on the trainers and the participants. Rather, the participants can exchange ideas, encourage each other, develop ideas and plan activities together. A group reference also makes sense from a didactic point of view: learning is embedded in social experiences, relationships, self-awareness and effectiveness and thus is sustainable. Individual weekend workshops may also offer suggestions and new contacts, but rather the orientation towards continuity and a reliable framework seem to meet the needs of the migrants 45+.

☼ Migrants often express the wish to gain more contact with locals. Therefore the offers of weltgewandt e.V. are explicitly directed to long-term residents. This also corresponds to the conviction that the practical experience of the encounter, that such social and cultural border crossings can sustainably help to reduce fears of contact and overcome reservations and prejudices. The latter often result from a lack of knowledge and a lack of personal contact.

☼ It is important to remember that migrants 45+ often have different educational biographies and learning experiences. Encouragement and empowerment to take an active interest in their surrounding society, to have a say and to want to get involved is fostered by mostly non-formal or informal learning experiences. It is advantageous if the pressure to perform is avoided and instead the focus is on shared enjoyment. It is extremely motivating when the participants experience that they are appreciated, that they can bring their competences to bear, that they can develop new ones and experience them positively, and that they are encouraged to take new steps. Apart from the need for contact and sociability, on a factual level they are concerned with acquiring knowledge or/and receiving practical support. This concerns, for example, language acquisition. It also applies to the acquisition of orientation knowledge (for more details see ► Adult educators).

☼ More generally speaking: If it is already a challenge for non-migrant adults to see themselves as learners, it is essential for Migrants to face up to this challenge. They often experience the loss of social status as, for example, doctors, lawyers, engineers (in Syria) and find themselves in the new country in the role of the 'unskilled'. If their professional qualifications are not recognised, they are unable to deepen their existing knowledge, and must either acquire an additional qualification or start from scratch.

Immigrants from other countries like Afghanistan, on the other hand, often have little educational experience. Both their self-image as adults (according to which

they are "mature" and no longer need to learn) and the fact that they have to enter the unfamiliar field of learning is for many a "stumbling block" in the process of arrival. The danger is that migrants in this age group resign if they do not experience success or do not find new fields of activity.

☼ In all this, it should also be borne in mind that migrants often come from countries where an active civil society, i.e. the political or social commitment of citizens, is not very pronounced, at least in the 'Western' sense. In many countries, the (extended) family is the main focus of interest, rather than an anonymous society. One has to understand that this is different here. In Germany, for example, people usually come together because they are united by a "common cause": Sports, urban gardening, singing in a choir, fighting against nuclear power, being active in a church community, organising a demonstration or strike, playing free theatre together, etc. Migrants do not arrive in a society that is a community. (Unless they live in the country or are involved in active neighbourhoods in the city). Rather, community is created and experienced through personal involvement. It will remain fragile unless there are people who have an integrating effect and are gifted in communication.

☼ This context also includes the fact that migrants often have little or no trust in state institutions, politics or politicians. The word "politics" itself already triggers a clear rejection by quite a few. In our educational programmes we therefore will not ask: "What do you think about politics? We replace the term with "world", and yet it is easier to talk about.

☼ Especially in the first months and years there is a need for orientation. What counts in the new society? What is possible? What is not? What rights do I have? What am I obliged to do? Are there support services available? Which ones? How and where can I contribute my ideas and experience? Before migrants can become involved in civic life, they need some form of stability in their new life. Ideally, language acquisition can be combined with questions about regional studies and intercultural learning. This also includes knowledge of the rule of law, asylum law, labour law, rights and duties in general, the political and economic system and cultural practices. It particularly concerns the discussion of how administrations work ("making bureaucracy understandable") - since migrants have experience with public offices, especially in the first years after their arrival.

☼ It can take away the inner pressure to integrate as quickly as possible, which quite many of them feel, when they are told that the process of arriving and 'getting involved' usually takes 10 years. For some it can take longer, for others shorter.

☼ All the above-mentioned considerations for promoting commitment and self-organisation presuppose that migrants will experience a basic level of security. This primarily means a residence status with a clear residence perspective, but also secure accommodation and at least prospects of employment.

☼ Participation requires equal access to goods, services, and rights. This is also true in the digital era. For refugees and migrants, free Internet access in their accommodation is therefore vital.

► Adult educators (lecturers, trainers)

☼ As mentioned, migrants and people with a history of migration often articulate a need for contact with the local population. DIALOGUE or language cafés that are interesting for both 'sides' are a good way of meeting this need. weltgewandt e.V. offers them on a regular basis (for more information see "adult educators"). Ideally, everyone learns from each other, develops ideas collectively and joins forces to create their own projects. Tandem partners can also come together from these encounters in the group. In this way, migrants can also be given individual support - as far as the tandem partner can provide it. DIALOGUE cafés also offer an opportunity to find out about other ways of support. Whether it is career advice, help in finding accommodation, or advice on how to understand letters from the JobCentre, landlord, internet provider, etc. Sometimes this can also be the subject of a DALOGUE café.

Such opportunities, learning and using the foreign language in an unconstrained and live way, are important as migrants 45+ need more time for language acquisition than younger people.

☼ Forms of free theatre inspired by the Theatre of the Oppressed (Augusto Boal) also contribute to this aim. This is not meant as a rehearsal of predetermined roles. It promotes the strengthening of self-expression, the discovery of one's own physical and linguistic abilities and the creative adaptation of experiences from one's own life-worlds into scenes that are best developed and performed together

with others. Playing together focuses on the joy and togetherness of even very different people. The participants are able to extend their capacity to act and experience being part of a group. This can lead to mutual support between participants.

☼ Theatre and other creative approaches such as collage workshops, creative writing, but also biography work, weighing up different opinions on a topic and more are aimed at awakening the creative potential of the participants and promoting personal growth.

☼ In addition to promoting informal, 'social' language learning, many migrants express a desire for practical support, for instance in finding accommodation or work. This offers the opportunity to combine the regulation of often existential questions with the acquisition of digital skills: Creating online CVs, writing online applications, getting to know and using job search apps, visiting certain portals, drawing attention to oneself on e.g. XING or LinkedIn etc.

☼ In all these open, participant-oriented activities, trainers can also incorporate knowledge about society: by providing information about opportunities for co-determination in one's own environment, in the community, in the (city) district, by presenting the political system of the host country (parliamentary democracy? presidential democracy?), by reviewing the history of the country and individual regions - and how this is being discussed today. The transfer and reflection of knowledge therefore not needs to be intentionally guided by fixed workshop plans or curricula. It can be done by trainers by feeding their (prepared) knowledge into the discussion. The central point is to pay attention to learning through dialogue. Firstly, to ensure that the participants understand the content. On the other hand, because especially in adult education being on par with participants and trainers is of crucial for the motivation to learn and for learning success. Therefore, it is best that all, trainers and participants alike, see themselves as learners. Such an attitude is beneficial for all: it takes away the pressure of being 'ready', 'trained', 'knowing' - and the shame or pretence when this is not perceived as such. Moreover, if everyone sees themselves as learners, the power difference between trainers and participants can be counteracted without negating the different roles.

☼ This is certainly the most favorable prerequisite to build an atmosphere of trust in which it is then also possible to address the culture shock that migrants all too

often experience when they come, for instance, to Germany. This can also be accompanied by talking about experiences of powerlessness, which in turn can have a formative effect on attitudes toward the host society. And long-term residents can share related experiences, if these may differ at the same time. Such a conversation enable them to disengage from those experiences. But whether such an enriching moment is experienced or not — when participants can feel free to be honest, are able to express joy as well as sorrow and doubts, and can also experience their own strengths, in such a citizen education the goal may take place: empowerment.

☼ Adult educators who want to direct their activities in this way need to be democratic themselves. This also requires self-reflection and an awareness of potential pitfalls. One of these is what I call "social paternalism". This refers to an attitude that is characterised by benevolence and the willingness to support migrants. However, this attitude is based on the assumption that the addressees of educational efforts are 'weaker' and have a lower status. The danger then is that adult educators will reproduce this inequality — and may even increase it; but the gap and perhaps even a dependence will remain. Only when the participants themselves can be 'strong' — and thus possible competitors! — emancipation can take place and they may develop their creative potential — as challenging as this may sometimes be for adult educators. The addressees of educational work are no 'objects', they are partners. Educational work should thus not be trying to convey pre-fabricated interpretations which possibly only confirm existing beliefs. Learning is rather an open process.

☼ A **golden rule** for a democratically sensitive mediation of contents in Germany is the so-called **Beutelsbach Consensus**. This is an agreement between stakeholders in Socio-political education dating from 1976 and contains the following three principles:

1. Prohibition of overwhelming: trainers, teachers and lecturers should not indoctrinate or bias participants.
2. Necessity of controversy: if there are varying positions on a topic, they should be presented. In this way, educational work should take into account and at the same time promote the existing diversity of opinions.
3. Analysis of one's own interests: The participants should be inspired to develop their own, well-founded opinion and to assert their own situation, values and interests.

☼ These rules are themselves in discussion. For example, educational actors advocate taking into account the interests not only of the participants, but of all groups and institutions that are analysed on a topic. Quite a few educational actors also see their task in explicitly encouraging people to become socially and/or politically active. Finally, it is objected that political education cannot be "neutral" in times of extremism and populism. In the author's view, however, equating the Beutelsbach Consensus with a neutrality imperative would not do justice to this agreement. The focus is on diversity and plurality of opinion. This does not necessarily exclude one's own positions. They are only to be marked as such.

☼ But one way or another, the ideal would be that citizens are competent and able to think independently to arrive at their own reasoned judgements on the basis of arguments. For this purpose, it is especially for migrants beneficial when people who work with them convey trust and confidence and promote their intrinsic motivation. On the level of actions it is crucial to encourage free, critical thinking as well as to promote the perspective of self-organisation. Course and project participants should be encouraged to become active in accordance with their own interests and to join engage with others to achieve their goals.

☼ Educational work is to a large extent also relationship work. This applies all the more to migrants. Especially for people who are from countries like Syria, Iraq or Afghanistan, trust and reliability are built through relationships rather than rules. The motivation to take part in courses, to contribute and to get involved is particularly created through the quality of the relationships with other participants and the trainers. Relationship work also entails communication, which requires time.

☼ Another challenge is the fact that educational work, especially political educational work, is also strenuous. Who likes to talk about crises, wars, injustice? Many of the topics are not "sexy". But others are: perceptions of history, portraits of interesting people, philosophically influenced topics like "What is autonomy?", "What does it mean to be an artist of life?", "What is emancipation?", "When is a person 'integrated'?"

☼ Working with migrants can also sometimes require mental strength. Especially when one learns about people's fates and how they struggle to arrive in their new

environment. Migrants - especially people aged 45+ - are often perceived as people "on the margins of society". It takes a high level of self-assurance as an adult educator in order to refrain from adopting this kind of social classification of people .

☼ These aspects, which are strenuous, are linked to the question of how adult educators can deal with these challenges in the most constructive way. How can educational offers nonetheless be combined with enjoyment and with encouragement? What are the sources of strength for my commitment as an adult educator? The – preliminary – answer, which we have developed from weltgewandt e.V. can be found in the reflections of this article. The creative methods, especially from theatre work, strengthen not only the heart and senses of migrants, but also of the trainers. With a consistently participatory methodology, it is easier to develop content and to endure the effort involved. The feedback from participants confirms this approach: "I am amazed how much we can learn from each other.", "My energy level is now significantly raised.", "It was very stimulating.", "A happy and vibrant gathering.", "In two hours we've experienced so much. Laughed, talked, played, gathered ideas." Apart from opportunities for supervision and exchange among colleagues, it is all too often the participants and the learning process itself that encourage.

☼ A sensitive issue is the question of how to deal with anti-migration and right-wing attitudes. What is the answer when people shout "Migrants are murderers" or think that immigrants are "to blame" for all social problems in the society? There are numerous argumentation guides for this. Their quality may vary; here too, the following may apply: "Examine all things, but keep the good" (The Bible, 1 Thess., 5,21). Inspirations can be found almost everywhere.

Two points seem to be central:

1. the level of **arguments**: Here it is not enough to see oneself morally on the better side and only expect that dislike and reservations can be counteracted by this. Clear deliberations are needed in order to assert a different perspective and/or to address contradictions in the arguments of people who are intolerant of migration.
2. sometimes **emotions** are so strong that arguments cannot be used to counteract them. Then it can be more opening to ask how the person is doing, what makes them angry, what they want. Nevertheless, this is a topic that cannot be fully considered in the context of this article.

► Organisation

☼ Organisations themselves, such as a neighbourhood centre, a organisations for social support, a district library or an association, can be a contact point for migrants, a "social anchor" in the new society, where they can take up offers and get actively involved. They can contribute their skills and gradually take on tasks. This can be technical support at public discussions, cooking at events, active participation in urban gardening, having a say in the design of (educational) offers, and much more. Learning is increasingly taking place in a dialogue and informal way. Migrants who are unemployed can be integrated into a time structure, experience themselves and thus live self-efficacy in practice. They receive information, learn about social codes, values and attitudes of others, can use the new language, be active and feel a sense of belonging. They can develop their competences through experience and have them certified by the staff of an institution. Engagement in an organisation and an organisation that allows engagement can thus offer bridges to the world of work in many different ways. Or they give the feeling of sense which is something that many newcomer are missing in their new contexts. A volunteer of weltgewandt e.V. once said it this way: "weltgewandt enables me to make a social connection. Here I can train what I need for the world of work. Voluntary work is like a bridge".

► Community

☼ Integration and empowerment is a learning task for everyone. Both aim at (intercultural) opening and mutual recognition at local level and in society as a whole. Local networks and the strengthening of (new) neighbourhoods, whether in the district or in the countryside, are of great importance for this. This horizon also shows, however, that equal opportunities and participation encompass not only cultural factors but also material, social dimensions. Efforts at integration and empowerment therefore also aim at social integration – for all. They should be oriented towards this, creating an awareness of social problems through which fear of contact, mistrust and resentments are nourished. Taking this clearly into account will contribute to understanding and common action. In the "battle of ideas", the practiced plurality of opinions, can ways towards more social equality be debated and new ideas developed. Empowerment for integration is political; integration is political.

☼ For lively neighbourhoods and an intercultural opening of institutions in a community is cooperation needed. Regular funding of the organisations is necessary for this. Uncertain perspectives and competition for funding have a counterproductive effect on empowerment towards integration.

► Society and Politics

☼ Socio-political education and empowerment for integration and citizen participation must be politically desired. This implies that population groups are not played off against each other. It also implies that citizens should develop a critical awareness of these and other power strategies.

☼ Major challenges are a) social inequality and b) traditional, structural racism and c) the practice of a free culture of discussion and that people make their voice heard.

☼ Social justice, as a necessary but not sufficient condition for peaceful coexistence of the many, requires a debate on how prosperity is created and how it can be distributed in such a way that it benefits everyone. This also requires an analysis of the current situation. In the capitalist economic system, especially in its neo-liberal form, competition and creating inequality is fundamental. In other words, social exclusion is an essential part of this economic system. In addition, there are crises such as regular shocks within the financial system, climate change, wars on resources, global tensions, lacking sales markets, where purchasing power exists, etc. They shape the background 'music' for integration. However, this is often not talked about in public discussions. It concerns those who mean all evil is caused by migrants. But it also affects those who argue against it, relying solely on moral judgements. However, if social factors are ignored, it can happen that cultural differences are discussed, but social differences are meant. They are only 'culturalised'. In educational practice on empowerment, a clear distinction should be made between these two dimensions of integration, the social and the cultural one. If it were done, intercultural learning would be easier. After all, that is exactly what is needed to counteract racism and discrimination. Embedded in a political strategy to overcome general resentments against others.

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES

1. Arguments: Should migrants be able to come to Europe from within?

Yes:

- Migration is part of globalisation, just as the EU's internal market is based on freedom of movement,
- Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:
 - (1) Everyone has the right to move and reside freely within a State.
 - (2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.¹Emigration is therefore a human right.
- Migration promotes diversity and makes societies more colourful and interesting.
- German companies in particular supply weapons to countries involved in acts of war, such as Saudi Arabia. As a result, they are seen as jointly responsible for the wars – also against the background of German history – and derive from this the moral duty to provide protection for the victims of violence and war.
- Especially the wars in the Near and Middle East are also about Europe as a sales market for gas and oil. As long as these causes of flight are not eliminated, people from these war zones must be able to find asylum in Europe.
- Wars express a political failure. People cannot be blamed for escaping from these policies.
- "In essence, the economy of a country is the result of politics. So even an economic refugee is a political refugee. You cannot separate the one from the other."² The economic system is not sufficiently fair due to protectionism and credit dependency, so people lose their livelihood and have to look for income elsewhere.

¹ United Nations, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, <https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html> (retrieved 28/06/2020)

² Heinrich Böll, Der Spiegel, Nr. 43/19.10.1981, <https://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-14339038.html> (retrieved 27/06/2020)

No:

- It is usually those who belong to the middle class who leave their countries and should better contribute to develop it.
- Migration causes a "brain drain". This means that qualified staff such as doctors and nurses, but also engineers, architects and others leave their country, which then lacks competent work force.
- The individual countries of Europe are themselves marked by various crisis. For this reason alone, their welcoming capacity is limited.
- Migration promotes social tension. Quite a few locals or former immigrants believe that the 'newcomers' have advantages that they were not granted. After the deep socio-economic transformation in the 1990s when many people became unemployed, it was, however, possible to make their business. They might fear to lose all again when migrants come.
- The attitudes, habits, customs and traditions of migrants are too different from those of long-term residents, so that living together would be too difficult.

Question:

What arguments would you underline? Which do you find reasonable? Which do not?

2. Telling objects

<i>Recommended group size/type:</i>	4-15
<i>Recommended time: Preparation time</i>	2 hours depending on the group size 10 min.
<i>AIMS and objectives (general, concrete)</i>	To get to know different cultural traits through objects in a funny way, to understand that something unfamiliar can have a familiar meaning.
<i>Resources required:</i>	Objects/clothes/pictures/scents/plants/spices etc. from different parts of the world, from different groups, etc.
<i>Introduction:</i> Participants shall identify objects, guess where they are from, which cultural habits they might „tell“, what history they may have.	

<p><i>Trainer activity:</i> Put the objects in the room. Give them a number. Build pairs or little groups. Invite the participants to go around one object at a time and guess what is the meaning, purpose or what is the object used for. Ask them for their ideas. Provide information about the objects. Invite participants to ask their questions and to discuss.</p>	<p><i>Participants activity:</i> Look carefully at the objects. Guess all their possible meaning. Make notes according to the objects and its numbers. Present your ideas to the whole group. Bring in your (open) questions, start a discussion.</p>
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3. Sociodrama encounter: Good life in a good Europe

<i>Recommended group size/type:</i>	4-15
<i>Recommended time: Preparation time</i>	2 hours depending on the group size 10 min.
<i>AIMS and objectives (general, concrete)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Playful mind-opening towards a topic; participants bring their own ideas and considerations in. - Stimulating a deeper understanding of community's and society's issues, - Discovering and experiencing one's own creativity, - Fostering the capacity to act, - Group building (in short terms or longer terms), creating a context in which participants experience belonging,
<i>Resources required:</i>	Space for group work and a (self-created) scene Requisites

Introduction:

Sociodrama was established by Jacob Levy Moreno, 1889 – 1974. He was a doctor, psychiatrist, sociologist and the founder of psychodrama, sociodrama, sociometry and group psychotherapy. It takes places when it comes to issues and conflicts of the whole society. For example, social problems like housing and raising rents, the right-wing movements and parties in Europe, the „trouble“ around the Euro, democracy and how to participate, but also bullying, racism against refugees, etc. Participants play a situation and try to ‘go in the shoes’ of one’s other. They experience new perspectives. Acting through Sociodrama gives also the opportunity to discover new possibilities to talk and act.

Find [more information on Moreno and Sociodrama](#) on the project's website.

In this Sociodrama session, participants come together in small groups. They are invited to go on a ‘phantasy trip’ in terms of the future of Europe. All ideas are o.k., it is time just to brainstorm what wishes, hopes, ideal situations come in participants’ mind when they

imagine a 'perfect' Europe in the next 20 years. The groups then choose a 'speaker' who takes over a role. S/he present through the role to the whole group how a „good life in a good Europe“ could be put in practice. It can be Pippi Longstocking or Santa Claus or ... who might make the audience us laughing but also reflecting.

Trainer activity:

1. Go on a phantasy trip: Invite participants to imagine a „good life in a good Europe“. Wishes, hopes, ideal situations, all ideas are o.k.
2. Build smaller groups. Invite participants to exchange on their imaginations (20 min.).
3. Prepare a scene, e.g. a chair in front of the whole group.
4. Invite participants going to the scene. Tell them that they firstly should stay behind the chair explaining the role which has been taken over. Say that after that participants should sit down on the chair and talk through their role.
5. When all have taken action, make a gesture to pass away the role participants have been played.
6. Stimulate reflection on what has been seen and how it touches own perceptions and considerations.

Preconditions:

Important:

1. All people can be actors. One idea of the Theatre of the Oppressed is to overcome the distinction between actors and the (passive, consuming) audience.
2. What participants do is based on their free decision. If anyone avoids taking part in an exercise, it is o.k. All is voluntarily.
3. Making mistakes is o.k.! :-)

Challenges that may occur:

Some participants might hesitate to play. Invite him/her to „act“ as an observer.

Participants activity:

1. Focus on „good life“ and „good Europe“; let ideas and imagination flow. Write them down.
2. Come together in smaller groups of 4-5 participants. Exchange on the hopes, dreams, wishes, ideas...
3. Decide for a role you want to 'go in'. It could be a Finnish muumi, the pope, pippi longstocking, santa claus, a nurse in the next hospital, a professor, a trade unionist ...
4. Go to the scene. Stay behind the chair and introduce your role. Sit down on the chair and play, talk ...
5. At the end of the session, pass your role away and 'get back' to you.
6. Ask questions, provide comments, share opinions and feelings, discuss.

CONCLUSION

Migration means change, so that new balances have to be found. This applies to the migrants themselves, whose life in the new environment is initially turned upside down. But it also applies to the regional environment and society as a whole. Integration does not only mean an adaptation to be made by migrants. It concerns questions of how to shape the community as a whole. Integration is therefore political. In other words, it is a question of what decisions are taken in town halls, ministries or presidential palaces to respond to a challenge and how. This can be done this way, but it could also be done differently. The differences within the European Union in particular show that there are often alternatives. The so-called integration policy in many countries is also different. Sweden has other rules and options than Greece.

The respective integration policy to support or lack of support for migrants is at the same time embedded in the economic and social policy of a country or the European Union. This addresses issues of social integration. It concerns all, both the newly arrived and the long-standing residents. In the current era of economic liberal ("neoliberal") policy, poverty and social polarization have increased throughout Europe. When new migrants come in on a larger scale, they face a situation where the social integration of larger groups of the population is precarious across Europe. Integration also means making people aware of and understanding these and other contradictions and paradoxes. This can be done through understanding, dialogue and education.

Civic education or Socio-political education aims to make integration a learning task for the whole society. Through the methods and objectives of empowerment, it helps migrants and long-time residents to (further) develop skills for a democratic culture and stimulates them to become active for the interests of the community and society. Empowerment focuses on integration in the sense of "renewal of a whole". Corresponding educational offers are therefore aimed at everyone. This approach has a chance of success (on a small scale) if the participants receive concrete support, are taken seriously with their needs, experience self-efficacy and are inspired and encouraged to organise themselves. This requires a favourable political framework, political measures to promote social inclusion and sufficient financial resources, not least for Socio-political education. Constructive cooperation between different actors in the community is also beneficial.

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8. CONCLUSIONS

Naturally, migrants and refugees constitute a highly diverse group; we cannot and should not make generalizations merely based on the common characteristic of a history of migration or flight. But since this project targets the group of people who face unstable working conditions or unemployment, certain common characteristics and experiences can be identified. To almost everyone, arriving in a new country and settling in a different culture with unfamiliar social norms and codes poses a challenge which is, usually, further increased by language barriers. This already vulnerable situation is often intensified by various needs such as care responsibilities or health issues.

However, they can rarely work in their profession because of difficult validation procedures. After a lifelong career, people have to start all over again. It is, therefore, crucial that the recognition system changes so that people can pursue jobs that match their abilities. It is further necessary to develop tools that certify skills for which people do not have any official proof.

With regard to all trainings, it is important to consider the specific difficulties which adults are commonly facing when they have to learn new things from scratch.

Having all these premises and everyday realities, we reinforce the need to improve specialists in adult education and training in developing the competence to work with migrants and to create educational programs adapted to their needs, and this manual offers a starting point for trainers, adult educators and counselors working with migrants.



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