# Framework for the Further Education of Professionals Facilitating Adults' Competence Development



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#### I. Introduction

#### 1. Aim of the Back to Learning Project

The 24-month project 'Back to Learning - Developing Key Competence of Adults for High-Quality Learning Opportunities' is implemented by the Government Office of Békés County in an 8-member international partnership, in cooperation with Maltese, Estonian, Spanish, German, Irish and Hungarian organisations.

The main goal of the project is for partner organisations to expand the toolbox of their methods for developing key competencies by learning from each other. They share good practices and experiences regarding networking in their communities, in organising training aimed at competence development, in curriculum development, in sensitising and in-service training of educators and professionals who can make real efforts to improve education and training opportunities for adults with low level skills.

The direct target group of the project is professionals from organisations responsible for career counselling, the development of key competencies with adults, the training of basic adult education practitioners and the shaping of employment policy.

Within the professional material prepared as one of the main products of the project, we propose a framework for the initial or further training of competence development with relevant professionals – applicable at EU level. The proposal contains the main content elements of the training and further training recommendations of the participating professionals (e.g. community organisers, social workers, human resources specialists, educators involved in key competence development, counsellors).

The framework is presented in our current material, which is free to use.

#### 2. Aim of the framework

The eight partners in the programme agreed on the need for them to have a single framework programme to promote and provide a framework for professionals to develop and support key competences with adults. During the workshops, we aimed to identify all the groups involved and define the competencies to be developed. By developing these competencies, they can be

more successful in supporting the start of vocational training and access to employment for adults with incomplete basic competencies.

The outcome is not a detailed training programme but a means to determine the important elements that should be included in teaching/ training programmes of the different countries. It aims to support the development of training programmes and the methodological recommendations in coherence with different national legislations.

#### Goals:

- To draw attention to the education/training needs of those professionals who are in contact with clients/adults lacking basic skills for more effective preparation of basic competencies in the interest of job preparation, employment, or further education.
- To provide educational/ training practitioners, training counsellors and support workers with tools to identify and support those clients/ learners with low level competencies and to facilitate the necessary education /training processes.
- To provide a framework so that the partners and training institutions of the partner countries will be able to create their own national programmes using this resource as a universal guideline.

#### 3. Methodology of developing the framework

We first defined the purpose of the Framework Programme and its target groups to include all those involved in adult competence development; curriculum developers, educators, consultants, support workers, training providers, administration/reception/office staff.

Secondly, through group work, we created the task profile and framework of learning outcomes complete with content. During the project process, partners discussed and agreed that Framework Programmes should be developed with this 'learning outcome approach'. This approach is an accepted practice in both adult education and higher education throughout Europe.

Each step was developed in small groups, then modified, accepted, and ultimately finalised by the consortium of eight partners.

The material has been forwarded outside the partnership to relevant organisations with whom the partner organisations collaborate on a regular basis. Through this interaction, we endeavour to achieve the adoption as well as the dissemination of a universally applicable framework.

#### 4. Concept system (definition) of learning outcomes

'Learning outcome is a description of the output requirements that can be achieved by learning at the end of the learning phase, an action-level description of the competences defined in context, in the terminology of knowledge + ability + attitude + autonomy/responsibility, corresponding to the Hungarian Qualifications Framework' that is in accordance with the European one. When using a 'learning outcomes' approach, the focus is on the level of knowledge the student has after a particular course or training programme; how well he or she acquired and understands it; and how he or she can apply his or her acquired knowledge and on what level of autonomy. The aforementioned level describing categories or descriptors are therefore knowledge, ability/skills, attitude and autonomy/responsibility.

#### *Knowledge:*

Expected knowledge of the relevant field should be described in this category. What is written here shows what concepts, lexical parts of the subject, and their contexts as knowledge should be acquired at a given level. 'Knowledge of notions, concepts, facts, definitions, rules, descriptions, laws, theories, systems, relationships, rules belongs to the category of knowledge'.<sup>2</sup> It is important to determine the depth and extent of this knowledge and to record it in a profession-specific manner. In this handbook, you can find a good breakdown by field of expertise both well-formulated, and not so well-formulated knowledge-based learning outcomes selected from the training and output requirements of the various courses.

#### Abilities/ Skills:

'Ability (skills and abilities) means procedural knowledge, which is, knowledge-applying knowledge, and describes forms of procedural knowledge'. Thus, in this case, the expected learning outcomes for the application of knowledge are formulated from the interpretation of the Hungarian Qualifications Framework, which describes skills from 'cognitive (logical, intuitive and creative thinking), and practical (manual dexterity, methods, materials, tools,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Farkas Éva (2017): Learning Outcome Based Curriculum and Subject Development in Higher Education, Juhász Gyula College Publishing House, p. 133.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> same resource, p. 16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> same resource, p. 17.

instruments)' aspects. In this case, cognitive skills refer to the degree to which the student is familiar with the procedures needed to solve problems and problems in a given area and at what level they are capable of using them (be it routine operations or even complex strategies). Expected learning outcomes related to practical skills are statements of actual actions, activities, and ability to carry them out.

#### Attitude:

Attitude is an inner, emotional component, commitment, a set of perceptual questions and evaluative attitudes related to the profession and work. Attitudes are manners and behaviours that can apply to both learning and work. Attitudes are related to knowledge, ability and independence. The attitude category includes, for example, formulas that indicate a person's interest, openness to a particular profession or area, and how receptive he is to a new profession, to know information, methods, willingness, and sensitivity in certain areas.

#### Autonomy / Responsibility:

'Each activity is characterised by the degree of autonomy and responsibility that a person can carry out the task /activity. That is, a person's ability to do individual work, and his/her need for control, assistance, and responsibility for participating in activities in the social environment'. This descriptor must, therefore, describe the level of responsibility the student can perform in a given activity (that is, the responsibility for their work, and the work of others). It should also be stated here what degree of autonomy or willingness to cooperate can be expected from the individual in carrying out and implementing the given professional activity.

#### 5. Defining the target group

**Educators/Teachers/Trainers interacting with adult learners**: people responsible for the process, planning, implementation, assessment and evaluation. This target group provides facilitation, regular support and mentoring during the education/ training process, in which they enable participants to complete the training successfully.

**Education/Training Counsellor**: a person who assesses the client's level of competence and training needs. Based on the level of competence revealed, he/she will suggest appropriate

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> same resource, p. 19.

education / training paths, collaborates with the client and other professionals to successfully deliver the training.

**Support Worker:** a person who is a member of state or municipal governmental and non-governmental organisations: paid and voluntary staff; local government, family physicians, community nurses, community law enforcers, probation officers, job centres, leaders of village societies, cultural societies and other community movements, those who work in libraries, museums, nursery schools, etc. They can offer support for people to return back to the education system, including those who have dropped-out or have lower levels of education.

#### II. Framework programmes

#### 1. Educators/Teachers/Trainers Facilitating the Education of Adults

#### **Definition of the target group:**

Educators/Teachers/Trainers, community trainers interacting with adults: people responsible for the process, planning, implementation, assessment and evaluation. This target group provides facilitation, regular support and mentoring during the education/training process, in which they enable participants to complete the education/ training successfully. People can also act as volunteers who take part in different phases of the process, for example: collecting data from users to get to know the educational needs; supporting the planification of the activities, supporting the implementation of the activities and supporting learners in the learning process.

A person in a mentoring role assists with the involvement of participants/students in the training, helps members of the target group to succeed throughout the training, and administers their follow-up. His/her support reduces the drop-out rate of those involved in training.

#### Training Profile, tasks to complete by the end of the training:

(What will the trainee do?)

- He/she analyses and interprets the evolving demands and the needs for Adult Education in the Information Society.
- He/she knows different processes of teaching and learning aimed at adults.
- He/she knows how to motivate adults to continue to learn.
- He/she gets acquainted with different possibilities how to assess the knowledge (how to test it in an informal way)
- He/she gets to know different materials (online and offline) for teaching Adults
- He/she knows how to deal with mistakes and uses them as a chance for further learning
- Understands, analyses and differentiates various perspectives and international models of Adult Education.

- Identifies the relevant trends and ideas of Adult Education policies at an international,

national, regional, and local level.

- Knows the different organisations, institutions, and social initiatives of Adult Education.

- He/she knows and interprets the European programmes of Adult Education.

- He/she analyses and assesses different international, national, regional or local plans,

programmes and experiences within the framework of Adult Education.

- Identifies and manages the different levels of planning and design for Adult Education

programmes; differentiating the structure; characteristics; types of intervention; and self-

elements that affect each one of the design levels.

He/she designs socio-educational intervention programmes in the field of Adult Education

of different types and in different contexts.

- He/she promotes respect for diversity and multiculturalism with the development of skills

for communicative interaction and the development of the social dimension of the

learning process among adults. This involves ethical commitment and critical and self-

critical capacity.

- Identifies and assesses strengths and weaknesses of an Adult Education plan, programme

or experience.

Planned timeframe for the programme:

Theory:

60 hours

Practice:

90 hours

Total:

150 hours

10

#### **Identification of expected learning outcomes:**

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes	Responsibility/autonomy
He/she knows the history of Adult Education.	He/she identifies the most relevant milestones in Adult Education and relates them to current circumstances in order to respond to new emerging needs.	He/she values the milestones and the important historic actions.	He/she can identify educational trends for designing current proposals adjusted to the formative needs of the 21 <sup>st</sup> century.
He/she knows the different contexts that make up Adult Education.  He/she knows different methodologies of teaching and learning.	He/she interprets the specific features of each context by associating them with the most appropriate teaching methodology.	He/she values different contextual features from the point of view of its opportunities and not from the point of view of its weaknesses.	He/she can select the appropriate training processes for each context.
He/she knows the resources and local, national and international plans for facilitating Adult Education (e.g. Erasmus+programme).	He/she relates the opportunities to the organisation and users' needs.	He/she has a good availability towards social relations and networking.	He/she identifies funding and collaboration opportunities with programmes and organisations that benefit the organisation itself.
He/she knows the organisations that work in the Adult Education sector, its features, similarities and differentiations.	He/she relates different Adult Education organisations to the need and to the target group. He/she is able to collaborate professionally to achieve individual development goals.	He/she strives to improve his/her knowledge and working relationships.	He/she associates each organisation with its know-how, and its expertise field for orientating adults to their needs in a personalised way; He/she is responsible for supporting the development of his/her staff and the professional community. He/she assumes responsibility for his/her professionalism.

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes	Responsibility/autonomy
He/she is familiar with databases and information sources.	He/she can search, analyse, classify and selects relevant information.	i improving squit equestion	To identify plans and training with a positive impact in the field of adult education.
He/she knows the basics and characteristics of adult education (andragogy).	He/she can interpret and relate the characteristics of adults to their learning choices and limitations.	human diversity and foster	To design and/or adapt training plans to the <b>different levels</b> and areas of adult education.
He/she is aware of the educational needs of adults.	He/she can interpret different social realisations. Relates needs to improvement strategies. He/she is capable of cooperation, empathy, mutual understanding and listening, assertiveness, self-reflection. He/she is open to learning various methods of personality development and self-awareness development.	He/she has the ability to adapt, and the flexibility to	Plan training actions consistent with the <b>need</b> and target group. Under the guidance of his/her workplace supervisor, he/she carries out his/her supporting activity autonomously.
He/she understands the special needs, characteristics, and behavioural characteristics of clients requiring core competency development.	Based on his/her knowledge, he/she is able to identify, process and respond effectively to emerging needs and problems and, if necessary, initiate a review of the development plan.	=	He/she identifies ways to achieve development goals and monitors the success of the learning process in collaboration with the educators of the institution.

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes	Responsibility/autonomy
Get to know the key competences for lifelong learning.  He/she recognises the client's level of competence.	He/she can relate key competencies to teaching-learning processes.  Communicates clearly, openly, and in an authentic way with clients, colleagues, and professionals of specific fields.	'helper' attitude when	The design of proposals that facilitate the learning of key and basic competences.  He/she carries responsibility and promotes the development of core competencies for mentees to the best of his/her knowledge.
He/she is familiar with assessment / evaluation criteria, techniques, and instruments to collect and analyse acquired learning.	He/she designs assessment/ evaluation criteria and learning indicators. Analyses the information obtained in the evaluation processes for decision making.	He/she uses data and information to help the adult continue learning. To communicate assertively for the purpose of improvement and motivation.	Assesses learning. Evaluates adult education plans and projects.
He/she is familiar with the curriculum of basic competence development training (incl. contents, methods, output requirements).	He/she is able to learn and apply the training programme in his/her work practice.	He/she is committed to his/her work and open to the development of his/her knowledge. He/she has an ethical attitude.	He/she supports the progression and the effectiveness of improving the core competences of the mentees entrusted to him/her. He/she carries out his/her work under professional ethical requirements and permits.
He/she knows the client's capabilities and the methods that lead to the learning objectives.	He/she makes the clients active in achieving their personal development goals.	He/she is impartial, fair and patient with the mentees.	He/she has a professional responsibility to support his/her client's progress.
He/she knows the documentation tasks for the mentoring activity and its legal background.	He/she is able to perform administrative work related to mentoring, can prepare professional reports.		

#### Method of assessing learning and evaluating the result:

Assignments: to analyse and to interpret programmes, policies, and academic papers.

- Theoretical exam.
- The design of a concept map with a presentation and self-reflection.
- **Practical activity:** the students design a **training plan** composed of elements such as needs analysis, description of the target group, design of objectives and contents, planning of activities, and design of evaluation criteria and techniques and instruments for collecting information.
- To attend a basic education class (cca. 10 hours) and to practise the knowledge gained from the training.

# 2. Training Counsellor Supporting the Development of Adults' Basic Competencies

**Training Counsellor**: a person who assesses the client's level of competence and training needs. Based on the level of competence revealed, he/she will suggest appropriate training paths, collaborates with the client and other professionals to successfully deliver the training.

#### Training Profile, tasks to complete by the end of the training:

(What will the trainee do?)

- The training counsellor knows the psychological theories regarding the counselling role, sees his/her limits and applies the methods of getting to know the clients.
- Is open to learning various methods of personality development and self-awareness development.
- He/she assesses the target group's abilities, level of knowledge and, if their basic competencies require development, recommends the appropriate training path.
- He/she cooperates with the relevant staff of the education/training provider to refer suitable clients as trainees to a particular course or training.
- Creates a safe and supportive atmosphere for the client.
- The training counsellor will assist in identifying the client's competencies, setting realistic goals, and identifying appropriate pathways to help achieve those goals.
- Formulates a personal development plan to meet the client's needs. He/she regularly reviews the plan, follows up the client's progress.
- The training counsellor will recognise when intervention is needed to modify the planned steps.
- Recognises if the client needs another person in charge of providing professional support and knows who to refer to. Collaborates with social network actors, including authorities and other bodies and actors providing support/services on a voluntary basis.
- He/she does follow up activities after the completed training.

## Planned timeframe for the programme:

Theory: 24 hours

Practice 48 hours

Total: 72 hours

## **Identification of expected learning outcomes:**

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes	Responsibility/Autonomy
He/she has a high level of knowledge of the pedagogical, social and psychological skills required to perform counselling activity.	He/she can analyse the lack of basic knowledge, abilities, and attitudes, can prepare his/her development plans supported by data, and can help others.	He/she strives consciously and independently for self-development and the formation of the own professional identity. He/she complies with applicable legislation in the course of his/her work.	Reflects on his/her work and its consequences, accepts and incorporates feedback.
He/she has a thorough knowledge of communication strategies applied in counselling and conflict management methods. He/she knows the methods of communication (written and oral) understandable for adults with functional literacy difficulties.	He/she is capable of cooperation, mutual understanding and listening, assertiveness, open, clear, authentic communication, and self-reflection. He/she communicates well in writing and verbally with the method of easy language.	He/she strives to understand the needs and problems of the candidates quickly and is motivated to respond successfully. His/her attitude towards clients is open-minded and inclusive.	He/she has a greater responsibility in the performance of his/her work, in the management of the data and information which he/she becomes aware of, and in the sharing thereof.  He/she carries out his/her work independently, taking into account his/her manager's instructions and the procedures/methodological guidelines governing the work activity.
He/she knows the social welfare system.	He/she recognises if the client needs another supportive specialist and knows where to direct him/her for special development and support. He/she is capable of developing interdisciplinary cooperation.	He/she is open and inclusive to the problems of different disadvantaged social groups. He/she promotes social inclusion and equal opportunities.	He/she cooperates closely with the social welfare system actors in developing the individual.

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes	Responsibility/Autonomy
He/she knows the rules of volunteering for the public interest and the social, community, and individual benefits of volunteering. He/she knows the support resources for basic skills development available in his/her environment on a voluntary basis.	He/she can incorporate voluntary support resources (e.g. supporting, reaching improving the skills and employment situation of people with low level of education) into his/her work.	He/she sees the use of external volunteer resources as an opportunity, he/she considers volunteer resources as partners.	He/she works independently, in accordance with the organisational protocol, together with the resources organised on a voluntary basis.
He/she knows the features and methods of basic competence assessment tools.	He/she uses tools (questionnaires, tests, etc.) to assess the basic competency of the target group. He/she can provide feedback to the client on the results of the survey.	In assessing clients' abilities and training needs, his/her tools is characterised by tolerance and a helping attitude.	He/she possesses professional independence in the evaluation of questionnaires and tests. He/she keeps information that comes to his/her knowledge confidentially.
He/she is aware of the criteria for recognising and differentiating training needs. He/she recognizes the client's training needs.	He/she can set realistic goals that can be achieved based on the individual characteristics of the applicants. He/she can make an individual development plan and knows how to present and make it approved with the applicant.	He/she is committed to the principle and practice of equal treatment.	He/she carries out his/her work independently, accurately, and strives for formal clarity in written and verbal performance. He/she defines development goals and tasks in collaboration with the applicant.

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes	Responsibility/Autonomy
He/she knows the major theoretical approaches as regards the development of basic competences for adults, the	He/she can find training opportunities for adults and the financial resources and support they may need.	He/she is committed to developing competencies for the adult population.	He/she performs and organises specific tasks independently. He/she cooperates with training providers in offering training opportunities.
relevant legal requirements and the practical operation of the training, the means of accessing the training and the possibilities of support.	He/she contributes to the involvement of candidates in the training programme identified in the development plan.	He/she consciously seeks solutions to emerging problems and shows proactive behavior in organising training courses.	He/she cooperates with organisations and staff members providing training support in the preparation and implementation of decision-making regarding applicants' studies.
He/she knows the documentation tasks related to consulting activities and their legal	He/she is able to carry out administrative work related to preparation of training documents and consulting.	He/she is committed to the development of key competences for adult learners.	He/she initiates cooperation with professional partners in his/her work.
background.	He/she can follow the further learning path of an adult involved in basic skills development.	He/she is opened to continuous learning. He/she follows-up the customer progress according to a schedule.	

#### Method of assessing learning and evaluating the result:

- Written: multiple-choice test and essay
- Case study during training: Presentation of a specific case, showing what and why the trainee did, or what could have been done or done differently.
- Oral: situational exercise, exam situation.

# 3. Support Workers for the Development of Basic Competences for Adults

**Support Worker:** a person who is a member of state or municipal governmental and non-governmental organisations: paid and voluntary staff; local government, family physicians, community nurses, community law enforcers, probation officers, job centres, leaders of village societies, cultural societies and other community movements, those who work in libraries, museums, nursery schools, etc. They can offer support for people to return back to the education system including those who have dropped-out or have lower levels of education.

#### Training Profile, tasks to complete by the end of the training:

(What will the trainee do?)

The Support Worker;

- knows about the situation of adult education in the area. He/she has an informative overview of adult education institutions and organisations who offer different kinds of support services.
- knows the peculiarities of adult learning, knows the problems of the target group and knows how to create attitudes and readiness to learn.
- is aware of the meaning of informative activities informing about learning possibilities through a variety of multiple channels.
- knows the psychological theories of the supporting role. How to inform and support
  the target group concerning the learning possibilities and the availabilities of
  appropriate support services.
- notices and recognises the target group (people with lower level of education or/and lacking basic skills, vulnerable groups).
- has communication skills and empathy to approach people with lower level of education and/or lacking basic skills.
- is able to transmit information through different communication channels and can communicate from people to people 'you know somebody who knows somebody'.
- is aware about the sources of information: learning possibilities, information about career and labour market. He/she knows the sources of information: training institutes,

counselling centres, unemployment offices and insurance fund, village societies, libraries and can guide people to contact them in order to receive studying information.

- has knowledge and he/she can encourage people to continue their studies, can suggest learning possibilities in formal and in-service training institution.
- is ready to start launching the network 'Community supported learning'. Network gives the possibilities to communicate and exchange experience.
- is aware of the objectives and tasks of the activity; can make sense of his/her activities and the benefits resulting from developing basic skills for the population.

#### Planned timeframe for the programme:

Theory: 16 hours

Practice: 8 hours (visit to schools and counselling centres)

Total: 24 hours

## Identification of expected learning outcomes:

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes	Responsibility/autonomy
He/she masters information and recognises the general situation of adult learning in the region.	Communicates fluently with representatives of educational institutions and other counterparts of adult education fields.	He/she is characterised by a 'helper' attitude when communicating with people (potential learners).	1 3
He/she recognises people's problems (lack of information, courage, previous bad experience, etc.) concerning their return to education system.	He/she is open to and capable of listening to people and talking to them.  He/she has active listening skills that enable him/her to enter a conversation and get to know about a person's educational situation.	His/her attitude towards people is understanding and respective. His/her empathy allows to build a trusting contact with other people.	1 1 1
He/she is familiar with the basic competence development training possibilities in the region (knows schools, etc.)	He/she is able to find and transmit information to people who need it. He/she guides people to learning information and shares success stories of adult learners.	He/she is committed to his/her activity and open to the development of his/her knowledge. He/she has an ethical attitude.	effectiveness of improving the general
He/she knows how to make contact, share information and notice people who have lack of basic skills.	His/her communication skills make it possible to involve other people in information/awareness raising activities.	He/she performs as an initiator, thinks critically and takes great responsibility for his/her activities.	He/she values the importance of notification to develop the community and/or region.
He/she has initiative to cooperate between different supporters.	He/she has communications skills in order to introduce what is going on and share experience.	He/she is supportive and mutually respectful to the other supporter.	He/she cooperates closely with other supporters. He/she takes initiative in creating the network.

#### Methods of assessing learning and evaluating the result:

- Written and oral feedback from the participants.
- Test.
- A short follow-up seminar (1 or 2 months later) and discussions of cases and experiences.

#### III. Vision

We will make our Framework Handbook available free of charge to all European Member States to support professionals in designing their own national training programmes.

We hope that adult education organisers, educators, members of state, government, NGOs, and all stakeholders will find this to be a supportive resource in their work and that our material will offer guidelines for professional development for the target group.

Our programme can provide a basis for adaptation to individual national adult education legislation, which can be further assisted by EU funding.

Our long-term aim is that, in the future, low level basic competencies among adults will not prove to be an obstacle to participation in education, vocational training or finding employment.

Continuous professional development for each of the target groups identified in this framework will enhance knowledge, skills and expertise thus providing a more supportive experience for the clients/ learners with whom they interact and motivate to develop basic competencies for accessing education, vocational training or employment opportunities.