ED EC

Extending and developing
adult educators' competences

REPORT COMPILING RESULTS OF THE PILOT TRAINING AND SUMMARISING THE PROJECT "EXTENDING AND DEVELOPING ADULT EDUCATORS' COMPETENCES".

OCTOBER 2020

EDEC: Extending and Developing Adult Educators' Competences

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Intellectual Output 3:

Summary report from the project containing also conclusions from the pilot training.

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1. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

1.1 Project objectives

The main objective of the Project is to broaden both access to, and the available educational offer for, people with lower qualifications, or those who are low-skilled, through the development of competences among adult education specialists (such as employment counsellors, adult educators, career advisors, coaches, etc.).

The Project aims to develop new competences among the vocational and educational advisors who work with adults, in particular adults with lower qualifications or low-skills.

The Project will contribute to the development of state-of-the-art comprehensive methods of working with Clients which will translate directly into the quality of support they receive, and ultimately into upskilling these Clients through their participation in formal and informal education.

The Project examined the pre-existing adult educational solutions developed in partner countries, comparing them and proposing possible adaptations.

The Project also examined the way education advisory services are delivered in the partnering countries and determined either the development opportunities for the role of education brokers in individual countries and the scope of opportunity for introduction of educational brokerage into the range of services offered by educational and vocational counsellors.

This objective has been achieved through:
• analysis of current systems set up to meet the educational needs of adults in the countries the Project Partners come from,
• development of a model /system for supporting adult education that takes into account the role and tasks of educational brokers as well as the scope of training provided to them, according to national conditions in the partnering countries,
• development of competences of adult educators (conducting pilot trainings in accordance with the developed model),
• dissemination of the elaborated model and results of the pilot training.

This report focuses on the development of competences of adult educators (conducting pilot trainings in accordance with the developed model) and the dissemination of the elaborated model and the results of the pilot training.

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1.2 Introduction to the pilot training

The pilot training was created following a survey completed by adult educators in each country. The survey questioned recipients on the areas of their roles in which they had least competence. The options from which recipients were to decide were as follows:
- Ability to motivate clients to change
- Ability to build a trusting relationship with the client
- Communication skills (i.e. active listening, assertiveness, etc)
- Ability to give effective feedback
- Ability to diagnose clients' "limiting beliefs" and help them to overcome them
- Ability to manage stress (work related)
- Knowledge in the field of diagnosing client's educational needs and creating educational paths for them
- Knowledge of the market of educational services in the native country and the European Union

The questionnaire was completed by 143 adult educators across Italy, Poland and the UK (a minimum of 40 adult educators per country). Based upon the results of the survey, the following areas were identified as being most appropriate for the training:
- Ability to build a trust relationship with the client
- Communication skills (i.e. active listening, assertiveness, etc)
- Ability to diagnose clients' "limiting beliefs" and help them to overcome them
- Knowledge in the field of diagnosing client's educational needs and creating educational paths for them
- Knowledge of the market of educational services in the native country and the European Union

Training materials were developed by the project members and these were standardised for the pilot training. The pilot training took place over 40 hours (5 modules x 8 hours). Originally the materials were developed for workshop delivery, however, due to the COVID-19 situation, much of the training was delivered through an online approach.

The pilot training was delivered to a total of 50 adult educators based in Italy, Poland and the UK.
Prior to commencement of the training, each participant completed an introductory questionnaire providing information on their previous experiences of being an adult educator. Then, following each module, a further questionnaire was completed to understand the 'distance travelled' by each participant on the programme, the quality of the training session and the standard of the training materials.

2. SUMMARY OF THE PILOT TRAINING IN EACH PARTNERSHIP COUNTRY

2.1 Poland

This section will describe the implementation of the pilot training within Poland.

2.1.1 Recruitment for the pilot training

The Foundation for Innovation and Knowledge (FIIW) team conducted a wide recruitment campaign of participants – adult educators for free on-line workshops on competences and skills necessary to work with adults.

The aim of the workshop was to acquire knowledge and improve the competences of participants on the basis of materials prepared in the framework of the training manual "Development of competences of adult educators. Manual for independent and group work" https://fiiw.pl/wpcontent/uploads/2020/07/EDEC_Pakiet_Szkoleniowy_Final.pdf

In order to provide a diverse range of adult educators at the workshops, in particular adult teachers, career counsellors, career advisers and trainers, the Foundation engaged its professional network of contacts built over the years during the implementation of projects related to the trend of lifelong learning". Recruitment was carried out mainly through digital channels and over the telephone. As examples, information about the workshop was sent to:
• Participants of the project conference "Adult Educator" – challenges and trends", which took place on 03.10.2019
• Members of the Partnership for Financial Education – NGO
• National Federation of Food Banks
• Professional Advisors at the Aktiwizacja Foundation
• Students in career guidance
• Schools for adults in the http://www.spisszkol.eu/

Information promoting training was posted on the Foundation Facebook page of https://www.facebook.com/fundacjainnowacjaiwiedza/ on 09.06.2020

Information about the training was also included on the portal www.ngo.pl with a nationwide reach.

The Mazowieckie Board of Education in Warsaw, a project partner, was involved in the recruitment of the participants of the workshop especially teachers of adults, which provided information about the workshops to:
- 8 schools for adults -primary education
- 13 high schools for adults
- 169 post-secondary schools for adults

Recruitment activities were successful and, before the first training scheduled for 17.06.2020, 18 applications were received.

2.1.2 Summary of the training

Before starting each workshop, participants completed an introductory survey in which they shared information about their work experiences, profession, the expectations and concerns they have about the workshop. Participants were also asked what resources they wanted/could share with other workshop participants.

All participants completed a survey in which they shared the following information:

Participant	Gender	Experience as an educator (in years)	Profession
Participant #1	F	11	Career counsellor
Participant #2	F	20	Adult Teacher
Participant #3	F	14	Career counsellor
Participant #4	M	10	Adult Teacher
Participant #5	F	1	Trainer
Participant #6	F	18	Adult Teacher
Participant #7	F	5 months	Career counsellor
Participant #8	F	9	Trainer
Participant #9	F	5	Adult Educator
Participant #10	F	8	Trainer
Participant #11	M	5	Educator, adult teacher
Participant #12	F	7	Career counsellor
Participant #13	F	8 months	Career counsellor
Participant #14	F	1	Career counsellor
Participant #15	F	13	Trainer
Participant #16	F	6	Trainer, Adult Educator
Participant #17	F	10	Trainer
Participant #18	F	1 year 5months	Social worker, adult educator

The organiser received 18 surveys – 16 from women and 2 from men.
Participants' expectations were as follows:
- Increase in knowledge – 12 people
- Increase in professional competence – 12 persons
- exchange of experience with trainees – 11 people
- achieving my goals in the form of professional development – 4 people
- learn about new methodologies and tools to use in your work – 15 people
- getting to know other people and establishing professional contacts – 8 people

Some participants had concerns about the form of on-line training related to the technical complexity of the educational platform, other participants wondered whether the workshops would be interesting, engaging and whether they would pass on previously unknown knowledge and tools. On the other hand, people with little experience as an educator feared that the knowledge presented during the workshops would be accessible and understandable to them despite their limited experience working with adults.

Almost 90% of participants pointed to communication, coaching, tutoring, public speaking, storytelling, exchanges of work experiences of working with people with disabilities, social exclusion, youth, burnout, cultural activities, online psychological interventions, crisis work, IT skills.

Training by this method (online, division into workshops and own work) was a new experience for participants. The situation, forced by Covid-19 restrictions, has become an experiment and a way to test the possibility of implementing the content contained in the training manual in online form.

Between 17.06.2020 and 17.07.2020, the workshop took place in a system of 2 meetings per week. The first meeting lasted 4 hours with another 2 hours later in the week. The Foundation used the Zoom platform to conduct the workshops. www.zoom.com.

The workshops were divided into 5 thematic modules:
1. Communication skills in the work of an adult educator.
2. Building a relationship with the client in the work of an adult educator.
3. Diagnosing and working on customer-limiting beliefs
4. Diagnosing educational needs and creating a customer's learning path.
5. Education services market in Poland.

Each workshop was conducted in the form of 4 hours of online training with a 15-minute break, then the participants were given materials for individual work. During the next

2-hour meeting, the participants met again to discuss and verify the results of their own work, possible problems or doubts.

The workshops were conducted by one trainer, which allowed them to build a very good atmosphere during the training and experience the group process.

The trainer was focused on the participants and gave them time to exchange experiences between participants and work on their own work examples. Classes were conducted using the Cycle D. Kolb, that is, through experience and reflection. As part of the classes, exercises were conducted divided into pairs and small groups.

There were a number of advantages of online training, such as:
• familiarising participants with the method of online workshops
• opportunity to take part in training from anywhere
• excellent atmosphere provided by the coach, thanks to which the participants made new acquaintances and exchanged experiences
• learn about new tools useful for online training e.g. Google notes, Mentimeter
• familiarise themselves with the functioning of the Zoom platform and its functionalities e.g. division into rooms allowing work in pairs or groups

However, there were also some disadvantages of online training, such as:
• technical difficulties in establishing a connection
• Wi-Fi connection quality issues
• limited time to exchange experiences
• back pain caused by a long sitting in front of the computer

2.1.3 Results of the pilot training

The survey was designed in such a way that participants could examine the increase in their knowledge by highlighting the answers before and after the training. They then answered a series of open-ended questions. All areas of the evaluation of the Polish pilot training showed a good improvement in results.

Below we present the results of Part 1 of the Survey, in which participants were asked for opinions on the training conducted and self-assessment of the increase in competences.

Communication Skills
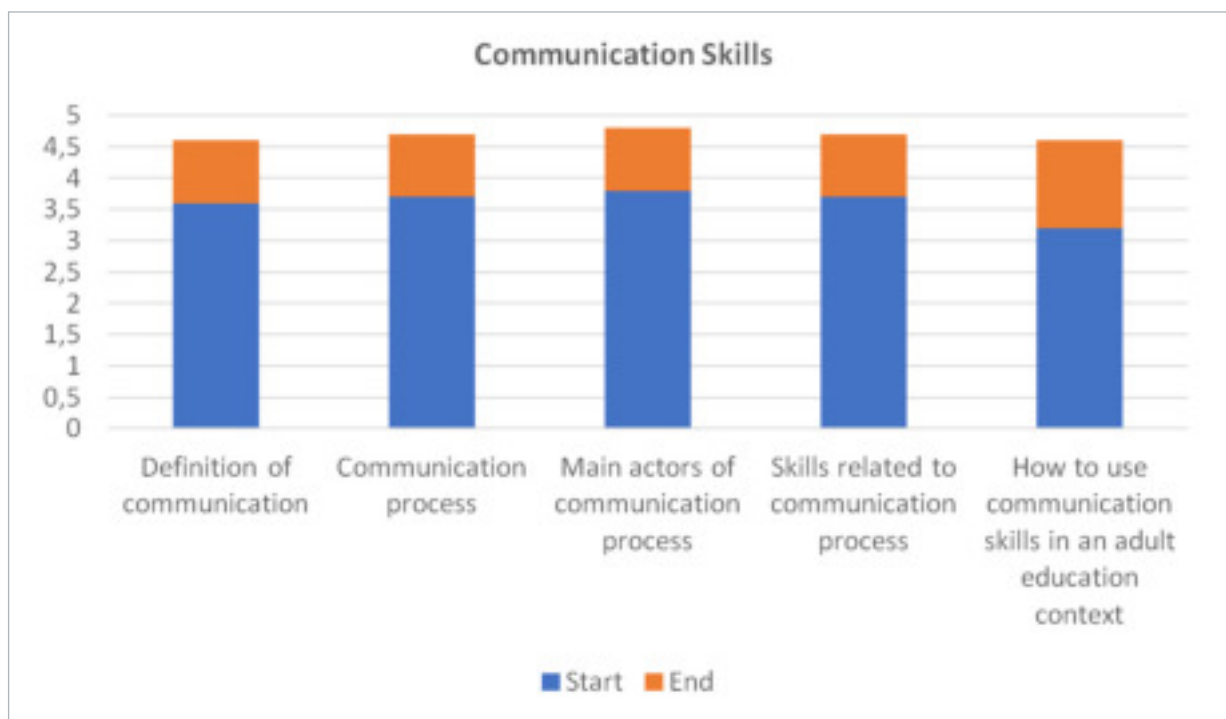
Each topic showed a consistent improvement from an average of approximately 3.5 points to around 4.5 points. There was a slightly wider distance travelled for 'how to use communication skills in an adult education context'.

Building Customer Relationships
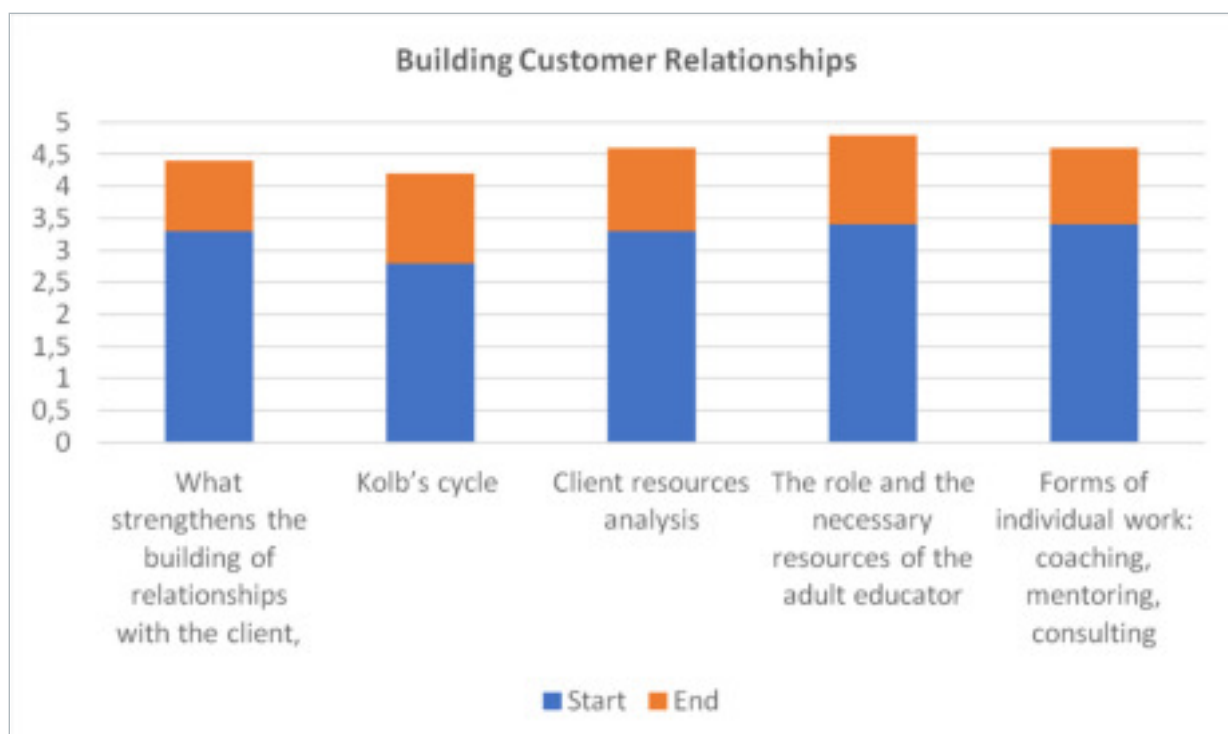
In the second module, the average starting scores were slightly lower at about 3 points and finished at approximately 4.5 points.

Diagnosis and Work with Restrictive Beliefs
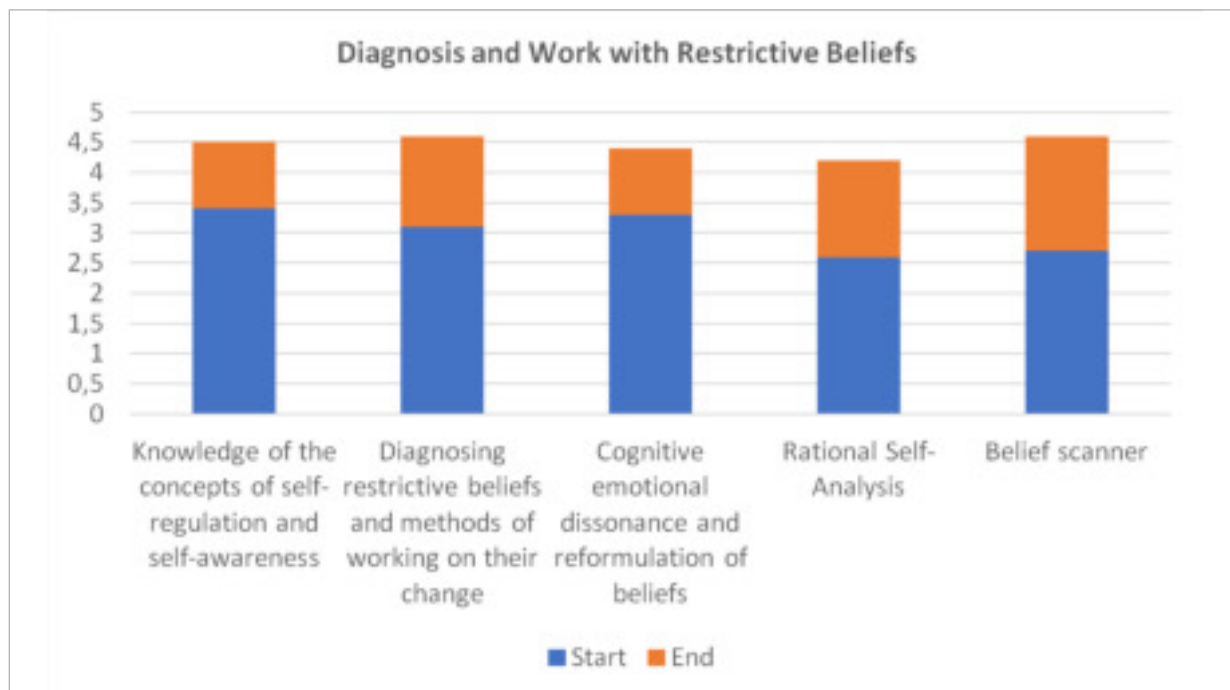
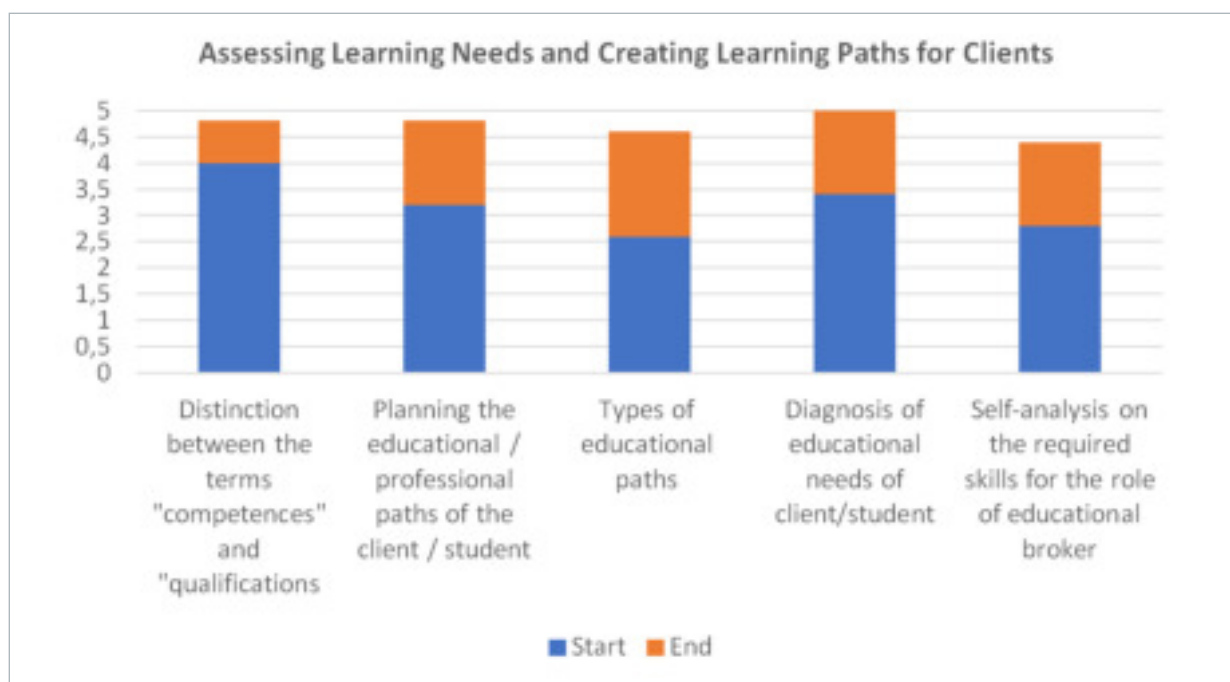Module 3 also showed a lower average starting point of around 3-3.5 points with almost all topics reaching around 4.5 points following the session. 'Rational self-analysis' had a starting average score of about 2.5 points and only finished slightly above 4 points.

Assessing Learning Needs and Creating Learning Paths for Clients

Module 4 also had low average starting points with the exception of the 'distinction between the terms "competences" and "qualifications"'. The remaining topics showed an improvement of 1.5-2 points between the start and the end of the session.

Educational Services in the Context of Adult Education in Poland
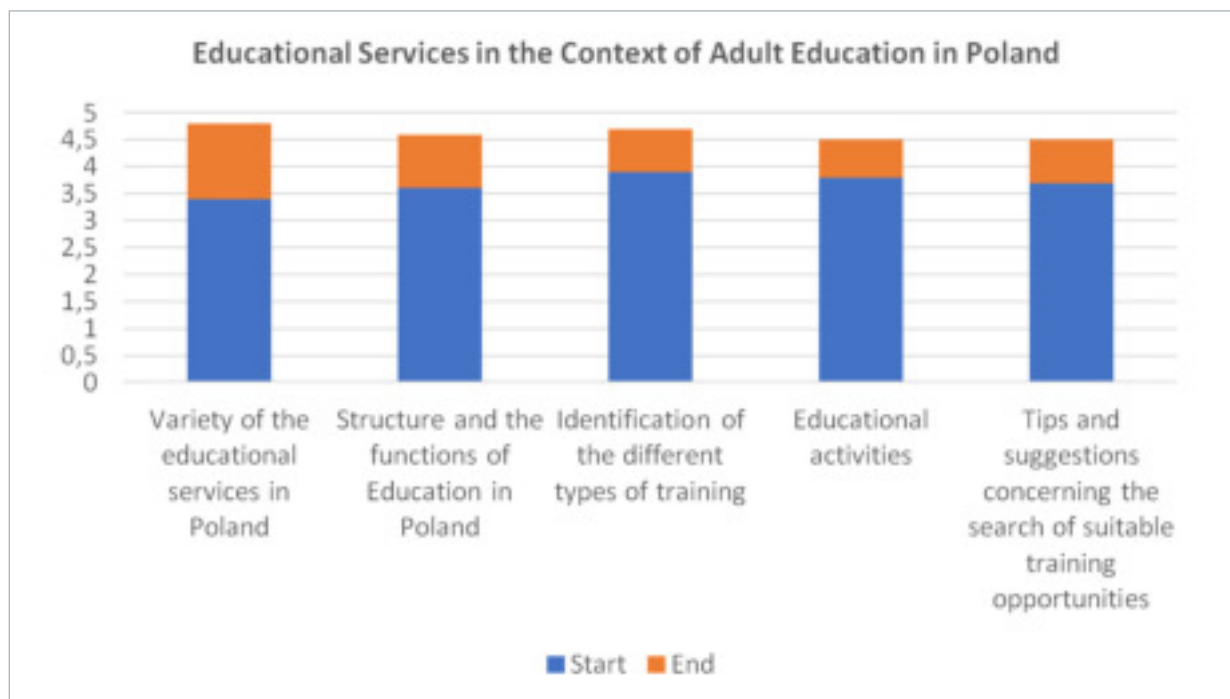
The final module had fairly low average starting scores and showed relatively little improvement of 1 or less points across all topics.

2.1.4 Training usefulness evaluation

The training was evaluated highly for all modules with very little variation across them. In all modules the training was rated at approximately 4.5 points for all questions.

This would lead us to conclude that the training was delivered to a high standard and was relevant to the participants.

Training Evaluation
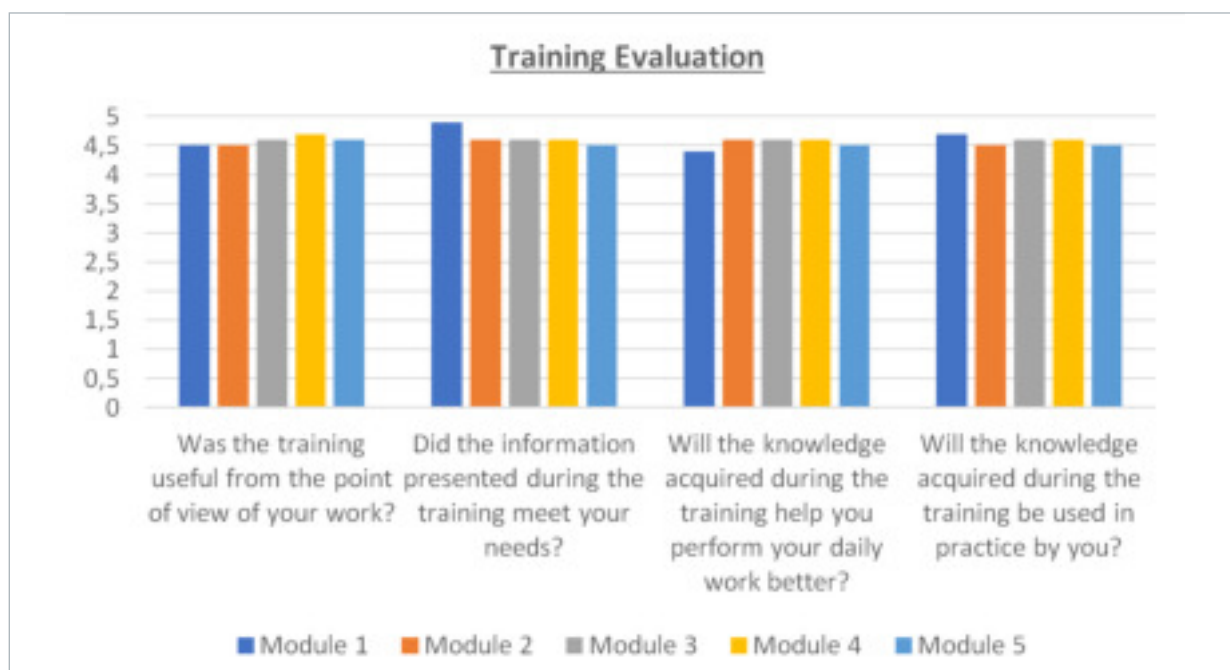
2.1.5 Training Materials

Similarly, the evaluation of the training materials was very high with all average scores at 4.5 points or above. This, again, leads us to conclude that the programme was delivered to a high standard.

2.1.6 Opinions/ Testimonials from the participants

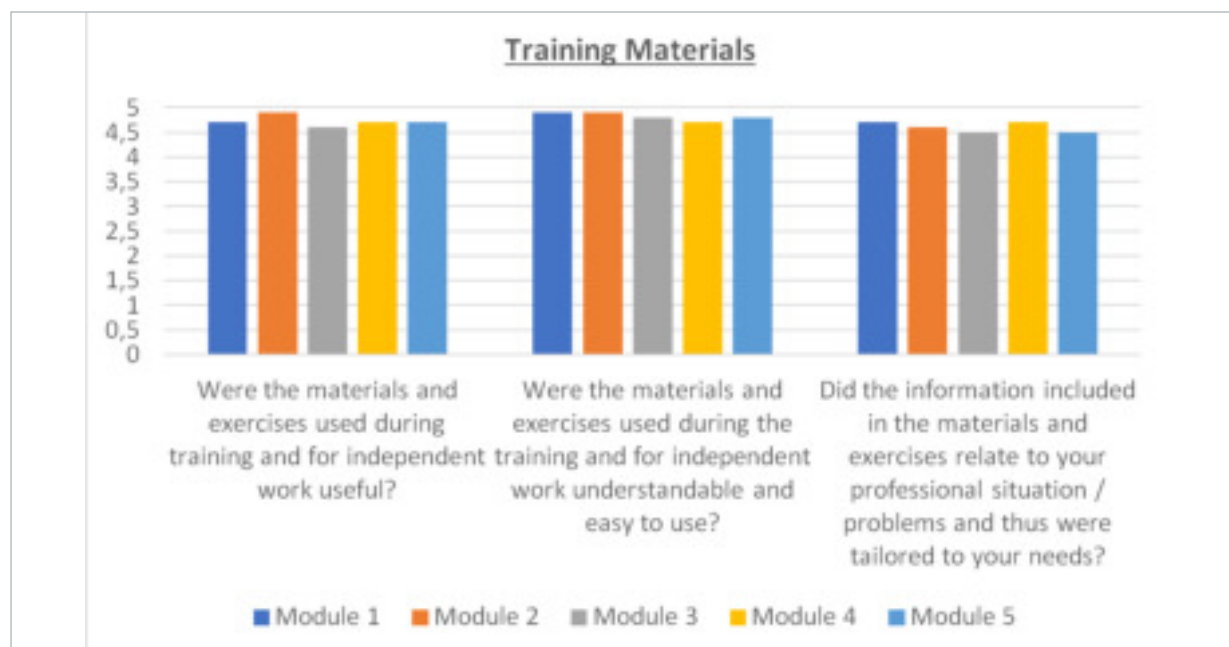Below we present the comments and recommendations that the workshop participants wrote in the surveys and after the training.

"Thank you very much for the opportunity to take part in the training. Great lead by Grazyna. The topics are necessary and inspiring for further development. The workshop method meant that during the exercises there was an opportunity to exchange experiences. There were also very interesting tools in the materials that I would like to use in the future. Please also remember about me in your next training".

"With the information provided by the presenter and the experience of the participants, you can definitely change the perspective and change/improve your actions"

"I've been using my new knowledge since the first opportunity after the training ".

"The training also allowed for self-observation resulting from exercise and to look at yourself from a different perspective."

"Knowledge is already being used. The use of the presented techniques and the use of knowledge provided by Grazyna wakes the client from winter sleep, and gives me a sense of greater effectiveness in action."

"I would like to thank you very much for the opportunity to participate in the training. The training is very useful and helpful in my work, ie. counsellor and adult educator. A large dose of knowledge, tools and experience necessary to work with adults, which was given to us in a very interesting way made me want to participate in the next module, despite the fact that I was on holidays. Once again, I thank you very much Kasia Jaszczuk for the organization of such training and Grażyna Knitter for the way it is conducted. Also to all other participants who were happy to share their experiences and insights. I ask for more such training."

"The title of the project "Expanding and developing the competences of adult educators" in which the workshops were held sounded interesting. However, I was concerned that the content would be superficial, similar to those proposed in most of the training programmes that are overflowing with the internet in an age of now fashionable topic of communication and personal development. I was very wrong, which makes me very happy. The knowledge conveyed by the wonderful leader – Grażyna Knitter – for the most part was, for me a new, deepening of the already known content. In addition to theory, I learned new tools to help with everyday work with the client. The information provided, introduced into the practice will certainly support my work and lead to increased efficiency of activities. I believe that what distinguishes pilot training from others in which I participated is, first of all, the attention of the presenter aimed not only at conveying knowledge aimed at improving the efficiency of work and effectiveness of activities with clients, but focusing on our good educators. Grazyna strengthened us in the belief that we need to take care of ourselves in order to be able to help others effectively later. Moreover, it is distinguishing to conduct meetings by Grażyna – in a communicative and accessible way she shared knowledge, supported listeners in solving problems, gave specific answers and tips. She represented an empathetic approach to the participants of the course. If I hadn't attended the workshops and someone was telling me about them now, showing me the materials, I would have regretted not taking part. Fortunately, it's just an idea. I propose to dedicate similar training not only to people involved in education, but also to social workers and family assistants – I have the impression that those who have been thrown into the fray forget that they are also adult educators, and the content is very tailored to our trade! I already recommend! I hope for similar meetings with Grazyna in the future: maybe cyclical training to deepen the knowledge we gained during our workshops?"

2.1.7 Training package dissemination activates

After receiving feedback from the training participants about the content of the training package, the Partnership updated the textbook accordingly, clarified the instructions for some exercises and improved graphics.

Then disseminated the training package (02) in the following ways:
- Promotion at events and trainings for adult educators
- Mailing to the database of network of organizations and professionals working in the field of adult education adult education;
- Mailing to the participants of the training pilot
- Mailing the directors of School for Adults in the Mazovia Region
- Articles on FIIW and Mazovian Board of Education;
- Posts in social media and in Facebook Groups for adult educators (Facebook);
- Publication of an article on several portals with nationwide coverage

FIIW sent a mailing to 555 entities involved in adult education at regional and national level, non-governmental organizations dealing with the labour market and working with disadvantaged people. The Training manual was attached to the email, also the email contained the link to the project partners websites where the training manual is available in different languages.

The Mazovian Board of Education has made the training package available to all directors of School for Adults for and other institutions where adult educators work in the Mazovia Region, the training manual was sent to 520 schools.

Also, an article in was published in on www.ngo.pl – the biggest Polish portal for non-governmental organisations. Here it is the link:
https://publicystyka.ngo.pl/pakiet-szkoleniowy-rozwoj-kompetencji-edukatorow-osob-doroslych

The training package has also been made available for social welfare centres, family assistants, senior clubs, occupational therapy institutions, occupational activity entities, social inclusion clubs and social inclusion centres.

The training manual is available for free downland from FIIW website and from the Mazovian Board of Education website. Here are the links:

https://fiiw.pl/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Rozw%C3%B3j-kompetencji-edukator%C3%B3w-os%C3%B3b-doros%C5%82ych.-Podr%C4%99cznik-przeznaczony-do-pracy-samodzielnej-i-grupowej_Sierpie%C5%84-2020.pdf

https://www.kuratorium.waw.pl/pl/edukacja-i-ksztalcenie/edukacja-europe-jska/14881,Nowa-publikacja-w-projekcie-Poszerzanie-i-rozwoj-kompetencji-edukatorow-osob-dor.html

2.2. Italy

This section will describe the implementation of the pilot training within Italy.

2.2.1 Recruitment for the pilot training

In order to recruit the target for the training, CSC used different digital media in order to advertise the EDEC training course. However, CSC first spread the news through its professional contacts via face-to-face meetings once the COVID restrictions allowed them. In this way CSC took advantage of its long-lasting professional network in order to gather potential participants around the territory of the city of Palermo.

Nevertheless, it must be said that most efforts were invested in the digital media. CSC used its own Facebook and LinkedIn pages in order to gather potential participants (https://www.facebook.com/CSCDaniloDolci/ https://www.linkedin.com/posts/csc-danilo-dolci_consulenteeducativo-formazioneonline-competenze-activity-6677175082693001216-wiRt and https://www.linkedin.com/posts/csc-danilo-dolci_scheda-di-partecipazione-al-corso-di-formazione-activity-6679300136507637760-eJCL)

Moreover, the EDEC training course was advertised in the CSC webpage (https://danilodolci.org/notizie/edec-formazione-educatori-adulti/) with an article containing the following information:
– A description of the role of the Educational Consultant;
– The definition of the main topics of the EDEC Training course;
– The definition of the target group to which the EDEC training course is addressed;
– General information on the EDEC project;
– The contact of the person in charge inside CSC.

The posts and the article had a link to an online questionnaire in which the potential participants could insert their personal information (name, surname, age, etc.) and contact details: email, number and Skype contact. Moreover, the potential participants were asked to indicate their interest in the training course and declare their professional experience in years.

This initial questionnaire was filled in by 27 potential participants. However, some people were not able to follow the training course for a series of practical and personal issues such as:
– family issues: i.e. taking care of children and old parents, due to COVID-19 restrictions;
– work issues: i.e. the schedule of the training course corresponded with their own work schedule;
– practical issues: i.e. they had a bad Internet connection that did not allow them to follow the lessons in a suitable manner.

2.2.2 Summary of the Training

As abovementioned, CSC needed to organise the training course twice since, in the first round, CSC did not gather 15 participants. The two rounds of the EDEC training course were held over the following periods:
– EDEC training course 1 round: from 22/06/2020 to 13/07/2020; N° participants: 8
– EDEC training course 2 rounds: from 16/07/2020 to 23/07/2020; N° participants: 9

In order to make this report clearer, the participants will be mentioned altogether, avoiding this distinction between the two rounds. In addition, a few people who took part in the first meetings decided to quit the training course because they did not find that it corresponded with their professional need; these people will not be inserted in the report since they did not conclude the training course and didn't achieve a minimum number of hours of attendance.

The total number of participants that completed the EDEC training course was 17. Following the completion of the introductory questionnaire, in which they have explained their expectations and how they would bring those competences into the training course, trainers slightly adapted the contents in order to meet the expectations of the participants. Consequently, the level of interaction and involvement was generally high during the training course (the results will be deeply analysed in the next section). The participants' profile was as follows:

List of Participants	Gender	Professional Experience (years of experience)
Participant #1	M	Educator (6)
Participant #2	F	Teacher (4)
Participant #3	F	Educator (5)
Participant #4	F	Teacher (20)
Participant #5	F	Teacher (5)
Participant #6	F	Educator (3)
Participant #7	F	Teacher (5)
Participant #8	F	Educator (6)
Participant #9	F	Teacher (10)
Participant #10	F	Educator (25)
Participant #11	F	Educator (2)
Participant #12	F	VET Trainer (1)
Participant #13	F	VET Trainer (10)
Participant #14	F	VET Trainer (4)
Participant #15	F	VET Trainer (3)
Participant #16	M	VET Trainer (10)
Participant #17	F	VET Trainer (4)

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, the National Agency approved the online adaptation of the EDEC training course with the following structure:
– 4 hours of online training with a break of 15 minutes;
– 2 hours of offline independent work for the participants;
– 2 hours of online verification of the independent work.

CSC implemented the EDEC training course with two trainers, who prepared the training material together and switched during the delivery of the training course. For each online meeting, the trainers prepared PowerPoint presentations that were shared with the participants. The main aim of these presentations was to clarify and synthetise complex theoretical concepts in a way that the participants could find easy and enjoyable. However, the trainers were careful to provide these concepts in an integral way, avoiding extreme simplification.

The 4 hours of online training were divided into the following schedule:
– 2 theoretical hours, in which the main topic was introduced together with the main concepts in the field of adult education;
– 15 minutes break;
– 2 practical hours, in which the participants played an active and central role, applying the new concepts through exercises that required practical solutions. This was always facilitated by the trainers.

At the very end of the 4 hours of online training, one of the trainers explained the expected independent work by preparing some PowerPoint slides as well as answering the questions of the participants about both the previous theoretical content and the practical exercise. Moreover, the trainers shared their own email address and phone number, in case the participants had some difficulties during the implementation of the independent work.

The 2-hours online verification was organised on a different day in order to let the participants have enough time to implement the independent work. These meetings were facilitated by at least one of the trainers. For these meetings, the trainers prepared a small recap of the previous 4-hours online training. Then, either the trainer prepared a summary of the work made by the participants or he prepared a blank PowerPoint slide to fill in (in case the participants forgot to send the completed exercise before the meeting). Most of these meetings were organised with a brainstorming approach, in which the trainer formulated questions and issues to be discussed among the participants. Depending on the exercises, the trainer sometimes decided to let the participants explain their own exercises in turn and then left time for the other participants to ask questions.

CSC decided to implement the training course using the GoToMeeting online platform for the following reasons:
– it guarantees a high level of privacy to the users;
– it provides a very simple interface for the settings;
– it does not require any kind of subscription for the users in order to join an online meeting;
– it stores the meeting registrations for many days, tracking the timing and the number of participants thus being a really good tool for the reporting of these activities.

The adaptation of the training course to a digital format brought new challenges and advantages. The challenges were the following:
– It was difficult to create the conditions in which the participants could interact: at the beginning, the screen of the laptop and the mobile phone were a communication barrier;
– At the beginning of the training, the trainers detected a certain degree of difficulty in modulating the exercises and the activities in the digital format;
– The trainers detected a certain degree of difficulty in attracting the attention of the participants during the online meeting, since the online training allows the shiest participant to "hide" more easily from the others.
– Every online meeting might be subjected to technical issues that could undermine the quality of the meeting (bad Internet connection, bad functioning of the computer audio, bad functioning of the headphones, etc.). On one occasion the audio of the trainer's laptop stopped working and the participants were not able to listen and the trainer was forced to restart the online meeting. Fortunately, small technical issues, such as this, did not affect the quality of the entire training course, but they were an important opportunity to learn and improve the following meetings.

The advantages were as follows:
– Thanks to the digital format, participants from various Italian regions were able to take part in the training course, increasing the feedback and the personal experiences on the field from different areas of Italy;
– The trainers confirmed that it was much easier to organise this type of meeting rather than face-to-face meetings, that require a larger amount of logistical preparation (set the room with tables and chairs, prepare beverage and snacks for the break etc.);
– The participants had the possibility to take part in the training course from locations that were more comfortable to them (home, workplace, parents' house, etc.). Moreover, they enjoyed more flexibility: they had the opportunity to move from one place to another or maybe to disconnect for a while in case of an emergency.
– The online training has been an excellent opportunity to experiment in a different way of delivering the training and this will be used as an approach for the next training delivery undertaken by our organisation.

2.2.3 Results of the pilot training

As previously mentioned, the introductory questionnaire aimed to gather the personal information of the participants together with their expectations and competences, so that it was possible to make a slight adaptation to the training contents in relation to their needs. Most confirmed that they aimed to improve their competences and increase their level of knowledge in the field of the adult education.

The participants were then asked which competences they would bring and share during the training course. Most of them referred to their professional and personal experience in the educational field. During the online meetings, the participants indeed demonstrated to be aware of the fact that the training course had a participatory approach and were willing to share their professional stories in a very active and open way.

Finally, the participants were asked to define the figure of Educational Consultant. Most of the participants were aware of its main role, saying that the Educational Consultant is a figure that supports the users in finding suitable training opportunities that allow them to enter in the job market.

This was a good starting point for the group with almost all the participants starting at the same level.

After concluding every module, the trainers sent to the participants an evaluation question-naire in which they were asked to evaluate the training course and their acquired knowledge. In order to keep consistency and coherence, the results below are presented following the different sections of the questionnaire.

Five questions were asked regarding each participant's assessment of their skills before and after the training module. In most cases, on average, the starting point was approximately 2.5 to 3 points and by the end of the module this had increased to around 4 to 4.5 points.

Communication Skills

Start / End
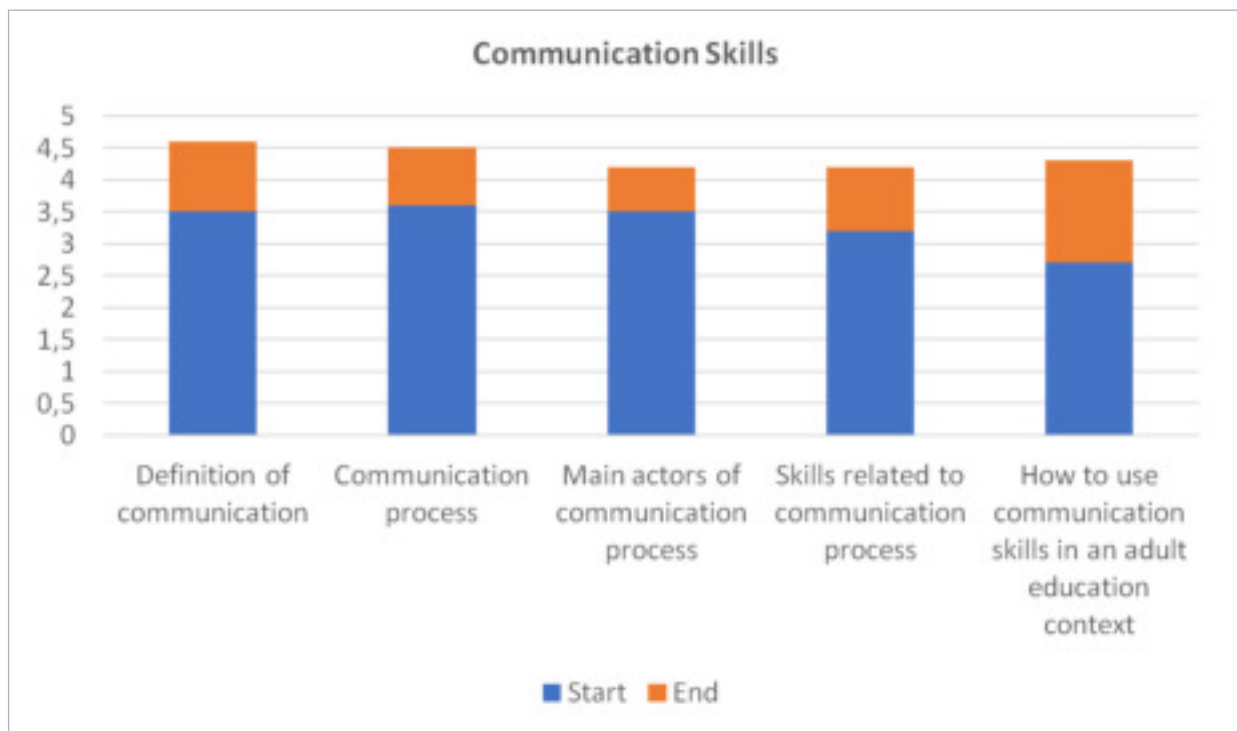
Participants felt that they improved their communication skills across all areas with approximately 1-point improvement on average. The largest improvement was in how adult educators should use communication in an adult education context.

Building Customer Relationships

Start / End
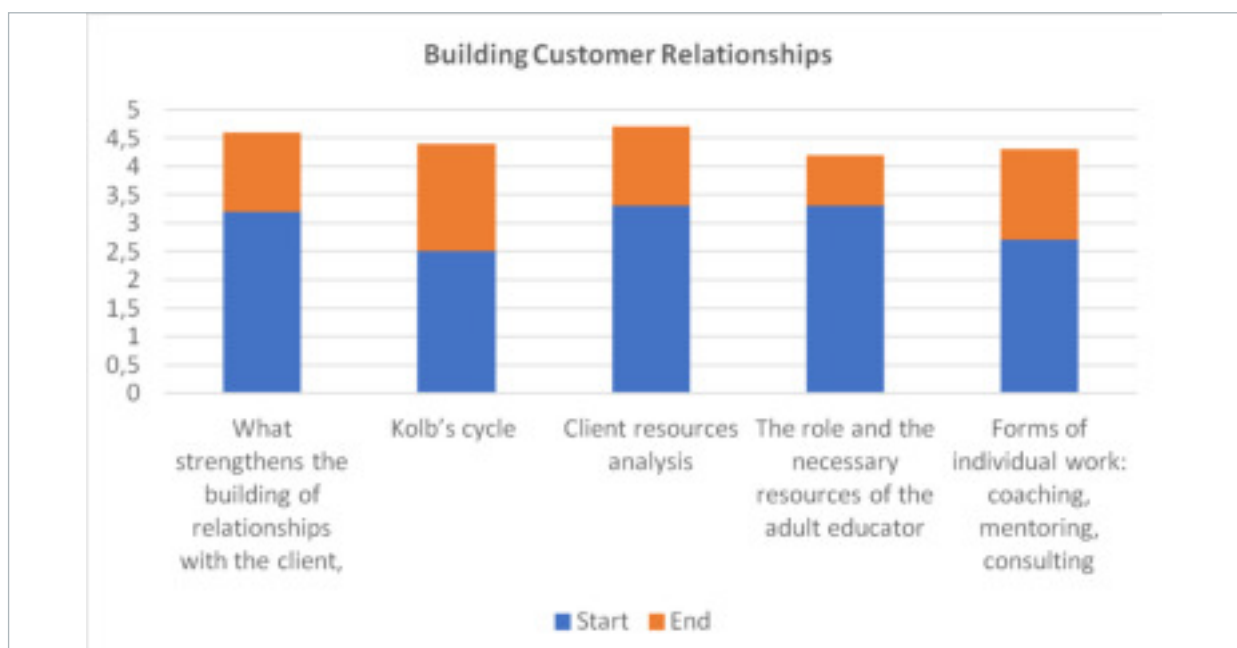
The responses of participants following the second module showed an increased improvement of approximately a 1.5-point improvement. The Kolb's Cycle showed an almost 2-point improvement.

Diagnosis and Work with Restrictive Beliefs
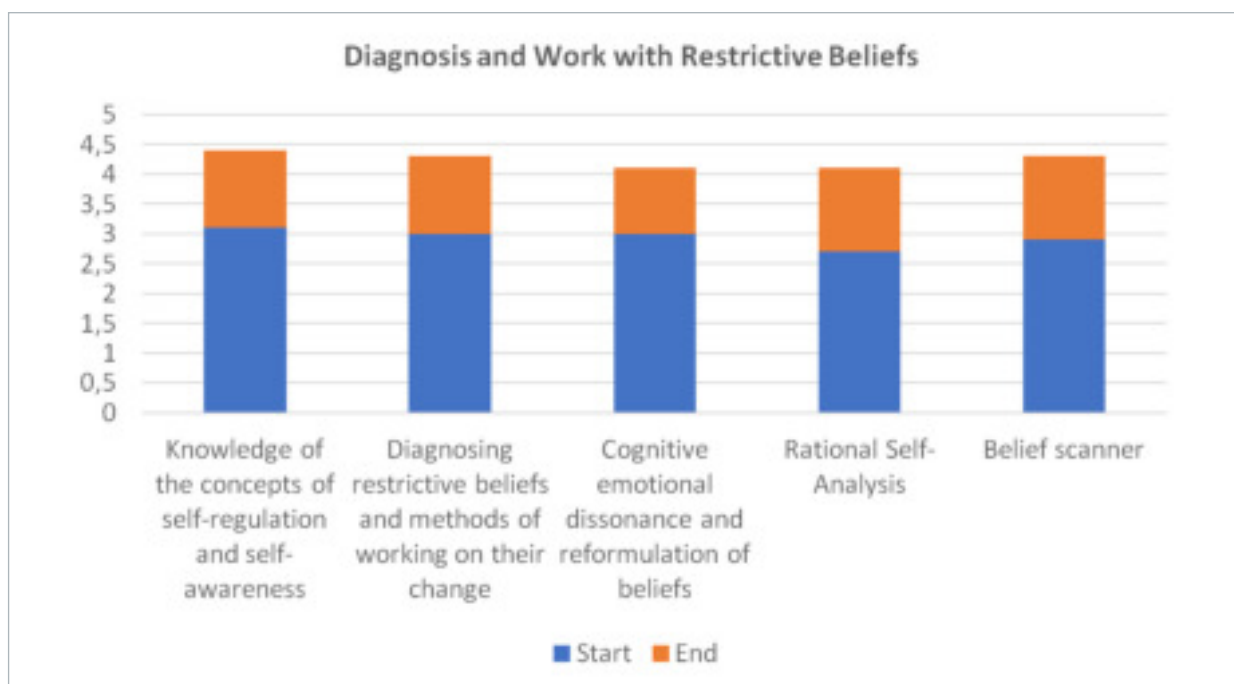
The improvements were fairly consistent across all areas questioned for diagnosis and working with restrictive beliefs. This showed an improvement of approximately 1.5 points across all questions but started and ended at relatively low levels.

Assessing Learning Needs and Creating Learning Paths for Clients
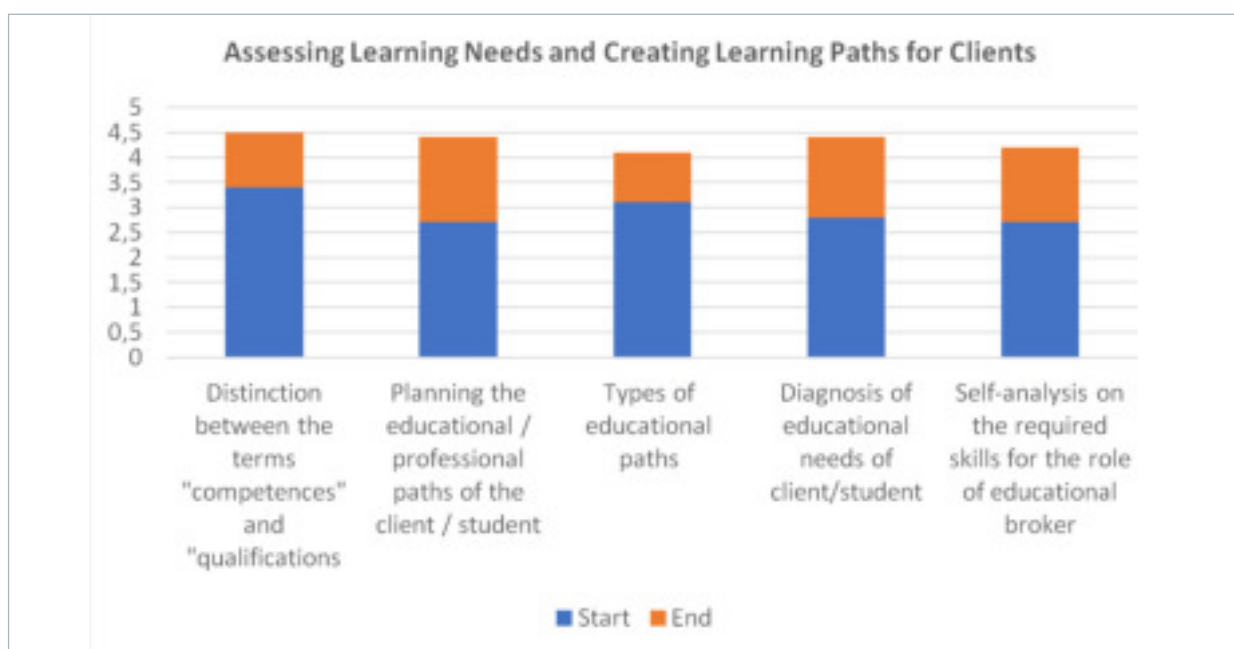
There was a wider difference between responses for module 3 with 'planning the educational/professional paths of the client/student', 'diagnosis of educational needs of client/student' and 'self-analysis on the required skills for the role of educational broker' showing improvements of 1.5 to 2 points whereas 'distinction between the terms "competences" and "qualifications"' showed only an improvement of approximately 1 point.

Educational Services in the Context of Adult Education in Italy
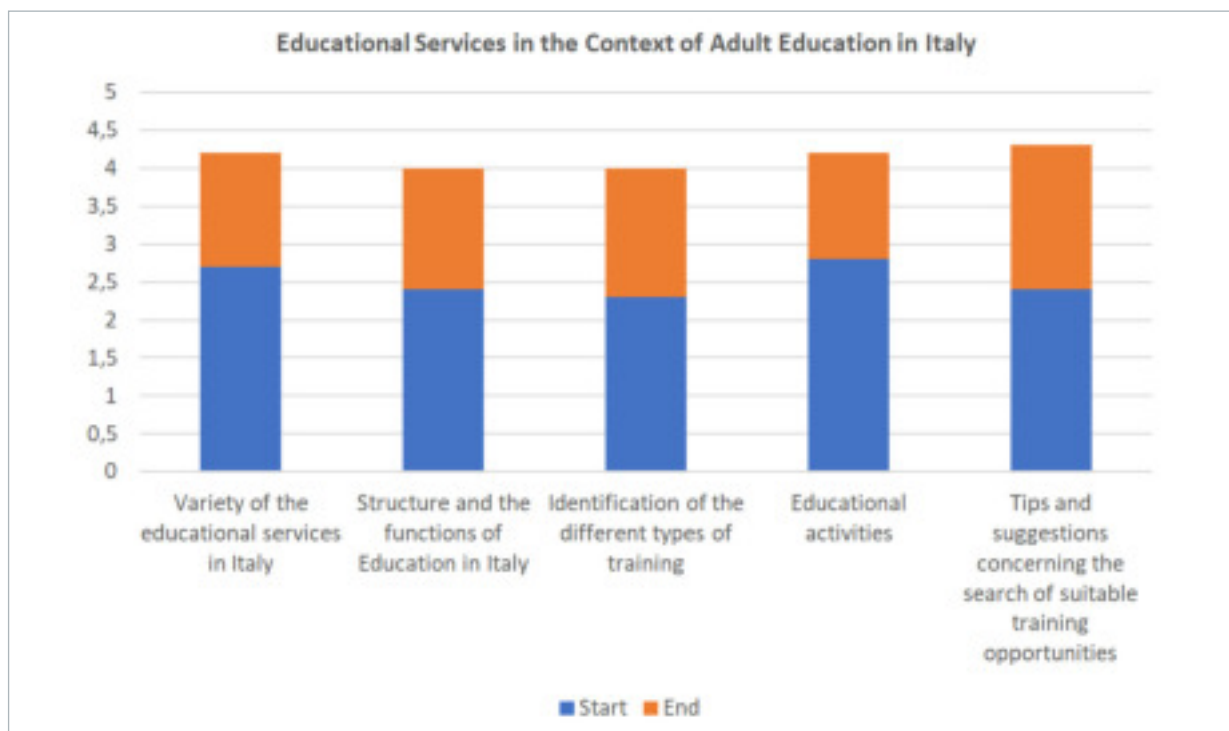
The fifth module showed a consistent improvement across all areas of approximately 1.5 points but, again, started and ended at relatively low levels.

The difference in the level of knowledge between the start and end of the training course is evident in all of the questionnaires. This would appear to demonstrate that the training course was effective and the trainers were able to successfully communicate new theoretical concepts to the participants.

2.2.4 Training usefulness evaluation

In the second section of the questionnaires, the participants were asked to evaluate the training course, focusing on the online meetings with the trainers. The participants rated their level of agreement, where 1 represents *total disagreement* and 5 represents *total agreement*.

Training Materials
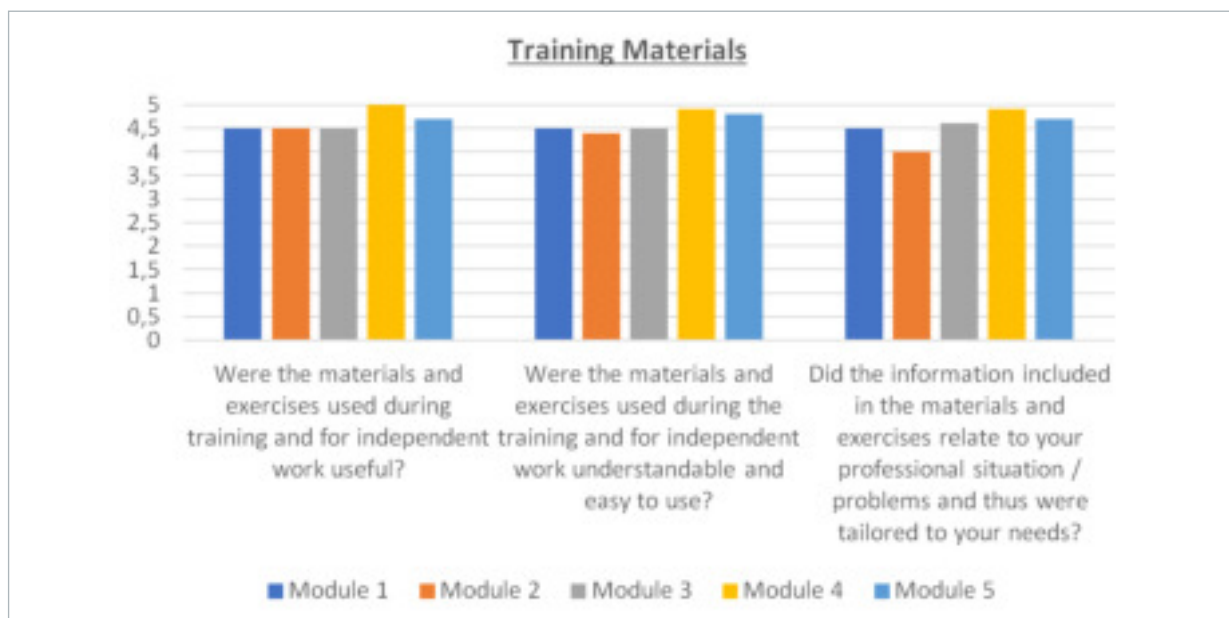
It is evident that the participants considered the training course very relevant and would be able to be put into practice by the adult educators.

2.2.5 Training Materials

In the third section of the evaluation questionnaires, the participants were asked to evaluate the didactical material, focusing on the theoretical booklets and the individual exercises. The questions in this section are also consistent for every questionnaire. Similarly, the participants rated their level of agreement, where 1 represents *total disagreement* and 5 represents *total agreement*.
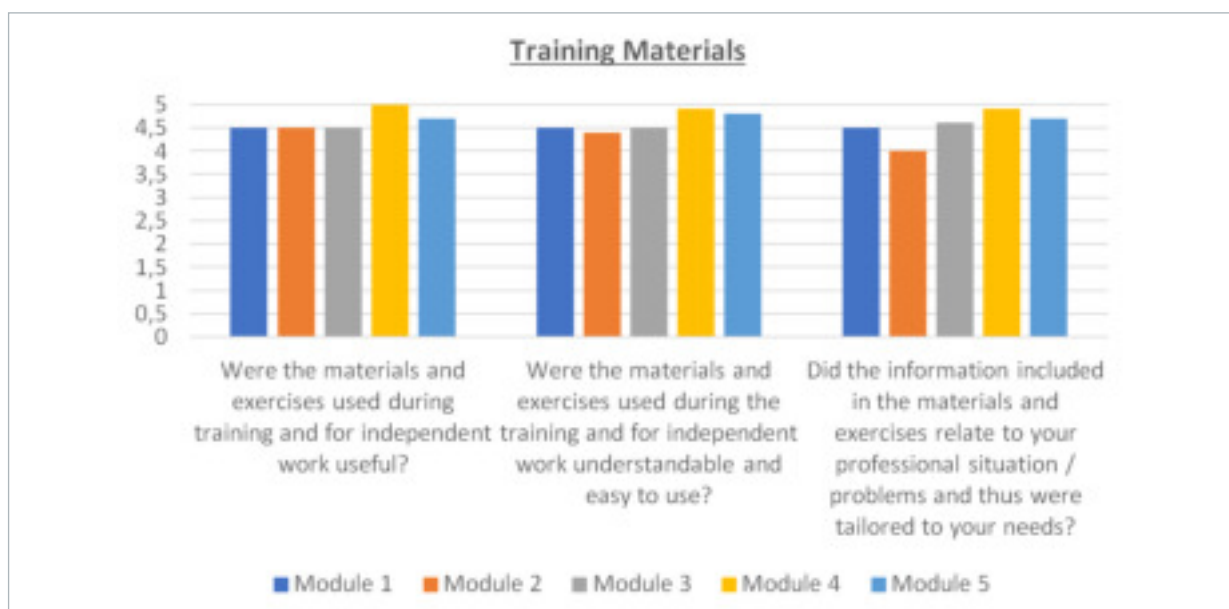

Training Materials

From the results, it is possible to conclude that the participants considered the material and the documents to be useful, understandable, easy to use and informative.

2.2.6 Opinions/ Testimonials form the participants

In the fourth section of the questionnaires, the participants were asked to provide general comments and opinions on the training course. The questions in this section are also the same for every questionnaire. Most of the questions are open in order to let the participants express their thoughts freely. Generally, the feedback in this section were positive, highlighting the open learning environment, the easy-to-use activities and the high level of the contents provided. However, some of the participants complained about some aspects such as the excessive duration of the training course – for some of them, an online training course should have lasted less than the amount of time set by our training – and the difficult interaction due to the use of the digital devices, which sometimes have created communication barriers. Finally, for participants with more than 20 years of experience, some definitions were too general: since the level of experiences of each participant have been mixed, for some topics it has been a bit less easy to find a middle-ground. However, as it has been reported by the previous results, the experience has been largely appreciated by all the participants involved.

The most relevant positive comments are reported below, taking into consideration all the evaluation questionnaire administered. Here is some examples:

"The trainer was particularly clear and he dedicated the right amount of time to explain the theoretical concepts. The training course was very interactive."

"The meetings are very well structured and there is nothing I did not like from them."

"I liked the possibility to listen to the others and share my experiences."

"I like to talk about empathy and the problems that we may have if we do not apply empathy."
"I liked the part with the exercises and the experience sharing."

"I liked the interaction between trainers and participants."

"I liked the freedom to express myself."

"I liked the exercise with colours."

"I liked the material that the trainers used."

"I liked the freedom to express my opinions."

2.2.7 Training package dissemination activities

Once the training pilot course was concluded, the training package was disseminated in the following way:
– Mass emailing through a database of contacts in the field of adult education;
– Press release;
– Newsletter;
– Posts in social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram);
– Publication of an article in EPALE – Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe

The CSC Visibility Office indeed sent a mass email to 151 entities involved in adult education at regional and national level, including all the Italian CPIAs (the Centres of Adult Education directly managed by the Italian Ministry of Education). The email contains the link to an article in which it is possible to download the training package.

Moreover, the CSC Visibility Office sent a newsletter to 589 non-governmental organizations dealing with the labour market and working with disadvantaged people. The newsletter contains a link to download the training package. The CSC Visibility also prepared an article about the training package for the press release and sent it to 578 contacts among regional and national newspapers to publish it. In addition, several posts with the link for the download of the training package were prepared and published in the following social media: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram.

Finally, an article in Italian was published in EPALE – Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe. The platform managers confirmed the release of the article, through which it is possible to download the training package in Italian (https://epale.ec.europa.eu/it/node/160127).

2.3. United Kingdom

This section will describe the implementation of the pilot training within the UK.

2.3.1 Recruitment for the pilot training

The pilot training programme was recruited through contacts we have with adult educators in the Liverpool City Region. The programme was advertised through a leaflet and any interested parties were required to complete the introductory questionnaire so that it could be ensured that the programme was suitable for each person.

Upon completion of the questionnaire, each chosen person was called by telephone to discuss the programme content.

All people completing the introductory questionnaire were deemed suitable for the programme and commenced the pilot training programme.

In addition, there were requests from further individuals working with the chosen adult educators to take part in the sessions. These people were not adult educators and so they did not complete the initial questionnaire but they did attend the initial online session.

2.3.2 Summary of the training

We delivered the training programme on one occasion to all 15 people. This took place during the week commencing 20th July 2020. The participants' profile is shown below:

List of Participants	Gender	Professional Experience (years of experience)	Profession
Participant #1	F	3 years	Adult Educator
Participant #2	F	5 years	Adult Educator
Participant #3	F	3 years	Adult Educator
Participant #4	F	1 year	Adult Educator
Participant #5	M	6 years	Adult Educator
Participant #6	M	1 year	Adult Educator
Participant #7	M	2 years	Adult Educator
Participant #8	M	4 years	Adult Educator

Participant #9	M	7 years	Adult Educator
Participant #10	M	2 years	Adult Educator
Participant #11	F	4 years	Adult Educator
Participant #12	F	7 years	Adult Educator
Participant #13	F	1 year	Adult Educator
Participant #14	F	9 years	Adult Educator
Participant #15	F	1 year	Adult Educator

We undertook module one through online training in line with the approved adaptations of the National Agency using the following structure:
– 4 hours of online training with a break of 15 minutes;
– 2 hours of offline independent work for the participants;
– 2 hours of online verification of the independent work.

We utilised Zoom for our online training session as it was free to use for participants but also easily accessible from multiple devices such as PC, Mac and smart phones and tablets. However, after the first module, delegates requested a face-to-face workshop model for the remaining four modules. Delegates felt that it was more difficult to undertake training online through a Zoom meeting, some participants did not have access to a reliable internet connection and/or did not have suitable devices due to lockdown and that the benefits were diluted by this. Much of this was due to both the delegates and the tutor having had limited previous experience of online learning.

Due to the relaxing of some COVID-19 restrictions in England, the small geographical spread of the delegates and the availability of large classrooms, the remaining workshops were able to successfully delivered in a safe, socially distanced manner in a classroom environment. This worked in a much better manner and received positive remarks from participants.

2.3.3 Results of the pilot training

The results of our training programme were good with large improvements in skills from the start of the modules compared to the end of the sessions, participants believing that the programme was relevant and that the materials helped them learn.

A large level of improvement was noticed across all of the modules through the programme within the UK pilot. Almost all areas achieved an average of close to 5 points by the end of the programme compared to a starting position in the mid-2 point range.
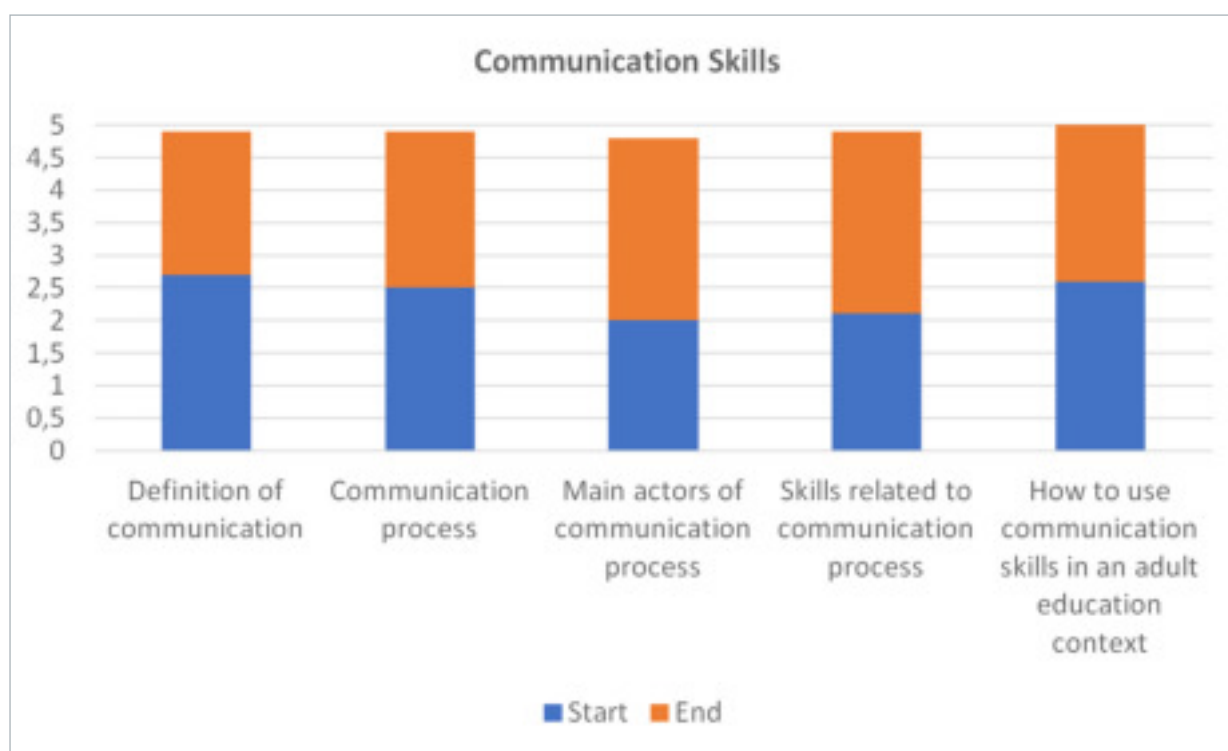
The first module showed a very high average end point figure. The main actors of the communication process showed a slightly lower average end point score but had a large distance travelled compared to the starting average point score of 2.5.

Building Customer Relationships
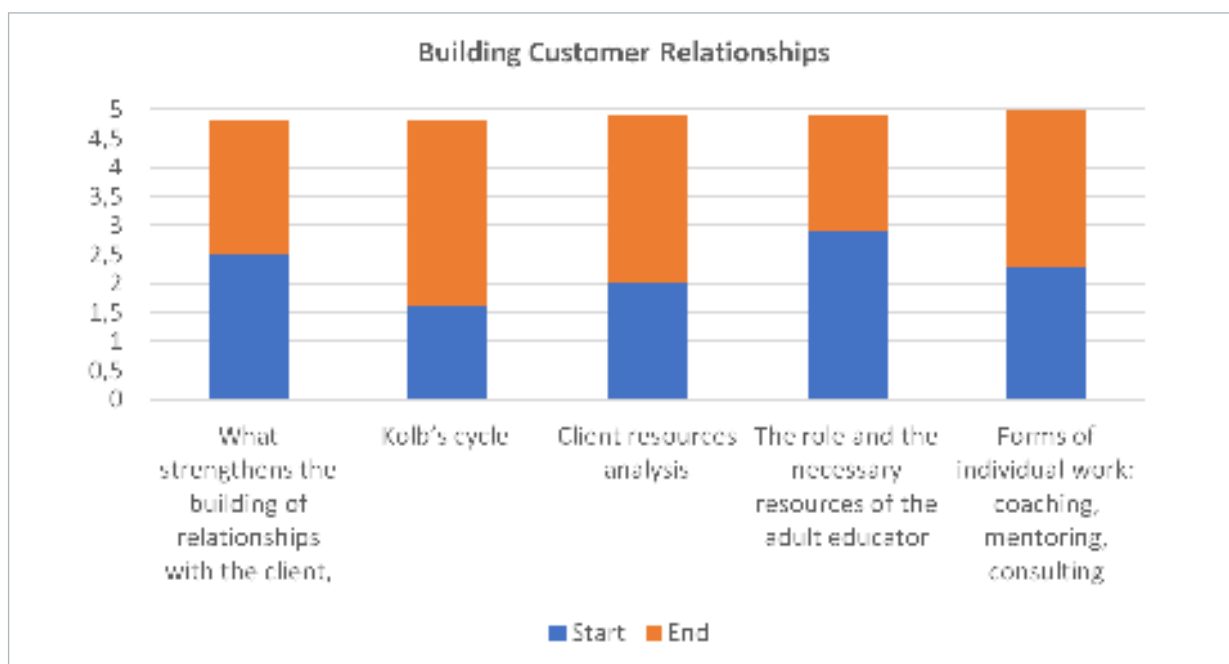
Again, module two achieved very high average end point scores with all areas, particularly 'Kolb's cycle' and 'client resources analysis', showing large distance travelled improvements.

Diagnosis and Work with Restrictive Beliefs
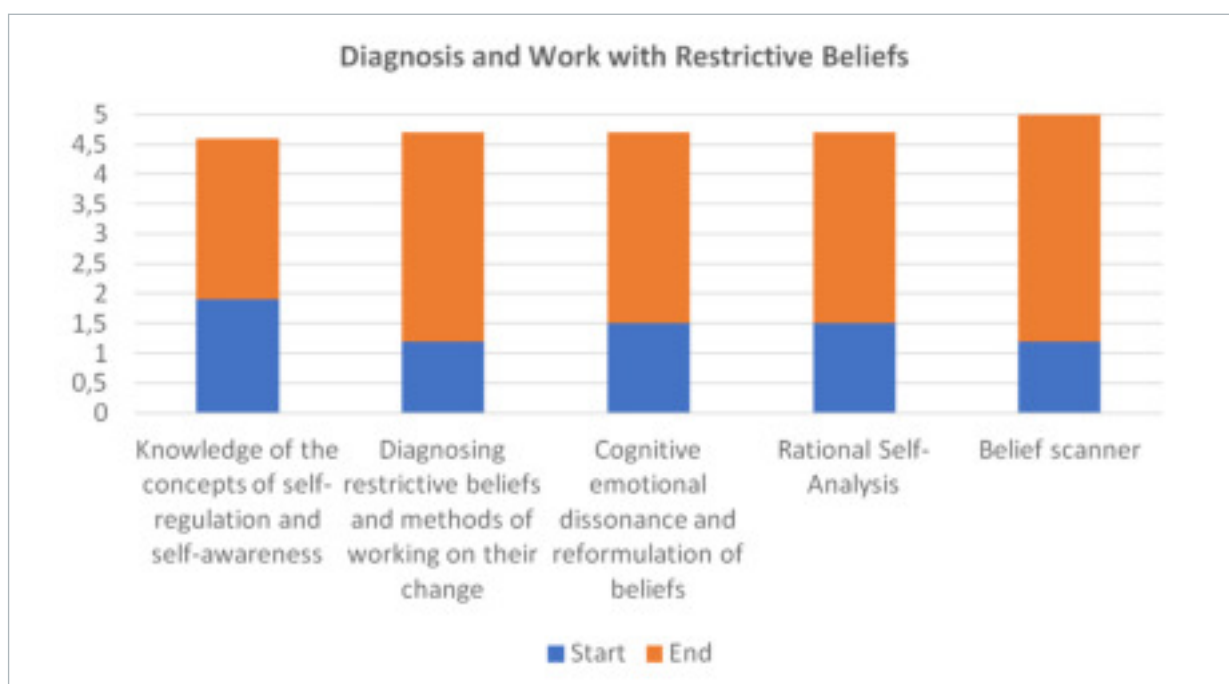
Apart from 'belief scanner', the end point scores were lower in the third module than the previous two modules. However, the distance travelled was much greater than the previous modules in every case. The average end point scores remained very high (4.5+ points) while the starting points were below 2 points in every topic.

Assessing Learning Needs and Creating Learning Paths for Clients
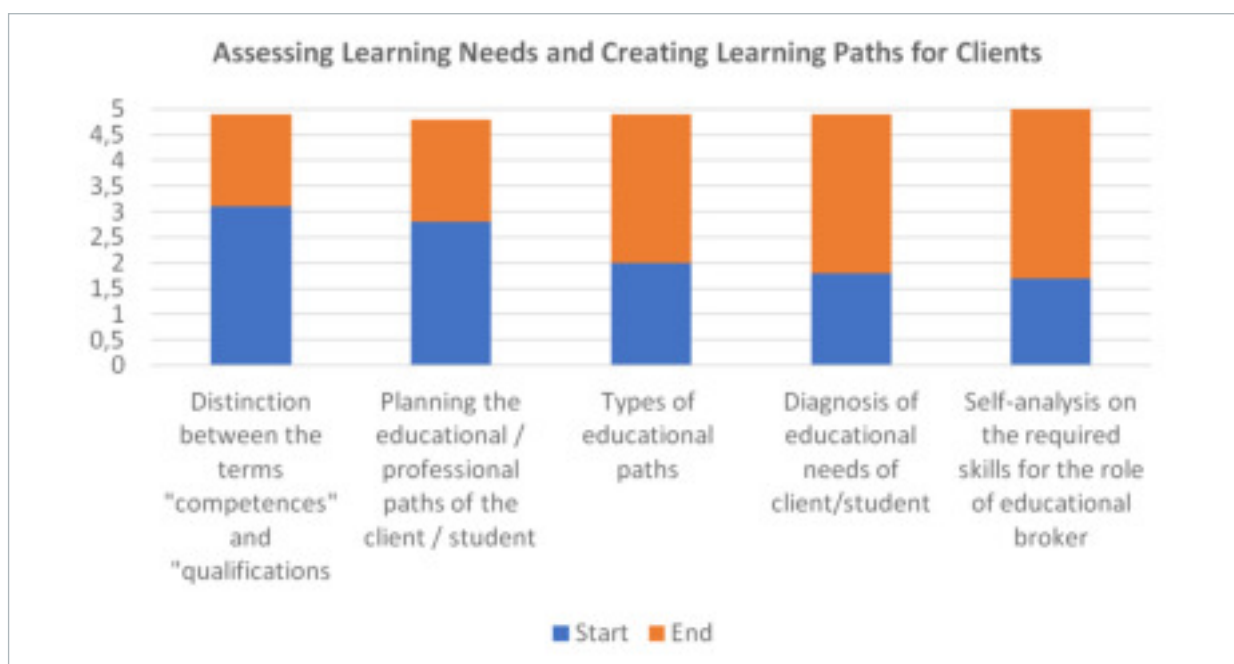
The average end point scores returned to almost 5 points in the fourth module, albeit from higher starting average point scores.

Educational Services in the Context of Adult Education in the UK
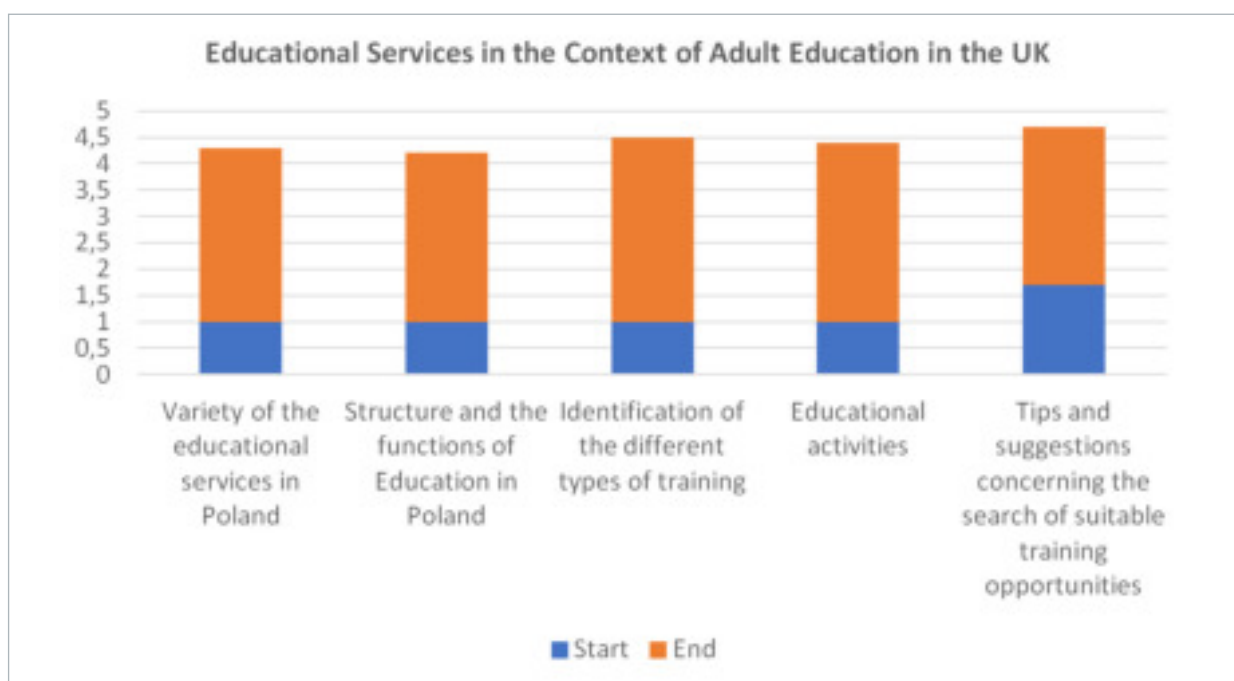
The final module showed slightly lower average end point scores of approximately 4.5 points or lower. However, the starting point grades were the lowest of the five modules with most being at just one point. This suggests confirmation of the opinion expressed in the first report which showed a lack of knowledge and understanding of educational services within the UK by adult educators.

There is a clear improvement in understanding in all topics within every module with most topics having an average starting position of between 1 point and 3 points and an average end point score of 4 points to 5 points. This shows considerable distance travelled and suggests the training was valuable to all delegates.

2.3.4 Training usefulness evaluation

Participants evaluated the training very highly for the first four modules, however there was a noticeable drop for the fifth module. This is consistent with the average end points for module 5 being significantly lower than the previous four modules. It is also interesting to note that this module had the lowest average starting point. This, again, links to the opinion expressed in the first report which showed a lack of knowledge and understanding of educational services within the UK by adult educators.
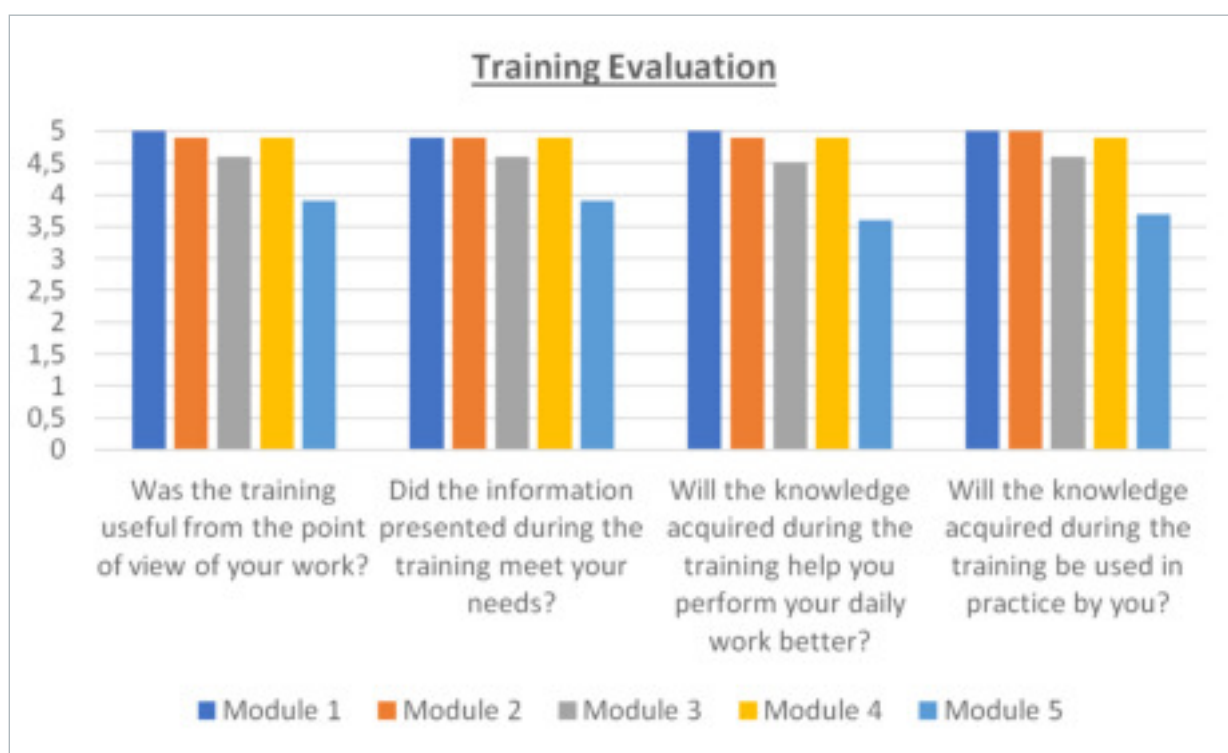
2.3.5 Training Materials

The training materials have also been evaluated highly across all modules with just a slight dip for module 5. In all cases, the training materials have an average score of over 4 points and in all but one case they are above 4.5 points.

Training Materials
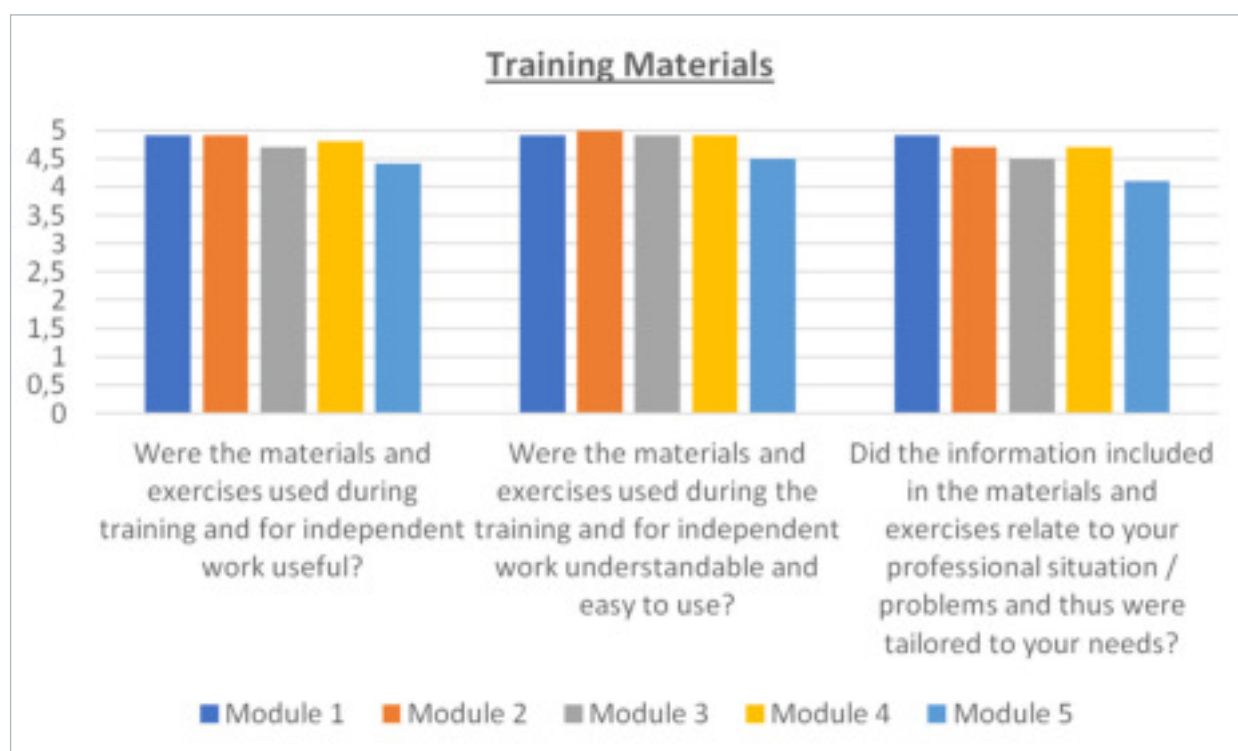
2.3.6 Opinions/ Testimonials form the participants.

Excellent responses were received by recipients of the training programmes. A sample are shown below:

"Very informative"

"Tailored course in detail"

"Really enjoyed the course"

"Kolbs Cycle was interesting"

"Great course"

"Good clear information"

"Brilliant course learning new methods"

"Methods used will be used within my job role for future communication with adults"

2.3.7 Dissemination

Following the training session, the training materials were disseminated using a number of different routes.

The materials were distributed to the organisations of all of the participants on the programme so that they can use these internally.

Furthermore, the materials were posted to our network of adult educator organisations within the Liverpool City Region, including relevant members of the Greater Merseyside Learner Provider Federation.

In addition, we have included the materials on our website for universal access.

3. Best international practices.

Following the pilot programme, a series of best practices were identified. This section will detail each of these.

3.1 Poland

During the preparation for the pilot training in Poland the FIIW team worked closely with the project partners to ensure the same or very similar training content was delivered across all three partnership countries. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the format of the training was changed from standard in-class room training to an online method in relatively short time. We had to be selective and choose content that will keep participants engaged in the learning process online.

The innovative method of preparing a handbook, which can be used for group and individual work, where each module consists of theoretical and practical parts, made it possible to adapt the pilot training to the online method and mix theoretical elements with practical exercises.

The possibility of a dual use of the publication was confirmed during the training, when the participants used the training during group training and then individually during their own work at home.

The Zoom platform was selected after research as a training platform as it gives the possibility to divide the group in smaller groups or pairs in separate rooms, this feature was very useful during the training and was used often by the trainer.

To ensure effective delivery of the training and ensure high standards, the following format was chosen for each module: 4 hours of online group training, 2 hours of off-line individual work based on topic and exercises prepared by the trainer and 2 hours.

The requirement for the participants to work between meetings worked very well – this gives the opportunity to use the content of the manual in the long term rather than just online classes.

Before the start of the training all participants were asked to fill the introductory questionnaire based on which the trainer was able to adjust the content to the needs of the group. Taking in to account the different professional experiences of the participants, the trainer often had to work as a coach and a facilitator.

In this case the recommendation for the trainers is to take care of the group process, integrate the team, ask participants with more experience to share with the group, engage all participants and share their opinions and jointly seek solutions to exercises or case studies. It is also helpful to draw conclusions through moderated discussion and to share the trainer's experience of working with adults.

In the case of the pilot training in Poland one trainer delivered all the training, the trainer had a lot of experiences in the delivery of online training of this length (4 training hours at once). Based on the delivery of the training, the trainer has the following recommendations for the future:
– Training group of up to 10 participants – allows contact and enough attention for all participants
– No recording if not required
– Length of training -5 hours with two breaks
– Ensure participants' cameras on
– Use an online platform which allows the division of groups into smaller groups or pairs
– Setting an on-line work contract, m.in cameras switched on, addressing a specific person,

Lifelong learning is not only about developing competences and improving qualifications, but, especially for persons working with adult students, prevention of burnout, satisfaction with learning new knowledge, learning new methods, ways to increase the efficiency of working with people seeking help and support.

Participants were eager to learn, also to share their experiences and to talk to others who often experience similar challenges as themselves.

3.2 Italy

During the implementation of the training course in Italy, the following best practices have been identified.

In the initial phase, once the project partners decided that the training course would be adapted from the face-to-face format to the online one, a first issue was to find the methods to keep the participants engaged in the learning process that would not have typical practical, face-to-face based activities. After a discussion, the project partners decided that the theoretical sessions needed to be mixed with the evaluation/assessment sessions in which the participants had a central and active role, explaining how they implemented the exercises related to the independent work. As regards the Italian group of participants, this solution was very successful, since the participants got involved, and in many occasions, these sessions became an opportunity to share and discuss professional and personal issues. After an initial phase of uncertainty, the participants got to know each other and the discussions became more and more personal and inclusive. To conclude, putting together theoretical elements followed by independent practical activities and open discussions during the online training course was a successful choice in this context.

In the planning phase, the adaptation of the 5 training modules to the online format implies the partial adaptation of the training topics. They, indeed, were chosen on the basis of the feasibility of the related exercises in the online format, assuring that the high standards of the training pilot course would be respected. That choice was made together by all the project partners through a series of online meetings in order to guarantee the identical topics and exercises in every training pilot course at the national level.

Once the structure of the training pilot course was adapted to the online format, CSC used social media and its database of contacts in order to save times in finding the potential participants. Then, CSC prepared and sent an introductory questionnaire to all those individuals who showed a sincere interest in participating in the course. In this way, it was possible to plan the number of participants to be expected. That was made for the following reasons:
– To understand who was really willing to participate in the training pilot course;
– To understand the level of expertise and the competences of the participants;
– To gather information about the expectations and the topics that the participants would like to deepen during the training pilot course.

Finally, CSC checked a series of online platforms to see which was the most appropriate in accordance with the following criteria:
– Easy access to the online platform for the participants;
– Easy management of the board control;
– Rights and privacy policy for those individuals who access in the platform;
– Opportunity of recording and storing the training sessions in the system.

This type of search was fruitful and may be presented as a best practice as well. According with the assessment of the trainers, CSC chose GoToMeeting as the online platform for the implementation of the training pilot course.

Another important aspect that needs to be stressed is the general modulation of the training pilot course in accordance with different levels of experience of the participants. As regards CSC, the trainers expected to have adult educators with less than 10 years of professional experience, since the content of the training pilot course is pretty complete and professionals with more years of experience could immediately get disinterested (nevertheless, two participants with more than 10 years of experience decided to join the training pilot course). Therefore, it is always highly suggested to know the characteristics of the participants (age, field of expertise, years of experience, etc.) before starting a training course.

The use of the introductory questionnaire was very successful and increased the level of the participants' satisfaction on the training pilot course.

Moreover, the CSC trainers noticed that the majority of the participants had significant professional experience in the topics of the training pilot course (even though the professional years were less than 10). Therefore, they decided to insert some moments during the theoretical sessions in which the participants could exchange their own professional experience. The consequences were as follows:
– The younger participants learnt and assimilated notions and methodologies from the direct experience of the older participants;
– These small moments of discussions and reflections interrupted the frontal lessons of the trainers, increasing the interactions among the participants as well as letting the trainers rest for a while.

That created a peer learning process, which is one of the most important benefits in this type of training: participants can be peer trainers, providing a strong enrichment in the contents as well as making the course more interesting and engaging. Moreover, an intergenerational approach was ensured, providing fruitful exchanges among participants and strengthening the value of the participation.

To conclude, it is important to balance the group, taking into consideration the following criteria:

1. The learning needs (What do they need to learn? How can we provide this content?);
2. The experience (How many years of experience do they have? How can I make my training interesting for them?)
3. The age (What kind of profile do the participants have? How can we make the activities more interactive in order to favour the learning experience in the intergenerational dialogue?)
4. Their expectations (How can you make the learning experience satisfactory? How to deal with a potential obstacles/concerns already expressed?)

During the organisation of the training course, the trainers had to deal with specific issues and elaborated the following solutions:

1. Before the start of the training pilot course, the trainers prepared different PowerPoint presentations for each of the 5 training modules. These presentations are characterised by small texts and by the presence of images that summarise and facilitate the comprehension of the main concepts.

   The main idea is that those PowerPoint presentations simplify the content of the training modules without trivialising it. Making the PowerPoint presentations effective and easy to be understood is fundamental in an online training course, since the communication process is often affected by the computers and the other technological devices that in become communication barriers. For the same reason, it was important that the trainers elaborated simple questions about the training topics for the participants, so that they felt involved and encouraged to answer, overcoming the technological divide and facilitating the communication process.

2. At the beginning of the training pilot course, the trainers let the participants choose whether they would like to leave the camera on or off, so that the participants would feel comfortable. Then, they decided to set two simple rules in order to facilitate the communication process with and among the participants. The rules were as follows:
   – When a trainer or another participant speaks, please keep the microphone off;
   – If you would like to ask a question, please write it in the chat. There will be some moments during every training session in which the trainers will stop and answer them.

3. During the training pilot course, the trainers switched from time to time in order to make the training sessions more enjoyable, interrupting the uniformity. For the same reason, sometimes they inserted videos to watch during the online training sessions. The trainers

also tried to interpret the exercises in an enjoyable way in order to engage the participants as well as stimulate their imagination and creativity.

4. In general, the participants were very interested and willing to learn new aspects of those topics for which they, in many cases, were already familiar. The participants, indeed, had from 1 to 10 years (or more!) of professional experience. It must be said that two participants, who had respectively 20 and 25 years of experience, were included in the training pilot course because they insisted and showed a genuine interest in some aspects of the training content that they felt they needed to improve.

During the training course, in general, the participants were participative, showing a positive attitude in the learning process: they were humble and open to assimilate new concepts and points of view. That attitude is a sign that the participants (even the ones who have more professional years of experience) assimilated the concept of lifelong learning in a way that they continuously search for learning occasions in order to acquire new competences for their professional and personal life. The open attitude towards the learning opportunities can be demonstrated in the evaluation questionnaires the participants filled in, where they declared an evident improvement in the knowledge of the topics of the training pilot course.

Moreover, their continuous interest and commitment showed the importance of this type of educational opportunity in their professional path. In this sense, the flexibility and adaptability of this training pilot course is a guarantee that these educational opportunities can be proposed in the future to other targets and new learners.

3.3 United Kingdom

The UK programme was designed and developed to be delivered in a classroom setting. As a result of the Covid-19 situation, this was quickly adapted to be delivered online. However, this was found to not be an effective form of delivery and it reverted to classroom delivery immediately.

Our experience was that classroom delivery was far more effective than online training. It allowed more involvement, interaction and understanding. The classroom delivery enabled group activities and simulations to be undertaken far more effectively and ensured that individual work was completed in a more effective manner. For these reasons, our experience would consider that classroom delivery of this programme has been far more effective than online training in the UK.

Where sessions are delivered online, it would be essential that the tutor had received specialised online delivery training to ensure the effectiveness of the module. As recipients become more experienced with online training, it is likely that the effectiveness of this training method will improve.

The completion of the introductory questionnaire was found to be very effective in determining both the starting points of the recipients and the distance travelled on a module-by-module basis.

All modules demonstrated significant increases in knowledge. However, the two areas in which we saw major improvements were the diagnosis and work with restrictive beliefs and educational services in the context of adult education in the UK. This would indicate that the areas in most need of improvement for adult educators were the ability to manage the beliefs of adults and the requirement for an understanding of the wider adult educational structure together with the skills to signpost adults effectively onto the most appropriate training routeway. These areas indicate that there can still be improvements made to this element of the programme, however they clearly show the greatest distance travelled.

4. Recommendation

The pilot programme has led to a series of recommendations.

4.1 Poland

After the successful delivery of the pilot training the following set of conclusions was prepared to support organizations and trainers who will deliver online training based on the training manual.
• Engage with a trainer who is experienced in delivering online training,
• Allocate enough time and resource to prepare training and the recruitment of the participants,
• Always circulate the introductory questionnaire to know participants' needs and interest before the training
• Explain how important the engagement of the participants is,
• Set up a training contract with the participants before the training
• Deliver training based on the Kolb Cycle (experience, reflection, inference, practice) where learning process is based on participants professional and life experiences

- Reference the content of the training manual – introduction of the most important theoretical content in the PPT presentation shown during the training
- Allocate time and space for the exchange of experiences, reflections, conclusions between participants of the training
- Bring together a single audience for the training, e.g. people working with young adults, people working with people with disabilities,
- For each module delivered online, plan ideally 2 days of training to better manage content of the training, or a minimum of 8 training hours as the manual suggest
- Make sure there is consistency and communication between modules
- Use different training methods during the training: presentation, moderated discussions, write conclusions, films, animations, group work, individual work, reflection time,
- Introduce new training tools and applications which participants can use in their day-to-day work
- Ensure integration and the possibility of exchanging experiences between participants in the group.
- Explain that the training is the opportunity to build sustainable, professional networks
- Take care of the participants' wellbeing and plan breaks

4.2 Italy

It is possible to summarize here a series of recommendations for further training courses that have the same online structure and similar topics:

- Organisation for the recruitment and training planning: ensure that you have enough time to plan and promote your training. It is important not to underestimate the efforts you need to put into recruiting the participants: it is not enough just to publish the advertisement. It is important to use your networks and understand how to use the dissemination activity in the best way;

- Contact the participants and get to know their learning needs before the training. In this way, you will ensure a satisfactory and effective learning experience and guarantee the process of lifelong learning;

- Make the learning experience enjoyable and effective from the communication point of view: choose the right platform but also produce an informative and visual presentation in order to make the training session an unmissable meeting in the educational path of the participants;

- Provide enough break time among sessions: it is important for participants not only to listen to but also to think about the contents of the training, to develop further contents, to "digest" the knowledge acquired and make it their own;

- Take care of the learning needs – and needs in general – of the trainer: being a trainer can be exhausting so it is important to understand their limits and organise the sessions around their needs and their colleagues.

As it was mentioned in the Report on the educational systems at national level (IO1), according to the same Italian adult educators, the educators have a scarce preparation in facing specific issues relate to their work with adults. The adults – especially the low skilled ones – have a wide variety of educational needs, often coming from their backgrounds at risk of social exclusion and with a high rate of scholar drop-out; on many occasions, these adults are those who back in time "escaped" from schools.

The adult educators have an increasing need of learning to adopt new, personalized and flexible educational methods in order to support this target. Moreover, the general training offer is often limited and sometimes some of adult educators are not equipped with the necessary competences, so that, it often happens that there are more teachers from secondary schools taking the role of adult educators than other profile.

Finally, looking at the Italian context and the needs that are currently in the sector of adult education, the EDEC training manual (IO2) and the related training course might contribute to fill this educational gap, providing an example of training course specifically targeted to adult educators. As a consequence, the EDEC training manual may bring more visibility to the professional figure of the adult educator, keeping also in mind that it introduces the additional role of the Educational Consultant strictly linked to the role of the adult educator.

In this sense, it is recommended to present training manual and its training course to the public Departments inside the regional authorities in charge of the preparation of the educational training courses as a valid proposal of learning path addressed to adult educators, thus increasing the educational opportunities to train educators who can be able to deal with the work reintegration of the low skilled adults, representing a bridge between the adult learners and the job market.

4.3 United Kingdom

There are two clear recommendations identified from the UK training programme:

1. Online training was not found to be as effective as classroom delivery in this subject area. Due to the soft skills that are being taught in many instances, it is far more beneficial to deliver the training programme in a manner in which the tutor can gauge involvement and understanding and in which the recipient is able to apply and practice the skills that are being taught.

2. Following the training it is important that the recipients continue to develop their learning and experience in managing the restrictive beliefs of adults and understanding the educational services structure in the UK. These areas showed limited understanding prior to the programme and yet are essential to providing effective adult education.

The UK training programme would indicate that the implementation of these two recommendations, together with the knowledge gained in the modules, would significantly improve the competences of adult educators.

5. Project Conclusions

The objectives and results of the project delivered by the Partnership were ambitious. However, it was important for all Partners to ensure a natural continuation of their many years of work in the fields of adult education, training and lifelong learning. The project, which proposed the development of competences among adult education professionals, was part of the current social policy needs of the project partner countries and the vision of adult learning under the Europe 2020 strategy

The first result achieved was an analysis report on the three education systems (Italy, the United Kingdom, Poland) and the opportunities each of them creates for the functioning and development of adult educators. This proved to be a big challenge, as each system was very different from each other. The partners' task was to formulate joint proposals and recommendations for the whole Partnership to strengthen systems and enable adult educators to develop and operate as much as possible. The analysis of the systems clearly indicated that there is still a lack of high-quality training on the necessary competences and skills that educators use in their daily work.

The second objective of the Partnership was to create a high-quality training package for adult educators, which will be used for both self-education and training. Prior to the creation of the training modules, the Partnership conducted a survey of 143 educators in 3 countries to examine their development needs and thus involve them in the process of creating educational content that they can use when a handbook is created.

The work on the manual came at a difficult time of the pandemic, which caused major changes in the organisation of each partner. The situation required discipline and an increased pace of action from everyone. The effort and attention to high quality work has been successful in the form of publication: 'Development of competences of adult educators. Training manual designed for self-employment and group work'. Pilot training in each of the 3 countries was ultimately intended to verify the quality and usefulness of the content. Each training group confirmed that the training has brought them many professional and personal benefits. Adult educators i.e teachers, job advisers, trainers thanks to the textbook, gained access to knowledge about modern teaching methods and the characteristics for adult education. It is worth stating that one of the important objectives of the proposed training was to connect the education process with interests, needs, interests of training participants, correlating the offered knowledge and skills with personal experience in a given field.

The thematic areas of the developed educational materials comprehensively prepare educators for their daily, often challenging, work with clients, especially clients at risk of social exclusion. The added value is that each training module can be used in two forms: as a material for working with a training group or for self-training of educators.

Initiatives addressed or initiated by adults become educational when, as a result of the involvement of actors in this type of activity, there is a strictly defined change in the adult life. The result is a consequence of the deliberate use of various types of teaching procedures. This is the competence gained by teachers and adult educators using the products of the project "Expanding and developing the competences of adult educators".

It is worthy to stress once again the innovative aspects of the EDEC project related to the internationalization of training contents. The EDEC project, indeed, tries to provide a solution to the lack of training offers for adult educators, that emerged in the context of the three countries involved in the EDEC project. Specifically, the partnership validated a knowledge and a series of educational methods at transnational level, demonstrating that is feasible and convenient to develop training contents that can be relevant from different national educational systems, overcoming eventual cultural differences.

In this sense, the participants in the different training pilot courses have evaluated with high rates the training content, declaring that their knowledge on the training topics increased after the training pilot course. Therefore, the arguments and the exercises presented were intelligible and assimilated by the participants, regardless of different cultural and educational backgrounds. Therefore, the EDEC project with its successful training pilot course represent a demonstration that the internationalization of the educational methods in the field of adult education is possible and, even, recommended.

In the opinions of the participants, indeed, excellent feedback was received several times for organising the competence workshops, which are crucial in the work of educators. Some participants stressed that they had never previously had the opportunity to take part in training specifically for this professional group.

Conversations with trainees and their statements and opinions are the best proof that the project has been successful and that the joint work of partners has had authoritative results. The results of the project allowed teachers to become more knowledgeful of the current systems designed to meet the educational needs of adults.