E-mploy-me! - Empowerment skills for Employment of Migrant Women through e-literacy! Project nº: 2018-1-ES01-KA204-050995

Manual of Good Practices on the Socio-Labour Integration of

Migrant Women through Digital Literacy

Content

Introduction

The Erasmus+ Project **E-MPLOY-ME!, Empowerment Skills for Employment of Migrant Women Through E-literacy!** aims at promoting empowerment and social and economic inclusion of migrant women through media literacy and development of digital skills to boost their inclusion into the labour market. In order to achieve this goal, unemployed migrant women have been involved since the beginning of the project, direct and indirectly.

E-MPLOY-ME! aims at meeting the needs of migrant women with the objective of erasing social and cultural barriers which stop migrant women from social and labour integration, in which technologies play a key role. To achieve this, a strong partnership has been built comprising Magenta Consultoría (Spain), Verein Multikulturell (Austria), Prism (Italy), EuFrak (Germany) and Center for Social Innovation (Cyprus). The partnership is being heavily supported as well by the associated partners Frauenalia (Germany) and Mar Violeta (Spain). The partnership is determined to create great value out of this project, thus putting a lot of effort in all the activities carried out. They first developed a State of the Art Review[1] which allowed them to identify and create a profile of their target group – migrant women who face problems in their professional and social inclusion -; understand the current situation of unemployed migrant women in the different countries the partnership is present, particularly the challenges the target group faces regarding their labour and social inclusion; the support services available for them and the resources and chances to succeed to which they can use. This knowledge led to the creation of an online learning platform[2] to meet the needs of unemployed migrant women identified and its piloting.

The project started on 10th September 2018 and was planned to end on 9th September 2020. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic situation, the partnership decided to extend the deadline in order to be able to finish all the planned activities and wrap up the project the 9th of November 2020. The COVID-19 situation has had a great impact in the development of the last steps of the project: lockdowns forced the partnership to cancel meetings or carry them online, some partners could not work, as they were closed during this time, others were just working from home but with the limitations linked to not being in a proper working environment and the constraint of free movement within the local, regional, national and European space. The economic crisis hitting the world also struck some members of the partnership. This struggles were also evident in the piloting phase of the project, as

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[1] Access the file online here: http://e-mploy-me.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/E-mploy-Me_IO1_FinalVersion_4.7.2019.pdf

[2] Access the webpage and e-learning platform here: http://e-mploy-me.eu/english/

some partners had to conduct the pilotings online, while others struggled to create a group – as participants were afraid of the sanitary situation – and to carry out online pilotings (as their target group lacked the digital skills to engage in a platform such as Zoom, Skype and similar, and they also did not have the necessary equipment).

Although all these setbacks necessarily impacted the workflow of the partnership and threatened with not finishing the project, the partners multiplied their efforts to continue doing their best, being this document proof of that.

The purpose of this document

The purpose of this document is to present examples of best practices regarding the use of new technologies in optimising the opportunities to access the labour market of unemployed migrant women which the partnership considers as good examples to follow, together with the partner's experience, comments and feedback on their own piloting activities. The partnership expects that, by disseminating these best practices, other agents interested in promoting the social and labour integration of unemployed migrant women find them useful, inspiring and, hopefully, transferable to their own context and target groups.

In the same way, this document presents how each partner carried out the piloting activity in their country and with their target group. The partnership agreed that it was important to present all of them with detail to show how, the very same activity (the piloting of the e-learning platform) with the very same broad target group (unemployed migrant women) can be carried out very differently and find very different challenges. As it will be presented in detail later in this document, the piloting was carried face-to-face and online, in the host country's language and in a lingua franca. In the same way, the target group shared by all partners presented very different characteristics in each country: in some cases, the culture and language were similar to that of the host country, in others, language was a huge barrier. Additionally, in some countries, the target group had some digital skills and owned a computer, in other cases one or both of these statements were not true.

The partnership wants this document to offer some insight about possible actions to implement to aid the socio-labour integration of migrant women as well as about how a perfectly transferable action can – and will – present slightly different challenges, which have to be taken into account and anticipated in order to overcome them even before they appear.

Definition of "best practices"

A best practice is commonly defined as a technique or method that, through experience and research, has proven reliably to lead to the desired result.[3] As a result, these practices could be shared and adopted to benefit more people.

Some other characteristics of a best practice are that it presents a valuable result for the user; it is simple; it appears as the answer to a situation in which change is necessary; it is pertinent and appropriate to the local context in which it is implemented; it can be maintained for a period of time and the results are lasting; it considers elements such as implementation monitoring and results evaluation in order to improve it; and it is innovative as it entails a different and creative approach to the problem to be solved.

With all that said, it is important to take into account that the superlative "best" does not mean that the practice is faultless, and the term does not refer only to those practices that have been implemented in "the best" way providing "the best" results. The term "best practice" does not refer to a state or perfection, but rather just to an action or intervention implemented leading to positive results. These results may not be entirely the expected ones, as maybe the practice brings different benefits not foreseen. In the same way, a practice that does not bring all the expected results is also valuable, as this hints at *where* the practice has to be improved to deliver the expected results. Documenting the aspects and elements that turned out not how we expected or those which failed is just as important as recording the practices that did succeed, as failure often turns out to be a great teacher and to provide ample space to experiment and improve.

Monitoring the implementation and evaluating the results are key elements of the process. Monitoring allows to make sure that the practice is leading to the accomplishment of the expected results and to rectify when we detect something is not going as planned. In the same way, the evaluation of results allows to make broader observations upon the completion of the practice: Were all the expected results achieved? Was the practice worth the resources invested? How could have the practice been better implemented? How could we modify the practice to achieve better results? How could we modify the practice to make it even more efficient?

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[3] https://www.bitpipe.com/tlist/Best-Practices.html (accessed on 14 July 2020)

Criteria for identifying best practices

In line with the purpose of this document, the partnership will identify the best practices according to the following criteria:

➢ **Effectiveness**: The practice must work and deliver positive, measurable results.

➢ **Efficiency**: The practice must deliver the results using a sensible amount of resources, including money and time, but also human resources.

➢ **Involvement of partners**: The practice must result from the collaboration among several stakeholders in any part of the process.

➢ **Involvement of the target group**: The practice must involve the participation of the target group in any part of the process. In the case of the **E-MPLOY-ME! Project**, this target group is unemployed migrant women.

➢ **Sustainability**: The implementation of the practice must be maintained over a period of time with the use of existing resources and the results must be lasting, even after the practice finishes.

➢ **Transferability assessment**: The practice must be replicable/transferable in a similar context.

In order to evaluate a practice, it is useful to ask questions such as "why?", "how?", "for whom?", "by whom" and "what's the impact?" regarding the practice. The answer obtained will draw the lines to follow during the evaluation process:

❖ **Why?** The answer should provide information about the objectives, which must be clear; the activities carried out and their purpose; and the relevance of the action to the participants, stakeholders and target groups.

❖ **How?** The answer should provide information about how the actions implemented relate to the objectives of the practice and the results expected.

❖ **For whom?** The answer should provide information about how the actions implemented involve the target groups.

❖ **By whom?** The answer should provide information about the organization or organizations carrying out the practice as well as all the collaborators who intervened in any step of the process.

❖ **What is the impact?** The answer should provide information about the outcomes of the practice as well as an evaluation at the level at which it was implemented (local, regional, national, European, international, etc).

Best Practices and transferability assessment

This section of the present document will feature some best practices regarding the use of new technologies in optimizing the employability of unemployed migrant women which the partnership considers as good examples to follow, analysing them according to the criteria examined in the previous section.

Best Practice 1 – Go-Digital

Who:	Project's partnership	**Where:**	EU	**When:**	n/a	**Target group:**	Adult educators, disadvantaged women.

Go-Digital is an European project carried out by LWLO (Lithuania), Magenta (Spain), CSI (Cyprus), Danmar Computers (Poland), IVC (Romania) and ITMC (Lithuania) which seeks the inclusion of disadvantaged women into the digital sector of the labour market. The aim of the project is to develop adult educators' competences in motivating disadvantaged women to take part in learning towards employment in the digital sector of the labour market, which, in turn, will promote gender equality. In order to do this, the partnership is developing a training program for adult educators on the coaching for female employment, an assessment tool to recognise the adult educator's competences, a set of open educational resources for women and a MOOC which allows to organise the flexible e-learning for adult-educators coaches within the flipped learning classroom.

Although the project activities have not yet been finished (end date of the project is 31st December 2021), however, the project will develop free online tools that will be open to be used by everyone. The practices, developed and tested, can be easily replicated and transferred to other EU Member Sattes, since the need for digital literacy and gender equality are two main issues that the society needs to address.

http://csicy.com/go-digital/

Best Practice 2 –Volutoring EU project

Who:	Volutoring partnership	**Where:**	Turkey, Italy, Sweden, Spain, Cyprus, Greece	**When:**	2018-2020	**Target group:**	Adult educators, disadvantaged women (migrants, women who live in disadvantaged areas etc.)

The partnership comprised by AB Merkezi EU Center (Turkey), CSV MARCHE (Italy), Elderberry (Sweden), ITC Innovation Training Center (Spain), CSI Cyprus (Cyprus), Symplexis (Greece) developed the project Volutoring: Volunteer-based Tutoring Model for Low-skilled Migrants & Refugees with the aim of promoting the inclusion of migrants and refugees into the formal educational system, developing their skills and promoting their social integration through social-cultural-sport activities and non-formal/formal education and training. For this, the partnership designed and developed the capacity building course and the web platform.

The scope of the project is to develop a comprehensive tutoring approach for building key skills and competences of low-skilled adult migrant-refugees, in order to facilitate their integration in the educational, professional and social life. This comprehensive capacity plan is based on a volunteer-based tutoring model facilitated by an electronic platform and supported by volunteers or professionals, who will act as tutors to the low-skilled adult migrants/refugees for building their literacy, numeracy & digital skills building, necessary for empowering the target group to fruitfully participate in social and economic life and to improve their self-reliance.

The practice of the Volutoring products has generated a successful series of trainings, both, to equip tutors with the necessary skills, knowledge and techniques, and to adult learners, so they could familiarize themselves with the e-learning platform and the 7 modules. Volutoring's online products were used during volunteer courses for migrant/refugees in various dedicated organizations, institutions and Refugee Centres.

The practice was efficient and effective in terms of successful outreach and positive response and engagement by the stakeholders, as well as the target groups of the project. More than 10 local organisations and public and private institutions were engaged to use the project's products in their digital and face-to-face courses. The practice can be easily replicated in other Member States, as it contains uniformed (in terms of content) but also tailored (in terms of the various needs emerging from the target groups) teaching material, interactive activities and mini tests, templates, online documents, didactic methodologies and practical guidance and examples. The languages of the products are English, Greek, Turkish, Spanish, Italian and Swedish.

https://www.volutoring.eu/

Best Practice 3 – Espacio CyL Digital

Who:	Junta de Castilla y León	Where:	Valladolid, Spain	When:	2nd-24th July 2018	Target group:	Migrant women

Espacio CyL Digital launches free digital literacy workshops frequently. Some of these are aimed only at migrant women. These workshops consisted of various sessions in which the participants were taught how to use a computer and other ICTs in order to be able to communicate with family and friends back home, as well as to learn how to do online procedures and look for a job in different online portals.

There was no data available on how many women migrants attended the workshop, however, those who attended did improve their digital skills, being able to use basic programs and platforms, such as Gmail and Facebook as well as they learnt how to look for a job online and build a good CV. It requires that the organization have enough computers for all participants, which can be quite expensive if there is no possibility to rent, but if this is not a problem, it is a very cost-effective workshop which has a huge impact on the participants. It can be easily replicated in any Member State.

https://comunicacion.jcyl.es/web/jcyl/Comunicacion/es/Plantilla100Detalle/1284281798933/_/1284811884555/Comunicacion

Best Practice 4 –Hola Fabiola

Who:	Orange Foundation and Directa Foundation	Where:	Spain	When:	2012-onwards	Target group:	Female migrants with low digital skills

Hola Fabiola is a program created by the partnership of Orange Foundation and Directa Foundation, with the support of the Spanish Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality. The program is aimed at female migrants with low digital skills living in Spain.

Hola Fabola is an online training itinerary, tailored to the needs of each participant. Through the digital literacy training, the project aims at introducing new channels of communication, integrating, improving oral and written expression in Spanish, learning other languages and the Spanish culture, and empower participants at an individual and collective level, among others.

During these eight years of implementation, *Hola Fabiola* has reached hundreds of female migrants in Spain, allowing them to develop digital skills which helped with their social and labour integration, but

they also could develop a network of support, develop soft skills and, overall, feel empowered. This action has proven to be very effective, requiring a big initial effort, which turned to be very sustainable. It can be replicated in any Member State.

http://www.holafabiola.com/

Best Practice 5 – Creating a CV workshop

Who: Verein Multikulturell	**Where:** Innsbruck, Austria	**When:** 2020	**Target group:** Migrant women

Verein Multikulturell delivered this workshop in Innsbruck aimed to migrants with the aim of increasing their employability by creating a high quality CV for their job applications. The main goal of these workshops was giving migrants the tools to create a CV in order to look for a job and apply to it in a professional way. Participants were supported by facilitators, who taught them, among other things, how to use digital tools in order to create a Europass CV. The use of new technologies was key in the development of this workshop and it was necessary that the participants got used to this new way of communication.

This activity aims to help migrant women to create their CV and gain confidence using their newly acquired abilities when searching new labour opportunities. It has been a part of a project ARTEM – promoting intercultural communication between migrants/refugees and locals. The activity has been developed as a part of a training for developing intercultural competences for migrants.

This workshop turned out to have a great impact in the participants' life, enriching their skill set and improving their employability. It can be easily replicated in any Member State.

http://www.migration.cc/

Best Practice 6 – G-NET

Who: XANO CHANNEL	**Where:** European Union	**When:** 2018-2019	**Target group:** Adult Trainers and adult learners

The G-NET project aims to promote the entrepreneurial spirit of vulnerable groups, such as unemployed women and migrants using social media and ICT to create new e-enterprises, improving their opportunities to enter the labour market in an effective way. The main goal of the G-NET project is to enhance the skills of adults, especially those belonging to the vulnerable groups, to use social media and ICT to connect with the labour market. The project aimed at training adult's teachers and trainers in the effective use of ICT tools and Social Media to find job opportunities and to develop entrepreneurial spirit in vulnerable adult groups, which, in turn, will make participants acquire key and transversal competences adapted to the digital era and the job market demands. By acquiring these skills, the project promotes the inclusion of adult learners, focusing on those belonging to vulnerable groups, while promoting gender equality and fighting discrimination. Within the project, several actions took place targeted directly at the adult learners, such as the delivery of a training package with video lessons and video testimonials, trainings on how to become an e-entrepreneur.

The project fulfilled all the expected results, and the training package met the needs of the target group. Furthermore, a learning community was established, where learners could support and motivate each other. A total of 100 adult teachers, 30 enterprises and 400 adult learners were reached by this project. In addition, the project can be replicated as long as the target groups are elected according to the project description.

https://gnet-project.eu/

Best Practice 7 – Intercultural Working Lab

Who:	Frauenalia	**Where:**	Berlín, Germany	**When:**	2019/2020	**Target group:**	Migrant women between 30-55 years old

The Intercultural Working Lab aims at supporting female migrant academics on their process to find a position in the German labour market which really matches their profile, competences and personal interests. Unfortunately, many migrant women in Germany cannot find a position which really matches to their academic studies and professional experience and end up taking over jobs for which they are over-qualified. This leads to situations, in which these professionals cannot develop their whole potential, which represent a big lost not only for themselves but also for the German society and economy. The specific goal of the project is for every participant to develop an action plan for their integration into the labour market.

The project fulfilled the expected results since all participants concluded their participation with this plan. 10 of them found a job matching their profile, competences and interests. 5 decided to re-orientate themselves in a new area and started additional studies in Germany. 3 of them are preparing C1- German level tests in order to start a Master's program and new University studies and 7 women are on the process to find a job.

https://www.frauenalia.com/intercultural-working-lab

Best Practice 8 – ECDL Facilitating Migrant's Entry in to the Austrian Labour Market

Who:	ECDL MA	**Where:**	Austria	**When:**	2010	**Target group:**	Migrants

A growing number of EU Member States face an ageing population, a stagnating or even declining working population and weak economic growth. Migration is one way to respond effectively to the challenges of ageing population, a stagnating or even declining working population and weak economic growth. This action aims at facilitating the integration of migrants to maximise their social and labour integration into the Austrian society.

ECDL computer skills certification is offered to migrants in order to support their professional and social integration in Austria. Given that an increasing number of jobs require digital skills, it is important to ensure that migrants receive appropriate skills to meet labour market requirements. Furthermore, by undertaking ECDL certification, migrants not only acquire digital skills, they also have the opportunity to learn technical ICT vocabulary in German, which is essential to succeed in the workplace. In other words, migrants' professional qualification goes hand in hand with language improvement.

Since 2010, when the ECDL programme was launched at Integration Centre Vienna, 210 migrants have been enrolled in the full ECDL programme and 220 migrants undertook the ECDL Advanced programme. In today's workplace, employees are increasingly required to have the ability to use technology efficiently and effectively. Consequently employers expect job applicants to have computer skills prior to being hired. This means that providing migrants with the right skills will help them to be more attractive to potential employers and to progress further in their careers.

https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/collection/einclusion/document/ecdl-facilitating-migrants-entry-austrian-labour-market-ecdl-ma

Best Practice 9 – MIVA project

Who:	Project part-nership	**Where:**	7 Partner countries	**When:**	2019-2020	**Target group:**	Third country nationals, NGOs, civil society, volun-teers, local authorities

The partnership of the project MIVA - *Migrants Integration through volunteering activities* developed an app, called INDIGOWORLD, aimed at promoting solidarity and inclusion through the offer or request of objects and services. Through this, the project wanted to promote the implementation of interactive activities to enhance the integration of Third Country Nationals' through their participation in the social and cultural life of the host community, and to foster capacity-building of local communities on success-ful integration via volunteering and cultural action. This was oriented at supporting the empowerment of refugees and increase their participation in local community life; implementing a capacity building programme focusing on third country nationals' integration, stakeholders and local citizens from the tar-geted communities. In particular, INDIGO app enables the access to free goods or services, and facilitates citizens' mobilization and engagement in non-profit actions and volunteering activities. Indigo has also a web app platform dedicated to NGOs allowing them to create volunteering activities on the application connecting them to the volunteers.

The app has proven to be very efficient and cost effective. In France, where it was created, there are thousands of users. It is currently being implemented in other countries, adding more languages for pub-lishing posts. The app has a high rate of transferability due to its nature and it could also incorporate other facilities. The App is translated in: English, French, Italian, Finish, Greek, Polish, Urdu, Farsi and Arabic.

https://www.mivaproject.eu/

Best Practice 10 – Pomelo project

Who:	Project part-nership	**Where:**	5 Partner countries	**When:**	2019-2020	**Target group:**	Volunteers and instructors working with Migrant Youth; community social workers; youth organizations working with MY and dealing with migrant integration; youth or-ganizations working with local youth; Mi-grant and local young people.

The partnership of POMELO – *Power of voice melody and diversity* project aims at fostering the integra-tion of young refugees into their host society. Among migrant communities, youth are the ones at the greatest risk of marginalisation in host countries, resulting in a "neither-here-nor-there" syndrome and potentially alienating them towards the host countries and adding to their frustrations and discomfort. Besides usual difficulties with finding food, shelter or work, these groups also face specific challenges in social inclusion, participation and personal development, regarding assistance with language and com-munication skills, teaching democratic citizenship and assisting with their emotional and psycho-cultural development and well-being.

POMELO is an answer to the need for effective integration practices for migrant youth. The project de-veloped an info-game and a Competence Map on Foreign Language Learning through Singing and on Music as Social Inclusion Enhancer, together with a training packs for professional working with local and migrant youth and another for local and migrant young people. The partnership also produced a Multi-media Replicability guide to make transferability easier. Additionally, a seminar for instructors, volun-teers, youth workers, youth organization staff and social workers dealing with migrant youth was held, so as to make them familiar with the info-game and the training kits. Through these practices, they and other local youth are afforded equal voice and the opportunity to grow together through reciprocal mul-ticultural enhancement.

Thanks to the POMELO project, participants acquired social inclusion and multicultural communication competences for their professional and personal profile; they increased their ICT skills and literacy; could develop support networks in the host country, both with organizations helping them but also with local youth. This practice can be easily replicable, just investing enough money to translate the materials (if they are not already translated).

https://pomelo-project.eu/

E-MPLOY-ME! piloting and afterthoughts

This section will provide insight about the piloting of the E-MPLOY-ME! E-learning platform in each of the members of the partnership's countries, how they were implemented, the characteristics of the target group, the challenges found and how they were overcame. In all partner countries, the training used the level 5 evaluation and was implemented in at least two sessions, with the exception of the training in Italy: the first one presenting the project and the platform, and the second one aimed at collecting feedback and solving doubts. However, each partner organization delivered the piloting according to the needs of their target groups.

Austria

The Austrian partner, Verein Multikulturell, had to face the COVID-19 crisis while carrying out the piloting sessions. Because of this, the participants were divided into two groups in order to accommodate to the number of people allowed to be together indoors. There were 8 sessions in total, 4 –one per module- with each group. The sessions took place in the sports room of Kindervilla, Innsbruck (Austria), a kindergarten for children with migrant background.

The partner chose to deliver the piloting in 4 sessions due to the needs of the group, as participants had low or no level of education. In addition, their ICT skills were very limited, only using their smartphones to communicate via social media channels and watching YouTube videos. For them, working on their own in the platform could have been too demanding, thus decreasing their motivation and commitment. Because of this, VM intertwined the learning of some basic digital skills in addition to learning how to use the E-MPLOY-ME! platform, to make the sessions as efficient and useful for participants as possible. This ICT training became as important as the training in the e-learning platform.

> Equipping participants with the skills needed to take the most out of the sessions is always a good idea.

Prior to the beginning of each session, participants filled in the LEVEL 5 evaluation form for each module, and after the session was completed, they filled it in again, thus evaluating their knowledge after being introduced to the platform. The evaluation was too complicated and tedious for participants. In addition, participants did not seem to quite comprehend the value of doing the LEVEL 5 evaluation and why it is relevant for them, partly participants needed an advanced level of language comprehension to understand the tool, which they tended to lack.

The sessions took place in German (host country language), with French, English and Arabic used as supporting languages by the facilitators. To mitigate the language issues, facilitators projected on a big screen what they were doing on their desktop while explaining, thus participants could recreate the same steps.

The main methodological tool *was learning by doing* – each participant had to be able to repeat what facilitators were showing on the screen. As participants had different levels of ICT skills, facilitators provided a lot of individual guidance for each participant. This difference in ICT levels brought up some motivation challenges: for participants with some ICT skills, this training was too easy, but for those with no ICT skills at all, it was demanding and quite intimidating.

> Giving participants the opportunity to share engages them and helps create great value from the activity.

Participants were also encouraged to discuss and provide their own input on *what online sources they use to learn a language, how they look for a job, how the find a doctor, or accommodation, what are the cultural differences and struggles they experience*. Participants were eager to contribute and share their opinions, although reluctant at first. Migrants and refugees tend to be treated as passive recipients of knowledge during trainings, so they were engaged and motivated when given the opportunity to contribute.

Participants became familiar with browsing the Internet as independent users; using the E-MPLOY-ME! platform and using the information provided; using various online tools and website to support participants' learning German in their daily lives; becoming familiar with a number of websites to gain information for the local context and use them independently. Another added value is that participants exchanged advice and started to create relations among themselves.

The facilitator claimed that the platform provides basic information and starting points for participants to initiate their own "online endeavours". However, they would need to receive some basic ICT skills prior to the use of the e-learning platform to be able to take the most out of the activity. Participants said that the information on the platform was interesting, especially the Module 3, as it encouraged them to reflect on their own behaviours and perceptions, the differences between Austria and their country of origin; and to share the struggles they experience in the host country. In addition, women said that it was not clear for them how spending so much time on the evaluation is helpful for them, as they said that they prefer to do more practical activities, such as working with the computers or discussing the topics of the modules.

> Adaptability is key. The sessions and the materials used were in English, as participants did not have enough knowledge of the host country language.

Participants in Austria got great value out of the piloting, as they could really improve their ICT skills in addition to the content of the E-MPLOY-ME! e-learning platform. However, a big handicap in this training was the fact that no childcare was provided, so some participants –mothers with family responsibilities –could not attend all the sessions.

Cyprus

The Cypriot partner, Center for Social Innovation, delivered the piloting in two sessions, in which participants were offered drinks and snacks, paper and pen and E-MPLOY-ME! project material.

The first session was conducted with the aim of introducing participants to the project and the online platform. At the beginning of the 1st session, CSI presented the project and participants had the opportunity to learn more about its objectives, outcomes, and expected results. This was followed by a presentation of the e-learning platform, the online course and its modules. Participants were shown, step by step, how to register on the platform and proceed with the course completion. During the session, they had the opportunity to ask any questions or clarifications about the e-learning platform before completing the Level 5 evaluation sheet to ascertain their current knowledge. Participants were asked to complete the online course by the second session.

> After the first session, participants received a document containing specific instructions and screenshots on how to register on the platform and complete the course.

The second session centred on participants' experience with the online course and solving any doubts they might still have. When participants provided CSI with feedback and all the questions were answered, they were asked to complete the Level 5 evaluation sheet to check how much they had learnt. To finish the session, participants received their certificates of attendance.

> Evaluating before and after the training allowed participants to better perceive how their knowledge improved.

PowerPoint presentations, group discussions, individual and group reflection and evaluation were the main ways of delivery of these sessions. The presentations, shown through a projector, were very useful in making the content more understandable and offering insight to the participants on how the project and the e-learning platform works. The discussions facilitated reflection among the participants and the facilitator. Lastly, the brief evaluation allowed the organisers to make a comparison between the first and the second session in terms of participants' skills improvement.

The trainer who facilitated the piloting sessions reported that participants were very engaged and interested and the sessions ran smoothly, without any issues, even though some challenges regarding the language were expected due to participants' lack of knowledge of the local language.

In general, participants also valued greatly the piloting, and they let this be known to the host organization. They found the material and the tips for developing skills related to job-hunting particularly useful. In fact, one participant commented that she did not know about LinkedIn and the module related to building a CV motivated her to create an account. Participants also found the quizzes accompanying each module useful to test their comprehension of the unit.

On the other hand, this particular group found the language course to be the least useful, since learning Greek as foreigners turned to be very difficult for them. Also, Greek differs a lot from the Cypriot dialect used in everyday life; this mismatch made the task of learning Greek for everyday communication particularly challenging, despite living in the country for more than 5 years. One participant mentioned that, although the modules were very well developed, they were not complete enough regarding the legal framework surrounding the employment eligibility of migrant women in Cyprus. There is a special section about the relevant legal frameworks in all partner countries in the online course; however, it was not very detailed and it referred to external links. Regarding the evaluation assessment sheet, participants found it not very comprehensive and difficult to fill in, requiring help from the facilitator.

Overall, the piloting session in Cyprus was considered to be a success, as participants found it useful and the partnership got insight on how to improve the online course for its public launching.

Germany

The German Partner, EUFRAK, carried out the training with 15 women aged between 30 and 45 years old. Unlike in the piloting sessions of other partners, these participants held a bachelor's degree and had enough ICT skills to operate the platform on their own. The countries of origin of the participants were Spain, Colombia, Peru, Chile and Argentina. Participants also had a B1/B2 level of German language.

The characteristics of their target group allowed the German partner to deliver the training via Zoom, an online conferencing tool. This was greatly appreciated by the participants, as it made participation easier for them, as they could take care of their children at the same time, and it was also safer in times of COVID-19.

Besides the presentations by the trainers, the methodology used during the pilot sessions was mainly discussion and sharing experiences related to the different challenges included in each module. In Module 3, facilitators carried out one of the tools presented during the E-MPLOY-ME! project's training in Cyprus, which included dynamics of self-reflection and presentations to the group.

> Adaptability is key: Due to the group's characterristics, discussing about the topics was as enriching as completing the training course.

During the first session, EUFRAK's facilitators introduced the project and its objectives and outcomes before introducing the platform, the online course and the four different modules. The facilitators explained the content of each module and answered the questions of the participants, then, facilitators explained Level 5 evaluation and told participants to fill in the evaluation sheet. The participants had 22 days to complete de platform before the second session.

During the second session, participants filled in again the evaluation sheet and provided feedback and comments on the platform and the training. Participants found the platform to be a very useful tool for newcomers, as it allows to find very different and useful information in just one place rather than doing multiple individual searches. Participants also provided some comments for improvement, such as including an estimated time of completion in each unit and adding a directory of English-speaking professionals providing services in main areas of the country such as psychologists, physicians, lawyers, etc. Participants also found very useful that the platform was available in more languages. This is relevant to highlight, as participants with intermediate German skills still found it difficult to understand all the information in the platform and completing the course in German.

Other feedback gathered was that the platform was not interactive, which affected the motivation of the user, as having "too much text" could be a reason to not completing the course. Participants proposed to include videos or even a sort of "virtual assistant" to guide them through the course.

As the facilitators stated, the piloting turned out to be very satisfactory. Facilitators and participants were satisfied with the results of the sessions, as participants could understand the goal of the projects and got to know the platform and interact with it going through the modules and they also provided very useful feedback on the platform and the course.

Italy

The Italian partner, PRISM, faced particularly strong obstacles to implement the training due to COVID-19 restrictions, although they were able to deliver the training with participants from Ghana and Kenya residing in Palermo, who had a basic local language and ICT skills, which made possible carrying out the training online.

Taking into account the particularities and needs of the group, the training was delivered in just one session. However, the modules were previously introduced to participants by email and individual Skype meetings were conducted and facilitated by the PRISM's project coordinator so participants could share their feedback in line with the Level 5 evaluation templates. During the training session, participants were introduced to the Employ-me project and the modules of the online course, how to register and log-in into the platform, how to enrol to the free learning modules, how to approach the modules, track their progress and take the quiz.

> Providing participants with information about the training content prior to it may make online training easier.

The main expected challenges were related to the direct engagement of participants due to the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic and the restrictions issued by the Italian government. Several piloting sessions were planned to be implemented on September 2020 as well as on March and April 2020. However, PRISM faced severe challenges in terms of current restrictions and health risks to the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The results expected were that participants who finished the training were able to get through the learning platform and its learning modules and were equipped with key competences and tools to increase their employability and orientation in the local community. The feedback received from the participants was positive, as nearly all of the participants declared that the learning modules equipped them with key competences and valuable tools on employability and orientation that they could use. Analysis of the evaluation results also showed a growth in the acquisition of knowledge and the ability related to the use of job-search tools and the creation of a CV and cover letter (module 2), as well as knowledge on intercultural understating and communication (module 3). Generally, the information received on social integration (module 4) and language orientation (module 1) considered "fine / useful enough". According to the facilitator of the session, the platform and its learning modules are easy to use and able to promote access to employment for the target group/s.

Despite all the challenges faced to deliver this training (difficulty to find participants, restrictive measures on gathering, having only one session) this training resulted to be very fruitful for the participants who attended it.

Spain

The Spanish partner, Magenta Consultoría Projects, carried out the training with four groups and delivered two sessions per group to accommodate to the legislation on restricted gatherings imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic, which by the end of the third training became even more restrictive, allowing only 6 persons to be together. To find participants, Magenta teamed up with two local associations helping migrants: ACCEM and Mujeres Africanas Association.

Sessions with all groups were structured similarly. During the first session, the facilitator introduced the project, the importance of the piloting and guided the participants through the e-learning platform, so they learnt how to register and use it. Before diving deeper into the platform, participants were asked to fill in the Level 5 Evaluation sheet. Participants were asked to complete the four modules of the platform before the second session. In the second session, participants had the opportunity to ask any doubts they might had about the units, the modules or the platform, and they were also welcomed to provide any comments or further feedback. After this, participants filled in again the Level 5 evaluation sheet and received their certificates of attendance.

The main methodology used was *learning by doing*, as the facilitator provided some guidelines, but it was the participants who had to open the internet, look for the E-MPLOY-ME! website, register in the platform and, finally, complete the modules on their own. Although they worked on their own, they were always supervised and tutored by the facilitator, mainly due to the difference in digital skills. Younger women tended to have more digital skills than their older counterparts, and this somewhat affected the participation of older participants. As ICT learning is incorporated in schools nowadays, younger participants had more digital notions. On the other hand, older participants tended to have no or low digital skills, and they tended to be embarrassed to ask for help, so the facilitator had to make a lot of follow up questions and be very alert to realise when a participant might be struggling. When this happened, the facilitator gave them some basic digital skills training: how to open/create folders and documents, how to save, how to open internet and search for things… so they could take the most out of the training.

A peculiarity of the first group (in comparison with the ones of other partners and the other 3 groups in Spain) is that the mother tongue of participants was the same as the host country's official language, so there was no issue concerning language barriers. This is because Spain receives mostly immigrants from Latin American, whose first language is Spanish. The participants of the rest of groups came from African countries, but had enough language skills to follow the course.

All participants benefited from the information provided, although they would have liked more detailed information in the modules. Some participants also benefited from learning how to use a computer, as their ICT skills were so low they could barely follow the steps to open the e-learning platform and navigate in it. The facilitator took this as an opportunity to introduce these participants into basic ICT skills: how to create folders and documents, how to edit and save documents, how to put documents inside and outside of folders, how to navigate the internet and look for information…

> Sometimes the results are not what we expect, but are still very valuable.

As it was mentioned in the previous paragraph, the lack of skills of the participants turned out to be an obstacle. First, because Magenta could not deliver the training online, as participants lacked necessary skills to do so (via facetime, skype for smartphones or similar apps). In addition, the lack of ICT skills also proved to be an obstacle when delivering the face-to-face sessions, as some participants could not use the computer. This problem was solved by providing participants who needed it with the necessary knowledge. Another problem was that most participants did not own a computer or had access to one near their place of residence. However, the facilitator referred participants to the mobile version of the online course. All participants owned or had access to a smartphone, and as the

e-learning platform is an internet site rather than a downloadable app, they could access it easily and complete the modules.

Most participants were genuinely excited and thankful to take part in the training and they were vocal about it. They regarded it as an opportunity to develop their skills and add a certificate to their curriculum. The module participants found most useful was Module 2 about job search, technologies & techniques to understand job demands. It was equally welcomed by younger participants, looking for a first employment, and older ones, who were left out of the labour market due to a variety of reasons: some could not practice in Spain the job they were qualified for in their country of origin, some stopped working to take care of the house and children or older relatives and others just cannot find an employer. Also, participants had the opportunity to meet people in their same situation, migrant women who, mostly, had not fully integrated nor adapted into the host society yet, thus creating a network of support. Also, participants provided very useful feedback about the platform, which allowed to improve it.

> It is important to understand participants' motivations and expectations in order to make the workshop the most useful for them.

Conclusion

Best practices are very useful when doing any type of work. They provide us with information of what worked well –and not so well –for a particular people in a particular situation. Thus, best practices can be replicated in similar circumstances if we want to achieve a similar result or can be adapted if our situation is different or want different results. Best practices can also be a source of inspiration, as a best practice can give us ideas to work in a certain way or adopt specific measures, or just simply make us think there is something in need of change.

After the piloting sessions carried out by the partners, it becomes clear that transferable practices not always should be delivered in the same way and they may not always provide similar results and still be beneficial. For most partner countries, language was a challenge, and they had to be creative to overcome that barrier. In other cases, this problem did not exist. This, together with the experience with learners with different ICT skills, puts the focus on the importance of adapting the resources and time to meet the specific needs of the group within the implementation of the practice, as different groups will need support in different areas.

Piloting sessions allow to gather comments and feedback from the other side of the action, from those who benefit from it. By piloting the e-learning platform, the partnership gathered essential information to improve the platform and the practice per se. An example of this is that, while the platform was found to be very intuitive and user friendly, participants in most countries mentioned that it would be better to include more in-depth information in the modules. In the same way, while participants stated that the training was enjoyable and they, in fact, improved their knowledge and skills, found the evaluation method (Level 5) difficult, confusing and tedious. This is something to improve in future implementations, either explain better how Level 5 works, or replace it with another method of evaluation.

After the piloting sessions, the partnership believes that the E-MPLOY-ME! e-learning platform can be considered a best practice due to its high level of transferability, its engagement with the target group

and the desirable results it produced regarding the needs it aimed to meet. The partnership is greatly satisfied with the development and results of the piloting sessions and expects that their experience is useful for anyone who reads this handbook.