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Training, journey and learn

WP 2.1 – RESEARCH AND DESIGN

MAP OF ADULTS' SOFT SKILLS

IN POLAND



Report prepared by the Association “CRAS” – Centrum Rozwoju Aktywności Społecznej

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Entry

The project "Training Journey and Learn - TRIP" is an international initiative aimed at improving the quality of adult education by implementing innovative methods based on experiential learning, openness to other cultures and the use of digital tools. The key assumption of the project is to support adults in developing soft skills necessary for active participation in social and professional life, with particular emphasis on the challenges related to digital and environmental transformation.

The TRIP project focuses on social inclusion, promoting European citizenship and developing intercultural awareness through educational activities carried out both in the digital space and in the form of tasks based on the exploration of social reality. The project includes, among others, the creation of online courses, virtual workshops, training for educators and activities strengthening the motivation of participants for further development.

This study is the result of an analysis of participants' needs and project assumptions, and its aim is to present guidelines for planning training courses in a manner consistent with the philosophy of the TRIP project and in line with the realities of adult education in Poland.

1. National context

1.1. Overview of the adult education system

1.1.1 Definitions, types of adult education

Adult education is a key element of continuing education, encompassing a wide range of activities aimed at developing competences, improving qualifications and enabling the acquisition of new skills at various stages of professional and personal life. In Poland, there is no single, universally accepted definition of adult education.

The most frequently used terms in Poland relating to adult education are:

- Lifelong learning – the process of continuously acquiring knowledge and skills, regardless of age, place of residence and professional situation. It includes both formal and non-formal education and informal learning.
- Formal education – the process of education taking place in the education system, leading to obtaining certificates and diplomas recognized on the labor market.
- Non-formal education – all kinds of courses, trainings, workshops organized by public and private institutions, non-governmental organizations and companies.
- Informal learning – acquiring knowledge and skills in an unstructured way, through work experience, self-education and social interactions.

In the EU context, adult education refers to people who have completed their basic education and entered the labor market, regardless of their level of education. In Poland, the definition is somewhat narrower and focuses mainly on people participating in formal and non-formal forms of education.

FORMAL ADULT EDUCATION

The formal education system for adults in Poland includes educational institutions that allow for gaining or supplementing education at various levels. Adults have the opportunity to study in primary schools for adults, general secondary schools, post-secondary schools and universities.

Primary and secondary schools for adults

In Poland, there are primary schools and general secondary schools for adults, which allow people who did not complete education at earlier stages to obtain primary and secondary education. Education in these institutions takes place in part-time, evening or e-learning mode, which allows for reconciling professional and family obligations with education.

- **Post-secondary schools**

Post-secondary schools offer education in professions that require secondary education but do not require a university degree. Their offer is wide and includes, among others, courses related to administration, IT, healthcare, hotel management and gastronomy.

- **Higher and postgraduate studies**

Higher education for adults is one of the most frequently chosen forms of continuing education. Adults can study both bachelor's and master's degrees, as well as postgraduate studies, which allow them to gain new qualifications or retrain. Postgraduate studies are very popular because they are adapted to professionally active people and are often carried out on weekends or remotely.

- **Industry Skills Centers**

A new element in the formal education system are the Branch Skills Centers (BCU), which combine educational functions with practical preparation for a profession. These are modern training centers that educate in close cooperation with employers.

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION – COURSES AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Non-formal education includes various types of courses, trainings and workshops that allow for the rapid acquisition of new skills and professional qualifications. There are many institutions in Poland offering such forms of education, including:

- Employment offices that organize courses for the unemployed and job seekers.
- Training institutions, both public and private, offering vocational, language, computer and other courses.
- Non-governmental organizations that implement educational projects aimed at various social groups, including people at risk of exclusion.
- Employers are increasingly investing in internal training for their employees.

An important element of non-formal education are also programs co-financed by the European Union, which enable professional development for adults. An example of such initiatives is the European Funds for Social Development (FERS), which finance courses and training adapted to the needs of the labor market.

NON-FORMAL LEARNING AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO TRADITIONAL EDUCATION

Informal learning plays a key role in the development of adult competences. It is the process of acquiring knowledge outside institutional educational structures, which takes place in a spontaneous and unorganized way. Modern technologies allow access to a huge number of educational resources, such as online courses, podcasts, webinars or expert blogs.

For many adults, informal learning is a primary form of education that allows for professional and personal development. Employers are increasingly recognizing the importance of skills acquired outside of the traditional education system, which is reflected in the trend of recognizing certificates and online courses by recruiting companies.

1.1.2 The legal system of adult education in Poland

Adult education in Poland is regulated by a number of legal acts and strategic documents that define the framework for the functioning of continuing education. This system includes both formal and non-formal education and informal forms of learning. Legislation regulates the organization of adult education institutions, the principles of awarding qualifications, the financing of education and the methods of its monitoring and evaluation.

The legal basis for the adult education system is provided by legislative acts at the national level and EU documents that shape educational policy within the framework of the common strategy of the European Union. Additionally, there are numerous implementing regulations that specify the details of the system's operation, define the principles of organizing courses and training, as well as the competences of institutions dealing with adult education.

The Education Law Act as the foundation of the adult education system

The basic legal act regulating adult education in Poland is the Act of 14 December 2016 – Education Law (Journal of Laws of 2017, item 59, as amended). This Act specifies the general principles of the functioning of the education system, including continuing education. According to Art. 4, item 30 of the Education Law, continuing education includes:

- Education in schools for adults,
- Obtaining and supplementing knowledge, skills and professional qualifications in extracurricular forms,
- Possibility of improving competences throughout life in various forms of education.

The Act also specifies that continuing education may take place in full-time, stationary, part-time and distance learning forms, which allows for the adaptation of forms of education to the needs of adults who work or have other commitments.

The Act also defines the scope of activities of adult education institutions and entities responsible for organizing adult education. The most important include:

- Adult schools offering primary and secondary education,
- Centres for vocational and continuing education,
- Vocational training centres,
- Institutions organizing vocational courses and training.

These entities operate in accordance with the regulations contained in the Education Law, and their activities are subject to the supervision of education boards and the Ministry of Education and Science.

Regulations regulating continuing education in extracurricular forms

Continuing education outside schools is regulated in detail by implementing acts to the Education Law, which specify the conditions for conducting courses and training. These are:

- Regulation of the Minister of Education and Science of October 6, 2023. This is one of the key documents defining the principles of organizing continuing education in extracurricular forms. This document indicates:
 - Conditions for conducting vocational qualification courses,
 - Methods of documenting the educational achievements of course participants,
 - Requirements for course organizers and their teaching staff,
 - Principles of validation of learning outcomes in non-formal education

This regulation aims to unify the standards of non-formal education and increase its quality by specifying requirements for the qualifications of staff conducting courses.

- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of March 19, 2019

This earlier regulation, which regulated issues related to continuing education in non-school forms, was partially replaced by more up-to-date regulations. It indicated the need to adapt the educational offer to the requirements of the labor market and took into account the development of new technologies in adult education.

Strategic documents on adult education in Poland

A lifelong learning perspective (2013)

In 2013, the Council of Ministers adopted the strategic document "Lifelong Learning Perspective", which set the main directions of educational policy in the field of continuing education. This document emphasized the importance of adult education in the context of dynamic changes in the labor market and the need to integrate the national qualification system.

Integrated Skills Strategy 2030 (ZSU 2030)

It is one of the key strategic documents developed in cooperation with the OECD. It focuses on:

- Developing competencies adapted to the needs of the labor market,
- Supporting greater participation of adults in lifelong learning,
- Promoting the idea of lifelong learning and learning in the workplace.

This strategy assumes that adult education should be linked to economic and social policy and its aim should be to increase professional mobility and adaptability of employees.

Human Capital Development Strategy 2030

This document emphasizes the development of vocational and technical education and the adaptation of educational offers to the needs of the changing labor market. It also indicates the need to increase the role of employers in adult education and the development of modern teaching methods, such as e-learning.

1.2. Challenges and opportunities in the local context

Despite the existence of various forms of adult education, this system encounters numerous barriers. The most important challenges include low participation in continuing education, lack of flexible forms of learning adapted to the needs of working people, and insufficient offer of courses responding to the real needs of the labor market.

1.2.1. Challenges of adult education in Poland

Economic barriers.

One of the main challenges is the cost and financing of education. Although some adults benefit from support from employers (almost half of participants in formal training were financed by companies), many have to

pay for their education out of their own pocket. The cost of courses, materials and travel can be a disincentive to take up education – especially for people with lower incomes. According to European research, among companies not offering training, one third indicated lack of financial resources or time as the reason for giving up training. Moreover, the lack of a universal system for validating competences acquired outside formal education means that adults have to repeat expensive courses to obtain recognised qualifications. Insufficient financial support from public funds and limited availability of subsidies (e.g. few scholarships or grants for adult learners) make it even more difficult for many people to take up education.

Technological problems.

In the digital era, adult education is associated with technological challenges. Access to equipment and the Internet can be uneven – around 13 million Poles are still digitally excluded or do not use the Internet despite having access. Deficiencies in basic infrastructure (e.g. fast Internet in rural areas) can limit the possibility of participating in online courses. The second aspect is digital competences: only 44% of Poles aged 16-74 have at least basic digital skills, while the EU average is 55.6%. This means that a significant group of adults first need to learn how to use a computer or e-learning platforms before they can benefit from modern forms of learning. Deficiencies in digital skills can be a significant barrier for seniors and people with lower education, which deepens educational inequalities.

Social factors.

Adults are less motivated to learn than young people for several reasons. Lack of time is the most frequently mentioned obstacle – professional and family obligations make it difficult to find regular hours for learning. Research shows that 21% of adults do not undertake education due to family obligations, and 18% because of conflicts between classes and work. Reconciling education with work and private life requires great discipline and support from the environment (e.g. flexibility of the employer or help from loved ones in childcare). Another factor is the psychological barrier of returning to school – adults may fear being judged, compared to younger people or being “too old to learn”. Finally, a certain group of people do not see direct benefits from education, lack internal motivation or have negative experiences from earlier education. Shaping the belief that learning in adulthood is an investment in oneself is a cultural challenge.

Culture of lifelong learning in Poland.

Although the idea of lifelong learning is gaining popularity, Poland is still catching up with Western countries in terms of adult participation in education. In 2022, 54% of Poles aged 18-69 declared some form of learning, but in the narrower Eurostat indicator (the percentage of people aged 25-64 learning in the last 4 weeks), the result for Poland is 8.7% (2023) with the EU average of 12.8%. Despite the increase (in 2015 in Poland it

was only 3-4%), there is still a large group of people who are educationally passive. The participation in lifelong learning is particularly low among the less educated, the elderly and rural residents. The culture of lifelong learning is only just getting stronger - more and more people understand the need to develop competences (an increase in awareness was noted especially among women), but in practice Poland is still building the habit of acquiring knowledge throughout life. The challenge is to change mentalities so that education is not perceived as a school obligation for young people, but as a natural part of adult life.

1.2.2. Opportunities and possibilities for the development of adult education

The impact of new technologies and e-learning

The development of technology has created new opportunities for adult education. E-learning platforms, webinars and online courses allow you to learn anywhere and anytime, which helps you reconcile learning with work and family. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the acceptance of remote education - today we can safely say that remote education has become a permanent fixture in Poland. An example of success is the Polish MOOC platform NAVOICA, where the number of users increased from ~75 thousand in March 2022 to ~124 thousand in March 2023. Online courses (both free and commercial) in the field of foreign languages, programming or soft skills are becoming increasingly popular. New technologies (mobile applications, e-textbooks, VR/AR simulators) can make learning more attractive and tailored to your individual pace. The digitization of education also reduces costs - many materials are available free of charge, and the lack of commuting saves time and money. However, the condition for fully utilizing this potential is the parallel improvement of society's digital competences.

The role of employers in improving qualifications

Employers play a key role in supporting adult education, especially since most adults learn for professional reasons. More and more companies are realizing that investing in employee development pays off – it contributes to higher productivity, innovation and staff retention. In 2020, over 40% of companies in Poland conducted continuing education for employees (the larger the company, the more often). Good practices include: programs for co-financing postgraduate studies, organizing internal and external training, providing e-learning platforms or training leaves. The importance of the concept of reskilling and upskilling – retraining employees for new roles within the company – is also growing. Although research shows that only 7% of Polish companies have used reskilling so far, half of them plan to implement it in the face of automation. Tax relief or funds for employee training may be an incentive for companies. It is important to build an organizational culture that supports learning – where employees feel that development is part of their job, not an after-hours addition.

Popularity of online courses and educational platforms

In addition to global platforms (Coursera, Udemy, edX), Poland has developed its own initiatives. The aforementioned NAVOICA offers nearly 200 free online courses created by Polish universities. The PARP Academy provides free training for entrepreneurs and employees in the field of business and digital competences. Universities and training companies conduct webinars and remote workshops, often open to anyone interested. Thanks to this, an adult, even with a small budget, has access to a rich educational offer - from language courses, through programming, to personal development. Social media and video platforms (YouTube, LinkedIn Learning) have also become an arena for sharing knowledge. This democratization of education is an opportunity to make learning more common. In 2022, as many as 48.3% of adult Poles learned informally - mainly on their own or from other people, often with the help of the Internet. This trend will grow with easier access to high-quality online content.

Adult education in Poland is gaining importance in the face of socio-economic changes. Despite the historically low participation of adults in continuing education, we are observing positive trends - awareness of the need to learn is growing (the percentage of educationally active increased from 46% in 2016 to 54% in 2022), technologies open up new forms of learning, and examples of successes (UTW, Latarnicy, e-learning platforms) inspire action. Nevertheless, economic barriers (costs, lack of funding), technological (digital exclusion) and social (lack of time, motivation) remain a challenge.

In order to fully utilize the opportunities of adult education, educational institutions should adapt their offer to the needs of adults – provide flexible forms of education (evening, weekend, online), develop systems for confirming competences acquired outside formal education and conduct information campaigns about available courses (research has emphasized that access to information is key to the decision to start education). Employers, on the other hand, should treat employee development as an investment: create training plans, support participation in studies and courses, and promote a culture of knowledge sharing in the workplace (e.g. mentoring, job shadowing). Cooperation between companies and training institutions can result in a better adjustment of the educational offer to the labor market. The government and local governments can encourage continuing education through relief and financing programs, as well as infrastructure development (e.g. providing Internet access in every region). To sum up, adult education is an investment for the whole society – it increases the competences of individuals, which translates into the innovation of enterprises and the prosperity of the country. Overcoming barriers and using modern educational tools will enable Poland to build a strong culture of lifelong learning, in which every adult – regardless of age or place of residence – will have the opportunity to develop their skills and interests.

2. Target groups

2.1. Identification of the main local target groups

Analyzing the assumptions of the TRIP project and taking into account the current socio-economic situation in Poland – including challenges related to digital transformation, social exclusion and unemployment – the recipients of the project activities were selected. The target group will be 50 adults, including:

- Group A: people who are disadvantaged, i.e. have limited access to education due to socio-economic status, geographical isolation or disability,
- Group B: unemployed people, including the long-term unemployed, especially people under 30, from sectors most affected by the digital and environmental transformation (retail, industry, traditional services),
- Group C: People with low levels of literacy, numeracy or digital skills. Specific characteristics and needs.

2.2. Specific characteristics and needs of target groups

Group A: People who are educationally disadvantaged (limited access due to socio-economic status, geographical isolation or disability).

Specific features

This group includes adults whose educational opportunities are limited due to economic barriers, geographical isolation (especially residents of rural and peripheral areas, including areas with poor transport connections and distant from larger urban centres), as well as people with various types of disabilities.

According to data from the Central Statistical Office (2022), about 20% of adult Poles declare serious limitations related to access to education. It is estimated that peripheral areas cover over 40% of the country's area, especially in the eastern and north-eastern provinces. Additionally, according to data from the Ministry of Family and Social Policy (2022), about 1.5 million people use social assistance due to a difficult financial situation. Psychological barriers, such as low self-esteem, fear of social evaluation and limited self-motivation to undertake educational activities resulting from previous failures or social isolation, are also characteristic of this group.

Needs

- Ensuring equal educational opportunities by implementing flexible forms of education (distance learning, mobile education, individual consultations).
- Adapting teaching methods and materials to specific disability-related needs (e.g. audiovisual materials, audio descriptions, sign language, appropriate digital platforms).
- Strengthening key competences, in particular social and civic competences, lifelong learning skills and skills related to independent financial and health management.
- Developing self-motivation, strengthening self-esteem and self-efficacy through comprehensive psychological support, mentoring and emotional education.

Group B: Unemployed people, including the long-term unemployed, especially people under 30, from sectors particularly affected by the digital and environmental transformation (retail, industry, traditional services)

Specific features

This group includes young adults, particularly at risk of long-term unemployment. According to PARP data (2024), the unemployment rate among people under 30 is over 10%. These people often come from sectors of the economy that are highly exposed to changes related to digitalization and ecological transformation, e.g. retail, industrial production and traditional services. These sectors are particularly sensitive to technological and environmental changes, because in Poland they are still dominated by work methods based on traditional technologies and human resources with limited digital competences. For this reason, employees of these industries are particularly exposed to job loss or the need for rapid retraining. Characteristic features of this group are mental barriers related to long-term unemployment: low motivation, lack of belief in the possibility of changing one's professional situation, lowered self-esteem and problems with self-discipline and self-motivation in undertaking educational activities.

Needs

Intensive development of key digital and environmental competences that respond to the needs of the changing labor market.

- Vocational education and retraining adapted to new industries, enriched with practical training in entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity.
- Development of soft skills such as change management, interpersonal communication and teamwork.

- Strengthening competencies related to self-motivation, emotion management and mental resilience to facilitate more effective adaptation to the requirements of a dynamically changing professional environment.
- Developing awareness of trends in the labor market so that individuals can proactively plan their professional careers.

Group C: Adults with low levels of literacy, numeracy or digital skills

Specific features

According to OECD and PIAAC data (2024), in Poland about 16% of adults, which translates to about 3.5 million people, have a low level of basic reading, writing or numeracy skills, while as many as 44%, or over 9 million people, demonstrate insufficient digital competences. A specific feature of this group is experiencing significant barriers in everyday social and professional life - from difficulties in using mobile applications to problems in using online public administration services. In addition, this group is often characterized by mental barriers, such as a high level of fear of formal education, lack of confidence in their learning abilities, shame about revealing their own limitations and very low self-motivation to acquire new skills. Additionally, these people often have low awareness of their own competence deficits, which makes it difficult for them to seek support and undertake educational initiatives.

Needs

- Organizing specialized courses developing basic competences (literacy, mathematical foundations, digital competence courses).
- Focus on the practical application of key competences in everyday life (e.g. household budget management, health prevention, use of digital public services, basics of safe use of the Internet).
- Education aimed at developing lifelong learning skills and strengthening social and civic competences.
- Supporting the development of self-motivation, self-awareness and self-discipline through dedicated coaching, mentoring and psychological activities.
- Education that increases awareness of one's own competence deficits and indicates practical benefits of improving competences.

3. Skill Analysis

3.1. Transversal skills relevant to the local context

Transversal competences, also known as soft or transversal competences, are a set of skills that can be used in various professional, educational and social contexts. Unlike hard competences, which are specific to a particular field or profession, transversal competences enable individuals to function effectively in a dynamic environment and facilitate adaptation to changing conditions (European Commission, 2019).

The development of transversal competences is particularly important in Poland, where globalization, technological progress and changing organizational structures affect the requirements for employees. However, their importance is not limited to the labor market - they are also crucial in education, everyday life, functioning in the family and civic activity. Their development contributes to the growth of innovation, improves the quality of interpersonal relations and supports active participation in society.

These include communication skills, problem-solving skills, teamwork, critical thinking, creativity, stress resistance, and adaptability. Having and developing them is important for the success of an individual.

Below, an analysis of selected transversal competences will be presented, along with their broad definition and importance in various areas of life.

Communication skills

Communication skills, understood as the ability to clearly and precisely express thoughts, listen attentively, negotiate effectively and adapt the form and content of the message to the needs of the recipient, are one of the most desirable transversal competences in the modern world. The growing complexity of professional, social and civic relations means that the lack of efficient communication leads not only to misunderstandings and conflicts, but also to limited opportunities for personal development and participation in social life. It is also increasingly noticed that communication skills are closely linked to other key competences, such as critical thinking, creativity, teamwork or emotion management.

According to the report "Human Capital Balance" (PARP, 2022), approximately 65% of surveyed employers in Poland declare that the ability to communicate effectively is crucial in their organizations for effective team cooperation and task implementation. In the context of recruitment, soft skills, including communication, are gaining importance in industries based on services, IT or marketing, where an individual's success largely depends on the ability to cooperate and present ideas. Attention is also paid to developing communication skills in more traditional sectors (e.g. production, industry), because increasingly frequent requirements

related to the quality of customer service or project work require efficient communication at every level of the organization.

In a broader social context, as indicated by research by the Educational Research Institute (IBE), the level of communication skills in the adult population directly affects social capital and the ability to engage in various grassroots initiatives, volunteering, and civic activities. Good communication enables more active participation in public discussions, providing support between generations, and cooperation with local authorities. As a result, individuals who are able to formulate their thoughts efficiently and listen to the opinions of others are able to more effectively influence the direction of development of the community in which they live.

Despite the growing awareness of the importance of this competence, the results of cyclical studies by the Central Statistical Office (e.g. "Adult Education" and "Economic Activity of the Population") and reports by organizations such as the OECD (in particular PIAAC) suggest that the level of communication skills is still insufficient in certain social groups. This applies primarily to people with lower education or less professional experience, as well as those who rarely participate in training or courses developing so-called soft skills. The lack of training offers focused on communication in smaller urban centers or villages, as well as insufficient funding for programs developing transversal competences of adults within non-formal education, may be a barrier.

Problem-solving skills

The ability to solve problems is one of the fundamental transversal competences that significantly affects the quality of life of adults – not only in the area of professional work, but also in the private, social and civic spheres. Reports prepared by the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development (PARP) or the Central Statistical Office (GUS) show that in Poland there is still a need for systematic improvement of this skill in order to better adapt to the dynamic changes in the world around us.

In the context of professional work, the ability to solve problems has been mentioned for years as one of the key skills valued by employers. The modern economy requires employees to be increasingly flexible, creative and respond quickly to unforeseen situations. That is why employers often emphasize that they are looking for not only specialists with specialist professional knowledge on the labor market, but also people ready to solve complex challenges independently and effectively. However, data indicates that there is a competence gap here - many adults in Poland do not have sufficiently developed problem-solving skills.

Using problem-solving skills in private life is no less important. This skill translates into more efficient management of the household budget, resolving family conflicts, organizing various aspects of everyday life,

or making informed consumer decisions. People who can analyze a situation, identify the cause of the difficulty, and then plan specific corrective actions are definitely more effective at dealing with the many challenges that family and social life pose.

In the social and civic dimension, efficient problem-solving contributes to the formation of a more aware and engaged community. An adult who is able to recognize existing problems (for example in the local environment), gather people with similar views around them and implement corrective actions or social innovations, becomes an active member of society who influences the improvement of the living conditions not only of their family, but also of the entire area. This is why in many projects co-financed from public funds, including European funds (e.g. under the European Social Fund), the importance of transversal competences is emphasized, such as creativity and critical thinking - key to building a modern civil society.

Teamwork skills

The ability to work in a team, considered one of the key transversal competences, is of great importance both outside the professional environment and in the context of work. In the social sphere, joint activities within volunteering or neighbourhood initiatives help integrate local communities and facilitate the exchange of experiences. Reports of the Klon/Jawor Association indicate that projects involving groups of adults in order to solve specific problems – for example local ecological campaigns or cultural events – effectively build a sense of community and trust.

In professional life, the ability to cooperate is equally important. According to the "Hays Poland Report 2021", over 80% of HR managers in Poland consider the ability to work in teams to be crucial for the development of companies and building competitiveness in a dynamically changing market. In turn, in the Randstad "Labor Market Monitor" study from 2022, as many as 70% of respondents admitted that teamwork has a direct impact on efficiency, the quality of implemented projects and the atmosphere in the workplace. This data is consistent with the findings of the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development (PARP), which emphasizes in the "Human Capital Balance" report that the lack of developed soft skills - including the ability to work in a group - is one of the most common challenges signaled by employers.

Human resource management experts and business consultants increasingly point out that the ability to collaborate effectively determines the development opportunities not only of organizations themselves, but also of individual careers. People who can work in a team develop faster and gain greater satisfaction from the tasks they perform.

It is also worth noting that teamwork among adults is not limited to the largest companies. Data from the Central Statistical Office (GUS) indicate that small and medium-sized companies are also increasingly

implementing practices based on cooperation in order to effectively compete on the market. This is happening, among other things, thanks to numerous training courses and workshops co-financed by European funds, which focus on the development of soft skills, including the ability to share responsibility and communicate effectively.

In summary, among adult Poles, the ability to work in teams is used both in everyday and social life, as well as in the workplace. Statistical data and publications such as the "Hays Poland Report 2021", Randstad's "Labor Market Monitor" or PARP's "Human Capital Balance" clearly indicate that the ability to cooperate with others translates into higher productivity, greater effectiveness in carrying out tasks and helps strengthen interpersonal bonds. As a result, both enterprises and organizations operating in the non-governmental sector and various social groups increasingly appreciate and promote the role of teamwork, recognizing it as indispensable for further development and prosperity.

Ability to adapt

Adaptability, understood as the ability to adapt to dynamically changing environmental conditions, cope with unpredictable situations and flexibly respond to new challenges, is one of the most important competences of adults in Poland today. In the literature, it is often defined as a set of features and attitudes that allow an individual to maintain effective functioning despite emerging changes and external pressures (e.g. organizational, technological, social). People with a high level of adaptability can quickly analyze new conditions, identify available resources and methods of action, and then implement the most appropriate solutions, minimizing the negative effects of transformation or uncertainty. In the context of the Polish labor market and social life, adaptability appears to be a key skill, especially in the face of constant changes resulting from globalization, digitalization and rapid development of technology. As indicated by reports of the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development (including the 2022 "Human Capital Balance"), employers are increasingly looking for soft skills among candidates, including adaptability - not only in industries related to services or IT, but also in the industrial and commercial sectors, where innovations and changes in procedures require staff to have a flexible approach to the tasks they perform. According to PARP, approximately 60% of surveyed companies in Poland include the ability to quickly adapt to new working conditions and organizational rules among the three most important factors in assessing employee effectiveness. Data from studies by the Central Statistical Office, such as "Adult Education" and "Economic Activity of the Population", also indicate the growing role of continuous improvement of qualifications in response to changing professional requirements. Adaptability is closely related to readiness to learn - people who are more willing to participate in courses, trainings and other forms of non-formal education usually cope better with transformations related to the restructuring of workplaces or the implementation of new technologies. At the same time, research by the Educational Research Institute (IBE) shows that adult Poles often show

resistance to change and uncertainty, especially in older age groups or among people with lower education levels who have not had the opportunity to develop their transversal competences, including adaptability, within formal education. OECD reports, including the international PIAAC adult skills survey, also confirm that a flexible approach to learning and problem-solving translates not only into higher chances of maintaining employment, but also into a better position on the market in times of crisis or when competition is high. Although Poland has achieved significant progress in the area of continuing education and improving professional qualifications in recent years, still has a lot to do to popularize an attitude of openness to change among adult employees on a mass scale. For many people – especially those living in smaller urban centers or in the countryside – the problem remains the lack of a flexible and widely accessible educational offer that would give the opportunity to strengthen adaptability, e.g. through workshops improving soft skills, change management training or courses preparing for work with new technologies. Another challenge is the insufficient integration of activities for the development of adaptability within social and educational policy. Although there are support programs for the unemployed, job seekers or those forced to retrain (e.g. initiatives financed from European Funds), they often operate in isolation from other forms of promoting professional activation or psychological support in the process of change. Meanwhile, adaptability also largely results from the ability to cope with stress, readiness for innovative thinking, and even social competences such as communication and teamwork. Without a coherent strategy combining these areas, participation in vocational courses alone may not be enough to fully develop flexibility and effectiveness in difficult situations. However, research by the Polish Economic Institute shows that many companies and organizations in Poland are beginning to appreciate the importance of adaptability among employees more and more. In practice, this translates into more frequent internal training on coping with change, introducing talent development or mentoring programs, as well as promoting practices in which employees have the opportunity to rotate to different positions. Such activities teach how to quickly switch between tasks and develop competencies needed in different contexts. To sum up, adaptability plays an increasingly important role among adult Poles - it is the key to coping with the challenges of the modern labor market, globalization and technological progress, and also promotes better self-fulfillment in social and private life. Although numerous reports (including PARP, GUS, IBE, OECD) indicate that awareness of the importance of this competence is growing, there are still significant barriers that make it difficult to develop adaptability - from limited educational offer in smaller towns to the lack of appropriate integration of various forms of support in social policy and the labor market. Systematic strengthening of adults' adaptive abilities therefore requires multi-directional activities, including both the adaptation of continuing education programmes and the promotion of an organisational culture based on openness to change and the pursuit of continuous self-development. For many people – especially those living in smaller urban centres or in the countryside – the problem is the lack of a flexible and widely accessible educational offer that would give the opportunity to strengthen adaptability, e.g. through workshops improving soft skills, change management training or

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Creativity

Creativity, defined as the ability to generate original and valuable ideas and solve problems unconventionally, is one of the key competences of adults in modern society and in the dynamically changing labor market. It is often emphasized in the literature that it is not limited to the so-called creative industries, such as art or design, but also covers everyday situations at work or in private life, in which innovative thinking and courage in testing new solutions lead to increased efficiency and improved quality of life. In Poland, there is a growing interest in developing creativity in adults, which is confirmed by, among others, studies of the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development (PARP), such as the "Human Capital Balance" from 2022. They indicate that nearly 65% of surveyed employers consider creativity to be an important factor supporting the innovativeness of the organization, as well as the key to standing out on a competitive market. This takes specific forms in various sectors: IT companies appreciate the ability to generate new ideas in the area of design and programming, the industrial sector - when introducing improvements to production processes, and the service sector - when looking for unusual solutions in contact with customers. Data from the Central Statistical Office, e.g. from the "Adult Education" or "Economic Activity of the Population" studies, indicate at the same time that many workplaces lack programs directly aimed at stimulating creativity, which may hinder the development of innovation at the micro and macro levels. The importance of creativity in the social and educational context is also confirmed by analyses from the Educational Research Institute (IBE). Adults who have the opportunity to develop creative thinking are more likely to initiate grassroots activities for the benefit of local communities, co-create innovative projects as part of volunteering or actively respond to problems encountered in their environment. Creativity, like other transversal competences (e.g. communication, adaptability), is therefore an element that strengthens social capital and promotes greater

civic engagement. On the other hand, international reports, including OECD (PIAAC) studies, show that creativity is not always sufficiently supported by traditional forms of education and vocational training. Polish adults often lack the conviction that they can develop in this area after completing formal education – especially among older people or those with lower education. Barriers include not only financial or logistical constraints, but also widespread stereotypes that creativity is an innate trait, not a skill that can be improved with the help of appropriate methods and exercises. However, many researchers and practitioners emphasize that creative thinking is a competence that - like a foreign language or computer skills - can be developed regardless of age. An example of effective actions for the development of creativity are various types of courses and workshops organized not only in the largest cities, but increasingly also in smaller centers. Initiatives financed from public funds or European funds are emerging, which focus on creativity workshops combined with other areas, such as design thinking, innovation management or social entrepreneurship. However, the offer of these forms of continuing education is still not wide enough, especially when it comes to accessibility for people working non-standard hours or living in rural areas and needing alternative methods (for example, online classes). Creativity is not only generating ideas, but also the ability to implement them and move from imagination to practice. For this reason, developing it requires coherent actions - combining soft skills (such as courage in experimenting, readiness to make mistakes) with knowledge and specialist skills in a given field. Reports of the Polish Economic Institute show that companies that enable employees to develop creative thinking (through dedicated projects, open dialogue between departments, flexibility in shaping professional roles) are more likely to implement product and process innovations, achieving better financial results.

3.2. *Sector-specific knowledge*

Digital skills

Digital competences have become one of the most important factors of socio-economic development in the 21st century. These competences increase work efficiency, facilitate access to electronic services, provide the opportunity to participate in public life or acquire new qualifications.

According to data from the Central Statistical Office, in 2022, approximately 86% of adult Poles (aged 16–74) used the internet at least once in three months. The share of people using a computer regularly (at least once a week) reached 73–75%, depending on the province. There is still a significant difference between younger and older age groups, as people over 50–55 more often report problems with operating electronic equipment and a lack of skills in searching and verifying information online. There is also a significant increase in the use

of mobile devices: the number of internet users on mobile phones has been growing systematically since 2020, which confirms the popularity of smartphones as the main tool for accessing digital resources.

Data from the European Commission's DESI (Digital Economy and Society Index), which measures the level of digitalization of societies in the European Union, indicate that Poland has remained at the bottom of the ranking in recent years, ranking around 24th out of the 27 EU countries. It is estimated that 44% of adult Poles have only basic or low digital skills, which is far from the EU average. Although around 57% of respondents declare at least average competences (for example in the use of office packages or basic content processing), this indicator is still inferior to the level recorded in many Western European countries. There is also a clear differentiation in terms of age, place of residence and education. Younger adults (16-34 years old) demonstrate higher digital competences, including freedom in using online services or remote learning tools, and people in the 55+ group are much less likely to use the internet, which deepens their digital exclusion. Disproportions can also be seen between residents of large cities and rural areas – access to broadband, modern equipment and training opportunities is much more limited in peripheral areas. Education plays a similarly important role: white-collar workers, office workers and specialists who have frequent contact with digital tools usually declare better mastery of programs and devices.

Reports by institutions such as the Digital Poland Foundation or NASK emphasize that Poles increasingly recognize the need to use the network safely, especially in the context of protecting personal data and counteracting phishing, but many users still lack knowledge about security system updates or the principles of recognizing cyber threats. Research conducted by non-governmental organizations, such as the "Cities on the Internet Association", also indicates a relatively low knowledge of practical skills, such as handling official matters online or using e-Health services, which particularly affects the elderly, low-educated and unemployed. The report by the Polish Economic Institute emphasizes that companies in Poland suffer from a shortage of people with more advanced digital skills (programming, cybersecurity, data analysis), which is becoming increasingly important on the labor market in the context of the so-called 4.0 skills. At the same time, continuing education is key to adapting to ever-evolving technologies: adult Poles, regardless of their education or profession, must reckon with the need to constantly develop their skills, and access to online courses and workshops – often co-financed or organized by public and private institutions – allows for ongoing filling of the competence gap and raising professional qualifications. This is especially visible in the context of accelerated digitization caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, when many people – including seniors – were forced to break down barriers and learn at least the basics of using the Internet in order to register for vaccinations online or handle official matters remotely.

Although the digital competences of Polish society are systematically developing, and the pandemic has accelerated the adaptation of new technologies, Poland is still behind many European Union countries in this area. Equal opportunities in access to the Internet require consistent actions to expand broadband

infrastructure, especially in rural areas, but it is equally important to promote the idea of continuous lifelong learning. Supporting educational projects aimed at people most at risk of digital exclusion should go hand in hand with the creation of flexible education paths, adapted to the needs of the changing labor market. A high level of competences, including advanced IT skills, translates into the competitiveness of the economy and the efficiency of public institutions, while at the same time allowing citizens to participate more fully in social life. Integrated actions of the public, private and non-governmental sectors and the conviction of adult Poles that investing in one's own digital competences is a lifelong investment are of key importance here and can accelerate catching up with more digitally developed European countries.

Ecological skills

Green skills, or skills necessary to develop an environmentally friendly economy that responds to climate challenges, are becoming increasingly important in Poland in the context of adult education and lifelong learning. The ongoing energy transformation and challenges resulting from the European Green Deal mean that demand for knowledge and competences in the field of sustainable development, renewable energy, circular economy and green innovations is also growing in our country. Retraining of adult workers is becoming increasingly important, especially in the industrial, construction and agricultural sectors, where both technical skills and knowledge of environmental protection and energy efficiency are required.

According to the “Green Skills Awareness 2022” study conducted by the Polish Human Resources Management Association, 58% of adult respondents declared that they were aware of the growing importance of green skills in the context of the labor market and environmental regulations. At the same time, 36% of respondents admitted that they were unable to indicate specific training or educational programs that would allow them to develop green skills, which suggests that the offer of continuing education in this area is still insufficiently popular. In another survey, developed in 2021 by the Institute for a Sustainable Future Foundation, as many as 64% of adults surveyed agreed with the statement that in the next 5–10 years they will have to expand their knowledge of ecological resource management and emission reduction to remain on the competitive labor market.

Employers and the public sector are increasingly involved in the development of green competences in adult employees, which is reflected, among others, in the financing of courses and training related to the installation of photovoltaic installations, waste management or eco-design. An example of this are programs co-financed by the National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management, addressed to companies wishing to improve the qualifications of their staff in the field of sustainable technological solutions. In rural areas or in smaller towns, local initiatives are gaining particular importance, the aim of which is to enable adult farmers and entrepreneurs to participate in e-learning or hybrid training, thanks to which the barriers related to commuting to stationary classes become less severe.

Continuing education in green skills includes both acquiring new knowledge (e.g. on climate change and clean energy technologies) and developing practical skills needed to implement sustainable solutions in enterprises or households. More and more companies decide to create their own internal programs that allow for continuous improvement of staff in the area of sustainable management - not only of natural resources, but also production processes or logistics. Research by the Polish Economic Institute from 2022 showed that 41% of companies in Poland include elements related to ecological innovations in their training strategy, and every third company (32%) believes that the deficit of specialists in this area will increase in the coming years.

Although progress has been made in raising awareness of green skills, Poland still faces the challenge of developing a more universal and flexible educational offer, accessible to a wide range of adult learners and adapted to the dynamic changes in the labor market. Financial and organizational support from public administration, business and non-governmental organizations – for example through partnerships at the local and regional level – can make adult education in green skills more accessible and less dispersed. Investment in the development of green skills not only allows employed Poles to increase their professional competitiveness, but also contributes to responsible management of natural resources and improving the quality of life in a broader social dimension.

4. Data collection methodology

The study was conducted by the CRAS Association in Rzeszów on March 10–21, 2025. The aim was to determine cross-sectional skills and training needs among adult Poles from various social groups.

4.1 Description of the tools used

The study used an individual structured interview, which means that interviews with respondents were conducted according to a previously prepared set of questions, in a set order. This form ensured comparability of data and enabled qualitative and quantitative analysis of responses.

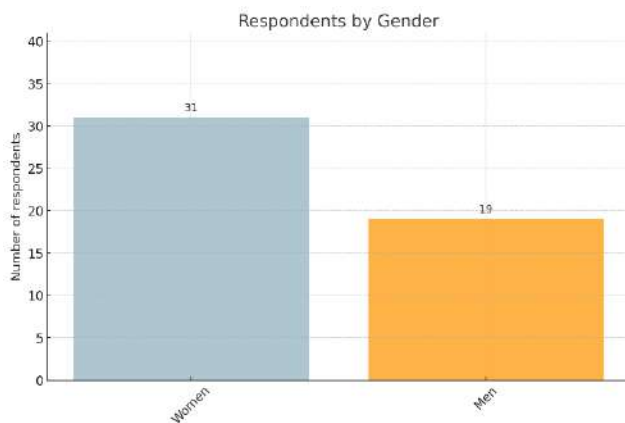
The research tool used was an interview questionnaire, which was used by the researchers. The questionnaire consisted of three parts:

- **Metrics**-contained questions to determine basic sociodemographic data of participants, including: gender, age, professional status, place of residence, level of education, affiliation to one of the three target groups (disadvantaged people, unemployed people, people with low skillsbasic).
- **Educational and professional experience section**, which included questions about:
 - participation in previous training,
 - type of training and skills acquired,
 - the impact of training on professional and personal development.
- **Needs and Barriers Section**, containing questions about:
 - areas in which respondents would like to develop (e.g. digital skills, stress management, creativity),
 - difficulties encountered in accessing education (e.g. financial, location, psychological barriers),
 - expectations regarding the planned TRIP project.

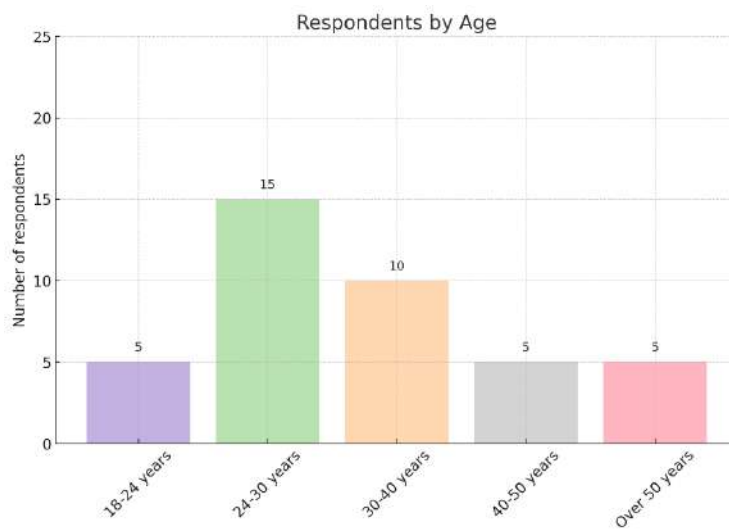
4.2. Participant and stakeholder engagement process

In order to effectively recruit participants for the study, the CRAS Association established cooperation with local stakeholders involved in activities for adult education and social integration. Key partners included, among others, district labor offices, social welfare centers, non-governmental organizations, social integration centers. Thanks to this cooperation, it was possible to reach people belonging to disadvantaged groups, including the unemployed, residents of peripheral areas and people with low basic competences.

The study included a total of 50 adult participants, including 31 women (62%) and 19 men (38%).



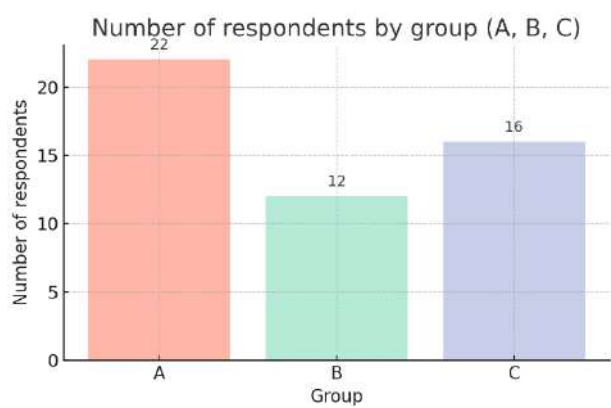
The most numerous age group was people aged 24 to 30 (15 people, 30%), followed by people aged 30-40 (10 people, 20%). The remaining age groups – people aged 18-24, 40-50 and over 50 – consisted of 5 people each (10%). The graphs below present the division of respondents by age.



Representatives of three target groups were invited to participate in the study.

- **Group A**– disadvantaged people who have limited access to education due to socio-economic status, geographical isolation or disability.
- **Group B**– unemployed people, including long-term unemployed, especially under 30 years of age, from sectors affected by digital and environmental transformation (e.g. retail, industry, traditional services).
- **Group C**– people with low levels of literacy, numeracy or digital competence.

The number of respondents in each group is as shown in the graph:



5. Analysis results

In order to design educational activities within the TRIP project, interviews were conducted with representatives of the target group. The aim of the analysis was to learn about their previous training experiences, identify current educational needs and barriers to development. The collected qualitative data provided valuable information on the expectations, motivations and difficulties faced by potential project participants. These results not only constitute the basis for further planning of activities, but also confirm the validity of the adopted project assumptions.

5.1. Presentation of collected data

Below is a description of the data collected during the interviews. They were collected in a structured manner, in accordance with the order of questions asked.

QUESTIONS ABOUT PREVIOUS TRAINING EXPERIENCES

- Have you participated in any training in the past? If so, which ones?
- If so, what skills do you think you have developed the most thanks to participating in the training?

Respondents were asked about their previous experience with training. Out of 50 respondents, 19 (38%) confirmed that they had previously participated in courses or workshops, while the remaining 31 (62%) declared no such experience.

When asked about the type of training they had received, the respondents indicated a variety of courses. They most frequently mentioned computer courses (4 people), culinary courses (3 people), workshops for office workers (3 people), as well as job search, care for the elderly, and free time animation courses (2 people each). In individual cases, technical training was mentioned, including backhoe loader operation, welding, AutoCAD, social skills training, and various beauty training courses.

Respondents most often emphasized that thanks to the training they developed, above all, specific professional competences (as indicated by 18 people).

When asked about the effects of learning during training, the respondents indicated, among others, the development of specific professional skills and an increase in their competitiveness on the labour market.

Respondents' statements included, among others, the following statements:

- "Thanks to the training, I gained practical skills in operating construction equipment. Now I feel confident behind the wheel, I know the safety rules and I can cope better on the construction site."
- "I have improved my skills in using office programs and organizing documents the most. I am more effective in my work in the office."
- "I learned how to help other people and how to cope with different caregiving situations."
- "The course allowed me to master specialist welding techniques. Thanks to this, I gained new professional qualifications."
- "I learned how to creatively organize time for different age groups. I developed interpersonal skills, I am more communicative and can establish contact with people more easily. I also have greater knowledge about what to do during animation classes."
- "I now operate fluently in the design environment. I have learned to create precise technical designs, which makes me feel more confident in my professional work."
- "The course helped me master the basics of computer use. Now I can search for information on the Internet, send e-mail and use Word on my own."
- "The classes have significantly expanded my practical skills. Now I can professionally perform nail and eyelash styling treatments, as well as various massages, which allows me to develop my own business."
- "Thanks to the course, I expanded my culinary skills, learned new recipes and cooking techniques. Now cooking gives me great pleasure and I can use it professionally."

Training participants emphasized that, in addition to gaining specific professional skills, they also noticed clear benefits in the area of personal competences. The most frequently mentioned were: increased self-confidence, creativity, better cooperation in a group, more effective interpersonal communication, more effective time management, increased independence and higher resistance to stress.

When analyzing the opinions of the participants, it is worth emphasizing that the effects of training on personal competences were much more often noticed by people who took part in workshops focused on personal development or social skills training. On the other hand, respondents participating in courses focused on specific professional skills more strongly emphasized gaining new professional qualifications and increasing their attractiveness as a specialist on the labor market.

The above observations show that according to the Participants, specialist training focused on professional skills primarily strengthens professional value, providing specific tools and qualifications needed for work. In turn, workshops focused on personal development effectively support participants in the area of soft skills, which can have a significant impact on both work efficiency and functioning in private life.

Additionally, it can be concluded that participants in vocational courses may often underestimate the development of their own soft skills, focusing primarily on measurable educational outcomes. Meanwhile, technical training, although to a lesser extent, has the potential to develop various interpersonal skills.

QUESTIONS ABOUT TRAINING NEEDS

- What skills would you like to develop? (e.g. communication, leadership, digital skills, problem-solving, teamwork, adaptability, creativity, other?)
- Have you experienced any obstacles related to acquiring new skills? If so, what were they?

One of the main goals of the interviews was to determine the training needs of the participants. The areas indicated by the respondents in which they would like to develop their skills were primarily: digital skills (39 people), coping with stress and frustration (38 people), identifying one's own capabilities (31 people) and the ability to solve problems (27 people).

The need to develop creativity (19 people) and teamwork skills (18 people) were indicated to a slightly lesser extent. The least frequently mentioned were the ability to adapt (11 people), interpersonal communication (8 people) and leadership (7 people).

The survey results clearly indicate that participants are particularly interested in training in digital skills, stress management and better understanding of one's own potential. This suggests that these areas should be prioritized when planning future educational activities aimed at this group of respondents.

During the interviews, respondents were asked whether they had encountered difficulties in acquiring new skills. 42 people confirmed that they had experienced various types of obstacles.

The respondents indicated limited access to training as one of the main difficulties. They most often referred to peripheral residence, i.e. barriers related to the distance from the place of residence to training centers. Some people indicated economic difficulties.

The following phrases appeared in the statements:

"I would like to take part in the course, but I can't afford to travel to the city, and there are no training courses in our area",

"I live far from the city, public transport is practically non-existent, so even if I wanted to train, I have no way to get there.",

"I can't get to the city for training. I finish work late and I won't make it to the courses, even those that take place in the afternoon.",

"I don't work. I can't afford training,"

"Training is very expensive. It's hard for me to spend half my salary on training."

Participants emphasized that they have limited free time, which influences their lack of participation in training:

"The employment office offered me a training course. They gave me a schedule where the classes were held for 3 months. Who has that much time to attend a course every day?",

"I work and also take care of the house. I have no way of adapting to the imposed training hours."

Many people pointed to emotional problems, such as low self-esteem and lack of self-confidence. Some people expressed fear of negative evaluation from other participants. The people interviewed said:

"I'm afraid to speak up during training because I don't want to embarrass myself in front of the other participants",

"Before I say something, I think about it ten times in my head and I usually end up not saying anything. I know that I lose a lot because of it and I avoid training.",

"The biggest obstacle to taking part in training for me is that I am afraid to speak up on a forum. I am paralyzed by the thought that someone will think my question is stupid or that I will say something wrong and everyone will notice. Because of this, I often sit quietly, even if I am really interested in something.",

"I'm afraid that others will see that I don't understand the material and will judge me as a weaker person."

A significant obstacle turned out to be the reduced motivation to participate in training:

"After so many months without work, it's hard for me to motivate myself to study. I feel like it won't change anything anyway.",

"I've gotten so used to staying at home that I'm not interested in training. I used to go on a course. It was even fun, but now I don't know if I'd dare."

Others declared that they preferred independent learning and did not find the training formula satisfactory:

"I prefer to gain knowledge on my own, courses bore me and I get discouraged quickly.",

"I don't like training. They're usually boring. I prefer to gain knowledge on my own. I read a lot, I look for information on the Internet. That's enough for me."

Another problem was low social skills that made cooperation difficult, as illustrated by statements such as:

"I find it hard to work in a group, I prefer to do everything on my own because it's hard for me to get along with others.",

"I feel insecure in group situations, I don't know how to establish contact and find my place in the team."

Respondents consider the language used by training providers to be an obstacle to acquiring new skills, as it is not adapted to their level:

"The presenter was not understandable to me, he used terms that I did not understand at all. I quickly got confused and lost interest",

"I once went to a computer course that I didn't learn anything from. I didn't understand what the teacher was saying to me at all. I finally gave up. There was no point in going to that course."

There were also voices criticizing the excessively theoretical nature of the training. Participants emphasized that many courses focus mainly on the transfer of book knowledge, without practical application. "I don't want to waste time listening to only theory, because I can find it myself on the Internet,"

"The course only talked about general principles, and I need practical skills. Theory doesn't develop me.",

"Instead of practicing and learning by doing, we spent most of our time on boring lectures. That discourages me."

QUESTIONS ABOUT EXPECTATIONS FROM THE TRIP PROJECT

- What aspects of the project do you find most interesting (e.g. experiential learning, cultural travel)?
- How do you think the project can support your personal/professional development?

The analysis of the respondents' statements indicates that the TRIP project participants consider the elements related to learning through experience and the opportunity to learn about diverse European cultures to be particularly attractive. They appreciate the value of practical activities, teamwork and interpersonal exchange in an international environment. Their statements included the following statements:

- "What is most interesting for me is learning about other cultures because it allows me to better understand the diversity of European traditions and values.",
- "I like the idea of learning through experience – direct contact with other participants and their culture is much more effective than dry theoretical lectures."
- "I am fascinated by hands-on activities and collaborative workshops – I remember new things more easily when I can experience them myself and exchange knowledge with other people."

For the participants it is crucial that the project is based on interaction, practice and real experience, and not only on theoretical communication.

Respondents indicate that participation in the TRIP project can be a significant step towards developing both personal and professional competences. Particularly often emphasized was the need to:

- developing soft skills, in particular coping with stress and frustration, identifying one's own capabilities and problem-solving skills,
- developing intercultural awareness and adaptation skills,
- improving digital competences.

Sample statements from respondents:

- "I think that by participating in the project I will improve my ability to deal with stress and frustration, which will also be beneficial in my personal and professional life.",
- "I hope that TRIP will help me better identify my opportunities and consciously plan my next steps.",
- "I am convinced that thanks to the opportunity to get to know other cultures better and work in an international environment, I will become more open to new situations and adapt to changes better.",
- "I hope that workshops developing communication skills will allow me to build better relationships and increase my effectiveness in the professional environment.",
- "Participating in the project can help me establish valuable professional contacts and better fit into an international professional and social environment."

Potential participants have high expectations of the TRIP project. Above all, they hope that participation in the project will:

- will enable them to overcome personal barriers such as uncertainty, fear of education, low self-esteem,
- will increase their motivation to act and develop further,
- will allow you to gain practical skills useful on the job market,
- will help you function better in a changing social and professional environment.

Participants also emphasize that they hope to overcome resistance to using modern technologies in education. They point out that their lack of experience with online learning has been a source of uncertainty and frustration for them. Therefore, they expect the courses to be:

- easy to use technically,
- linguistically understandable, without using complicated terminology,
- available in a flexible formula, enabling learning at any time and at any time, adapted to their daily rhythm of life and responsibilities.

Online classes and the use of modern technologies are seen as an opportunity to acquire valuable digital competences, provided that their form is friendly, transparent and adapted to the level of participants.

Respondents see the TRIP project as a chance for development, both personally and professionally. For them, the project is not only an opportunity to gain new skills, but also an impulse to change their lifestyle and open up to new possibilities.

5.2. Interpretation of results

The data collected during the interviews provide in-depth insight into the needs, experiences and barriers to learning for disadvantaged adults. These results not only confirm the validity of the TRIP project's assumptions, but also provide practical guidance on how to increase its effectiveness and accessibility.

Respondents clearly indicate that the learning process should be engaging, practical and focused on everyday experiences. Methods based on cooperation, action and interpersonal exchange are highly valued, which is directly consistent with the concept of learning through experience proposed in the TRIP project. They expect not only to acquire new competences, but also an internal change – strengthening self-confidence, a sense of agency and readiness to take on new challenges.

At the same time, technical, psychological and organizational barriers remain a significant factor limiting participation in education. They indicate the need to design TRIP activities in a flexible, accessible and supportive manner. Intuitive service, friendly language and the possibility of learning at a convenient time are key elements for the effective inclusion of this group in the educational process.

The research also suggests that TRIP should take into account the diverse levels of readiness of participants – both in terms of digital competences and attitudes towards learning. An individualized approach, combined with integration activities, can significantly increase the effectiveness of the program and increase the engagement of recipients.

5.3. Identifying priority skills

Based on the collected data, it was possible to determine the areas that TRIP project participants consider most important in the context of their own personal and professional development. Among the indicated skills, the following clearly dominate:

- **Digital competences**, covering basic computer, Internet and online educational and communication tools (indicated by 39 people).
- **Coping with stress and frustration**, which the participants perceive as crucial in everyday functioning and in the context of professional activity (38 people).
- **Identifying your own opportunities**, i.e. the ability to recognize one's resources, potential and directions for further development (31 persons).
- **Problem-solving skills**, supporting independence and effective action in various life and professional situations (27 people).

To a lesser, but still significant extent, the participants declared their willingness to develop such competences as: creativity (19 people), teamwork (18 people), adaptability (11 people), interpersonal communication (8 people) and leadership (7 people).

These results allow us to define the priority programmatic directions of the TRIP project.

Well-designed educational activities have the potential not only to develop competences, but also to activate, empower and integrate participants – which perfectly aligns with the goals of the TRIP project.

6. Local good practices

This chapter presents selected good practices in the area of adult education, with particular emphasis on those initiatives that use travel, contact with cultural diversity and experiential learning as key elements of the educational process.

6.1. Examples of successful initiatives in adult education

"Europe in a backpack"

The project implemented by the Foundation for Cooperation and Dialogue "New Space" is an innovative initiative combining adult education with cultural travel across Central and Eastern Europe. This model is based on the method of cultural immersion and experiential learning in a natural social environment.

The program consists of a series of four educational trips (including to Slovakia, Lithuania, the Czech Republic and Romania), during which participants take part in language and cultural workshops, meetings with local leaders, study visits to educational centers and volunteer activities for local communities. In each country, participants carry out practical team tasks related to the topics of interculturalism, history and heritage, which promotes active learning and development of social competences.

The trips are preceded by substantive preparation in the form of stationary and online workshops, and after each trip, participants create joint educational projects, sharing acquired knowledge and reflections with the local community. The project strengthens the sense of European identity, develops adaptation and communication skills, and effectively breaks language and social barriers.

"The Power of Bieszczady"

The model implemented by the Centre for Innovative Education presents the methodology of "outdoor learning", in line with the assumptions developed by the University of Edinburgh. Educational support is divided into two phases. In the first, participants, during a seven-day field trip, carry out a number of activities, such as: hiking in the forest, building a camp, cooking in the open air. Time in the open air, away from civilization, under the supervision of qualified trainers and coaches is an excellent opportunity for group integration, strengthening bonds, building a sense of self-agency and responsibility. In the second phase, participants carry out exercises aimed at developing digital and mathematical skills as well as understanding and processing information.

"Tastes of Europe"

The project, carried out by the Cultural Education Association "Tastes of Europe", combined intercultural education with culinary education. Adult participants from small towns in Poland took part in week-long trips to Italy, Greece and Spain, where they learned about local culinary traditions and cooking

techniques. As part of the workshops, they visited organic farms, took part in joint preparation of dishes, and learned about the history of the regions and cultural differences. After returning to Poland, they organized local "culture evenings" during which they shared their acquired knowledge with other residents. The project developed social, linguistic and cultural competences, and also supported intergenerational integration.

"Cities Without Borders – Education Through Exploration"

The project, organized by the European Center for Mobile Education, was addressed to adult participants from regions with limited access to culture. Its main focus was study visits to partner cities, including Tallinn, Riga and Vilnius. During the trips, participants took part in educational walks with guides, urban walk learning workshops, visited cultural institutions and participated in interactive urban games. The project promoted the idea of "learning through immersion" in a new cultural environment, and its effect was local educational initiatives inspired by the experiences gained (e.g. thematic walks, podcasts, blogs).

Universities of the Third Age (UTW)

Universities of the Third Age operate in Poland at various institutions – most often they are universities, but they also operate at cultural centres or libraries. The main target group is senior citizens, to whom UTW offers various forms of education – from lectures and seminars on history, psychology or culture, to computer, language or art workshops. Their unique feature is the lack of exam pressure, which helps create a friendly environment conducive to continuous acquisition of knowledge. Thanks to the activities of UTW, senior citizens can not only develop intellectually, but also make new friends, which improves the quality of their life and counteracts the feeling of exclusion.

"Lighthouse Keepers of Digital Poland"

The Digital Poland Lighthouse Project (also known as "Digital Poland of Equal Opportunities") focuses on minimizing digital exclusion among adults, especially those aged 50+. The key role in this initiative is played by volunteers - the titular Lighthouse Keepers - who organize computer and Internet classes in community centers, libraries and community centers. The teaching methods are simple and adapted to the needs of the local community, which allows participants to overcome their resistance to new technologies more quickly. As a result, many people gain the ability to search for information on the web, use social networking sites or use email for the first time.

E-learning platforms, including NAVOICA

The development of e-learning has opened up new perspectives in adult education, enabling learning anywhere and anytime. The Polish platform NAVOICA, operating in the MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) model, is an excellent example of this. Participants have access to courses conducted by Polish universities and educational institutions - from academic issues to practical professional skills. The advantage of this solution is interactivity: video lectures, quizzes, discussion forums or project work encourage active participation. This form of education makes it easier for working people, parents or rural residents to gain new qualifications without the need for frequent commuting.

Industry and sector programmes

Many companies and institutions undertake to organize specialized training programs tailored to the needs of a specific industry or profession. A typical example are programming academies in IT companies, where novice candidates acquire software development skills in a work environment. Language courses organized in international companies are equally important, allowing adults to acquire the necessary communication skills. In addition, various projects co-financed by European funds (e.g. under the POWER program) combine training, career counseling and internships, offering comprehensive support in acquiring a new profession.

Continuing Education Centres and Industry Skills Centres

CKU and BCU are an important element of the public educational offer for adults. Schools and institutions providing vocational education offer a variety of courses tailored to the realities of the local labor market. Adult learners can gain new professional qualifications, confirmed by a state exam, which increases their chances of finding a better job. Thanks to cooperation with enterprises, the curricula in the Centers for Continuing Education are constantly updated to respond to dynamic technological and economic changes. In turn, in the Branch Skills Centers, it is possible to concentrate schools, institutions and companies focused on one field - for example, gastronomy or mechanics - in one place, which facilitates the exchange of experiences and support in career development.

Local Knowledge and Education Centres (LOWE)

LOWE is part of the idea of using the potential of schools for adult education. The program is based on the assumption that an educational institution can act as a local education center, creating a friendly space for people of all ages. Thanks to cooperation with local governments, non-governmental organizations and employers, LOWE provides a computer room, library and sports facilities, and also

adapts the educational offer to the real needs of residents. Participants can develop digital, professional or social and civic skills, often under the supervision of well-prepared teachers. Another significant benefit is the strengthening of ties in the local community - adults learn in a place they know and trust, which makes it easier for them to return to education after a longer break.

"Traveller Clubs" in libraries and community centers

"Traveller Clubs" are an attractive way of spending free time and developing a passion for discovering the world. Meetings devoted to various countries and cultures are regularly organized in libraries, community centers or local activity centers. Thanks to the participation of invited guests - globetrotters, bloggers or geographers - participants gain practical knowledge on how to plan a route, where to look for accommodation or what to pay attention to during a trip. Watching photos, films and stories from different corners of the world together allows adult listeners not only to broaden their horizons, but also to get inspired for their own travels. Clubs of this type often cooperate with local institutions and entrepreneurs, which allows for the organization of knowledge competitions, mini thematic workshops or joint sightseeing trips.

Travel festivals and conferences

Travel festivals, such as well-known events organized in large cities, are an excellent opportunity to gain knowledge about less obvious destinations and non-standard forms of tourism. During several days of lectures, slide shows and films, participants can hear the stories of people who have hitchhiked around the world, climbed high peaks or crossed continents by bike. These conferences are usually supported by travel publishers and tourist portals, which allows direct access to specialist materials and maps. An important element of festivals are thematic workshops, e.g. photography or first aid, thanks to which listeners of adult groups improve practical skills necessary during travel.

"Language Clubs" with elements of culture

Language clubs combine learning a foreign language with learning about the culture and customs of individual countries. Participants meet in cafes, community centers, or non-governmental organizations to speak a foreign language and deepen their knowledge of the culinary traditions, holidays, or music of a given region. Native speakers or people who have lived abroad for a longer period of time are often invited, which allows them to learn authentic phrases and pronunciation. Thanks to this formula, adults learn the language in natural communication situations, while developing intercultural competences. Club organizers often cooperate with restaurants or cultural institutions to enrich the offer with tastings and shows related to a given country.

6.3. Lessons learned and success factors based on experience and travel

The success of adult education, especially that which is based on active action and contact with cultural diversity, depends primarily on the quality of the conditions created for learning. Practice shows that the most effective forms of learning are those that enable adults to be truly engaged, personally discover and reflect. A key aspect is to give the educational process meaning - the participant must see value in it for their life, work and development. Learning cannot be detached from reality - it should be life-related, embedded in context and giving a sense of agency.

Modern educational programs increasingly treat learning as a path to discovering the world – not in the sense of physical travel, but in the form of learning about new values, cultures and perspectives. Participants do not travel, but thanks to audiovisual materials, virtual meetings with people from other countries or analysis of social situations from different corners of the world, they have the opportunity to learn something new and important. This opens them up to otherness, teaches tolerance and develops cultural sensitivity, which is of great importance in the context of the modern labor market and social life.

The experience of people who run this type of classes shows that the activity of participants is key. The best effects are brought by those activities that give them the chance to act independently – to prepare their own materials, presentations, reflections or conversations with other participants. Knowledge conveyed in the form of a lecture does not stay with the participant for long. However, what they “work through” themselves – even symbolically, e.g. in the form of a cultural task – becomes their own educational experience.

The community that is created around the learning process is also important. Even if classes are held online, contact with others, the opportunity to exchange opinions and work together promote engagement and maintain motivation. People learn better when they can compare their perspective with the perspective of others, feel part of a group and support each other in the educational process. Cooperation becomes not only a method, but a value in itself.

Good practices also point to the importance of technology – not as a goal, but as a tool that supports the flexibility and accessibility of learning. Educational platforms give adult participants a space to learn at their own pace, without having to give up their professional or family responsibilities. Thanks to them, learning becomes more friendly, less burdensome and better adapted to the lifestyle of adults. This is especially important for people from smaller towns or with limited mobility, who often did not have real access to this type of activity before.

The role of reflection is also worth noting – moments of stopping, analyzing and relating the knowledge gained to one’s own experiences. Classes that offer such moments – for example in the form of discussions, reflection journals or summaries – have a much greater impact on the development of participants than those that are limited to the transfer of information. Reflection allows the participant to make sense of what they are learning and to “build” this knowledge into their everyday life.

The issue of psychological safety and flexibility cannot be ignored either. Adults often have various educational experiences behind them – not always positive ones. When they re-enter the role of a student, they may feel uncertainty, resistance, fear of being assessed. Therefore, the success of education largely depends on the atmosphere – trust, respect and acceptance, in which each participant feels that they have the right to learn at their own pace, in their own way and without pressure. Such an atmosphere not only promotes learning, but also rebuilds faith in oneself and one's abilities.

In summary, effective adult education is one that is based on real experience, provides space for learning and action, uses modern technologies in a supportive way and – most importantly – builds lasting engagement of the participant. It is not about imparting knowledge in the traditional sense, but about starting the process of internal development – through learning, reflection and encountering what is new and inspiring.

7. Recommendations

7.1. Tips for developing training plans

When developing training plans within the TRIP project, the specificity of the target group, conclusions from the diagnosis of local needs and priorities of adult education based on experience, culture and digital transformation should be taken into account. The training plan should be flexible, practical and focused on developing key soft skills.

Take into account the profile of participants

Training must respond to the real needs of adults in difficult life situations, unemployed people and people with low basic skills. It is recommended:

- using simple language and clear instructions,
- building trust and a sense of security,
- creating short, engaging modules that can be implemented in a flexible time frame.

Focus on competencies resulting from the needs of participants

Based on the diagnosis, it is clear that TRIP project participants particularly need to develop competencies that are essential in everyday functioning, job searches and building motivation and self-esteem. Training plans should focus on strengthening these areas. In particular, it is recommended to include:

- digital skills,
- coping with stress and frustration,
- identifying your own opportunities and potential,
- problem-solving skills,
- creativity and flexible thinking.

Prioritizing these competence areas will not only allow for the development of participants' knowledge and skills, but also for rebuilding their motivation, sense of agency and readiness for further education.

Develop experience-based thematic modules

The structure of training within the TRIP project should be embedded in the realities of everyday life of participants, referring to their personal experiences, social and professional situations. Instead of transferring knowledge in the form of lectures, it is recommended to use methods based on action and involvement, which activate participants and facilitate the absorption of content.

In particular, it is worth constructing modules around scenarios inspired by reality – such as everyday decisions, family challenges, changing jobs, communicating with institutions, using digital services or situations requiring cooperation with others. Each module should include a practical element: individual or group exercises, analysis of specific cases (case study), creative activities or solving a problem that may be similar to the participants' experiences.

It is important that participants can recognize elements in the training content that are close to their own lives and learn by referring to their own stories. The exercises should support not only the acquisition of knowledge, but also the development of soft skills, such as communication, flexibility, problem-solving and self-awareness.

Reflective activities should also be an important element of each module. For example, after completing an exercise, participants can reflect on what they have learned, what was difficult for them, and what was rewarding. Reflection can be oral, written, or graphic – depending on the group's preferences. Regularly including such moments deepens the learning process, supports the development of self-awareness, and allows for the permanent anchoring of new skills in personal experience.

Use technology as a support, not a barrier

Training should be possible for people with different digital skills. It is recommended:

- user-friendly platforms (e.g. NAVOICA, Moodle),
- availability of materials in various formats (video, audio, text),
- offline options or printable materials for people with limited Internet access.

Take care of integrating and motivating elements

Adults learn more effectively when they feel like they are part of a community. It is worth planning:

- individual tasks related to the participant's reality,
- sharing results (e.g. short audio recordings, photos, comments),
- structured reflection after each module (e.g. journal, summarizing questions).

Take into account the Polish socio-cultural context

Proposed training topics may include:

- comparisons of local and foreign traditions,
- change management in the local community,
- discovering your professional potential,
- strengthening social and family skills,
- building emotional resilience and motivation.

Complete the training with a final assignment

It is worth providing a summary in the form:

- a short original project (e.g. a personal development plan),
- presentation or audio recording,
- written reflection showing what the participant gained.

7.2. Strategies to cope with identified challenges

Based on the analysis of the initial situation, conducted as part of the diagnosis in the TRIP project, a number of challenges were identified that limit the active participation of adults in educational processes. The most important barriers include economic difficulties, a deficit of digital competences, limited access to educational offers, lack of flexibility of forms of learning, as well as low levels of motivation and self-confidence. In response to these challenges, a strategy of action was developed that aims to increase the accessibility and effectiveness of educational programs for adults.

Equal opportunities through accessibility and local support

One of the key strategic actions is to ensure equal access to education for people living in towns far from training centres. To this end, it is recommended to conduct training using available digital technologies, while ensuring support from local institutions (e.g. libraries, community centres, schools) that can provide computer equipment and space for learning. This approach allows for eliminating the territorial barrier, which is particularly important for people without means of transport or caring for loved ones. Cooperation with local partners also helps to better root educational activities in the realities of community life.

Developing basic digital competences of participants

In response to the low level of digital skills that is common among adults, especially those from disadvantaged groups, the strategy includes the implementation of simple and accessible introductory modules. Short training courses on the use of educational platforms, basics of using the Internet and digital safety are the first step in integrating participants into modern learning environments. Simple language, step-by-step instructions and the possibility of obtaining technical assistance during the courses are key here. Such activities help overcome fear of technology and increase the educational independence of participants.

Taking into account the time and life constraints of the participants

Given that many adults combine learning with work, household chores or caring for loved ones, it is necessary to design training courses in a flexible way that fits the daily rhythm of participants' lives. It is recommended to use short educational modules that can be completed in stages, at any time - even in the evenings or on weekends. In the case of online classes, it is also important to provide recordings and materials that participants can use at a time convenient for them. Such an organization promotes equal participation and reduces the risk of withdrawal due to organizational difficulties.

Strengthening motivation and self-confidence

One of the common reasons why adults avoid training is fear of evaluation, low self-esteem or previous negative educational experiences. That is why it is so important for training programs to include elements that support personal development – e.g. classes on stress management, identifying one's own resources or interpersonal skills training. The role of the trainer is also crucial here, as they should create an atmosphere of openness, acceptance and safety, and support participants in building a sense of agency and faith in their own abilities. Such an environment promotes lasting engagement and allows for gradual development.

Basing the program on experience and practical action

According to the results of the diagnosis, adult participants definitely learn better in practical situations than during traditional lectures. Therefore, it is recommended that trainings should be task-based and refer to real problems that participants encounter in everyday life. These can be exercises related to the use of online public services, preparing presentations, solving local problems or organizing events. This type of approach not only strengthens the effects of learning, but also increases the sense of usefulness of the acquired knowledge and supports the reflection process.

Virtual opening to cultural diversity

Based on the analysis of the initial situation, conducted as part of the diagnosis in the TRIP project, a number of challenges were identified that limit the active participation of adults in educational processes. The most important barriers include economic difficulties, a deficit of digital competences, limited access to educational offers, lack of flexibility of forms of learning, as well as low levels of motivation and self-confidence. In response to these challenges, a strategy of action was developed that aims to increase the accessibility and effectiveness of educational programs for adults.

Virtual opening to cultural diversity

The TRIP project places particular emphasis on intercultural education as a way to broaden participants' horizons and develop social competences. Contact with cultural diversity can be achieved individually, through independent work with educational materials. Participants can learn about other cultures based on videos, podcasts, photo reports, articles or multimedia materials provided on the educational platform. Classes can also include reflective elements, such as keeping a journal, answering open questions or quizzes to check understanding of the content. This approach allows each participant to explore cultural topics in a

comfortable way and adapted to their own needs, without the need for teamwork or participation in live meetings.

8. Conclusions

The TRIP project, through its assumptions and activities, responds to specific challenges related to adult education in Poland. Low participation in continuing education, economic and technological barriers, as well as a shortage of soft and digital skills, constitute real obstacles to the professional and social development of many adults. However, the local diagnosis carried out as part of the project clearly indicates that there is also great potential and readiness to learn - provided that the educational process is adapted to the reality of everyday life of the participants.

One of the key conclusions is that effective adult training programs must be based on experience, flexibility and cultural proximity. Learning cannot be just about transmitting content – it should become a process of discovery, experience and reflection. In this context, digital technologies play a huge role, as they allow reaching participants regardless of their place of residence and creating a learning environment available “here and now”.

Conclusions from the implementation of previous projects and the collected data indicate that the most effective forms of adult education:

- integrate elements of practical action,
- enable learning about other cultural perspectives (also in virtual form),
- offer a space for reflection and exchange of experiences,
- are carried out in a flexible manner, without the pressure of assessments and in a safe environment.

Despite significant progress, Poland still faces the challenge of building a culture of lifelong learning. The TRIP project shows that appropriately designed activities – including courses based on soft skills, digital tools and openness to diversity – can be a real response to the needs of local communities. Introducing the recommended solutions into educational practice, with the support of public institutions, non-governmental organizations and employers, can, in the long term, contribute to increasing adult participation in education and improving their quality of life and ability to adapt in a changing world.

Attachments 1 - Interview Questionnaire

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Title: Interview for training needs analysis in the TRIP project.

Objective: Identifying the transversal skills and training needs of participating adults.

Interview sections:

1. Metrics.

Sex

- ☐ Woman
- ☐ Man
- ☐ Other
- ☐ I prefer not to answer

Age:

- ☐ 18 – 24 years old
- ☐ 24 – 30 years old
- ☐ 30 – 40 years old
- ☐ 40 – 50 years old
- ☐ Over 50 years old

2. Belonging to the target group:

- ☐ a person who is in a disadvantaged situation, i.e. has limited access to education due to socio-economic status, geographical isolation or disability,
- ☐ unemployed persons, including long-term unemployed persons, especially persons under 30 years of age, from sectors most affected by the digital and environmental transformation (retail, industry, traditional services),
- ☐ a person with low levels of literacy, numeracy or digital skills. Specific characteristics and needs.

3. Previous experience

- Have you participated in any training in the past? If so, which ones?
- If so, what skills do you think you have developed the most thanks to participating in the training?

4. Training needs

- What skills would you like to develop? (e.g. communication, leadership, digital skills, problem-solving, teamwork, adaptability, creativity, other?)
- Have you experienced any obstacles related to acquiring new skills? If so, what were they?

5. Expectations for the TRIP project

- What aspects of the project do you find most interesting (e.g. experiential learning, cultural travel)?
- How do you think the project can support your personal/professional development?

6. General opinions

- Suggestions for preferred training methods and tools.
- Other comments or expectations.

Attachments 2 - List of Involved Stakeholders

For the effective implementation of the TRIP project objectives, as well as the sustainable implementation of its results, the involvement of a wide range of institutional partners from various sectors is crucial. The list below presents representative entities from the national and regional level (with particular emphasis on the Podkarpackie Voivodeship) that can support the implementation of innovative activities in the field of adult education.

1. Adult Education Institutions

- Continuing Education Centers
- CKU and CKZiU in Białystok, Łódź, Kraków
- Masovian Self-Government Teacher Training Center
- The Centre for Practical Education and Teacher Training in Mielec (CKPiDN)
- Subcarpathian Science Center "Łukasiewicz" in Tajęcin
- Network of Universities of the Third Age, including UTW at the University of Rzeszów

2. Non-governmental and social organizations

- Foundation for the Development of the Information Society (FRSI)
- The Leaven Foundation
- Association of Trainers of Non-Governmental Organizations (STOP)
- PRO Carpathia Association
- Foundation for the Development of Local Democracy – Podkarpackie Training Center in Rzeszów
- CIVIS Polonus Association

3. Labor market and social welfare institutions

- Social Welfare Centers
- Social Integration Centers – including in Strzyżów and Przemyśl
- Rzeszów Regional Development Agency SA (RARR)
- Przemyśl Regional Development Agency (PARR)

4. Educators and trainers

- Lighthouse Keepers of Digital Poland – a nationwide network of 50+ educators
- Polish Society for Media Education
- Education Development Center (ORE)

- Vocational Training Center in Rzeszow

5. Local government institutions and authorities

- Association of Polish Cities
- Union of Rural Communes of the Republic of Poland
- Marshal's Office of the Podkarpackie Voivodeship
- Municipalities: Rzeszow, Sanok, Jaslo, Stalowa Wola
- Municipal and communal public libraries – e.g. the Public Library in Barcin and the Provincial and Municipal Public Library in Rzeszów
- Cultural Centers – e.g. RDK Rzeszów, MBP Krosno

6. Entrepreneurs and employers' organizations

- Union of Entrepreneurs and Employers (ZPP)
- Confederation Lewiatan
- Employers of Poland
- Subcarpathian Employers' Association
- Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Rzeszów
- Subcarpathian Chamber of Commerce in Krosno

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