



**TITLE:** Integrated collaboration framework and tools to establish effective local ecosystems engaging unemployed low-skilled adults over 45 years old in training and empowerment programs

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## PURPOSE OF THIS OUTPUT

This output underlines the essential need of collaboration and working together with different stakeholders in order to activate unemployed low skilled over 45 years old but also in order to achieve a sustainable and effective local ecosystem. This output proposes practical recommendations to CSOs – Employers- Policy makers- Training providers and translates motivation strategies into a concrete integrated collaboration framework among these stakeholders.

More specifically in order to create an Integrated Collaboration Framework for establishing effective local ecosystems in this document we are going to examine the roles and types of

- CSOs
- local employers
- Policy makers
- adults training providers

This collaboration framework has as goal to engage unemployed low-skilled older adults in education and training.

This need is established through several studies throughout EU countries. More specifically we can see that<sup>1</sup>):

- 1/ 10 European adults takes part in some form of education or training,
- more than 25% of all adults lack the basic literacy, numeracy and digital skills that many of today's jobs require,
- the participation in trainings of younger persons (aged 25–34) in the EU was more than 20% higher than that of older ones (aged 55–64) in 2016.

<sup>1</sup> OECD, 2019; Adult learning statistics, For further information:

[https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Adult\\_learning\\_statistics](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Adult_learning_statistics)



## WHAT MOTIVATES UNEMPLOYED LOW SKILLED ADULTS OVER 45 YEARS OLD TO PARTICIPATE IN TRAININGS -RESULTS OF DESK RESEARCH IN MOTIVATION FACTORS

Lower qualified workers encounter many challenges in education and training due to their weak basic skills. Nevertheless, they are motivated to learn if they think that training is useful, believe that they are able to complete the training and that they have some opportunities for better work conditions or advancement possibilities<sup>2</sup>. The lower qualified workers are open to learning opportunities, but not highly motivated. Besides work tasks in a working environment which are generally simple, they consider that there is no need for further education and training. Education and training are seen as valuable and important, but motivation is not high because the work environment does not motivate individuals to develop new skills. Adults are motivated to participate in learning activities if they have positive experiences of learning, and employers are involved in the training process.

Accordingly, the level of participation in learning activities could be increased if:

- There are real opportunities for advancement and job rotation.
- Learning opportunities lead to continuing learning experiences.
- The operation of the learning process is tailored more closely to participants needs.
- More support is provided for learning in the workplace.

More specifically EU suggests<sup>3</sup>, *six crucial factors for increasing participation* in adult learning and skills development opportunities.

- A. Increase adults' willingness to take part in, and their positive attitudes towards learning

<sup>2</sup> Konrad's research (2005)

<sup>3</sup> European Commission (2018), "Proposal for a COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION on Key Competences for LifeLong Learning", <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52018SC0014&from=EN>



Participation and retention are dependent on adult learning having a **positive reputation** and on individual learners being well-disposed towards it. To ensure that this is the case, Member States can work with social partners and other stakeholders to raise awareness about the many benefits of adult learning, to reach out to adults who would most benefit from it, and provide them with **tailored information and guidance**. This is of particular importance for our target group, given the dispositional barriers they face, especially because of previous negative educational experiences.

#### B. Encourage employer investment in adult learning

As job requirements evolve, employees must develop their existing skills and talents – along with acquiring new ones. For this reason, **professional development and job-related training** are key factors that can motivate adults to return to learning. Ensuring that employers invest in adult learning in order to assure employees productivity and efficiency is essential. In the same time, this can be a key factor for increasing both the range of education and training opportunities available and the number of employees taking part in learning.

#### C. Enhance access to learning for disadvantaged and difficult-to-engage groups

There are many kinds of adult's learners with many different learning needs. There is no 'one-size-fits-all' solution: policies should incorporate **tailor-made programs and be flexible enough to respond to each individual's learning needs and motivations** – including **basic skills development for low-skilled learners**. Unemployed and older adults are also difficult groups to reach. This group can represent a great manpower opportunity for many enterprises. To accomplish this, forming partnerships with intermediary organizations such as community groups and trade unions is recommended.

#### D. Improve the relevance of adult learning for everyone involved

A key factor for tackling unemployment is education and training opportunities that address **the specific needs and motivations** of both learner and employer. Then, not only does participation increase, but the end result is also better: meaning higher skills, access to new



jobs, career advancement and improved social outcomes. For this reason, adult learning policies and provision should be **designed in a way that responds to the needs of different user groups**, of all ages, occupational status and qualifications.

E. Assure the quality of adult learning opportunities

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It is important that adult learning provision be of **high quality**, both to ensure positive outcomes for learners, employers and the community, and to make the most effective use of public investment. Factors associated to quality that are crucial for motivating to participate in learning settings are amongst others (Konrad, 2005) the amount of autonomy provided, the degree to which students can identify with and find interesting a given learning task or set of tasks and the type and timing of the feedback provided.

F. Coordinate adult learning policy at national, regional and local levels

For maximum policy success, there needs to be **effective coordination** of the different initiatives happening at the national, regional and local levels, and effective collaboration of all the various institutions, organizations and stakeholders.

Also, we have to add that<sup>4</sup> for adult learning being in control is key motivation for learning. Finally, small gains in language, literacy and numeracy skills and their wider benefits need to be assessed and learners value knowing what progress they have made.

In order to better understand the requirements and influential factors for engaging unemployed low skilled adults over 45 years old in training we conducted a desk research that was based on previous studies and findings all across Europe. We also realized focus groups with employers and semi directive interviews aimed to shed light on the constraints, barriers and motivational factors towards participation of 45+ low-skilled unemployed in training activities. 41 low-skilled unemployed over 45 years old adults participated from Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Spain. From our research we found that key factors that could facilitate interviewees to participate in a training activity, are the following (listed by

<sup>4</sup> Windisch 2015:60



importance)

- To find a job / To increase possibilities on finding a job
- To learn new things
- To get new qualifications
- To socialize
- To improve skills
- Flexible timeline & Easy schedule

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Also, a crucial group of factors able to accommodate their expectations for attending a seminar has been highlighted. Based on their answers:

1. Direct network with a company at the end of a seminar, speed interviews, job fair etc. (85,4%)
2. Better quality of implementation of the seminars (more practice than theory) (82,9%)
3. More information about seminars that are going to happen (80,5%)
4. Training designed by professionals of the labor market, direct contact with the enterprises, targeted to the labor market needs (75,6%)
5. Recognition of qualifications gained through the participation in a seminar/ certification, etc (61%)
6. Support from family environment (43.9%)
7. Distance learning methods (29,3%)
8. Childcare services during the seminar (22%)





## CSO's

### WHY it is important?

Greater civil society engagement towards providing the proper educational opportunities, as long as these organizations can play a role in advocating for adult learners, is crucial in the European context. In some cases, like in the Netherlands, collaboration between civil society organizations from different contexts can help to further develop effective systems of support for vulnerable learners. Other countries, like Norway and Ireland, were being provided with the opportunity to involve CSOs themselves in the designing of policy and strategies relating to adult training. Some key aspects of the important role of Civil Society Organizations in a collaborative environment is the available connection with targeted populations and the ability to engage new learners setting their needs in the front line. Vulnerable populations experience a 'low skilled trap', where those with low-skills or low levels of qualification are often in jobs where they are not provided with education and training. They are also less likely to seek out or participate in learning opportunities outside the workplace due to negative experiences and stigma<sup>5</sup>.

### WHAT act45 proposes?

CSO's should foster Innovative approaches in encouraging worse-represented groups to participate in adult education, whereas challenges and obstacles need to be addressed in detail. The focus of attention of the employability approach should be on social interaction, inclusion, and active citizenship in parallel with the fundamental skills (numeracy, literacy, digital skills ).

<sup>5</sup> <https://eaea.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Country-Reports-2019.pdf>



## WHO is a CSO?

CSO's can be local NGO's that offer employability services for vulnerable groups. Every NGO should seek innovation and sustainability of services in order to continue offering quality and up-to-date services.

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## WHICH TYPE of CSO's?

These guidelines are addressed to any local NGO with an employability service or job center regarding counselling, trainings on soft and hard skills, general and specific educational opportunities and preferably coaching and connection with the labor market. Beneficiaries of the NGO's should be specifically unemployed low-skilled 45+ years old (low educational background and digital skills) coming from broader vulnerable groups such as long-term unemployed people, homeless, people that face social exclusion and financial difficulties, refugees and migrants, single-parent families or families with many children and in general household schemes that face any other vulnerability such as disabilities, mental illnesses etc.

## TO WHOM WE ARE ADDRESSING THIS DOCUMENT?

This document is addressed to:

*General Director*, the person who has the general overview of NGO's program, activities and communicates the areas of action and the philosophy of the organization properly. This person can contribute critically in areas of action prioritizing empowerment of vulnerable groups through theories of change and foreseeing the needs of communities in order to be met effectively.

*Employability Service Manager*, the person who evaluates the progress of work in the service, creates the environment for fruitful interaction among counsellors, can conceive and think future aspects and development of the service, has a clear knowledge of the beneficiaries'



needs and what the organization can (could) design and implement in accordance other CSO's departments.

*Employability Service Counsellors*, the people who design and implement one2one counselling sessions with beneficiaries, facilitate the decision making by discussing work and educational choices, and assist the creation and implementation of a realistic action plan. What is more, they design and implement relevant capacity building activities and workshops related to the work field, such as on-site support in the computer lab, job seeking techniques workshop, e-skills workshop, interviewing skills workshops, workshops of soft skills required to adjust and maintain a new job etc.

*Educational Programs Experts and Educators*, the persons who collaborate with employability service delivering basic skills lessons and workshops such as literacy, numeracy, English language lessons and digital skills lessons.

*Professional Coaches*, the persons who contribute in the capacity building preparing the beneficiaries for the integration in the labor market regarding soft skills and guidance for specific sectors of the employability field.

## **WHEN AND HOW a CSO can participate in the project?**

Prior to training offer CSO's can:

- ✓ Have a clear view of which general or specific skills lead to professional development and to a competitive status in the labor market. The employability service manager and counsellors should proceed to proper decision making regarding adult education programmes and assign the detailed design and implementation to expert adult training providers



- ✓ Explore beneficiaries' expectations and learning needs.
- ✓ Raise awareness about the benefits of lifelong learning through spreading the word (WoM) and featuring opinions of former participants and instructors
- ✓ Get constantly informed about general and specific trends in the labor market and define resilience and competitive factors in the workplace as soft skills training content
- ✓ Attend job events and develop network properly with employers and companies, collect job openings from all available sources CSO's so as to match the eligible candidate profiles with the right positions and to give the opportunity to beneficiaries to explore positions of their interest in the labour market. Explore synergies with employers for training opportunities.
- ✓ Conduct focus groups , email campaigns, online surveys with local employers in order to explore specific issues in the labour market such as hard and soft skills training needs, trends in the labor market, seasonal or incidental to special occasions needs and then inform adult training providers appropriately
- ✓ Develop an engagement strategy for employers and design an 'activity catalogue' targeted to employers, where they see all the ways in which they can collaborate with the CSO and choose the preferred ones
- ✓ Collaborate with other CSO's in order to meet different needs but in a supplementary context so as to create equal and meaningful opportunities for all vulnerable populations. Seek better working conditions for everyone and advocate for innovative approaches towards reintegration of vulnerable groups
- ✓ In collaboration with local employers and adult training providers, CSO's should build a learning culture that focuses on skills and professional development regardless of educational background or poor learning opportunities, emphasizing the need for stereotype breaking for vulnerable groups and motivate the labour market context broaden their horizons in recruitment processes



- ✓ Collaborate with public institutes and adult learning providers in order to coordinate adult learning policies in local, regional and national level
- ✓ Provide personal coaching, motivate beneficiaries to participate in training opportunities through individualized counselling. Identify technical and soft skills as well as axes of skills development and build Specific Measurable Achievable Realistic and Time bound (SMART) action plans with beneficiaries
- ✓ Design subsidies and grants for job-related training programs

#### During design of training offer:

CSO's should achieve an in-depth collaboration both with local employers and adult training providers so as to create suitable training contexts taking into consideration the needs identified before and the learning outcomes they want to produce through innovative and inclusive training material in basic soft and hard skills. Our research show that from conception through to planning, design, marketing, implementation, delivery and evaluation, managers, supervisors, workers, union representatives, providers and instructors must work together as a team to determine where the training needs are, what the goals of training should be, how training should be delivered and how the entire process and its results should be evaluated. Engage the beneficiaries in the design of the training by integrating their expectations and learning needs in the design of the curriculum. Giving everyone an equal voice promotes confidence and trust and strengthens the stakeholders' commitment to the program and the ownership of it, thereby promoting not only quality and relevance, but also its sustainability. Moreover, CSO's can:

- ✓ Raise awareness about the benefits of lifelong learning through spreading the word (WoM) and featuring opinions of former participants and instructors
- ✓ Design a strategy to reach out low skilled unemployed adults through media campaigns and by providing proper information and take into account any situational, institutional or dispositional barriers that exclude beneficiaries to be informed or



participate

- ✓ In collaboration with employers identify necessary hard and soft skills for the specific job related training and translate them to training itineraries and be a force of proposition in current trends in labour market.
- ✓ Offer job-related, tailor-made training programs in accessible locations such as community centers, name courses using an attractive way including fundamental and of high demand skills development such as confidence, teamwork, employee initiative and problem solving, develop new types of learning support systems to increase accessibility, involve beneficiaries in design of the courses and learning material. Focus on bonds that matter in the educational process and provide trainings that lead to formal qualifications
- ✓ Work on motivation and activation of beneficiaries in order to increase engagement and participation and improve relevance of educational content, assuring the quality of adult learning opportunities.
- ✓ Focus on educational programs based on learning by doing methods and shed the light in the utility of the training in the labour market
- ✓ Develop structured and the same time sensitive to the specific population selection process (for the beneficiaries who will receive the offered training), so as to so as to increase motivation, to ensure fair treatment and to make the selection process as a developmental opportunity for the participants (combined with relevant consultation/feedback after the selection)
- ✓ Show readiness in exploring beneficiaries' expectations and involve them in the design of the curriculum. This can offer a safe environment where a social network will grow and interactions will occur, facilitate properly promoting socializations aspects during the design of the program and provide immediate response when needed
- ✓ Persuade beneficiaries how training responds to their needs and prepare



necessary tools to assess the desired impact with various methodologies and follow-ups

### During implementation of the training:

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CSO's design and implement the following and in some cases in collaboration with local employers and adult training providers:

- ✓ Realize personalized counselling sessions throughout the ongoing training, in order with aim to sustain and/ or increase the engagement of participants in the procedure and to link their newly developed competencies with their action plan and professional goal. Also, maintain beneficiaries goal-oriented, self-determined and promote self-regulation for being on track e.g. by promoting self assessment/learning logs (at the beginning, during)
- ✓ Facilitate soft skills trainings
- ✓ Provide job search support & consultancy so as to prepare for the job market and to encourage mobilization. Therefore, incorporate additional/supplementary workshops. Facilitate specific workshops and learning opportunities regarding job seeking techniques, CV and cover letter writing skills, e-skills and interview skills
- ✓ Present, inform and always be updated on trends in the labor market
- ✓ Design and realize seminars on labor's rights (legal and human rights) relating to labor relations between workers and employers. These seminars can inform that target group about their rights and sensitize them to be more active citizens.
- ✓ Provide beneficiaries with support in individualized needs in order to complete educational programs of employability (ex. Organize peer 2 peer learning in order to overpass learning obstacles)
- ✓ In collaboration with employers organize training opportunities which combine employment with training (working contract of part time in a company and part time in a training center) and offer the opportunity to receive coaching in order to support



performance and job retention.

- ✓ Organize in collaboration with employers job shadowing initiatives, visits in companies, adult apprenticeships, on-the-job training schemes in collaboration with CSO's policy makers in order to advocate for changes in the legislative context
- ✓ Organize motivational speeches and company presentations during seminars. Engage and support employers to design interactive activities that encourage dialogue, mutual identification and motivation.
- ✓ Apply subsidies and grants for job-related training programs (ex. cover transport and care costs, thus eliminating some of the main challenges some people have to participate)
- ✓ Propose employer training allowances for taking on unemployed
- ✓ Increase willingness and positive attitudes for learning
- ✓ Ensure feedback provided from all involved parties (e.g. trainers, coaches, employer, consultants, beneficiaries) in order ensure a holistic approach and to achieve the best possible results for all parties.
- ✓ Promote learning by doing: all training content must be followed by some practical exercises to ensure the skills are properly developed in real situations.
- ✓ When possible, foster intergenerational learning. Sharing learning spaces with younger people help +45 learn from aspects like ICT and catch their energy but also teach them from their wide experience and maturity. This helps them be not only passive learners but people with a lot to teach and give.

Based on our desk research the extent of involvement of social partners and employers, in the selection and content of vocational and educational training, appears to be dependent on local conditions and contacts/ networks between local Public Employment Service (PES) offices and local employers and trade union representatives. The main challenges are around putting in place adequate incentives for employers, providing regulated training





provision, and not generating big bureaucracy (European Commission, 2015: 33).

After training completion CSO's should:

- ✓ Continue to provide support (e.g. consultancy/job search assistance, coaching), in order to find a desirable/relative job and have the opportunity to implement the learned skills and thus, increase the impact and sustainability of the acquired knowledge. CSOs should keep in mind that this support should encourage beneficiaries' autonomy and consequently avoid dependence schemes with the CSO.
- ✓ At the end of the training Organize speed dating interviews in order to connect employers with beneficiaries and proceed to follow up initiatives and changes made for both parts.
- ✓ Conduct total evaluation of the collaboration schemes and beneficiaries' engagement is essential for the sustainability of such initiatives.
- ✓ Conduct total evaluation from all stakeholders of the educational materials and content of employability programs is critical for stepping forward taking into consideration any amendments that should be made.
- ✓ Conduct a 6 month follow up to assess mid-term impact. It is good to have a wider insight on the effects of the training
- ✓ Develop tools or use tools that already exist for recognizing new skills or soft skills<sup>6</sup>for vulnerable populations will give an added value to the whole program.
- ✓ Keep contact with former trainees and monitoring successful work placements. Provide relevant feedback to all involved stakeholders.
- ✓ Maintain contact with employers and training providers
- ✓ Develop alumni society for former beneficiaries in order to maintain a mutual supportive network both for former and future alumni.

<sup>6</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/migrantskills/#/>  
<https://www.digitalskillsaccelerator.eu/learning-portal/online-self-assessment-tool/>  
[http://icaro-softskills.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/IO2\\_Soft-Skills-Assessment-Tool-KitV4-1-1.pdf](http://icaro-softskills.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/IO2_Soft-Skills-Assessment-Tool-KitV4-1-1.pdf)  
<https://www.jobs4techproject.eu/#evaluation>



## EMPLOYERS

### WHY is it important?

In most OECD countries, low-skilled adults are less likely to participate in training activities, and employers and workers representatives have a key role to play in mobilizing them. As highlighted by the European Commission (2015:31), the general trend appears to be towards sustainable models of building employability that will remain relevant over time (i.e. linking training to labour market forecasting approaches, or training being embedded in the national qualifications frameworks). Thus, local adaptation to the needs and trends with focus on current and future employment opportunities emerges more and more, either directly through customized schemes, with specific employers or indirectly based on labour market forecasts. Employer-based approaches (i.e. those targeting specific vacancies and on-the-job training placement schemes) generate higher employment outcomes than classroom-based training).

The implication and engagement of local employers is a key factor not only for motivating low skilled unemployed over 45 years old in training opportunities but also for achieving an effective local ecosystem.

### WHAT act45 proposes?

Implement the matching approach tends to link training for unemployed adults to current employment opportunities, either directly through customized schemes, with specific employers or indirectly based on labour market needs. The purpose of choosing this approach assumes that specific training delivers a number of specialized skills needed for a specific job. The strengths of this employer-focused approach are that (European Commission, 2015: 32): (i) it responds to actual vacancies and (ii) it puts unemployed trainees and employers together (e.g. through guaranteed interviews). Building trust and robust



partnerships among stakeholders (PES, VET providers, employer associations/ chambers and employers) are essential for offering high quality training placements, targeted to the learner's skills and career aspirations, as well as meeting the needs of employers (Cedefop, 2018:37-39). Moreover, combining a matching approach with basic skills training, career counseling and mentoring support by multi-professional teams contributes also to the success of work-based activation programs.

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### **WHO is considered a local employer?**

Local employer can be every person or company that employs people. Every enterprise that is sustainable and want to grow, develop or maintain its activities.

### **WHICH TYPE of companies?**

It is irrelevant to us the size and type of company as we think that every employer could benefit from this approach. That being said, through our desk research we can see that there is kind of a pattern and we encounter low skilled over 45 years old at companies with specific domain of activities such as construction, manufacturing, farming, sales(super market, store, mini market), cleaning, customer services, warehouse, transports, house aids/carers, food processing and preparation. In addition, in big and medium companies usually there are more flexible processes that can support adult training or on the job training than in smaller companies. In small companies though, apprenticeship thrives so there is a margin to develop new apprenticeships approaches with older people. Employers acknowledge that the involvement of managers is critical for efficient basic skills workplace courses.

### **To WHOM we are addressing this document?**

This document is addressed to

*CEO, General Director* (mostly in small enterprises) the person who has the general overview



of the Enterprise. This person can foresee the needs in human resources according to the development of the activity and the company's goals to reach. Often this person in small and medium enterprises is also responsible for the recruitment of the personnel. This means that he/she is aware of the skillset needed to be acquired or developed for the company.

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*HR Directors, managers* This person is responsible for the establishment of the adequate processes in every company as well as of the recruitment procedure. Often, he/she is aware of the skillset needed to be acquired or developed in the company.

Recruiters are the experts in the matching process between the profile of the candidate and the needs and culture of the company.

*Learning and Development Manager, coordinator, officer.* This person is responsible for the development of the employees of the company and for maintaining of their efficiency. He/she is the expert in lifelong education and in technical skills related to the company., and the key person between the company and training providers

*Corporate Social Responsibility Manager/Officer* This person often is the link between the CSO representative and the company and often he/she is the first person a job counselor may encounter in his/her attempt to collaborate with a company or vice versa. He/she is responsible for defining and developing strategies which support a company's ethical, sustainable and environmentally friendly objectives.

*Chamber of Commerce member* This person often advocates on behalf of his/ her business community in order to develop or maintain the business interests of his/her community. Consequently, Chambers of Commerce have only gain from maintaining their Human Resources active and updated.



*Members of powerful employers' association. We will take the specific example of a Confindustria member in Italy. This person participates in an association representing manufacturing and service companies in Italy and thus, has a great network and a general idea about the national economy and the labour market's needs in every sector. By representing companies and their values at institutions of all levels, this person has as main goal to guarantee drive of Italy's economic, social and civil development and can contribute to social well-being and progress. Confindustria has seen its strategic importance grow over the years and is now a benchmark for the entire Italian economic system at the European Union*

## **WHEN AND HOW a local employer can participate in the project?**

There are many ways of involvement in this project

a) Prior to training offer employers can:

- ✓ proceed to the definition of skills demand, the improvement or update of the supply of skills they already have in order to remain competitive and the identification of particular skill demand in the labour market and skill shortage. In order to do that the HR department or the CEO has to develop tools measuring the skills of their employees. Also, Chamber of Commerce representatives can develop tools in order to mitigate to skill shortages in the labour market or the emergence of fading professions. To help define skills demand we propose some tools that already exist <sup>7</sup>.
- ✓ when identify a training need, they should coordinate with CSOs and training providers to go on together projects that ensure a better intervention.
- ✓ present job openings to CSOs through networking actions or events. CSOs on the other hand match open positions to relevant candidates profiles. That is a common way to collaborate with CSOs so as to facilitate the mobilization of the beneficiaries

<sup>7</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/migrantskills/#/>  
<https://www.digitalskillsaccelerator.eu/learning-portal/online-self-assessment-tool/>  
[http://icaro-softskills.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/IO2\\_Soft-Skills-Assessment-Tool-KitV4-1-1.pdf](http://icaro-softskills.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/IO2_Soft-Skills-Assessment-Tool-KitV4-1-1.pdf)  
<https://www.jobs4techproject.eu/#evaluation>



towards attending a skills upgrading program

- ✓ participate in focus groups and programs that CSOs conduct in relation to labor market's issues. CSOs have as main goal to (re)introduce unemployed people to the labor market and match the demand of the skill set needed in the market with the pool of skills and competencies they recognize within their beneficiaries.
- ✓ work as ambassadors of this collaboration to other employers with aim to sensitize other local employers, break stereotypes related to CSOs or to their beneficiaries and motivate other employers to participate in this collaboration framework.
- ✓ in collaboration with CSOs and training providers should build a learning culture in their company
- ✓ focus on systematically recognizing learning that is not reflected in the formal level of educational skills employers can work with institutions such as EOPPEP in Greece which develops and implements comprehensive national systems for the accreditation of non-formal & informal learning and provides scientific and technical support in designing and implementing the vocational guidance national policy, as well as the provision of such services in Greece
- ✓ design and implement subsidies and grants for job-related training programs and/or employer training allowances for taking on unemployed
- ✓ Initiate/support programs of hiring and developing specific categories of population such as long term unemployed women over 45, low digital skilled people over 45 etc./Introduce to their formal procedures or CSR activities a standard percentage of hirings of this type.

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b) During design of training offer:

Local employers could actively collaborate with adult trainers and CSOs in order to translate skills needs into learning outcomes, and co-design experiential training material (real-life examples case studies) on basic and soft skill. Also, during this



phase employers can define hiring objectives (percentage or quota of placement activity after the end of training) and decide to fund education and training ad-hoc (per participant) (ex. Companies with a CSR activity can use their funds in training programs for future employees, giving access to their company to more vulnerable groups). Evidence shows that from conception through to planning, design, marketing, implementation, delivery and evaluation, managers, supervisors, workers, trade union representatives, providers and instructors must work together as a team to determine where the training needs are, what the goals of training should be, how training should be delivered and how the entire process and its results should be evaluated. Giving everyone an equal voice fosters confidence and trust and strengthens the stakeholders' commitment to the program and ownership of it, thereby promoting not only quality and relevance, but also sustainability. In order to best organize and ensure the partnership CSO together with employers can design and sign a collaboration agreement scheduling 6 or 12-months activities, defining communication channels and tasks delegation related to their own availability, expertise and experience.

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c) During implementation of the training:

Collaboration of local employers with CSOs to organize and facilitate

- ✓ training seminars
- ✓ combining employment with training (working contract of part time in a company and part time in a training center)
- ✓ job shadowing initiatives
- ✓ visits in companies
- ✓ motivational speeches and company presentations during seminars
- ✓ adult apprenticeships
- ✓ on-the-job training schemes
- ✓ Provide feedback to trainers/CSO's consultants (if trainees are involved in a kind of



apprenticeship)

- ✓ Job rotation (if have employed trainees) in order to acquire a spherical knowledge of the business and the mission/ goals / activities of each department
- ✓ Participate in a forum among employers, CSOs, training providers, so as to share challenges and best practices

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Based on our research the extent of involvement of social partners and employers, in the selection and content of vocational and educational training, appears to be dependent on local conditions and contacts/ networks between local Public Employment Service (PES) offices and local employers and trade union representatives. The main challenges are around putting in place adequate incentives for employers, providing regulated training provision, and not generating big bureaucracy (European Commission, 2015: 33).

d) After training completion:

Local employers in collaboration with CSOs should organize speed dating interviews and follow-up initiatives. Also, along with the training providers and CSOs they can develop tools for recognizing new skills or soft skills

The validation or recognition of non-formal and informal learning improves skill matching in the labour market by strengthening the signaling power of skills and making it easier for employers to identify which skills jobseekers already have (ILO & OECD, 2018). This process of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is particularly important in countries with high levels of under-qualification where workers possess skills required for the job but lack a qualification to prove this.

Building trust and robust partnerships among stakeholders (PES, VET providers, employer associations/ chambers and employers) are essential for offering high quality training placements, targeted to the learner's skills and career aspirations, as well as meeting the





needs of employers (Cedefop, 2018:37-39). Moreover, combining a matching approach with basic skills training, career counseling and mentoring support by multi-professional teams contributes also to the success of work-based activation programs.



## TRAINING PROVIDERS

### WHY is it important?

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Only one out of every 10 European adults takes part in some form of education or training, despite the fact that more than a quarter of all adults lack the basic literacy, numeracy and digital skills that many of today's jobs require (OECD, 2019; Adult learning statistics[1]). Besides, our research shows that there is an interplay between low level literacy and numeracy skills, qualification levels, skill levels, occupation and skills development. This interplay has an impact on the unemployed, either in seeking job procedures or in participating in training activities. Although education and empowerment of skills could increase employability, only "1 in 4" unemployed low-skilled over 45 is participating in training schemes (European Commission, 2015).

From our research we established that the most common obstacles for low-skilled unemployed people participating in training activities appeared to be financial and informational. Moreover, institutional barriers come into view concerning the "selection process" and "the recognition of the training in a working environment". On the other hand, 82,9% of unemployed over 45 years old low skilled believe that better quality of implementation of the seminars (more practice than theory) would facilitate participation of the target group and "37 in 41" interviewees would like to participate in a training activity related to their profession. Many of them seem to relate their attendance of a seminar with a way to find a job or with increased possibilities to find a job. These findings are in line with Konrad's research (2005), who suggests that lower qualified workers are motivated to learn, if they think that training is useful, believe that they are able to complete the training and that they have some opportunities for better work conditions or advancement possibilities. Participation and retention are dependent on adult learning having a positive reputation and on individual learners being well-disposed towards it. To ensure that this is the case, Member



States can work with social partners and other stakeholders to raise awareness about the many benefits of adult learning, to reach out to adults who would most benefit from it, and provide them with tailored information and guidance, and connection to the labor market. Considering that unemployed and older adults are difficult groups to reach, forming partnerships with intermediary organizations such as community groups and trade unions is recommended. Furthermore, collaboration with specific employers and companies can lead to sustainable learning outcomes and increasing the effectiveness of vocational learning programs.

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### WHAT act45 proposes?

A key factor for tackling unemployment is education and training opportunities that address the specific needs and motivations of both learner and employer. Then, not only does participation increase, but the end result is also better: meaning higher skills, access to better jobs and improved social outcomes. Although, there are different approaches on establishing schemes to support low-skilled unemployed people towards training, evidence show that tailored training achieves and a mix-and-match approach better result for the low-skilled than general schemes (European Commission, 2015:29).

More specifically, Konrad's research (2005) shows that the level of adults' participation in learning activities could be increased if, there are real opportunities for advancement and job rotation, the operation of the learning process is tailored more closely to participants needs and their employers support learning activities.

According to interviewees in our research, a flexible schedule of the training sessions and easily understandable subjects could reinforce their participation in training activities. Especially for this target group, training should be relevant to their needs, delivered in a practical way. Moreover, it is suggested that training activities that lead to qualifications recognized by employers could increase their participation.



## WHO is considered a training provider?

For maximum policy success, there needs to be effective coordination of the different initiatives happening at the national, regional and local levels, and effective collaboration of all the various institutions, organizations and stakeholders.

As training providers can be considered all types of formal or non- formal educational institutes or professionals who work as freelancers, which already provide occupational learning activities and adult learning programs. Additionally, providers who are willing to participate in this proposed scheme, in order to design and implement professional integration programs for low-skilled people over 45 years old.

## WHICH TYPE of training provider?

Vocational Training Centers and Institutes, Lifelong Learning Centers, Universities that provide training programs or lifelong learning programs, Private Schools, Assessment and Certification Organizations, NGOs who design and/or implement vocational training programs, literacy learning courses or digital learning courses, Companies' Training Academies. For instance, there are educational institutions who have specialization in specific professional sector, such as accounting, hospitality, housekeeping, food & beverage management, sales, customer services, transports. These occupations have identified from our desk research as the most widespread among low skilled over 45 years old unemployed people. Moreover, training providers can co- design innovative training programs in sectors that are in demand in the local labor market. Other specific training providers could be Training and work cooperatives. We find these structures in Italy and they offer services mainly to unemployed people and aim to guarantee the "employability" of people.

TRAINING/WORK COOPERATIVES



vocational training institutions that, with the aim of strengthening their skills and facilitating their insertion into society with greater tools and a higher professional capacity in performing tasks. The training offer of these realities therefore has the aim of guaranteeing the "employability" of people

### To WHOM we are addressing this document?

*CEO, General Director or owner of the educational organization*, the person who have the general overview of the Institute. This person can proceed to make agreement with other stakeholders for creating synergies according to the organization's philosophy.

*Professional Development Managers & Coordinators*, the person who builds relationships within the institute to create healthy and professional educational programs supporting the development properties.

*Educational programs expert*, the person who evaluates educator's properties and trainees skills and creates appropriate educational programs focusing on learning and employment outcomes, that are beneficial for learners and companies.

*Instructors, trainers & educators & adult educators*, the persons who have experience in designing, organizing, facilitating and evaluating educational and training programs for adults, taking in consideration learners' profile and adapting the program to trainees' and stakeholders' needs.

*CSOs trainers*, who have experience in adult education and training targeted to vulnerable groups and they can identify their skills, their special needs and have implemented learning methods, according to the way they learn.



*Trade unions representatives*, all unions that provide, organize and implement VET programs independently or in cooperation with companies and enterprises regarding the labor market's needs.

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*Deans & Professors*, who want to link University to the labor market, organizing training programs based on labor market's needs and providing advanced learning methods for low-skilled adults.

*Freelance professionals & educators*, who have many years of experience in their field, such as accountants, hairdressers or any other occupation and they can train newcomers in their occupation, implementing appropriate learning methods.

*Assessment and Certification Organizations Manager*, who can explore labor markets needs and will develop formal procedures to certify non-formal skills in specific occupations, such as care-giving or warehouse work.

*Training/work cooperative members in Italy*, who aim at strengthening unemployed skills facilitating their insertion into society with greater tools and a higher professional capacity in performing tasks. The training they offer is directly linked to labour market's needs and have as main goal to place unemployed people to open job positions. Employers contact them to train unemployed manpower for their job vacancies.

## WHEN AND HOW a training provider can participate?

It is critical training providers' involvement in all phases of the program. More specific;

Before:

- ✓ Participate in focus groups with employers and Learning and Development Managers in order to specify the **skill set demand** to perform in their sector and



the lack of skills that employers have identify to employees over 45 years old, taking in consideration the requirements of job openings

- ✓ Participate in focus groups with CSOs and employers to identify the motivation, the obstacles and the attitudes of people over 45 years old during the participation in a training program.
- ✓ Explore and take in consideration employees' interests and expectations regarding the learning outcomes (Cross, 1981).
- ✓ Collaborate with CSOs for training instructors, educators and training providers to the target group's special needs as well as participate in focus groups and programs that CSOs conduct with companies in relation to labor market's issues
- ✓ Conduct individualized sessions with unemployed people to specify the skills set that they already have and the skills that they lack. Moreover, they have to focus on the employees' obstacles, needs and motivations to participate in a training program. Not only learning needs, but also social needs and health problems have to be taken in consideration, bringing the outside in. Training and education initiatives should make it possible for participants to benefit from job oriented qualifications.
- ✓ Interviews with low-skilled 45+ workers to understand the way they learn, what methods they use and what skills they need in order to be more effective. Furthermore, by involving them in the content and design of their own literacy and numeracy courses and learning material (Windisch 2015:58) learners' motivation increases.
- ✓ Sensitize employers about the benefits of collaboration in designing training programs for low-skilled people, underlying the learning and employment outcomes
- ✓ Setting requirements for the selection of the participants to ensure their commitment in the training program (for example a low fee or accomplishment



recompense, in cooperation with CSOs

- ✓ Identify schemes of recognition non-formal skills, in cooperation with assessment and certification organizations (Recognition of Prior Learning)
- ✓ Review related research regarding adult learning programs taking into account learning practices that are based on replicable procedures that have proven themselves over time for large numbers of people and the learning outcomes from other relative training programs that companies or CSOs have already conducted
- ✓ Seek instructors from the labour market and probably from interested future employers.

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During design of training:

- ✓ Design programs focused on needs of the target group: Short-term duration and flexible timeline are a major criteria for older people to participate in a training program. Additionally, easily understandable tasks and short-term learning outcomes should be adopted in the learning process, that learners can value knowing what progress they have made. Learning working methods should comprehend distance learning, which is widely preferred (29,3%) due to adults' obligations. Learning methods by using technology and less physical or manual techniques are appropriate for older workers. At the same time, adults need more practical learning than theory and trainers have to use participants' experiences as a base in the learning process. Besides, according to the results of ACT45 interviews, participants have professional activity mostly in technical fields and manual work and elderly care.
- ✓ Adopt diversified teaching methods in forming mixed groups of learners in tailor-made programs for adults, it is critical (different ages, different skillset, but homogeneous groups regarding the occupation or sector) because it is a





simulation and preparation for a real working environment.

- ✓ Develop learning content that includes trainees' interests and needs and focus on specific sector in local level and their wider benefits need to be assessed. Factors associated to quality that are crucial for motivating to participate in learning settings are amongst others (Konrad, 2005) the amount of autonomy provided, the degree to which students can identify with and find interesting a given learning task or set of tasks and the type and timing of the feedback provided.
- ✓ Specify the skills and the learning and employment outcomes in order to be clear to the participants and using self - assessment forms regarding the identified needs in the beginning of the program and ask for filling out the same form in the end of the program, in order to self-assess their advancement. This way they can be more active in the learning progress.
- ✓ Prepare learning certificates or recognize qualifications in collaboration with employers and offer an accumulation of ECVET credits are additional benefits that can motivate adults to participate in learning activities
- ✓ Provide the necessary equipment and space and ask for equipment or workshops space from companies to implement the training program or simulate their facilities to a working environment. The program must not have requirements for studying or/and equipment that participants may not be able to have
- ✓ Co-design the program with Job counsellors of CSOs and Learning and Development Managers of companies, regarding the learning content taking in consideration the learning habits of unemployed people
- ✓ Identify and foresee the barriers not only to the participation but also to the process. Flexible schedule of the training sessions is appropriate to avoid drop out.
- ✓ Include the employability purpose in the name of the program, such as *Job*



*integration training* program. The name of the program and the courses should not sound formal, as low-skilled people have not positive experiences from the school. (Windisch 2015:48-51)

- ✓ Marketing methods should include information through different media and specifically using television, that is the most successful media in reaching people with low skills than print media (Windisch 2015:48-51)

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During implementation of the training:

- ✓ Present the content, methods and goals with a clear job perspective to trainees to include their recommendations as participatory learning approaches increase the commitment and make sure the acknowledge for learners' skills that already have
- ✓ Start from practice to reach the theory through inquiry-based learning approach and co-decide specific learning outcomes and using case studies and examples. In addition to learning, learners can develop their own booklets and newspapers during writing classes which are then used as learning material by other participants. (ή which could be used as learning material by other participants later on)
- ✓ Make sure that all trainees participate actively in the learning process, including their experience and knowledge. An immediate feedback of the learning outcomes and a day to day evaluation between the learners increases their autonomy and can lead to co-decide for the most effective learning method. In this process, learners can present their practices to an expert for getting feedback.
- ✓ Organize on the job training (in different companies) with an expert in a regular base and use of this experience in the theoretical part with the instructor to share what they have learned. A low-skilled employee can act as a facilitator or co-trainer in the learning process



- ✓ Strengthen the relationships during a training activity; Developing Peer to Peer activities by taking into account every learners' strength, is a critical factor. This can mitigate obstacles in a heterogeneous groups and can enhance socialization that acts as a motivation for all the participants.
- ✓ Ask for feedback on the way to handle the obstacles with trainees and CSOs stakeholders. A focal person has to be in charged of the constant follow up of the learners' participation throughout the process. Moreover, meeting between the focal person and the group in a weekly basis to discuss possible difficulties or displeasure can decrease the drop- out risk. In learning, relationships matter: teacher/student, student/student, and the learner's support network.
- ✓ Valorize skills acquired through a document/portfolio that links the skills of the individual, ideally in relation to professional or educational standards (European Commission, 2018)

#### After training completion:

- ✓ Recognize new methods coming from trainees, dissemination of the learning materials to relative organizations, CSOs and companies, that can make good use of it, by developing their own programs.
- ✓ Use assessment forms to evaluate the learning outcomes and assure the quality of the program. Adapting valid ways of measuring adults' learning gains, because some progress learners make, such as improvements in confidence, teamwork, employee initiative and problem solving, cannot be captured by a purely quantitative comparison of basic skills proficiency prior and after the course. (European Commission, 2015:29). It is difficult to compare the relative success of different schemes because the outcomes depend on the mix of target groups and each scheme's objectives. In this case, combining training with other labor market measures could be an effective method.



- ✓ Raise awareness about the many benefits of adult learning. Trainers can work as ambassadors of this collaboration to other training providers with aim to sensitize other local organizations & institutes, break stereotypes related to CSOs or to their beneficiaries and motivate them to participate in this collaboration framework. (Alumni club/network, as mentioned before) 36
- ✓ Reach out to unemployed low-skilled adults with tailored information and guidance and sensitize the target group with community outreach programs that provide information for prospective learners in the community and/or offering basic skills trainings in accessible locations, such as community centers or the workplace, also helps recruit learners
- ✓ Recognize qualifications gained through the participation in a seminar/certification.
- ✓ Keep contact with former trainees and monitoring successful work placements. Provide relevant feedback to all involved stakeholders.

Building trust and robust partnerships among stakeholders (Employment Services, VET providers, employer associations and employers) is essential for offering high quality training placements, targeted to the learner's skills and career aspirations, as well as meeting the needs of employers. Having everyone an equal voice fosters confidence and trust and strengthens the stakeholders' commitment to the program and ownership of it, thereby promoting not only quality and relevance, but also sustainability.



## POLICY MAKERS and SOCIAL PARTNERS

### WHY is it important?

Throughout our desk research we established that unemployment rates generally appeared to be levelling out and rates for people with low educational qualifications continued to rise, reaching almost 20%.

There were around 25 million unemployed adults aged 25-64 in the EU in 2011 from those 10 million, were low-qualified. Also, low-skilled unemployed people are over-represented among the long-term unemployed, many of whom work in declining occupations and sectors.

Furthermore, in 2013:

- ✓ 20 % of the EU working age population has low literacy and numeracy skills;
- ✓ 25 % of adults lack the skills to effectively make use of ICTs;
- ✓ people with low proficiency are easily caught in a 'low skills trap' as they are less likely to participate in learning activities that people with high proficiency;
- ✓ education and skills increase employability: this represents a challenge 25% of unemployed who has low literacy and numeracy skills.

The PIAAC Survey identified challenges per country, providing policy recommendations<sup>8</sup>. In particular, for Italy and Spain, the survey highlighted that in both countries around 30% of adults have literacy and numeracy skills at level 1 or below, which are the highest shares among EU countries.

The survey recommends the reinforcement of re-skilling training programs for older and low-skilled workers, in order to increase the labor market relevance of education and training. Findings in Spain show that there is a general problem with skills proficiency, not only amongst the young but throughout the general population, as Spain scores far below the OECD and EU averages regarding numeracy and literacy. In Italy, the PIAAC survey

<sup>8</sup> European Commission, 2013: 20-22



focuses on stepping up efforts to prevent early school leaving and improve school quality and outcomes. What is worrying is that findings show that in Italy, skills of people aged between 25 and 34 are at the same level as younger generations. Skills among older generations are even lower.

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Moreover, learning during adulthood tends to be undertaken by young adults and highly educated individuals as opposed to older adults or adults with lower skills. Furthermore, there is a divergence between participation in education and training by age group. Less than 6% of all 55-64-year-old participated in education and training in 2013, compared to nearly 17% of 25-34 year old. PIAAC also found that people who are employed were more likely to access non-formal learning activities compared to unemployed people (45% compared to 23% respectively).

This would seem to indicate that those who need education and training the most in order to return to employment have the least chance of getting it. This is a particular problem for those unemployed people whose lack of basic literacy or numeracy skills prevents them from accessing more job-specific training.

Moreover, the same review concludes that training for unemployed adults is probably not sufficient, at least in countries such as Greece and Bulgaria, where small proportions of unemployed people take part in training despite these countries facing some of the highest unemployment rates for low-skilled adults in the EU.

### WHAT act45 proposes?

Policy makers have the decision-making power to change or set institutional policies.

They can influence the collaboration framework in two ways. Firstly, via reviewing the structural framework and policies applied in partner countries. Throughout our desk research we have examined and developed the barriers encountered by low-skilled unemployed over 45 years old to participate in education and training opportunities. One key



category of barriers is the “structural barriers”<sup>9</sup>, given that derive from social conditions and structures. In this way it is proven through research that societies that provide for older adults, for the unemployed and for low-skilled adults, tend to not pose institutional barriers to education and training, and as such, the situational barriers that one may face are also overcome. Consequently, policy makers can facilitate the participation of the target group in education and training opportunities by proposing more free training opportunities related to the labor market or by creating a culture where personal development and lifelong training is seen as an advantage and a privilege accessible to all citizens.

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Secondly, many employers believe that tackling the issue of low basic skills must be a shared responsibility between the government, education authorities and employers. The main challenges are around putting in place adequate incentives for employers and training providers providing regulated training provision, and not generating big bureaucracy. Also, we have already mentioned that coordination of adult learning policy at national, regional and local levels can lead to maximum policy success. Effective coordination of the different initiatives happening at the national, regional and local levels, and effective collaboration of all the various institutions, organizations and stakeholders is key factor for succeeding to motivate unemployed low-skilled over 45 years old to participate in training opportunities, thus mitigate unemployment issues and reintegration of long term unemployed to the labor market.

### **WHO is considered a policy maker or/and a social partner and to WHOM we addressing this document?**

**Trade Union Representative:** this person aims to safeguard and advance the interests of the trade union’s members. It can play a key role in negotiations on pay and conditions and the production and implementation of policies. One of the policies could also be regarding Lifelong Learning and training opportunities.

<sup>9</sup> Rubenson and Desjardins (2009)



**Public Employment Service (PES) Managers/officer:** The PES plays an important role in providing general and vocational training to upgrade the skills of the workforce. More specifically, Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs) are an important re- and upskilling tool provided by PES. It however remains a challenge to find effective measures to foster the jobseekers` employability at European labour markets<sup>10</sup>.

**Municipal Council Representative:** This person represents the decision-making body of the municipality. Most of the competencies of the municipal councils are directly related to the sectors that employ our target group. Thus, municipal programs are influenced by the upskilling of the unemployed low-skilled over 45 years old and vice versa. In the competencies of the municipal council in Greece, in other countries??? the following areas are included Building permits and urban planning applications, Social welfare, Issuing of professional licenses, Agriculture, livestock and fisheries, Transport infrastructure, Health care and Education.

**Ministry of Education and Lifelong Learning officer:** This person has a global overview of Lifelong Learning National framework and has as main goal to develop and promote lifelong learning in a national level. Can give a targeted and pertinent input about the project feasibility and dissemination potentials and can encourage its implementation. He/she is interested in gathering best practices and local initiatives taken by CSOs, training providers and/or local employers.

**National Organization for the Certification of Qualifications & Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP) officer:** This person represents a public entity that operates in Greece under the supervision of the Minister of Education, Research and Religious Affairs. His /her main goal is to participate in the creation or maintenance of a holistic and interrelated policy framework for the development of lifelong learning and certification of qualifications in Greece. This person is interested in linking VET with labour market needs, upgrading people`s occupational qualifications, reinforcing their employment perspectives and strengthening social cohesion.

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.pesnetwork.eu/2020/01/21/public-employment-services-almeps/>





**Ministry of Labour representatives:** It is in his/her interest organization to motivate unemployed low skilled over 45 years old to participate in learning opportunities. In fact the Ministry of Labour has created in Greece a specific public body called The *National Institute of Labour and Human Resources (NILHR)* which has the mission to implement, monitor and analyze issues of the labor market and lifelong learning. In particular NILHR has as main goal to analyze the supply of, and demand for, occupational categories and skills, and identify training needs at a national and a local level.<sup>11</sup> This representative can be a key stakeholder both for the success as well as for the dissemination of the project.

**Representatives from interministry and labour market collaborations or other councils such as the Council for Tripartite Cooperation in Bulgaria.** These people represent the government, trade unions and employers' organizations and their goal is to assure a healthy economy plan in Bulgaria. They have a decision-making authority in terms of policies, measures and employees rights (including minimum wage, leaves, redistribution of social services, etc.). In regional level **Employment commissions** representatives include local and national authorities (in this case the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies), trade unions, employers' and NGOs, have as main goal to lower unemployment and create efficient employment schemes. These representatives prepare policies for retraining / training / employment.

## WHEN AND HOW a policy maker can participate in the project?

There are many ways of implication in this project

a) Prior to training offer policy makers can:

- ✓ proceed to the definition of skills demand in the labour market and the identification of particular skill demand in the labour market and skill shortage. In order to do that the *Public Employment Service (PES) Managers/officers should collaborate with Trade*

<sup>11</sup> <https://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/en/institutions/national-institute-labour-and-human-resources-nilhr>



*Union representatives, Chamber of Commerce and experts of NILHR.*

- ✓ Linking the analysis of labour market's demand skill wise to training opportunities, NILHR and EOPPEP should work together with Trade Union representatives, Chamber of Commerce, local employers and training providers
- ✓ Establish tailor made program and adjust training program already exist to the labour market's needs for the specific group
- ✓ Participate in focus groups and programs that CSOs conduct in relation to labor market's issues. CSOs have as main goal to (re)introduce unemployed people to the labor market and match the demand of the skill set needed in the market with the pool of skills and competencies they recognize within their beneficiaries.
- ✓ Work as ambassadors of this collaboration to other policy makers and other institutional entities
- ✓ Promote lifelong learning policies inspired by other EU countries (adult apprenticeships, short internships that allow the reorientation of long term unemployed, give **incentives** to local employers to participate actively in act45 collaboration framework).
- ✓ Focus on systematically evaluating and recognizing learning that is not reflected in the formal level of educational skills- design tools of recognition/certification of those competencies. EOPPEP for example can work in collaboration with CSOs and local employers to develop and implement accreditation of non-formal & informal learning and provide scientific and technical support in designing and implementing the vocational guidance national policy.
- ✓ Train the trainers and CSO counselors on the Lifelong Learning framework, on new policies and new initiatives and bring together organizations that work in the same issues etc.

b) During design of training offer:

Based on our desk research the extent of involvement of social partners and employers, in



the selection and content of vocational and educational training, appears to be dependent on local conditions and contacts/ networks between local Public Employment Service (PES) offices and local employers and trade union representatives. The main challenges are around putting in place adequate incentives for employers, providing regulated training provision, and not generating big bureaucracy (European Commission, 2015: 33). Also, in designing tailor made training and education initiatives that makes it possible for participants to benefit from job oriented qualifications.

c) During implementation of the training:

Speed up procedures that could be an impediment towards the implementation of decided incentives for involved stakeholders

d) After training completion:

The validation or recognition of non-formal and informal learning improves skill matching in the labour market by strengthening the signaling power of skills and making it easier for employers to identify which skills jobseekers already have (ILO & OECD, 2018). This process of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is particularly important in countries with high levels of under-qualification where workers possess skills required for the job but lack a qualification to prove this.

Building trust and robust partnerships among stakeholders (PES, VET providers, employer associations/ chambers and employers) are essential for offering high quality training placements, targeted to the learner's skills and career aspirations, as well as meeting the needs of employers (Cedefop, 2018:37-39). Moreover, combining a matching approach with basic skills training, career counseling and mentoring supported by multi-professional teams contributes also to the success of work-based activation programs.



## ANNEX

### Infographics- When and how stakeholders can participate throughout the project



Steps for CSO's throughout the training offer.

Prior	During Design	During Implementation	After
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze the job market (emerging sectors, opportunities for unemployed low-skilled 45+) &amp; explore relevant issues (ex. focus groups for local employers).</li> <li>Encourage a learning culture by raising awareness on the benefits of lifelong learning &amp; develop subsidies and grants.</li> <li>Attend job events, develop a network of collaborations with other CSO's &amp; join employment roundtables on the training and employment field.</li> <li>Provide personal coaching to beneficiaries &amp; design engagement strategy plan for employers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design strategy on reaching, motivating, and activating unemployed low-skilled 45+ people &amp; develop tailor-made selection process.</li> <li>Identify skills that lead to professional development and specific trends in the labour market, matching with companies' demands.</li> <li>Collaborate with employers and training providers, in offering accessible job-related tailor-made training programs.</li> <li>Focus on learning by doing methods, stressing its utility in the labour market.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage mobilization via personalized counselling sessions &amp; use tools to keep track of participants' goals.</li> <li>Design supplementary workshops (on CV and Cover letter writing, Interviewing skills, etc.) facilitating soft skills training.</li> <li>Collaborate with employers in organizing job shadowing initiatives, visits in companies, adult apprenticeships, on-the-job training schemes, motivational speeches and company presentations during seminars.</li> <li>Record feedback from involved stakeholders throughout the training.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue the provision of individualized coaching and support &amp; organize networking activities with employers.</li> <li>Evaluate collaboration schemes, educational materials, and content &amp; provide feedback to involved stakeholders.</li> <li>Develop or use tools to recognize new or soft skills for vulnerable populations.</li> <li>Maintain employers and training providers network &amp; develop alumni society for former and future beneficiaries to sustain a mutual supportive framework.</li> </ul>



## Steps for Employers throughout the training offer.

Prior	During Design	During Implementation	After
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognize and define systematically non-formal learning and skills.</li> <li>Participate in CSO's activities connected to labour market's issues (ex. focus groups).</li> <li>Build a learning culture and act as ambassadors for other employers.</li> <li>Initiate/support programs for hiring people from the target group and design grant programs for their development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Translate skills' needs into learning outcomes.</li> <li>Co-design experiential training material (real-life examples case studies) on basic and soft skills.</li> <li>Share challenges and best practices (i.e. through participatory forums).</li> <li>Collaborate with CSOs on scheduling activities for their participation in the training.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organize training seminars, job shadowing initiatives, visits in companies, motivational speeches, job rotation opportunities.</li> <li>Facilitate training seminars.</li> <li>Organize adult apprenticeships and implement on-the-job training schemes.</li> <li>Provide feedback to trainers/CSO's consultants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in job fairs and speed dating interviews.</li> <li>Validate and recognize non-formal and informal learning outcomes.</li> <li>Satisfy hiring objectives.</li> </ul>



## Steps for Training Providers throughout the training offer.

Prior	During Design	During Implementation	After
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Translate skills' set demand into learning outcomes.</li> <li>• Participate in CSO's activities connected to labour market's issues (ex. focus groups) &amp; create a pool of future instructors (involve possible interested employers).</li> <li>• Interview unemployed low-skilled 45+ on their way of learning, motivation, obstacles, and attitudes.</li> <li>• Identify schemes of recognition for non-formal skills.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design programs according to the interests and needs of the labour market and the target group.</li> <li>• Encourage forming mixed groups of learners.</li> <li>• Specify learning and employment outcomes &amp; recognize qualifications (ex. certifications).</li> <li>• Identify and foresee possible barriers &amp; adapt marketing methods to the target group.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use participatory learning approaches encouraging Peer to Peer activities, making sure all trainees are active in the learning process.</li> <li>• Start from practice to reach the theory &amp; valorize the skills acquired.</li> <li>• Organize on the job trainings in collaboration with employers.</li> <li>• Identify obstacles during the process and collaborate with job counselors to mitigate the effects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize and disseminate best practices.</li> <li>• Raise awareness on the benefits of adult learning.</li> <li>• Recognize qualifications gained (ex. certifications).</li> <li>• Keep contact with former trainees and monitor successful work placements, providing feedback to involved stakeholders.</li> </ul>



## Steps for Policy makers throughout the training offer.

Prior	During Design	During Implementation	After
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define skills demand in the labour market and link them to tailor-made training opportunities.</li> <li>• Participate in CSO's activities connected to labour market's issues (ex. focus groups).</li> <li>• Recognize and define systematically non-formal learning and skills related needs, promoting lifelong learning policies, subsidies and grants.</li> <li>• Train trainers and CSO's counselors on current Lifelong Learning framework.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Translate skills needs into learning outcomes.</li> <li>• Co-design experiential training material.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speed up procedures and implement Lifelong Learning policies for low-skilled 45+ people, recognizing the importance of non-formal learning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work on the recognition of non-formal and informal learning.</li> </ul>



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## Useful Links

Adult Education in Europe 2019 – A Civil Society View European Association for the Education of Adults, <https://eaea.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Country-Reports-2019.pdf>

Digital Competence Framework for Citizens (2013), by the European Commission, <https://www.digitalskillsaccelerator.eu/learning-portal/online-self-assessment-tool/>

EU Skills Profile Tool for Third Country Nationals, <https://ec.europa.eu/migrantskills/#/>

Network of the European Public Employment Services, <https://www.pesnetwork.eu/2020/01/21/public-employment-services-almeps/>

National Institute of Labour and Human Resources (NILHR), <https://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/en/institutions/national-institute-labour-and-human-resources-nilhr>

Soft Skills Assessment Toolkit and Individual Goal Mapping – Report and Development of Ideal Tools (2017), [http://icaro-softskills.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/IO2\\_Soft-Skills-Assessment-Tool-KitV4-1-1.pdf](http://icaro-softskills.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/IO2_Soft-Skills-Assessment-Tool-KitV4-1-1.pdf)

Vocational Education and Training and Jobs for a technological and virtual future, <https://www.jobs4techproject.eu/#evaluation>