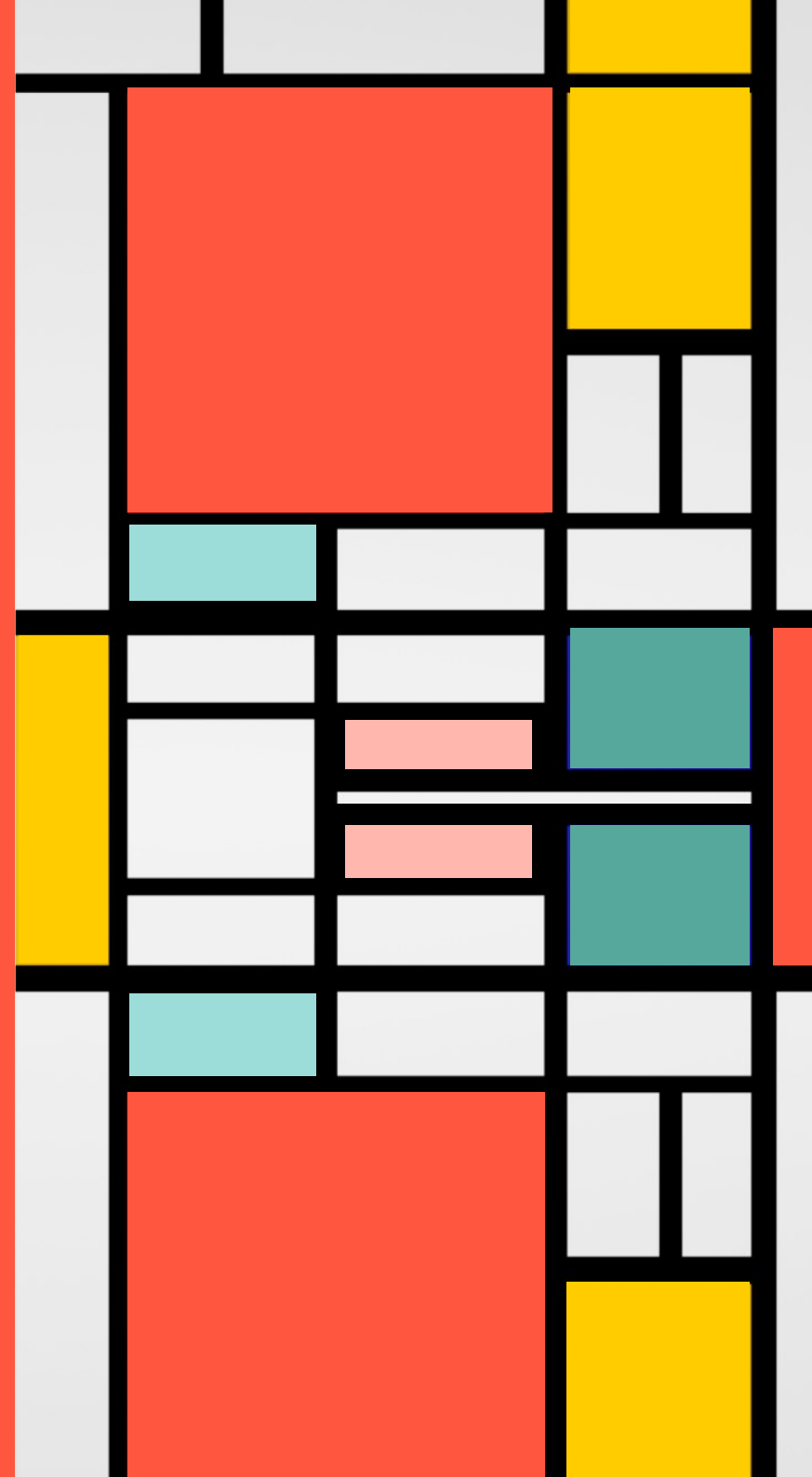




Life Skills For Europe

Awareness Raising & Strategy  
Toolkit



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## Introduction to the Concept of Life Skills

The PIAAC results have shown an alarming lack of basic skills across Europe, one in five has problems with basic reading and numeracy; one in four has very low digital skills. Providing adequate and appropriate courses for this target group does not only mean allowing them to escape from the low skills trap, but also to empower them to contribute to their own lives, families and communities. This is also true for the increasing numbers of newcomers to Europe, who need a diverse range of skills to live in dignity with and contribute fully to their country of destination. For all the reasons above, a more comprehensive approach to learning should be adopted. The concept of life skills exceeds the basic skills concept, since it promotes more than just a basis for survival. Non-formal adult education can and should be the driver of this change by embracing the vision of life skills as building blocks for increasing individuals' opportunities in the labour market and in the society as a whole. In some countries, adult education providers have already started initiatives to broaden the concept of basic skills, and have adopted more holistic practices in basic skills provision.

## The LSE project

The Life Skills for Europe project aims to improve the basic skills provision in Europe by explaining, further developing and upscaling the life skills approach. The project also fosters a common understanding of the benefits of life skills for adult education across Europe.

## The LSE project definition of Life Skills for Europe

Life skills are a constituent part of capabilities for life and work in a particular social, cultural and environmental context. The types of life skills emerge as a response to the needs of the individual in real life situations.

Life skills are building blocks of independence and self-efficacy. They are combinations of different capabilities that in general enable adults to become lifelong learners and to solve problems in order to live an independent life as individuals and participate in a collective life within society. Life skills are closely related to the key challenges adults are faced with in the modern world. This means, for example, taking care of their physical and mental health, actively contributing to their wellbeing, mastering financial matters, and coping with the digital environment. When skills are defined in this way, it becomes clear that competences embrace not only the needs of the individuals but also their knowledge and values.

## Components and benefits of life skills

### Numeracy capabilities

Recognizing, engaging with and using numerical information in everyday life – using mathematics to solve problems, describe, explain and predict what will happen

### Literacy capabilities

Understanding and creating written text – interacting with written information in daily life, at home, work and in the community – using these capabilities to participate in civic life

### Financial capabilities

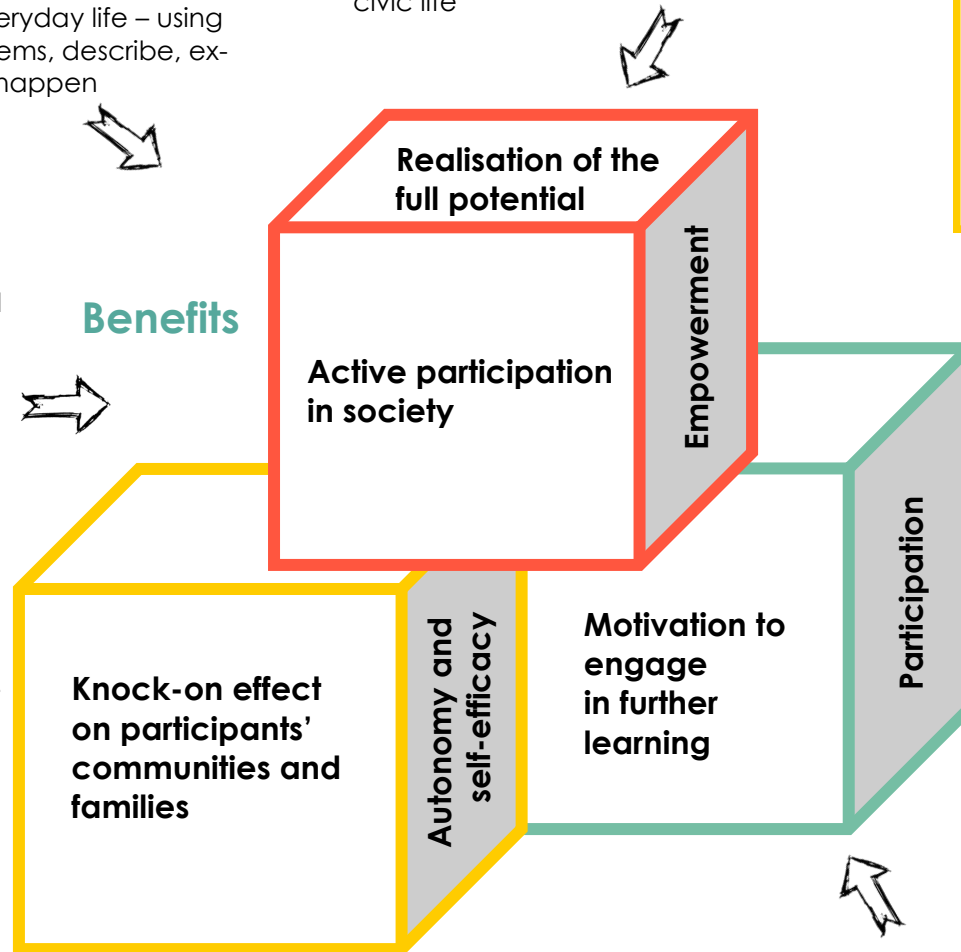
Being able to manage money and to use the information and advice services that are required to effectively manage one's own finances

### Health capabilities

Having the necessary knowledge and competences to take care of one's own physical and mental well-being and care for others – knowing how to access and make use of healthcare services – understanding basic health information (e.g. medication, food packaging)

### Personal and interpersonal capabilities

Self-management, self-esteem and empathy – being able to make decisions and solve problems – being able to communicate with others in a respectful way, to manage conflicts and collaborate with others across differences



The following illustration represents the eight types of capabilities that are incorporated the definition of life skills as well as the benefits they bring to the individual and the society.

There could be numerous combinations of these capabilities in real life. The combination of capabilities that an adult needs for a successful life depends on the concrete circumstances and real needs.

### Digital capabilities

Being familiar with a computer supported and web-based environment and able to use digital tools, media and resources, e.g. to find information, solve practical tasks, create digital content and products, and manage data – having a critical understanding of the nature, techniques and impact of media messages

### Environmental capabilities

Understanding the impact of daily actions on the environment (e.g. ways food is produced and consumed, energy, recycling, waste reduction) – understanding the concept of sustainable development and how it connects environmental, social and economic elements

### Civic capabilities

Understanding how democracy works in practice, how to participate in democratic processes and be engaged in communities – understanding and respecting religious and cultural differences

Source: LSE leaflet. (2017)

## The LSE research

The first intellectual output of this project<sup>1</sup> provides an overview of the understandings of life skills in Europe and beyond, and it provides a collection of good practices and innovative tools already used in the partner countries. In the framework of that output, a small scale survey on terminology of life skills was designed that included 24 carefully selected researchers and practitioners from participating countries and representatives of relevant institutions or international organisations. The inputs from the small-scale survey on terminology analysis were very valuable because they represent perspectives on the present living concepts of life skills in adult education theory and practice and present new insights for the definition in the partners' countries. Furthermore, the investigation on the life skills concepts included the review of the definitions promoted by international organisations such as UNICEF's definition in the Global Evaluation of Life skills Education Programmes<sup>2</sup> and UNESCO's definition included in The third Global Report on Adult Learning and Education<sup>3</sup>. Investigation was extended also to the literature review on life skills definitions, including the concept of the Citizens' Curriculum<sup>4</sup> and several others that are described in [The Report on Life Skills Approaches in Europe](#).

While drafting the report, the life skills consortium took into consideration the framework proposed by the 'COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning', published on the 17th January 2018. The competences proposed there are included in the Life Skills for Europe approach but are grouped differently. The LSE consortium wanted to give visibility to the building blocks/domains that will make people capable to contribute to their own life and to society. In the LSE project we use the term CAPABILITIES with the purpose of upgrading the definition of (key) competences. The LSE partners strongly believe that the critical and ethical dimensions are integral parts of the development of (key) competences, which are very well represented by the term, 'capabilities'.



1. <https://eaea.org/project/life-skills-for-europe-lse/?pid=10220>
2. [https://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/UNICEF\\_GLS\\_Web.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/UNICEF_GLS_Web.pdf) (1.9.2017)
3. <http://uil.unesco.org/system/files/grale-3.pdf> (1.9.2017)
4. <https://www.learningandwork.org.uk/our-work/life-and-society/citizens-curriculum/> (1.9.2017)

## The LSE Framework

The second output of the project<sup>5</sup> offers an overarching framework for life skills learning that is applicable across Europe. The framework aims to establish a common understanding of life skills by defining eight key types of capabilities necessary to be an active participant in life and work. For each capability there are two aspects, difficulty of skill/capability level and familiarity of context, which allow for a range of starting points and support the recognition of learners' progression.

The framework shows how learners may be supported to develop their capability at different levels, from basic understanding at 'foundation' level through to increasingly complex learning at the 'extending' level and at the same time, develop these skills for different purposes and in different contexts - in relation to their own personal empowerment; in their relationships with others, including family, friends and their local community; and through wider engagement as an active citizen.



[The Framework](#) is not intended to be exhaustive or prescriptive. Rather, it is presented as a starting point which can be added to and adapted to address the needs and requirements of different groups of learners. Equally, it is not presented as a programme of learning that learners work through from start to finish; learning should be prioritised so that the capabilities selected, reflect learners' needs. The teaching and learning principles that Life Skills for Europe promotes are also described in the framework.

	Foundation	Developing	Extending
<b>Personalisation</b>	Identify personal strengths and understand the importance of self	Identify personal strengths and weaknesses	Develop personal strengths and weaknesses
<b>Relationships with others &amp; local community</b>	Engage with groups in the local community and in the wider world	Engage with groups in the local community and in the wider world	Engage with groups in the local community and in the wider world
<b>Active engagement</b>	Engage with groups in the local community and in the wider world	Engage with groups in the local community and in the wider world	Engage with groups in the local community and in the wider world



5. <https://eaea.org/project/life-skills-for-europe-lse/?pid=10220>

## Benefits of well-developed life skills and learners' stories

### Benefits for an individual

In general, life skills enable adults to become lifelong learners, to solve problems, to become critical thinkers, to manage their lives and to participate in the community and the labour market. They are building blocks of autonomy and self-efficacy but at the same time provide the individual with the will and capacity to contribute more to its environment. An adult with well-developed life skills will be 'an adult who is capable', a person who is not only aware of his/her own survival needs, but also the importance of self-development as well as his/her own well-being.

*"FOKUS has helped me to live in a healthy way both mentally and physical. At FOKUS I get the support and the tools to learn how to function as a person. I have enhanced my self-esteem and are learning how to relax in my own company"*

*(Learner at FOKUS, a day folk high school in Denmark)*

*"Now I'm not afraid to say – I mean even in work I will now say, no that's not good for me, I prefer this way or – I now – I'm not ashamed of who I am anymore and I will now speak up for myself whereas then I wouldn't...."*

*(Learner on RBLI LifeWorks programme, United Kingdom)*

*"I try to listen and hear that every single woman, recognize the potential in each of them, and at the same time take care for dialogue among them, and encourage them to be able to hear each other and to focus on the realization of a common goal. The group acts as one, as one image, because wherever they appear, they leave an impression as the group of 13 participants, each of them with her own impressions helping to make a story whole." / ... / "Participants are progressing on the personal level as well as a group. As a mentor, it's great to observe this gaining process, and I'm proud of them." / ... / "Study circles help to bring a good idea into life because nowadays it is not enough to have an idea, you need to know how to realize it as well in a community as a common goal."*

*(Mentor of a study circle, Slovenia)*



## Societal Benefits

Societies that systematically support the development of life skills of their citizens can expect them to become active citizens who will be willing to act ethically and in non-violent ways, who will find themselves in multicultural societies and will be tolerant to cultural and other diversities – and at the same time, be able to defend and fight for their rights. At this point, it could be stated that the concept of LSE is to some extent avant-garde, since it is socially critical. The successful implementation of the LSE concept largely depends on political decisions regarding social inclusion as the implementation of the concept proceeds in four key processes: activation, internalization, participation and connection. However, adult education providers have a role to play in creating initiatives and projects, embedding this concept into their teaching curriculum or raising awareness of the importance of this approach among policy-makers.

*"I think the folk high school has been helping me to understand the Danish language and culture. While being here I have made a lot of new friends".* (Learner at Jyderup Højskole, Denmark)

*"I wanted to know what the project was about. I was quiet in the beginning. Now I sit together laughing with a Danish woman. She is very nice and we understand each other"* (Afghani woman, learner at the recycling design course, Denmark)

*"Interesting and totally positive experience, which taught me tolerance to others, and very positively influenced my life, above other things I learn social skills and basic of psychology."* (Young adult in PLYA program, Slovenia)

## Boosting motivation for further learning and education

A crucial part of life skills courses is the opportunity for participants to co-create the content of programs and attend tailor-made programs for each group of adult learners<sup>6</sup>. This further enables a positive experience, which is the key to successful learning and education<sup>7</sup>. Life skills education can have an impact on people's lives. Often people do not see how education could fulfil their needs, but the provision of life skills could change this attitude. Learning can indeed stimulate a new educational need: if providers tackled the real needs of learners through life skills approaches, they would be able to build trust among learners that education was an important resource. In this way, life skills provision could also be a way to foster potential learners' interest in adult education.

*"Too me it has been very helpful to discover that by turning my foot in the right direction it's a beginning of getting closer to what I want. The small steps matters."* (Learner at FOKUS, a day folk high school in Denmark)

*"I think it's shown me different pathways that I hadn't thought about to a longer-term career. What I particularly like about the project is the fun element of it. It doesn't feel like structured learning...I made lots of useful connections when I was there as well".* (Learner on programme aimed at socially isolated unemployed older men, Phase 2 Citizens Curriculum pilot, United Kingdom)

*"[The learners] feel more motivated and more interested in where to go next. So they've tried something out and they're like, 'oh well, maybe I can go to college or go to that Adult Ed class and study x'y'z' and that kind of thing. It's like an increased awareness of the possibilities that are out there for them."* (St Mungo's Broadway pilot lead, Phase 2 Citizens Curriculum pilot, United Kingdom)

*"In the Municipality this study circle has changed the view on the lifelong learning of adults. Lifelong learning can also be something pleasant, can be something for leisure and can influence community development."* (Learner in study circle, Slovenia)

6. [http://www.eaea.org/media/oed-network/publications/guidelines-for-trainers\\_en.pdf](http://www.eaea.org/media/oed-network/publications/guidelines-for-trainers_en.pdf) (1.9.2017)

7. Javrh, P. (ed.). (2011). *Obrazi pismenosti: spoznanja o razvoju pismenosti odraslih*. Ljubljana: Slovenian Institute for Adult Education. (Translated title: *Faces of literacy: Evidence in the development of adult literacy*).

## Sustainability awareness

Life skills are also highly important in the field of sustainability, since responsible and active concern regarding the environment and the planet is becoming increasingly important. These kinds of human survival skills are nowadays crucial for a participatory society. We can conclude that the basis of the LSE concept represents an ethical attitude and responsibility towards society, the environment and ourselves. This is one of the main reasons why this concept calls for obtaining necessary skills in order to live a relatively independent life as an individual and a collective life within society.

*"I became aware of how important it is to me to be in contact with others, to be a part of a community, even though I suffer from social anxiety." (Learner at Frederiksberg day folk high school, Denmark)*

*"We gather one great potential to show how one society can benefit and develop. A society which is tolerant, solidary, committed to sustainable development, which encompasses using new technologies, and at the same time, does not do any harm to the society and/or environment." (Learner in the study circle, Slovenia)*

*"In study circles people can in a beautiful way unite their so far unrealized dreams, transfer them using learning into reality, into interpersonal relationships, and also opportunities for the development of their local community and environment." (Mentor in study circles, Slovenia)*

## Recommendations for providers

Adult education providers and organisations can greatly contribute to raising awareness on, developing and implementing of Life Skills approach in Europe.

The LSE consortium hopes that this toolkit could be useful in finding arguments to convince different stakeholders on the benefits and the feasibility of the Life Skills approach. In case you wish to contribute to the development of this approach, do not hesitate to contact the project partners (visit the website to learn more). When it comes to the Life Skills approach implementation, adult education providers and organisations are certainly in the best position to do so.

Below they could find some concrete suggestions on how this can be done, starting from the principles to adopt, moving towards the strategy for the different target groups and finishing with some suggestions about the content and the methodology.

### General principles

The LSE consortium believes that the following principles should be considered when implementing of the Life Skills approach<sup>8</sup>.

- ⇒ **Flexibility:** The Life Skills approach requires flexibility at different levels. The most obvious is the flexibility of the curriculum because it has to respond to identified needs of learners, while it can also be about the teaching methodologies, the learning settings and activities.
- ⇒ **Inclusive learning community:** One of the most important features of a course embedding the Life Skills approach is the inclusivity of the learning environment. This includes acknowledging differences in learners, working actively for their empowerment and fostering the sense of community among them.
- ⇒ **Continuous professional development:** The Life Skills approach requires trainers able to design and deliver with the active participation of learners. Moreover, they should be able to incorporate facilitative approaches which encourage self-reflection and critical thinking, help learners to take charge of their own learning and problem-solve for themselves. Continuous professional development as well as the creation of exchange opportunities for trainers is thus needed to ensure that.
- ⇒ **Quality assurance and transparency:** In order to make learning meaningful for learners and trustful for external stakeholders, quality assurance strategies should be in place. It is important that evaluation is carried out with the active participation of the learners. Transparency is key when it comes to discussing with learners about their learning objectives and the follow-up of the course, but also in relation to its publicity within the provider, towards interested parties or with policy-makers.

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8. To learn more on the teaching and learning principles, please refer to the LSE framework: <https://eaea.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/LSE-Capabilities-Framework-FINAL-WITH-CC.pdf>

- ⇒ **Partnership and cooperation:** As the Life Skills approach has a strong link to the context in which learning takes place as well as to the learners' needs, partnership and cooperation with a number of different stakeholders is considered beneficial. These could be social services, cultural centres and the labour market, but many more are conceivable (see the previous chapters for some examples).

## Target Groups

The LSE consortium invites providers to:

- ◆ **Analyse and understand the potential target groups of the course:** this will help overcome learning barriers and plan the course in general terms.
- ◆ **Plan outreach strategies** that will allow the involvement, engagement and inclusion of learners at risk of exclusion. The LSE consortium adopts a broad definition of outreach which embraces all phases of a course:

Outreach has been used in adult education to describe a range of activity, all of which is designed to bring people into education who might not get there by themselves:

- \* Delivery of programmes in community settings, including village halls, pubs, faith-related buildings, community centres, and so on, rather than in learning establishments / classrooms.
- \* Working with a range of people/groups in communities to bring them into community learning / outreach sessions as above or to course in colleges / learning centres
- \* Engaging with people / groups in communities to plan and design their own learning - for all kinds of purposes but also or even particularly around improving communities.

- ◆ **Build in opportunities to progression pathways:** A course embedding the Life Skills approach should be seen as the first step for learners, not the arrival point. Thus, they should be encouraged and supported to progress in their lives and careers with guidance and counselling during and after the course. Providers should be prepared and willing to ensure that.

## Content and methodology

Providers willing to implement the Life Skills approach should:

- ⇒ **Adopt a broad/holistic perspective on skills:** If providers aim at combining basic skills with the development of other capabilities linked to the context, they also need to embrace a different perspective of skill and advocate for it at the policy and research level. Adult education organisations at the national and European level can certainly have a great role in supporting them.
- ⇒ **Don't be afraid to experiment on, be flexible with and adapt the traditional curriculum:** Certain Life Skills capabilities are regulated by a curriculum, which might be too rigid to implement the Life Skills approach. For this reason, providers are invited to adapt it where possible.
- ⇒ **Involve learners in all phases of the courses:** Providers should do so from the design to its evaluation, giving a lot of importance to it in particular throughout the course implementation. They should also foster peer learning and foresee monitoring processes.
- ⇒ **Facilitate positive learning experiences** in a safe learning environment, where individual life situations are taken into account. Providers can find examples of empowering methodologies in the LSE project's collection of tools.
- ⇒ **Strengthen the social dimension of the course** by providing spaces/opportunities for the learners to meet. Life Skills courses' participants report that feeling part of a group is one of the first benefits of their learning experience (see the chapter on the learners' quotes in this toolkit).
- ⇒ **Use the "power" of wider educational activities** outside the classroom. As the LSE project's collection of good practices demonstrates; cultural visits, artistic workshops, wellbeing days, practical exercises, etc. have a clear added-value for learners of Life Skills courses.



## Recommendations for Policy Makers

Policy-makers at all levels can contribute to raising awareness, the adoption and implementation of the Life Skills approach by:

- ⇒ **Valuing and supporting non-formal (methods and) providers**
- ⇒ **Connecting life skills with a full range of policy agendas** e.g. public health, integration of migrants, boosting civic participation
- ⇒ **Promoting the life skills approach in adult education**
- ⇒ **Allowing flexibility of funding and curriculum design to providers**
- ⇒ **Supporting programmes aimed at social outcomes and personal development as well as those related to the labour market**
- ⇒ **Support the development of pathways which enable adults to progress to higher level learning, and other outcomes**, such as entry to the labour market, or progression to better paid, better quality jobs
- ⇒ **Providing resources in order to allow providers to support the learners in all phases of their progression pathway including guidance and counselling**
- ⇒ **Supporting continuous professional development of adult education trainers**
- ⇒ **Delegating resources and responsibility to local and regional authorities where appropriate**



## Recommendations for stakeholder organisations working in life skills areas

The LSE consortium considers organisations and providers working in lifelong learning (other sectors than AE); employment agencies; social partners; organisations working on social inclusion and in the health sector; public services; and the labour market as key stakeholders for the Life Skills approach.

The LSE consortium invites them to:

- ⇒ **Learn more about the Life Skills approach through the results of the project.** Often people adopting a Life Skills approach don't name it like that. In the first output of this project, partners drafted a theoretical analysis that will be useful to understand what the consortium means with that.
- ⇒ **Develop strategies on how to address life skills for their target group.** Implementing a Life Skills approach is beneficial for the target groups of all the organisations and services listed above. In the last chapter of this toolkit, there is a list of possible strategies that can be adopted to make this approach a reality at different levels and in different contexts.
- ⇒ **Support the advocacy work of the consortium in order to implement Life Skills at the policy and practice levels.** The LSE consortium is at complete disposal in case any of the stakeholders above would want to act towards this important goal and will contact a number of them directly at the European and national level in order to promote the approach.
- ⇒ **Making links with adult education, and in particular with non-formal adult education, when working with or planning activities for their target group.** Cooperation with adult education providers and organisations and the above-mentioned stakeholders will certainly be an added-value for vulnerable groups in our societies. If there are no structures for that, stakeholders could consider starting with informal contact and project-based activities.





# Proposals for life skills strategies on local/regional and national levels

## Denmark



The learning approach promoted by the LSE project is very much in line with the tradition and values in the Danish non-formal adult education sector. In particular, with its focus on involving participants in the learning processes on the basis of their needs and developing strong, independent and capable citizens.

At the Danish Adult Education Association (DAEA) an umbrella organization for the non-formal adult education sector in Denmark, the Life Skills term was embraced not only for its content and relevance but also because it captures the core of the learning that participants develop while taking part in non-formal education opportunities. Life Skills had been the overall theme for many activities in DAEA in 2018.

For instance, a campaign on the social media was carried out, where the message was that people learn much more than they think while taking part in the non-formal learning. A part of the campaign was represented by pictures of learners followed by sentences such as "I took drama classes, and learned to step into character", "I took dancing classes, and learned to stand on my own two feet" or "I took coding classes, and learned to decode other people". The campaign was successful in promoting the non-formal adult learning sector and in underlining all the different life skills participants get while being engaged in learning.

In Denmark there is an increasing political focus on job-related skills and also on documentation of effects. The broad activities of adult learning do not have a single purpose like for example job but rather a multipurpose. Also it is almost impossible to measure the exact effects of adult learning on society. We find, however, that the concept of life skills is a way to communicate the value and necessity of adult learning to decision makers. It is clear to most, that we do not only need job-related skills, but also basic skills, personal skills, democratic skills etc. in order to live together peacefully and in order for everybody to take part in society.



## Greece



Life Skills for Europe is a great opportunity to rethink the basic principles of adult education but also to find linkages with other educational sectors - especially linkages to the formal education. According to the PIAAC survey, The share of adults in Greece who score at the highest levels of proficiency in literacy and numeracy is considerably smaller than the OECD average, while the proportion of adults with poor skills in literacy and numeracy is much larger than average. Greece is one of the few countries where women outperform men in literacy. Tertiary-educated adults in Greece have relatively low proficiency in literacy, numeracy and problem solving in technology-rich environments. While the relationship between information-processing skills and levels of social trust, voluntary activities and subjective health is considerably weaker in Greece than in other participating countries/economies. Workers in Greece use their numeracy and problem-solving skills at work as frequently as the average across OECD countries; but their proficiency in these skills is not as highly rewarded, with higher wages, as in other OECD countries.

DAFNI KEK is about to continue working at the local and national levels as follows:

- ⇒ Advertising the LSE framework as the inspirational approach for the adult learning short courses that are organised,
- ⇒ Cooperating with Second Chance Schools (SCS) and exchanging about common strategies on how to implement Life Skills in Greece,
- ⇒ Trying to create a network of providers on a national level, through which their role as Lifelong Learning Centres is redefined by giving emphasis to Life Skills Learning/Development as basis of all educational curricula. The network shall also promote the inclusive character of lifelong learning (and the specified educational curricula) by advocating that it is accessible for all, no matter the educational, social or cultural background of each learner. DAFNI KEK will try to get the support of national or European calls for that.
- ⇒ Promoting the Life Skills approach in Greece by creating a page in the DAFNI KEK website with topic-related and by finding opportunities to present the concept at relevant conferences.



## Slovenia



In Slovenia, life skills are associated with basic capabilities, a holistic approach that integrates basic skills and capabilities, and was introduced within the model of education of vulnerable groups of adults. The approach has been developed and implemented in practice over the last decade and has been part of ongoing efforts of adult educators in Slovenia searching for a new paradigms in the area of adult learning. Especially after the release of PIAAC data showing that there is a worrying number of adults in Slovenia lack basic skills. Adults in Slovenia score below the OECD average in literacy, numeracy and problem solving in technology-rich environments. In addition, adult with low levels of education and skills have the lowest rates of participation in adult education.

Adult educators are facing one of the serious problems when trying to involve vulnerable adults in learning and education, especially those with the lowest levels of education. This is due to the negative experiences those potential learners had from schooling and previous learning in formal settings. For this reason, the above-mentioned holistic approach was adopted in Slovenia: the educational experience was enriched and made meaningful for the learners by addressing essential life needs of adults in the course. This led to a shift from a negative and frustrating learning experience to a liberating and visionary approach that can be the stepping-stone that ensures long-term effects of learning for vulnerable groups of adults.

Many adult education providers in Slovenia accepted the basic capabilities model and embraced it in the heart of their professional work. The Life skills Curriculum Framework is very much in line with their endeavours to give new learning opportunities for low educated and vulnerable groups of adults.

As regards the policy level, Slovenia has already accepted national master plan and adult education act that acknowledges the needs to offer more flexible life skills learning opportunities for vulnerable groups of adults. Great proportion of this provision is supported from European social funds in the period 2018-2022 and is free of charge for adults. It is expected that this will boost the provision that embed basic capabilities concept into the provision and teaching curriculum. For this reason, Slovenian Institute for Adult Education has been promoting the life skills approach within different adult education networks and associations and will continue to do so. However, one of the main challenges of the education of vulnerable groups of adult in Slovenia remains, and this is to make the acquired knowledge and skills visible and to link it with progression routes.

## The United Kingdom



Many adult education providers in the UK already recognise and endorse the principles and recommendations of a Life Skills approach, and implement these in their practice where possible.

However, in recent years, some features of the policy and funding landscape for adult basic skills has worked against provider flexibility and autonomy to fully adopt the life skills approach. For example, in England, the funding system is driven by the achievement of qualifications, which must be delivered in order to draw down funding. For some learners, this is a barrier to engagement in learning, and limits the providers' flexibility to develop a curriculum which is truly responsive to learner needs.

Currently, policy prioritises some life skills capabilities over others. For example, literacy learning for adults is fully funded and free to the learner. However, English language learning for migrants wishing to learn English, is only fully funded if the learner is in receipt of unemployment benefits, and some learners are only eligible for co-funded provision, in which the learner has to pay a contribution. This limits the potential to develop courses which deliver a holistic range of capabilities, for all learners who might benefit.

However, recently some features in the policy landscape show promise that, in the not too distant future, it will become easier for adult learning providers to offer more flexible, responsive life skills learning opportunities. The Government has announced a new statutory entitlement to basic digital skills learning.

Full details are not yet known, but as there is no additional funding, providers will have to innovate to 'do more with less', and this could create new opportunities to deliver courses which integrate basic and life skills, for example literacy, numeracy and digital skills learning.

There is a growing understanding from policy makers, particularly those at the city-region level (many of whom will have increased, devolved powers to commission adult education from 2019), that delivery of qualifications does not guarantee competence in certain skills, nor necessarily lead to the desired outcomes of learning. Increasingly, these policy makers are interested in funding adult basic and life skills learning on the basis of outcomes such as progression into work, improvements in health and wellbeing and social integration. In the longer term, this too could create an environment which incentivises providers to offer a broadly based, holistic approach in adult basic and life skills learning.

Learning and Work Institute continues to support adult education providers, in a range of settings, adopt a 'life skills approach to adult basic skills provision. For example, we recently developed teaching and learning materials to support people in prisons whose first language is not English. Drawing on our Citizens' Curriculum model, the resources covered health, civic and financial capabilities, with a focus on English language skills.

## The European Level



Life Skills are linked to a number of European Policies and Initiatives launched in the last years by the European Commission. In particular, the European Skills Agenda and the Upskilling Pathways Initiative; the Key Competence Framework; and the future of the EU2020 strategy.

The European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) plans a threefold strategy to implement the life skills approach at the European level.

In the first place, EAEA will organise meetings with policy-makers working at the European Commission, at the European Economic and Social Committee and at the European Parliament to promote the approach and to discuss with them how to embed it in existing and future EU policies in education (but not only).

Secondly, EAEA will provide capacity building opportunities on the topic to its members, either via face-to-face presentations at events (Annual conference, study visits, younger staff training, etc.) or via online webinars and infonotes.

The third forum that EAEA will use to implement the Life Skills approach is ongoing projects (such as Skillhubs, DCDS, UP-AEPRO and FUTURE-LAB). In particular, the EAEA will seize the occasion for the National plan for Adult Literacy in Portugal project, which is currently coordinating. The project is funded by the Structural Reform Support Service (SRSS) of the European Commission and aims at improve the skill level of adult population in Portugal by fostering the participation rate of adults in lifelong learning. EAEA plans to introduce the Life Skills approach in the framework of this project and provide concrete and customized measures to promote and offer life skills to the various groups of citizens with (very) low or no qualifications. The EAEA has already presented the Life Skills benefits as well as the project results during an international workshop which took place in Lisbon in October 2018 and make sure the Life Skills approach is embedded in the National Plan for Adult Literacy which is about to be drafted.

# Annex I

## Good Practice Examples

## Learning for a successful life- Slovenia

*“These women were pure life; they were teaching very well, really. It was surprising to me that it was different, that we were joking, that they were not teachers, as we knew them from school, that they were mentors, we called them teachers, but it seemed to them funny...”*

### Brief Description

These non-formal training programmes are aimed at empowering vulnerable groups in Slovenia to gain life skills and change their attitudes towards learning.

#### **STRONG POINTS:**

- ◆ Programmes specifically focused on different educational needs
- ◆ Full involvement of learners
- ◆ Intergenerational element
- ◆ Well evaluated and documented

#### **KEY BENEFITS:**

- ◆ Socialisation and engagement in the community
- ◆ Acquisition of new skills
- ◆ Increase in the participants' self-confidence and self-awareness
- ◆ Increased learning motivation

#### **MAIN CHALLENGES:**

- ◆ Diversity among learners
- ◆ Scale of the programme
- ◆ New target groups

#### **ASPECTS OF LSE COVERED:**

- ◆ LITERACY AND LANGUAGE CAPABILITIES
- ◆ DIGITAL CAPABILITIES
- ◆ NUMERICAL CAPABILITIES
- ◆ PERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL CAPABILITIES
- ◆ CIVIC CAPABILITIES
- ◆ FINANCIAL CAPABILITIES
- ◆ ENVIRONMENTAL CAPABILITIES
- ◆ HEALTH CAPABILITIES

### Target Group

The programmes reached around 20.000 adults, mostly adults of lower education and qualification background (with less than upper secondary education). Majority of participants are unemployed and inactive on the labour market and excluded from the processes of decision making on a local level, which often leads to a limited access to resources. Recent monitoring showed that programmes are also successful for certain groups of migrants. Therefore, a special programme for migrants was developed afterwards.

### Professionals Involved

There were around 30 different professionals included in the development, piloting, implementation and evaluation of the programmes. Around 400 teachers completed the training to implement good practice, and teaching in pairs was recommended in groups of maximum 12 participants.



## Other Stake holders involved

Over 200 stakeholders and representatives of local government and professionals from relevant institutions are engaged in the scheme each year. The Ministry of Education, Science and Sports covers the costs of programme development, teacher training and programme delivery. Slovenian Institute for Adult Education prepared professional starting points, developed and piloted the programmes, implemented them in practice and took care of the training and professional development of teachers, as well as promotion of the programmes. The network of institutions implemented programmes according to local needs, adjusted the programme to participants and reported on their progress. Representatives of the local community promoted and co-financed the programmes in some cases.

## Constituent Parts

The programmes consist of basic building blocks. Learning is considered successful if the learners actively participate in all the phases of learning – from the selection of topics to planning and executing the project, along with monitoring and evaluation of their learning. As a result, variegated and multi-layered learning is embedded throughout the project work, which encourages people to cooperate with each other, take responsibility and identify with the community. Participants therefore learn to define problems by themselves and search for appropriate solutions to upcoming issues during the learning process, while reflecting on the decisions made. Teachers help them with their activities and individually support their development in numeracy, literacy and ICT skills.

The main method of work is project work, which emphasizes the learners' needs and interests and does not follow the subject-organization of a formal school curriculum. The whole curriculum is learner centred and negotiated. As citizenship education is an integral part of the literacy programmes in Slovenia, literacy teachers are trained to incorporate citizenship education in the programmes according to the participants' needs.

The quality is guaranteed through several mechanisms: teacher training, continually upgrading their skills, having literacy providers register as providers in order to acquire governmental resources, and having their work regularly monitored by SIAE and the Ministry.



### More Information

**Year of development:** 2003-2014 - The programmes were updated and renewed in 2014.

**Available in languages:** Slovenian, partly English.

**Conditions for use:** Descriptions of programmes are accessible online.

**Link to the original:** <https://pismenost.acs.si/en/programs/programs-for-adults/>  
<https://pismenost.acs.si/en/programs/model-of-programs/>

## St Mungo's Broadway Citizens' Curriculum pilot –UK

*"I find that it's given me the confidence that I need to step forward into higher education if I want to or taking it into the workplace."*

### Brief Description

St Mungo's Broadway used the Citizens' Curriculum to develop a weekly programme of activities for their residential college. This supports homeless adults in being able to live independently and was later developed to work with learners who were homeless and enrolled in their part-time college.

#### **STRONG POINTS:**

- ◆ Learner-led approach
- ◆ Flexible model that can be adapted for use in different contexts including for other socially isolated groups
- ◆ The interlinking of as many of the skills and capabilities as are relevant in the context
- ◆ The residential nature of the learning opportunity, for vulnerably housed learners

#### **MAIN CHALLENGES:**

- ◆ Consistency and continuity: some learners were not used to routines and at first found it difficult to adjust to the college environment.
- ◆ Tutors were initially wary about giving learners control over the direction of their programme but became more confident as learners became more engaged and started experiencing positive outcomes

#### **BENEFITS:**

- ◆ Improvements in learners' attitudes towards learning
- ◆ Increased self-efficacy associated with improved self-esteem and confidence
- ◆ Increased social and civic engagement
- ◆ Practitioners increased their confidence in adopting a learner-led approach, got a better understanding of learners' lives and motivations, and improved understanding of their impact on learners.

#### **ASPECTS OF LSE COVERED:**

- ◆ LITERACY AND LANGUAGE CAPABILITIES
- ◆ NUMERACY CAPABILITIES
- ◆ HEALTH CAPABILITIES
- ◆ DIGITAL CAPABILITIES
- ◆ FINANCIAL CAPABILITIES
- ◆ CIVIC CAPABILITIES

### Target Group

Learners who are homeless, have issues with social isolation and can find it difficult to engage with their local community. They engaged full-time in the residential college or in the part-time day college. The residential college accommodated up to 10 residents at a time who usually stayed for between three and six months. Approximately 10-12 learners attended the part-time day college.

## Professionals Involved

A project manager, 2 tutors and trained volunteers ran the project activities.

## Other Stake holders involved

To recruit learners onto the programme, college staff liaised with area managers from their hostel network. They held themed activity days and invited key workers to visit the college with potential residents.

## Constituent Parts

St Mungo's Broadway residential college aims to support clients who are vulnerably housed to improve their basic and independent living skills. Residents live and learn together, attending a full-time educational programme. The Phase 1 involved a variety of activities and lessons spread across the week, which covered many of the interlinked capabilities of the Citizens' Curriculum: literacy, numeracy, health, digital, financial and civic, which together acted as a package of holistic support for learners. For example, literacy, numeracy and IT sessions were delivered once a week and learners also had a 'Wellbeing Day' each Tuesday where they could access a nearby health and wellbeing centre. Other activities covered multiple capabilities at once, for example each week a resident was given responsibility and a budget to go out and buy ingredients for breakfast, which the learners then cooked as a group. In Phase 2, St. Mungo's Broadway implemented the Citizens' Curriculum in their part-time day college for adults who are homeless. Phase 2 aimed to make the delivery even more learner-led and responsive to learners needs. They introduced a weekly walking day which encouraged them to engage with the wider community.

St Mungo's Broadway found that involvement in the pilot enabled their learners to engage in community activities that they would never have volunteered for previously, including participating in a community theatre performance.

## More Information



**YEAR OF DEVELOPMENT:** Phase 1 development: 2014/15. Phase 2: 2015/16.

**OWNER OF THE TOOL:** Learning and Work Institute (L&W)

**CONDITIONS FOR USE:** A suite of resources is available free of charge. More in-depth consultancy on use of the Citizens' Curriculum is offered by L&W on a fee-paying basis.

**AVAILABLE IN LANGUAGES:** English

**LINKS:** [Citizens' Curriculum videos](#); [Case studies](#) which provide an introduction to the Citizens' Curriculum, how it was delivered, the impact which was achieved and the critical success factors; A [Citizens' Curriculum Coaching Guide](#) and [Participatory Resource Pack](#).

## “Welcome to Belgium” Pedagogical kits – Belgium

*“I have learned things thanks to practice, by being put into a concrete situation” – Learner*

### Brief Description

Lire et Écrire trained adult education practitioners to use pedagogical kits on different themes relevant to everyday life in Belgium, for improving migrants' reading and writing skills and for coping with everyday life in Belgium. Each kit gives guidance on how to facilitate different activities and provides the material necessary for carrying them out.

#### **STRONG POINTS:**

- ◆ There was no material designed for newly arrived migrants lacking basic skills.
- ◆ The collective dimension of the materials: trainers and learners can take part in its further elaboration by proposing new activities.
- ◆ Exchange of knowledge, rather than top-down information.
- ◆ Activities are designed to be fun and playful.
- ◆ The kits are used in diverse settings

#### **KEY BENEFITS:**

- ◆ Critical reflection on the society in which participants live.
- ◆ Increase of basic skills through the use of photos to work on life skills and social issues.
- ◆ The kits are always designed by a team of several people: this is crucial as it improves creativity in the conception of the activities.

#### **MAIN CHALLENGES:**

The use of the kits with newly arrived migrants who are complete beginners in French and who lack basic literacy skills

#### **ASPECTS OF LSE COVERED:**

- ◆ LITERACY AND LANGUAGE CAPABILITIES
- ◆ NUMERICAL CAPABILITIES
- ◆ PERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL CAPABILITIES
- ◆ CIVIC CAPABILITIES
- ◆ FINANCIAL CAPABILITIES
- ◆ ENVIRONMENTAL CAPABILITIES
- ◆ HEALTH CAPABILITIES

### Target Group

The direct beneficiaries of Lire et Écrire's trainings are mainly individuals working in literacy organizations, public social assistance centres, socio-professional integration organizations and social cohesion organizations. In terms of their professional profile, training participants are mainly trainers/teachers, but also people working in direct contact with newly arrived migrants, organization directors or coordinators, educational counsellors, as well as interns, students and individuals seeking paid or voluntary work in the above-

The indirect beneficiaries of the training are migrants whose literacy skills and overall life skills are improved through use of Lire et Écrire's pedagogical kits. Other beneficiaries are literacy learners at large. Indeed, while the kits were designed for migrants, it was clear that they would be useable in literacy training both with migrants and with Belgian learners.

## Professionals Involved

8 professionals have been involved in the project in total. 2 to 3 people have worked on each kit.

## Other Stake holders involved

While it is difficult to provide a specific number, specialised institutions/organisations have been contacted during the preparation of each kit to obtain or verify information provided in the kit.

## Constituent Parts

The project consisted in trainings to use eight pedagogical kits on different themes: Living together, Housing, Health, Education, Employment and social security, Everyday life, Residency statuses and migration, Institutions. The trainings organized by Lire et Écrire were three-day trainings to use the first five kits, three-day trainings to use all eight kits, and one-day trainings to use the last three kits. These kits give migrants a broad overview of social, cultural and environmental aspects of life in their new host country, thus giving them capabilities to integrate into their new setting more quickly. The life skills developed through Lire et Écrire's work are a response to what individuals need in a real-life situation: newly arrived migrants need to understand how their new host country works in order to be able to integrate into it. Use of the kits also aims to develop critical thinking skills and, ultimately, foster active participation in all aspects of the society. The kits can also be used to teach basic skills to a native Belgian audience (including young people) or as part of a broader reflection on society. Evaluations are carried out after training, but no evaluation on the use of the kits were organised. However, the continuous demand for the kits, both in terms of material kits and of free download are indications of their suitability to existing needs.



## More Information

**YEAR OF DEVELOPMENT:** The project started in 2010. The last kit was created in 2016.

**OWNER OF THE TOOL:** Lire et Écrire

**CONDITIONS FOR USE:** One free kit is available for organizations working on literacy or welcoming newly arrived migrants and for libraries. For other organizations and for additional kits, the cost is 25€. The kits are downloadable for free.

**AVAILABLE IN LANGUAGES:** French

**LINK TO THE ORIGINAL:** <http://bit.ly/2cC6i43> or <http://www.lire-et-ecrire.be/Bienvenue-en-Belgique-Huit-mallettes-pedagogiques?lang=fr>

## Pratto apo koinou / TOGETHER WITHIN- Greece

*“Exchanges between the participants as well as with society allowed learners to reflect upon their values, needs and expectations”.*

### Brief Description

The PRATTO APO KOINOU practice has been designed to meet the needs of the socially excluded and vulnerable members of the local community and to create a common meeting ground.

#### **STRONG POINTS:**

- ◆ Empowering approach
- ◆ Different target groups
- ◆ Free course
- ◆ Volunteers-based
- ◆ Time provision for conscious understanding and change of attitudes
- ◆ Constant evaluation and flexibility
- ◆ Holistic aspect of the learning – all support services were embedded within the learning

#### **KEY BENEFITS:**

- ◆ Socialisation and overcoming prejudices
- ◆ Acquisition of new skills
- ◆ Increase in the participants' self-confidence and self-awareness
- ◆ Peer learning and peer counselling
- ◆ Participants become advocate of their own needs
- ◆ Boost participants' creativity

#### **MAIN CHALLENGES:**

- ◆ Diversity of participants' needs and expectations

#### **ASPECTS OF LSE COVERED:**

- ◆ LITERACY AND LANGUAGE CAPABILITIES
- ◆ DIGITAL CAPABILITIES
- ◆ PERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL CAPABILITIES:
  - ◇ Communication skills
  - ◇ Team work
  - ◇ Self-efficacy
  - ◇ Self-confidence
  - ◇ Emotional intelligence
  - ◇ Entrepreneurial skills
- ◆ CIVIC CAPABILITIES:
  - ◇ Intercultural skills
  - ◇ Cultural skills

### Target Group

About 40 persons. Unemployed people (18-55) – Roma people – Migrants and refugees

## Professionals Involved

6-7, being the core group composed of 5 educators/ mentors plus 20 volunteers from various disciplines and fields, as medical school students, social workers, pedagogical school students, retired educators. The group of volunteers who supported the workshops were strongly impacted by the practice: they got into a self-reflection process identifying their values and getting into more active role as citizens who care for social matters.

## Other Stake holders involved

Pratto apo koinou invited several persons from peer organisations and local community to take part into the project. These included the 'Protasi Movement' which works on drug prevention and physical health; PRAXIS, which facilitates the integration of refugees to the community; the Regional and Local Authorities; some cultural organisations (Municipal Theatre on Move of Patras City, Museum of Athens, Patras and Olympia); and a volunteering organisation on cancer prevention.

## Constituent Parts

Unemployed people had the chance to have career and personal counselling, lectures from professionals concerning cooperative forms of employment etc. People with migrant and/or refugee background were mostly taught language skills, both Greek and English as well as some basic computer skills. Roma people were more concerned about language lessons for children and adults, support for children to stay in school and ways to get by like provision for food.

All three groups had the chance to meet and do things collectively like:

- ⇒ Attend workshops about language and communication (Greek-English)
- ⇒ Creative activities and art (Theatrical Masks creation where refugees, volunteers and unemployed citizens learnt about the face expressions – anger, laugh, pain, etc.)
- ⇒ Watching movies (organizers mostly concentrated on 'SILENT MOVIES' in order to facilitate fun and laughing)
- ⇒ Creation of a web radio called "Life Skills" where 3 broadcasting events gave the opportunity for participants to talk about themselves, share music preferences and expose their situation.
- ⇒ Participating in the "Dining Table" action: social outing for participants in the city.



## More Information

**Duration of the practice:** 10 months (November 2014 – August 2015)

**Owner of the tool / operator:** Cyclisis – Education, Culture, Environment

**Conditions for use:** Free with reference

**Available in languages:** Greek, English (partly)

**Links:** <http://pratoapokinou.cyclisis.gr>

## Recycling Design – Denmark

*“Here, it’s a dialogue. It is another form of informal and relaxed atmosphere and safety. They dare to ask questions which they never dare to ask in regular language classes. It is another ... much SAFER integration” (Lena Becker, leader of the school)*

### Brief Description

The provider of the local Adult Education Association wanted to contribute to the integration of refugee women by making a handicraft course activity for both Danish and refugee women.

#### STRONG POINTS:

- ◆ Flexibility
- ◆ Children friendly activity
- ◆ Safe space environment
- ◆ Willingness to overcome logistical obstacles (like transportation)
- ◆ Low participant fee

#### KEY BENEFITS:

- ◆ Socialisation and overcoming prejudices
- ◆ Acquisition of new skills
- ◆ Increase in the participants’ self-confidence and self-awareness
- ◆ Peer learning and peer counselling
- ◆ Boost participants’ creativity
- ◆ Informal integration

#### MAIN CHALLENGES:

- ◆ Outreach work needed

#### ASPECTS OF LSE COVERED:

- ◆ LITERACY AND LANGUAGE CAPABILITIES
- ◆ PERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL CAPABILITIES:
  - ◇ Communication skills
  - ◇ Team work
  - ◇ Self-efficacy
  - ◇ Self-confidence
  - ◇ Problem-solving
  - ◇ Entrepreneurial skills
- ◆ CIVIC CAPABILITIES:
  - ◇ Cultural understanding
  - ◇ Intercultural skills
  - ◇ Learning about principles of democracy
- ◆ ENVIRONMENTAL CAPABILITIES
  - ◇ Recycling aspects

### Target Group

The beneficiaries are all the women participating in the course. Since children and men are welcome for shared dining, they also benefit from the activity, because they also develop their network.



## Professionals Involved

4 professionals: a teacher in handicrafts, the leader of the school, social workers/interpreters. The 'cultural and language interpreter' employed during the course was one of the success factors: this person works as a mediator, translator, motivator and is able to solve various problems in a comprehensive way.

## Other Stake holders involved

A social worker from the job centre was involved in motivating the refugee women to participate in the course. Also a Facebook group supporting refugee initiatives called 'Venligboerne' (friendly neighbours) helped by spreading the word.

## Constituent Parts

Danish and refugee women meet each other to share their interest in handicrafts/ needlework once or twice a week. The main purpose is to learn how to do handicraft/recycling designs, but it's also about developing mutual cultural understanding and for the refugees to learn or practice the Danish language, to get a network, to gain experiences with the non-formal adult education system and knowledge about Danish society. While making the handicrafts many different topics are discussed. For instance, issues concerning going to the doctor, the dentist or how to get in contact with social workers.

The course is a free space for the women to chat, share, learn and inspire each other in a safe learning environment. They become as each other families and share their personal successes and fiascos. The group has also started a network where they use their different competencies for activities that do not involve needlework. For instance, a shared dining and field trip to the Parliament were organised.

## More Information



**Year of development:** Beginning of 2016

**Owner of the tool, operator:** The course is provided by *DOF Allerød Fritidsskole* – a local non-formal adult educator provider belonging to an Adult Education Association called *Dansk Oplysnings Forbund, DOF*

**Conditions for use:** None

**Available in languages:** Danish, but with interpreters connected to the course.

**Links:** <https://sn.dk/Alleroed/Kreative-kvinder-stod-bag-modeshow/artikel/653668> (Article only in Danish)



# Annex II

## Examples of Tools

## Educational videos: “On the path to a successful life” – Slovenia

*“The Educational movies explain shortly and in a concise way the importance of lifelong learning and presents eight key competences crucial for every individual”.*

*(Darij Olenik, teacher of ICT).*

### Brief Description

Short videos presenting basic information on key competences in a user-friendly manner. The main focus in the videos is on the personal experience and the development of a particular key competence.

#### **STRONG POINTS:**

- ◆ Addresses real-life needs of individuals in real life situations
- ◆ User-friendly presentations without text
- ◆ Motivational character by using personal stories
- ◆ Can be used in many ways – individual learning, group work, warm-up

#### **KEY BENEFITS:**

- ◆ The videos are practical tools for animation and motivation of learners from different vulnerable groups
- ◆ Basic information on key competences in a relaxed and humorous way
- ◆ Information on learning programs
- ◆ Engaging learners in decisions to take individual action and guidelines on how to do it

#### **MAIN CHALLENGES:**

- ◆ Adult educator needs to consider principles for multi-media work when working with vulnerable groups.

#### **ASPECTS OF LSE COVERED:**

- ◆ LITERACY CAPABILITIES
  - ◇ communication in a mother tongue
- ◆ NUMERACY CAPABILITIES
  - ◇ mathematical competence
  - ◇ competences in science and technology
- ◆ PERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL CAPABILITIES:
  - ◇ learning to learn
  - ◇ sense of initiative and entrepreneurship

## Target Group

The videos are suitable for any group of adults. But each of the videos also strongly addresses a particular target group. For example, a movie on "learning to learn" addresses unemployed men, a movie on entrepreneurship addresses young drop outs, a movie on communication in one's mother tongue addresses young female migrants, who would like to succeed in business, a movie on mathematical competence and competence in science and technology addresses the retired population and the elderly.

## Constituent Parts

The Educational movies are digital tools with a motivational character and address learners through role models that have everyday problems and solve them through learning. Introducing a personal story causes the identification of participants in the field of adult education and learning, as the act of the person in the video makes them think: 'I can do it too, I have to do something.' The personal stories encourage others to take individual actions, for example by visiting educational institutions and getting information on learning programs. The educational part of the video is structured in such a way that spectators learn about all the main characteristics of the chosen key competence in a relaxed and humorous way.

The movies are especially useful for adults who have problems with written texts. Every movie includes concrete guidelines on how to take the first step in order to develop a selected competence. Furthermore, there are 4 brochures for users and educators with basic information and instructions.

By 2020 there will be 4 more videos available; communication in a foreign language, digital competence, social and civic competences and cultural awareness and expression.

## More Information



**Year of development:** 2012-2014

**Owner of the tool, operator:** Slovenian Institute for Adult Education

**Conditions for use:** Free of charge - on line

**Available in languages:** Slovene (English subtitles)

**Links:** <https://pismenost.acs.si/en/resources/educational-audio-and-visual-resources/visual-resources/on-the-path-to-a-successful-life/>

## Citizens' Curriculum resources – UK

*“I find that it’s given me the confidence that I need to step forward into higher education if I want to or taking it into the workplace.” (St Mungo’s Broadway learner, Phase 2)*

### Brief Description

To support providers to develop and implement their own Citizens' Curriculum model, a holistic approach to ensure everyone has the language, maths, digital, civic, health and financial capabilities they need for life and work in today's society.

#### **STRONG POINTS:**

- ◆ Support implementation of a learner-led approach
- ◆ The resources can be adapted to a broad target group and in different contexts
- ◆ The interlinking of as many of the skills and capabilities as are relevant in the context
- ◆ Holistic aspect of the learning

#### **KEY BENEFITS:**

- ◆ Improvements in learners' attitudes towards learning
- ◆ Increased self-efficacy associated with improved self-esteem and confidence
- ◆ Increased social and civic engagement
- ◆ Practitioners increased their confidence in adopting a learner-led approach, got a better understanding of learners' lives and motivations, and improved understanding of their impact on learners.

#### **MAIN CHALLENGES:**

- ◆ In order to ensure the learner-led approach the resources should be adapted to the context and the learners' needs

#### **ASPECTS OF LSE COVERED:**

- ◆ LITERACY AND LANGUAGE CAPABILITIES
- ◆ NUMERACY CAPABILITIES
- ◆ HEALTH CAPABILITIES
- ◆ DIGITAL CAPABILITIES
- ◆ FINANCIAL CAPABILITIES
- ◆ CIVIC CAPABILITIES

## Target Group

The resources are designed for use by commissioners, adult learning providers and practitioners to support implementation of the Citizens Curriculum approach with all adults, including the most disadvantaged. Citizens Curriculum models have been developed for use with recent migrants, homeless or vulnerably housed adults, young adults in disadvantaged areas, adults experiencing or recovering from alcohol, substance misuse, and offenders/ex-offenders.

## Constituent Parts

The resources support organisations to adapt and implement the Citizens' Curriculum model to suit their own learners' needs and delivery contexts by:

- ⇒ explaining why stakeholders should consider implementing, and the benefits of, the model
- ⇒ providing information and guidance on what tasks need to be completed to develop a Citizens' Curriculum model
- ⇒ showcasing examples of Citizens' Curriculum delivery models
- ⇒ providing information and guidance on how to evidence and evaluate the outcomes achieved by Citizens' Curriculum programmes and highlighting effective practices.

The resources have been used to implement Citizens' Curriculum approaches in local areas and neighbourhoods in different parts of UK and in different delivery contexts. The third phase of the Citizens' Curriculum programme included models tailored to a range of different contexts including prisons, 'place-based' approaches and in the workplace.



## More Information

**Year of development:** 2015/16. Revised 2016/17

**Owner of the tool, operator:** Learning and Work Institute (L&W).

**Conditions for use:** The resources are available free of charge. More in-depth consultancy on use of the Citizens' Curriculum is offered by L&W on a fee-paying basis.

**Available in languages:** English

**Links:** [Citizens' Curriculum Capability Frameworks](#), reference tools for all of the Language and Literacy, Numeracy, Health, Digital, Financial and Civic. [Citizens' Curriculum videos](#): including a variety of previous and current Citizens Curriculum pilots. [Case studies](#): which provide an introduction to the Citizens' Curriculum, how it was delivered, the impact which was achieved and the critical success factors. A [Citizens' Curriculum Coaching Guide](#) and [Participatory Resource Pack](#)

## Dialogic Literary Gathering – Spain

*“(...) “Feelings, sensations, ideas and experiences must be encouraged. All these concepts are very important to open our mind, to be able to communicate ourselves with all kinds of people, and to be more tolerant, understanding and reasonable. So that we have a peaceful coexistence” (Learner).*

### Brief Description

Dialogic Literary Gatherings have their origin in the 1980s at the Adult's School from La Verneda-Sant Martí, in Barcelona, and they consist of meetings around literature, in which the participants read and discuss the classics of Universal Literature.

#### STRONG POINTS:

- ◆ Based on an egalitarian dialogue
- ◆ Addressed to various target groups
- ◆ Participants are actively participating in the process of knowledge building
- ◆ Contributes to a deeper social transformation of participants environment and personal lives
- ◆ Easily transferable

#### KEY BENEFITS:

- ◆ Active citizenship
- ◆ Empowers participants to acquire a broader view of the world while improving basic skills
- ◆ Empowers participants to be more assertive in their lives and in the community

#### MAIN CHALLENGES:

- ◆ The method requires a moderator, who is in charge of facilitating the discussion so that everybody can express their thoughts and impressions

#### ASPECTS OF LSE COVERED:

- ◆ LITERACY CAPABILITIES
  - ◇ reading and oral skills
- ◆ PERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL CAPABILITIES:
  - ◇ Sharing values like solidarity, respect, coexistence
  - ◇ acknowledging different and new points of view
  - ◇ generators of knowledge
- ◆ CIVIC CAPABILITIES
  - ◇ Self-confidence in expressing thoughts in public
  - ◇ Reflection about topics of society



## Target Group

No specific target group. But participants have been people with no university qualifications who take part in adult education centres or associations: children, teenagers, families, adults, and elderly people with different backgrounds, and inmates.

## Constituent Parts

The first step in developing a dialogic literary gathering is to select the book that the group will read and discuss for several sessions. Everyone at the gathering participates in selecting the text and once the proposals are presented, the participants come to agreement about which book to read. The works to be discussed must be one of the greatest universal literary works of humankind, as these books are about timeless topics: love, women's role in society, coexistence among cultures, the impact of war, the consequences of authoritarian regimes, etc. As each participant reads the chosen book, at home, they select paragraphs that interest them. When the participants come to the session, they read and explain their selected paragraphs. When one person has presented his or her paragraph, others who have chosen the same paragraph, or who want to contribute, discuss various ways to interpret this paragraph. As they share their personal interpretations of the same paragraph, they construct collective knowledge, operating on the principle of egalitarian dialogue. The richness of the gathering lies in this particular way of looking into texts. Through this collective act, Dialogic literary gatherings make it possible for many people from different contexts, especially those who belong to vulnerable social groups (immigrants, the illiterate, ethnic minorities, and the disabled, among others), to contribute in creating collective meaning and knowledge that transform their own personal lives and promote social transformations in different fields that reach other people's lives.



### More Information

**Year of development:** 1980

**Owner of the tool, operator:** Free and open methodology.

**Conditions for use:** The tool can be used with everyone, it only needs a comfortable space where all participants can see and listen to each other without difficulties. A moderator is in charge of facilitating the discussion so that everybody can express their thoughts and impressions on the part of the text which is being discussed.

**Available in languages:** The tool is easily transferable in any language

**Links:** <http://confapea.org/tertulias/>

<http://www.edaverneda.org/edaverneda8/en/dialogic-literacy-gathering>

## NESSIE – Network for Soft Skills Innovation for Employment - Greece

*“Before starting this course, I found myself lacking confidence in many aspects of life. However, the time I have spent completing the course has boosted my confidence and has made me look back and think about who I used to be and the person I am today”. (Learner).*

### Brief Description

The NESSIE programme has been devised to help the learner gain an understanding of what soft skills are and how they can develop their own to enhance their career prospects.

#### **STRONG POINTS:**

- ◆ An e-learning platform containing interactive training tools
- ◆ Focus on assisting development of soft skills
- ◆ Train the trainer package
- ◆ Using learning outcomes/ competence-based approaches

#### **KEY BENEFITS:**

- ◆ All participants were able to identify some area in which their lives had improved
- ◆ The course has supported 72% of learners to change their soft skill behaviours
- ◆ 80% identified improvements in their own job performance following the training

#### **MAIN CHALLENGES:**

- ◆ Ensuring the user-friendliness of the platform
- ◆ Guidance from mentors are important to link soft skills and improved employment prospects

#### **ASPECTS OF LSE COVERED:**

- ◆ PERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL CAPABILITIES:
  - ◇ Communication skills
  - ◇ Team work
  - ◇ motivation
  - ◇ Self-confidence
  - ◇ Problem-solving

## Target Group

The target group is both workers in workplaces and unemployed people, who wants to develop their soft skills.

## Constituent Parts

According to the project group, poor soft skills are linked to a range of labour market problems: high staff turnover/difficulty recruiting (particularly in the young); lack of ability to compete; inability to cope with change; reasons for staff dismissal & problems in school to work transition. VET providers in Italy, Sweden, NL, Romania, Greece and Germany are trying to respond to these identified skill-related problems by offering new approaches to training and developing these skills.

The project has developed a course of training materials. To conclude the course and obtain one's certificate, one will need to complete the Grading Tool (before and after relevant training), collect a Witness Testimony from your mentor or line manager using the template provided online, complete relevant quizzes and activities/logs and produce a reflective account on your soft skills development.

The project was partially funded by the Lifelong Learning Programme as the Leonardo da Vinci programme.

NESSIE has developed educational materials in cooperation with VET providers and employers to both train workers in the workplace and unemployed job seekers, and importantly assess these essential soft skills. The program is built on training and assessment methods based on an innovative approach, proven to work with disadvantaged learners in VET classroom contexts (TOI MASS 2009).



## More Information

**Year of development:** 2012 to 2014

**Owner of the tool, operator:** **NESSIE** – Network for Soft Skills Innovation for Employment. The NESSIE Project Consortium is made up of training providers, employers, employer representatives and labour market actors, providing a broad spectrum of cultural references due to the variety of people working with them.

**Conditions for use:** Once the individual is logged in the materials are free to use.

**Available in languages:** All products have been translated from English into Dutch, German, Greek, Italian, Romanian and Swedish

**Links:** <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/eplus-project-details/#project/UK/12/LLP-LdV/TOI-553>

## Value-cards and drawings – Denmark

*“I think the approach of using drawings and value-cards is fantastic because it's a super fast and simple way of getting to the essentials. You don't have to start with telling a long and complicated story. And during the process new ways to engage in society become visible for the participants” (Jette Borgstrøm, Teacher).*

### Brief Description

The method is a combination of using value cards and/or own drawings as a starting point for conversations in groups, where the purpose is to discover own values and to begin a process of re-establishing connection to lost competences.

#### **STRONG POINTS:**

- ◆ The visual approach does not require high level of language skills
- ◆ It is a simple tool for working with complicated issues.
- ◆ It is low-tech and easily available (paper and pen)
- ◆ The use is flexible and can easily be adjusted (Conversations in groups, one to one).
- ◆ The method is easily transferable

#### **KEY BENEFITS:**

- ◆ Beginning a process of re-establishing connection to lost competences.
- ◆ Boost participants' motivation for development and life-long learning.

#### **MAIN CHALLENGES:**

- ◆ The conversation and common reflections have to be facilitated by a teacher/guidance counselor to ensure a useful process.

#### **ASPECTS OF LSE COVERED:**

- ◆ HEALTH CAPABILITIES
  - ◇ Taking care of own physical and mental health
  - ◇ Actively contribute to own wellbeing
- ◆ PERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL CAPABILITIES:
  - ◇ problem-solving and communication in a respectful way
- ◆ CIVIC CAPABILITIES
  - ◇ participating in the community

## Target Group

Participants at the Day Folk High School use the value-cards and the drawing of values, whilst they take part in the course called 'Living Life (På livet løs)'. This is a course for people with long term stress, depression and/or other physical or mental challenges in life. The method can be used by everyone.

## Constituent Parts

During the process of working with drawings and/or value-cards the participants become aware of their own values and how they can be transferred into new settings. The method creates engagement in society as the participants become aware of new opportunities and actions.

The conversation is led by a teacher to ensure the talks and reflections head in the right direction. The idea is to find a sweet spot and to discover core values such as being part of a community, along with engagement in, and contribution to, society. During conversations in groups the participants help each other find personal values and how these can be unfolded/transferred into new settings. Becoming aware of personal values is a foundation for engagement in society and a tool for managing life with different kind of challenges, whether it be physical or mental.

The reflection and mirroring of experiences concerning challenges in life contributes to the development of motivation for lifelong learning. A potential exercise could e.g. be to make the participants reflect upon what they would like to engage in if there weren't any personal challenges/obstacles to consider and in what way this engagement could be transferred into a new setting.



## More Information

**Year of development:** The cards are from 2012 and they are part of a tool/project focusing on maintaining young people in the upper secondary education system in Denmark.

**Owner of the tool, operator:** The combination of using drawings and value-cards/pictures is a method developed by the Day Folk High School in Frederiksberg called Kursustrappen. It's inspired by another theoretical approach called Act.

**Conditions for use:** The cards can be downloaded for free. The cards are in its originally form a dialogue-based tool with 48 different cards including a mini guide explaining exercises focusing on job, education and citizenship. It's developed in connection to a project under the Danish Ministry of Education called 'we need all young people' (Brug for alle unge).

**Available in languages:** All languages - no written elements in the way the drawing and cards are being used.

**Links:** The cards can be found here: <http://www.brugforalleunge.dk/Materialer> (It's a Danish site. Search for ' 2012: JUMP-kort - Dialog om job, uddannelse og medborgerskab')



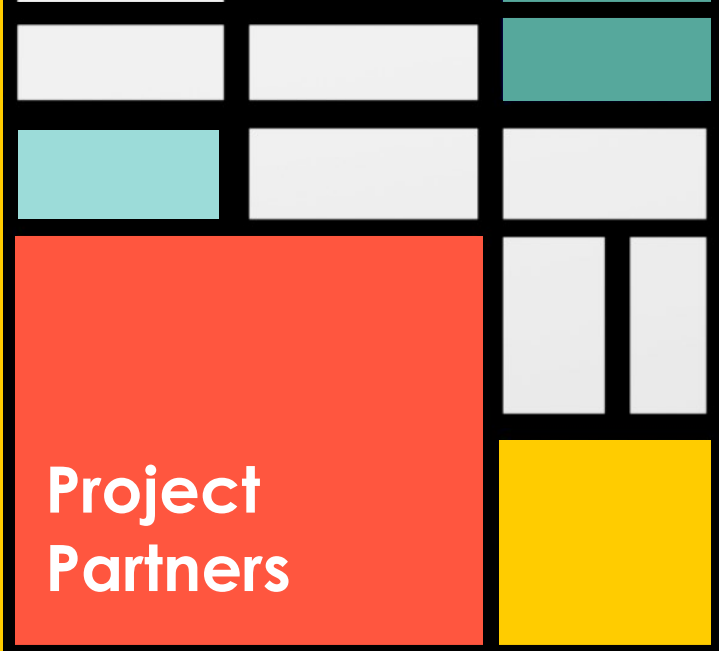
# Life Skills For Europe

Awareness Raising & Strategy

## Toolkit



Life Skills for Europe, 2018



Project  
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