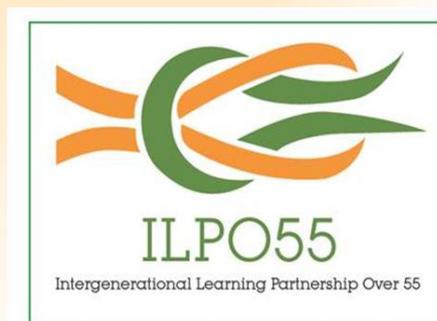




ILPO55

Intergenerational Learning
Partnership Over 55



2017

Preface

The Malta College for Arts, Science and Technology, in cooperation with the other project partners has been awarded European funding through the Erasmus + Programme , Key Action 2 (Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices) in terms of a strategic partnership for Vocational Education and Training.

The situation regarding Europe's ageing population is a pertinent subject for different sectors. The number of people in the working age is expected to significantly decline in the coming years. The resultant impact on the labour market, the growth of certain sectors and the economy overall is also a reality. As highlighted in the Europe 2020 strategy only 46% of older workers (55-64) are employed compared to over 62% in the US and Japan. On the other hand, the EU has also set the increase in employment of older workers as a key objective. The Europe 2020 strategy sets out a target of increasing the employment rate of the population aged 20 to 64 to at least 75% by 2020.

The banking sector was also prone to such external forces, and early retirement was heavily used as a tool for workers over the age of 55 to exit from the labour market. Hence the project partners acknowledged that a holistic intergenerational approach was required, to create a bridge between the older and younger adults, whilst targeting the employment of older adults. Furthermore, emphasis was placed on maintaining over 55 workers in employment and for employers in the financial services sector to recognise the importance of adapting towards an age diverse workforce.

Above all, this publication denotes the culmination of 3 years of work by the project partners whereby significant work was done to produce several outputs. This included a combination of background research, consultation with stakeholders, reports, workshops and seminars, courses and a reference framework. It is a pleasure to be able to share this experience, whilst hoping that the outputs developed put into fruition concrete efforts towards addressing the areas highlighted by the project.

Acknowledgements

The project partners would like to thank all the participants from different countries, that voluntarily participated in the piloting phase of the project. Moreover due acknowledgement is also given to the different banks, financial institutions and other public and private stakeholders that provided feedback and input towards research tasks, consultation seminars and the final outputs of the project. Lastly a special thanks goes to the Maltese National Agency (European Union Programmes Agency - EUPA) for the guidance and support given throughout the progression of this project.

Executive Summary

The project titled 'Intergenerational Learning Partnership Over 55' is a three year project funded through the Erasmus+ Programme. The final activity of this project includes the ILPO55 publication in the form of an e-book. This has been developed based on the experience of 10 partners from different European countries in relation to the development, piloting and finalisation of the project website, ILPO55 reference framework, qualifications and related outputs. Moreover, this document includes the main background information, project outputs and recommendations to key stakeholders. It is aimed at offering concrete proposals to stakeholders in the banking and finance industry with a particular focus on issues of age management, employee retention of the over 55 and intergenerational cooperation with younger employees.

Partnership



Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology

www.mcast.edu.mt



Effebi Association

www.asseffebi.eu



Institute of Banking Education

www.ibv-nbs.sk



Institute of Financial Services - Malta

www.ifsmalta.org



Malta Union of Bank Employees

www.mube.org



Mediterranean Bank Network

www.medbanknet.com



Università Telematica Internazionale Uninettuno

www.uninettunouniversity.net



NIBE-SVV

www.nibesvv.nl



Anup International

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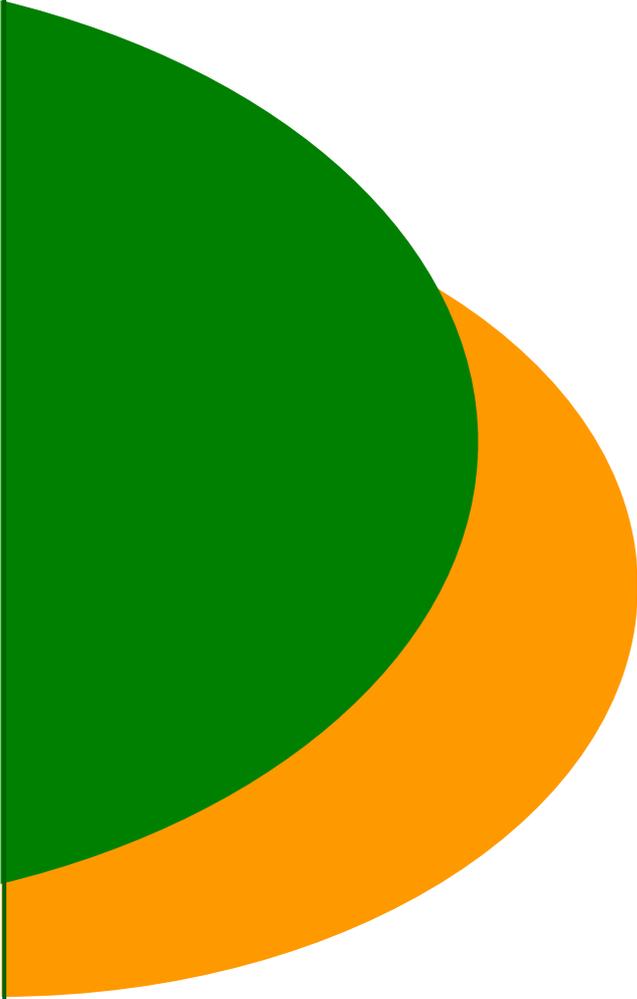
Institut d'Estudis Financers

www.iefweb.org

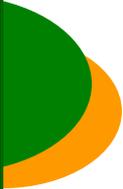
The project brings together 10 partners from 6 European countries, forming a transnational cooperation partnership with a balanced representation of the Erasmus+ area. The project consortium reflects a strong mix of organisations that includes education and training institutions together with banking associations and unions.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	7
2. Needs & gaps analysis - conclusions and recommendations	11
3. Ilpo55 Professional Qualifications	15
3.1. Adult Trainer & Social Responsibility Facilitator Qualifications	16
3.3. Blended training programmes	26
4. Ilpo55 reference framework	28
4.1. Methods and tools for competence evaluation – the Employability Portfolio	31
4.2. Methodologies for supporting the professional development	47
4.3. Recommendations for acquiring the ILPO55 Qualifications	50
4.4. Legal and regulatory provisions	55
5. Validation of the ILPO55 Reference Framework and the two Qualifications	64
5.1. Piloting methodology and instruments	65
5.2. Results of the national piloting reports	67
5.3. Conclusion and recommendations for the ILPO55 Framework and the two Professional Qualifications	79
6. Recommendations to key stakeholders	82
6.1. To adult learners	83
6.2. To adult training organizations	84
6.3. To Employers	86
6.4. To Policy Makers	87
7. Annexes:	88



1. INTRODUCTION



The project set up the ILPO55 Reference Framework, which will address the Over 55 individual needs with a 360 degree perspective:

- Analyse education, training and work experiences
- Assess individual competencies
- Identify personal and professional objectives
- Support over 55 individuals in planning their future career/work experiences
- Give advice regarding the existing opportunities for validation of competencies, recognitions of prior learning etc..
- Provide support for further education and training of the over 55 individuals

The project is based on a number of intellectual outputs with concrete results related to the rationale and objectives of the project. An overall summary of each key result is being included below, in view that these are further elaborated in other sections.

1. Evaluation Strategy and Instruments

The first project output included the internal evaluation strategy, aimed at ensuring the quality of project outputs. Moreover it was also targeted towards proposing remedial actions and to effectively confront quality problems which might be presented

2. Project Website

The project website aims to serve as a core dissemination and multiplication channel providing information on the project's goals, activities, and deliverables produced and available to the public.

3. Needs and Gaps Analysis

The needs and gaps analysis aimed at

1. Identifying needs and gaps in the field of age management and intergenerational cooperation.
2. Collect and analyse examples of good practices in the field
3. Identifying further needed actions to be taken for engaging and supporting stakeholders in implementing an integrated approach.

Hence this output produce 6 results, namely

- 5 National Reports
- 1 European Overview and Roadmap report, encompassing input from the different national reports

4. Course Curricula for ILPO55 Qualifications

This output refers to the design of two courses based on the results of the needs and gaps analysis. These were expressed in terms of learning outcomes. The overall results produced by this output included course curricula and blended training programmes for the two courses.

5. ILPO55 Reference Framework

The ILPO55 reference framework represents a central component of this project. This output refers to the development of a consolidated version of the Reference Framework based on 3 methods and 7 instruments for supporting the professional development of the over 55.

6. European Report on the piloting of the ILPO55 Reference Framework and the ILPO55 Qualifications

This output refers to the piloting phase of the project whereby the ILPO55 reference framework and the courses produced were piloted in the partner countries. This was based on a piloting methodology established as part of the work done for this output, which was also based on a number of piloting activities and national consultation workshops. The overall results included national piloting reports from the partner countries and a European piloting report that includes a comparable analysis of the feedback received from the 5 countries.

7. Final Publication of Project Results

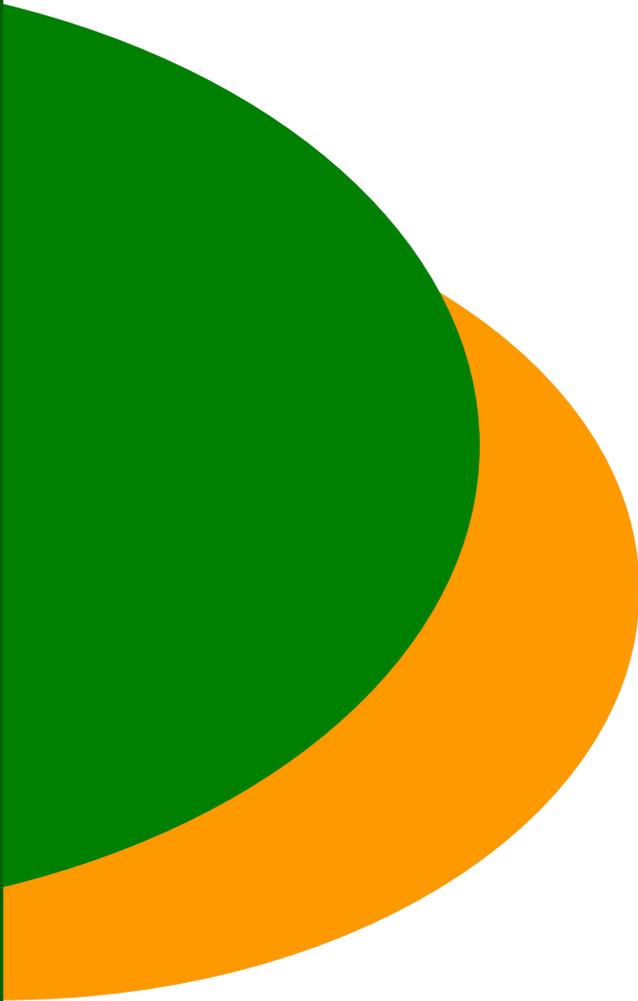
This output reflects the culmination of all the work done throughout the project, which in fact results in this e-book.

8. Exploitation and Sustainability Strategy

This output relates to an exploitation plan that ensures that project results reach the right target audiences. Moreover, the aim is to successfully transfer the results to appropriate decision-makers to achieve their sustainable promotion and support. The overall results produced therefore included

- an internal intellectual property rights agreements

- The Exploitation and Sustainability Plan
- The organisation of the final dissemination conference



2. NEEDS & GAPS ANALYSIS - CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The ILPO55 consortium started the project by undertaking a Needs and Gaps analysis with the aim of analysing the over 55 competencies and how age management and intergenerational activities were taking place in the financial services sector.

Intergenerational activities are extremely relevant and could be a useful way to exchange knowledge and skills between different generations. The over 55 would have acquired such through working experience and whilst the , under 35 would have recently learnt these from their educational experience.

The research methodology was designed trying to address as much target audience as possible as well as ensuring quality of the contents and useful feedback. To achieve these aims, the following tools were agreed among partners:

1. Surveys:

In the current changing professional, economic and social environment, age management strategies can contribute to recognizing skills and transferring of work-based competencies from the employees who are 'over 55' to the younger generations, exchanging of competencies and increasing efficiency and motivation.

The questionnaire asked the views of respondents as to know how older and younger generations can share skills, knowledge and experience with staff or colleagues and how your organisation approaches intergenerational sharing of knowledge and best practice.

2. Focus groups & Interviews

In order to ensure a better approach on intergenerational activities and gaps between over and under 55 years old in the financial services sector, the project team organised focus groups and interviews to share the expertise, knowledge and interests of key stakeholders in FSS and ensure that the activities and materials to be developed and used as part of the project are 'real', relevant and useful.

Most of the focus groups discussed the qualities that each cohort has and agreed that over 55 tend to have:

- maturity
- a sense of discipline
- experience

These qualities are acquired through experience and they could be transmitted through mentoring or coaching.

On the other side, under 35 tend to be/have, as demonstrated above:

- technological skills and abilities
- networking sense
- social commitment

3. National & European Report

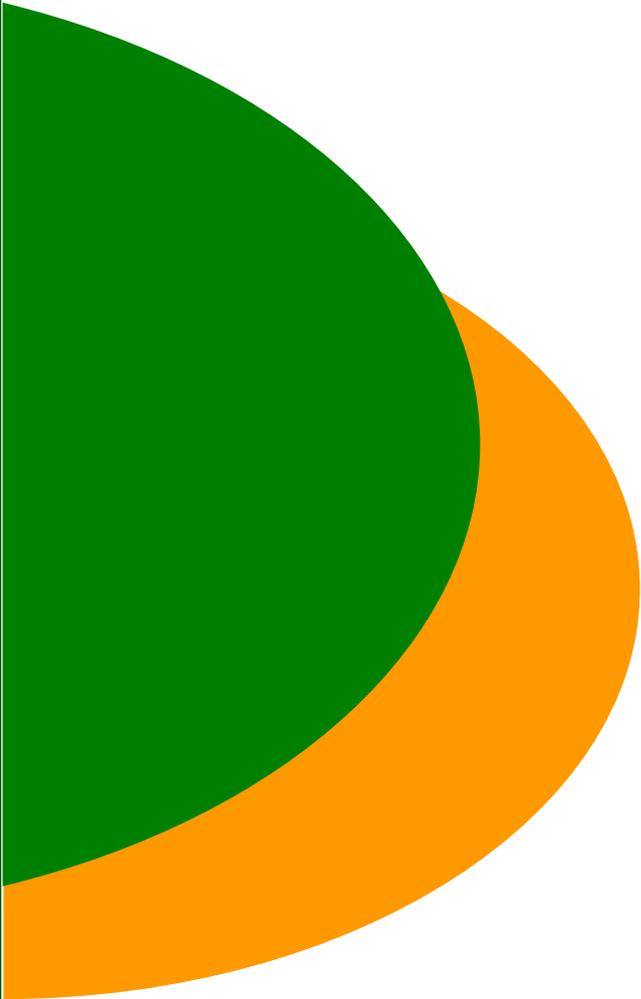
Partner countries analysed the results of the competencies feedback and intergenerational activities proposals from surveys, focus groups and interviews in National Reports.

The results of this analysis are the basis for comparative research within the European Report that summarises and compares all the results from five different countries.

The main results of the research have been worked out in the project in order to produce the ILPO55 Framework and the tools that would fill in those needs and gaps to foster employability of over 55:

- In the past 8 years, most of the banks had re-structured their organizations due to the financial crisis. This has directly affected over 55 that are currently working part-time in the banking system, or were just retired but still willing to be active.
- The demographic situation is a common theme amongst the countries involved in the research. The cohort between 35 and 55 is very high and will be in the near future the project's target. Hence a high number of those aged over 55 is expected.

- Some organizations have launched several programs within the own organisations to promote active ageing.
- Socio-political factors: On one hand, the European Commission is trying to enhance policies and prioritise active ageing. This is evident through various initiatives shown in the past years such as studies, funds and specific projects. On the other hand, all countries are closely observing this issue, with a specific concern expressed by Trade Unions due to the demographic expectations of a significant number of over 55 as a result of an ageing European population. From a political and policy perspective most of the countries are activating policies to start proving this target with tools and competencies to face a new period of life. In all the analysed countries, the concern and involvement of the Trade Unions and Professional Associations is being a trigger to activate national policies and initiatives.
- The retention of Over 55 is still not very attractive to Managers and HR.
- Technology is a very important competence in Banking and this is evidently more developed in the younger generation than the older generation. The sharing of knowledge and skills related to ICT and online tools from the under 35 to the over 55 is to be given priority.
- We are living in a world where humans are instruments of profit. In a technological world which is overwhelming for the over 55 it is difficult to see what an older can do for a younger person.
- ILPO55 is needed since younger generation, although quick in absorbing information, are not well prepared when they leave Universities.
- As far as Trade unions are concerned, this project can offer the possibility to be closer to the population, and thus highlighting the opportunities that this transfer of knowledge can provide for the over 55.
- How to transfer the value of retaining over 55 in an organization? What could be the narrative to make young managers value over 55 competencies and expertise? Young managers are extremely based in "efficiency" where over 55 seem not to fit in their strategy.



3. ILPO55 PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

3.1. Adult Trainer & Social Responsibility Facilitator Qualifications

The ILPO55 qualifications have been defined based on the needs analysis conducted during the first months of the project and have been elaborated in line with the European lifelong learning instruments.

These two qualifications (Adult Trainer and FSS Social Responsibility Facilitator) represent a professional opportunity for over 55 employees and/or experts in the banking and financial sector. In addition, they are in line with national and European policies in the field of age management.

Adult Trainer

Overall Objectives	The aim of this qualification is mainly to provide the knowledge, skills and competences required to effectively plan, prepare, deliver and evaluate training sessions. This is in view of the prospective over 55 employee being experienced in banking and finance, but probably lacking in the training element
Areas of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and preparation of training sessions/courses • Development and provision training (including mentoring and tutoring) • Co-ordination of team and individual work • Helping incorporation and contextualization • Monitoring and Assessment
Organizational CONTEXTS/Roles	Part-time/occasional training (in-company or externally) Professional (full-time) training
Description (Profile)	The expert adult trainer is the professional who is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialised in a certain technical subject; • Able to establish a pedagogical relation with the trainees during a training session, promoting the acquisition of knowledge and competencies as well as the development of attitudes and behaviours in accordance with the professional performance required.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The facilitator in the learning process.
Units	<p>The Adult Trainer Qualification includes 3 Units:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analysis, Design and Delivery of Training Activities 2. Technology Enhanced Learning 3. Mentoring
Core Competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand and feel comfortable in the technical context in which he/she is specialised Adapt to the different organisational contexts and different target groups Plan and prepare the training contents and modalities Adjust the learning processes and activities to learning pace and preferences of participants and organizations Able to deliver E- learning/Blended learning (Web) Context – e.g. platforms, app, etc. (e-trainer) Lead and facilitate the training/learning processes in each group of trainees Manage the progression of a trainee Evaluate the training efficiency and efficacy
Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comfortable in the professional context, in the institution and in the working market In good relation with himself and with the others Integrated in the real world of work Empathy Respect towards adult learners
PRE-REQUISITES	<p>Diploma or other professional qualifications in communication/ education/ management/ training</p> <p>Working experience (minimum 4 years in the specific technical field)</p>
EQF LEVEL & Credit Value (can be expressed in ECVET or ECTS depending on context and country) (Suggested)	<p>EQF Level 5</p> <p>6 credits</p>
Assessment procedures (Suggested)	<p>Presentation , Practicum, Project work, written and/oral Assignment,</p>

Financial Services Sector Social Responsibility Facilitator

Overall Objectives	The programme for the financial services sector social responsibility facilitator aims at helping the over 55 employees within the financial services sector to understand the importance of social responsibility. The experienced adult, can contribute effectively by also helping his/her own organisation in terms of the dissemination of good practices regarding this field. Hence this course aims to be the first stepping stone towards a more active participation for the over 55 employees.
Areas of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good Practices. Provide input to the Company's CSR Department on existing good practices with respect to CR. • Benefit Analysis. Provide support to the management in assessing the company risks and opportunities with respect to CR. • Program Development. Support the CSR management in developing and implementing CSR policies and programs. • Measurement. Provide advice for developing appropriate goals and process for measuring the Company's performance with respect to CR. • Stakeholder Engagement. Provide support in engaging internal and external stakeholders for implementing CSR activities. • Communications. Work effectively with the management to advance the Company's reputation with respect to CR.
Organizational contexts/ Roles	FSS SR Facilitator within FSS Institutions CSR professional for NGOs, private and public companies, etc.

Units	<p>The FSS SR Facilitator Qualification includes 4 Units:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction to Social Responsibility in the Financial Services Sector 2. The Role of Internal and External Stakeholders 3. Strategies and tools for SR Implementation 4. Professional Knowledge, Skills and Competences for the Social Responsibility Facilitator
Core Competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and experience in activities related to CSR and reporting in a corporate setting. • Understanding of the global CR landscape, key CR issues and good practices. • Experience in implementing a CR program; e.g., work on strategy, policy development, program development, goal setting, reporting, internal management systems, etc. • Ability to identify trends and issues in business and society that affect the Company's CR agenda. • Written communications and oral skills, including public speaking, meeting facilitation and presentations. • Ability to analyze and interpret data.
Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to and passion for CR. • Innovative thinker who can constructively challenge conventional ways of thinking and propose new ideas. • Resilient and able to adapt to different challenges. • Customer service commitment for internal and external stakeholders. • Ability to meet deadlines and to be in line with priorities quickly. • Reputation for integrity and judgment.
PRE-REQUISITES	<p>Diploma or other professional qualifications in areas such as: social services, environment Real working experience (minimum 5 years in the same organization)</p>

EQF LEVEL & Credit Value (can be expressed in ECVET or ECTS depending on context and country) (Suggested)	EQF Level 5 8 credits
Assessment (Suggested)	Report, Presentation , Practical examination, Project work, Assignment, Examination



3.2. Course curricula and assessment standards

Introduction

The ILPO55 qualifications were designed based on the principles of student centred learning and thus defined in terms of units of learning outcomes, expressed in terms of knowledge, skills and competences. The piloting phase of the project, was an interesting opportunity to obtain feedback and do the necessary changes. This section includes the main elements from the final course curricula. This information was adapted from the full document developed by the project.

1. Adult Trainer

The adult trainer qualification is composed of three units of learning outcomes, that focus on the key requirements to deliver training activities or else act as a mentor. A brief overview of each unit is included below.

Unit 1-Analysis, Design and Delivery of Training Activities

Unit Description

This unit will look at the key aspects related to the planning, preparation and delivery of training activities. Learners will be introduced to the purpose of training within an organisation together with considerations that need to be taken for training design. When working with adults, educators & trainers need to take a different approach that considers the characteristics of the adult learners.

Moreover, the learner will be trained on delivery approaches and methodologies taking into consideration the needs of the target group and of the organisation. It is also necessary to consider the assessment and related evidence required to demonstrate that learning outcomes have been achieved.

Main Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

1. *Explain the purpose of training and the role of the Adult Educator within an organisation;*

- 2. Discuss the importance of planning for training and assessment;*
- 3. Prepare and use appropriate material and methods for training delivery and assessment;*
- 4. Discuss and apply the five assumptions of adult learners and the four principles of andragogy.*

Unit 2-Technology Enhanced Learning

Unit Description

The proliferation of technology and online learning has created a wealth of opportunities for educators to facilitate the learning process. This is also highly relevant within the context of workplace training and adult learning. This unit will introduce learners to methods and techniques that can be used to complement training delivery. This goes beyond using slides in a traditional lecture based environment. In fact, this unit explores how information and communication technology promotes interactions between the learners themselves and the adult trainer within different learning contexts.

Main Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- 1. Identify different types of technologies, which can be used for learning, and evaluate their effectiveness;*
- 2. Design multimedia materials to be applied to technology enhanced teaching scenarios;*
- 3. Apply technology enhanced learning in the adult training process.*

Unit 3-Mentoring

Unit Description

Tutoring and mentoring have been identified as important skills for the expert adult trainer within the context of intergenerational learning in the financial services sector. It can also be considered as a learning relationship that is rooted in principles of adult learning. Tutoring and mentoring are also about creating a safe and comfortable environment, to be able to develop the potential of the employee being tutored / mentored. In this regard this unit will discuss the role of mentoring and its role in the learning process, particularly the identification of individual needs. This unit will also introduce learners to the elements to be considered in the tutoring and mentoring role. Learners will be exposed to the

apprentice, competency and reflective models of tutoring and mentoring and the process to build effective relationships between the tutor/ mentor and the learner / mentee.

Main Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- 1. Develop strong and supportive mentoring relationships built on trust and confidentiality;*
- 2. Plan and prepare formal mentoring sessions;*
- 3. Assist mentees in developing problem solving and self-development skills.*

2. Social Responsibility Facilitator

The social responsibility facilitator qualification is composed of four units of learning outcomes, that focus on the key elements related to social responsibility in particular, within the Financial Services Sector. A brief overview of each unit is included below.

Unit 1-Introduction to Social Responsibility in the Financial Services Sector

Unit Description

Financial Institutions can be considered as important components of the worldwide economic system. Such entities provide consumers and commercial clients with a wide range of financial services. The number of people affected by activities of financial organisations tends to be very large and normally entails long term relationships. After the 2008 financial crisis, many were concerned about the decline in confidence in financial services institutions. Therefore, this unit introduces learners to the general notions and definitions of Social Responsibility as applied to the financial services sector. Importance will be given to the need for trust, accountability, transparency and particularly the issue of governance; which is critical in different areas including the legal, ethical and economic elements.

Main Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- 1. Analyse and evaluate the pertinent CSR activities integrated to business and non-business as applied in the financial services sector;*
- 2. Recognise and select the benefits of social responsibility for business.*

Unit 2- The Role of Internal and External Stakeholders

Unit Description

Banks and other financial services institutions affect a large number and variety of people. One can consider both internal and external stakeholders. This includes the owners, officers, employees, borrowers, depositors, government and communities. Hence it is important that the 'social responsibility facilitator' understands the role/function of such stakeholders.

This unit will therefore introduce learners to the different internal and external stakeholders, elements that should be included in stakeholders' dialogues and how to deal with issues related to social responsibility.

Main Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- 1. Use stakeholder analysis to Identify individuals or organisations that are impacted by or can contribute to organisation's CSR measures;*
- 2. Analyse the role of internal and external stakeholders within the context of Social Responsibility.*

Unit 3- Strategies and Tools for Social Responsibility Implementation

Unit Description

The implementation of Social Responsibility measures requires effective strategies and tools to be efficient. The Social Responsibility Facilitator has an important role, in using his/her experience in the Financial Services Sector, to support the management of a financial services organisation in this context. It is also fundamental that financial services organisations also understand the economic consequences of ethical failures. This unit will therefore consider these key aspects together with how the impact of corporate social responsibility can be measured.

Main Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- 1. Evaluate the role of the Social Responsibility Facilitator in supporting management for the implementation of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR);*

- 2. Produce and Apply appropriate tools to implement and measure the impact of Social Responsibility activities.*

Unit 4- Professional Knowledge, Skills and Competences for the Social Responsibility Facilitator

Unit Description

In order for the social responsibility facilitator to be effective in his/her role, certain knowledge, skills and competences are required. These can be considered to be a package that enables the social responsibility facilitator (SRF) to work concretely in the field of CSR. Effective communication, problem solving skills, conflict resolution, team-work and work ethics are few of the most important soft skills that enable the social responsibility facilitator to fulfil his duties. Moreover, the social responsibility facilitator needs to be sensitive to issues affecting society and the environment around his/her organisation. S/he needs to be able to think critically and creatively and suggest activities which the company can pursue in order to improve these challenges. This unit will therefore introduce learners to such topics.

Main Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- 1. Apply the techniques of effective communication;*
- 2. Practice critical and creative thinking and emotional intelligence;*
- 3. Use appropriate techniques to solve problems and deal with conflicts.*

Assessment

Assessment is used to verify if learning outcomes were achieved. Considering the nature of the qualifications and the context in which they will be delivered, practical and contextualised assessments are recommended. The adult trainer qualification, for example, can encompass a whole practicum period that can cover all the three units or, when not possible, a project based type of assessment. On the other hand, the Social Responsibility Facilitator units can be assessed through case studies or else a project based assessment within the context of the learner's organisation. However this should not be a restrictive component. Different contexts and organisations may have different resources and needs. Hence apart from these suggestions, one may adapt assessment accordingly.



3.3. Blended training programmes

The project proposes that the two ILPO55 qualifications are offered in a form of a blended learning approach. This approach is highly pertinent in current discussion within adult education due to the flexibility that it offers. Furthermore, this was also considered to be the ideal approach when considering the context of financial services institutions and the needs for adult learners and the over 55.

The aim is to create a learning experience for the learner consisting of both face-to-face, experience and a web-based online learning component. Thus each learner can interact with his peers and tutor during the face to face hours but at the same time offers the possibility for the learner to study at his own pace. The blended learning approach combines the more traditional approach of teaching with the online digital media one. It still requires both the learner and tutor to be present during tuition hours but gives the learner more flexibility and control over time, place and pace of studying. At the same time the blended learning method also offers flexibility for the organisation, tutors and learners alike.

Both qualifications were designed using the blended method approach. The project consortium worked on preparing a tutor's pack. This is to serve as guidance for prospective tutors and trainers. However considering the dynamic nature of the Financial Services Industry, prospective users are encouraged to adapt and create new material according to their particular context. This extra material could be a recorded video of the lecture for revision purposes, but it could also be additional material such as video links, PowerPoint presentations, links to articles and list of suggested readings.

The ILPO55 project is making all relevant material available on the project website. This can be used by banks and financial services institutions as is or else adapted accordingly. The lifelong learning perspective and the principle of flexible qualifications were also considered, in view that one may also consider to only choose a specific unit or more than one. The blended learning approach hence shall further facilitate this process. Overall, one of the recommended methods is the 'flipped classroom'. This is further elaborated in the next section.

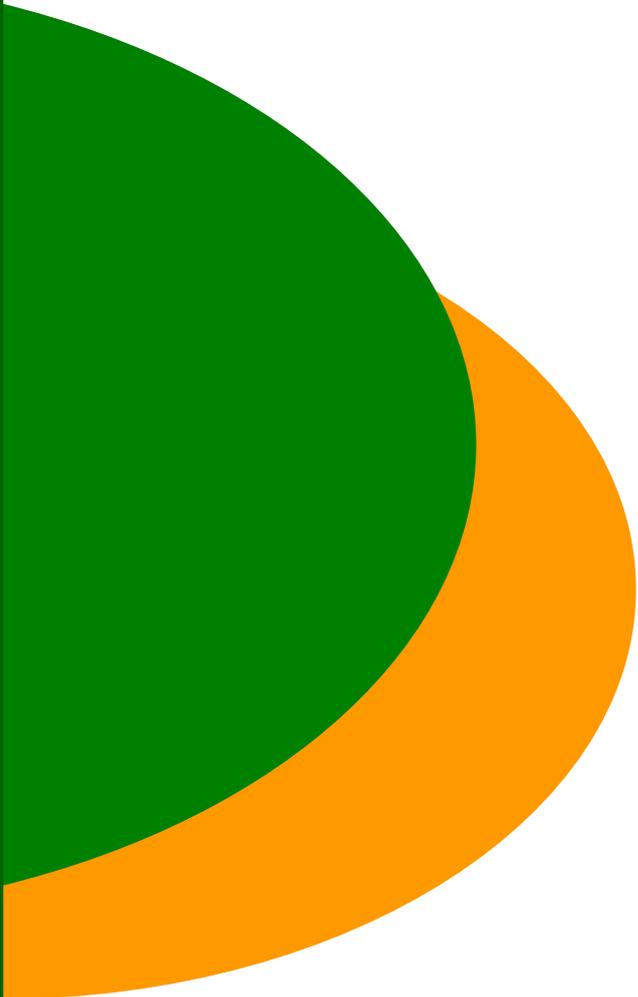
The Flipped Classroom

The flipped classroom method is one of the suggested approaches for the ILPO55 qualifications. This approach mainly considers the fact that what was traditionally done in class or in any other face to face teaching environment can be done at home or in one's free time whilst that which was traditionally done at home is done in class. Hence adult learners following these programmes can go through the material and suggested resources at home and thus use face to face hours to develop better understanding, solve problems or focus on practical tasks. Obviously, such an approach requires also initial guidance from the tutor so that adult learners can orient themselves with the material and how learning should progress.

This can also be a good approach for financial services institutions that might have the limitation of great distances as the onus is placed on the adult learner and a limited number of face to face sessions can be used to further consolidate learning. Blended learning and flipped classrooms may relocate some of the training sessions outside the main training context but that does not mean that a disconnection is to be created between learners, peers and tutors. Hence prospective tutors can still support the over 55 employees through various synchronous and asynchronous methods¹. Interestingly enough this approach is highly scalable and thus can be applied in different ways, starting from one lesson and going further to either a whole unit or else for the whole course.



¹ Synchronous Methods : real-time interaction, e.g. online lecture, video-conferencing
Asynchronous Methods : non real-time interaction, e.g. discussion forums, community spaces brainstorming, email,



4. ILPO55 REFERENCE FRAMEWORK

One of the main aims of the ILPO55 project was the development of a Framework to address the needs of the Over 55² individuals with a 360° perspective, improving their employability making them an essential Human Resource for the development of any institution which decides to employ them. Other aims of the Reference Framework include:

- Analysing the education & training, and work experiences of each individual;
- Assessing their individual competencies;
- Identifying their personal and professional objectives for further Professional Development Plan ;
- Supporting the Over 55 individuals in planning their future career/work experiences;
- Providing advice regarding the existing opportunities for validation of competencies; recognition of prior learning;
- Providing recommendations for the improvement and certification of competencies such as from where to obtain specific qualifications (e.g. Adult Trainer and Social Responsibility Facilitator);
- Providing support for further education and training etc.

The tools and methods forming part of the ILPO55 Reference Framework were developed in a way to address all the aims listed above. In fact, the Reference Framework can be considered as a one-stop-shop for the development of the Over 55 individuals within the Financial Services Sector. This is in line with the principles of Age Management which is an ever growing concern in Europe.

The ILPO55 Reference Framework consists of methods and tools which can help both:

- the Over 55 individuals; providing guidance on what is available in the various countries to support them if they decide to remain in employment, as well;
- as the various FSS Organisations who either already employ Over 55 individuals or decide to employ them, giving them tools to help Over55 individuals with their professional development.

The ILPO55 Reference Framework Consists of the Following Sections:

1. An Employability Portfolio – comprised of three Methods and Seven tools for competence evaluation;
2. Methodologies for supporting the professional development of Over 55 individuals;
3. Recommendations for acquiring the ILPO55 Qualifications;

² Over 55 individuals refers to individuals employed or formerly employed within the Financial Services Sector aged 55 and over.

An analysis of the Legal and regulatory provisions related to Age Management in the partner countries.

Each of these sections will be explained further in the sections below.

4.1. Methods and tools for competence evaluation – the Employability Portfolio

The Employability Portfolio is a compendium of the tools for competence Evaluation and methods for self-evaluation and career progression. It is based on the principles of self-reflection and self-evaluation and is designed as an exercise which helps individuals to identify their strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for Professional Development Plan .

One of the main strengths of the ILPO55 Employability Portfolio is that it validates the experience gained by the individuals throughout their years of employment, and builds upon it to form the future of the individual. In doing so, Over 55 individuals are encouraged and empowered to retain employment and pursue ways for further development and career progression.

Another essential element for the ILPO55 Employability Portfolio is the element of Mentoring. In fact, the entire process, which is composed of seven tools, features the input of an expert from the industry (and the organisation, in the case of employees who are employed at the time of the ILPO55 Employability Portfolio completion) to act as a mentor to the Over 55 individual seeking to improve his career and employability status. The main task of the mentor is that of being a reference point for the Over 55 individual and guide him/her through the process of self-discovery, eliciting his/her strengths and helping him/her to build upon them, whilst also identifying his/her areas for improvement. The Mentor can assist the Over 55 individual in devising plans of action for improvement, and help him/her to customise them in the most effective possible manner.

The Employability Portfolio is composed of three methods and seven tools as follows:

METHODS
1. Mentoring guidelines
2. Training
3. Competency Framework
TOOLS
1. Mentoring Plan
2. Competence Evaluation Questionnaire
3. E-Portfolio
4. Interview

5. Professional Development Plan
6. Recognition of Prior Learning
7. Self-Reflection Exercise

The aim of the Methods within the Employability Portfolio is that of providing insight and instruction about:

1. the use of the various elements of the ILPO55 Reference Framework, namely the Employability Portfolio and its tools;
2. the importance of training for career progression (including reference to the Programmes Developed as part of the Project: The Expert Adult Trainer and the Financial Services Sector Social Responsibility Facilitator);
3. the use of Mentoring as part of the Employability Portfolio and the mentoring tool, the rationale behind the inclusion of mentoring within the Framework and the suggested model for the implementation of mentoring sessions.

The tools forming the Employability Portfolio can be employed in succession, as a process (in the order in which they are listed above), or used individually as per the needs of the organisation and the individual. In either of these cases, the ILPO55 consortium recommends that:

1. guidance, in the form of a mentor is provided to the individual who chooses to use any of the tools within the Employability Portfolio;
2. the Self Reflection Exercise is always filled in, regardless of whether the individual is following the entire process or just a single tool. The Consortium believes that by developing and/or strengthening Over 55's self-reflection skills, it would be giving them a tool which will be useful for them in the long term, even beyond the ILPO55 Employability Portfolio.

The following Sections will provide a detailed overview of the various tools of the Employability Portfolio:

1. The Mentoring Plan

Document Links

[ILPO55 EMPLOYABILITY PORTFOLIO MENTORING METHOD.pdf](#)

[ILPO55 EMPLOYABILITY PORTFOLIO TOOL 1 MENTORING PLAN LAYOUT.pdf](#)

The notion of Mentoring and guidance is central to the ILPO55 Reference Framework and Employability portfolio process. Each individual wishing to undergo a process of growth (both personal and career oriented) needs to be

guided prior to undertaking such process as well as during its execution. The role of the mentor is therefore very important as it provides structured guidance and also gives the individual a point of reference:

1. with whom to discuss personal and professional goals and any difficulties and/or doubts holding him/her back from achieving them;
2. with whom to design the plan and tasks for the achievement of his/her pre-set goals for self and career advancement;
3. to consult when in need of advice regarding any issues and/or difficulties encountered during the execution of the tasks forming part of the plan for personal/professional improvement.

The mentoring plan is the first tool of the ILPO55 Employability Portfolio. Researchers conducted during the ILPO55 project lead the ILPO55 consortium to identify and confirm Mentoring as a key tool for the development of the Over 55 employees within the Financial Services Sector, and hence the decision to place the Mentoring Plan as the first Tool of the Employability Portfolio.

The aim of the Mentoring plan within the ILPO55 Employability Portfolio is to ensure that the Over 55 individuals, choosing to follow the ILPO55 Employability Portfolio process, are given the necessary support, guidance, suggestions and feedback as they fill in and submit the various related tools. Within the Mentoring Plan, the Mentor and Mentee should take the opportunity to discuss the mentee's goals for the future and draw a plan for the successful achievement of such goals.

The use of the mentoring plan is explained in detail in the Mentoring Method forming Part of the 3 Methods within the ILPO55 Employability Portfolio. The ILPO55 Consortium recommends the use of the G.R.O.W. model for the implementation of the mentoring plan which sees the setting up of a Goal and a plan for its fulfilment. Moreover, the ILPO55 Consortium also recommends that the Over 55 individual is led to take control of his/her plan for career progression, with the mentor acting mainly as a prompter and/or point of reference to confirm and/or discuss the various issues that may disrupt the Over 55's process of self and career amelioration.

2. Competence Evaluation Questionnaire

Document Link

[ILPO55 EMPLOYABILITY PORTFOLIO TOOL 2 COMPETENCE EV. QUESTIONNAIRE.pdf](#)

The Competence Evaluation Questionnaire is the second tool within the ILPO55 Reference Framework – Employability Portfolio. The Questionnaire marks the first instance of self-reflection within the Employability Portfolio. It is composed of a number of questions which aim to introduce the Over 55 individual to the

process of Self Reflection, giving him/her (and the mentor) the opportunity to identify his/her skills and competences in view of his/her own career progression.

The results of the questionnaire should provide an initial insight into the individual's main skills and competences which can be further developed through the mentoring sessions planned as part of the mentoring plan, and pave the way for the use of other tools forming part of the ILPO55 Employability Portfolio.

At this stage of the Portfolio, the level of self-reflection expected from the individual is minimal especially when compared to the self-reflection exercise at the end of the portfolio. In fact, the Over 55 individual is only expected to rate his/her skills and competences (on a scale of 1 low to 5 high) and there are no instances of open ended questions.

Nevertheless, one cannot underestimate the importance of the questionnaire at this point of the portfolio, as through it, the Over 55 individual starts to:

1. analyse him/herself;
2. learn to evaluate his/her strengths;
3. Identify his weaknesses and;
4. learn to plan his/her professional future accordingly.

The questionnaire consists of the following sections:

- Section A: Personal Details
- Section B: Management Skills
- Section C: Technical Skills
- Section D: Social Skills
- Section E: Personal/ Behavioural Skills
- Section F: ICT Skills.

These were identified as the most relevant areas for employment within the Financial Services Sector in the various consultation exercises carried out throughout the ILPO55 Project. Such consultation exercises also revealed that whilst the older employees are stronger on the Management, Social and/or Personal/Behavioural skills, they may require help with ICT Skills (although individuals from different departments might have different needs).

Following the completion of the Competence Evaluation Questionnaire, the individual may be invited to use other tools of the ILPO55 Employability Portfolio to further analyse his/her personal knowledge, skills and competences. The use of the questionnaire facilitates the Creation of the E-Portfolio (which is the third tool in the Employability Portfolio) since most of the introspective thinking process on skills and competences would already be complete, and the individual would have already had the opportunity to discuss it with his/her mentor.

3. The E-Portfolio

Document Link

[ILPO55 EMPLOYABILITY PORTFOLIO TOOL 3 EPORTFOLIO.pdf](#)

The E-Portfolio is a key tool within the ILPO55 Employability Portfolio. It is a showcase of the individual and his/her various achievements obtained through education and work experiences as well as other initiatives related to Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and Life Long Learning (LLL). In a way it is similar to a Curriculum Vitae, however it provides more detailed information, and enables the possibility of providing evidence which is difficult to include within (and/or irrelevant for) a normal CV (such as multimedia files, and/or samples of work produced by the individual). Many times, E-Portfolios are used in addition to the CV to give a more complete picture of the individual.

The term E-Portfolio stands for Electronic Portfolio and it is not to be confused with Employability Portfolio. In fact for the purposes of the ILPO55 project, the E-Portfolio is a tool which can be used in conjunction with the other tools forming the Employability Portfolio. For the purposes of the ILPO55 Employability Portfolio process, the E-Portfolio is exceptionally useful in conjunction with the RPL Exercise. The first phase of any RPL Process involves the gathering of evidence and the building of a portfolio which is used to showcase and transmit such evidence to the evaluation board. Having an E Portfolio as one of the tools in the process provides the individual with a head start and further reduces the time needed for building, and therefore processing, of his/her RPL application.

The process of building an E-Portfolio is another instance of Self-Reflection within the ILPO55 Employability Portfolio Process. Through this process Over 55 individuals are required to evaluate and understand their aspirations; strengths; interests; drivers and other influences. They will also be required to walk through their formative years and take stock of their achievements, giving them an opportunity to review what they have achieved throughout the years and identify any gaps in their formation which may preclude them from reaching the pre-set goals.

Moreover the E-Portfolio is a tool which can be used beyond the ILPO55 Employability Portfolio and Reference Framework. In fact, it can be used in any situation which requires the Over 55 individual to describe him/herself formally in terms of his/her achievements (such as at a job interview etc.). The E-Portfolio provides both the individual and the Organisation (with whom the individual is

employed or aspires to join) with a holistic picture of his/her strengths and weaknesses.

There are different types of portfolios depending on the purpose which the individual wants his/her portfolio to fulfill. Some examples are:

1. Developmental Portfolio – which shows the progress of a specific task or project
2. Reflective Portfolio – in which the user reflects on his/her, learning process and consequently represents the changes in his/her understanding over time.
3. Representational or Showcase Portfolio – which showcases content, such as achievements etc.

The ILPO55 consortium recommends that the E-Portfolio developed by the user developed as part of the ILPO55 Employability Portfolio process is a mix of all three categories mentioned above. Nonetheless, an E-Portfolio should not be a repository of each and every bit of information on the individual. E-portfolios need to be designed according to their intended purpose and target audience, much like a Curriculum Vitae. It is therefore recommended that information is carefully selected in order to not overwhelm the audience with information which might also be irrelevant; and ensure that the message is received as clearly as possible.

One of the major challenges within the ILPO55 project was the selection of the ideal E-portfolio platform to recommend for the ILPO55 Employability Portfolio Process. There are various portfolio applications available online offering different options. The ILPO55 consortium researched these platforms and rather than selecting one application, the consortium decided to recommend six applications and leave it up to the applicant to select his/her preferred one, based on his/her skills and needs. The Consortium recommends the following applications:

1. **Mahara ePortfolio System** (<https://mahara.org/>) – which is an open source software therefore free of charge, but needs to be installed on a server, for example on the servers of an organization for use by its employees etc.

2. **Google Sites** (<https://sites.google.com/>) – Google provides a free of charge but limited service to create a small website. This can be created in the form of an e-portfolio.
3. **Wordpress** (<http://www.wordpress.com>) - offers both free and paid plans in order to create a blog. A blog is one of the best platforms that can be used and adapted as an e-portfolio.
4. **Mijneportfolio** (<https://www.mijneportfolio.nl/nl>) – a dutch portfolio system based on the standards of the NEN 2035:2014nl (a Dutch Standard drawn purposely for the regulation of e-Portfolios).
5. **Pathbrite Portfolios** (<https://pathbrite.com/#maker>) – is a free of charge and user friendly approach to e-Portfolio.
6. **Linked in** (<https://www.linkedin.com/uas/login>) – which although is a social network it fulfils the role of e-Portfolio perfectly and allows users to build networks.

Detailed descriptions of these e-Portfolio applications can be found in the E-Portfolio tool Description referred to above. Although the Consortium recommends the above application, it does not mean that they are the only ones available online, or that other similar platforms cannot be used. Any E-Portfolio application can be used as long as it allows the participant to:

1. Write his/her personal details;
2. upload different types of documents;
3. share his portfolio with a third party.

4. The Interview

Document Link

[ILPO55 EMPLOYABILITY PORTFOLIO TOOL 4 INTERVIEW TEMPLATE.pdf](#)

The fourth tool within the ILPO55 Employability Portfolio is the Interview. The interview builds upon the results of the previous 3 tools. By now, the individual would have had two opportunities for Self Evaluation (in the filling in of the Competence Evaluation Questionnaire and the creation of the e-Portfolio) and a number of sessions with the Mentor in which s/he should have discussed the outcome of the Competence Evaluation Questionnaire and the e-Portfolio, and

started drafting a plan for the individual's path for career progression. Therefore the individual would have already gathered enough knowledge about him/herself to enable him/her to answer the questions during the interview session.

The aims of the interview are:

1. to analyse and review the outcomes of the previous three tools and gather information on the individual's personal experience with the ILPO55 Employability Portfolio process;
2. to further explore the individual's skills and competences in order to Identify any possible gaps in view of the pre-established goals within the mentoring sessions;
3. to define and establish the individual goals for professional development (and determine one of the following possible outcomes):
 - Continue working in the same role within the same function within current organisation;
 - Look/Apply for another role in a different function in the same organisation;
 - Continue working in the same organisation but with other activities (trainer, mentor, coaching, CSR facilitator, intergenerational activities, social activities)
 - Look for a job outside the present organisation, and/or take another entrepreneurial route.
4. to discuss and establish an initial plan for professional development.

The ILPO55 Consortium recommends that the interview is held by an HR expert and who is independent from the individual and the Mentoring sessions. The expert needs however to be briefed on the process being followed by the individual and should be provided with the outcomes of the first 3 tools. The interview should concretize the O55 individual's idea/s for Professional Development Plan and provide the basis for the filling in of the Professional Development Plan which is the 5th Tool within the ILPO55 Employability Portfolio. In fact, at the end of the Interview process, the interviewer is to issue a report including all the information discussed and targets established, inviting the O55 individual to examine them in depth in conjunction with the support of his facilitator/mentor, for the creation of his/her the Professional Development Plan.

The decision/s made at this stage of the Employability Portfolio Process (based on point number 3, above), will determine the future of the Over 55 individual and will determine the course of action which s/he will need to take in order to reach the goal decided upon. In some situations it might also mark the end of the Employability Portfolio process especially if the individual decided to look for a job outside the present organisation or take a different entrepreneurial route.

5. The Professional Development Plan

Document Link

[ILPO55 EMPLOYABILITY PORTFOLIO TOOL 5 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN.pdf](#)

The Professional Development Plan is the tool which marks the last step in which the Individual has the opportunity to reflect on the future of his career progression. Any decisions taken at this stage will be the definitive decisions and therefore all that would be left for the individual is to execute the plan and meet the pre-set goals.

The choices to be made as part of this Professional Development Plan depend on a number of factors which are both internal and external to the individual. Internal factors are factors which depend on the individual him/herself such as his/her; skills and competences; lifestyle (an all matters related to it such as: health; family etc); willingness to remain in employment; willingness to change organisations or positions in order to achieve career progression etc. External factors are those factors which do not depend directly on the individual and therefore s/he does not have control over them. Some examples of External Factors are:

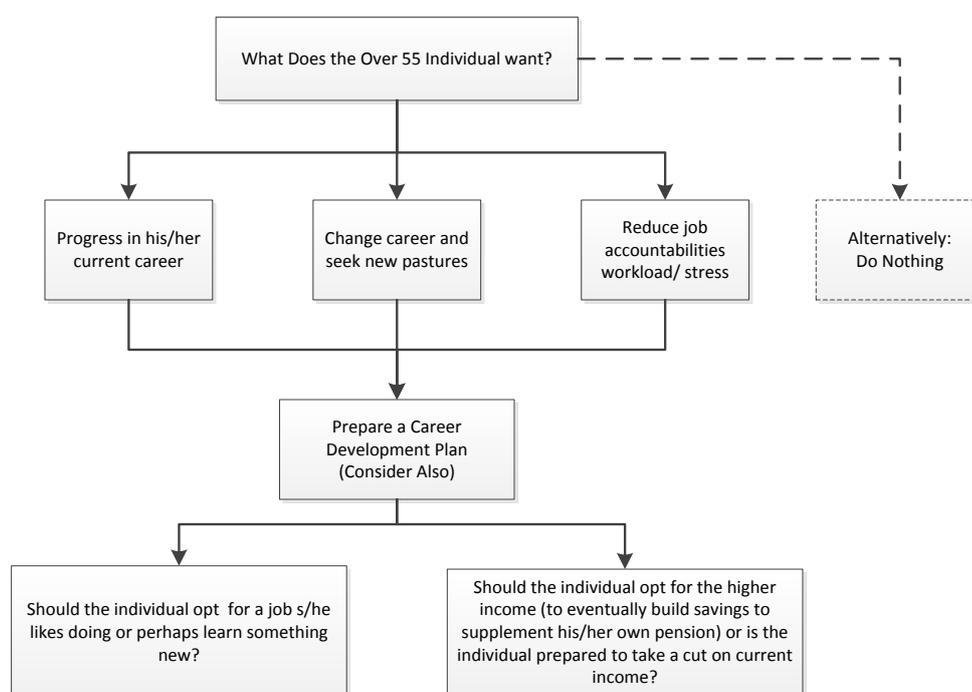
(i) External Factors - Within the current organization:

- The prevailing corporate culture within the bank in relation to its elder employees.
- The availability or otherwise of early retirement schemes.
- The availability or otherwise of reduced working hours; flexi-time and job sharing schemes.
- The availability of job opportunities and new roles within the organization.
- The prevailing HR policies within own current job.

(ii) External Factors - External to the current work organization:

- The general state of the banking and financial services sector.
- The disposition of financial services firms to outsource work and award consultancy positions.
- The support available from the state and other related entities for new start-ups and small and medium sized enterprises.
- The ease with which new business start-ups could be set up and the extent to which authorities support new business initiatives and innovation.
- The current and envisaged state of the economy including the job market.

The ILPO55 Consortium recommends that apart from reflecting on him/herself (as seen in the first four tools of the Employability Portfolio and the emphasis placed on Self Evaluation), the Over 55 individual also analyses the external factors prior to completing the Professional Development Plan. Such evaluation of external sources should be conducted prior to the final decision of the individual so as to prevent any unnecessary disappointments. There are various options which the Individual could take into consideration for his/her future. Some of these will see the individual opting for a job which s/he likes doing but which is different from the current tasks she/he is used to accomplish and therefore requiring him/her to obtain new skills, or else choosing something s/he is good at and reinforcing his/her skills and competencies to be able to execute the work accordingly. Decisions at this stage will also present changes in income and therefore the individual needs to deeply evaluate before making the final decision. The following schematic provides a good picture of such options for the O55 individual.



The participation of the Mentor in guiding the Over 55 individual to complete the Professional Development Plan is crucial. The Over 55 individual needs to have a reference point with whom to discuss the various options at hand and the various decisions that s/he could be undertaking for his/her future career strictly connected to the Professional Development Plan.

6. Recognition of Prior Learning

Document Link

[ILPO55 EMPLOYABILITY PORTFOLIO TOOL 6 RPL- RATIONALE AND GUIDELINES.pdf](#)

[ILPO55 RPL IN EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION.pdf](#)

The inclusion of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) within the ILPO55 Employability Portfolio is in line with the ILPO55 project aims of improving the employability of individuals of 55 years or older within the Financial Services Sector. Throughout the project, the various consultation seminars, and the needs and gaps analysis carried out at the early stages of the project, the ILPO55 consortium confirmed that one of the main reasons why Over 55 refrain from career progression, is the lack of motivation to follow courses and/or further training which might be seen as waste of time. Another factor which emerged from the ILPO55 project initiatives was that these individuals had a number of skills and competences which they accumulated through the years from various experiences and therefore it was important to include RPL as one of the seven tools within the ILPO55 Reference Framework – Employability Portfolio.

RPL within the ILPO55 Reference Framework has a dual role:

1. To provide information to over 55 individuals about the National initiatives related to Recognition of Prior Learning available in their countries. More information about this can be found in the Main RPL Document referred to above.
2. To provide organisations with a procedure and tool for the provision of RPL in Employment which complements their HR and Interview processes related to internal progression of employees.

RPL in Employment is a process by which the individuals are given the opportunity to participate more actively - within the interview process - by providing information on their skills and competences and on how these, in their opinion, complement or fulfill the requirements of a specific call for applications. This process will put the organization (especially HR Departments) in a better position to get to know its employees and make more informed decisions at the end of the interview process. This is a process which is internal to the organization, and which may be used to validate the experiences of its employees. It is in no way connected to, or in conflict with, Official RPL initiatives present in the country and its outcomes are only valid within the organization. RPL for employment may also be used in conjunction with Internal Training Programmes in order to exempt individuals from attending parts of them, thus reducing the time needed to obtain the certificates and therefore encouraging

Over 55 to take up the training programme and progress further. Once again, any credits or units of internal training conferred via RPL in Employment are strictly internal, as any kind of proceeding and results, and this does not mean that the organization is empowered to conduct RPL for the conferring of qualification titles and/or credits on a National Level.

The use of RPL in employment is not an entirely new concept. The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) speaks of RPL for Employers and how RPL can be used within an Employment setting in order to help employers in:

- *"identifying employees' skills effectively;*
- *identifying skills gaps in organisations;*
- *identifying appropriate training opportunities;*
- *reducing the time required in employee training due to minimised duplication of learning;*
- *increasing motivation and interest in workplace activities on the part of the employee/learner*
- *generating new ideas and developments for the organisation as a result of the employee/learner reflecting on work activities."*³

The SCQF also claims that RPL in Employment *"can lead to increased employee retention and reduced recruitment and training costs."*⁴ This is directly in line with the aims of the ILPO55 project and it is an incentive for both the Organisation/s (as it reduces the costs and time required for training) and the Employee (as it reduces the effort needed in order to advance within his/her place of work).

The structure of the ILPO55 Framework facilitates the application of RPL. The most important element for a successful application of RPL is the clear guidance and/or mentoring, a factor which is common throughout the entire process of the ILPO55 Framework. It is important that the person helping the Over 55 employee as part of the framework also acts as a facilitator for the recognition of prior learning. Moreover, some of the other tools forming the framework can easily be applied as tools for RPL. The E-Portfolio is one such tool. The information contained within the e-portfolio can be enhanced and developed in such a way as to serve as the main repository for the evidence needed to be assessed for RPL. In addition when the RPL Process is applied as part of the ILPO55 framework, it is easier to identify whether an individual is eligible or not given the information gathered about the individual throughout the process and therefore the Institution is ensuring that the time and effort spent on the RPL process is not wasted.

³ <http://scqf.org.uk/more/rpl/rpl-for-employers/> accessed on 28.03.2017.

⁴ Ibid.

The RPL process can be a fairly lengthy process which requires complete dedication and commitment by:

- the applicant - in order to submit the information required and to answer any clarifications requested by the organisation, and;
- the organisation – in order to verify the authenticity of the elements within the applicant’s claim and to provide the necessary guidance to the applicant throughout the process.

The ILPO55 Consortium therefore recommends that RPL for career progression is carried out with employees within own organisation and preferably as part of the ILPO55 Framework. Reference can be made to Opren (2006) who referred to the benefits of RPL in employment and on the lessons learned from a pilot held by the Institute for People Development, one of which was that *"RPL should be embedded within broader personal development path planning within any organisation to be personally and organisationally meaningful."*⁵ This is in line with the proposal and recommendations of the ILPO55 Framework wherein RPL for Employment is being proposed as part of a holistic process for the personal development of O55 employees.

7. Self-Reflection Exercise

Document Link

[ILPO55 EMPLOYABILITY PORTFOLIO TOOL 7 SELF REFLECTION GUIDELINES.pdf](#)

The final step in the ILPO55 process is a self-reflection exercise aimed at analyzing the O55’s awareness of his/her own professional development as a result of his/her experience with the tools forming the ILPO55 Employability Portfolio Process.

Self-Reflection is the exercise by which individuals take an introspective look at themselves, in an attempt to learn more about their fundamental nature, purpose and essence. Self-Reflection is an important element which helps individuals make informed decisions about themselves helping them to analyse their past, learn about their present and plan their future. Through Self Reflection, individuals will be able to learn more about their general state of mind, their goals and aspirations and their abilities to achieve such goals.

⁵ <https://www.skillsportal.co.za/content/rpl-makes-sense-employers-well-employees> accessed on 28.03.2017.

Self-Reflection is a very important aspect for the ILPO55 Reference Framework, especially in relation to the Employability Portfolio. The ILPO55 Reference Framework aims at helping Over 55 employees in the Financial Services Sector to make informed decisions about their future and their professional development, and one of the ways it tries to do this is by getting the over 55 individuals to evaluate themselves and identify their strengths and weaknesses. The Employability Portfolio is composed of seven tools each of which constantly drives individuals to ask themselves about their own objectives for the future, analyse their skills and competences to verify whether they fulfil the necessary requirements to meet such objectives and plan accordingly.

The ability to self-reflect is one of the main skills which every professional should possess. Donald Schön (1983) wrote about Self-reflection as a tool for professionals and introduced 2 types of reflection: Reflection on Action and Reflection in Action. Reflection in Action⁶ is the reflection which is done while an action (or event) is occurring. Such reflection will affect any decisions taken in relation to that action/event and might result in a change of action prior to the end of the event in order to obtain a better result. In other words, Reflection in Action is the reflection which is done in real time, prior to the end of an event. It will give the individual the opportunity to improve on the work which s/he is currently doing in order to better meet any pre-set specifications or targets. On the other hand, Reflection on Action⁷ is the reflection done on an action or event which has ended. The thought process for reflection on action would normally follow the following pattern "what would I improve? or what would I do differently... next time or if I had the opportunity to do this again?" Both forms of reflection, offer the individual the opportunity for continuous improvement, and hence their importance and inclusion within the ILPO55 Framework and Employability Portfolio.

The ILPO55 Reference Framework was designed for Over 55 employees and aims at improving their employability and relevance to the industry. The ILPO55 Employability Portfolio features both elements of reflection identified by Donald Schön. Reflection in Action is featured in the main concept of the Employability Portfolio, which is intended to be used by the Over 55 employee whilst s/he is still in employment, in order to identify how s/he can progress his/her career. Moreover, the tools forming part of the Employability Portfolio, such as the Competence Evaluation Questionnaire, the E-Portfolio and the Professional Development Plan , all encourage the O55 Individual to self-reflect on a number

⁶ Adapted from *The Reflective Practitioner* by Donald A. Schön - 1983

⁷ *Ibid.*

of factors about him/herself as an employee and about his/her future to identify potential ways of improving his/her current position.

Alternatively, the Self Reflection Exercise, at the end of the Employability Portfolio, takes the role of Reflection on Action. At this point of the Employability Portfolio Process, the employee should have gained a high dose of experience on self-reflection using the other tools and reached a point where s/he needs to reflect on the benefits (or lack thereof) obtained through such an experience. Guidance should have been provided to the individual, in the form of a mentor, throughout the entire Employability Portfolio Process and the individual should now have developed a higher level of self-awareness which facilitates the self-reflection process and enables him/her to reflect deeper. The aim of the Self Reflection Exercise is that of guiding the over 55 individual to reflect on his/her experience and:

1. validate its effects on himself/herself as an individual, on his/her career and on his/her prospects for the future;
2. reflect on the effectiveness of the ILPO55 Reference Framework and the tools forming part of the Employability Portfolio within the financial services industry, and;
3. suggest ways in which tools and their provision can be improved.

The Self Reflection exercise is divided into four main sections as follows:

Section A - Personal Detail: The Self-Reflection exercise is an integral part of the ILPO55 Reference Framework – Employability Portfolio. Although one of its aims is that of gathering feedback for improvement it is not intended to be an anonymous exercise.

SECTION B - Reflection on own experience with the ILPO55 Employability Portfolio: This section is meant to guide the Individual to reflect on the general experience with the tools forming part of the Employability Portfolio including a chronological reflection on the events leading the individual to follow the ILPO55 process and the reasons behind such decisions. The Individual is invited to reflect on the difficulties encountered and the solutions taken to overcome them, and the areas and tools which in his/her opinion were more satisfying.

SECTION C -
Reflection on
Personal and
Professional Growth
through the ILPO55
Employability
Portfolio:

In this section the individual is invited to dig deeper and reflect more about the changes s/he, as an individual, has undergone through the use of the tools forming part of the ILPO55 Reference Framework especially the Employability Portfolio. The individual is invited to reflect on who s/he was prior to the Employability Portfolio Process and who s/he has become at its completion, focusing on a number of points such as (self-confidence; self-discipline; employment position; personal aspirations and goals; etc.).

SECTION D -
Recommendations
for Improvement:

This is meant to provide information to the organisation, offering the ILPO55 Employability Portfolio Process, in order to gather feedback for improvement in view of future offerings. Such a reflection might also reveal to the individual areas where s/he could have improved his/her performance.

Each section within the Self Reflection Exercise template is made of a number of questions in order to help the thinking and reflection process of Over 55 individuals. Questions are closely knit to one another and some may seem very similar and/or repetitive. This was done on purpose to ensure that the reflection process for each section follows a pre-determined path. Whilst it is not necessary to answer each question directly (given the sheer volume of questions) The ILPO55 consortium recommends over 55 individuals cover as many questions as they can in their reflective process.

4.2. Methodologies for supporting the professional development

One of the objectives of ILPO55 project is to address any skills' gap for the age cohort of Over 55 individuals within financial services and this is being done through the design and implementation of two Professional Qualifications:

The first one addressing mentoring skills and the second one aimed for the individuals embarking on corporate social responsibility facilitator within the financial services industry.

As part of the ILPO55 project partners shared instruments and tools to help evaluate professional and personal competences and also support professional development.

These instruments will help to:

- give insight in the situation/motivation of the over 55 individual;
- give insight in the possible gap with other professional profiles;
- guide for further professional development;
- give possible future career guidance;
- present professional profile for future positions.

A pre-condition for enhancing the employability of over 55 and help further professional development is that the individuals and the employer have a clear picture and insight of the knowledge, skills and competences of the individual. That is why the first pillar of the framework has as ultimate objective a clear competence and skill profile of the over 55 individual. Together with the other pillars of the framework the over 55 can take concrete steps to enhance their employability.

To end up with a clear skills/competence profile an individual ILPO55 Employability portfolio will be developed according to the following steps:

Step 1: an on-line self-assessment questionnaire based on the skills/competences of the individual.

Step 2: based on the results/reports of the questionnaire individuals will be invited for an interview to discuss the results of the previous steps.

Step 3: The over 55 will complete a Professional Development Plan in order to highlight their career options. A career plan helps to build the individual's skills, manage his/her career path and is particularly useful when changing careers. Indeed, it is particularly useful for the 55+ cohort when deciding whether to make use of his/her experience for mentoring purposes or else opt for a completely different career path.

Professional Development Plan for 55+: A step-by-step approach

The assessment should be twofold: internal and external. There are a number of internal and external factors that could directly or indirectly impinge on the choices and option that would be available to the over 55 who is evaluating his current work/career position.

1) Internal assessment:

What are my immediate/short-term objectives?

What are my current skills? Do I need to address any skills gaps?

2) External assessment :

(i) within the current organization:

- The prevailing corporate culture within the bank in particular in relation to its elder employees
- The availability of early retirement scheme
- The availability of reduced working hours; flexi-time and job sharing schemes
- The availability of job opportunities and new roles within the organization
- The prevailing HR policies within your current job.

(ii) external to the current work organization:

- The general state of the banking and financial services sector
- The disposition of financial services firms to outsource work and award consultancies

- The support available from the state and other related entities for new start-ups and small and medium sized enterprises
- The ease with which new business start-ups could be set up and the extent to which authorities support new business initiatives and innovation
- The current and envisaged state of the economy including the job market.

Career evaluation plan

Following for the evaluation:

- Draw up a list of opportunities one would be interested in.
- Set up a plan on how the skills gaps identified are to be addressed.
- The individual will decide if mentoring is his next career move...which skills does he/she need?
- Does the individual have special skills/experience that he/she can leverage to provide consultancy/mentoring to his/her current employer?
- The individual could decide to attend a mentoring/coaching course so as to build on these skills.
- Provide consultancy assistance both in-house but also to other companies.
- Attend seminars or register for qualifications such as the Adult Trainer (Mentoring) and the Social Responsibility Facilitator programme.

4.3. Recommendations for acquiring the ILPO55 Qualifications

Introduction

As defined in the European Recommendation setting the European Qualifications Framework⁸ a qualification is '*a formal outcome of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to a given standard*'.

Defined in this broad way, the term qualification helps to clarify what can be considered as the separate *building blocks* of a qualification:

- learning outcomes - a qualification must clarify what the holder is expected to know, be able to do and understand. A qualification's relevance to future recipients depends on its ability to signal learning outcomes clearly;
- assessment and validation process - a qualification must be based on reliable and valid assessment procedures able to capture the essence of the knowledge, skills and competences held by an individual learner;
- need for standards – standards (included in the National Frameworks) are critical to qualifications as they define what a learner is expected to know, be able to do or understand for specific awards. Standards can be seen as the reference point around which the entire qualification process turns. Standards are also critical for relevance of the qualification to future users (for example, in the labour market) as they define the level and profile to be achieved;
- recognition process - a qualification is a 'paper of value' and its currency depends on a formal stamp of approval or recognition. Recognition can be seen as the final step in the qualification process, confirming that the process has been appropriately carried out and that the qualification can be trusted;
- role of competent bodies.

⁸ European Parliament; Council of the European Union, 2008

Enhance over 55 individuals' employability through ILPO55 Qualifications

Within ILPO55 project Partners developed a 3 steps method for enhancing the over 55 individuals employability based on competence evaluation, professional development plan and 'marketing' professional profile.

Asses over 55 individuals' skills and competences through the different tools available within the ILPO55 Framework and the Employability Portfolio

A pre-condition for enhancing the employability of over 55 and support further professional development is that both individuals and the employers have a clear picture and insight of the knowledge, skills and competences of the individual. For this reason, the first pillar of the ILPO55 Framework has as ultimate objective a clear competence and skill profile of the over 55 individual.

Skills and competence can be asses within the ILPO55 European Reference Framework – Employability Portfolio through the following methods and tools:

1. Mentoring plan;

2. Competence Evaluation Questionnaire: based on the training needs identified during the analysis conducted within the project, in the Partner countries.

The questionnaire, in 5 different languages, can be accessed through ILPO55 website:

Italian: http://www.ilpo55.eu/it/ilpo55_procedures_italy.aspx?lang=it

Maltese: http://www.ilpo55.eu/it/ilpo55_procedures_malta.aspx?lang=en

Dutch: http://www.ilpo55.eu/it/ilpo55_procedures_spain.aspx?lang=es

Romanian: http://www.ilpo55.eu/it/ilpo55_procedures_romania.aspx?lang=ro

Spanish: http://www.ilpo55.eu/it/ilpo55_procedures_netherlands.aspx?lang=nl

3. E-portfolio:

The Framework recommends a model of (e)-portfolio that can be used and provides also links to other models available in the Partner countries.

Using this tool, with the support of project Partners and/or other experts in their countries, the over 55 individuals have the possibility to develop a professional portfolio that gives them the opportunity to demonstrate practical experience competences acquired in non-formal and informal learning.

Over 55 individuals are invited to provide information and evidences regarding the following areas of competences:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScGg0sf7xJMc7jp-zhdCv_d6n4xKW7D1D0PNvVjk5g2tfAw7Q/viewform

4. Interview:

This assessment step will conclude with an Assessment report elaborated by project Partners to highlight:

- The strength and weaknesses regarding skills/competences;
- A record of the professional accomplishments;
- Providing evidence for performance claims;
- Goals and planning for further carrier;
- Define possible skill/competences gaps;
- Necessary support for further development;
- Advice to acquire ILPO55 qualifications;
- Advice how to use provisions and national regulations.

5. Professional Development Plan;

6. Recognition of Prior Learning;

7. Self-Reflection Exercise.

To have further information on the 7 tools indicated here below, please refer to *section 4.1 "Methods and tools for competence evaluation – the Employability Portfolio"* of this Publication.

Further/complementary learning programmes for achieving the ILPO55 professional qualification/s

Based on the evaluation results over 55 individuals can decide whether they wish to register in a specific training programme in order to achieve the ILPO55 Professional qualification/s (Adult Trainer and/or Financial Sector Social Responsibility Facilitator).

ILPO55 Partnership proposed a possible schedule, to which refer as option, that might anyway change depending on multiple further factors.

Over 55 individuals can subscribe for the learning programmes related to the two ILPO55 Qualifications (Adult Trainer and FS Social Responsibility Facilitator) according to the following timetable:

Country	Training provider	Course Language		Training period (start/end dates)		Attendance procedure		Contact details
		Adult Trainer	FS SR Facilitator	Adult Trainee	FS SR Facilitator	Adult Trainer	FS SR Facilitator	
Italy	UNINETT UNO	IT		February/March		Part-time		info@uninettunouniversity.net
Malta	MCAST	EN/MT		Oct/Jan or Mar/June	Check MCAST Part Time Courses prospectus for details.		Part-time	2398 7100
Malta	IFS	EN		Sep/Oct	Check ifs Malta website for more details.		Part-time	21240335/info@ifsmalta.org
Romania	ANUP	EN/RO		March /June		Part-time		www.anupinternational-dalles.ro
Spain	IEF	ES		March	April	Part-time		ief@iefweb.org

In those cases where, based on the results of the competence evaluation, individuals decide to register directly for the training courses, they can contact project partners for further details about procedures.

'Marketing' a professional profile for higher employability

Over 55 individuals with relevant skills and expertise that can be formally assessed and demonstrated, need to be supported in 'marketing' their professional capacity for his/her own employer and/or for other employers in order to achieve their professional objectives.

Key elements to be considered when presenting his/her own professional portfolio to an employer are:

- a) Describe your professional profile through a user friendly tool, presenting the relevant professional qualification/s acquired (e.g. Adult Trainer, FS RS Facilitator);
- b) Be clear about the image/message you intend to present: what's authentic to you, differentiating you from your peers and making you relevant and compelling to your target audience;
- c) Make certain your professional profile to be 'marketed' is consistent across all platforms. For instance, your resume and LinkedIn profile must be in synchronized;
- d) Be ready to back-up your professional profile with evidences and practical demonstration, if requested;
- e) Demonstrate enthusiasm and motivation to work and underline your professional objectives.



4.4. Legal and regulatory provisions

Introduction

The partners in the ILPO55 project have each contributed their knowledge and experience towards the compilation of this report. Each partner was asked the following questions:

1. Identify the most recent national rules, policies and laws that refer to age management and intergenerational cooperation.
2. Analyse the above legislation/ rules in your country
3. Recommendations for Policy Maker to support the concrete application of the ILPO55

Malta

'The National Strategic Policy for Active Ageing 2014-2020 compels Government to address the continuum of challenges that hinder the formation of an active ageing society.'

This comprehensive government policy covers, amongst others, the following topics which are relevant to the ILPO55 project

- Employment Friendly Tax/Benefit Systems
- Age Management
- Intergenerational Cooperation - Transfer of Experience
- Intergenerational Solidarity
- Policy recommendations

Although Malta has not yet enacted any specific laws in relation to active ageing, the government of Malta has introduced a wide ranging policy which has many recommendations for best practice when it comes to age management and

intergenerational cooperation. The Malta government has this year taken on one of the recommendations of the policy and has introduced a scheme which allows workers in the private sector and also those who are self-employed to opt to retire at a later age than the current retirement age and thus benefit from a higher pension on eventual retirement. The government has also taken note of the policy and is concentrating on adult learning by introducing schemes for the elderly to follow various educational courses free of charge. This also introduces an element of intergenerational cooperation especially in topics like computer studies and internet awareness which tend to be taught by the younger generation.

Recommendations:

- Shorter working week for the over 55s so that they can take up course of education and thus benefit from our project results.
- Benefit Schemes for private companies who opt to introduce shorter working week for the over 55s In order to make it a more attractive option
- Introduction of the entitlement of extra days leave to working grandparents to look after grandchildren thus allowing the younger generation especially working women/mothers to further their careers. Within the financial services this benefit is offered by some organisations as a result of social dialogue and collective bargaining.
- Awareness campaigns about the benefits to both older and younger workers if respective capabilities and strengths are recognized and maximized.
- Shorter working week for the over 55s so that they can take up course of education and thus benefit from our project results.
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- Awareness campaigns about the benefits to both older and younger workers if respective capabilities and strengths are recognized and maximized.

Italy

National Working Programme on Active Ageing, April 2012

National Working Programme on Active Ageing developed by the Department for Family Policies, of the Presidency of the Council of the Ministries in collaboration with national / local Administrations. Following the indications provided by the European Commission, the Programme fixed principles / objectives to promote Active Ageing in field of: employability; active citizenship and volunteering; health/social services. Per each sector of intervention, the competent Administrations identified policies and initiatives to be undertaken, indicating stakeholders to be involved and results to be achieved through the application of National and Regional Operative Programmes (POR / PON).

The Programme underlines the relevance of the following principles:

- Relevance of the LLL for the employability of the over-50 workers;
- Support the knowledge exchange between older and younger workers on working place to attenuate the intergenerational conflict and the barriers to the job market for both the target group;

Implementation of measures for the “gradual retirement” of older workers in order to support the job inclusion of youngest ones.

National Law n. 247/2007, art. 1.29.g

This Law gives the Government the mandate to adopt legislative decree/s aimed at supporting the employability of vulnerable people. The law refers, in particular, to young and elderly workers in order to strengthen active ageing policies and support the intergenerational exchange

National Law n. 247/2007, art. 1.31.c

For regulating the employability public services, the Government has to take into consideration specific criteria and measures for the promotion of active ageing. Government invited employability public services to focus on training services for workers in order to promote the active ageing.

National Law n. 247/2007, art. 1.30

Introduces the “apprenticeship contract” to support the employability of young people. Promotion of the employability of young people and the intergenerational exchange.

The Italian Government’s legislation includes the definition of actions and measures on the Active Ageing, and general declarations on the importance of the topic and of regulating it.

It is important to underline that in Italy the legislation competence is shared between State and Regions. According to the ex art. 117 Constitution, Regions have exclusive legislative competence on social services; a concurrent legislative competence with the State on health services. The State has the exclusive competence to define, and guarantee on the whole National territory, the services' standards related to civil and social rights. The State has exclusive legislative competence in defining general rules concerning education and welfare. It fixes general principles and criteria on occupational safety, education (not VET), and complementary / supplementary welfare.

According to this criteria of sharing legislative competence between State and Regions, the issues of active ageing and intergenerational exchange, could be regulated both by State and Regional legislative powers (exclusive and concurrent) causing, in some cases, difficulties in the identification of competent authority/s.

This constraints should be overcome with the Constitution Reform, proposed by the Government and approved by the Parliament in April 2016 that foresees a "new Federalism": Abolishment of the subjects covered by concurrent legislative competence between State and Regions; and transfer of some strategic competences to the State. Italians will decide on the entering in force of the Reform through the constitutional referendum scheduled for October 2016.

Active Ageing initiatives have been supported also by private actions; and national/regional employment policies have been more focused on welfare rather than job flexibility. Therefore, interventions and examples of good practices on the topic can be identified mainly within the private sector, for example: HERA SPA (energy sector); IBM Italy; Informatica Trentina SPA (ICT Company); Novartis Farma; Reale Mutua Assicurazioni (Assurance Company); Telecom; Ubi Banca and Intesa San Paolo (Banking Sector). - Source: ISFOL Research 2014, Maria Luisa Aversa, Pietro Checcucci, Luisa D'Agostino, Maria Parente.

Recommendations:

- Participation Strategy. Develop / Implement professional paths that take into consideration the personal workers' conditions and ambitions. Study cases show the elderly workers' availability toward changes regarding working hours and workplace activities:
- Continuous training. Provide continuing training during the whole workers' professional life in order to improve their performance and employability. Offering the over 55 workers the opportunity to learn / improve their knowledge in ICT and foreign languages also through learning paths with the involvement of youngest people.

Spain

Spain has the following laws/policies and programmes which relate to age management

- Pacto de Toledo – Spanish pension system
- Employment Promotion Programmes - Employment of the ageing workforce
- Law 35/2010 of 17 September - labour market reform
- Decree Law 1/2011, 11 February - improve the employability
- Professional requalification programme for people who have exhausted their unemployment benefits

Pacto de Toledo

The Spanish pension system is defined under the Toledo Pact (Pacto de Toledo), which has been in place since 1995. The Pact is the written approval by the House of Deputies of a document where all relevant partners (government, trade unions and employer associations), and all political parties in Spain agree to ensure the sustainability of the public pension system. Through the Toledo Pact framework, the pension system is closely monitored and evaluated. Furthermore, any recommendations emerging from these periodic evaluations of the Pact are closely followed by the government and the relevant partners.

Employment Promotion Programmes (Programas de Fomento de Empleo)

These have two main objectives. The first is to maintain employment of the ageing workforce. One way of improving employment prospects for older people, especially the unskilled, is typically by providing subsidies that reduce the costs of retaining older workers.

The second objective is to increase employment rates among the ageing workforce.

Law 35/2010 of 17 September

Other active labour market policies have focused on the employability of the workforce. Given that unemployment particularly affects people with lower levels of education, vocational training has been considered a key tool to create stable and long-term opportunities for such workers, with the potential to decrease the vulnerability and social exclusion often suffered by this group. More specifically, a decree passed in 2007 had the objective of promoting vocational education among both employers and employees.

Decree Law 1/2011

The implementation of Decree Law 1/2011, 11 February, to establish measures to improve the employability of specific social groups, including the long-term unemployed over the age of 45. These measures basically consist of carrying out individual and personalised employment itineraries and identifying their professional and training needs to increase their chances of reentering the labour market

Professional requalification programme for people who have exhausted their unemployment benefits

This new programme will last six months and will give participants the right to take part in individualised and personalised employment itineraries, obtain requalification training while receiving 75% of IPREM in benefits

Recommendations:

Although several initiatives are taking place in Spain, the national decentralised system of government can offer a more in-depth strategy towards age management for specific areas and targets.

The Financial Services Sector has a major operation in cities where the concentration of services is very high and, at the same time, the potential opportunities for over 55. These geographical issue is important to be taken into consideration.

On the other side, the online tools ILPO55 is offering can ensure a wider impact of the project in other areas where f2f services will be more difficult to obtain and where unemployment has extremely tackled.

In this sense, ILPO55 can offer a range of tools and methods to update the over 55 competencies to better face or integrate new employment opportunities

The Netherlands

The Netherlands have the following laws/programmes governing age management

- Law concerning working after reaching the official state pension age - Dutch State pension system (AOW)
- Employment Promotion Programmes - Employment of the ageing workforce
- Law 30 September 2015 - Labour market reform

- Decree Law 376/2015, 15 September - Improve the employability after official state pension age

The AOW is a basic state pension for people who have reached their AOW pension age. The AOW scheme is an insurance scheme which covers everyone who lives or works in the Netherlands, regardless of nationality. For every year that you are insured, you build up rights to 2% of the full AOW pension. If you have been insured for the full 50 years preceding your pension age, you will get a full AOW pension

Ageing population

The statutory retirement age is currently 67 years. In the Netherlands, fiscal support for pension contributions paid to enable retirement before the age of 67 was terminated several years ago. It is still possible for people to take early retirement, but they must finance this themselves: if a person wishes to have his/her retirement pension paid from a younger age, then the pension will be considerably lower, because the accrued pension capital will have to last for longer.

The new law makes it also possible and much easier to work longer and retire after the age of 67. The statutory obstacles to working beyond 67 have been removed by introducing this law. Postponing retirement reverses the effects of early retirement. It is financially attractive.

By working longer, more pension rights are built up, the pension benefit commences a later stage and this means that the pension can be higher. In general the amount of pension payable will increase by about 9% for every year a person works after the retirement date. Postponing the retirement date can therefore quickly lead to considerable increase in pension benefits and is an attractive means of solving the problem of any pension shortfall. Often a pension scheme will offer the option of part time retirement. In this case a person receives salary for the days worked and pension benefits for the rest of the week. So it is still possible to build up pension rights for the part of the week still worked.

Recommendations:

We recommend to use the social dialogue as the main platform to reach results in this respect

In the Netherlands most initiatives are built in the collective labour contracts between social partners. Several initiatives are taking place to increase

participation of the elderly population in the labour process, but mostly this is not governed by national law. The most new initiatives are part of the collective labour contracts between social partner in the different sectors.

In the banking sector the social partners are now discussing an arrangement to make it possible for employees to use for a period of a maximum of two years 50% of their working hours to realise a switch of their career. In this respect, the online tools ILPO55 is offering can be an instrument to support this kind of initiatives. In this respect it is very relevant that the biggest Union in the FSS sector in the Netherlands participates in the ILPO project

Romania

Romania have no specific laws/policies governing active ageing

There is no data available regarding recent national rules, policies and laws that refer to age management and intergenerational cooperation in Romania. However our Romanian partner reports the following:

Demographic Challenge Romania is projected to experience one of the sharpest drops in the working-age population in the EU, a trend that will impose a heavy burden on the economy. Romania will see its old-age dependency rate—defined as the ratio of people older than 65 to the working-age population—more than double over the next four decades, reaching 55 percent by 2050. The old-age dependency rate will increase from about 22 percent in 2014 to 33 percent by 2020. The decline in the share of the population contributing to economic output could result in lower growth in income per capita and dampen overall prospects for economic growth. In the absence of reform, demographic aging may therefore lead to higher rates of poverty, social exclusion, and dependence among the elderly.

Recommendations:

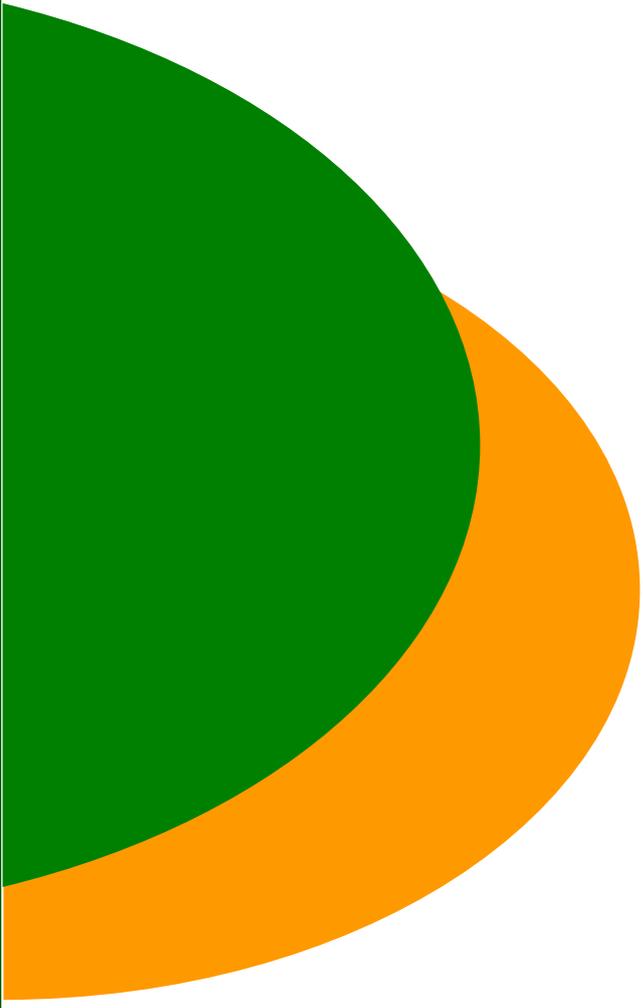
- Establish frameworks for lifelong career development
- Better coordination of guidance activities must be achieved in the cooperation with social partners
- Assure the quality of guidance by professionalising staff, standardising methodologies and monitoring outcomes

Conclusions

It is clear that countries in Europe are still in the development stage of implementing directly 'effective' Active Ageing legislation and detailed policies. However, the introduction of 'generic' policies complimented with well-defined strategies will allow sectorial application that will probably require a more detailed focus on what can be acceptable and doable in line with business exigencies where it permits.

In fact, Collective Bargaining seems to be one of the main tools that can effectively get active ageing policies to be implemented such as in the Netherlands and if needs be when necessary 'enforced'.

Thus, overall across Europe a slight gap still exists between that which can be enforceable through further introduction of specific legislation and that which is permissible by the business which covers also public service entities



5. VALIDATION OF THE ILPO55 REFERENCE FRAMEWORK AND THE TWO QUALIFICATIONS

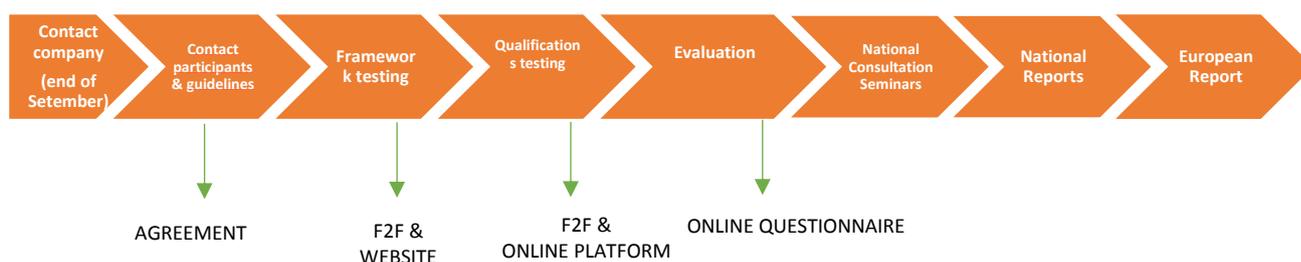
5.1. Piloting methodology and instruments

The piloting stage aimed at checking, with the support of over 55 individuals from the Financial Services Sector, the European Reference Framework and its tools, and the two new qualifications created in the project for over 55. The following list of outputs were checked:

- ILPO55 European Reference Framework:
 - o Competencies Questionnaire
 - o E-portfolio
 - o Feedback evaluation
 - o Interviews
 - o ILPO55 Portfolio & Career development plan
- Adult trainer qualification
- Social Responsibility Facilitator qualification

The target identified for the piloting stage were over 55 individuals from the financial services sector (banks, insurance companies, others) and each partner country was asked to identify at least 10 individuals.

The main piloting stages were structured according to the following schedule:



Stage 1:

- ILPO55 European Framework: employees over 55 tested tools to analyse their competencies and create their portfolios of competencies and career development plans.

Participants had two possibilities for competency evaluation & professional

development planning:

- Following all the steps of the competency evaluation: (competency questionnaire, portfolio, feedback questionnaire, interview and professional development plan), or;
- Selecting one of the self-assessment tools (competency questionnaire, portfolio, feedback questionnaire) then proceeding with interview and professional development plan.

This information was an important input for the trainees in order to decide the second stage mainly devoted to training activities.

Stage 2:

Blended training courses on the two qualifications were offered to the participants:

- Adult training course: The aim of this qualification is mainly to provide the knowledge, skills and competences required to effectively plan, prepare, deliver and evaluate training sessions.
- Social Responsibility Facilitator course: The programme for the responsibility facilitator aims at helping the over 55 employees within the financial services sector to understand the importance of social responsibility.

Each partner organised the trainings according to the needs and expectations of the piloting stage participants, offering both classroom and online trainings.

Finally, National and European consultations seminars were organised aimed at sharing with stakeholders of the financial services sector the products created and piloted by individuals to analyse the level of usefulness, transferability and applicability.

5.2. Results of the national piloting reports

Malta

For the Maltese national piloting activities of the ILPO55 Reference Framework the Maltese Partners identified a number of over 55 individuals within the FSS and invited them to a piloting phase consisting of three stages across three separate events

- **Stage 1-** ILPO55 Reference Framework
- **Stage 2-** ILPO55 Qualifications
- **Stage 3-** National Consultation Workshop

The recruitment of participants was entrusted to MUBE and IFS Malta in view of their contacts with banks and other financial institutions. This was done through an invitation email that also highlighted the need, importance and relevance of the project. The participants that accepted were then given the appropriate guidelines and project information so as to familiarise themselves with the main objectives of the project and also the related piloting phase. MCAST supported this process by providing further guidance, in particular regarding the training aspect.

Conclusions and recommendations

The following is a summary of recommendations from the different activities

The ILPO55 Reference Framework

- Career plan should be filled in before the interview to allow a deeper discussion during the interview.
- To include more open ended questions during interview. This way more feedback can be obtained.
- A stock-take of the individuals' strengths, weaknesses, skills and achievements should be taken prior to the interview (e-portfolio). This could then be matched with the questions in the interview and the other tools. The interviewer could also build his questions on the participants' submissions and adapt accordingly.

- Questions related to past experience and knowledge should be asked in order to compare with what the individual wants to do in the future.
- The questions on the questionnaire are more informative than those asked during the interview. The questionnaire should be made available to the interviewer during the interview to allow a deeper discussion and to allow the interviewer to get to know the interviewee better.
- Both in the interview and questionnaire there should be more space for participants to write down their own thoughts.
- In the question related to Professional Goals there should be a follow up question asking why the interviewee chose that particular answer.
- The person conducting the interview should be independent from the company the participant works in. This allows for the participants to speak more freely and open up about their perspective of the current job.
- Employers should be part of the ILPO55 process and should be made aware of the plans of those over 55.
- Implementation of the ILPO55 framework in local banks is challenging and there is a need of appropriate negotiation

Training Activities

- It is important to deal with the issue of 'fear of technology', particularly in view of a possible blended approach
- The units that were piloted were well received and appreciated.
- Although the units are being suggested at a particular level and with assigned credits, one should also leave the option so that these can still be adopted in a flexible manner on an attendance basis.
- The project is providing tools, course descriptions and material. However banks might be reluctant as most training is currently focused on specific job related skills rather than personal development. This however might still be addressed as banks can choose individual units that may be applicable for them.

Conclusion

Overall a number of challenges and actions were mentioned. Whilst the project deliverables were well received, it is clear that commitment by all the stakeholders is critical. Furthermore locally more can and needs to be done in collaboration with public and private institutions for those involved to assimilate the principles and objectives of the ILPO55 proposal

Italy

For the Italian national piloting activities of the ILPO55 Reference Framework Uninettuno and Effebe Association identified 10 over 55 individuals within the FSS and invited them to develop a step by step personal employability portfolio and to follow two blended training module of the ILPO55 Professional Qualifications:

- *Adult training*: the aim of this qualification is mainly to provide knowledge, skills and competences required to effectively plan, prepare, deliver and evaluate training sessions
- *Social Responsibility Facilitator*: the aim of this qualification is to help the over 55 employees within the Financial Services Sector to understand the importance of Social Responsibility.

Uninettuno and Effebe Association chose respectively two different modules of the two qualifications:

- Uninettuno: *Adult trainer* - Unit 2: Technology enhanced training
- Effebe Association: *Social Responsibility Facilitator* - Unit 1: Introduction to Social Responsibility in the Financial Services Sector.

Be involved in the piloting experience gave to the 10 Italian selected over 55 a better understanding of their personal employability situation and concrete support to improve their position in the labour market.

The piloting Phase has been divided in two main different phases:

- 1. Phase 1 (step 1 and 2)** - Identifying and selecting 10 over 55 individuals employed in a relevant institution in the FSS and testing 3 of 5 instruments and tools developed within the ILPO55 Reference Framework;
- 2. Phase 2 (step 3)** - Guiding the 10 over 55 in following a training modules of the ILPO55 Professional Qualifications.

BNL BNP Paribas, from Rome, and BCC, from Castellana Grotte, accepted to take part in the piloting experience and the Human Resource manager selected 10 motivated over 55 employees that could benefit from this experience.

Effebe and Uninettuno tested the 3 following instruments and tools:

- Competence evaluation questionnaire ;

- Career development plan;
- Interviews.

Phase 1 (step 1 and 2) :

1. **Competence evaluation questionnaire:** it have been provided by e-mail the competence questionnaire evaluation to each participant inviting them to duly fill it in and to send it back.
2. **Make your own career development plan:** after receiving all the completed questionnaires, were sent to each participant a career development plan template inviting them to fill it in.
3. **Face to face interviews:** to assess the results of the above steps the 10 over 55 individuals have been invited for a face to face interview lasting around 45'/each.

Training

Effebi and Uninettuno involved the employees to the second and final phase of the piloting process, the blended training module for:

- selecting and contacting an expert trainer explaining him/her the piloting phases and objectives;
- defining the blended delivery methods (e-learning and classroom) based on the chosen units;
- defining the training course contents and materials according to the existing ILPO55 training manual;
- setting the schedule of the training (online course and classrooms).

Conclusions and recommendations

The main recommendations received during these activities are:

- a. some specific tools should be more user-friendly: in particular the e-portfolio;

- b. for obtaining the two qualifications it is necessary to concentrate more on recognition of prior learning, as an evaluation method for obtaining the certificates;
- c. the 'professional development plan' was considered to be rather complex and therefore, they suggested to provide further guidance especially for the last part regarding the action plan;
- d. the interviews were very much appreciated and the only recommendation was to provide the guidance regarding their implementation within or outside the organization where the over 55 individuals work, since they believe the results might differ.

Spain

IEF led the piloting stage in Spain by involving 5 important national banks that usually collaborates as a trainer provider were invited to participate in the piloting stage. The main Human Resources managers agreed on the participation of some of their employees over 55, therefore IEF invited them to participate in testing the following European Framework Tools:

1. Competence Questionnaires: they were sent by IEF to the participants.
2. Interviews: An expert from IEF reviewed all the results of the questionnaires and prepared the interviews. Some of them were f2f and other using Skype or Telephone. Most of them lasted 45 minutes each and served as basis to further develop the career plans.
3. Career plans development: These plans were created by each of the participants with the support of IEF facilitator.
4. Training on Social Responsibility Facilitator: The participants were invited to follow an online training on this qualification, basically on the "strategies for Social Responsibility" which most of them stated were very interesting for them.
5. National Consultation Seminar: A panel of stakeholders attended this seminar to assess the relevancy and usefulness of the ILPO55 framework and transferability opportunities.

The profile of the over 55 participants attending was pre-retired and still active working but about to retirement and most of them with top management positions, such as business managers, project managers, office managers. Their main professional objectives linked to ILPO55 framework were to become

Trainers, Coaches, European project managers, Facilitators, Entrepreneurial projects board and/or Consultants.

Regarding the Competency Questionnaire, the participants found it useful a concrete but most suggested it could have been in an online format and even a self-evaluation tool.

The interview format is easily adaptable to different interview forms, such as f2f or online and it was considered by the facilitator as a basis to exchange information with the participant, review the results of the competencies questionnaire and settle the fundamentals of a future professional (career) development plan.

Finally, the "career development plan" was considered a long tool. Most of them would have preferred to use an objective-based template or balance scorecard, as they are used to that in the professional environment. They didn't feel comfortable with the term "career" as they stated they are over 55 and they don't see themselves in the mood of a career as such. They preferred "professional development plan".

Furthermore, IEF offered the Social Responsibility Facilitator course, unit 3: Strategies & tools for Social Responsibility. The training lasted two weeks and the participants were the ones invited previously to test the European Framework.

The national consultation workshop, conducted by IEF team, targeted participants (stakeholders) from Banks and Trade Unions. The seminar was very constructive with several inputs given by the participants, such as:

- The importance on intergenerational activities as a tool to foster age management.
- The current situation in Spain is different from the one we found at the beginning of the project. Banks are trying to capitalise human resources and introducing elements to retain them as much as possible. These elements can be teleworking, intergenerational activities, job shadowing, training, and others related to social responsibility that could make over 55 be interested in sharing expertise and the companies understanding the value of people.
- The importance of prior recognition as a tool to ensure that over 55 can benefit from the European Qualification Framework in order to be better prepared for either internal activities or external consultancy or training.

- The ILPO55 Framework was pointed out as an important reference model to encourage and motivate over 55 to continue their professional career. All of the participants considered it very clear and useful.
- The qualifications are interesting. The Adult trainer is already a “professional certificate” in Spain so they considered the materials could be used for these trainings.

As top managers, they state the project is very interesting as it tackles one of their main concerns in managing people in the banking sector, focusing on over 55. They consider it’s extremely transferable to their institutions.

Conclusions and recommendations

The main conclusions we can outline from IEF’s piloting experience are the following:

- A very useful and clear framework with user-friendly instructions.
- The contents are well defined for all the framework and are attractive for the project’s target and stakeholders.
- High level of transferability of the framework, tools and training activities.
- The importance on intergenerational activities as a tool to foster age management.
- The importance of prior recognition as a tool to ensure that over 55 can benefit from the European Qualification Framework in order to be better prepared for either internal activities or external consultancy or training.
- The ILPO55 Framework was pointed out as an important reference model to encourage and motivate over 55 to continue their professional career. All of the participants considered it very clear and useful.
- The website is very clear and all the tools are available in different languages.

To sum up, the following recommendations were suggested by all the IEF team:

- Although the participants consider that prior recognition is important, they are not interested in obtaining any “official” qualification but very interested in following the training to be updated and capable for a future professional career.
- Automate the tools with online technologies.
- Offer the trainings in an eLearning platform.

- Create a training of trainers' programme for both Adult trainer and Social Responsibility facilitator.

The Netherlands

NIBE conducted the piloting stage in The Netherlands by inviting 27 banks and 7 insurance companies to participate in the piloting stage.

Both, the Human Resources Department of Banks and Insurance companies agreed on the participation of the majority of their over 55 employees, therefore NIBE SVV kindly required them to test the following European Framework Tools:

4. Interviews: were the starting point of the piloting stage. Through this tool, an expert from NIBE introduced to the interviewees the ILPO55 project and its objectives. Some of them were face to face and other by telephone. Most of them lasted around 1 hour each and served as basis to further invite the 10 over 55 individuals to fulfil the competence questionnaire.
5. Competence Questionnaires: they were sent by NIBE to 10 participants to analyze their education & training and work experiences as well as to assess their individual competencies. They were extremely useful to collect effective information from the participants.
6. E-portfolio: 9 participants, guided by a representative of NIBE, also completed an e-portfolio.
7. Career development plans: this was the last tested tool by NIBE. 10 over 55 individuals completed it.
8. Adult Trainer: participants were finally invited to follow an online training course on the Unit 2 of the Adult Training Qualification: "Technology Enhanced Learning".

The proliferation of technology and online learning has created a wealth of opportunities for educators to facilitate the learning process. This is also highly relevant within the context of workplace training and adult learning. This unit introduced learners to methods and techniques that can be used to complement training delivery. In order to provide the highest level of professionalism and proficiency in the field, NIBE- SVV launched a set of tablet and smartphone e-learning apps to support learning and making it easier to learn. With the e-learning apps NIBE- SVV, with the help of its technical partner, developed an app for being - time and location independent - continuously informed and trained. For the purposes of the pilot of this unit NIBE SVV provided participants with an app (Triple A) and access to a virtual learning environment (e-Connect).

9. National Consultation Seminar: on 27th of March 2017 21 stakeholders (16 of them were either piloting participants or HR managers of Dutch banks) was invited to attend the seminar to assess the relevancy and usefulness of the ILPO55 Reference Framework and related transferability opportunities.

The profile of the over 55 participants attending was pre-retired and still active working but about to retirement and most of them with top management positions, such as business managers, project managers, office managers. The consultation seminar ended with a panel discussion/feedback session on the Framework and the two Qualifications.

Conclusions and recommendations

Feedback on the ILPO55 European Framework

Participants considered the interviews a good starting point. This qualitative component suits better than a quantitative component. The majority of the participants were not necessarily positive about the e-portfolio software, as it was not user friendly, difficult to navigate. Participants suggested to implement this element in E-Connect or offer it through an app. The career plans gave participants the right direction and was considered a fruitful way to develop a sustainable career strategy.

Feedback on the Qualifications

In general, both qualifications were positively received. Participants especially embraced the aim of the Social Responsibility Facilitator, as knowledge, skills and competences necessary to implement CSR is pivotal for organizations: research shows that more and more organizations focus on reputation and license to operate. Participants advised to strengthen the industry involvement in qualification development. Moreover, from a HR perspective, participants required a mandatory periodic reviews of qualifications to determine whether they are still fit for purpose.

Romania

From the 20 invitations that were addressed individually, by mail, after a phone call in advance, either to recommended persons, or to banks at their HR department, a number of 12 banks, insurance companies, trade union, Academy of Economic Sciences, the Financial Supervisory Authority, as well as the Financial Institute showed their interest, availability for the project and recommended individuals of 55 for the first phase of the national assessment of the ILPO55 Framework. In the official addresses we presented the project, target group, objectives and what is the methodology in the phase of piloting.

The piloting sample was formed by the following 55+persons :

- 11 females, 2 males
- all the members of the group have or had managing position (top and middle)
- all of them have training experiences either top level, or branch level.
- 1 is of the Romanian National Bank
- 1 of the biggest State Bank in Romania
- 2 of training departments from banking and financial services

What was discouraging for the 55+ age group was the fact that at the official level of the majority of the addressed banks there is no interest for this age group, the banks or insurance services have no any policy or strategy for this age category.

This was the answer of the big banks issued also from the contact with the professional association of the banks, named the ARB (Asociatia romana a bancilor), although they appreciated the initiative of the project ILPO55+.

In the first phase we have completed 4/7 instruments belonging to the European Framework. All guided materials were translated into Romanian language and were filled in on line :

1. Interviews : 10 persons
2. Competence Questionnaires : 11 persons
3. E-portfolios : 4 persons
4. Career plans : 6 persons

All the participants appreciated all the tested instruments and made some observations and recommendations concerning the flow of the assessment instruments . They also showed their interest in testing some learning units from

the two qualifications. A special interest was focused on the Mentoring Course that they also mentioned in the career plan. They found the emotional intelligence course a very useful theme as it might be applied also for other sectors of activities. This observation was also mentioned for the whole course of mentoring emphasising its transferability and more general applicability.

The face to face training session, as well as the online training, as *blended learning* method, were also of big attraction. The set of 7 themes of the mentoring course was developed and posted on the Moodle of ANUP-International's website. Each theme has got the references and an application where the participant was invited to solve tasks. At the end they were supposed to present a short mentoring pilot program.

Within the face to face session, the 10 learners were introduced in the *online Moodle* by the administrator of ANUP-International: registration, how to access materials, how to communicate with the group, how to solve the team tasks assumed during the course. Learners registered in 4 working groups on the 6 themes of the course. During a month and a half the administrator of the site and the trainer were managing the Moodle platform.

Some observations issuing from the face to face session, as well as from the on line experience:

- commitment for the participation in the mentoring activity,
- very few people reacted at the on line tasks (3 from the already 6 registered),
- there is no experience in working on line and consequently there is a fear,
- for some people it appears to be very hard to work on line,
- some of the people found the experience completely new and very innovative,
- some quotations from the "blitz"evaluation: innovative, new information, interesting, challenging, mobilising, unexpected.

The next step was to share with 7 present FSS stakeholders the products created and piloted by individuals to analyse the level of usefulness, transferability within a *national consultation workshop*. The agenda of the seminar and the evaluation of the seminar showed that the instruments and methods of the ILPO55 Framework, as well as the 2 qualifications are for all participants at the seminar relevant for the training in age management within their organisation and they are interested to use the 2 qualifications after the end of the project.

Conclusions and recommendations

-A general suggestion was made for a person who wants to become a trainer, a facilitator in the sector: it has to have a necessary authority to implement the project and its products.

-“The departments of HR within banks and financial services have to be informed about the ILPO55 project and its outputs. They can organize courses after these materials” was the opinion of a participant.

-The learning materials are useful, they may be adapted for the national banking context.

-They are also a basis in designing professional standards for the two qualifications. In Romania the occupation of mentor is registered in the National Register of occupations, but the standard is too old (elaborated in the '90). So, based on the materials we have from ILPO55 we can elaborate a professional standard. The course for mentor has been appreciated by the IBR (Romanian Institute for Banking) and will be promoted by them as a separate course.

- The IFS (Institute for Financial Studies) will introduce the module of mentoring in their course for adult trainer.

- Proposals have been made by participants at the consultation workshop for promoting the 2 qualifications at the following banks:

- Romanian Bank
- ARB-department of HR
- Banca Transilvania
- Alpha Bank

-A protocol of cooperation with HR departments of banks and other financial institutions.

-An enlargement of the already existing learning group with new experienced members.

-Making a DEMO of the results of the project which intends to show the advantages of the involved institutions.

-The Institute for Financial Studies signed a protocol of cooperation with ANUP-International in which they asked the permission to use these materials for the course of trainers.

-A special situation was registered with the Financial Supervisory Authority which asked our cooperation and showed the need for courses for mentoring, as there is a recent request from the EU for such courses.

5.3. Conclusion and recommendations for the ILPO55 Framework and the two Professional Qualifications

During the Piloting Phase, the project partners collected feedback from the different stakeholders involved: over 55 individuals, HR experts, Trainers and Mentors. Most of the reactions were positive and demonstrated great appreciation for the ILPO55 European Reference Framework and the two proposed Professional Qualifications, since they provide a comprehensive approach for managing active ageing and intergenerational cooperation in the FSS. (for further information, please, refer to the [ILPO55 EUROPEAN PILOTING REPORT.pdf](#))

There is a need for the intergenerational cooperation, in order to enhance knowledge and competences, and this has to be given priority for consideration and inclusion within the FSS institutions' policy.

The project (through the Reference Framework) should further emphasise the over 55 as a resource that should have an active role within FSS organisations. Therefore, FSS organisations should understand that when aged and experienced workers engaged in senior positions retire, a void is created in terms of the loss in knowledge and work practices. FSS organisations should therefore strive to recognise the strengths of a multi-generational workforce.

For all these purposes, it is highly recommended that all the stakeholders involved, work together to clearly address this problem. It is sure that more can and needs to be done in tight collaboration with public and private institutions to better communicate and broaden the principles, and objectives of the ILPO55 proposal.

The main recommendations received during the piloting activities were:

- e. some specific tools should be more user-friendly: in particular, the e-portfolio;
- f. In order to obtain the two qualifications it is necessary to concentrate more on recognition of prior learning, as an evaluation method for obtaining the certificates. Although the participants from the different partner countries consider that recognition is important, some of them are not interested in obtaining any "official" and/or accredited qualification but very interested in following the training to be updated and capable for a future professional career;

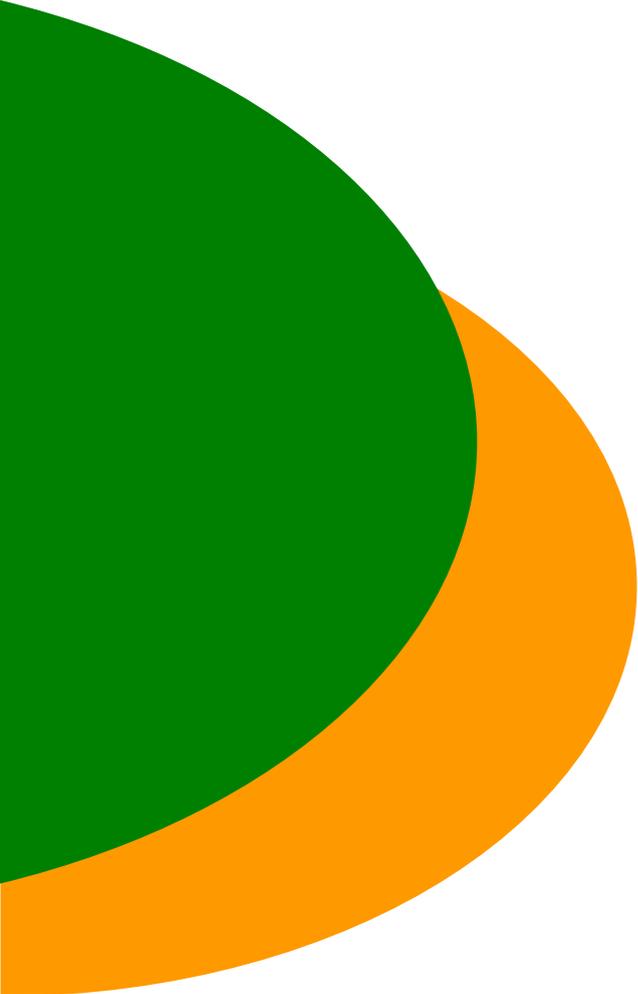
- g. the 'professional development plan' was considered to be rather complex and therefore, participants suggested to provide further guidance, especially for the last part regarding the action plan;
- h. the interviews were very much appreciated and the only recommendation was to provide the guidance regarding their implementation within or outside the organization where the over 55 individuals work, since they believe the results might differ;
- i. the interview has been considered a good flexible instrument to be used for acquiring qualitative input regarding both competencies and skills and individual's objectives and aspirations in the professional field.
- j. some over 55 individuals proposed to create a training programme for trainers for both Adult trainer and Social Responsibility facilitator qualifications.

Moreover, the need for inclusion of professional guidance as part of the ILPO55 Reference Framework – Employability Portfolio process was a common theme in the feedback received for the various tools used in the Piloting Phase. It was noted several times that many of the tools become difficult to use for Over 55 individuals and create barriers which make them lose their intended purpose. Because of this, the ILPO55 Consortium revised the structure of the Employability Portfolio within the ILPO55 Reference Framework, transforming it into a process whose tools can be used individually, but which gives major input when used in succession. The new format of the Employability Portfolio saw the inclusion of a Mentoring Plan as the first tool and the assistance of a mentor throughout the entire process to help the individual with the execution of the various tools within the Employability Portfolio; the inclusion of RPL as recommended in the National Consultation workshops in order to encourage over 55 individuals to follow training programmes by validating their skills and competences; and finally the inclusion of a self-reflection exercise to complete the process of the Employability Portfolio. Rather than a single e-Portfolio, the ILPO55 Consortium agreed that the ILPO55 Reference Framework should point towards various readily available tools and leave it up to the applicant to select his/her preferred one. In doing so, they would be avoiding any possible obstacle which would rise from imposing a specific portfolio which is either too complex or too simple for the needs of the individual.

The inclusion of Mentoring as part of the Reference Framework also provided the individual with a reference point with whom to discuss any difficulties or uncertainties which may crop up throughout the process.

Following the Piloting Phase and the evaluation of feedback received the structure of the ILPO55 Reference framework Employability Portfolio has changed as follows:

METHODS
1. Mentoring guidelines
2. Training
3. Competency Framework
TOOLS
1. Mentoring Plan
2. Competence Evaluation Questionnaire
3. E-Portfolio
4. Interview
5. Career Development Plan
6. Recognition of Prior Learning
7. Self-Reflection Exercise



6. RECOMMENDATIONS TO KEY STAKEHOLDERS



6.1. To adult learners

The need to update the management approaches, methodologies, tools and even the personnel is a common trend for enterprises. As a consequence, the over 55 workers represent the main target of this renovating campaign in order to make room for younger people with specific competences. With reference to the generational gap, the main challenge to be faced by the over 55s is finding the personal motivation and positive attitude in order to turn the generational gap into a positive generational bridge.

The presence of new generations should not be interpreted as a possible problem for older generation but rather as a bilateral opportunity of personal and professional enrichment and progression. The over 55 group needs to be aware of the importance of relational aspects within an enterprise where working outcomes are progressively achieved through the use of technology, networking and team work. Such a mutual interchange includes a dual perspective. On the one hand it is crucial for the over 55 worker to give a personal contribution and on the other to listen to and accept feedback from young people to implement a process of cooperation whereby the final result reflects on the success of the enterprise itself.

Specifically for the bank sector, the over 55 individuals can play the role of tutors for the younger generation with the main task of both transmitting their general experience and transferring more specific knowledge and skills including :

- Decision-making: to plan in advance and on a long-term perspective;
- Management: to define and apply a management strategy;
- Negotiation: to deal with clients and adopt solutions in order to be appealing;
- Problem solving: to foster a culture oriented to find and solve problems;
- Professionalism: to be autonomous and adherent to the professional framework and ethic code.

Simultaneously, Over 55s have to leave the door opened to receive from young generation the following skills to constantly improve themselves:

- Digital skills: to find, evaluate, utilize, share and create content using information technologies and the Internet;
- Communication: to possess good written and oral communication skills, to be a good listener and to consider the counterpart's opinion;
- Mediation: to help the involved parts in developing their own agreement;
- Team working: to work in a group for a common goal and to be supportive, respectful and open to new ideas.



6.2. To adult training organizations

Demographic data reveals that the European continent is getting older with a resulting impact on the labour market and particularly on the over 55 age group. Such a reality urges an immediate intervention in order to give value to the potential of this age group and adult training organizations play a relevant role. Subsequently, on the basis of the ILPO55 project's results, the partnership has considered appropriate the following three recommendations to be addressed to training organizations:

1. To understand the over 55's needs.

Adult trainers should conduct a needs analysis of the over 55's knowledge, skills and competences to obtain a holistic view of the general context where they will operate. This analysis is a starting point for the personalisation of the trainer's intervention which will lead to create a tailored learning approach responding to the personal features, backgrounds and needs. Moreover special attention needs to be given towards women especially in terms of (i) general/time management which can support them to conciliate work and family and (ii) competitiveness, through a process of self-awareness of their competences and potential.

2. To motivate over 55 individuals:

Lack of motivation can easily lead the worker to isolation and turn the age and the experience he/she has acquired into a barrier. Trainers should play a role as counselors who promote concrete actions to motivate the learners, increase their self-efficacy and exploit the value of experience and age through the development of a 'coaching' ability to be addressed to the young generation. Moreover, adult training organisations have to attract learners, transforming skepticism into curiosity which can work as catalyst in order to become confident with the notion of lifelong learning even after this learning experience. It is important to avoid exclusion feelings and false expectations and simultaneously give advice on the opportunities of validation and certification which exist through the promotion of networking among individuals with similar needs.

3. To valorize, enhance and increase over 55's capital

On the other hand, trainers have to be promoters who are able to identify and assess individual potentials and guide them into the reconversion and requalification of technical, trade, and ICT competences according to the introduction of new methods and tools of management on the basis of the specific labour market needs and more specifically of the bank sector. Moreover, introducing them to specific didactic contents such as ICT, languages and developing *ad hoc* skills like personal leadership development represents a

proper intervention of 're-styling' and personal branding where the trainer needs to possess the capacity to valorize the over 55's experiences and competences. Furthermore it is important to underline those aspects that can exalt the enterprise's competitiveness such as confidence with the working context, reliability, communication and social skills which represent a rooted asset on the territory for the bank sector.



6.3. To Employers

An organisation can benefit from a mix of young and older employees. This is particularly relevant when considering the intergenerational approach highlighted by the ILPO55 project. Employers within financial services should view over 55 employees as experienced members of their organisation, who have a lot to contribute. Hence the ILPO55 project recommends the following aspects for employers of financial services.

1. Breaking Stereotypes

The over 55 category typically faces a number of stereotypes that may hinder opportunities for employment or further progression within an organisation. These can include assumptions that older workers are less creative, less reliable, result in higher costs and resistant to change. However the contrary was evident during the course of the various meetings, focus groups, seminars and workshops conducted as part of the ILPO55 project. The older generation generally demonstrates high commitment and loyalty to an organisation. Furthermore they also rate highly in terms of soft skills such as leadership, problem solving, listening, organisational abilities.

2. Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of prior learning is being recommended as a possible measure that can be implemented by employers. This can serve as a means to identify, document and provide recognition to knowledge, skills and competences gained from different forms of learning. The latter can be formal, non-formal and informal. Implementing such efforts can contribute towards employee motivation and retention. Furthermore the organisation can demonstrate commitment to continuous improvement and quality. Employers can also create partnerships with local or international training organisations to also offer qualifications for their employees through an RPL process. The RPL process was also proposed by the project as a key component within the ILPO55 reference framework.

3. Increase awareness of age management strategies

Age management is an important consideration for employers. Understandably age management strategies require time and resources and hence such need to be sustainable. It is however recommended that the notion of age management is integrated into or complements current organisational policies. Employers are encouraged to look at existing good practices, even from the financial services sector, and to empower older workers to be a key element within the organisation.



6.4. To Policy Makers

Policy Makers have an important role to further boost the efforts and the objectives put forward by the ILPO55 project. A number of changes in active labour market policy and employment regulations are required to enhance the employability of older workers. Hence the following are the project partners' recommendations following the experience gathered through the project.

1. Shorter working week for the over 55s;
2. Flexible working hours to allow training and lifelong learning initiatives to be taken up as part of employees' course of education. Furthermore policy makers are encouraged to improve the coherence of a system of continued education and training;
3. Incentive schemes for private companies who opt to introduce practical family friendly measures with the aim of supporting the over 55s. This can also include for example payroll tax cuts;
4. Creating awareness of how work creates mental wellbeing notwithstanding if it is paid work or voluntary. Such a campaign could be an essential part to encourage older people to remain at work;
5. Introduction of the entitlement of extra days leave to working grandparents to look after grandchildren thus allowing the younger generation especially working women/mothers to further their career. Within the financial services this benefit is offered by some organisations as a result of social dialogue and collective bargaining ;
6. Awareness campaigns about the benefits of introducing the intergenerational 'mix and match' policies at the workplace Ex: Mentoring, IT skills;
7. On recruitment employees are offered company supported Pension schemes to enhance retention and commitment;
8. Legal Framework addressing sectoral 'needs' and demands should be considered Ex : Rules & Regulations that govern/allow implementation of specific active ageing policies in the Financial Sector.

7. Annexes:

1. [ILPO55_ADULT_TRAINER_COURSE_CURRICULA.pdf](#)
2. [ILPO55_SFR_COURSE_CURRICULA.pdf](#)

ILPO55 INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING PARTNERSHIP OVER 55

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