

**Guidelines for Future Training**

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**Introduction**

The DELSA Project is a two-year EASMUS+ project with five country representatives and one pan-European partner working collectively to develop free open source digital skill training materials for upskilling adults with minimal digital capability.

DELSA is the concrete answer to specific needs in the field of upskilling adults, with focus on Digital Skills for low skilled adults. The choice for the topic (Digital Skills) is due to the relevance of digital skills in modern social and economic environment. Digital Skills for low skilled adults is a priority for Erasmus+; Digital skills for adult is a priority for Ireland: the OECD International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), Survey of Adult Skills reports that 42% of adults in Ireland score at or below Level 1 in Digital Skills proficiency, 18% of adults refused to take the computer-based assessment, while 38% of adults in Ireland have no experience with computers and lack basic digital skills.

The rational of the project is that better digital skills help improve productivity, increase the opportunities of finding a job and help balance personal and professional lives. However, citizens without digital awareness or digital skills cannot access digital government services and employment opportunities that almost universally require digital skills. Further there is a correlation between lack of digital capability human capital and willingness to become digitally connected which will limit the goal of a digitally connected inclusive Europe. The new EU skills agenda for Europe recognises the need to support cooperation among education, employment and industry stakeholders to improve the digital skills of the wider populationn.

**Target Group**

The main target group: Participants with low level of digital skills

* QQI L5 Childcare
* Active Retirement Groups
* Farm Families
* Adult Learners
* Tutors
* Rural Social Scheme Participants
* Unemployed people

**Tasks** **IO1**

Internet Web Solutions was the lead partner & carried out the following 2 tasks:

1. Task1: Defined DELSA OER Platform
2. Task2: Maintained and operated the DELSA OER

Task 2 will last for at least an additional 2 years as Partners have already committed to maintaining the DELSA OER Platform for at least 2 more years.

IWS developed the DELSA OER Platform to ensure that it was fully operational as an “OER–open” functionality & made it user friendly and updated it fully for the specific target group and stakeholders: The Platform made the DELSA tools visible, readily accessible and usable to those groups. The OER Platform was developed and deployed in 5 languages.

Accessibility and user-friendliness was the key concepts in the development of this OER-Platform, text-to-speech functionalities was implemented to boost accessibility of contents & it is ill iterated and blinded target groups. It’s available online 365 days a year, 24 hours a day from any digital support thanks to its mobile-friendly structure for use through various types of handsets (PC, portable computers, tablet, smartphone).

## IO2 - Mapping of Digital Skills & Competences

National Documents were already identified by Partners during the preparation of the proposal, and was further identified at implementation during IO2

National University of Maynooth Ireland were the lead partners in O2 & carried out the following tasks

1. Set methodology to be followed by all Partners, on the basis of what already agreed upon at preparation (i.e. general scale and scope, overall methodological approach, timing and sequencing of specific activities, etc.)
2. Identified sources and resources for secondary assessment
3. Defined literature and other sources for secondary assessment
4. Analysed documents:
5. Structured the reporting and aggregation tools
6. Common schedule
7. Defined common tools & analysed them.

The Mapping of Digital Skills & Competences for Low Skilled Adults will outline real and perceived learning needs, through a series of qualitative and quantitative data and information.

## IO3 – DELSA Content development of training materials in 5 languages

## Learni Innovation: Lead Partner IO3 is the main result of the DELSA Project: consists of 10 courses specifically designed for low-skilled adults to equip them with the digital skills and competences identified in IO2.

**Courses Developed**

* Protecting Personal Data and Privacy
* Solving technical problems
* Identifying needs and technological responses
* Identifying Alternatives: messaging, email, video chat
* Using the internet and managing information
* Using the internet and managing information
* Basic computing, using the internet and managing information
* Digital Technologies for Communication and Collaboration
* Digital Citizenship
* Developing digital content - Integrating and re-elaborating digital content
* Using the internet and managing information
* Protecting devices

IO4 - DELSA Pilot Validation 200 Target Groups trained

**Lead Partner: P1 - IRISH RURAL LINK.** IO4 is the DELSA Toolkit comprising the validated training materials and content together with guidelines for further adoption and mainstreaming. In IO4, 200 Target Groups representatives were trained in 6 Countries however 1600 users have used the course to date.

**Test and Validation Planning**

Irish Rural Link lead partner for IO4. IRL’s first task was to develop a test and validation plan. A key element of IO4 is the validation of the platform to check its resilience, performance, user-friendliness and ability to meet the requests and needs of the target groups. A Validation Plan was developed to define specific schedule, activities, tools (e.g. template of forms to collect feedbacks from users) for the test and validation activities for the multilingual OER Platform, web-based multilingual online training modules, content and material, and the interactive multilingual training content and material to be delivered face to face. The Validation Plan is used during Project implementation to ensure that T&V activities are carried out by Partners in a standardised and comparable fashion: this will allow coherence in the activities (i.e. all Partners follow standardised procedures, timeline, tools, etc.) and reliability of inputs and feedback for the finalisation of the training content and material (i.e. accuracy of results).

**Test & Validation Activity**

The Test & Validation phase commenced in February 2020 up until August 2020. Progress was discussed during our monthly skype meetings. In March, due to the COVID 19 & pandemic emergency measures that have been implemented in all countries involved in the DELSA project partners devised means to deliver the DELSA training online to avoid risks related to the tradition class-rom and face-to face delivery. The partners agreed to make the most of the online means to perform test and validation.

Thanks to the high openness of the DELSA Open Education Resources Platform, partners were able to make the training available to users without any restrictions: the DELSA OER Platform does not require registration. Such Open Access approach will allow not only to widen participation but also guarantee the gathering of anonymous data for test and validation purposes.

Feedback was collected by partners using a standardised feedback form. Hard copy feedback forms were collected through online zoom training, links were sent to emails and follow up calls in order to complete the feedback forms. Participants also completed the online feedback form on the online platform. DELSA partners completed the feedback report summarising the feedback from participants. The standardised feedback form was used by all partners.

Training online took place in the form of PowerPoint presentations or from the online platform. Zoom group training also took place with 4-5 people being guided through the platform or through PowerPoint presentation.

**Training Activities**

As per the proposal that was submitted, the target groups for the test and validation phase of the project was

* low skilled adults
* adult educators
* practitioners of adult education and low skilled situations

The breakdown of respondents who completed the training were as follows:

* QQI L5 Childcare
* Active Retirement Groups
* Farm Families
* Adult Learners
* Tutors
* Rural Social Scheme Participants
* Unemployed people

Due to the COVID 19 pandemic & emergency measures that have been implemented in all countries involved in the DELSA project partners devised means to deliver the DELSA training online to avoid risks related to the tradition class-room and face-to face delivery. Training was scheduled from February to August. The duration of the training varied depending on the target group & how many modules was covered. Mainly two and sometimes two and a half hours was sufficient enough time to cover one module.

The structure of the training was presented with an overview of the DELSA platform, content & the background of the project was presented. The website was then presented to participant and they were guided through the website and the functionality of the website. Modules were presented in order of the needs of the target group. Non-liners would start with the basics and setting up their own email address.

Group sizes varied depending on the target group. Zoom online training groups varied from 4 to 8 people. A link was also sent to participants who availed of the training & the feedback was then collected by a follow up phone call. Participants also had the option of availing of the training on the online platform where they could have completed their online feedback form. Some partners also got a chance to hold face-to face class-room training early in the year before Covid 19. They help training for two hours and collected their feedback verbally, through brain storming sessions and also hard copy feedback.

**Guidelines for future Training**

The feedback from all partners has been extremely positive across the board. Partners looked at all aspects of the training content that the participants found most useful, not so useful & what modules were the most popular in order to draw up guidelines for future training. The recommendations were then made by partners after analysing the feedback forms & discussing the changes with groups of participants through virtual brain storming sessions and follow up calls after the training was complete.

Overall participants were extremely happy with the content provided and found it most useful, practical, appropriate & accessible in their everyday lives especially during Covid 19. Most people were either working from home or cocooning so participants explained that the timing was perfect. The fact that they could access the content freely, no need for passwords, registration and being able to manage the training themselves were certainly an added bonus for participants. Some of the participants were non-liners who availed of the training & did not have an email address set up & found this process most challenging. They suggested in the future maybe 1:1 training and support in order to set up an email. The most challenging part of setting up the email was the password, lower case letters, putting capital letters in their email address & the @ button. Once their email was finally set up they felt a sense of achievement and this brought them to their next step.

The participants suggested that they would definitely like to see a follow on from this project. Participants also suggested linking the modules into each other. In order for progression when a participant is finished maybe a voice or button that comes up to say you have completed session 1 please progress to session 2. Irish participants expressed the importance of digital skills during the pandemic for instance being able to shop online, banking online, book doctors’ appointments and most importantly being able to stay connected with their family & friends while they were cocooning during Covid 19. Also participants suggested more information on websites regarding their country. It was suggested that an online banking demo for each country would be extremely useful and also a test banking account within each country. The greatest barrier for participants was the fear of technology especially when it comes to online banking and using their bank accounts. The safety online module helped to reassure people.

It is evident from our findings from feedback collected from participants that there is certainly an opportunity to progress further the online platform to adapt some of the recommendations suggested from participants. The project has shown that the delivery of online, freely available training is widely welcomed by our target groups. There are certainly possibilities to develop the platform further with future projects by adding a step up project and also by adding additional information to the modules.