

# Linking Citizenship and Employability

Analytical Review of Practices  
and Initial Conclusions

By Laurent Labrot, Sciences Po Grenoble & Association EDIAS  
with an introduction by G. Pirker, E. Rapetti, N. Zimmermann

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**Author:** Laurent Labrot (Association EDIAS)

With an introduction by Georg Pirker, Elisa Rapetti, and Nils-Eyk Zimmermann (DARE network)

**Editor:** Georg Pirker

**Design:** Nils-Eyk Zimmermann

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# 1. Introduction

By Georg Pirker, Elisa Rapetti, Nils-Eyk Zimmermann  
Democracy and Human Rights Education in Europe (DARE network)

This publication is published in the frame of the LICEAL project. **Linking Citizenship and Employability** perspectives in **Adult Learning** strategies and practices aims to develop learners' capacity, adequately supported by educators, to self-assess and undertake learning and personal development projects contributing to social inclusion and employability. The project explored, collected and analysed practices which promote the development of adult learners' competences both relating the social-civic dimension and to employability. With the analytical review we conducted a primary exploration to understand in a qualitative way the experiences that promote overcoming the traditional separation between citizenship and employability training. The aim is to stimulate a reflection combining the two fields and to provide concrete, structuring elements drawn from exemplary projects carried out by professionals in Europe in recent years. The 15 case studies/practices presented in this publication give concrete example of approaches, models and activities guided by this intent.

The text integrates the work of the partnership on the basis of the analysis developed by Laurent Labrot (Association EDIAS) and a consecutive validation phase which consulted several stakeholders in order to verify the relevance of the findings we came out with the selected practices. The analysis explores the practices in terms of target audience and pedagogical methods. Moreover, it focuses on the cluster of competences included in the different practices and why they are relevant in today's societies (democracies).

## 1.1 Linking citizenship-employability in adult learning

Securing a decent life in times of challenging economical, ecological, social and political transformations that affect large fields in our European societies is an ever demanding task. For people inside and outside the labor market, on its peripheries (with growing numbers of people in irregular labor), for skilled workers and those in need of upskilling, for people who enter the labor market and whose competences yet need to be reflected in validation and acquisition systems. And also for the validation and recognition systems which themselves are in need of being adjusted to changing societal realities.

Coping with demanding and fast changing labor markets and work requirements, the adapting of, and reasoning about, transferability of competences from one field into another context (in example social to professional) gains more importance. In the same way this has consequences for individuals on the micro-level as learners, on a meso-level for the transforming labor environment (i.e., recognition and validation systems and approaches, acknowledgement of prior learning). Furthermore, this applies also to the macro-level taking into account the embeddedness of people and learning within the overall societal, economic and political conditions affected by and affecting these transformations.

The transformations challenge all, but they are increasingly stronger for people with access difficulties (like low-skilled), for people facing qualification gaps, people who are in need to re-steering due to the transition of their working fields, or people who face for various reasons barriers in entering the labor markets at all (e.g. no papers, working permission, etc.).

In particular, a large development is job polarisation, the decrease of middle-skilled jobs resulting from a higher demand for high-skilled and low-skilled jobs. The OECD predicts, that 14% of jobs are at high risk of automation and that 32% of jobs could be radically transformed (Nedelkoska & Quintini, 2018). Structural barriers prevent persons from leaving behind “involuntary part-time employment” in the lower ranks of the service sector (Peugny 2019) or settings of “irregular labor” (e.g. fictitious freelancing, platform work).

As a consequence, fewer and fewer can count on the post-war labor integration model – internal advancement in a company – or on leaving behind the irregular labor without broader external support. If entry to the labor market is one challenge, the other is to have a perspective to become employed according to the own abilities and potentials and in accordance with accessing and enjoying on full scale social and labor rights.

Here, education has the important task of mitigating problems that are in manifold way structural in nature. A modern approach to this is to train people not only along the (in the marginal area also only marginal) professional requirements, but to enable learners to see, develop and use the breadth of their competences. However, successful application of education and training means to apply these competences under the conditions described above.

Education should, on the one hand, help learners to become aware of the concrete barriers and hurdles and their causes and also who in (and how) civil society, state, and economy addresses these. On the other hand, learning should empower people for taking a step to eliminating hurdles – individual ones the same as those that only can be changed politically.

From an educational perspective, we speak about **combinations of individual learning, democracy-related learning and support for social engagement/civil society inclusion**. This finding leads to the demand that vocational training, with its widespread thinking in clearly defined pathways, must be accompanied by a **pedagogical openness** to the resources and needs of learners; especially to the competences and skills they have acquired or can develop in various social contexts outside of work. Thus, the view on competences changes from professional to transversal, from hierarchical to intermingling and adapting.

“In fact, the word ‘path’ has come to overshadow the skills that have often been at the heart of pedagogical thinking in recent years. The key to the structure and even success of any project of this type is to have a well-defined pathway that will enable us to gradually take charge of these disadvantaged groups, while also dealing with their often differing potential. These are realities that are often overlooked in evaluations, which focus solely on traditional teaching methods and success rates, to the detriment of the conviviality and holistic, humanist content created” (Labrot, p. 17).

If citizenship competence is the ability to actively and successfully participate in social, political and cultural life and the enjoyment of democratic and fundamental rights, this entails the ability to participate in and shape the public sphere, to contribute and be heard. Along the way, one acquires skills in solving problems, dealing with others, seeing oneself as capable of taking initiative, or creating and using social structures for one's own goals. Certainly such ability supports people also in the labor context and also has a positive effect on the personal/social spheres. Conversely, skills acquired in a professional context will benefit navigating other contexts (Labrot).

## Competence acquisition: everything up to the learners?

The LICEAL case studies compiled in the second part of this publication's analytical review identified a coherence between the acquisition of entrepreneurial/employability competences and civic/social competences – which surprisingly have similar levels of importance and are overlapping. The analytical review concludes that not so much the single step in a specific field of competence acquisition is decisive for success, but the decision about the path to go and, how learning is accompanied. Here Adult Learning plays a crucial role.

The OECD's transformative competencies 2030 (OECD, NA) identify three fields where competence development becomes crucial for successful navigating transformations:

- \_ Creating new value,
- \_ Reconciling tensions and dilemmas, and
- \_ Taking responsibility.

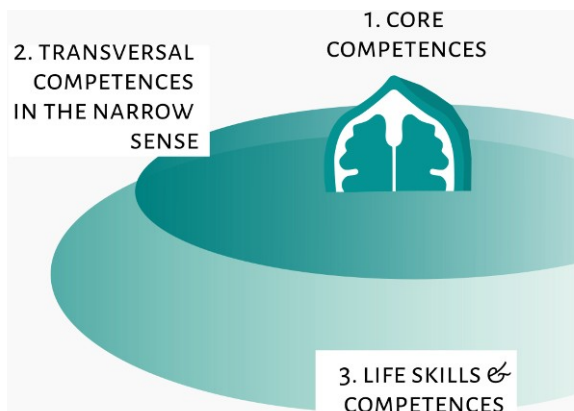
In order to explore and operate these competence fields, there is thorough guidance and accompany needed. How to come from such a very broad and universal description of competence dimensions to something which could help education to operationalise transversal competences? **Competence frameworks** aim to function as “an orienteering tool on the lifelong learning journey, where each learner will take an individual path” (Bacigalupo, 2022). They identify transversal fields of competence, cluster them systematically and break them down to different levels, so educators can work with them. In example the Reference Framework Competences for a Democratic Culture (RFDC) of the Council of Europe (Council of Europe, 2016) or the DigComp framework for digital competence of the EU.

Different approaches and competence models always look at transversal competences differently and also reflect them in varying degrees of detail. Therefore, models are required that enable users to compare these different frameworks in order to be able to draw from them the best impulses for their own purposes. One such model is that of Cedefop and ESCO with the aim to create a “structured and consistent terminology on transversal skills and competences” (Hart et al., 2021).

Analysing competence frames through the Cedefop/ESCO model enables us to understand what transversal competences are, which transversal competences are interrelating and how they build on each other, or how other competences contribute to a transversal relevance of learning.



It can also be used to explore which of the transversal competences are particularly addressed in individual competence frameworks or curricula (and which are given lower priority).



**Core Competences:** The minimum basis for individual learning and interacting with others. The necessary foundation for more transversal skills and competences: Mastering languages, working with numbers and measures, working with digital devices & applications.

**Transversal Competences in the Narrow Sense:** Competences used and developed universally and constantly in different contexts and social roles: Thinking; Self-Management and Learning-to-Learn; Social and Communication; Physical and Manual.

**Broader Life Skills and Competences:** Competence concepts that address transversal competences in particular and focus on a specific social implementation context. Life skills and competences reflect changing societies and will to some extent be more dynamic and subject to change than the previous categories:

- \_ Entrepreneurial and financial skills and competences
- \_ Health-related skills and competences
- \_ Cultural skills and competences
- \_ Civic skills and competences
- \_ General knowledge
- \_ Environmental skills and competences
- \_ Digital competence beyond basic skills

Building the bridge between such or similar meta-conceptions to concrete educational practice – is where Adult learning and VET, but also (career) guidance and counselling, planning and mentoring come in. They aim to accompany and support people to identify and spot opportunities, adapt and transfer existing capacities in changing conditions, to develop self-esteem, but also to gain experience of self-efficacy and trust. Interventions and educational practices often apply mainly to the micro- and meso-levels, which are confirmed in the competence clusters being in particular relevant for education at the intersection between citizenship and employment.

The practices examined as part of the LICEAL project's analytical review in chapter 2 roughly confirm the systematics of the ESCO/Cedefop model, where they can be well integrated. They also provide information on the extent to which transversal dimensions are included in modern educational concepts.

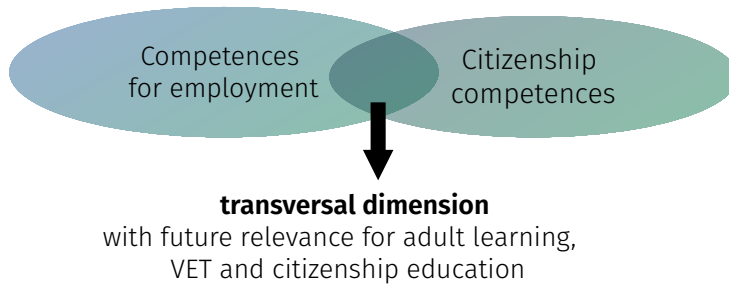
## **The need for a more systemic view: linkage to citizenship education**

It is of course good for people to acquire skills to enter the labor market and improve their employment status or get a decent work, but is not only the individual acquisition of skills that leads to these desirable consequences. Systemic conditions, norms, the economic, social and political dynamics on the macro level shape the conditions for success and failure. Specifically, failure is systemic and collective in political systems that have seen (and allowed) the erosion of the welfare state and of the rights of people and workers. Thus, citizenship education linked with labor education should gain more importance supporting the reflection and analysis of societal developments affecting labor, labor politics and existing power conditions.

Casting such a systemic view is important to develop and share also with those who work in training with adults, also because they themselves are probably in precarious working conditions. It is important for them to develop this awareness in their relationship with the learners they work with and train.

The LICEAL project places itself exactly within the range of supporting employability of Adult Learners via individual competence development. It promotes learning that includes a systemic view on the civic sphere, on economic/societal and political conditions which frame democratic interaction and the negotiation of power. Such an approach leads beyond the individual citizen and touches these determinative socio-political conditions. Citizenship Education and Democracy Learning thus builds conceptually and in practice – a transversal connection to the single fields where labor market empowerment, employment-related learning, entrepreneurial competences

are facilitated, making a connection between the individual readiness for accessing a job, and the labor market/economy macro policies affecting the overall setting of the theatre, which are in Europe defined with social partners, social, workers and participation rights.



This publication can be understood as an exploration of intersecting items of citizenship-related competences and competences relevant for employment in order to contribute to the further development of adult learning, VET and citizenship education as key fields of lifelong learning. With this publication we comprise the different aspects of the partnership within LICEAL we have focussed on:

- \_ Exploratory field research on practices in Europe and beyond
- \_ Ideas on learners' competence development
- \_ Guidelines for educators
- \_ A Competence Explorer which exemplarily demonstrates to educators how they can systematically take up, address, and apply transversal competences.

While DARE network developed the LICEAL Competence Explorer, in a similar manner the European Training Foundation created the card game Scaffold which we also recommend as a complementary tool.

## 1.2 In a nutshell: analytical review of adult learning practices connecting citizenship & employability

### **Citizenship dimension**

Having a look at the citizenship dimension of the project we can roughly categorise the practices screened into two categories. There are as a first category practices which pursue a specific policy change agenda – in example concrete social empowerment, the emancipatory support of the individual, the access to equal rights – by working with dedicated target groups. These aims

are often also driving the educational institution, organisation, provider responsible for the activities. Often these groups belong to marginalised, vulnerable or in any dimension disadvantaged spheres of our societies, often facing intersectional and perpetuating positions of vulnerabilities. The employment aspect of the practices is pursued among others towards achieving a bigger societal goal. These practices support the target groups in claiming their rights as citizens. The activities have a clear, content-wise connection to deal with citizenship and rights issues, explicitly by putting focus on law aspects. They set democracy and human rights on the agenda and involve, meet and exchanging with elected representatives of public institutions (or ultimately supporting people to involve themselves into politics or apply for an elected office).

The second category emphasizes on the social capital gaining – through community work, local solidarity, care and engagement/ volunteering projects. The citizenship aspect is targeted rather implicitly, for example in targeting on basic skills and literacy development, conducting intercultural community activities, connecting to green or social economy and entrepreneurships.

### **Employability dimension**

The employability dimension of the practices analysed also follows common characteristics, mainly in the immersive and piloting nature of activities.

What do we mean by that? The employment dimensions of the projects analysed connect self-efficacy and taking initiative/responsibility in small steps. They make a connection between the participants and the potential employment institutions while having the educational provider/authority as intermediary in the position of a broker. One could characterise this triangular relation of AE provider–learner/client–employer as learning field of an immersive nature, which is common to all projects analysed, and foundational to the success of learners. As distinctive feature in the employment dimension there can be described there is one group of projects having a close connection to basic literacy and to the acquisition of a (first) formal degree, while a second group of projects emphasizes strictly on the personal, relational competence development and supports mainly entrepreneurship and (social, economic) initiative of people via the learning and reflection processes.

### **Intermingling dimensions**

A common feature of all practices screened is the intermingling of citizenship and employability dimensions. Common to all projects and describing the characteristics of the projects as standards are to mix both the dimension of citizenship and employability, in terms of methods, targets, and topics. Elements of particular interest are

- \_ mixing formal, informal and non-formal learning opportunities
- \_ addressing both employment and non-employment adult learning practices and the willingness to promote volunteering
- \_ promoting the development of different sets of competences: technical, entrepreneurial and soft/transversal, or citizenship competences
- \_ involving groups of people with different backgrounds and characteristics and connecting them to further communities
- \_ including individual learning reflecting and coaching processes as a constant and characteristic feature.

### **Empowering practices with an intersectional lens**

Among the practices, it has been possible to identify some enablers which create a frame for the promotion of the empowerment of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, to overcome stigmatization and welfarism. This intersectional perspective (UN Women, 2021) applies to at least three dimensions:

- \_ **Intersecting identities:** considering how diverse identities interact to create unique social effects that vary according to time and space. Identities are not singular and distinct, nor are they additive. Thus, the consideration of the questions related to the intersection of identities of people we engage with (as educators, as people, etc.) is of crucial importance for enabling processes.
- \_ **Relational power:** being aware of and challenge relational power in practice. Answering and unveiling the power dynamics in the educational process: who holds power and in what circumstances? Who makes decisions? And how are they accountable?
- \_ **Transformative, rights-based dimension:** to promote human rights and address inequalities by transforming social structures and changing the way resources and relationship are produced and allocated.

All these dimensions are guiding the practices identified in one or more ways. They apply to the educator/learner relation, to the social/cultural situation of the learners and the educators, but also opening a field of frank and mutual learning and exchange on the interpersonal level towards the subject of gaining competences.

## 1.3 Provisional conclusions: think & act across boxes

### **Interdisciplinary and intersectional approaches**

It seems important to understand that developing social/transversal competences and sense of citizenship are interrelated. Thus, interdisciplinary and specifically intersectional approaches that create awareness on vulnerabilities and enable for tackling them, should be mainstreamed.

An intersectional lense enables to draw further conclusions on the bigger picture of the political context where citizenship and employment education takes place. It is astonishing in how far target groups (different vulnerabilities, access difficulties, marginalised groups, women) and also the topical approaches the projects work on (greening, sustainability) coincide to the categories of items and people being mostly affected by the global phenomenon of restricted civic spaces. As the CIVICUS monitors repeatedly point out in its trend analysis, it is over the years people from LGBTQI+ groups, women and environmental issues who bear globally the biggest burdens of civic repression (CIVICUS 2023). Such the practices intermingling employability and citizenship competence development also might be understood as a hidden treasure of knowledge how to direct learning for civil and democratic resilience as such. It would be of utmost importance to politically understand the issue not only from a perspective on education focussing genuinely on deficits upskilling but also aim at the importance of stabilizing democracy.

### **Diversity, inclusion and peer learning**

Diversity, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, enhances learning and improves the experience during peer support and reflection. Reflection and peer-support become crucial for gaining trust and empowerment. It remains of crucial importance to reflect on the role of the educators as people accompanying long term development processes.

### **Digital, green and sustainability**

Digital, green and sustainability are the three sectors and areas of competence development which seem crucial for both employability and citizenship competence development. Regardless of the level of qualification people bring, they are trained first and foremost in these fields, thus being placed at the core of societal transformation processes. Vice versa with the group of people and practices facing for multiple reasons difficulties in entering employment and labor, there exists a pool of high expertise to work on the development of competence areas highly relevant for the EU future. Thus, EU and member states should use the experiences gained for further

development the European Education area – which means across all areas of education and training.

### **Holistic approach to adult education**

A holistic learning approach with digital skills and a blend of formal and non-formal learning is utmost useful and key for people/citizens to improve their inclusion into the labor markets. Specifically, the cross-sectoral application of mixing formal and non-formal learning concepts and environments/spaces seems key for the successful application of competence acquisitions. Again the EU has with its Erasmus+ Program an instrument to create scaling and lasting impact across all sectors.

### **The importance of volunteering**

Volunteering is a highly valuable way to acquire employability and citizenship competencies through concrete practical application. The immersive character of practices that apply learning/qualification with volunteering/social activism/community engaging shows the high potential of transversal oriented competence learning. With existing EU programs such as ESK in the youth/young adults field, the EU has a powerful instrument to support and create effects.

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# 2. Citizenship and Employability: Analytical Review

By Laurent Labrot  
(Sciences Po Grenoble & Association EDIAS)

## 2.1 A general conclusion at the start: one thought and two surprises

In the following analytical review, we offer a summary based on a corpus of specialized projects offering pathways to economic and political autonomy. Over the course of these pages, we will have been able to specify more precisely the nature of the audiences involved, and propose elements that will help us to better define a potential classification. Analyses of the projects have also highlighted best practices and key elements of transferability, providing accessible references. Finally, a brief overview of the skills developed by these projects enables us to characterize the proposed activities and situate the various skill blocks.

Over and above the content, this work has enabled us to meet several methodological challenges, namely the ability to reach conclusions and propose pertinent reflections based on a highly heterogeneous corpus, without this turning into an often unrepresentative statistical display. This statistical display would not have been possible anyway with the data available, unless we had gone beyond the framework initially envisaged for the design of this document in terms of timeframe and content. Admittedly, the projects proposed in the corpus were selected largely on the basis of their successes and results, but the diversity of subjects, audiences and methods makes the



analysis much more complex, as it remains focused on commonalities and mastered reference systems. As we have already stated, some data, such as precise graduation rates and detailed teaching methodologies, are not available in most cases, as the author of these pages does not speak some of the languages used, such as Turkish or Slovenian. We have therefore opted for a compilation of available knowledge and a coherent methodological approach, while at the same time taking care not to bore the reader with too many references.

And yet, and this is a surprise after all this work, the different projects all point to a common reality of shared skills and relatively identical knowledge acquisition at the end of specific, often original, and highly effective paths. The summary you have read is therefore accurate, representative, and not based on the thoughts of a few individuals, but on a body of analysis that offers a variegated, practical dimension, totally representative of the European realities we have tried to transcribe.

In fact, the word “path” has come to overshadow the skills that have often been at the heart of pedagogical thinking in recent years. The key to the structure and even success of any project of this type is to have a well-defined pathway that will enable us to gradually take charge of these disadvantaged groups, while also dealing with their often differing potential. These are realities that are often overlooked in evaluations, which focus solely on traditional teaching methods and success rates, to the detriment of the conviviality and holistic, humanist content created. Before a person can be integrated into society, he or she must first be cared for and helped to break with isolation, disinterest in others and in him- or herself, the digestion of another difficult life and the alleviation of traumas still present. This work, well known to specialists, remains little talked about, with employers traditionally expecting future employees to be trained only in the professional dimensions that are now accompanied, and so much the better, by soft skills. Similarly, the pathway to active citizenship will ideally involve people who are ready to commit themselves, who are dynamic and socially integrated. In this exercise, LICEAL will have helped to situate the realities of the path to integration for disadvantaged, whose personal reconstruction will be their first task, and not the least. It will come as no surprise, therefore, to see one of the two skill sets focusing more specifically on these issues, but it will also come as no surprise to see that these pathways to citizenship do not leave many people by the wayside, and this is undoubtedly one of their primary virtues.

The second surprise is that, far from being a complicating factor, the cohabitation between employability skills and civic and political skills is harmonious and successful. While we might initially have wondered how civic

and political skills would be received by people whose primary aim is to enter the job market, we have to admit that the best answer is given by the end-users of these projects, who largely approve of their usefulness, while appreciating all the knowledge transmitted, which is seen as useful and complementary. In fact, given the relevance of these schemes and the results they have achieved, it would seem that what is new today in this complementary approach should become the norm in the long term, so much so that the formalization of qualifying courses is today synonymous with values, both democratic and social, not forgetting the gradual arrival of unavoidable ecological and climatic truths, of which the younger generations will tomorrow be the best ambassadors, and which it is hard to see being left behind in such circumstances. This complementarity will also apply to Europe. One of the aims of this work was, wherever possible, to provide information and forecasts on a case-by-case basis, using elements of European policy in the broadest sense. Readers will easily find references to European postures, guiding documents, projects and ambitions in virtually every topic covered. This is not surprising, given that this document is logically part of European policy in terms of integration, but also of civil and political rights. This reality is also complemented by the fact that the authors and actors of these projects refer to European current affairs to build their cases and argue with local decision-makers as well as with the managers of the structural funds requested. Today, Europe has understood that it must, on the one hand, help disadvantaged groups who have been living on its soil for a long time to progress, and offer a pathway to renewed citizenship and economic integration favored by a favorable economic climate in terms of labor needs. But Europe must also offer states a model of integration for foreigners who have arrived on European soil for a variety of reasons, and for whom it is vital to ensure a stable and positive place in society. These two realities paint a picture of a future that will give pride of place to these pathways to integration, and even more to a good life.

To multiply the number of projects of the type described in these pages, it is essential to have elements of appreciation and enhancement, as well as content that can be transposed. This is the spirit of the LICEAL project, and of this document, which should be read in conjunction with the project's other complementary achievements.

## 2.2 Background and approach

The LICEAL project aims to analyse the concrete and precise links between employability and citizenship that are being forged by numerous innovative projects in Europe today. To this end, the project partners, all of whom are involved to varying degrees in innovative processes in these fields, have agreed to reason collectively on the basis of an initial analysis, which is the document you have in your hands.

In order to offer as concrete and precise a vision as possible, the LICEAL partners have selected a corpus of projects that fall within the above-mentioned principles. After an initial selection of over fifty projects, it was decided to retain only 15 for the final phase, in order to avoid overloading an already comprehensive and diversified corpus. These projects, which are representative of the dynamics currently being proposed in most European countries, have developed know-how and practices that are not only representative but also exemplary in terms of results. The aim of this document is therefore to offer a global analysis that will enable us to examine a number of issues in greater depth, while remaining focused on the issue of dual action and the dynamics of employability and citizenship.

The first will focus **on target audiences**, in terms of identity and characterization, but also in a context of diversity [p. 28]. The principle here will be not only to better identify these groups, but also to reflect on their primary needs, difficulties and final needs. As we shall see, the result is different from the classic reflections on social policies, as well as those devoted solely to the issue of citizenship and access to rights.

The second analysis will specify the **methodological concepts** and, above all, **the types of actions and practical strategies** employed by the players in the corpus [p. 35]. Starting from a common principle centred on the acquisition of skills enabling significant added value in terms of integration, our approach demonstrates that the dynamics followed are nourished by the complementarities generated around the employability-citizenship diptych, to the point of making it a key element of overcapitalization. Indeed, almost all the projects in the corpus achieve above-average results for such schemes. We'll also be taking a look at almost all the methodologies used with these audiences, which will provide us with valuable information on current best practices.

The third analysis will propose some **elements for the transferability of these experiences**, with a particular emphasis on **management systems**, but also on **the groups of competences** to be deployed through the examples put forward by the corpus analysed. The latter consideration also provides an initial framework within which the other elements of the skills-based project can be coherently deployed.

At a time when Europe has proposed making 2023 the year of skills, it is clear that one of the aims of this project is to offer credible tools and, as we shall see, to draw on the dual focus on employment and citizenship. While many publications focus on vocational skills and citizenship skills, readers will hear that a reflection combining the two fields is much less frequent, and is intended to provide concrete, structuring elements drawn from exemplary projects carried out.

## 2.3 A brief presentation of the selected practices

As they serve as a frame of reference for this work, and as the reader will find them frequently cited throughout the text, we offer in the following pages short presentations of these projects, with particular emphasis on their original features, strategies and rationale. Without claiming to offer a complete panorama, readers will be able to better understand why they feature in the selection made by the partners, and why they were selected by all LICEAL players. These projects are very different, but they are all driven by the same desire to offer pathways to integration for a wide range of people. Each project is accompanied by a link to find out more, with the aim of enabling readers to explore the themes in greater depth. For the sake of simplicity, the projects will be referred to by their first acronym in this text, so that readers can easily situate them.

### **Transversal path for education: welcome to the center!**

This project, proposed by the International Institute for Humanitarian Laws (IIHL), was carried out under an agreement with the Italian Ministry of Education and the Provincial Adult Education Centers (CPIA). These very important



*Centri Per l'Istruzione degli Adulti*

Italian centres are located at provincial level and offer a wide range of activities based on the concept of civic education. Aimed at a wide range of target groups, from unemployed young people to former prisoners, these structures offer a variety of courses that form a coherent whole on the road to professional and civic integration. In addition to civic education, these courses

include computer science based on the concept of digital citizenship, Italian and international law, and sustainable development, to name but a few. The project also includes training for teachers, and foreign languages and Italian for foreigners. This project, which is one of the oldest in Italy, has undergone many changes over the years, with several programs financed by the European Structural Funds and the Ministry. It can even be said that its employability and citizenship guidelines are a precursor in the European context, and that it has been copied many times since, which is clearly a real guarantee of success. → [Internet](#)

## Monte Adentro: against rural exclusion

“Monte Adentro” is a collective bringing together a number of specialized associations. The project aims to combat rural isolation in the Chaco region of Argentina, and offers individual and community assistance to provide skills and tools to improve living conditions. Here, the focus is on the essentials, with the creation of local structures run by volunteers from the capital as well as local volunteers. The project also aims to combat the disappearance of local communities and cultures, and has therefore developed teaching methods in line with certain European approaches. Computer equipment is available for distance learning courses in a variety of fields, including IT, literature, rural development and business creation. It's a program open to all and open to all audiences. → [Internet](#)



## Project CESCY: from competence to lobbying

The project involves six European countries in the creation of a set of skills for young adults, leading to the ecological transition and the circular economy. In addition to the creation of the competencies themselves, the aim is to create educational materials, but also, in a more original way, to carry out certain lobbying actions with European authorities, such as proposing a nomenclature and a model resume for recruitment in the environmental field. This project, which involves both associations and companies, has produced significant documentation, such as a comprehensive guide to teaching methodologies for sustainable development training. → [Internet](#)



## Radial Project: combining artistic activities and sustainable development

The project is certainly one of the most original in this selection. Aimed at a public in difficulty, the project will design artistic workshops that will not only enable projects



**Recycled Art for  
Disadvantaged  
Adult Learners**

to be proposed in these fields, but also envisage the creation of economic activities stemming from sustainable development and the recycling of materials. The project has created two types of content: the first, entitled “Manual for Trainers”, contains all the pedagogical and informative references needed to organize such venues, while the second is an online training course aimed at entrepreneurs wishing to move into this field. The authors of the project, who form a European consortium, have provided translations of these documents in English, Greek, Bulgarian, Italian, German and Spanish. In addition to the training courses themselves, there are case studies with practical experiences linking artistic creation and waste treatment. → [Internet](#)

## Custodi del Bello: green spaces as a way of life

“Custodi del Bello” means “guardians of beauty” and is a project creating a real life path for vulnerable groups - the unemployed, the homeless and migrants – who will form teams to look after



**Custodi  
del Bello**

public spaces in partner towns. Paid by the local authorities, they will follow a training program that will lead them to jobs in green spaces and gardens. This quest for integration will involve skills acquired within local groups, then with professionals involved in the project, who will complete the training before offering jobs. This spectacular project offers a highly original path to integration, combining professional practice, community service and sustainable development. Its originality lies first and foremost in the fact that it offers civic missions that enable the acquisition of basic skills and the achievement of certain milestones in terms of integration into a collective, before seeing the industry's professionals step in and take over. → [Internet](#)

## Supported community based living in BiH

This project is the result of a partnership between S-nodi and public bodies such as Caritas and private companies such as Intesa Sanpaolo. Starting from a terrible observation



S-NODI

that the situation of people suffering from mental disorders is very difficult in Bosnia and Hercegovina, because the system confines these people to closed specialized establishments, the partnership created community housing and, with the help of volunteers, offered the people concerned the opportunity to live there and, at the same time, to acquire skills in community living, domestic tasks, autonomy and social inclusion. This magnificent project has helped 195 people, some of whom have seen their medical situation improve dramatically, with a reduction in stigma and pathologies and a totally new openness to the world. This project, whose audience is somewhat out of step with the others presented in this corpus, also serves to remind us that integration in Europe is a notion that must be shared by all → [Internet](#)

## Careers for climate: job perspectives for migrant women

The NGO Peregrina is a veritable institution, in operation since 1984, supported by the City of Vienna as well as both national and European funding programs. Peregrina offers counselling in



peregrina

14 languages, basic education training for migrant women and several innovative projects, e.g. “Careers for climate: new job perspectives for migrant women”, a project whose great originality lies in the fact that it offers prospects in the field of green or greening professions, and involves all players, whether social, administrative or entrepreneurial. The project combines German with Turkish and Arabic for its communication, and, along with another green project offering workshops for climate protection, has seen its content updated several times by the Ministry in charge of climate. [...] Having counselled and/or trained women from sixty countries during forty years, Peregrina is a monument too little known by our Austrian partners. [...] The other strength of the NGO and its projects is the quality of the multi-disciplinary team – social workers, lawyers, trainers, psychologists, child carers and interpreters – who are able to offer strong individual added value with personal advice and exchanges.” → [Internet](#)

## Ecoguard: training and qualification for people with disabilities through vegetable gardening

An original and effective pathway to ecological activities based around gardening and fruit and vegetables. The project, which is taking place in five European countries, offers a pre-qualification phase, before helping people to find sustainable, viable employment. The strategy here is to move from a passive, submissive situation to that of an active worker. The program has proposed two deliverables, a Trainer's Manual and a guide to professional activities of this type, aimed at people interested in developing this type of project. These will cover a wide range of professional skills, as well as sustainable development and business creation. Note that an Android mobile application enables total mobility in accessing information and communications. The target audiences are very broad, and include people from immigrant backgrounds, the disabled, and those suffering from other exclusionary factors. There is also a very dynamic web page with a wide range of documents, updated regularly. → [Internet](#)



## Pôle Emploi Global Supports for Job Seekers with Social and Professional Difficulties

Here, we are no longer dealing with local or regional projects to help people find work, but with a national scheme involving tens of thousands of people and partly financed by the European Social Fund for unemployed young people. Nonetheless, this project will follow job seekers encountering social and economic obstacles in their job search over three phases, including a complete diagnosis of their potential and wishes, follow-up by a group of professionals comprising a Pôle emploi advisor and a social worker, and finally entry into a contractualized global support package enabling them to follow training courses and receive help with interviews and job preparation. A large number of skills are offered on a case-by-case basis, in the fields of soft skills, employability and business creation, as well as personal development, self-confidence and the identification and resolution of obstacles. This project, which has been running for several years, enables us to take on people who are very far from employment every year. More precisely, the Pôle emploi advisor helps job seekers define the project to find a job, to identify





the tools that can help them in their job search, to promote their skills in relation to their project and the opportunities for employment. The social referent helps job seekers find solutions to deal with financial, administrative or legal difficulties linked to housing, health or mobility. → [Internet](#)

## Young Politicians: politics as a career choice

“Young Politicians” is a project currently being examined by the European Social Fund. It meets a number of needs at both



SCIENCES PO  
Grenoble

French and European level, namely renewing an ageing political workforce and combating abstentionism. To achieve this, the aim is to encourage young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to take an interest in politics and become involved in local community life, or even to stand as candidates in elections. This will be achieved through a selection process in conjunction with employment services, followed by training in a range of skills including information on the French political system, associations and elections, as well as practical visits to politicians who are likely to sponsor them in a mentoring scheme. Designed in conjunction with university specialists from the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Grenoble, this project combines employment skills and civic skills in an original way.

## Solidarity apprentices: overcoming a double hurdle

Supported by the AFEV (Fondation de l'Association Etudiante pour la Ville), the project's primary aim is to address the two main difficulties faced by school drop-outs in entering the world of work. This is a preparatory pathway to apprenticeship, which bypasses a negative feature for certain groups, namely the impossibility of accessing it without a diploma. Here, you can participate



even if you have no qualifications. We then go on to develop the skills of these young people to help them get around the second problem, that of difficulties in obtaining an apprenticeship contract. The program, which is recognized by the French Ministry of Employment as an official preparation for apprenticeship, really does help a category that is all too often forgotten: young people with no qualifications. The program, which is offered in a number of French regions, includes not only traditional vocational training, but also practical skills such as first aid, health and administrative procedures. Motivated young people can then do civic service and join mentoring companies.

## CusCus: food power!!!

CusCus can take the prize for originality and popularity within LICEAL. CusCus aims to develop skills and competences, both technical



and transversal, useful for the integration of the most vulnerable into the social and work context, and to develop and strengthen active citizenship through awareness-raising paths on the topic of migration and concrete volunteering experiences. The project included training courses address to different kinds of people – unemployed, young people, women, migrants – on food and cooking skills, digital technologies and entrepreneurship competences. Moreover, the project will freely organize convivial events bringing together vulnerable groups who will find themselves in the company of traditional members of the public, as well as amateur and sometimes professional cooks. In this way, participants will be able to discuss and exchange ideas, as well as develop a range of cross-disciplinary skills to facilitate the integration of the most vulnerable. Cooking, entrepreneurship, digital skills and civic elements will all be on the menu. The informal nature of the exchanges, and the culinary thread that can lead to new hires as a result of contacts made and confirmed during these meetings, make CUSCUS a program that cannot be ignored, and one that is financed by the Autonomous Province of Trentino. We're dealing here with a totally original type of dynamic, which enables multiple intercultural exchanges, and with a relaxed attitude to which disadvantaged groups are very sensitive. What's more, even though we're also going to have professional chefs, culinary cultures, especially on the part of foreign audiences, are going to be able to express themselves on an equal footing and provide a particularly rich dialogue. → [Internet](#)

## WUK: three programs in one!

WUK is a network of 11 training centers in and around Vienna, offering three major training programs since 1983.

It also means 5,000 trainees and a host of success stories.

With its personalized, holistic approach, the program brings



together a wide range of professionals to serve a public divided between those under 21 and older people. The three main programs are consulting and training, coaching and employment assistance, and education and qualification. The heart of the program begins with the desire to act on guidance with a significant impact, and to develop a logic of emancipation through education that will include, on a case-by-case basis, multiple skills in personal development, creating activities, approaching employers, languages,

not forgetting civic education in close coherence with the European level. A solution for every individual situation seems to be the key phrase for WUK, which handles a wide range of cases, from young people with mental health problems to single women with children, not forgetting foreigners from many different countries. Staffed by seasoned professionals, with links to a host of national and international experts and professional associations, WUK carries out a considerable amount of work on behalf of the entire population of the Vienna conurbation.

## Torino My City: women in their city

This project is aimed at a group of immigrant women from the Turin area. It will include 120 hours of Italian language teaching, as well as training in employability, civic and cultural issues, and active civic integration. The comprehensive program also includes festive events and outings to businesses, monuments, museums and public places. The project will offer participants two levels of exams leading to certification. There are 3,000 women enrolled, with an attendance rate of around 70% and a pass rate for the highest exams of around 40%. This project blends professional, cultural and family skills, offering a comprehensive curriculum that highlights upon the importance of teamwork and discovery activities in conjunction with local public authorities.



## POWER program for gender equality and participation

POWER (Politics for Women: Empowerment through Participation), initiated by a Turkish & international partnership (UNICEF, ACEV), is aimed at women who are neither employed nor studying. These are essentially housewives who suffer from poverty, violence and often isolation. The project will not only prepare them for employment, but also offer them a range of practical aids, such as driving licenses and administrative formalities. Personal development, self-awareness and a professional objective are the three mainstays of a project that closely blends employment skills and civic knowledge. No less than eighteen skill areas, including writing/reading, gender equality, social skills, collaborative work and communication, are covered by training courses tailored to different target groups. Five Turkish provinces and three metropolises are involved, with a public made up of women aged 18 to 40, both Turkish and foreign. A comprehensive program run by a non-governmental organization, ACEV, also involved in the aftermath of the dramatic earthquake that struck Turkey this year. → [Internet](#)



## 2.4 Characterization of the corpus

This section contains two coherent analyses, which also form what can be seen as a presentation of the issue through its primary actors, i.e. the various groups concerned by these projects. In addition to their characterizations, we will also see a typology of the diverse and very relevant steps taken to meet their social, economic and political needs.

### Categories of target groups

What kind of public are we talking about here? In other words, if the above introduction and the vocabulary used refer to people in difficulty, we still need to clarify their typology and logic. Broadly speaking, there are two terms used in all the projects in the corpus, whose meanings may vary slightly from one European country to another, but whose general meaning is clear. The first refers to people who are very far from employment (DTE Difficult to employ in English), a term commonly used by employment players such as the French company France-Travail<sup>1</sup>, who refer to “public away from employment” (public éloigné de l'emploi). The second, more general term refers to the economically and socially disadvantaged<sup>2</sup>. These two prisms conceal categories that can generally be defined in terms of their disabilities and primary problems<sup>3</sup>, and in a manner common to all European countries.

The majority of projects in the corpus are not aimed at any particular category, but rather, as indicated in the table below, at vulnerable/disadvantaged groups. So, even if we're going to go into a little more detail about the components of these groups, the generalist nature of a large majority of projects refers more to the desire to include diverse publics, generally united by the same geographical location.

The overview below shows the vocabulary used to describe target groups. Where more than one description is used, they are also listed here. Vocabulary used to describe target audiences<sup>4</sup> and number of projects<sup>5</sup>:

13 Young people | 12 Women | 11 Socio-economic disadvantaged groups  
 10 Immigrants, refugees | 8 People with disabilities  
 3 Rural | 1 People with justice system involvement

1 A new name for Pôle emploi.

2 Generic term used in scientific publications, for example.

3 Labrot, L.; Pallade, O. (2022). Typology of HDE People: a quick typology of cases followed by the French public employment service”. Project Com In Results, 2022, 11 p.

4 Some projects list categories of stakeholders such as social workers as target groups. As these are not target groups, but actors in the projects, they are not mentioned.

5 The table refers the data related to the 50 practices collected, not just the 15 described in the previous paragraph.

Here we find all the categories usually found in this type of program<sup>6</sup>. It should be noted that all the projects refer to people seeking employment. It is also understood that a person may belong to several categories, such as a disabled woman living in a rural area, or a young man of immigrant origin leaving prison. We can also propose a broad typology comprising **four main groups**: people with disabilities, those suffering from sexual/gender discrimination, groups suffering from age-related problems, and finally categories representing people who have recently arrived in the country or come from a generally recent immigration over several generations. It should be noted that, apart from a few exceptions, the projects in the curriculum do not provide **statistics on activity attendance**, which means that the question of attendance rates at the start and end of the project cannot be answered definitively. However, the few programs such as “Torino my city” that do mention this indicate attendance rates in excess of 70%, and discussions with the heads of most of the projects indicate, without precise figures, that audiences are generally in attendance and show a good level of assiduity.

### Disabilities

Physical and mental disabilities are present at two levels in the corpus. Only one<sup>7</sup> program is devoted to mental disability, while several refer to this public as integrated with users<sup>8</sup>. The categories of disability reveal a paradox that is particularly apparent here, namely the often abusive social and legislative framework that leads to the dramatic isolation of the people concerned. The only project proposed on this theme, “Intellectual Disability Bosnia”, introduces the subject by emphasizing that one of its primary objectives is nothing less than to circumvent a system which provides for the isolation of people suffering from mental disorders in specialized medical establishments. The aim of the project is to build autonomous living spaces that will not only enable people to acquire the skills of living together, but also greater autonomy for a group of people who will thus be able to significantly reduce their illness. In addition to this example, most European countries offer employment assistance policies for these groups when their disabilities naturally allow it<sup>9</sup>, but if the employability of the disabled worker is a priority, we're less likely to come up with projects to improve the citizenship of these groups, who

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6 One exception is the absence of transsexuals, but as this type of minority is not very common, it could be included in the majority of projects.

7 Supported community based living in BiH

8 Ecoguard, Cuscus, Peregrina, WUK, Monte Dentro, Pôle emploi Global Support, New Politicians etc...

9 And let's not forget the many invisible disabilities that also reduce the professional and civic prospects of these groups.

all too often remain second-class citizens, unable to get to a polling station because the steps are impassable for a wheelchair, or unable to attend meetings even remotely because of inadequate computer equipment. While employability is one of the aims of the projects in the corpus, access to genuine citizenship for this group is clearly a more innovative objective. The dynamics proposed in terms of ergonomics in the workplace (Pôle emploi Global support) should therefore logically be extended with equal effectiveness to achieve concrete and real civic benefits. It's worth noting that this category will have a very different citizenship deficit to that of refugees, for example. Disabled people, who have the nationality and master the language of the country, will suffer from elements of mobility and socialization, while refugees, on the other hand, will have to deal with the effects of language and lack of information about the host country. The corpus mobilized here clearly shows that the disabled public must benefit from this dual access, both to employability, often provided for by the public authorities, and to citizenship, unfortunately less developed in recent years. It would therefore be appropriate, as is currently the case in European projects for gender equality, to include disability assistance as a cross-cutting element in all structural fund projects. Finally, we note the absence of any information in the corpus on the treatment of invisible disabilities, which constitute a very important category. The logic of treating disabled people on a case-by-case basis could clearly include this group, which seems de facto to be one of the participating categories, although this has not been formally confirmed.

### **Sexual and gender discrimination**

Gender identity encompasses several quite different groups. The first is quite simply that of women, who have traditionally been subject to multiple forms of discrimination in European countries for centuries. While the majority of Europe's citizens are women, it is paradoxical to note that women suffer not only from violence (the main manifestation of discrimination, according to European Union analyses<sup>10</sup>), but also from significant barriers to employment, with a higher unemployment rate<sup>11</sup> of around 12%, as well as pay gap that remain very high even today<sup>12</sup> with a difference of around 13% for equal

10 European Union (2012). Eurobarometer: The gender inequalities in the European Union. Flash Eurobarometer 341. <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2400>

11 European Union. Eurostat: Employment patterns. <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/infographs/womenmen/bloc-2b.html?lang=en> Last accessed 10.04.2024

12 European Parliament. Écart de rémunération entre hommes et femmes en Europe : faits et chiffres (Infographie) <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/fr/headlines/society/20200227ST073519/l-ecart-de-remuneration-entre-hommes-et-femmes-en-europe-infographie> Last accessed 10.04.2024

responsibilities and working hours. This situation has led the European authorities to place gender equality at the heart of the Structural Funds strategy, with the obligation for each project to be at least vigilant on the subject. So it's hardly surprising to find in our corpus several projects largely devoted to women<sup>13</sup> with two special mentions for "Peregrina" by our Austrian partners, which helps women find jobs in sustainable development professions, and the "Power Program" by the Turkish consortium, which aims to develop multiple skills for women who are often homemakers and have neither jobs nor qualifications. But if we are talking about access to employment and business start-ups, we must also highlight the democratic and civic deficit suffered by European women, with lower percentages of local and national elected women than men<sup>14</sup> and political mores often described as macho and discriminatory on the old continent. From this point of view, the acquisition of competences, not only in the field of employment, but also in that of civic and democratic rights, is an important feature of the programs in the corpus analysed.

Gender based discrimination covers the discrimination based on sex, gender identity, or gender expression. Homosexophobia covers the discrimination based on gender identity and expression and sexual/romantic orientation. Those two categories of discrimination can overlap and initiatives aiming at fighting gender-based discrimination may also fight discrimination related to sexual orientation and address the diversity of sexual and gender minorities. As it does not feature explicitly in the programs of the corpus, it will not be fully developed in these pages, but it seems important to mention a few elements. On the one hand, of all the groups we can list as disadvantaged, the one concerned with transphobia and homophobia is certainly one of the most in need for support<sup>15</sup>. In addition to the open hostility of a significant proportion of public opinion in most European countries, the lack of information and visibility on their precise numbers and needs often leads to their existence being ignored locally. We can assume that some of the projects in the corpus deal directly or indirectly with such groups<sup>16</sup> whose political rights have been strengthened by major legislative

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13 Torino my city, Peregrina, WUK, Power Program

14 On this subject, see the study by the US Congress, which gives a global view of European countries with between 45% and 30% of women elected to parliament. <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/misc/R45483.pdf>

15 Absent in the corpus are also projects dedicated to Roma/Sinti communities. This is partly the case since there are specific programs in Europe set up, dealing with the various needs of these communities. However, there is no excuse: an important part of these programs emphasizes on the connection to labor and employment.

16 The WUK project treats these audiences on a case-by-case basis.

modernizations, as in Spain with the very recent recognition of gender reassignment and a desire to enhance the status of the people concerned, including in terms of local political representation<sup>17</sup>. There have also been significant developments in the defense of LGBTQA+<sup>18</sup> rights, with an ever-increasing number of elected representatives no longer making a secret of their sexual orientation, in order to combat the kind of exclusion and discrimination that is intolerable in the 21st century.

## Youth

Along with women, young people make up the largest group. Whether we're talking about people from suburbs considered to be difficult, or residents of rural communities, for decades they have been at the heart of specific employment and training policies. Staying with the current situation, it's worth pointing out that the unemployment rate for young people in Europe is currently around 15%<sup>19</sup> compared with 6.2% for the entire working population<sup>20</sup>. It is therefore logical to note that young people, along with women, are the most represented group in the corpus, although projects are generally dedicated exclusively to this category. The available statistics show that young people are often the most represented category within projects such as "Monte Adentro", which focuses on rural communities in Argentina, or "Learning Designers", which offers young adults a wide range of skills relating to the world of work, as well as civic and democratic rights. "Apprentis Solidaires", on the other hand, focuses directly on the search for apprenticeships synonymous with secure, long-term employment for young people who often struggle to find such contracts. Over and above the employability deficits often at the heart of the schemes run by employment players in Europe, the projects in the corpus will also find a logical and welcome investment in civic and democratic skills. From this point of view, young people represent a long-term investment that can not only improve integration, but also help to renew the political and associative players<sup>21</sup>, not

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17 Euronews (06.04.2023). Spain's new 'transgender' law breaks new ground on LGBTIQ+ rights. <https://www.euronews.com/2023/04/06/how-spains-transgender-law-is-changing-the-lives-of-those-affected> Last accessed 10.04.2024

18 "LGBTQIA" stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual and the "+" stands for the other diverse sexual and gender minorities.

19 Statista. Youth unemployment rate in the European Union as of April 2023, by country <https://www.statista.com/statistics/613670/youth-unemployment-rates-in-europe/> Last accessed 10.04.2024

20 May 2023 official statistics from Eurostat

21 The EDIAS project "Nouveaux politiciens" (New Politicians) will be on show, aimed at raising young people's awareness of political careers.



forgetting the fight against electoral absenteeism and the rise of certain forms of extremism.

### **Seniors**

Senior people fall into two categories: older employees, older unemployed people who have difficulty finding job<sup>22</sup>, and who suffer from physical problems but have a wealth of experience, and retired people, who suffer from isolation and economic difficulties due to a very low pension level. The corpus of projects does not offer a program dedicated to these categories, but they are present in many cases. Pôle emploi's "Global Support" includes a specific program for jobseekers over the age of fifty, while the activities of the "Cuscus Project" involve welcoming and involving retired people, who are often isolated and marginalized. In terms of civic and democratic skills, this category can also be seen as offering mentoring and tutoring for younger people, as part of a strategy to re-mobilize senior citizens, whose political knowledge is called upon, as well as their ability to lead and pass on educational ideas.

### **Refugees and immigrants**

The last major category concerned by the body's projects is a fairly heterogeneous group comprising refugees and immigrants. In addition to refugees in the classic sense of the word, this group includes economic newcomers, as well as first, second and third generation immigrants<sup>23</sup>. Without dwelling on the definitions, it should be pointed out that these groups, offering a wide range of professional qualifications, generally suffer from language deficits and discrimination, which keep them out of the job market. Many of the projects in the corpus are aimed at these groups, although few are entirely dedicated to them. The "Torino my City" project, for example, focuses mainly on a group of immigrant women, with a view to acquiring skills and sharing convivial moments, as does the "POWER" program in Turkey, which targets a female audience that also includes a number of immigrant women, while "Custodi del Bello" brings together a diverse public to acquire skills in the field of green spaces and a path to employability. Here again, the programs

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22 Employment rates among 50-64 year-olds in Europe vary widely, with some countries reporting rates of around 60%, while others, such as France and Italy, are at around 53% (2021 figures). In reality, it is very difficult to find work after the age of fifty in around half of European countries.

23 For more details, see one of the latest European reports on the subject: de Haas, Hein, 2018. 'European Migrations: Dynamics, Drivers and the Role of Policies'. EUR 29060 EN. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union: <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/JRC109783/kjna29060enn.pdf>

include civic and democratic training to facilitate integration and open the door to associative and even political responsibility for immigrant nationals.

We can conclude this rapid characterization of the categories present in the corpus by highlighting the presence of groups defined by other characteristics. The most obvious of these is the **rural population**, present in several projects, which combines an identity already mentioned, such as youth or disability, with the aggravating phenomenon of geographical isolation. Like the “Monte Adentro” project, dedicated to rural communities in Argentina, there are other projects offering activities in rural communities, such as the “Cuscus Project” in mountain environments, or the “Radial Project”, which offers isolated communities the chance to acquire skills in recycling and artistic creation. The link between employability and civic and democratic skills in rural areas is particularly important in the fight against rural desertification, which depends as much on maintaining economic activity as on the existence of a fabric of associations and renewed local political representatives, particularly with young people.

We can quickly conclude by pointing out that the groups in the corpus are, unsurprisingly, the main populations concerned by the lack of access to employment and a certain lack of civic and democratic knowledge<sup>24</sup>. This observation not only legitimizes the solutions and approaches proposed, but also suggests that there is a certain consensus on the subject in Europe today on the part of economic integration professionals and advocates of civic and democratic values. Indeed, without the projects in the corpus having been aware of each other, there is a shared desire across borders to address these target groups in a fairly homogeneous way, with similar logics and applications. To achieve this, however, we need to characterize the common objectives that will be included in the aid for these groups, in other words, to specify their situations.

## 2.5 Common features

The first characteristic of all the groups in the corpus is **their partial or total distance from society, and therefore their isolation**. Behind this discrepancy, which is obvious in some cases and more concealed in others, lies a primary observation based on the key word “isolation” mentioned above. This isolation may be individual, as in the case of an older employee living alone and having been somewhat marginalized since his forced departure from the

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<sup>24</sup> We point out that there are a few references in projects to the issue of prisoners in need of rehabilitation, and that representatives of Roma/Sinti communities are included in some projects. However, a research specifically targeting at these groups would have completed the picture of this study.

world of work, or it may be collective, as in the case of a family recently arrived in France and facing the language barrier. So the first important step is to make contact, sometimes with the help of an interpreter, to overcome the communication deficit and offer the people concerned the chance to join a dynamic, a project or an action. From a certain point of view, we can consider that the **expectation of this changeover**, whether conscious or not, will characterize all the groups in the corpus, who will thus experience a first event situated in the project.

The **communication deficits** mentioned above must also be tackled as a matter of priority, as they represent a dramatic additional obstacle for these populations<sup>25</sup>. Here we find not only the classic problem of language, which is generally addressed by specific training in the “language of the country” for foreigners<sup>26</sup>, but also other communication deficits that may be linked to factors such as illiteracy or hidden deafness. The meeting between the individual concerned and the structure in charge of the dynamics will therefore generally be accompanied by exchanges which will enable us to get to know the person but also to seek a common language which may be more or less easy to establish, depending on the case.

Then, with an openness that combats isolation and communication deficits, we'll have an understanding of the social situation. We are dealing here with the **multiple precariousness** that constitutes the second major obstacle to integration. This is also where the duality that characterizes the LICEAL project comes to the fore, i.e. the simultaneous consideration of two major deficits. When we speak of precariousness, we first think of the **economic dimension of the problem**, before gradually exploring other notions around **social, legal, political and health realities**<sup>27</sup> which generally come first in this order. The logic of LICEAL is to link the two, namely the economic and social through employability, and the legal and political through civic and democratic knowledge. Generally speaking, the person concerned will have in mind his or her return to or first arrival in the world of work, which embodies a minimum quality of life<sup>28</sup> and the satisfaction of needs, but the civic

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25 Putnam, D. (2020). Poverty as a Social Relation. In: Beck, V.; Hahn, H.; Lepenies, R. Dimensions of Poverty. Berlin University Press, ref chap 2, p.41-55.

26 Like the “French for foreigners” or “Italian for foreigners” headings found on the titles of the courses concerned.

27 Kasmir, Sharryn. (2018) 2023. “Precarity”. In The Open Encyclopedia of Anthropology, edited by Felix Stein. Facsimile of the first edition in The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Anthropology. Online: <https://doi.org/10.29164/18precarity>

28 Finding work will be the priority in the majority of cases, with exception of certain disabled and retired people who can no longer work and have to be content with receiving benefits. We are therefore well aware of the fundamental role played by

pathway, whether for an immigrant woman or an elderly employee, is equally important, as it will establish the identity of these people over time.

## Civic and democratic needs

While the common need for good work is easy enough to understand, civic and democratic issues are a little more complex, as there are in fact several audiences, of which there are **three in the table below**. The first group, broadly entitled “**people of foreign origin**”, is paradoxically the most immediate archetype when it comes to the issue at hand. Indeed, it is the very symbol of the integration and assimilation policies that have been pursued in Europe for decades. Not having the right to vote in their country, nor often the right to stay for long, they are offered the chance to integrate gradually, by learning the language and acquiring knowledge of the host country. In every European country, there are a number of specialized facilities and structures for this type of dynamic, with the exception of civic and political rights, which are often less developed in education for various reasons<sup>29</sup>. However, beyond democratic legitimacy, LICEAL is also legitimized by the current situation. Against a backdrop of falling unemployment in Europe and the emergence of so-called “short-staffed” professions, with companies frantically looking for workers, obtaining nationality and thus definitive integration into the country will become a perennial means of meeting companies' needs.

Type	Characterisation	Citizenship situation	Objectives
Foreign origin	Non EU citizens with barriers to the labor market	People without EU citizenship without any political rights	Acquire citizenship competences for inclusion
Marginal	Disconnected, often in a situation of poverty in multiple deprived situations	Have political rights without keys to use them	Acquire keys to go to basic (citizenship) participation and become better included
Barriers	Citizens with all rights but still facing barriers/ discrimination	Use political right and have limited access to offices/ positions	Improve competences and confirm the will to go far on stronger responsibilities, gaining accesses

support for administrative procedures, which feature prominently in certain projects.

29 It hardly seems necessary to point out that, for most European countries over the past few decades, migration policies have been synonymous with economic integration, with individuals considered above all as a workforce. While language learning and certain elements of living together were encouraged, naturalization, synonymous with political rights, was not always encouraged, and the prospect of these groups voting in elections was also not among the first principles.

Less easy to understand, the second category in the table refers to people who **originate from the country concerned, but who find themselves in a marginal situation**, such as rural youths or disabled people. In theory, they are citizens like any others, but in practice, economic and political integration is not a given. In recent years, most European countries have rolled out a number of integration projects aimed at these groups, but almost always through employability. The problem is that these citizens need to be able to do so in their own right, and part of LICEAL's aim is to make them aware of this through dedicated skills. LICEAL is therefore betting that promoting access to full citizenship among these populations will not only enhance the value of a Europe that is fairer to all its components, but also diversify and amplify democratic and civic expression with fully integrated individuals from all backgrounds, including disability and immigration.

Finally, the third category, quite similar to the previous one, concerns individuals who are **closer to integration**, with, for example, a young person from the suburbs who already has responsibilities in an association while doing a succession of precarious jobs, or an immigrant woman from a single-parent family who has become involved in a social aid structure, again with a part-time job. In this case, the journey has been made in part, but these people will be able to aim for full economic integration with full-time, higher-skilled jobs, while at the same time acquiring more responsibilities with, for example, associative leadership or candidacy in local elections. So, we're talking about a complement and the desire to show these people the need to go further in defending their rights and gaining access to the authorities, for example, while also developing financial autonomy and independence, which often means more time for social, union and civic involvement.

We can conclude here that these groups share a common characteristic, namely that they pursue objectives that enable them to meet **three types of needs**. The first, in the majority of cases, is the **key to socialization**, synonymous with communication and integration into a society whose codes or behaviours have been mastered. The second is **the job market, with the keys to entering and progressing** in it, while achieving a dignified and sustainable quality of life. Thirdly, the individual **acquires or reinforces his or her civic and political rights**, thereby enabling active dynamics of integration and responsibility in society, with the notion of defending European democratic values.

## 2.6 Relevant practices in integration geared towards employability and civic and democratic values.

The corpus analysed includes numerous best practices and strategies for integrating target audiences. Without claiming to set out always innovative and original modes of action, most of them revolve around tried-and-tested mechanisms, some elements of which will be improved to increase their effectiveness and impact with these target groups. Should employability skills and civic knowledge be disseminated using different methods? In almost all cases, the two sets of skills are offered at the same time, and are often closely interwoven in the training provided. We can speak of a real complementarity between the two dimensions, and the minimal acceptance – not to say plebiscite in most cases – of these two joint packages by the target groups underlines their legitimacy. It should be emphasized here that many of the proposed projects have received excellent evaluations, and some are even continuing long after they have been implemented<sup>30</sup> which reinforces their legitimacy and exemplary value. To make the best practices easier to understand, they have been classified into five categories. However, as we do not have all the detailed project budgets, it is not possible to offer an analysis of their costs, as the few elements available do not suggest any specific positive or negative features in terms of return on investment, which are always very difficult to assess prospectively. What's more, as some projects are still in progress, it is impossible to judge them objectively before they are completed. We propose here an analysis of the systems in terms of dynamics and progress, while the actual content will be analyzed in the next section. Finally, it should be noted that the data available are not precise enough to provide statistics on the types of pedagogical practices detailed, nor on the certifications and diplomas offered. This lack of information seems to correspond to two cross-cutting realities that have conditioned the drafting of these pages. The first is that these projects overwhelmingly employ conventional pedagogical practices, as found in virtually all adult training courses, and have not wished to record these pedagogies in detail. The second observation is that the needs of the job market, especially today, do not necessarily require certifications and diplomas to find a job. Some projects, such as “Torino my city”, propose such dynamics, but most of the projects in the corpus make no mention of these issues, either because the target groups concerned have no need of such goals, or because such recognition is automatic and gives rise to automatic certification once the project has been completed.

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<sup>30</sup> Cuscus and WUK, for example, are over ten years old, while most of the corpus is between five and ten years old.

## **Projects addressing exchange and socialization, cross-training concepts**

As already mentioned in the common characteristics of the target groups, one of the main difficulties is marginalization, which often leads to severe isolation. In order to break out of this situation, and thus bring the target groups into a new dynamic, many projects have proposed activities that revolve around three dimensions. The first is **geographical displacement**, which can lead to **discovery trips**, often accompanied by **cross-training**. These elements can take place in relative geographical proximity, as in the case of “CUSCUS”, which organizes informal events in the vicinity, including the discovery of culinary practices, but also, in a relaxed way, training elements. These exchanges, which combine socialization and cooking, are also to be found in “Turino my City”, with immigrant women benefiting from time spent exchanging in the city, while gradually acquiring useful knowledge. It's worth noting that the notion of cross-training here refers to a characteristic often evoked in projects, namely the **mutual listening of learners and supervisors** who will mutually enrich each other. This notion, which at first seems more concerned with the path from supervisors to learners, also beautifully highlights the enrichment of supervisors. For example, the volunteers helping mentally disabled people in the “Intellectual Disability people in Bosnia” project underline the positive elements they derive from their relationships, while the professional structures involved in “Peregrina” also emphasize the exchanges they have with women wishing to learn and practise a trade in the environmental field. **This notion of mutual enrichment is therefore at the heart of the projects, and is a feature sometimes overlooked** by the evaluators, but one that will enable the projects to continue, thanks to the volunteers who will also benefit in terms of exchanges and the pleasures of being together. Finally, the more political dimension of the knowledge exchanged is also perceived as positive, with a willingness to integrate highly appreciated by the participants, such as the regional political representatives who speak to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds in the “Young Politicians” project, or the visual artists who help an immigrant public acquire Italian nationality in the “Radial Project”.

## Apprenticeship, training and awareness-raising activities

The concept of apprenticeship, most often reserved for young people, is generally synonymous with easier entry into the world of work. Highly developed for decades on a European scale, in particular with the European Alliance for Apprenticeship<sup>31</sup>, the process will concern all young people, but will also be extended to groups further away from employment. As Cedefop's European report<sup>32</sup> points out, each member state will be offering qualifying courses to young people on the basis of agreements with professional branches, with recruitment difficulties leading more and more employers to look favorably on the idea of turning to groups farthest from employment to complete their hiring. Thus, Pôle emploi in France will offer specific support for young people as part of its "Youth Engagement Contract" project supported by the European Social Fund. The "Apprentis Solidaires" project alone symbolizes the quest for results, as it bypasses the two main difficulties faced by young people who are a long way from employment, namely the lack of a diploma and the absence of any contract with companies. The project will not only train young people who have often left the education system at a very early age, but will also enable them to obtain an apprenticeship contract, synonymous with school-business alternation and successful integration. "Ecoguard" and "Custodi del Bello", which are not two projects exclusively dedicated to young people, will nonetheless contract with companies in the same green spaces and gardens sector, in order to obtain apprenticeship contracts on a case-by-case basis, generally with companies in the social economy. **These projects combine professional apprenticeships with civic discovery, with two distinct mechanisms.** One is either to **focus on awareness-raising activities**, as in the case of sustainable development, with a strong emphasis on green spaces<sup>33</sup>, which have an impact on the participants' daily lives and involve them in actions in favour of the environment, or to opt for **training courses** alongside those dedicated to the professional activity itself<sup>34</sup>. Many of the projects in the corpus, although not exclusively aimed at young people, use apprenticeships to secure their career path on a case-by-case basis, offering a way out into employment and integration using a traditional European training tool<sup>35</sup>.

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31 European Commission. DG Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion. Apprenticeships. <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1198&langId=en> Last accessed 10.04.2024

32 Cedefop (2018). Apprenticeship schemes in European countries. Luxembourg: Publications Office. <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2801/722857>

33 "Custodi del Bello" and "Ecoguard"

34 "Apprentis Solidaires" and "WUK" are more along these lines.



In many European countries, apprenticeships include an introduction to the world of trade unions, as well as a series of practical lessons inherited from the civic education that European countries have had since around the 19th century. Today, Europe seems to be rediscovering the virtues of dual apprenticeship, which presupposes real coordination between the education system, companies and, by extension, the social partners, as Vera Scepanovic and Martin Artiles point out<sup>36</sup>. Another example is **the civic service projects** included in “Apprentis Solidaires”, but which remain under-represented in the corpus with only one reference. These exchange programs, now widespread in Europe, include significant participation by disadvantaged groups, and often offer individualized courses. Traditionally, civic service was originally conceived as a complement to traditional military service. After the militarized formulas, which were increasingly disliked by young people, and following cooperative ventures that sent young people abroad on work placements, civic service introduced peaceful missions of general interest and largely replaced the other formulas, especially after the disappearance of military service in France, for example, in 1997. At European level, there is the main schemes the European Solidarity Corps, aimed at young people aged 17 to 30 on up to 12-month assignments<sup>37</sup> for non-profit organizations, often located outside Europe. This scheme can involve apprenticeship programs, and is also aimed at young people from disadvantaged groups, it includes civic and democracy related training as integral part of the program.

Whether in the form of civic and democratic education offered by the projects themselves, or already integrated into apprenticeships, we can emphasize that apprenticeship is more than ever a winning process, even for young people who are a long way from employment<sup>38</sup>. The multiplicity of schemes, which include not only those mentioned above, but also certain

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35 Boivin, P.; Baez, J. (2019). Stocktaking Report. The state-of-play of validation in the voluntary sector across the EU. October 2019, JOB BRIDGE project. Lifelong Learning Platform, Brussels. [https://job-bridge.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Job-Bridge\\_Stocktaking-Report\\_Layout\\_Final.pdf](https://job-bridge.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Job-Bridge_Stocktaking-Report_Layout_Final.pdf) Last accessed 10.04.2024

36 Šcepanović, V., & Martín Artiles, A. (2020). Dual training in Europe: a policy fad or a policy turn? *Transfer: European Review of labor and Research*, 26(1), 15-26. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1024258919898317>

37 European Solidarity Corps [https://youth.europa.eu/solidarity\\_en](https://youth.europa.eu/solidarity_en) Last accessed 03.05.2024

38 The corpus underlines the value of using social economy companies and associations to offer apprenticeship contracts, which are not always easy to obtain for young people with no qualifications. In most European countries today, there are financial solutions available for young people wishing to enter the job market in a job in short supply. The added value of specialized structures here is not only to offer a professional and civic project, but also to be able to finance it.

projects directly dependent on professional branches, not forgetting the traditional companionship which still finds many followers in European countries, we are here on a semblance of schemes clearly making it possible to achieve the objectives of the projects presented in this corpus<sup>39</sup>.

## Mentoring, senior support, support systems

A large majority of the projects in the corpus have mentoring systems. “Mentoring is a means of development and learning, based on a voluntary, free and confidential interpersonal relationship (the mentoring relationship), in which an experienced person (the mentor) invests his or her acquired wisdom and expertise to foster the development of another person (the mentee) who has skills and abilities to acquire and professional and personal goals to achieve”<sup>40</sup>.

Although mentoring is not always clearly visible in the programs in the corpus, there are a number of examples, such as “Transversal Path Education” and “Power Program”, which offer mentors from the voluntary sector to provide special support for these specific target groups. If mentoring is currently gaining ground in Europe, as demonstrated by the European Mentoring Summit<sup>41</sup>, it's because it combines a number of advantages, such as relatively modest costs, the use of senior skills that are all too often neglected, and generally quite effective individual follow-up for public and private organizations wishing to successfully integrate new employees in these difficult recruitment times. However, contrary to popular belief, mentoring concerns all ages, and in “Intellectual Disability People in Bosnia”, mentors are often younger than mentees. Overall, there are **three types of** mentoring activity in the corpus.

**Integration into the company** with internal or external senior support remains a classic. We need to say no more, except to emphasize that, when it comes to integration, having mentors with political or associative functions, in addition to their professional skills, is undeniably a plus.

**The support of a specialized mentor**, generally offered externally to the structure you wish to join. In the corpus, this type of profile can be found in “Transversal Path Education” or “WUK” for fairly specific profiles, such as disabled people requiring supervision in terms of ergonomics and health at work, or immigrant women who will benefit from follow-up from someone

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39 Cedefop (2018).

40 Mentorat Quebec. Définition et origine. <https://mentoratquebec.org/definition-mentorat/>. Last accessed 10.04.2024

41 European Union. European Mentoring Summit 2022 [https://youth.europa.eu/year-of-youth/activities/1324\\_en](https://youth.europa.eu/year-of-youth/activities/1324_en) Last accessed 10.04.2024

familiar with their community. Here again, the search for a politically and socially committed profile can be a plus, but this is a luxury that not all projects can afford<sup>42</sup>.

**The civic mentor** does not feature explicitly in the programs in the corpus, but seems to exist in certain schemes such as “Learning Designers” or “Young Politicians”. He or she can be seen as a referent and facilitator in obtaining naturalization, a role that exists in certain official programs for refugees and foreigners in countries such as Canada, but more rarely in Europe, as far as we know. A second role, found in some of the projects in the corpus, is one of individual follow-up, focusing on the discovery of the country and its values, and the transmission of practical information with concrete assistance in obtaining a visa, for example. Here, we can consider that many of the projects in the corpus aimed at foreigners have this type of profile, which will be made available to asylum seekers to a greater or lesser extent over a longer or shorter period of time. The civic mentor or sponsor is important because he or she can complement the schemes, and his or her presence alone underlines the importance of the values he or she embodies, which are often at odds with those of the job market alone. This good practice, which we believe is destined to develop over the next few years, is one of the features of the projects in the corpus that is often not very visible.

## **Skills development and simulation-based recruitment**

This term covers two complementary types of system: job preparation and recruitment by skill, also known as recruitment by simulation. Job preparation is present in all our programs, and the skills thus developed will be discussed further in this document. To situate it as a good practice, it should be emphasized that the target groups here have a particular need to develop their employability, and through it their ability to evolve positively and correctly in the world of work and, by extension, the society of the country concerned. This preparation for employment, often considered imperfect even for people with a normal schooling, will therefore consist in making the person aware of recruitment procedures, and preparing him or her for the job itself. In other words, it's both training for the job, and practical training for the job itself. The current employment situation in Europe is a reversal of what it was three or four years ago. With unemployment currently below 7% and a shortage of manpower in many trades, employers are more willing to accept an improvement in the quality of working life, but they are also in favour of

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42 We don't have any precise information on the subject within the projects in the corpus, except for “Young Politicians”, whose aim is precisely to make young people aware of political careers, and whose mentors are all political representatives.

fully-paid training courses for jobs in short supply. It is therefore relatively easy to benefit from job-related training, bearing in mind that the issue of citizenship and democracy indirectly takes its place in the teaching of “savoir-être” skills, social skills now considered as important as, if not more important than, traditional job skills by many employers. As we'll see in our analysis of the skills on offer, the challenge for the projects in the corpus, through this good practice in job preparation, is to offer a complete content package that also includes civic and democratic issues, which are in line with collective and social know-how. The quest for harmonization between the two poles of employability and civic and democratic issues characterizes the projects in the corpus, which have moved away from the relative concealment of the second pole found just a few years ago to display truly bipolar approaches.

For groups far removed from the job market, traditional recruitment processes involving CVs and theoretical interviews remain ineffective. In response to companies' new needs for employees as quickly as possible, some long-established processes, such as the Canadian skills method, have resurfaced over the last few years, now backed up by **simulation-based recruitment**. The skills method consists of directly testing the future employee in the workplace, with classic tasks that will be required under real-life conditions. No doubt obvious to many, but hardly practiced by European companies even ten years ago. As a result, this skills-based method will be integrated into job preparation to respond more directly to hiring procedures. The same applies to simulations, which will also be conducted in the same practical spirit. In all cases, these methods aim to appeal to the general public, often on a concrete basis, particularly for manual and technical tasks. It should be noted that today's simulations are no longer confined to purely professional skills, but now focus on interpersonal skills, including cultural and social references. For example, receptionists, social workers, sales and marketing staff and healthcare professionals will need to be able to take part in a conversation, and have certain social and cultural notions that will help them to appreciate the public and better integrate into the professional structure. As we shall see in terms of competencies, the process of preparing for employment also presents civic and political issues, which can be seen in all the programs in the corpus. While the civic and democratic rationale naturally prevails, it can no longer be dissociated from a recruitment process that now focuses on contact and information sharing, including by drawing on current affairs and general culture.

## Custom devices

Tailor-made solutions offer a rather heterogeneous set of features, each of which is defined by a number of fundamental characteristics. Generally speaking, it's a concrete achievement that strengthens the planned support, and more often than not meets an almost immediate need of the target audience. Hundreds of examples of this type can certainly be found in every European country, and the corpus of this work does not claim to be exhaustive. Nonetheless, the examples presented here are illustrative in nature, giving these schemes strong added value and dissemination potential, generally focusing on employability and civic values.

Among the facilitating measures, we find several that once again address the issue of isolation, with **assistance in obtaining a driver's license, various mobility aids**, and the provision of **childcare** to support working women in particular<sup>43</sup>. This type of approach is relatively inexpensive in urban areas, with the exception of childcare, which can often be set up with community jobs. The advantage here is to reinforce local support and commitment to the project, **with loans of professional tools and even work clothes**. In many cases, local responses are called for, based on solidarity between groups of individuals and generations. Behind these solutions we also see the emergence of short circuits and other local devices such as cryptocurrencies<sup>44</sup>, but also the maximized use of equipment and skills. These dynamics characterize tailor-made solutions and often ensure their success.

There are also a number of concrete actions designed to influence the body and image of the target audience. The return to the world of work will be accompanied by a "Global Support" **employment and health program** designed to help people returning to work after long periods of illness, or with disorders requiring special arrangements and precautions. There will also be a focus on self-esteem and image, with beneficiaries able, for example, to get advice on their look and obtain some quality personal photos for their CVs ("Transversal Path Education"). This kind of practical support helps to circumvent certain difficulties in hiring, while reassuring participants with advice from professionals who agree to give advice on a voluntary basis.

**Immersion programs**, which are generally designed for young people, have a number of specific features ("Cescy"). Complementing the educational effort, it simply provides for the sharing of professional, social, cultural and even political activities for one or two days, similar to the school internships

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43 The Power Project offers these facilities to Turkish women for exchanges and training courses. Many other projects in the corpus offer similar practical solutions.

44 In Italy, for example, you'll find cryptocurrencies that can be used to pay for childcare.

practiced in various European countries to help young people find their bearings. Immersion is interesting because it will encourage not only professional orientation, but also certain social and cultural postures, like immersion alongside an elected official in the exercise of his or her duties (like in “Young Politicians”).

The difference with a company visit or an information meeting is that the person immersed will share the whole day-to-day routine with the carers, sometimes donning work clothes and using equipment reserved for the professionals concerned. So we're going one step further here, with trust and often total identification with the tasks performed. These very inexpensive practices also help to reinforce the choices made by the people concerned, and sometimes even to find a mentor in a structure that is now interested in a potential job candidate. Immersion is therefore an interesting practice, often confused with other forms of socialization, and one that enables the person to come face-to-face with a practice that he or she can then judge with a maximum of experience. While there are certain limits linked to the skills and dangers of certain professions, we can also find compromises where the person is simply a spectator, which is already a significant experience.

Finally, there are collective practices **associated with the territory**, whose aim is to create a framework conducive to exchanges, but also to provide a certain legitimacy. This category includes municipal councils for foreigners, municipal youth councils and social-educational twinning<sup>45</sup>, to name but three. With the exception of “Young Politicians”, few projects in the corpus contain allusions to the inclusion of twinning arrangements, such as “WUK”, which will benefit from cultural exchanges to strengthen the socialization of certain foreigners. What's interesting here is first and foremost the official nature of these schemes, twinning being recognized and encouraged by Europe<sup>46</sup>, but it's also the democratic and civic learning that these structures represent. Exceptionally focused less on employability than on citizenship and democratic values, these schemes interact in several integration projects.

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45 These are twinings between several European communities with a socio-educational scope, i.e. offering cultural exchanges, significant sporting events, training courses, discovering other countries and strengthening citizenship.

46 European Commission (2020). Twinning Manual. [https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2020-09/twinning\\_manual\\_2017\\_update\\_2020.pdf](https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2020-09/twinning_manual_2017_update_2020.pdf) Last accessed 10.04.2024

## 2.7 Civic and democratic competences: clusters and elements of transferability

Having provided an overview of the best practices and dissemination features identified in the projects, we now turn to the content of the training courses themselves. As the LICEAL project also includes two other work packages/products, WP3 and WP4, which propose concrete tools for adult trainers and adult learners, which will be linked to the content described in these pages, we will mainly be discussing the structuring of the competence blocks used in the practices, and their links with the main concept of these pages, which is the coherence and complementarity between employability and civic and political education. We will not, however, offer a detailed description of each competence, nor the pedagogical methods used to deliver them.

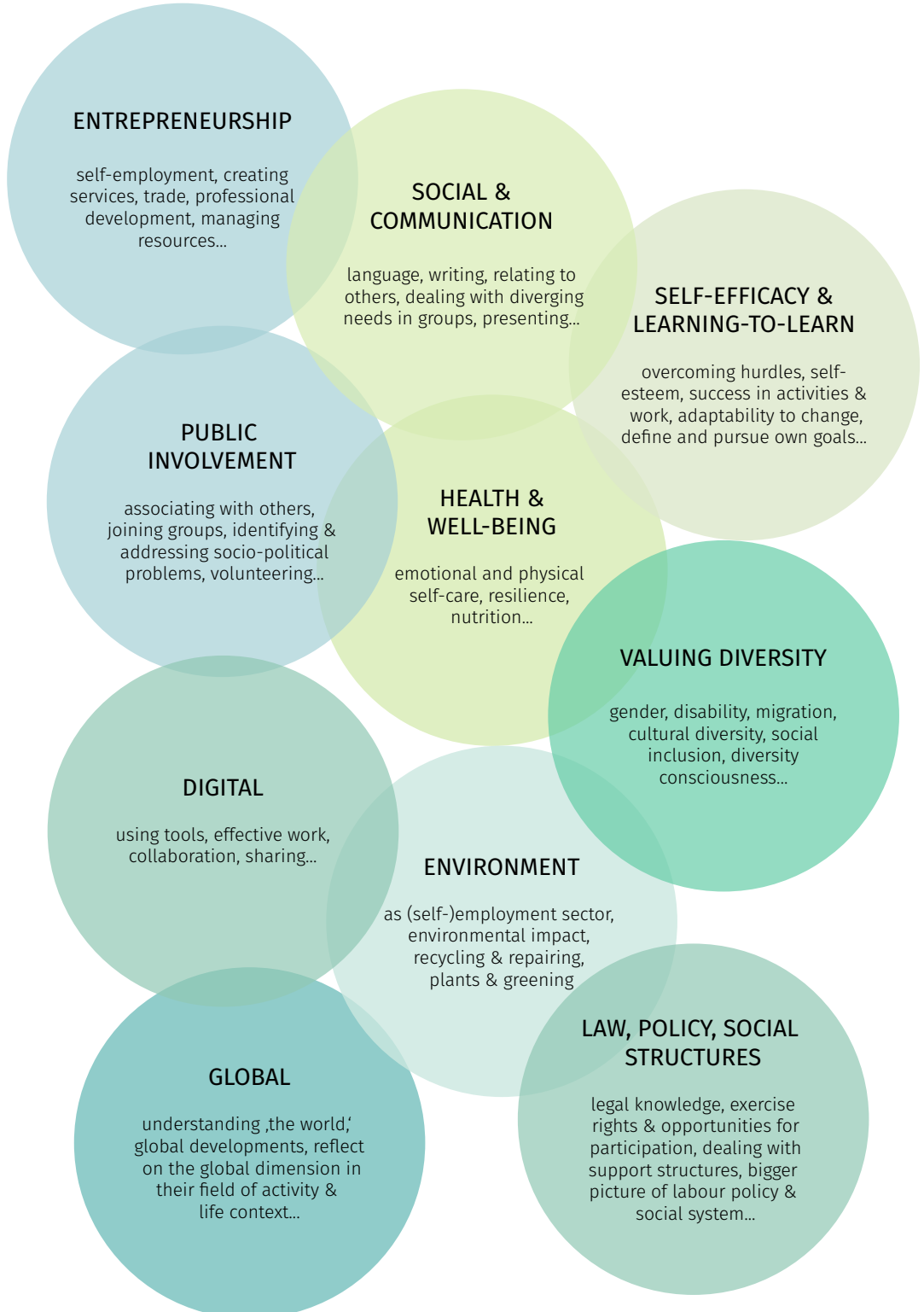
The initial rationale of the LICEAL partnership was therefore to identify the competence blocks used in the projects in the corpus analysed, and their deployment within the projects. As we indicated at the outset, all the projects are characterized by the transmission of knowledge, in a wide variety of contexts, but all share the same desire to offer knowledge about the world of work and citizenship. So we'll find both blocks of skills focusing on employability, and others more geared towards civic and political knowledge.

The intelligent mapping technique used here enables us to sketch out an initial approach in terms of competence, by defining blocks. We are dealing here with **all the competences deployed in all the projects**, which means that not all projects have necessarily offered all of them. However, overall, we can consider that all the projects used most, if not all, of the blocks identified, with differences in vocabulary and sometimes in logic of use. It can therefore be said that all the projects in the corpus combine employability and civic skills.

Beyond this initial observation, a central question is **whether we're going to have blocks of competences organized around these two items**, which would mark a certain monolithism. In other words, can employability and civic competences be mixed? After analysing the competence blocks and their articulations, we can see that the areas that emerge tend to revolve around two dimensions that make it possible to link, often within the same competence and training block, the two areas of work and civics.

We'll thus have two major competence areas: **quality of life and well-being, on the one hand, and cultural, entrepreneurial, civic and citizenship skills**, on the other. Naturally, we can discuss this division and find other possible articulations between the blocks defined by the projects, **but this remains the most coherent when we measure the context relative to the target audiences and above all to the pathways that emerges throughout these pages.**

## Relevant transversal competence clusters identified by LICEAL





As we've already mentioned, we're talking in these pages about people in distress, with many causes of isolation and physical and mental pain. So it's only logical that our projects should focus on providing concrete solutions to these problems. If we want to help these people integrate better, we have to offer them the means to respond to their discomfort, misfortune and major daily difficulties. **These top priorities will therefore contain both elements close to employability, and others geared towards civic and political integration.**

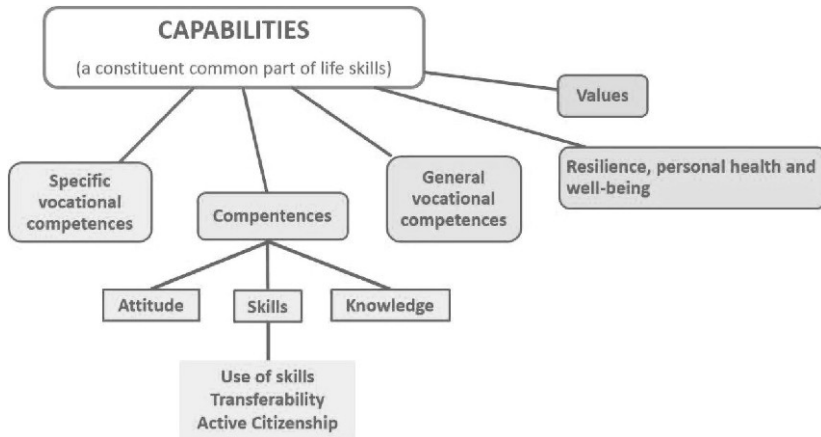
The second skills area will be more focused on **traditional apprenticeships**, with content no doubt closer to the traditional training courses offered to foreigners or young people wishing to develop an economic activity. Here, we're dealing with content that presupposes the ability to act at a minimum, to communicate with society, and to be willing and able to discover the world around you. For people with a wide range of disorders, it's important to be able to project oneself into projects and take responsibility for oneself in the long term. We're therefore dealing here with training courses that are generally offered later in the projects, or that involve people who are able to receive and listen to them.

If we understand the following typology in terms of these two groups, it will be easier to combine employment and civic integration, and above all to select content according to the target audience. At this point, we might wonder about the difficulties encountered in offering competences to very diverse audiences, with individuals at different stages of understanding and potential. Most projects respond to this in two ways. On the one hand, they logically rely on collective emulation to enable the most motivated and capable to motivate the others and pull them upwards, a logic that has long been present in all educational systems. On the other hand, several project managers mention the possibility of diversifying results according to the people involved, with content that can serve as a driving force for some, and simply as information and awareness-raising for others.

As the design of these two sets of blocks has not been the subject of any consultation between the projects, nor of any theorization to our knowledge, it should be seen as the expression of the primary realities mentioned above, as well as the desire to propose a skills acquisition process that is as natural as possible and as in line as possible with the wishes of the audiences concerned. Ultimately, the blocks as highlighted by intelligent cartography draw a natural path that takes full account of the needs of target audiences.

## Quality of life and well-being skills

The five blocks that make up this package reflect both a desire to renew and energize a dialogue with these groups, and to enable them to better apprehend their daily lives with holistic and humanistic values and perspectives. This is not a common feature of other European projects focusing on skills-based integration or skills-based employability, which often overlook “life” skills, as Petra Javrh and Estera Mozina point out in their report “The Life Skills Approach in Europe”<sup>47</sup>.



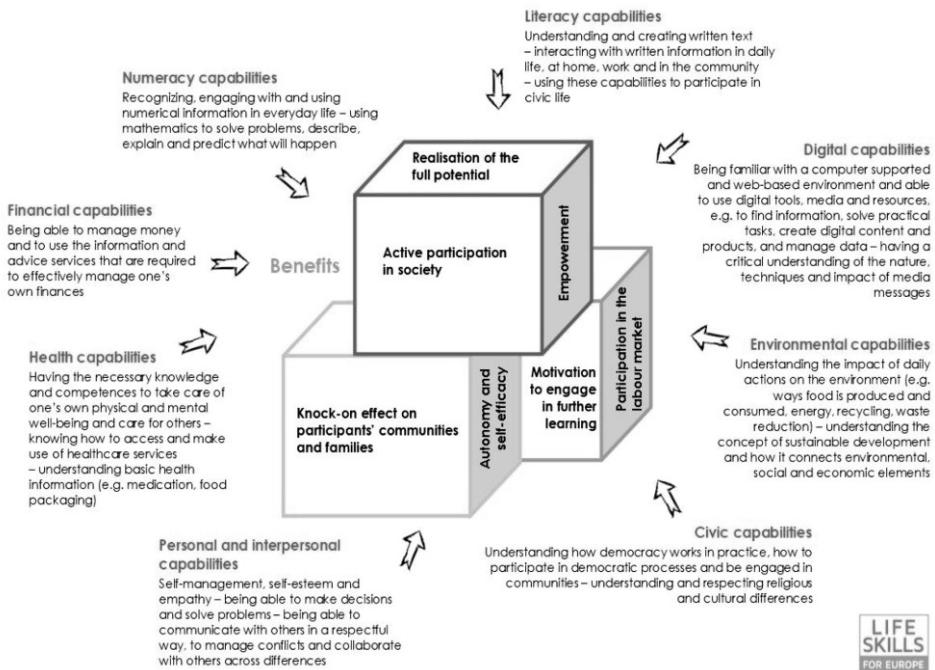
Source: Javr & Mozina, 2018, p. 25

In this diagram, which illustrates LICEAL's approach and logic, the authors emphasize that for populations in difficulty, the acquisition of skills must be preceded by work on the individual's ability to follow training courses, and to evolve in an often very difficult context. It is worth noting that, for the authors, the process begins with a focus on quality of life and the conviction that the individual can evolve and progressively take charge of his or her own life, ultimately leading to the prospect of becoming an active citizen.

The diagram on the following page, taken from the same ERASMUS project in 2017, shows that, like LICEAL, the economic and citizenship approaches are combined here, in an attempt to offer an integration pathway that will, overall,

47 Javrh, P.; Mozina, E. (2018). The life skills approach in Europe. Summary of the LSE analysis. European Association for the Education of Adults – EAEA (Europe), Danish Adult Education Association – DAEA (Denmark), The Learning and Work Institute – L&W (UK), Dafni Kentro Epaggelmatikis Katartitis – DAFNI KEK (Greece). Slovenian Institute for Adult Education – SIAE (Slovenia). Brussels. [https://eaea.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Life-Skills-Approach-in-Europe-summaryEN\\_FINAL\\_13042018.pdf](https://eaea.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Life-Skills-Approach-in-Europe-summaryEN_FINAL_13042018.pdf) Last accessed 10.04.2024

produce the same blocks of skills. However, LSE's approach focuses on the entire European population, without necessarily working with groups in difficulty, as is the case with LICEAL. Similarly, the project operates around the concept of life skills, to refer to the most immediate environment of most European citizens. What's interesting about this scheme is that it demonstrates the relevance of thinking in two stages, the first focusing on **these fundamental skills**, and the second on **more advanced skills** of a kind that will enable us to move towards more definitive integration.



Source: EAEA, Life Skills for Europe (LSE)

## Communication

The first block proposed is communication, which responds to the most immediate needs, and is not only a means of combating isolation, but also of integrating into the national and European community. Whether we're talking about people who need to learn the local language, or others who have serious difficulties communicating despite a certain command of the language, we're talking about skills that condition the acquisition of subsequent knowledge.

In detail, we'll be looking **at the relationship with others, inclusive communication, group life and speaking up to encourage community action, writing and presentation skills, and of course learning the local language.**

It's clear here that, from the outset, we'll be adopting a parallel approach to the acquisition of linguistic bases and relationships with others, as well as

the first collective elements around speaking and even the principles of collective approaches and representation. So there's linguistics, applied psychology and even civics.

According to the descriptions available, we're talking here about training and discussions in small groups, which allow for sharing and conviviality. Generally speaking, it's in this block that we see the most immediate progress and the acquisition of skills around self-esteem and speaking up. All the programs in the corpus offer these skills, which are generally deployed right from the start. The pedagogical frameworks vary widely, but they are all geared towards building trust and creating a group that can evolve together throughout the course.

### **Health and Well-being**

The second block, present in almost all projects, concerns health and well-being. It characterizes LICEAL's approach very well, as it is part of a drive to improve quality of life. It includes the following competencies: **Health and well-being, sustainable food, self-esteem, emotional education, individual and collective cooking, and finally sustainable development and food.**

So, as mentioned above, we're going to find here skills designed to facilitate the well-being of the person, with several times on food and cooking. We find this very strongly in the "Cuscus" project, of course, but also in "Intellectual Disability People" and "Torino my City", which place great emphasis on culinary practices and sustainable development as a collective tool for sharing and integration. Our training programs are based on conviviality and exchange, and have nothing to do with the knowledge offered in traditional classrooms. Chronologically, they take place fairly early on in the projects, and complement the communication tools by enabling these times to be extended with concrete creations. What's interesting here is the cohabitation of practical information on the country's medical system, for example, with moments of tasting products made by the learners themselves. Alongside communication, this block of skills pursues the path of integration, creating friendships between people from different communities and groups. It is also a way of offering manual activities that are accessible to all, and that feature in the heritage of the countries of origin of the people concerned<sup>48</sup>.

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48 Do the projects analysed on these pages have an over-representation of culinary content? The answer would be a little, but not too much. Having five out of fifteen projects that cook good food is a high average, but in the absence of statistics on the subject, we can nonetheless point out that culinary enthusiasts are not rare within Erasmus projects, with examples of "Chefs", "Cooking forward" and other "Culinary trips" belonging to the same group. On the other hand, if this average is high, the good results of these projects might suggest that others would take a serious look at this practice...

## Sustainable Development

The third block concerns sustainable development, and raises some initial questions. Are we dealing with a logic of well-being, or rather with the second set of cultural and economic knowledge? The choice of placing this group within the quality of life domain is explained by the analysis of the skills developed and, above all, their contexts. In the majority of cases, we're dealing with field skills, developed in close contact with nature, as in "Custodi del Bello", "Ecoguard" and "Peregrina", which offer practical knowledge but also practice an ethic and an overall logic that brings us closer to elements of quality of life, even if we're also naturally concerned with employability.

This block includes skills related to sustainable development, greening, plant knowledge, environmental ecology, conservation of natural heritage and recycling/repair. This approach to nature- and environment-oriented professions complements what has already been said about cooking. It's worth noting that between projects with kitchen components and those with a nature focus, we're not far from half the corpus, which illustrates two truths. The first is the great success of projects dealing with natural components in general, which will motivate a large majority of audiences in difficulty. Cooking, gardening, animals and wilderness preservation are all specialties that offer something positive and an attractive, motivating professional activity. We're also looking for ways to interest a wide range of people in the same cause, which is now, unfortunately, crucial: safeguarding nature and combating climate change and its consequences.

Looking at the project timetables, we can see that these skills are passed on throughout the process, often forming a common thread. Not only will participants be encouraged to assert multiple identities around these notions, consumers, cooks, gardeners, but they will also seize opportunities to make them their profession, and thus deepen these practices over time.

## Collaboration and sharing

The fourth block concerns **collaboration and sharing**, and is part of virtually all projects such as "Monte Adentro", "Power Program" and "WUK". Here we'll find various skills such as **collaborating with others, sharing, creating and designing collectively, working efficiently, and using digital tools**. These skills will be articulated and even defined quite differently, depending on the audience and the objectives. Situated further downstream than the other blocks, it enables us to emphasize the qualities of the collective, and will encourage participants to put their future projects into practice by already taking part in a community logic. The question of collective identity refers both to the soft skills employers are looking for, and to those needed to

evolve within a social or political group, through associative responsibilities or political participation in local life, for example. This is a key concept for any successful integration process, but also for values and practices that are highly sought-after by anyone who needs to take on some form of responsibility.

### **Diversity**

Finally, the fifth and last block, relating to quality of life and well-being, concerns the enhancement of diversity. This is a more civic and political area, but one that is totally necessary for the integration of very diverse groups, who may come from countries with neither democratic regimes nor public and political freedoms. Here we'll find content on **gender, disability, origin for migrants, cultural openness and multiculturalism, understanding diversity, social inclusion, or finally digital realities** around social networks, for example.

These perspectives are in line with the desire of European authorities to promote diversity as a means of enhancing integration and combating extremism.<sup>49</sup> These perspectives complement quality of life by highlighting the equal place of each individual, while at the same time introducing the values of equality and social justice. Here again, we can consider the fact that this block may form part of the second set. The decision to keep it here is further explained by the direction taken by the projects, which will clearly propose times for dialogue and exchange, and serene and even sometimes playful introductions to these issues, which often require a certain caution due to their themes. Projects such as “Transversal Path Education” or “CESCY” offer content that will above all make participants think, by linking diversity to economic and political integration within the country concerned. With this block, we gradually move away from quality of life issues, now integrated and always present in the curriculum, towards integration, which ultimately involves exchange and collaboration with others, such as a boss, an association director or a teacher looking after a child in the family. Placing diversity as a factor will therefore further reduce the spectrum of identitarian withdrawal, and provide the keys to positive exchange with everyone we meet.

So, depending on the case, it's a person who has reflected on and accepted his or her identity, who already has trusted people around him or her and valuable know-how to help him or her evolve in a group, who will be offered skills that are often more advanced and will finalize his or her integration. Naturally, this reflection depends greatly on the audience, and some people will not have to go through these stages along the way, but overall, we can consider that the implementation of these skill blocks will greatly follow the

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49 European Commission. <https://www.eudiversity2022.eu/>. Last accessed 10.04.2024

progression of individuals and ultimately enable them to feel progress and positivity on their own scale. This block therefore represents the transition between the first and second sets. This block is also very important in that it will contribute to this transition, offering the people concerned the first civic and political reflections of their journey, and thus making them aware that they must also address these dimensions, which is by no means obvious to some participants. From a pedagogical point of view, an analysis of the content and, above all, the vocabulary used, shows that we often proceed in small steps, progressing serenely, which does not prevent us from resolving certain problems. It is interesting to note, for example, that when the trainers of the curriculum projects talk about their experiences, they very often mention intercultural difficulties in relation to diversity issues among the problems they encounter. Male audiences having a little difficulty in accepting the words of female participants, exchanges that were a little livelier than average on the role of schools and secular education, questioning the value of democracy versus the word of God - all these examples underline the strategic and ultimately totally relevant nature of this set of skills.<sup>50</sup>

## **Cultural, entrepreneurial, civic and citizenship skills**

The second set of competences proposed in the projects are blocks that can be seen as less typical of disadvantaged groups. In fact, if the author of these lines is going to live in Japan, for example, there's a good chance he'll be offered this type of teaching, even though he's not specifically part of a disadvantaged group. We're talking here about knowledge that will help people to progress, while at the same time completing the skills they need to integrate. Chronologically, these blocks will often be offered a little later in the projects, although this depends on the target audience. We can consider that we are dealing here with a wider range of skills that may or may not be deployed in projects. Compared with the first set, the ambitions are clearly higher, even if we can consider that the requirements in terms of results may vary according to the audience. Depending on the project, we could have a first set that is little used because it has already been acquired, and conversely a second set that is much more widely deployed because it directly addresses the concerns of participants waiting to learn about these subjects. There are also five skill blocks:

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50 As these few testimonials do not constitute statistics, we can't go any further into the difficulties encountered by the trainers, which seem to be quite typical of training courses of the same type.

### **Involvement in society**

The first concerns involvement in society, with knowledge on **volunteering, designing and participating in initiatives, projects and group work, responsibility within a group, citizenship, the ability to involve others in one's activities, identifying socio-political problems and seeking solutions, making concrete advances in favour of social change, and enriching projects.** This vast ensemble clearly reveals a higher level of ambition than any of the above, by referring to audiences capable of mastering advanced knowledge. It also specifies the identities that will gradually be built up, i.e. the economic, social and political roles that each individual will have to assume at least minimally if he or she wants to be autonomous. Here, as in the following blocks, we have skills that enable us to grasp the roles of **entrepreneurs, associative players, citizens, political activists and even elected representatives,** to focus on the main ones. **This access to roles** characterizes the training courses offered in the field of integration, with the aim of enabling autonomy as quickly as possible, as this will increase learning capacities tenfold, while also specifying the priorities of each individual. One person will devote himself or herself to entrepreneurship, while another will turn to voluntary work, etc. Just like the classic school system, the focus will shift from generalist content to more specialized knowledge, which will generally lead to choices being made in terms of follow-up specializations, for example. These characteristics can be found in numerous projects such as “Custodi del Bello” or “Ecoguard”, which, depending on the professional choices of the participants, offer them a gradual integration into a garden center or a livestock farm, which presupposes slightly different knowledge. As the role takes off, the individual gradually joins his or her peers, both professional and political, by joining a company, for example, but also a civic association or political party. Such a move underlines the success of the training and marks a more than symbolic milestone in terms of integration. This knowledge will vary greatly from project to project, but is present in all programs, such as the “Radial Project”, which links entrepreneurial skills and sustainable development, or the “WUK”, which offers customized content tailored to the age and profile of the participants, with the aim of active, voluntary integration. These contents. Involvement in society is undoubtedly the most diverse block, offering the most varied content, as trainers often have different visions in such a context. What binds these skills together is that they are geared towards action and active social roles, which may seem paradoxical when you consider that 90 of Europeans have no particular responsibilities in society. Having said that, by revealing what already exists, we'll be in a better position to encourage vocations among groups who often have a huge knowledge deficit on these subjects.



### Improving self-efficacy

The second block concerns improving individual effectiveness. It includes **the criteria for success in an activity and at work, the ability to be flexible, to cope with difficulties, to access daily and professional autonomy, and finally to access help.**

We're dealing here with a vast array of fairly heterogeneous skills that tend to evoke business-oriented training, with the exception of access to aid, which has featured prominently for several years in the training themes offered to foreign audiences. The definitions of these skills vary from project to project, with "CESCY" tending to focus on learning how to think for oneself through motivational elements and alternative thinking. "Apprentis solidaires" takes a more practical approach, seeking to resolve financial, administrative and relational problems. Whether in terms of content, or even the vocabulary used to describe the skills acquired, it could be argued that this block should be used differently for each project, and that there are as many qualifiers and variations as there are projects in the field of integration. However, this block has undergone a very interesting evolution, with skills hitherto reserved more for future executives in the private sector, through commercial courses, shifting towards projects of this type. The very notion of efficiency refers more to motivational seminars for managerial staff than to skills offered to audiences considered disadvantaged. Paradoxical, one might say, and rightly so, since the terminology corresponds well to the needs of these groups, but it has to be said that such content has long been lacking in integration projects. In the same vein, talk of flexibility and autonomy, two key concepts for decision-makers, perfectly symbolizes the evolution that now sees the groups to be integrated also having the right to act autonomously, both at work and in the civic sphere. A slightly provocative statement, but one that illustrates very well the paradigm shift that we owe in large part to the Structural Funds on this issue, which have put forward ideas and, above all, concrete actions for a form of care that includes independence and freedom of action.

Efficiency enhancement is a more work-oriented concept, but flexibility and autonomy are also civic concepts that feature prominently in projects such as "News Politicians", aimed at training political decision-makers. These training courses are also offered as part of the Schuman "training" program, which is nothing less than a gateway to the European civil service<sup>51</sup> and whose semantics faithfully echo the vocabulary of these projects. All this illustrates the evolution towards a certain universalism in the notion of efficiency, and its increasingly widespread use, because over and above its virtues in terms of

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51 European Parliament. Traineeships in the European Parliament. <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/at-your-service/en/work-with-us/traineeships> Last accessed 10.04.2024

concrete help and support, it is also a motivating factor, as the content is synonymous with progress, learning and even professional advancement.

### **Learning-to-learn**

The third block, entitled **learning to learn**, completes the previous block, while focusing skills more on asserting one's own identity. It covers the following areas: **overcoming learning difficulties, assessing skills, identifying obstacles and learning from them, exploring and describing skills, developing self-esteem and creativity**. Quite similar in spirit to the previous block, the ensemble is based both on fairly formalized pedagogical practices, but also on less structured methods and more oriented towards discovery and playful practices. The corpus of projects analyzed offers a vast array of practices along these lines. While “Leaving Designers” will propose rather conventional work sessions, as part of a distance-learning program based in rooms set up for this purpose, “Cuscus” and “Custodi del Bello” will feature different practices that will find their place in interactive events that may fall somewhere between a workshop and a more or less formalized discussion, but offering concrete results over time. The notion of learning to learn has been particularly developed by the Council of Europe<sup>52</sup>, which has produced a portfolio dedicated to the **language issue in a multicultural and civic approach**. This documentation contains a whole series of self-analyses enabling learners to reflect on their own potential, and thus deploy the associated skills to best effect. As a kind of concrete self-assessment for all concerned, this block is essential in the development of critical thinking, but its main feature is that it gives a kind of after-the-fact choice. In other words, learning how to learn not only helps to structure the acquisition of knowledge, but also helps to confirm a scale of values capable of defining priorities and even interests in a given direction. It is therefore not only a methodological package that will help reassure and reassure people, but also a means of enabling each stage to make choices both in terms of orientation and professional and civic commitments, as was already the case with the previous blocks. Here again, each project can define the use of this block, its ultimate aim being autonomy and self-assessment, which are key notions in the integration process, as it finalizes the subject's own identity, which will now take precedence over the environment he or she controls.

### **Entrepreneurship**

The fourth block, dedicated to entrepreneurship, will concern around 75% of the projects in the corpus, and is mainly linked to the opportunities offered by

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52 Council of Europe. The European Language Portfolio. <https://coe.int/en/web/portfolio>  
Last accessed 10.04.2024

sustainable development. It includes the following skills: **service creation, resource management, business, organization and structuring of professional activity, entrepreneurial creativity**. This block will appeal to a motivated public capable of creating an activity, whether in the artistic and recycling fields, as in the “Radial project”, or in green spaces and gardens, as in “Custodi del Bello”, “Ecoguard” and “Peregrina”. There are also more general approaches, such as Pôle emploi's “Global Support”, or the “Power Program”, which offer food for thought that can lead to creations in any field. In any case, it's clear that this block will not always concern all the people who are involved in these practices, and will be aimed at people who already have significant potential. There is an infinite number of projects offering such dynamics, and the challenge here is precisely to be able to meet the needs of specific audiences. In current fact, the titles, content and teaching methods used are generally fairly conventional, firstly because there aren't thousands of ways of teaching these elements, and secondly because we're dealing here with a block that is aimed at a public that may be seen as advanced compared to others. We are therefore dealing with training courses offering content that is fairly similar to that found in structures more traditionally involved in these fields, such as chambers of commerce. There are, however, two differences: an environmental specialty and information on the social economy, which also enables the creation of sales and production structures such as cooperatives. Depending on the degree of development of these social economy structures in the territories concerned, we'll have skills that clearly address the subject. It's no coincidence that Spain, Italy, Austria and France, to name but four European countries, have seen significant development of cooperative networks, providing concrete examples and local support. It's also worth noting that this block includes a very significant number of distance learning courses, underlining the advanced nature of learners capable of mastering this type of pedagogy. There will also be courses to be followed without the need for an online instructor, i.e. automated content, which again presupposes know-how and mastery of the skills required to follow these online modules.

This block can be seen as a certain professional achievement for people who find it an opportunity to create their own activities, synonymous with autonomy, but also a method enabling them to integrate easily into an existing family business. This observation is rounded off by the fact that, in terms of outlets, such creations will mainly be found after the possibilities of salaried employment, as it cannot be said that civil service entrance examinations and the liberal professions are easy to access for these groups. The aim of these projects is not to glorify capitalism and liberalism, but to offer credible alternatives for activities that are often geared towards sustainable

development and short supply chains. It may come as a surprise at this stage not to see any skills geared towards the creation, management and development of associations, especially given that a very large majority of LICEAL's structures are part of the associative world. After verification, it became clear that almost all of the projects at one time or another proposed knowledge on the subject, which could be either in the collective approach and construction field, or in the entrepreneurial field, by completing the panorama of existing statutes for the creation of structures. This clarification thus illustrates the vision of an associative world that is both committed to, and therefore present in, the skills blocks dealing with collective approaches, and also representing a type of economic activity creation that finds its full place in the possibilities offered. Although we do not have any significant statistics on the types of structures created by the people who took part in these projects, the information available shows a multiplicity of small local structures, generally offering community services, crafts, but also the sale and distribution of local produce. As in the case of “Torino my city”, we'll also find the creation of associations that will in turn serve as incubators for other local structures, such as food sales outlets or associative sewing and clothing recycling workshops. However, it's difficult to give a more precise overview of the local structures created in this way. Several projects, such as Pôle emploi's “Global Support” and “Transversal Path Education”, are directly linked to the relevant ministries, which will thus indirectly have access to comprehensive statistics on the creation of activities. In the two examples available to us, namely the Italian case with the Istat reports<sup>53</sup> and the French case with Insee<sup>54</sup>, it can be noted that the rate of business start-ups (conventional and social economy) is identical overall after training for people from chambers of commerce and for those from projects aimed at disadvantaged groups. This very positive finding for this type of project underlines not only the quality of the training provided, but also the concern to integrate business creation into the economic as well as the social and political dimensions of society. In fact, the creation of resources and services, as well as inventiveness, will be focused not on maximizing profit, but on quality of life and positive integration into the community, with activities that truly serve the neighborhood. This is the key element to bear in mind when creating a training program of this type, because the ultimate goal is to achieve serene

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53 Istituto Nazionale di Statistica (ISTAT). Rilevazione statistica sulla ricerca e sviluppo nelle imprese <https://www.istat.it/it/archivio/12541> Last accessed 10.04.2024

54 Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques (Insee). Les entreprises en France Édition 2021 <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/5758740?sommaire=5759063> Last accessed 10.04.2024

integration, not a frenzied pursuit of profit. This competence block therefore contains not only the information needed to create a structure, but also a perspective, a humanist and democratic posture, which is the very essence of any project of this type.

### **Legislation and the political environment**

Finally, the last block entitled Legislation and the Political Environment, includes the following skills: **understanding the dimensions of social, political and economic power; mastering citizen power and using it oneself; citizen and labor rights; critical understanding of the system and the world; critical thinking; understanding a problem from different perspectives; and finally, critical understanding of local, national and international politics.** This copious menu once again offers a finalization of a course, this time centered on citizenship and democratic issues. This block can be seen as the perfect complement to the previous economic and professional content, with an approach that was initially aimed at foreign audiences, but which has logically been extended to other participants. While the course is still marked by legal content, which is essential for such courses, there are also several references to international situations, not forgetting real content on critical thinking and its principles. It is undoubtedly in this block that the European dimension is most present, as it is impossible today to teach these skills without including solid references to the European level. We are indeed dealing with a civic and democratic model derived from European culture and history, and this is largely confirmed by the detailed content of these training courses, which are designed to help students discover a different order, not always present in the minds of European citizens today, namely the dual national and European culture. Pedagogically, the approach remains relatively homogeneous, with content that is highly appreciated for being rooted in current events and everyday life. For example, the young people in “Apprentis Solidaires” will discover Europe during solidarity missions, while the Turin girls in “Torino my City” will visit a number of public and institutional buildings, while benefiting from practical information on the Italian social and political system. In each project, knowledge is imparted, but dialogues, exchanges, visits and discoveries also mark out the acquisition of specific skills. But above and beyond the knowledge to be acquired about the country and Europe, the most important thing is to learn to think independently, which is synonymous with free will and active citizenship. This is where the individual becomes a citizen after being offered the chance to be an entrepreneur, but in any case, he or she is informed, knowledgeable and independent. This last point is undoubtedly the most difficult part, according to the trainers working in this

field, as each individual will initially be set in their ways, and the challenge will be to get them to think without forcing or attacking their initial convictions. Having restored confidence, reintroduced people to a collective, and offered them professional prospects, becoming an active citizen is not generally a step expected by these audiences, who may welcome it with enthusiasm or, on the contrary, never apply these lessons. However, even if the European ideas are not always the most obvious to retain, as they are undoubtedly less concrete than the professional aspects, the fact remains that project evaluations, once completed, clearly indicate significant success at this level. If most of these projects have been running for several years, not to say decades, as in the case of “Cuscus”, “Global Support” and “Leaving Designers”, to name but a few, it's because they meet their objectives and respond to needs in terms of civic integration<sup>55</sup>.

At the end of this rapid approach to the skill blocks present in the projects analyzed, references that will be taken up in other LICEAL projects, we can briefly sketch out three observations. The first is to note a **strong harmony between the skills proposed by these projects**, with two sets that naturally blend knowledge in terms of employability and that concerning civic and democratic issues. While each project is different, in terms of audience, vocabulary and even outlook, it is nonetheless a unit that plebiscites the primary logic of LICEAL in terms of its dual professional and civic direction, and does so in a joint and assertive manner. The second, as we believe we have illustrated, is the **coherence between these blocks of expertise and current European affairs**, which refer to work, projects and dynamics that coincide with LICEAL's objectives in terms of integration, values and the evolution of European citizens. More than ever, integration and its corollaries are at the heart of European thinking, and such projects feature prominently in Brussels' structural policies, including in terms of dedicated funding. We can therefore clearly associate the skills system developed here with European reference systems and projects. The third and final point is that, without having common pedagogical guidelines, all the **projects propose a system for acquiring skills in similar contexts**, based on previous European achievements. The real debate is not so much about the pedagogies implemented, which are often quite similar and will revolve either around teaching that will be seen as classic, or around freer practices such as workshops or informal

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55 Here we return to the work of the Council of Europe, already mentioned above. Council of Europe (2020). Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC). Competences for democratic culture and the importance of language. Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg. <https://rm.coe.int/prems-007021-rfcdc-competences-for-democratic-culture-and-the-importan/1680a217cc> Last accessed 10.04.2024

dialogues, but rather about the contents, which are reinforced in this work with the presentation of concrete tools directly derived from the projects analyzed and forming a global solution, a toolbox that can be used at one's convenience. This comprehensive overview can be adapted and transformed to suit individual needs. These are the elements that will be proposed in this project, in order to offer a concrete approach and tools.

## 2.8 Influential educational spaces and programs

As in the preceding pages, we can ask ourselves at this stage whether the available corpus is a generalist one, or in other words, whether we are working on a set of projects that can offer a complete panorama of applicable solutions. While each country and even territory has its own specific features, we can nonetheless answer in the affirmative, with more than a dozen European countries involved in the projects in the corpus, and transposable solutions that present no particularities that would be impossible to transcribe to other territories. It should also be pointed out that all the projects in this corpus could have been carried out in other European countries without posing very different problems for managers. While we can speak of more or less developed systems, as we shall see, there is no serious and definitive obstacle to a transposition that would see a project from this corpus reproduced elsewhere. This organizational homogeneity, which is based on shared European values and resources, may well point to a certain universality of the proposed practices, at least in terms of their transposition potential.

### **Local third-party education centres (associations with trainers and volunteers)**

One of the main characteristics of all the programs in the corpus is the importance of operational third places, which will materialize three key stages in the learning process: the **meeting**, synonymous with the start of sharing and the immediate brake on isolation; the **sharing of knowledge**, which will coincide with pedagogical, affective and even strategic exchange; and finally, the **place of new beginnings**, which will see the beneficiaries fly off to other horizons, sometimes participating in turn as volunteers and trainers. What distinguishes third places from other systems is that they are generally the very creation of the structures organizing these projects, materialized either by premises dedicated to the project, or by the use of premises already devoted to similar practices, but which are often used a little differently in these new settings. There are two main situations: the first involves using existing learning facilities and making them compatible with the project, as in

the case of Transversal Path Education or Peregrina, which use social centers to offer training courses specifically adapted for audiences who have not necessarily had access to these spaces up to now. The second situation sees the project hijacking third places not normally intended for training, such as the kitchens of “CusCus” or the parks and gardens of Italian towns in “Custodi del Bello”. The notion of a third place takes on its full meaning here, and will be accompanied by a new use for the site that will accentuate and illustrate the transmission of the knowledge produced. We must also emphasize the fact that, from an educational point of view, after the training courses traditionally delivered in classrooms, or, as mentioned above, directly in the field with workshops or hands-on experience, we'll find a third way, offering activities halfway between the two previous orientations, which characterize the logic of the labs and contribute to their success.

So, when we look in more detail at the methods produced to use these third places, it appears that in addition to the space itself, we'll also find associated pedagogical practices that are characterized by approaches. Here, we can talk about content that links two types of labs: integration labs<sup>56</sup> and policy labs<sup>57</sup>. Although most of the programs in the corpus do not refer to labs when describing their third places and the content developed there, there is a strong correspondence between the content of the programs and the characteristics of the labs, particularly in the field of employability. For example, in a presentation of the France-Travail labs<sup>58</sup>, we find the following elements, which are also to be found in the above-mentioned document from Micreate, a structure specializing in the integration of young migrants in Europe<sup>59</sup>.

Six elements structure the activities of a lab of this type: **a dedicated and open space, a motivated team, a cooperative and benevolent state of mind, agile and stimulating work methods, a facilitating and available network, and finally one or more specific projects.** The projects in the corpus therefore reflect the characteristics of Lab-type approaches, providing solid elements of transferability.

Without going into further detail about these third places and their relatively easy transpositions into lab practices, let's note that beyond the characteristics mentioned above, we will also appreciate in these devices the

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56 Micreate. Integration Lab. <https://www.micreate.eu/index.php/integration-lab/> Last accessed 10.04.2024

57 <https://policy-lab.ec.europa.eu>

58 Pôle emploi Auvergne Rhône-Alpes (2022). What is the Pôle emploi Lab? Pôle emploi.

59 See note 56



ability to offer diverse knowledge, especially here the elements of employability and civic and political skills<sup>60</sup>.

In terms of transposition, therefore, we can not only look to the dynamics of labs, which have an abundance of methodological literature and cover the whole of Europe today, but also resituate the main functions of labs in the logic proposed here.

Overall, 4 functions are retained in this process: **The Room Lab** takes up a principle present in certain projects, and which leads globally to the principle of immersion: the possibility of discovering practices and know-how directly in contact with professionals who come specially to give demonstrations. This practice facilitates costly or difficult travel for rural or disabled visitors, and allows us to move from discovery to awareness-raising, via concrete participation. Showrooms can also be used to display culinary creations and results, providing a source of motivation for participants. By presenting culinary creations at certain events, the “Cuscus” project clearly responds to this logic, as does the “Radial Project”, which will exhibit works of art and plastic creations. It's worth noting, even if it's not specifically mentioned in the curriculum, that such presentations can be linked to an element of evaluation, motivating participants who will not only see their creations exhibited, but also have them appreciated and valued by the teaching team, leading to certification on the spot or compliance with an internal quality label.

**The Flash Lab** will propose a short collaborative and creative experience that will often characterize a key moment in the training process: starting, ending, obtaining a professional contract or access to planned emancipations. The “Power Program”, for example, will exchange ideas with women who have already obtained their driving licenses, while “Apprentis Solidaires” will offer a specific time for obtaining an apprenticeship contract, synonymous with an easier entry into professional life. As its name suggests, the Flash Lab will mark the course and offer a number of significant highlights. Elements that can easily be transposed to other projects.

**The Big Lab** will support a pedagogical team over the long term, generally to enable the acquisition of actual skills. It is the reference point in this model for the acquisition of training skills and the main understandings around the

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60 In Europe today, there are a number of Labs specializing in these issues, which not only explore and analyze the policies themselves, but also implement educational approaches aimed at underprivileged groups, who are thus encouraged to participate actively. These approaches, which are often the work of universities, public services and foundations, are not far removed from the integration dynamics implemented by the programs in this corpus.

Gofen, A.; Golan, E. (2020) Laboratories of Design: A Catalog of Policy Innovation Labs in Europe (September 1, 2020). <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3684515>

knowledge transmitted. The notion of large size comes from the very significant number of hours planned in this framework, which generally corresponds to the classic pedagogical content of the project, such as language courses in the country concerned.

Finally, the **Fab Lab**, like a business incubator, will support the gradual creation of a professional activity, alongside the acquisition of skills. The “Cescy” project, for example, offers this kind of support to young entrepreneurs working in the field of sustainable development, while the “Radial Project” offers the same kind of support in terms of business creation through the recycling and transformation of raw materials.

The logic of the “tiers lieu” (third place), which is often described in terms of Labs, is therefore a key feature of many projects that will use premises, often by modifying their original use, to offer educational activities. This logic of using or reusing space, combined with positive methods and activities, is to be emphasized and clearly constitutes a privileged starting point in terms of transferability. So as not to overload an already lengthy text, we won't go into detail on the pedagogical methods used for training in these spaces, given that there is a wealth of literature on the subject. As far as the animation of Labs with a social dimension is concerned, we can also refer to a number of sources, including the European “Reconfigure” project, which proposes an approach broadly applicable to the cases mentioned here.<sup>61</sup>

## **Further training in formal education spaces (school, evening classes)**

While the development of third places is the choice of a significant number of projects in the corpus, we also find other choices, often dictated by the existence of facilities already present within the school and vocational training system and likely to meet the precise needs of the program. The limit to the use of such schemes is either their absence from the geographical horizon of the projects concerned, or the difficulty of mobilizing them for specific audiences often in great difficulty. Nevertheless, Transversal Path Education and Global Support, not to mention WUK, are examples of projects that make use of the education system in place. What's interesting here, and clearly constitutes a transferability criterion, is not only the possibility of using these schemes where they exist, but also of negotiating adaptations to them to make them coincide with the needs of the target audience. This option is easier to realize in the context of adult continuing education, where we are generally used to such turnkey adaptations.

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61 <https://reconfigure.eu/>

In many European countries, there are school-based dropout prevention schemes aimed at young people, but which can also include people up to around 20 years of age. These schemes include funding for catching up, as well as local aid, as is the case in France and Italy to help young people pass their driving test, for example. The primary aim of these schemes, which we will find in the projects in the corpus, is to offer these young people initial skills that are often absent or lacking. Indispensable for obtaining a first job and an apprenticeship contract, these skills will be taught face-to-face or by distance learning, with the support of the country's official education systems. These schemes are often quite conventional, but have the merit of featuring prominently in the official activities of ministries of education and their regional representatives. They enable the projects to take charge of the populations concerned, and to make serious savings by being able to rely on existing, referenced teaching teams. In some cases, projects in the corpus would not have had the necessary budgets to operate without these schemes.

In the same vein, evening classes, a long-standing feature of vocational training schemes, remain an effective way of meeting adult training needs. Here again, the difficulty of dealing with the problems of certain groups, such as the issue of travel, unfortunately reduces the scope of some schemes. However, the use of evening classes, now accessible by distance learning, and benefiting from significant resources in most European countries, can enable some adults to acquire the necessary skills as well as a useful trade. We may see these schemes as accessible only to certain individuals in a group, but this solution, which has economic advantages for projects, can also enable us to offer individual solutions in certain cases. Here, we'll be looking at schemes designed for people who have already achieved a significant level of integration, enabling them to strengthen and complete their career paths.

## **Ecole de la 2<sup>nd</sup> chance and similar European practice**

Many European countries have developed schemes that we will refer to here generically as Second Chance Schools. From Spain, with its 39 “New Chance” schools, to France, with its 130 “Second Chance” schools active since 2007<sup>62</sup>,

62 “The Second Chance Schools” (SCS) are the result of the European White Paper presented by Mrs Edith Cresson. ‘Teaching and Learning - Towards the Learning Society’. Recognised by local, regional and National Administrations, They are Mainly aimed at Young People Aged 16 to 29 who have left the school system without a diploma or qualification.” E2C Website

European Commission Directorate - General XXII - Education training and youth  
 Directorate - General V - Employment industrial relations and social affairs. (1996/1995).  
 Teaching and learning - towards the learning society: white paper on education and training. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

not forgetting Germany, Austria and Italy, these establishments now form a network known as E2C<sup>63</sup>, which brings together over two hundred establishments in 14 European countries. What distinguishes this type of establishment from standard remedial education and evening classes is that we are dealing here primarily with school dropouts, but also with young adults who want to give themselves a second chance to acquire a secondary school leaving certificate, or to enter a vocational stream. In terms of both teachers and programs, we're dealing here with specialists in very difficult groups.

In addition to the possibilities offered by these structures, such as “Global Report”, “Apprentis Solidaires” or “Torino my City”, with their specialized teams and upstream financial support, there are a number of advantages to approaching these schemes.

The first is the fact that, in recent years, the European network has created the first skills nomenclature aimed at a low-skilled public<sup>64</sup>. In an article outlining the process, Isabelle Houot and Nathalie Lavielle-Gutnik mention certain paradigm shifts, such as the need to focus on strengthening the identity of these young people, which clearly involves soft skills and a dialogue between trainers and young people concerning the social realities experienced<sup>65</sup>. This is an evolution that will come as no surprise to the authors of the projects in the corpus, but which once again leads to the observation that in many projects, the marriage between the reality of employment and civic and political rights has now been consummated. The system of competences thus proposed is not far removed from the teachings contained in the projects in the corpus, such compatibility offering not only possible partnerships, but also a framework for reflection in terms of the transferability of LICEAL practices to other European territories with such establishments. Conversely, following the example of the lobbying carried out by the “Cescy” project, it will undoubtedly be important and necessary over the next few years to propose to the E2C network that it benefit from the work of this project in terms of civic and political skills, as we are dealing here with a reflection on identity that does not seem at first sight to be accompanied by all the skills identified on these issues. The potential offered by second-chance schools should be included in any project of this type involving young people, as their transferability to many European countries means that they

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<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/d0a8aa7a-5311-4eee-904c-98fa541108d8>

63 European Second Chance Schools. <https://e2c-europe.org/> Last accessed 10.04.2024

64 Isabelle Houot, Nathalie Lavielle-Gutnik: “Nouveau Référentiel de Compétences dans les Ecoles de la Deuxième Chance, vers de Nouvelles Transactions. In “Savoirs” 2018, pages 91-110, Paris, l'Harmattan.

65 Huot & Lavielle-Gutnik, 2018, p. 106

can be used to strengthen the supervision of these groups and complement the projects being monitored.

## Programs addressing initial difficulties in acquiring skills

This generic term covers a range of specialized practices aimed at specific audiences. Three different groups can be distinguished. The first is aimed at **disabled people**, the second at **newcomers** (foreigners who don't speak the local language), and the third at the **very vulnerable**, such as former drug addicts and depressives persons.

Disabled people have long benefited from special facilities, whether in terms of mobility, access to teaching through adapted software, devices for the visually impaired, transcriptions for the deaf, not to mention ergonomic arrangements enabling interaction with the teaching team and the materials made available. When many of the programs in the corpus, such as “Ecoguard” or “Radial Project” list disabled people among their participants, it's clear that these projects have the know-how to deliver a course adapted to these audiences, even if the choice of the diversity of people involved also facilitates access and integration of disabled people who will benefit from the help and support of the rest of the group. There are two types of adaptation here: “physical” adaptations such as an access ramp or the unlocking of software functions such as very large lettering, but also invisible practices such as the choice of an adapted work rhythm or improved direct communication. We refer to these as invisible practices, because they do not appear directly in the documents presenting the project, and are part and parcel of normal pedagogical practices, which are therefore generally not formalized for specialized practitioners. Nonetheless, these practices, which we can't go into here in any further detail, also represent an important asset for these projects. For several decades now, the European authorities have been creating a legislative and even judicial arsenal to guarantee the rights of people with disabilities<sup>66</sup>, a body which includes references in terms of autonomy, accessibility and equal opportunities. It is therefore important that Europe should also capitalize on respect and initiative in the field of disability. With this in mind, and with a view to highlighting the good practices that are less visible but very often present in these programs, the principle of a “disability report card” has been introduced in a majority of member countries. For each project, the Structural Funds management authorities will collect a final document containing the dynamics, strategies and best practices for the disabled public. This document not only constitutes a

66 Further texts on the subject: <https://www.ecologie.gouv.fr/union-europeenne-droits-des-personnes-handicapees-et-accessibilite> Last accessed 10.04.2024

concrete element of dissemination, but can also enable the structures that contributed to its elaboration to benefit from increased visibility for their future projects.

Some of the projects in the corpus are particularly concerned with civic and citizen dynamics, in line with the 2019 European circular on accessibility for people with disabilities to democratic processes such as elections, civic rights and public expression<sup>67</sup>. The knowledge proposed by the “Intellectual Disability People in Bosnia” project and the “Cuscus” project, for example, specifies elements around diversity, mutual respect and responsibility, which are in line with European policies and can constitute elements of dissemination that are often original but unfortunately not very visible, and which therefore need to be extracted from practices. This civic and citizenship dimension, naturally accompanied by employability factors, fits in well with the new dynamics around disability.

Many of the reviewed practices are also specifically geared to foreign audiences who **do not speak the local language**, and who do not have the socio-economic knowledge required to live in the country. The use of human translators and translated teaching materials and documents, as in the “Peregrina” project in Turkish and Arabic, enables rapid results to be achieved, which can be combined with the use of appropriate software when the audience so permits. The language barrier can also be overcome by technical training in the field, where gestures and practical demonstrations greatly facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, as in the “Custodi del Bello” project. Over and above these ways of getting around linguistic difficulties, the aim is also to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge about the host country and, by extension, about Europe. Without going into too much detail, we're dealing here with multicultural practices that are not necessarily easy to pass on to a public that may present very strong socio-cultural gaps. What emerges from the projects analyzed is the ability to overcome differences using teaching methods derived from foreign language teaching. For example, language immersion often takes place in small groups, enabling the rapid acquisition of basic vocabulary. At the same time, the choice of vocabulary will include civic and political terms and content, enabling students to rapidly learn the elements of integration at this level, as a prelude to autonomy and the ability to formulate judgments and reasoning. These are generally non-formalized

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67 European Commission (COM(2021) 101 final). Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Social and Economic Committee and the Committee of Regions. Union of Equality: Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52021DC0101>

methods that enable foreign learners to acquire the language on a basis that has a dual professional and civic priority. We'd like to emphasize that collecting these easily transposable linguistic best practices could be the subject of our own approach. While there's no denying the primary importance of the language-learning method and the traces it leaves on the subject's later expression and ability to think, learning a language with an assumed professional, political and social dimension will lead to easier integration and greater involvement in the country's collective life. There are also natural links between the world of work, presented as an objective to be achieved, and knowledge of the country's environment, which also serves the individual concerned. Whereas the training public, often made up of language teachers, did not have a political mission, here we still have a desire to pass on the language, but through a number of economic and social objectives. This is transforming not only teaching, but also trainers, who are going to have to give their courses a logic that leads to integration. All this will lead to the creation of original training courses, the very subject of knowledge acquisition, which deserve to be disseminated and exhibited.

Lastly, we'll find quite specific practices for audiences that are often diverse, but with **very fragile psychological and mental profiles**. Although not limited to people suffering from specific mental disorders, these audiences include many people who have been weakened by great suffering. Refugees who have fled misery and torture, marginalized young people who have taken refuge in drugs, elderly people traumatized by isolation and ill-treatment - these are all profiles that require special care in terms of training. A number of projects offer collective assistance practices in which the group protects the weakest members of the group, without forgetting the presence of volunteers. The "Cuscus" project, for example, integrates culinary practices as an element of appeasement, while the "Power Program" focuses on responding point by point to the concrete problems of the participating women, thus ultimately triggering confidence and a positive dynamic. We're more concerned here with a pedagogical process of sharing and the search for a certain serenity. It would also be interesting to be able to analyze more closely the psychological support given to these groups, and the often very concrete solutions found to address their suffering and win their attention for the acquisition of knowledge. Here again, we're dealing with invisible practices that need to be highlighted and taken into account.

## Training provided by social partners

The European social partners, whether the European Trade Union Confederation for employees, or the employers' representatives Business Europe (private companies), UEAPME (small businesses) and CEEP (public employers), are rooted in a body of legislation and collective practice based on European social dialogue. Within this framework, these structures are involved in the Structural Funds and encourage their local representatives to invest in economic and social dynamics. In Italy, for example, the CGIL, CISL and UIL trade union centers offer training courses through partner associations and foundations, as do their counterparts in Spain, the CCOO and UGT. The “Torino my city” project, for example, includes such components in its partnership. Using such partnerships to offer training on employability, for example, or more rarely on citizenship issues, is an interesting possibility. The added value, beyond the skills that can be mobilized, is not only to benefit from support for future recruitment, but also to be able to pass on best practices to the European level and thus play the transferability card, while feeding partner networks. There are countless European networks that include structures linked to social partners and professional branches, and having such relays is an asset that should not be overlooked by partners and project managers alike.

## Validation of acquired experience

Validation of acquired experience (VAE)<sup>68</sup> is a process that has been underway for some time in several European countries, but which remains little-known to those involved in vocational training and generally unknown to those concerned with civic and democratic issues. Validation of acquired experience (VAE) is a measure that enables anyone, regardless of age, level of education or status, to have their acquired experience validated in order to obtain professional certification. Several projects in the corpus, such as “Global Support” and “News Politicians”, make use of this practice, enabling such courses to be set up, which are an ideal complement to the actions carried out for young people. VAE is aimed either at people who have already had successive professional experiences before going through a negative period, or at people who have never worked but who have skills that can be used professionally. Thinking clearly in terms of skills, and enabling academic

68 Cedefop, European Commission, ICF. (2019). European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning 2018 update: Synthesis report. [https://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2019/european\\_inventory\\_validation\\_2018\\_synthesis.pdf](https://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2019/european_inventory_validation_2018_synthesis.pdf) Last accessed 10.04.2024

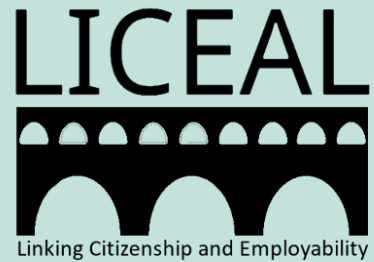


recognition that is often indispensable, VAE makes it possible to enhance the value of individuals who have experienced a break in their professional activity, or who have a totally atypical profile. This means we can capitalize on skills that are both professional – including in specific fields such as sustainable development – and civic and democratic, through skills in associations and even politics. One of the principles of VAE is to offer courses that will progressively validate the skills acquired, but also offer training to complete the profile and often fill in the gaps. For example, if a refugee has all the skills needed to work as a plumber, he or she can also take a language course, as well as a course on the accounting standards and practices of the host country. VAE is the only system proposed here where all acquired skills, including those in civic and political fields, will be valued, enabling individualized and optimized courses to avoid training involving knowledge already acquired. Although VAE can be used for all audiences and all cases, the ability to sign VAE contracts on a case-by-case basis with part of the target audience is clearly an opportunity that should not be overlooked, especially as each pathway can be analyzed and thus valorized. The spin-off of VAE courses is particularly interesting, as it allows for positive publicity and often identification with predecessors. “He did it, why can't I?” becomes particularly relevant for individuals who had never found a practical solution for their particular situation.

It should be pointed out, however, that VAE also has a number of weaknesses in most European countries. On the one hand, courses are often difficult, long and time-consuming, which demotivates some candidates and accounts for significant drop-out rates. We need to be able to call on the services of committed professionals to keep track of candidates and prevent them from giving up. Secondly, universities often have a problem with VAE, refusing to authorize it or complicating candidates' work with additional courses and requirements that are sometimes too restrictive and unnecessary. This is where the relationship between the VAE system and the validating institution is important. In cases involving difficult learners, the level of supervision needs to be raised, as does the pedagogical approach towards the associated training establishments. ◀

# LICEAL project:

The analysis of existing practices presented in this publication has been the first step in the frame of LICEAL project. Based on the analysis of this publication and on the project objectives, the LICEAL team develops educational products in order to support adult educators during the creation of more learning paths integrating employability, entrepreneurship, and citizenship/civil engagement competences within the horizon of a personal development.



## For educators

In particular, the 1) **guidelines for adult educators** and the supplementary 2) **planning toolkit** present theoretical and methodological elements for the design of learning programs for adults that are particularly geared towards the development of competences (rather than just the transfer of knowledge). In this context, the adult educator is seen as a **facilitator** who accompanies and supports the learner on their learning journey. The guidelines present various participative and interactive learning methods and approaches useful for encouraging a proactive and self-determined attitude and for strengthening transversal competences.

They especially introduce how to plan training courses based on competences by making use of competence descriptors, how to integrate competence development in a training process, or how the competence perspective serves identification and recognition of learning. In particular, the 3) **Competence Explorer** is intended to serve as a digital tool for implementing the competence dimension directly in learning design and implementation of educational activities (including the most relevant key competence frameworks developed at European level).

## For adult learners

The guidelines are directly connected to the 4) **adult learners' toolkit** with specific focus on the important three competence dimensions: **critical and systemic thinking, cooperative, digital**. The toolkit will be developed as a self-learning path including self-positioning assessment, motivational videos and resources for learning. The toolkit aims to serve mainly adult learners for self-reflection and self-development in the personal and professional dimensions, but can also serve adult educators in trainings, mentoring and other competence-building activities.



All LICEAL Resources [online](#)

## For policy

The project develops 5) **policy recommendations** in a participatory process with Policy Labs involving civil society, labor market actors, administrations, educators and learners. 6) **Policy guidelines** provide educators and educational organisations with concise and comprehensible guidance on the policies relevant to linking employability and citizenship.

## Project partners

- [Association EDIAS](#) – France, Saint-Martin d’Heres (Coordinator)
- [Istituto Internazionale Di Diritto Umanitario](#) – Italy, San Remo
- [Forum des Régions Européennes pour la Recherche l’Éducation et la Formation](#) – France, Vénissieux
- [Comitato Promotore S-NODI Gabriele Nigro](#) – Italy, Turin
- [Democracy and Human Rights Education in Europe](#) – Belgium, Brussels
- [Learning Designers](#) – Spain, Almuñecar
- [Wiener Forum für Demokratie und Menschenrechte](#) – Austria, Vienna
- [Bogazici Universitesi](#) – Turkey, İstanbul
- [France Travail Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes](#) – France, Lyon

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