



A DIGITAL SKILLS TOOL KIT FOR LOW SKILLED ADULTS
FOCUSING ON WOMEN RE-ENTERING THE LABOUR MARKET

DESKTOP RESEARCH

P5 – Emphasys - Cyprus

Project Coordinator: CIVIC COMPUTING

Project Number: 2017-1-UK01-KA204-036712

Project information

Project acronym: eSkills4all

Project title: A DIGITAL SKILLS TOOL KIT FOR LOW SKILLED ADULTS
FOCUSING ON WOMEN RE-ENTERING THE LABOUR
MARKET

Project number: 2017-1-UK01-KA204-036712

Sub-programme or KA: KA2 Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of
Good Practices

Project website: <https://eskills4all.eu/>

Contents

1. Introduction	4
EMPHASYS	4
Purpose of this Document & General Aims	5
2. Current Employment State in Cyprus	5
3. Demographic Data at CY Level.....	6
Unemployment by Gender & Age	6
4. Unemployment & ICT Skills	7
Access and Use of the Internet.....	8
Use of a Website	8
Cyprus Current Scene at National Level	8
5. Cyprus current scene at European Level – Participation in EU programs	8
6. Conclusions	9

1. Introduction

This document falls under IO1 and it aims to continue the investigation of the current scene in partner countries in relation to:

1. The digital skills gap between the labor market and the low-skilled unemployed adults
2. The digital needs related to employability skills of adults
3. The current scene related to jobs and employment
4. The provision of digital and employability training courses
5. The EU strategies and initiatives in the digital field
6. The validation mechanisms
7. Set up Advisory Group with experts in the field of ICT and employment

The eSKILLS4ALL project fights digital illiteracy, skill mismatch and long unemployment for low skilled adults, especially for women, supporting them to return to employment with a new set of skills adequate for the new challenges. The project proposes to introduce a transparent and multi-assessed process, based on an interactive and dynamic platform to be developed in order to up-grade, up-skill or re-skill their digital skills related employability to meet the needs of the labor market and bridge the gap related to skills mismatches between E&T and the world of work. It also aims to support low skilled adults (women in particular) in their search for a better job or enter the employment by building bridges with the labour market through the creation of the on-line and in-house eSKILLS4ALL HUBs.

EMPHASYS

The «Emphasys Centre» began operating in 1998, as a related company to «A & A Emphasys Interactive Solutions Ltd» (due to common ownership), a successful company specializing in consultancy, software and support services in the field of ICT. Since then, the “Empahsys Centre” has continued to operate as an ICT Software Centre, but is has also developed into a successful ICT Educational and Vocational Centre and a European Research Centre, that cooperates closely with various organizations in Europe for the implementation of EU projects.

The «Emphasys Centre» is approved by the Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture as an Educational and Vocational Centre specializing in the field of ICT. As an educational institution (non-formal provider) the «Emphasys Centre» offers high quality courses for adults, professionals and young people interested in obtaining professional qualification or attain vocational training for employment. The «Emphasys Centre» has been involved greatly in the last 17 years in organizing custom-made in-service training courses for the employees of various companies and organizations in the private and public sector based on their ICT needs and requirements.

- The experience of the organization in the development and implementation of professional development training programs both for educators, as well as for unemployed people in cooperation with the Ministry of Labor, will support the consortium.
- EMPHASYS involvement is based on the urge to upgrade its services and educational material for this diverse group of adults.

Purpose of this Document & General Aims

This document aims to present the unemployment status and digital skills in Cyprus for both men and women (25-40 years old) with a special focus on women.

2. Current Employment State in Cyprus

In Cyprus, the unemployment rate measures the number of people actively looking for a job as a percentage of the labor force. Unemployment Rate in Cyprus increased to 11% in November 2017 from 10.50% in October of 2017. Unemployment Rate in Cyprus averaged 7.83% from 2000 until 2017, reaching an all-time high of 16.80% in September of 2013 and a record low of 3% in March of 2002.

The following table presents the change in employment rate within 2017.



(Source: <https://tradingeconomics.com/cyprus/unemployment-rate>)

The long term unemployment rate refers to the share of unemployed persons since 12 months or more in the total number of active persons (those who are either employed or unemployed) in the labor market.

Table 2 presents the long-term unemployment rate in Cyprus from July 2014 to July 2017.



Collectively the results from the two tables indicate that extra measures need to be taken so as to fight unemployment in Cyprus. eSkills4all will focus on adult women who have been unemployed for a number of years and are interested in gaining numeracy, literacy and in particular IT skills. This project will provide hence to the public (and especially women) with a training course that will equip them with the necessary skills to improve their employment chances in Cyprus.

3. Demographic Data at CY Level

Unemployment by Gender & Age

The Statistical Service of the Republic of Cyprus provides the actual data for the registered unemployed individuals in Cyprus for 2017 by sex and age.

SEX AND AGE	YEAR 2017												Year Average
	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	
TOTAL	42,839	42,326	39,088	32,804	29,922	30,577	31,670	31,003	27,951	26,436	33,780	35,771	33,681
Under 20	223	218	203	136	130	112	106	98	150	158	198	175	159
20 - 24	2,957	2,917	2,609	2,050	1,817	1,734	1,784	1,805	1,756	1,709	2,339	2,351	2,152
25 - 29	5,813	5,741	5,319	4,525	4,118	4,183	4,304	4,337	3,957	3,572	4,584	4,664	4,593
30 - 39	11,574	11,496	10,672	8,935	8,255	8,904	9,483	9,269	7,948	7,354	9,203	9,737	9,403
40 - 49	8,707	8,653	7,970	6,493	5,787	5,957	6,131	5,928	5,327	5,088	6,893	7,458	6,699
50 - 59	9,589	9,374	8,637	7,307	6,682	6,633	6,833	6,605	5,993	5,825	7,418	8,026	7,410
60 - 64	3,759	3,713	3,477	3,170	2,947	2,883	2,866	2,814	2,655	2,564	2,962	3,168	3,082
65 and over	217	214	201	188	186	171	163	147	165	166	183	192	183
MALES													
Total	21,263	20,870	19,250	16,250	14,678	14,172	13,892	13,627	13,225	12,741	15,773	16,973	16,060
Under 20	108	109	98	64	48	49	44	36	77	84	96	75	74
20 - 24	1,327	1,318	1,176	893	775	708	678	662	689	694	1,036	1,052	917
25 - 29	2,571	2,523	2,298	1,920	1,711	1,598	1,548	1,578	1,578	1,478	1,997	2,075	1,906
30 - 39	5,688	5,634	5,191	4,338	3,942	3,877	3,912	3,834	3,555	3,371	4,149	4,518	4,334
40 - 49	3,917	3,861	3,586	2,951	2,619	2,593	2,529	2,444	2,383	2,309	2,897	3,195	2,940
50 - 59	5,075	4,909	4,545	3,907	3,552	3,394	3,294	3,225	3,136	3,050	3,686	4,017	3,816
60 - 64	2,442	2,385	2,230	2,054	1,913	1,847	1,790	1,754	1,696	1,644	1,797	1,924	1,956
65 and over	135	131	126	123	118	106	97	94	111	111	115	117	115
FEMALES													
Total	21,576	21,456	19,838	16,554	15,244	16,405	17,778	17,376	14,726	13,695	18,007	18,798	17,621
Under 20	115	109	105	72	82	63	62	62	73	74	102	100	85
20 - 24	1,630	1,599	1,433	1,157	1,042	1,026	1,106	1,143	1,067	1,015	1,303	1,299	1,235
25 - 29	3,242	3,218	3,021	2,605	2,407	2,585	2,756	2,759	2,379	2,094	2,587	2,589	2,687
30 - 39	5,886	5,862	5,481	4,597	4,313	5,027	5,571	5,435	4,393	3,983	5,054	5,219	5,068
40 - 49	4,790	4,792	4,384	3,542	3,168	3,364	3,602	3,484	2,944	2,779	3,996	4,263	3,759
50 - 59	4,514	4,465	4,092	3,400	3,130	3,239	3,539	3,380	2,857	2,775	3,732	4,009	3,594
60 - 64	1,317	1,328	1,247	1,116	1,034	1,036	1,076	1,060	959	920	1,165	1,244	1,125
65 and over	82	83	75	65	68	65	66	53	54	55	68	75	67

Source: <http://www.mof.gov.cy/> (Statistical Service)

As can be observed from the table above, 33.681 individuals were unemployed in 2017, 16.060 males and 17.621 females. Focusing on the eSkills4all target group (25 – 40 years of age) 6.240 men were unemployed and 7.775 women. Despite more females having been registered as unemployed than men, the small difference between the genders suggests that the project needs to also look into targeting men as well as women in the eSkills4all program.

4. Unemployment & ICT Skills

Cyprus's performance is below the EU average, but progress is being made (DESI, 2017). In 2016, 74% of the Cypriot population used the internet regularly (versus 70% in 2015) but only 43% possessed at least basic levels of digital skills. Nowadays, digital skills and competences are needed for nearly all jobs where digital technology complements existing tasks, and shortages can be an important barrier to employment.

Access and Use of the Internet

According to the Cypriot government¹ Internet usage in Cypriot enterprises remained stable over 95% over in the last years. 96,5% of all enterprises had access to the Internet in 2016. The Internet usage was almost 100% in all medium and large enterprises indicating the essence of all employees having IT skills.

Use of a Website

Compared to 2015, in 2016 a significant increase was observed in the percentage of enterprises having a website (74,7% in 2016 from 71,8% in 2015) with the percentage in large enterprises reaching the 100%. Nearly one fifth (23,2%) of all enterprises advertised open job positions or offer online job application. In large enterprises that percentage reaches 70,5%. Cypriots lack the knowledge of basic IT skills can miss the opportunities of advertisements for job openings.

Cyprus Current Scene at National Level

In 2016, the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism together with the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Communication, Transport and Works have decided to introduce the certification of European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) on a voluntary basis to secondary students in public and private schools. They also decided to provide training and ECDL certification to a number of soldiers and unemployed people (600 per year) as well as the provision of training programmes to people with disabilities. The objective was to have 70% participation out of the 7000 students studying in secondary education. The ECDL certificate can be compared with a "Digital Driving Licence".

Cyprus participates additionally in the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs. The coalition is addressing the shortage in digital skills and the future anticipated mismatching of unfilled ICT-related vacancies across Europe. Cyprus' Digital Champion Dr. Stelios Himonas, with the cooperation of the Department of Electronic Communications launched a National Coalition for Digital Jobs - Grow Digital CY in 2015. The National Coalition is a partnership with public institutions, professional communities, private companies and non-profit organizations. There is a three-year action plan aiming to promote the diffusion and the improvement of digital skills in order to address the anticipated future mismatch between ICT professionals and work force vacancies.

5. Cyprus current scene at European Level – Participation in EU programs

In 2013 Cyprus participated at the program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), the most thorough and extensive international research study on adult skills organized by OECD. The survey measures adults' proficiency in key information-processing skills - literacy, numeracy and problem solving in technology-rich environments - and gathers information and data on how adults use their skills at home, at work and in the wider community.

¹ [http://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/cystat/statistics.nsf/All/60554FD3091F7707C225807600383DE9/\\$file/ICT_ENT-Summary_Results-2016-EN-021216.pdf?OpenElement](http://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/cystat/statistics.nsf/All/60554FD3091F7707C225807600383DE9/$file/ICT_ENT-Summary_Results-2016-EN-021216.pdf?OpenElement)

- **Literacy:** Cyprus falls below the EU average with regards to literacy skills. Cypriots scored 269 points ranking 6th from the end with the European average being 271 out of the 300. The majority of Cypriots (40%) are at Level 2 (from Below Level 1 to Level 5) of Literacy Skills.
- **Numeracy:** Cyprus falls below the EU average with regards to numeracy skills. Cypriots scored 265 points ranking 9th from the end with the European average being 268 out of the 300. The majority of Cypriots (39%) are at Level 2 (from Below Level 1 to Level 5) of Numeracy Skills.

According to the study the high-skilled Cypriots are progressing well through adult learning but not low achievers. People with higher skills tend to have jobs that require more continuous training, which in turn contributes to their skills, in contrast to the low skilled workers which fall in a 'low skills trap'.

6. Conclusions

Cyprus lacks training programs and initiatives that will promote the necessary ICT skills for low skilled individuals to find a job. The eSkills4all program will hence tackle this gap promoting both digital literacy and fighting unemployment.