

Innovative Curriculum for Adult Learners on soft skills

IO2 Soft Skills Assessment Toolkit and Individual Goal Mapping –
Report and Development of Ideal Tools

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1. Aim

The aim of this Intellectual Output of the project ICARO is to emphasize the importance of Soft Skills for persons seeking a job, especially if and when they have not acquired a high level of formal education and can document these educational efforts.

Furthermore, it is the aim to report about the situation in the different partner countries regarding the provision of SSA Tools and GMM. The expectation that such instruments are scarce was to be proved or disproved.

In addition, the project partners aimed at providing a unique tool for SSA, for use in the project and beyond. The tools developed in this project are developed in the hope that they can inspire the EU community and the national discussion about the need of assessing Soft Skills especially for persons with a low level of formal education.

Last but not least, this Intellectual Output had the aim to lay a foundation for IO 3, the Course.

Whether it is the training provided for the target group of unemployed persons, in which the participants are supposed to get the opportunity to assess their Soft Skills (or get them assessed), or the Training for AE Educators, in which the participants are supposed to learn how to administer such assessments in a way accommodating the needs of the target group mentioned above.

2. Target groups

The target groups of this project are:

a) Unemployed persons with a low level of formal education (with an emphasis to persons over 50 years)

Statistics on EU level show that the employment rate of persons with a low level of formal education, compared to those with a medium or high level of formal education, is below average in the EU (52,7 % employment rate for low level, 73,4% at medium level and 83,7 % at high level. Furthermore, this percentage has, as a consequence of the crisis, worsened between the years of 2008 and 2014, from 56,6% in 2008 to the percentage mentioned above. The unemployment rate among workers with a low level of education in the same time has risen from roughly 10% in 2008 to 17-18% in 2014 (all EU countries). The reasons are that the number of job opportunities has dropped, but they have dropped above proportion for job opportunities aimed at persons with a low level of skills. The most difficult group is the age group of persons 50 years and older. There are several reasons: their training can be outdated, their participation in Further Trainings is mostly low, and employers are doubtful about that group.

There is a need to give more support to this vulnerable group, one way to ease their way into the labour market is to show the competences outside or beyond technical knowledge and experience, e.g. in the field of Soft Skills.

b) Educators of AE

If there is a need to offer ways for unemployed persons with a low level of education, then Adult Educators are the dedicated group to provide these ways. That means that AE educators themselves need to have the skills and competences in order to support these persons and find and use tools to make competences visible and possibly certifiable. AE educators mostly stand for their field of expertise (ICT, Language, health etc.), but they have to learn to look between these fields, and search for the skills that



are not fixed to a certain vocational area, but are cross sectoral. The International Training offered for AE Educators endeavours to make this possible.

c) AE organisations

Adult Education providers (public, private) might be interested to be introduced to a set of tools they can use in different environments:

either embedded in projects of funding lines designed to help unemployed persons into the labour market; or

as a single offer in their course programme as an opportunity for unemployed persons to learn more about themselves, get activated and find a way into the job. Even as a stand-alone-offer courses with these topics (Soft Skills Assessment) might find a funding from states, job agencies etc.

AE providers dealing with the target group of unemployed persons with a low level of formal education are asking for tools to assess Soft Skills. This is the result of enquiries made by the project partners among the members of the Local Action Groups.

3) Assessment of Soft Skills

Considering the situation mentioned above about unemployment and especially long-term unemployment, the fact that many persons of these groups in the respective countries belong to the so called “low educated” job seekers, the evaluation and possibly certification of Soft Skills can be a means to enhance the chances when seeking a job.

Unemployment has been a constant issue at least since the economic crisis starting 2008, the effects of which have never been totally overcome. As a consequence, mobility throughout Europe has uprooted many persons, especially young persons under 30 years. Sometimes their qualifications are not acknowledged in their new country of choice. That does not mean that they do not have skills. These skills can be appreciated.

The need for Soft Skills Assessment has been greatly enhanced by the refugee crisis of 2015, albeit the EU countries have been influenced by that in different ways. In Hamburg, a new project (with a lifetime of 6 years) has the task of evaluating formal and informal skills of all refugees coming to Hamburg, in order to find a placement in job or education as soon as possible. But research throughout the partners showed that very little is offered in the way of tools to be used in the assessment of Soft Skills.

a. Requirements

The requirements as a tool meeting the demands of an EU-project are the following:

- The tool has to be usable in all EU –countries, first during the lifetime of the project in the partner countries, but after the projects’ lifetime we wish to inform other partners in quite different countries all over the EU, in order to strengthen the impact of the project. Therefore, the tool must be usable (which does not mean that we will translate it in all EU languages).

- Consequently, the tool cannot be fixed to a certain system of Vocational Education and Training (VET) or of the job market in general. In the different EU countries, we see

very different systems of initial VET or Continuing VET (CVET). These differences sometimes have their roots in the school system, are often due to the development of the job market and the fact that economies are differently shaped. E.g., in a country where many SME are in existence usually one cannot find many companies offering In-House CVET. Owing to the fact that many countries in the EU do not have installed the dual system of VET, rather offer initial training for a vocation via schools, the experience and the knowledge for training is provided in organisations not actively acting on the labour market.

- In contrast, in Germany, Austria and some other countries, the Dual System of VET has, as a consequence, made the companies made aware of the need to provide training, initial and otherwise.
- As project partners, we want to influence the debate about Soft Skills Assessment and the need of tools enabling professional personal to deliver to assess Soft Skills or at least supervise the process of assessment. In offering a tool by ourselves, we stimulate this debate. But that means that the tool must be open to be adaptable to change on national level (without violating the criteria) and to be complemented with important elements that are necessary in the process of acquiring a job in a certain country (e.g. language skills with level description or experience in a foreign country etc.).

b. Selected Tools of partners

Partners had the task to find tools for Soft Skills Assessment (SSA) during the research in IO1. They installed a group of responsible and interested partners of their own network or of governmental bodies, such as chambers, labour unions, job agencies etc. The LAG members were provided with a questionnaire asking (among other questions) whether they see a need for SSA and whether they know of any tools for SSA. The results are surprising and, at the same time, underline the importance of this project: many LAG members throughout the partner countries were of the opinion that SSA is needed (reasons as mentioned above) , but at the same time very little was known about existing tools for SSA. Extensive research by partners at least produced some SSA tools, which are shown in the Annex, by partner country. But, despite many efforts, nothing could be found in Greece, Ireland. Belgium, as a partner with a slightly different purpose in the project, was not required to research this topic.

All partners were provided with a template to report on their findings

This is the result:

Spain:

Spanish partners introduced two instruments, the second one only after an extensive research.

One has been developed by themselves (“Tab control”) and actually covers a broad range of Soft Skills, including language mastery etc.

The second one, “eLene4work”, has been developed in the frame of an EU project and aimed initially towards young persons.

Lithuania:

In Lithuania, the partners named 2 tools, both have been developed with funding of EU project funding lines, and both are online tools. The “JobYes” tool is a short one and can be easily adapted and enlarged to cover more areas.

Belgium:

Belgium Partner found two Erasmus+ projects which have developed tools for assessments : ‘Hard-Soft skilling-charting your career path (project coordinator Liceul Charles Laugier, Romania), “to create innovative tools to support continuous development of learners' high transferable skills, increasing the students' motivation by encouraging collaboration and experience sharing, fostering creativity and peer assessment”, thought this project website is down.; second project, “i-pool- Interactive Pool of tools for enhancing basic skills and key competences of adults” which develop Interactive Pool (package) of those tools in a form of on-line database, allowing for categorisation and assessment of existing tools and addition of new ones, as well as making recommendation for other uses.

Germany:

In Germany, the project partners found 3 tools, one for the assessment of digital tools one for Soft Skills and one for a variety of skills, incl. Soft Skills (“Profile PASS”). All instruments are in use, they have partly been funded by national or EU bodies and at least the tool Profile PASS is well known, but not very often used, with the exception of using it with women getting back to the workplace.

EU- Level:

Of course, on EU level there are existing tools to evaluate or report/collect your Soft Skills, such as the Europass. They are well known to the communities in the respective partner countries and do not need to be described as they are available on many EU sites. For further information see <https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu>, the tool is provided in all EU languages.

c. Criteria

The criteria we, as a project team, have elected to be essential for a Tool to assess Soft Skills are different from the requirements we have to consider in the frame of an EU project. They, in our opinion, are valid for all tools. They are based on professional standards and ethics. The criteria we selected are a result of the screening of the existing tools we found in our research phase.

In our opinion these are:

- **Theory based:** a tool used for assessment of Soft Skills needs to have a theoretical basis. E.g. in learning theories, such as the Transitional Learning Theory of J. Mezirow,

the idea is that learning can be triggered by transitional episodes in life if and only if they are reflected upon and inserted in the frame of values, thereby changing this frame.

This theory is instrumental in understanding why SSA in itself can have a learning outcome.

- **Resource oriented:** many questionnaires or tools dedicated to assess skills are strongly deficit oriented, they show very often what one cannot do/achieve. In order to encourage learning it is important to focus on the resources existent and assess them as much as possible. The paradigm of resource orientation in social work and education came about in the beginning of this century. Resources are defined as characteristics and features of a person; they are non-material and can be of an emotional, social, psychological, physical or economical nature.

- **Participative:** Adults are independent individual, defining their aims for themselves. Therefore, tools used to assess their skills have to offer the opportunity to influence the process and the outcome, so that individual aims and preferred strategies are taken into account.

- **Reflective:** the process of assessing one's skills is often accompanied by looking backwards into one's past experience. This should be supported in order to reflect on past learning experiences and successes/struggles. This in itself is a learning outcome.

- **Describing learning outcomes:** in accordance with the EU model of qualifications assessments should have as their aim the description of learning outcomes, not only of facts /grades.

- **evidence based:** assessment of Soft Skills should be based on evidence, e.g. observation, documentation, witnessing;

- **Personalized:** the assessment process needs to be highly personalized. Even in group settings the focus has to be on the individuals.

- **Appreciative:** hand in hand with the criteria of resource orientation goes the need to be appreciative. The tools used must allow for in-built-appreciation of acquired skills, of learning steps during the process and at the end of the process.

- **Oriented towards the future** acquirement of skills: assessment of Soft Skills should offer the opportunity to show what else can be learned, acquired or tried. Insofar, a tool for assessment should not be the end, but possibly the beginning of a process repeated in intervals.

- **Easy access and low cost:** participants belonging to the target group of unemployed persons mainly do not have a budget to pay for assessment of Soft Skills. Therefore,

the tools should be provided for no or low costs. And they should be easily accessible, either online or in other forms.

d. Conclusions

After discussion in the group we came to the conclusion that all existing tools we found during the research phase can be used, but they have to fit to the circumstances.

If used in a situation where the funding is coming via a project or a third party, the criteria of low cost can be neglected, in other situations it can be prohibitive. The online tools are fine for persons with the skills to negotiate them, but if that is not the case, there should be help available. The fact that some tools only cover a certain area of Soft Skills is not a disadvantage as long as the persons using them or offering them are aware of the fact. It is important that the trainers administering the SSA tools are acquainted with them so they know what can be expected and what has to be explained. Thus disappointments can be evaded.

e. Description of Ideal Toolkit for Assessment

Taking into account the requirements and criteria as well as the tools already existing and their evaluation by partners, the “Ideal” Toolkit for SSA must meet high expectations.

As project partners, we want to influence the EU-wide and national debate on Soft Skills Assessment and the need of tools enabling professional personal to deliver Soft Skills Assessment or at least supervise the process of assessment. In offering the basic shape of a tool by ourselves, we hope to stimulate this debate. But that means that the tool must be open to be adaptable to change (without violating the criteria) and to be complemented with important elements.

Roughly designed, it is based on the findings of the IO 1 (using the most important descriptors for the sub items of Soft Skills), it will offer an online and an offline version with “self and other” assessment that is driven by evidence and includes the opportunity to use it in a narrative setting, either as a person-to-person setting or a group.

It can be used as a tool for assessing Soft Skills in one sitting, or as a measure to stimulate debate and exchange. Then it will be used in a narrative way. The tool can be used including short written reports that are prepared in advance, and then introduced in the meetings. The outline of this tool you will find in the annex.

4) Guidelines for Educators of AE using Toolkits for SSA

The European Framework of Qualifications (EQF), developed during the early years of the recent century, has had a wide impact on European and national politics regarding the recognition of qualifications. Since 2012, all new qualification descriptions should follow the same regimen, dividing the set of qualifications/experience necessary in a certain field in this pattern:

Knowledge	Skills	Competences	Attitude
Means theoretical or factual knowledge	In the context of EQF, skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) and practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments)	In the context of the EQF responsibility and autonomy is described as the ability of the learner to apply knowledge and skills autonomously and with responsibility	<i>For AE Trainers, it is important that knowledge, skills and competences are based on an attitude (professional, personal)</i>

The 4 column has been added by the project partners, it is not part of the EQR- pattern. We as a consortium, however, think that a certain attitude as a fundamental basis for competence and performance is essential for AE trainers.

After the initial implementation on EU-level, the national governments and responsible bodies were required to adapt the EQF to national use (e.g. in Germany: The DQR, Deutscher Qualifikationsrahmen).

Some changes have been made in the different countries, regarding the description of the 3 main areas (Knowledge, skills, competences) and, furthermore, the description of the levels of qualification. In the original set-up on EU level there were 8 levels of qualifications, described as “basic” (level 1) up to “most advanced” (level 8). The process of adaptation in the VET system and in AE is an ongoing process. For further information, see link in 7).References.

Regarding the qualifications of AE educators, the set of qualifications can be described in the same fashion. In fact, with the effort of EQUAVET, this idea took place, not only

describing qualifications of AE educators, but also including descriptions of competence areas for AE or VET providers and the VET or AE system in general.

Coming back to the Soft Skills Assessment process that is not done by learners themselves and independently, but is administered by professional AE educators or Social Workers, the project offers a set of qualifications (knowledge, skills and competences) in order to support the “ideal tool” for SSA in practice. These qualifications can be described in the same fashion as used in the EU wide or national qualification frameworks:

Set of requirements for trainers working with the Assessment of Soft Skills

Knowledge	Skills	Competences	Attitude
Qualification appropriate for this task, either by university degree or long- term experience.	Skills or self- reflection	Goal oriented	Convinced that everyone can learn
Knowledge about the target group, their social and economic background, their educational needs	Ability to structure a process, to encourage and summarize, to go forward and come to an end	Empathy	Convinced that everyone has skills
Knowledge about the job market and the requirements of certain professions	Methodological skills	Competence of steering the process in a productive way	Seeing participants on eye-to- eye level
Knowledge about the changes in the society and especially in the demand of work force	Active listening Communication skills	Ability to show appreciation	Thriving to learn and inspire others to learn
Knowledge about financing and funding training or job entry	Digital skills	Ability to share the responsibility for a process	Tolerance acceptance
Knowledge about tools for SSA and GM	Counselling skills	Ability to restrain oneself	Oriented towards diversity

Knowledge about methods for reflection, process orientation, and communication	Skill to seek information via different media: network, internet etc.	Ability to know one's own borders	
....OthersOthersOthers	...Others

During the International Training for Trainers that is part of the projects' activities this list can be supplemented according to the experiences made. The training will take place in November 2018, in Hamburg.

5) Individual Goal Mapping: Methods and Reporting, Follow Up

As an addition and important supplement to Soft Skills Assessment Tools, the project endeavoured to find tools for Goal Mapping, which is a structured process of realising one's own aims, using strengths and support measures. The tools usually have a visualizing part in order to connect the left and the right part of the brain.

a. **Requirements for Goal Mapping Methods (GMM)**

- The tool has to be usable in all EU –countries, first during the lifetime of the project in the partner countries, but after the projects' lifetime we wish to inform other partners in quite different countries all over the EU, in order to strengthen the impact of the project. Therefore, the tool must be usable (which does not mean that we will translate it in all EU languages).
- Consequently, the tool cannot be fixed to a certain system of Vocational Education and Training (VET) or of the job market in general. In the different EU countries, we see very different systems of initial VET or Continuing VET (CVET). These differences sometimes have their roots in the school system, are often due to the development of the job market and the fact that economies are differently shaped. E.g., in a country where many SME are in existence usually one cannot find many companies offering In-House CVET. Owing to the fact that many countries in the EU do not have installed the dual system of VET, rather offer initial training for a vocation via schools, the experience and the knowledge for training is provided in organisations not actively acting on the labour market. In contrast, in Germany, Austria and some other countries, the Dual System of VET has, as a consequence, made the companies made aware of the need to provide training, initial and otherwise.
- Of course, a goal mapping process is an approach undertaken in a certain amount of time, therefore any tool to be considered useful must work with an step-by-step approach.

b. **Existing Methods**

The existence of any tools for goal mapping was discussed and researched by all partners in their LAGs and with other responsible partners. However, only two tools could be detected, one in Germany and one in Spain.

The German tool, METACARDS, has been developed by a EU- project with the same name. This project consisted in several countries, but only in Germany the effort of the project has led to a very sustainable solution that a printing company sells the cards needed in the process. There is a Train-the Trainer System in action, but in little use. However, even though this instrument was developed for the implementation in transitional processes of youth, it can be used with adults just as well.

The tool from Spain, invented and used by the lead partner of the project, is less restricted in the use of instruments, is very intensive and, as a group instrument, it can use the advantages of peer-to-peer-learning.

Both methods you can find explained in detail in the annexes.

c. Ideal methods: Instructions

The ideal tool for Individual Goal Mapping

- needs to be part of a counselling/advising process (or in fact could be the advising process itself);
- has to be in accordance with the criteria of SSA and the above mentioned requirements under 5a);
- has to offer documentation, but without the need to show it to anyone: this is the decision of the person seeking advice;
- has to be individual; a “one-fits-it-all” instrument is not appropriate;
- has to touch different areas of life, not just the vocational sector;
- has to follow the aims set by the person seeking advice, not by outside goals;
- has to be participative;
- has to offer time and opportunities for reflection and learning
- has to use appreciation as a key ingredient.

6) Certification: pathways, requirements, existing methods

The results of the enquiries made by all partners about SSA and GMM in their own countries and on EU level is suggesting that regarding the certification of such instruments is not in existence right now. There are several countries in EU that are offering pathways to acknowledge prior experience in a job and get this experience certified, often by chambers of commerce, chambers of skilled crafts or other responsible bodies. These efforts are supposed to help persons with a low level of formal qualification to get their experience in work areas certified and thus acknowledged as equal to someone who has taken the path of formal education.

The certification process often contains tests, simulations, observations and other means. However, this is not so for Soft Skills. They might be shown “by the way” in these processes, but in themselves they do not get certified.

On the other hand, the need to certify Soft Skills (or at least recognize them) is well known at EU level. The Skills Agenda for Europe and its initiative “Upskilling Pathways” states that informal competences should be recognized more easily to help persons with a low level of formal education to show their competences.

Certification can take place in 3 different settings:

- a) The instrument used in such processes is certified, and as a result everyone using this instrument gets an acknowledgement based in this certification. This is the case with the instrument “Weiterbildungsbausteine”, used in Hamburg, where adult education providers or CVET provide expose their trainings/instruments to a certification process led by the State Department of Education, and once the instrument (called “Baustein”, which means building block), is certified, each use of this instrument can be certified as well.
- b) A certification of the provider of certain instrument is a second track of achieving certification or recognition. It is widely used in EU countries through regular audits or similar measures. However, the connection to the efforts done by one individual is weak.
- c) The third setting is to certify directly the process/ the results of one individuals efforts or existent skills. But this leads inevitably to the question who will be accredited to certify these skills.

Mostly, a combination of all settings will be needed to make recognition of non-formal experience in the area of Soft Skills feasible:

A certified instrument, installed by an accredited organisation, leads to certifiable results when used by an individual client.

7) References

On transformative learning (Jack Mezirow):

<https://www.learning-theories.com/transformative-learning-theory-mezirrow.html>

On the European Qualification Framework (EQF)

https://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/sites/eac-efq/files/leaflet_en.pdf

On EQAVET, a system of quality implementation in CVET

<https://www.eqavet.eu/>

On unemployment in EU:

http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Unemployment_statistics

On the need for Soft Skills

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1223>

On the need for Soft Skills Assessment and Assessment of Informal and non-formal competences in general:

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

On Goal Mapping Theory and Practice

<https://goalmapping.com/get-goal-mapping/templates/>

More links you will find in the annexes provided below, they give more information about the tools introduced.

8. Annexes

8.1. Tools for Soft Skill Assessment provided by partners

• SPAIN

Name/Title of the Tool:	TAB CONTROL FOR SOFT SKILLS
Short Description with link	This tab collects a self-evaluation of the level of soft skills according to different kinds of indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learning and learning - Digital competences - Scientific and technological competences - Mother-tongue communication - Foreign-tongue communication - Social and Civic competences - Sense of initiative an entrepreneurship soft skills - Cultural awareness and expression
Target group:	unemployed people with different profiles: long-term unemployed people, young people without professional experience, all of them needed from orientation
Developed by:	Counselling Service of SEF
Used by:	SEF: employment programmes
Acknowledged by:	No acknowledgement known
Certified by:	None
Length of time for using this tool:	Open-ended time for using this tool
Prerequisites	The person must be registered as a jobseeker in the Work Offices.
For “Instructor”	
For room/facility	Quiet and comfortable room. To have enough time for answering the tab
Technical	Computers
Costs (for participant)	0 €
Strengths:	Easy tab
Weaknesses:	There is a lack of awareness about this issue
Possible Improvements:	It will be necessary to dwell on the tab and make some improvements
Summary: Meeting the criteria for Assessment Tools In ICARO?	Yes

Name/Title of the Tool:	eLene4work: Learning to learn for new digital soft sills for employability
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<p>Short Description with link</p>	<p>This self-assessment is the first step in the eLene4work learning pathway. The purpose is to help learners identify their soft skills and digital soft skills, set their own learning agenda by identifying their strengths and areas for improvement, and decide whether they want to build on these strengths and/or fill the gaps in their soft skills profile. The main target group is students prior to entering the job market/young workers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After rating their own level of soft skills via a declarative questionnaire, they can also decide which ones are important for them. • They can then set their own learning agenda by analysing the results of the questionnaire. The system generates a PDF file at the end of this process that helps to keep trace of this initial self-assessment in later stages. • Once the learner have decided which soft skills he/she wants to work on, he/she can use the Orientation Guide to select MOOCs or other learning solutions, and then the P. Journal <p>http://elene4work.eu/project-outputs/self-evaluation-tool/</p>
<p>Target group:</p>	<p>eLene4work helps students develop the soft skills mostly required by companies and helps companies exploit the digital talents of new employers and young workers. eLene4work then proposed a strategic partnership whose goal is to test and monitor the possibility offered by MOOCs and OER to fill the gaps between the university and the labour market.</p>
<p>Developed by:</p>	<p>11 partners from 9 European member states.</p>
<p>Used by:</p>	<p>teachers, trainers, students, career guidance officers, young workers, recruiters, head hunters etc</p>
<p>Acknowledged by:</p>	<p>No acknowledgement known</p>
<p>Certified by:</p>	<p>OPEN BADGE FACTORY: https://openbadgefactory.com/</p> <p>Description: The badge holder has higher awareness on his own soft skills and digital soft skills and, by consequence, on which ones s/he may work to improve them. The badge holder has wider knowledge about the online offer of learning paths</p>

	(MOOCs mainly) dedicated to soft skills. Moreover he/she gains a deeper understanding about his/her learning process while studying with MOOCs.
Length of time for using this tool:	Open-ended time for using this tool
Prerequisites	Unknown
For “Instructor”	Unknown
For room/facility	On line tool
Technical	Computers
Costs (for participant)	Unknown
Strengths:	The eL4w Explorer badge by recognizes the achievements in soft skills and digital soft skills
Weaknesses:	It is an online tool and the student may leave before the end
Possible Improvements:	Offer the possibility to perform the test in person
Summary: Meeting the criteria for Assessment Tools In ICARO?	Yes

- LITHUANIA

Name/Title of the Tool:	DiSoCi
Short Description with link	<p>This is online free of charge Assessment tool that evaluates the level of digital, social and civic competences of adult educators and gives the overview on the soft skills which have to be improved for better outreach of diversified learners: migrants and refugees.</p> <p>The assessment tool consists of two parts: -Test on Digital Competence. -Test on Social and Civic Competence.</p> <p>Evaluation of Digital competence consists of 38 questions and takes about 25 minutes to complete. Evaluation of Social and civic competence consists of 32 questions and it will take about 20 minutes to complete</p> <p>EU Erasmus+ project DiSoCi: Digital, Social and Civic Competences Development for Adult Educators Working with Migrants and Refugees. http://disoci.eu/assessment-tool (in English).</p>
Target group:	Adult educators and migrants/refugees.
Developed by:	EU Erasmus+ project DiSoCi partnership, www.disoci.eu
Used by:	Not used yet.
Acknowledged by:	No acknowledgement known.
Certified by:	None.
Length of time for using this tool:	Open-ended time for using this tool.
Prerequisites	Some experience and basic knowledge in adult training.
For “Instructor”	To be acquainted with the tool and to have some counseling experience.
For room/facility	Quiet and comfortable room. To have enough time for answering the online questions.
Technical	Computers.

Costs (for participant)	No costs.
Strengths:	Attractive and easy to use. Assessment is based not on the subjective self-evaluation of the skill level but on the answers about practices being held.
Weaknesses:	Covers only 2 competences.
Possible Improvements:	Evaluation tool for other social competencies could be developed using the same principle.
Summary: Meeting the criteria for Assessment Tools In ICARO?	Yes.

Name/Title of the Tool:	Job Yes non-formal online training course
Short Description with link	The most popular soft skills' online self-assessment tool in Lithuania. The person ranks his/her various soft skills related to 4 competencies - Social and civic (21 skills) , Learning to learn (8 skills), Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship (15 skills), Digital competence (4 skills)- using the scale from 1-'no skills' to 10-'perfect skills'. After completion of self-evaluation test on personal soft skills, the person gets summarized description on the level of his/her soft skills and personal Knowledge Portfolio with suggestions for rationale Action Plan regarding Training. http://job-yes.eu/ platform. (In English, Lithuanian, Spanish, Italian, Latvian)
Target group:	People with disadvantaged background and fewer opportunities
Developed by:	Erasmus + Project "JOB-YES: Choose a job not a dole" partnership
Used by:	SIF during implementation of other Erasmus project Labour exchange office: employment programmes
Acknowledged by:	No acknowledgement known (Quality prize award at Lithuanian National Agency)
Certified by:	None
Length of time for using this tool:	Open-ended time for using this tool
Prerequisites	The person must be registered as a jobseeker in the Work Offices or to be a participant of a SIF project
For "Instructor"	To be acquainted with the tool and to have some counseling experience

For room/facility	Quiet and comfortable room. To have enough time for answering the online questions.
Technical	Computers
Costs (for participant)	No costs
Strengths:	Easy to use, promoting awareness and understanding on soft skills
Weaknesses:	There is a lack of awareness about this issue
Possible Improvements:	Created tool covers 4 from 8 Lifelong Learning competences, therefore evaluation tool for other 4 competencies could be developed using the same principle. Also, more skills could be added to cover certain competence.
Summary: Meeting the criteria for Assessment Tools In ICARO?	Yes

- GERMANY

Name/Title of the Tool:	Digital Competences: Self Assessment
Short Description with link	This document is basically a description of different areas of digital competenc (information processing, content creation, communication etc), and there are indicators of competences on three levels. The form of description is by personal approach, can be used as a kind of questionnaire. http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/resources/digital-competences
Target group:	Everyone
Developed by:	EU/CEDEFOP
Used by:	Unknown
Acknowledged by:	In the frame of Europass and other passes of EU
Certified by:	No certification
Length of time for using this tool:	Individual, up to 4 hours
Prerequisites	None
For “Instructor”	No instructor necessary, but can be used in a group /in face-to-face situations; in that case: instructor needs very good IT knowledge
For room/facility	No prerequisites
Technical	It access
Costs (for participant)	No costs
Strengths:	No barriers, easy access, very detailed, 3 competence levels , covers all areas of digital competence
Weaknesses:	No acknowledgement, no documentation foreseen
Possible Improvements:	Tool for documentation (like a check list)
Summary: Meeting the criteria for Assessment Tools In ICARO?	Yes , because it covers an important area and is non-discriminatory

Name/Title of the Tool:	Profile Pass
Short Description with link	The Profile Pass is a system of enquiries regarding gained competences in the family, in the area of previous vocational activities, in leisure time or in volunteer work .The competences will be validated by questionnaires, guided talks and other activities and then documented in a file (paper or online). This can be done with one person or with a small group. http://www.profilpass.de/
Target group:	Persons with a low level of formal education, persons who want to get back into the job market after a time of unemployment/family work etc.
Developed by:	Hamburger Institute for Education and School
Used by:	Different trainers, who have to be licensed
Acknowledged by:	Many companies
Certified by:	No certification
Length of time for using this tool:	App. 4-5 weeks (each week one meeting of 4-5 teaching units)
Prerequisites	
For “Instructor”	Has to be licensed
For room/facility	No prerequisites
Technical	No prerequisites
Costs (for participant)	100-200 €, incl. a workbook
Strengths:	No barriers, all experiences are valuable, meaningful information
Weaknesses:	Time consuming, is not for free, no formal acknowledgement
Possible Improvements:	Certification through a responsible body
Summary: Meeting the criteria for Assessment Tools In ICARO?	Yes

Name/Title of the Tool:	Checklist Soft Skills
Short Description with link	<p>This document has been developed for leadership persons, but can be used (with little adaptation) for persons with low educational background. It is basically a list of Soft Skills, separated in several sub-areas such as: interpersonal skills (e..g communication), intrapersonal skills (time management etc.) and others.</p> <p>The different areas are described with several sub-skills each and certain behavior that goes with this sub- skill. The process is divided in a self assessment (I look at the sub – skills and give examples of my mastery of this skill) and an other assessment (have I seen this sub- skill in your behavior). The process is documented.</p> <p>https://media.newjobs.com/dege/redaktion/pdf/checkliste_soft_skills.pdf</p>
Target group:	Everyone
Developed by:	I.O Business
Used by:	I.O. Business and possibly other companies
Acknowledged by:	In recruiting processes
Certified by:	No certification
Length of time for using this tool:	Individual, up to 6 hours
Prerequisites	None
For “Instructor”:	No instructor necessary, but can be used in a group /in face-to-face situations; in that case: instructor needs very good knowledge of the persons, e.g. as a teacher, course trainer, co-worker etc.
For room/facility	No prerequisites
Technical	No prerequisites
Costs (for participant)	No costs
Strengths:	No barriers, easy access, very detailed, includes the view of the person and one other
Weaknesses:	No acknowledgement, is only usable in a setting where the “other” is someone with a common experience
Possible Improvements:	Language could be changed (simpler)
Summary: Meeting the criteria for Assessment Tools In ICARO?	Yes , because it includes the view of two sides

8.2. Tools for Individual Goal Mapping provided by partners

- SPAIN

Name/Title of the Tool:	100x100 ACTIVACIÓN
Short Description with link	The program consists of a continuous process of activation that is part of the personalized itinerary of insertion designed for unemployed by SEF The group is accompanied by a coach who realizes a labor of intensive and specific orientation during the whole process http://www.sefcarm.es/web/pagina?IDCONTENIDO=88362&IDTIPO=10&RASTRO=c\$m29945,6646
Target group:	Groups of unemployed people with different profiles: long-term unemployed people, young people without professional experience, all of them needed from orientation
Developed by:	Counselling Service of SEF
Used by:	SEF: employment programmes
Acknowledged by:	No acknowledgement known
Certified by:	None
Length of time for using this tool:	100 days, Four hours/day. Monday to Friday
Prerequisites	The person must be registered as a jobseeker in the Work Offices.
For “Instructor”	The coach addressed the whole process of triggering
For room/facility	Different spaces: room, tables, blackboards, etc.
Technical	Telecommunications equipment, image and sound, and audiovisual projection.
Costs (for participant)	6 €/day/participant 600 € participant
Strengths:	Very participative, intensive and personalized counselling
Weaknesses:	The attitude in each participant can influence the result
Possible Improvements:	Reducing the duration of the process Maybe semi-attendance
Summary: Should be included in Assessment Tool Report ICARO?	Yes

- GERMANY

Name/Title of the Tool	METACARDS
Short Description with link	<p>The Metacards- System consists of 3 sets of cards: The Goal Cards: these cards depict desirable situations such as wealth, happiness in family, big cars etc. The Help Cards: they depict the support one can get within oneself, from friends, from family, from officials. The Road Cards (depicting road signs, such as Stop!) these cards can guide the process of achieving your goal.</p> <p>The process is divided in 4-5 steps: identifying your goals, identifying your situation now, describing the steps to be taken and identifying the resources you can obtain in order to achieve your goals. After a while (1-2 month/s) you revisit your situation, laying the cards “new”. https://www.up2europe.eu/european/projects/metacards-project_123946.html</p>
Target group	Young persons changing from school to job/VET
Developed by	EU-Project METACARDS
Used by	Hamburger Volkshochschule, Volkshochschule Passau, 250 Individual Coaches
Acknowledged by	No acknowledgement known
Certified by:	None
Length of time for using this tool	Several months, each time app. 2 hours, at least 4 meetings.
Prerequisites	This is a structured and licensed method, it is not open to everyone to facilitate
For “Instructor”	The instructor has to attend as least 2 trainings, each training 16 hours, these trainings cost app. 800 €.
For room/facility	Quiet, big tables
Technical	Photo equipment
Costs (for participant)	Depending on the funding it can cost up to 500 € to take this process
Strengths	Very participative, no “leading”, works with known “pictures”, can easily related but at the same time the cards leave room for interpretation
Weaknesses	Expensive, lengthy, restricted use of cards
Possible Improvements	Make your own cards, accommodate them to be more flexible for use with adults
Summary: Should be included in Assessment Tool Report ICARO?	Yes, definitely

8.3. Introduction to an outline of an “IDEAL TOOLKIT FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF SOFT SKILLS”

	Assessment of Soft Skills Name: Date: Done by:	Your own assessment: Think about the experience: what was the task, were there obstacles, how did you overcome them? What was the result?			Rate your skill (1-4) 1= beginners 2= independent 3= advanced 4= creative use
Rate the importance of this skill (mark x)	Digital competences	Task	Obstacles and Strategies	Result	
	Ability to use computers to retrieve, assess, store, produce, present and exchange information				
	Ability to access internet search and use internet-based services				
	Able to follow Rules / Manuals/ Guides while using ICT				
	Apply ethical rules while using ICT				
	Ability to communicate and participate in collaborative networks via the Internet (or to use Social media)				

		Your own assessment: Think about the experience: what was the task, were there obstacles, how did you overcome them? What was the result?			Rate your skill (1-4) 1= beginners 2= independent 3= advanced 4= creative use
Rate the importance of this skill (mark x)	Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship	Task	Obstacles and Strategies	Results	
	Ability to plan				
	Ability to work both as an individual and collaboratively in teams				
	ability to judge and identify one's strengths and weaknesses				
	Ability to analyse				
	effective representation and negotiation				

	Ability to assess and take risks				
		<p>Your own assessment: Think about the experience: what were the obstacles, how did you overcome them? What was the result?</p>			<p>Rate your skill (1-4) 1= beginners 2= independent 3= advanced 4= creative use</p>
Rate the importance of this skill (mark x)	Social and civic competences	Situation	Obstacles And Strategies	Result	
	Ability to be flexible and prepared to compromises				
	Ability to communicate constructively in different environments				
	Ability to accept feedback and constructive criticism				
	Ability to establish interpersonal relationships				
	Ability to distinguish the personal and professional spheres				
	Ability to be capable of coping with stress and frustration				

	Ability to express and understand different viewpoints				
	Ability to negotiate with the creation of confidence				
	Ability for self-presentation in verbal and written form				
		Your own assessment: Think about the experience: what were the obstacles, how did you overcome them? What was the result?			Rate your skill (1-4) 1= beginners 2= independent 3= advanced 4= creative use
Rate the importance of this skill (mark x)	Social and civic competences	Situation	Obstacles And Strategies	Result	
	Ability to resolve conflicts and problems				
	Ability to show tolerance				
	Aware of basic concepts relating to non-discrimination				

	Aware about Gender equality and Diversity				
	Ability to feel empathy				
		<p>Your own assessment: Think about the experience: what were the obstacles, how did you overcome them? What was the result?</p>			<p>Rate your skill (1-4) 1= beginners 2= independent 3= advanced 4= creative use</p>
Rate the importance of this skill (mark x)	Cultural awareness and expression	Task	Obstacles and Strategies	Result	
	Respect for diversity of cultural expression				
	Ability to relate one's own creative and expressive points of view to the opinions of others				
	Ability to understand the cultural and linguistic diversity in Europe and other regions of the world				

	Ability to identify and realise social and economic opportunities in cultural activity				
	Ability for artistic self-expression				

8.4. Explanation of how to use the tool

This tool should only be used in a confidential setting, for free and voluntarily. The documentation belongs to the person that has undergone the process. The “other” person, if involved in the process, should be chosen or at least agreed upon by the person undergoing the process.

The incidents shown as evidence can be documented using short sentences. This outline of a tool is the property of the ICARO project. The elaborated version for use can be found on the website. There you can find examples for each of the skills named in this tool.

If using it alone, please go through the whole questionnaire, answering all questions. Write under “Task”, “Obstacles” and “Result” regarding an example, your experience. Then give yourself a grade from 1-4. Cross at the left which competences are in your opinion especially important. This however will not change the result. But for your own interpretation, you can work on a “plan for improvement” according to your own settings. At the end, you can go to the bottom and click, and you will get a “spidergram” , e.g. a competence profile regarding the 4 main areas. This you can save separately or print and put it in your portfolio. After some time (e.g. after the course “From home to work” you can repeat the questionnaire and see whether there are differences or improvements.

If using the questionnaire in the framework of a counselling, these instructions are for the counsellor.

Please explain the purpose of the activity to your client. Go through the whole questionnaire (as explained above) and encourage your client to think about experiences where a certain competence could have been shown. Ask questions to make the narrative more meaningful. If problems arise, help your client. At the end, discuss with your client that the results of the questionnaire is in their ownership and they decide what to do with it.

Regarding the “importance” of individual competences, they will not change the spidergram. But in the case of setting up a plan to improve the Soft Skills competences by joining the course “From home to work” or taking up other measures, these areas can lead to priorities for actions.

8.5. Outline for a Goal mapping method

Goal Mapping – Step by Step

1.1. Introduction

The Goal Mapping is an ideal and necessary supplement of the assessment of Soft Skills. In order to implement it in the frame of assessing Soft Skills, it has to follow certain principles:

- needs to be part of a counselling/advising process (or in fact could be the advising process itself);
- has to be in accordance with the criteria of SSA and the above mentioned requirements under 5a);
- has to offer documentation, but without the need to show it to anyone: this is the decision of the person seeking advice;
- Has to be individual; a “one-fits-it-all” instrument is not appropriate;
- has to touch different areas of life, not just the vocational sector;
- has to follow the aims set by the person seeking advice, not by outside goals;
- has to be participative;
- has to offer time and opportunities for reflection and learning
- has to use appreciation as a key ingredient.

In the following, the steps to be taken in the process of Goal Mapping, are described. They are based on the discovery work of the EU- project CHARISM (in the frame of LEONARDO, developed for youth) and have been adapted to the needs of adults for the purpose of this project.

1.2. Description of steps

The process of Goal Mapping is structured by the following steps:

1. Anamnesis
2. Assessment
3. Support plan
4. Monitoring
5. Evaluation
6. Follow-up care

A. Anamnesis:

The main measure in Goal Mapping is consulting: the Case Manager should already be prepared to consult with “head, heart and hand“.

There will be a first (introducing) conversation: welcome, naming the problem, introduction of the Case Manager, assurance of voluntariness, data privacy and biographical work starts (biographical/counseling interview). It is important to create a comfortable atmosphere and to adjust the setting to show appreciation towards the client. During further meetings biographical work will be continued and intensified (pictures, music, “treasure chest”, assessment tools) The Case Manager should be fit in w- and in coiled questions. The anamnesis is the first step to define the mandate and to decide, if the client is accepted in the Case Management! The Case Manager has to create confidence and commitments.

B. Assessment:

This step depends on the mandate. The Case Manager should be able to handle different approaches (e.g. potential analysis, “Genogramm”, “explorix”, Assessment of Soft Skills ICARO, others mentioned in the Report on Soft Skill Assessment Tools reported in the Toolkit for SoftSkills, see website of ICARO). The aim is to know the client very good, to find out his/her (in-)formal competences and to empower him/her.

C. Support plan:

The support plan will be developed in cooperation with the client. It will be signed by the Case Manager and the client, to force a commitment. However the client always determines what shall be done. The Case Manager should be able to express the aims according to the SMART-approach (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, temporary).

D. Monitoring:

Monitoring also depends on the mandate and contains the monitoring of the support plan. During this step a bigger part of working with networks (networking with stakeholders, authorities etc.) happens. The monitoring process can contain several meetings with the client in order to follow the progress.

E. Evaluation:

Evaluation contains self-made or bought forms for data acquisition/collection. The mandate transaction should be the central theme. There should be a closing meeting for a final conversation.

F. Follow-up care:

The follow-up care contains of a meeting between the Case Manager and the client after a couple of weeks to check if everything is okay and if the solutions are still the right ones. A further mandate can be addressed.

Quality standards

2.1. Recognition of EQAVET Indicators and EQARF Indicators

Regarding the work with unemployed adults with low level of skills, the following Quality Standards, issued by the EU:

- EQAVET:
 - o EQAVET is a network of EU- organisations and representatives of member states to enhance and improve the quality in teaching and adult educations. Several measures are implemented and can be found on the website, along with national plans and regulations.
- EQARF:
 - o Use of acquired knowledge at the work place (ind. 6)
 - o Unemployed rate (Ind. 7)
 - o Prevalence of especially vulnerable groups)ind. 8)
 - o Mechanisms to identify training needs in the labour market (Ind. 9)
- For further and detailed quality standards, see also the Toolkit for the Assessment of Soft Skills, section 4a, b and c.

2.2. Evaluation of GOAL Mapping Methods

To guarantee high-quality work, Case Managers have to ask themselves the following questions during the process:

- Have I selected the right parties involved?
- Is/are the disadvantages/the potential of the visible?
- Which network partners do I have?
- It is necessary to set aims during the Case Management process. Have they been reached?
- Is there a support plan?
- Do I still act in accordance with the wishes of the client?
- Are my actions documented in a comprehensible way? Can they easily be compared and assessed?
- Do I know when my work as a successful Case Manager is finished?
- Do I know how to finish the process of counselling?

Goal Mapping- Documentation

To support the efforts of Case Managers, some form of documentation should be offered. This can be on paper or online in an E-portfolio. This documentation has the purpose of making visible the formal and informal competences, the gain in competences, the individual results of the Case Management process, but also the aims and pathways chosen for the near future. The documentation thus illustrates which competences already exist, which ones might be developed and how the goals could be reached.

In order to enhance the quality of this documentation, the single documents could be bound into a folder, nicely done. The decision to show all or some of these documents to possible employers is entirely with the client.

The content of the DOCUMENTATION is:

- **The basic personal information**
- **fields of activities** (visualize (informal) competences):
 - hobbies and interests, family, school, education, military service, alternative service, voluntary year, working lives, training periods, jobs, political and social commitment, special situations in life
- **competences** (measures to draft the competence statement, e.g. Assessment of Soft Skills ICARO, others), see ICARO website for more information and tools.
- **aims and the next steps**
- **application documents** (references, tests, cover letters etc.)

An agreement should be made between Case Manager and client, how and for how long the documentation should be stored (if not regulations of organisation or project already give indications).

References

W- and coiled questions:

http://changingminds.org/techniques/questioning/open_closed_questions.htm

EQAVET : <https://www.eqavet.eu/>

EQARF : <https://www.eqavet.eu/Equavet2017/media/Documents/Explanatory-brochure-on-the-EQARF-indicators.pdf>

E-Portfolio : <http://wp.auburn.edu/writing/eportfolio-project/eportfolio-examples/>

SMART approach : https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SMART_criteria

