



WHITE PAPER ON DIGITAL SKILLS-GAP BETWEEN LOW-SKILLED UNEMPLOYED ADULTS (FOCUS ON WOMEN) AND THE LABOUR MARKET: COMPARATIVE REPORT



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Project information

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Introduction

The e-Skills4All project, funded by the Erasmus+ Programme, aims to support low skilled adults (women in particular) in their search for a better job or enter the employment by fighting with digital literacy, skills mismatches and long unemployment, and also by accumulating a new set of skills adequate for the new challenges.

The project proposes to introduce a transparent and multi-assessed process, based on interactive and dynamic platform to be developed in order to up-grade, up-skill or re-skill their digital skills related to 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.

E-Skills4All is an initiative of six organizations with relevant experience in the project topic, from five EU countries: CIVIC Computing (UK), North-East Regional Development Agency (Romania), WIDE - Women in Digital Empowerment (Luxembourg), Emphasys Centre (Cyprus), CIVIS Plus (Greece) and ANTENNA (Cyprus).

The purpose of the present document is to produce a Comparative-Survey-Report highly useful for the development of the project's aims and in compliance with the New Priorities of the ET2020 Report, the 2016 EC Recommendation 'A New Skills Agenda for Europe' and the 'PUp-skilling pathways: New opportunities for Adults' thus responding rapidly to the urge of Member States to use any EU Funding Programmes for promoting the set suggestions.

In addition, the proposal is based on a research cycle, thus supporting the Erasmus+ priority for the design of evidence-based programmes that can lead to reforms that deliver quality in education, training and policies, as well as to the development of innovative ways to ensure sustainable investment in all forms of learning, both formal and non-formal. It is expected that the results of this research will lead to a targeted up-skilling programme that meets the needs of low-skilled adults for digital acquisition.

The final report will be the first one in some partner countries (such as Cyprus, Greece) to analyze specifically the digital gap and skills-mismatches among low-skilled adults and the labor market. The results of the report can also be transferred and used in other sectors as evidence i.e. in the VET and Adult Sector as there is a common interest and need for the specific topic.

It can be used as a reference document by the policy makers in partner countries for promoting the e-Skills for Jobs and the Digital Agenda in their country. Additionally it can be used as an informative report by other EU countries and the EC.

General Overview

CIVIC Computing

Civic Computing (CIVIC) was established in 2001, in Edinburgh, Scotland and is one of the largest suppliers of digital work to the Scottish Government. CIVIC is known for innovation in product development: we were first to develop a Java CMS over 10 years ago (Content Control), we were first to market a solution for compliance with EU legislation on Cookies (Cookie Control), and we recently launched on a new social media tool (Ffora) targeting mainly youngsters seeking personalised content.

In the context of the service provision to SQA, CIVIC develops services and tools also for parents and teachers. As a consequence of its work for SQA, CIVIC wants to introduce new services for educational publishers in ELT and language teaching in general where it believes there is great potential for CIVIC to unleash its creativity and serve the needs of the educational publishing sector in terms of innovative digital offering.

In this regard, the present project is an excellent opportunity for CIVIC to acquire first hand experience on the creation of resources, from initial conception all the way to validation with adults. Project results will be used by CIVIC to generate sales as they will be part of the case studies presented to prospective customers from the educational publishing sector. As such, CIVIC has significant interest not only in developing results of high quality but also in maintaining them.

We have considerable experience in content led projects with the following public sector organisations:

- Scottish Government
- Scottish Parliament
- Scotland Office
- Sportscotland
- Central Government Centre for Procurement Expertise (CGCOPE)
- Transport Scotland
- Registers of Scotland
- Scottish Qualifications Authority
- NHS Scotland

General aims

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CIVIC are involved in this project because we have a vested interest, as well as experience in developing online solutions, training courses, training manuals and delivering these training courses.

Once we have developed and launched a website, training for the clients is required to teach them how to edit and add content and images. In some cases, more technical training is required where we train clients on how to edit the structure of the website.

Larger organisations tend to want to train employees of all departments and these employees are predominantly low skilled women of similar ages to our target market (25 - 40yo). Therefore we have experience in conducting this training and understand how to make it as simple as possible, providing a step by step training manual for them to refer to at any time.

We also support gender equality which is demonstrated in our equal pay and equal opportunity policies and procedures. Our workforce ranges in age, from those in their twenties to those in their sixties and two thirds of our workforce are female, with a representation at management level. Therefore, we are very interested in contributing to help women enter the labour market.

North-East Regional Development Agency

The North-East Regional Development Agency, the first regional-type institution in Romania, is a generator of social-economic development of the North-East Region.

Amongst our social-economic and political concerns of 1999, at a time when our organization was established, we had to introduce a new concept: the regional development policy. Through a sustained cooperation with the six county-level public administrations (of Bacau, Botosani, Iasi, Neamt, Suceava and Vaslui), which have signed the agreement for setting up the North-East Development Region, we have succeeded gradually in turning this concept into reality.

The institution currently has 160 employees, higher education graduates as engineers, economists, public administration servants, etc., and almost 10% of them are involved in vocational education activities within the North-East Regional Studies Centre (CRS), structure set up in our institution since 2010.

North-East Regional Studies Centre is our VET center, providing until now, trainings for more than 600 persons in: Project Management, HR Management, Public Procurement, Strategic Management, Leadership, Financial Management for university graduates. We have well trained lecturers and researchers with proof experience, having national (National Qualifications Authority) and international certification (Extremadura Business School, Spain).

So far the center obtained operation permits from the National Council for Professional Training of Adults as provider of certified training for the three courses/occupations: project manager, human resources manager and public procurement expert.

The training programs are tailored in such a way as to adapt to the needs of the organizations both through contents and learning methods and by adapting the difficulty level of the

concepts to existing training levels of trainees, the learning process being based on partnership.

RSC also proposed itself to carry out the following main activities into the regional development field:

1. Professional training
2. Professional training programs certified by the National Authority for Qualifications.
3. Specialized training courses on interdisciplinary fields (cost-benefit analysis, management of infrastructure projects, territorial marketing, etc.)
4. Training courses tailored on issues specific to RDA's activity
5. Research and applied studies and surveys
6. Assessment of professional competencies.

General Aims

North-East Regional Development Agency aims the quality training, as a resource that can lead to the improvement of the economic and social sectors from North-East Region of Romania. NERDA developed a global thinking model, oriented to generate and transfer knowledge and know-how for the internal staff, but mainly to create future specialist, leaders in regional development sector. Until now, more than 600 participants graduated with certificates/diplomas the training programs provided by North-East Regional Studies Center.

NERDA is constantly preoccupied on all the levels of educational sector and employment in the North-East region, key components of sustainable economic development. For example, RDA coordinated the regional consortium and has developed the Regional Action Plan for Development of Technical and Vocational Education.

So, our participation in this project is important due to our large experience, on the one hand in regional development and, on the other hand, in adult education, training programs, research and applied studies and surveys.

WIDE – Women in Digital Empowerment

Women in Digital Initiatives Luxembourg Asbl is a non-profit organisation initiated in Luxembourg in 2013 and officially founded in 2014, currently acting as WIDE (Women in Digital Empowerment).

WIDE Vision - to empower women with and thanks to digital as well as to increase the number of women seizing their opportunities in the digital economy and society.

WIDE Mission - to offer practical support and activities to include more women and men in the field of digital as well as the contribution to build a more diverse workforce and a wider ICT talent pipeline for Luxembourg.

To do so we work on three pillars:

- Networking
- Confidence Building
- Skill Acquisition

Luxembourg has one the highest digital skills ratio according the the Digital Economy and Social Index index and has indeed a high proportion of highly qualified staff. It's also one of the most IT centric country in the Europe. However inclusion into digital world and economy can be improved, especially for those who have less opportunity to access training.

In addition, WIDE is happy to bring their expertise in working on inclusion of women in the digital field. We also conducted a programme with refugees in 2017 where we learn a lot from women with low digital skills.

Emphasys Centre

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.

CIVIS Plus

CIVISplus was founded in 2011 and it was established in January 2012 with the aim of fighting against social exclusion, poverty, social inequality, as well as protecting the natural and social environment, thus contributing to the endeavours of Civil Society towards social prosperity and sustainability.

Purpose of NGO CIVISplus is the creation of programs of humanitarian and public benefit having as their object the defence of human rights regardless of race, nationality, gender, creed and cultural background as described by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In particular, purposes of the organization are:

- To implement projects and actions against poverty, unemployment and social marginalization;
- To promote and deepen the concepts of Democracy, Freedom and the European ideal;
- To support and protect immigrants, refugees and asylum-seekers in Greece. The defense of the rights of people from third countries entitled to protection in our country as well as their smooth integration into Greek society. To implement projects against racism of every kind. To offer support for repatriation procedures to citizens of third world countries willing to go back to their native countries;
- To promote equality between the two genders according to the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discriminations against Women of the UN;
- To promote Youth work;

General aims

The last years Greece has been plagued by the economic crisis, the unemployment rate is really high especially for young people; long term unemployment and professional insecurity have become a “trend”.

Mismatches between the skills offered by the formal education and the skills needed in the labour market (including digital skills) make the situation even worse.

Launching of initiatives and projects aiming to further develop human capital's skills in all sectors could be an effective measure in order to promote employability. Based on this fact we consider our participation in the eSkills4all initiative extremely beneficial for our country and target groups.

NGO CIVIS PLUS works mainly with people with fewer opportunities such as immigrants, refugees, NEETs, long term unemployed, women, low skilled people etc.

Taking into consideration that these target groups usually face more barriers to their employability, tend to stay unemployed for longer periods and/or are employed in low paid or part time jobs, our participation in the eSkills4all initiative will enable us to better support them, create more opportunities for them and boost their employability.

ANTENNA

Antenna was the first private Television station in Cyprus and already counts 24 years of dynamic presence in the market. Since its formation, the station has been the leader in Television ratings in both its news bulletins as well its local and foreign entertainment programmes which range from daily series, to shows and blockbuster films.

The Company has also formed ANT1 Radio in 1998 and an online presence, ant1iwo (antenna internet world) in 2012. ANT1 Radio's main focus is the entertainment aspect with high-quality programmes attracting tens of thousands of listeners at any time of the day. Ant1iwo covers breaking news, sports and lifestyle news, broadcasts ANT1 TV and Radio streams for free and provides a high-quality Video On Demand service for the Company's television programmes.

Demographic data at a national level

United Kingdom

Unemployment in the UK is something the that Government takes a massive interest. Trading Economics shows that the current economic position of UK unemployment is reducing and was reducing steadily throughout 2017:



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

Trading Economics also shows that the UK's current unemployment rate is at a 42-year low and has been forecasted to remain at 4.3% into March 2018 and that the long term unemployment rate has reduced from 2.1% in 2014 to 1.1% in 2017.

Although these are positive figures, there is still a known gap in the market that eSkills4all can fill. We will be focusing on adult Women who have been out of unemployment for a number of years who have an interest in gaining numeracy, literacy and in particular IT skills. These women may feel that they are not up to date with the current ever changing working environment and have no understanding of the general skills required in most jobs. This course will provide a training course that these Women and even Men can complete so that when they want to get back into the labour market they can confidently say that they have the skills and experience required to fulfil the job at hand.

The Office for National statistics provides the data published on 13th December, that confirms there is a higher percentage of men (4.4%) that are unemployed than women (4.1%) in the UK. This evidence provides the conclusion that we may look into targeting men as well as women in the eSkills4all programme.

The UK Government wrote a publication called 'Digital Skills Crisis'. Within this it highlights that almost 90% of new jobs require digital skills and 72% of employers state that they are unwilling to interview candidates who do not have basic IT skills.

Some 4.5 million of the 12.6 million people in the UK who do not have basic digital skills are actually in work and therefore have employers who could help them develop their skills needs. Lloyds Banking Group's most recent Business Digital Index survey showed that as many as 1.2 million small businesses in the UK lack basic digital skills. The economic and social case for investing to close the digital skills gap could not be clearer.

Romania

Unfortunately, Romania ranks the penultimate place in the European Union in terms of digital competences, according to the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI). The large number of IT specialists in the economy is one of the reasons why Romania does not occupy the last position in the European Union (EU) in the field of digital competences.

Romania's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate fell to 4.7 percent in November of 2017, from 4.9 percent in the previous month. It was the lowest jobless rate on record, as the number of unemployed went down by 8 thousand to 443 thousand.

Unemployment rate for men decreased 0.1 percentage points to 5.6 percent, while that for women also declined 0.1 percentage points to 3.7 percent. A year earlier, the jobless rate was higher at 5.5 percent.

Unemployment Rate in Romania averaged 6.67 percent from 2004 until 2017, reaching an all time high of 8.60 percent in January of 2004 and a record low of 4.70 percent in November of 2017.



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

Regarding the structure of unemployment by level of education, the unemployed without education and those with the level of education primary, secondary and vocational education had the highest share in total unemployed registered (79.68%), while the unemployed with lyceum and post-secondary education level represented 15.63% and those with university studies 4.70%. (<http://www.anofm.ro/files/Comunicat%20de%20presa%20somaj%20decembrie%202017.pdf>).

The structure of unemployment by age groups is as follows: under 25 years of age represents 11,06%, between 25 and 29 years of age 7,08%, 30 – 39 year 19,92%, 40 – 49 years 28,99%, 50 – 55 years 14,97%, over 55 years 17,98%.

It can be seen that the 30-49 age group represents almost half (**48,91%**) of the total number of unemployed, as for Romania, may represent the target group of the project.

Luxembourg

Luxembourg is one of the smaller member States, but when it comes to technology the government is currently making efforts and offering financial support to encourage the ICT sector and digitalization across

all sectors. Digital is central in the strategy of Luxembourg and is even directly managed under the Prime Minister office.

There is a number of governmental initiatives, as well as consular/ professional organizations/ initiatives focusing on digitalisation topics with a focus on skills. There is also a number of non-profit organizations offering education and training in this field, especially targeted at low skilled adults, refugees, underprivileged, or unemployed young adults.

Women have a lower “working rate” than other EU member states but family policies are evolving in a positive manner encouraging women to work. It’s also useful to know that in Luxembourg, almost 50% of the population is represented by expats or foreigners who choose Luxembourg only as a temporary destination and that 50% of the workers commute from transborder countries everyday to work in Luxembourg.

ADEM (L’Agence pour le développement de l’emploi) divides age groups as follows <30 (20,86 % both M & F), 30-44 (53,91% both M & F) and 45+ (43,22% both M & F). Therefore it is not possible to give a percentage for the age group of 25-40 as requested above. See below for percentages among the different age groups.

Source: http://www.adem.public.lu/fr/marche-emploi-luxembourg/faits-et-chiffres/statistiques/adem/Chiffes_cles_DE_inscrits/index.html

According to ADEM 17,283 people did not have a job in Luxembourg by the end of 2017. Of those 17,283 people 9,268 (53,62%) are men and 8,015 (46,38%) are women. ADEM divides age groups as follows <30 (20,86 % both M & F), 30-44 (53,91% both M & F) and 45+ (43,22% both M & F).

1,601 (19.98%) women are part of the age group “<30”. 698 have achieved an education level of “secondaire inférieur”. 599 have achieved an education level of “secondaire supérieur” and 304 have achieved an education level “supérieur”.

3,147 (39,26%) women are part of the age group “30-44”. 1324 have achieved an education level of “secondaire inférieur”. 925 have achieved an education level of “secondaire supérieur” and 898 have achieved an education level “supérieur”.

3,267 (40,67%) women are part of the age group “45+”. 2076 have achieved an education level of “secondaire inférieur”. 752 have achieved an education level of “secondaire supérieur” and 439 have achieved an education level “supérieur”.

Source: http://www.adem.public.lu/fr/marche-emploi-luxembourg/faits-et-chiffres/statistiques/adem/Chiffes_cles_DE_inscrits/index.html

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.

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.

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

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According to the Cypriot government 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.

Greece

The total population in Greece was estimated at 10.76 million people on January 1st 2017. There is a large number of unemployed in the country, which reaches 23,1%. Most of the unemployed are long-term unemployed. Long-term unemployment refers to people who have been unemployed for 12 months or longer.



SOURCE: TRADINGECONOMICS.COM | NATIONAL STATISTICAL SERVICE OF GREECE

Regarding digitalization, according to the country's profile in EDPR (2017) Greece ranks 26th out of the 28 EU Member states and did not make much progress compared with other EU Member states.

In human capital, Greece's performance is well below EU average but it slightly progressing. In 2016, the percentage of the Greek population using the internet on a regular basis (66%) is one of the lowest among European countries (EU average is 79%). The number of individuals having at least a basic level of digital skills is also progressing with 46% in 2016 compared with 44% in 2015.

The high rates of unemployment in combination with the low rates of digitalization and human capital's digital skills create an urgent need for Greece to address its severe digital skills gaps and the chronic skills mismatch observed between the ICT industry's needs and the skills offered by formal education. In this direction the eSkills4all initiative can contribute to the country's overall digital performance.

The Greek seasonally adjusted unemployment rate fell to 20.7 percent in October of 2017, following an upwardly revised 20.8 percent in the previous month. Still, Greek unemployment rate remains more than double the Eurozone's average.

A year earlier, the unemployment rate was recorded at 23.3 percent. The number of unemployed persons fell by 11.1 percent while employment increased by 3.0 percent.

The 15-24 age group recorded the highest unemployment rate (40.8 percent from 44.4 percent in October of 2016), followed by the 25-34 age group (25.7 percent from 29.7 percent), the 35-44 age group (18.9 percent from 19.7 percent).

The unemployment rate among women declined to 25.4 percent in October from 27.9 percent a year earlier, while among men it decreased to 17.0 percent from 19.5 percent.

Among the country's regions, the highest unemployment rates were reported for Epirus-Western Macedonia (25.8 percent), followed by Peloponnese, Western Greece and Ionian Islands (21.9 percent), Macedonia-Thrace (21.4 percent) and Attica (21.2 percent); while Crete recorded the lowest rate (14.8 percent).

Although the indicators improve every year, the development of the skills of the unemployed, through the eSkill4all program, is something that will be able to improve these figures substantially

Greece: Unemployment rate by sex and age

Unemployment Greece September 2017

	Total	Men	Women
Unemployment Rate [+]	20.5%	16.8%	25.3%
Unemployment less than 25 years [+]	39.5%	36.2%	43.3%

Unemployed 25 years and over [+]	19.4%	15.6%	24.2%
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Greece: Unemployment

	2016	2015
Unemployment Rate	23.5%	24.0%
Male unemployment	19.7%	20.7%
Female unemployment	28.0%	28.1%
Unemployment less than 25 years	47.2%	50.1%
Unemployed male less than 25 years	43.1%	45.2%
Unemployed female less than 25 years	51.6%	55.5%
Unemployed 25 years and over	22.1%	22.5%
Unemployed male 25 years and over	18.5%	19.4%
Unemployed female 25 years and over	26.5%	26.5%

Unemployment compared to the level of Education

Unemployment rates of the population aged 25-64 years by level of education level are:

Less than Primary, Primary and Lower Secondary Education												
timegeo	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Greece	8.3 _b	7.3	7.1	6.9	8.9 _b	11.9	17.0	25.1	28.7	27.6 _b	26.2	26.2
Upper Secondary and post-Secondary non-Tertiary Education (level 3 and 4)												
timegeo	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Greece	9.6 _b	8.9	8.3	7.3	9.3 _b	12.8	17.8	24.5	28.1	27.7 _b	25.5	24.2

Tertiary Education (level 5 and 8)												
timegeo	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Greece	7.0 _b	6.4	6.1	5.7	6.7 _b	8.8	13.0	17.1	19.4	19.1 _b	19.0	17.2

CURRENT AND FUTURE RULES

Agriculture, the maritime industry and tourism are important sectors of the Greek economy. Skills forecasts for Greece predict that demand for high- and low-skilled workers, and to a lesser extent medium-skilled workers, will all rise in the coming years.

Looking forward to 2025, the share of the labour force with high level qualifications will rise, whilst the share with medium- or low level qualifications will decrease.

Greece's working-age population (15-64) is projected to decrease in the period to 2025, with a particular drop in the share of the workforce aged 25-34, whilst the share of the labour force aged between 55-64 and 65+ will increase significantly.

Labour market participation is expected to grow. Looking to the future, Greece is expected to have a significantly higher old-age dependency ratio than the EU28 average.

Future employment growth (in %) in Greece in 2015-2025 across sectors

Sectors	%
Professional services	30.25
Accommodation & food	21.06
Construction	20.24
Wholesale & retail trade	11.51
Administrative services	10.66
Finance & insurance	4.48
Arts & recreation	4.45
ICT services	3.50
Health & social care	2.51
Education	2.24

Energy supply services	-0.80
Public sector & defence	-0.94
Manufacturing	-1.40
Mining & quarrying	-2.94
Transport & storage	-6.59
Water and waste treatment	-8.47
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	-14.69

Country's current scene at National Level

United Kingdom

OECD (2017) states, 'Over a quarter of workers in the United Kingdom have only low skills, which holds back labour productivity and job quality'. They note that the government has started to simplify vocational education and training with a levy on large businesses. Low-skilled workers participate less in lifelong learning, therefore, introducing targeted re-training programmes should boost competencies more broadly.

One of the points raised in this report to improve productivity and job quality of low-skilled workers is to 'Introduce individually targeted programmes for low-wage and low-skilled workers to improve their lifelong learning opportunities'. Again, this confirms the need in the UK for our eSkills4all programme.

This concludes that the eSkills4all project is greatly needed and will target this large percentage of workers who are not only unemployed, but are in a job and do not have all the skills required. This also does not seem to only be an issue with our target audience, but with all of the population ages 16 to 65.

The Government has also identified a number of specific initiatives which bear on the digital skills agenda:

- a new national curriculum in computing in September 2014 and reformed GCSEs/Alevels in computer science;
- reforming apprenticeships in software development;
- investment in doctoral training in aspects of data;
- investment in the employer-led Tech Partnership;

- the 'Cyber Streetwise' online safety campaign; and the Shadbolt Review on the accreditation of computer science degrees.¹³

During their current Digital Skills Crisis inquiry, they added:

- a new broadband Universal Service Obligation by 2020, giving everyone the legal right to request broadband at minimum speed from a provider at a reasonable cost;
- establishment of a Digital Engagement Council (to be chaired by Ed Vaizey) by early 2016 [replacing the previous Information Economy Council];
- investment of £3 million to extend the network of Master Teachers, helping to increase teacher capability to deliver the new computing curriculum, which was launched in September 2014;
- launch of the digital Degree Apprenticeships, the first cohort of apprentices started in September 2015, with over 40 employers and nine universities collaborating to create a curriculum that meets industry sector needs;
- confirmation in the Autumn Statement 2015 of funding for the Ada National College for Digital Skills.
- There is also a new Institute for Coding to support high level skills; and funding of computer science courses through a competition managed by the Higher Education Funding Council for England

Romania

Romania has experienced a fall in the number of wage-earning employees since the beginning of the century. This has been explained with reference to high rates of inactivity recorded by the working-age population, the large number of people working in subsistence farming, and the outward migration of labour (mostly to elsewhere in the EU), bringing about a loss of human capital. Similarly, the extent of early school leaving also has affected the competitiveness of Romania's human capital.

According to <http://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/bg/countries/romania>, there will be modest employment growth, but employment levels in 2025 are expected to remain below our pre-2008 financial crisis levels. Most employment growth over the medium-term will be in the distribution and transport sector, and most job opportunities will be for skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers.

Sectors with the largest share in employment in Romania in 2016:

- Agriculture, forestry & fishing 23.10%
- Manufacturing 18.91%
- Wholesale & retail trade 13.93%

- Construction 8.03%
- Transport & storage 5.59%

Occupations with the largest share in employment in Romania in 2016:

- Farmworkers and gardeners 18.50%
- Sales workers 7.53%
- Drivers & vehicle operators 6.27%
- Metal & machinery workers 5.38%
- Construction workers 5.12%

Luxembourg

Policies/initiatives/programmes to support unemployed adults (25-40) with an emphasis on women for reskilling and upskilling

Zarabina - is an organization dedicated to the empowerment of women and equal opportunity between men and women in search of a job and continuing training. Zarabina offers counsel for individuals, and orientation and planning courses for professional life as well as training courses.

Centre for women, families and single parent families - The CFFM 'Nei-Ufank' (Luxembourgish for “new beginning”) counseling, information and referral service offers support to women who want to make a fresh start in their professional lives. It offers socio-pedagogical consultations, vocational guidance, information and advice to any woman looking for a job.

Initiativ rëm Schaffen - The Initiativ rëm schaffen (Luxembourgish for “start working again”) aims to promote the professional reintegration of women by offering them seminars, individual consultations as well as training (secretary in the law firm, medical secretary).

Naxi - is a vocational training and integration center for adult women looking for a job, registered with the ADEM. The main objective of the center is to directly and sustainably (re)integrate women into the labor market.

Service d'emploi féminin - The ADEM's women's employment service provides information on the various possibilities, the training organizations, as well as how to access training. It organizes information workshops

for all women interested in (re) integrating into the labor market. These workshops - in Luxembourgish language - are announced by official notice and take place every first Tuesday of the month at the ADEM in Luxembourg-Gare.

Sources:

http://www.bienvenue.lu/documents/fck/file/pdf/Etudes%20et%20formation/formation%20femmes%20pdf/form_femmes_FR.pdf

Cyprus

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.

Greece

According to OECD (2017) the future of Greece's well-being will depend on improving educational performance to raise employment and social outcomes. The challenges are significant, as public education expenditure in Greece has declined in recent years and learning outcomes are weak.

The basic skills of adults in Greece are lower than average, as measured in the Survey of Adult Skills, a product of the OECD Programme for International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)

Though a lot of policies, initiatives, strategies and projects are being implemented in Greece by private and public actors in order to support employability, skills' development and digitalization it seems that efforts in these directions should be intensified.

The Operational Program "Human Resource Development, Education and Lifelong Learning" is one of the seven Sectoral / National Operational Programs for the 2014-2020 Programming Period, co-financed by the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Youth Employment Initiative (PAN) and is indicative of the country's aims in the field.

Priority Axis 2 aims to tackle unemployment, increase employment, equal access to the labor market, and creating new sustainable jobs with an emphasis on areas the country has competitive advantage, especially for those groups of the population that have the highest rates of unemployment (long-term unemployed, women, unemployed with low qualifications, unemployed aged 30-44).

Specific objective i: Access of the unemployed to employment with emphasis to long-term unemployed, women and unemployed aged 30-44

Indicative actions:

- New job programs for the unemployed and for specific groups of unemployed
- Benefit Programs,

Specific Objective ii: Increase in the percentage of unemployed people trained receiving certification, focusing on long - term unemployed and unemployed persons who have not been enrolled in tertiary education.

Indicative actions:

- Targeted Training and internship Linking Programs in leading sectors of the Greek economy, leading in certification.
- Training checks of the unemployed in sectors of economic activity with guaranteed employment.

Investment priority 8.4 Equality between men and women at all sectors, including in terms of access to employment, career development, reconciliation of professional and privacy and promoting equal pay for equal work.

Specific objective (i): Improvement of the working conditions of women, with an emphasis on working women in precarious employment

Indicative interventions:

Programs to harmonize family and professional life cycle 2014-2020

Programs to promote gender equality in business.

“Labor Force Employment Agency” (OAED) launches various programs for short term employment in order unemployed people to gain work experience, and training programs on digital and other skills.

Entrepreneurship is encouraged and supported through various programs in order new job vacancies to be created.

Second chance schools promote lifelong learning and skills’ development.

A variety of projects are being implemented by private and public actors about up skilling and reskilling young people and adults in the context of European programs such as Erasmus+, European integration Fund and other.

The “National digital strategy 2016 -2021” has 3 main directions: 1) support research and development, 2) Enhancing digital skills in schools, 3) Emphasizing on lifelong learning with Massive open online courses (MOOC) on digital topics.

Country's current scene at European level

United Kingdom

OECD have created questionnaires (PIAAC) that people can take to gain an understanding of their level of adult skills. These questionnaires are split up into the following categories:

- Literacy
- Reading Components
- Numeracy
- Problem solving in technology-rich environments

These can be found here -

<http://www.oecd.org/skills/piaac/samplequestionsandquestionnaire.htm>

This information can be used to help the eSkills4all partners gain an understanding of previous work done and what kind of questions we might ask when we contact our target audience.

Romania

In terms of digital skills, Romania's performance is below the EU average but it's making some progress with more people getting online and digital skill levels slowly improving. A little more than half of Romanians are regular internet users (56%) compared with 79% in the EU. 28% of Romanians possess above basic levels of digital skills versus 56% across the EU.

Romania benefits from a good pool of science, technology, math and engineering (STEM) graduates with 1.6% of Romanians aged 20-29 years old holding a STEM degree although this level is falling according to the latest figures. The share of ICT specialists in the economy is increasing as IT jobs offer attractive salaries.

The Ministry of Education and Research aims to increase the digital skills of the new generation and is preparing some initiatives to tackle this issue. As of 2017, both ICT and programming classes are being introduced in middle school. They allow for simple coding and algorithmic thinking in order to ensure that children are able to search, find and interpret data.

A pilot project called 'The Digital Catalogue' has been implemented, allowing for parents to digitally track grades and absences in school. School books - the availability of which has been a significant public issue in Romania in the past years - are currently available for free, online⁹. Various private companies have launched their own campaigns to improve digital skills and attract ICT specialists.

At this point digital skills still seem to be mostly promoted through private sector initiatives, rather than by public policy.

Luxembourg

There doesn't seem to be any data regarding Luxembourg's participation and performance in the PIAAC programme. As a matter of fact Luxembourg is not even featured among the countries having participated in the study.

For reference see: <http://piaacgateway.com/country-reports> , and <http://www.oecd.org/skills/piaac/country-specific-material.htm>

The Digital Skills and Job Coalition Lëtzebuerg is coordinated by LIDIT (Luxembourg Institute for Digital Training). LIDIT and many other partners aim to:

- “To substantially reduce the shortage of IT professionals, to improve the conditions for the private and public sector employees as well as all inhabitants to learn and continuously improve the necessary ICT skills for job, the establishment of IT business and development of the digital market;
- To attract more young people to choose ICT and other science studies and professions, to ensure the acquisition of digital skills also when learning other professions;
- To raise public awareness of the importance of digital skills and competences:” (Source: <https://lidit.eu/partners/>).

Coalition launched in May 2017 and has around 50 members.

Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition Lëtzebuerg <https://lidit.eu/digital-skills-coalition-letzebuerg/>
http://www.digital-luxembourg.public.lu/en/actualites/e-skills/2017/20170519_nationalcoalition/index.html

Fit4Coding:http://www.digital-luxembourg.public.lu/en/actualites/e-skills/2017/20171207_Fit4Coding_Digital_Skills_Award/index.html

Initiative to retrain unemployed people to ICT careers. Was awarded a best practice award in 2017 at the EU Digital jobs and skills assembly.

National DESI - Digital Economy and Social Index (five main dimensions: Connectivity, Human Capital, Use of Internet, Integration of Digital Technology, Digital Public Services) status

Luxembourg ranks 5th in DESI 2017. Luxembourg is one of the leading countries for connectivity, digital skills and Internet usage while the integration of digital technologies by companies and digital public services are its relative weakness.

Source: ec.europa.eu/newsroom/document.cfm?doc_id=43026

Cyprus

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.

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'.

Greece

Greece participated in the second cycle of PIAAC program.

Key findings:

- The share of adults in Greece who score at the highest levels of proficiency in literacy and numeracy is considerably smaller than the OECD average, while the proportion of adults with poor skills in literacy and numeracy is much larger than average.
- In contrast to what is observed in other countries, 25-34 year-olds in Greece perform as well in literacy as 55-65 year-olds.
- Greece is one of the few countries where women outperform men in literacy.
- Tertiary-educated adults in Greece have relatively low proficiency in literacy, numeracy and problem solving in technology-rich environments.

- The relationship between information-processing skills and levels of social trust, voluntary activities and subjective health is considerably weaker in Greece than in other participating countries/economies.
- Workers in Greece use their numeracy and problem-solving skills at work as frequently as the average across OECD countries; but their proficiency in these skills is not as highly rewarded, with higher wages, as in other OECD countries.

According to the pledge tracker of the European commission, the Greek Coalition for the Digital Economy was launched on 6 May 2014 becoming the 6th EU country to create a national coalition, and is aimed at young people and potential entrepreneurs.

It is signed by 5 Ministries (Education, Employment, Administrative Reform, Development, and Infrastructure); 3 General Secretariats (Youth, Mass Media, and Gender Equality) and the Federation of Hellenic ICT Enterprises (SEPE). The last updates, as of March 2015 show that the coalition hadn't started yet. Currently there are 36 pledges in Greece.

Greece has also a regional coalition "Women & Girls Go Digital in Greece" which under the leadership of the Hellenic General Secretariat for Gender Equality and in collaboration with the European Centre for Women and Technology have set off to develop a functional ecosystem of entrepreneurs, business people, policy makers, the academia in order to assist women in pursuing ICT careers and help the best and brightest talents shine among Greek women and girls.

According to the Digital Economy and Society Index 2017, Greece ranks 26th. Overall Greece did not make much progress compared to other EU Member States. On the positive side, Greeks are more actively using internet for video calls and online content.

However, its low performance in digital skills risks acting as a brake to the further development of its digital economy and society.

1. Connectivity: Greece features wide availability of fixed broadband, but take-up is progressing slowly. Price is relatively high, the transition to fast broadband connections is slower than in other EU countries. Greece remains last in NGA coverage per household.
2. Human Capital: More people are online, but skills levels remain low. However, the number of science and technology graduates is relatively high and this is a good promise for Greece's digital future.
3. Use of Internet: Greeks are active internet users of social networks and online content. Over the past year more and more users have been engaging in online banking.

4. Integration of Digital Technology: Greece is progressing slowly. Companies use social media but are less prone to take up new technologies such as cloud and RFID. More and more SMEs use electronic sales channels, although not for cross-border sales.
5. Digital Public Services: Greece has progressed in the provision of Open Data, although not as fast as other European countries. The number of eGovernment users is also slightly progressing, but the delivery of online public services is well below EU average.

Conclusion - Map digital skills based on country findings

The development of new digital technologies and the accelerating pace of digitalization offer new growth opportunities for nations.

However, after conducting research at the level of each country involved in this project, it can be seen that the unemployment rate is quite high, registering values well above the European average as it is in Greece and values close to the European average, such as in Cyprus.

With values below the European average we find in Luxembourg (5.8%), Romania (4.7%) and UK (4.1%).

Different situations we also encounter when it comes to Unemployment rate by gender (men / women), by age and background. While in the UK and Romania the situation is similar, unemployment is higher among men than women, in the other countries participating in the project the situation is the opposite.

Regarding the structure of unemployment by level of education, except Luxembourg, in all other countries the unemployed without education and those with the level of education primary, secondary and vocational education had the highest share in total unemployed registered.

Unfortunately, in terms of digital competences, according to the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) Romania, Greece and Cyprus ranks the last places in the European Union.

In Romania the sectors with the highest employment rates are agriculture, forestry & fishing, manufacturing, construction and, given that half of Romanians are regular internet users (56%) compared with 79% in the EU and 28% of Romanians possess above basic levels of digital skills versus 56% across the EU we can conclude that the eSkills4all project will be more than welcome and also necessary.

In Greece, the high rates of unemployment in combination with the low rates of digitalization and human capital's digital skills create an urgent need to address its severe digital skills gaps and the chronic skills mismatch observed between the ICT industry's needs and the skills offered by formal education.

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.

OECD (2017) states, 'Over a quarter of workers in the United Kingdom have only low skills, which holds back labour productivity and job quality'.

Not the same thing we can say about Luxembourg when it comes to digital skills. Luxembourg ranks 5th in DESI 2017 and is one of the leading countries for connectivity, digital skills and Internet usage while the integration of digital technologies by companies and digital public services are its relative weakness.

To take digital to the next level, the Luxembourg Government launched the Digital Luxembourg initiative in 2014. Under the umbrella of Digital Luxembourg, joint private-public ventures and projects find their place, each tackling a different aspect of digital development, each bringing the country one step forward.

Due to the lack of qualified applicants for tech jobs, Luxembourg will work together with PwC to launch the Digital Skills Bridge Project in 2018. It will also tackle the impact of robotisation and automation in jobs.

While in Romania the large number of IT specialists in the economy is one of the reasons why Romania does not occupy the last position in the European Union in the field of digital competences, in Luxembourg there is important need to ICT specialist such as programme, ICT project managers, Business Analysts and cybersecurity specialists. 44% of companies do say that they have difficulties to hire for these positions.

It is difficult to define exactly how many jobs are available for low-skilled adults. This is very likely due to Luxembourg's top performance when it comes to digital skills. According to a study by the European Commission Luxembourg takes 1st place with 89% of unemployed and employed people having basic or above basic digital skills.

In many jobs basic digital skills are required, even relatively simple tasks like servicing tills or customer management systems (in hair salon for example) require the employee to have these basic skills even if the job itself is not digital.

To conclude, it is clear that there is a real need for a training programme that will help these low skilled people to gain experience and confidence, particularly when it comes to Digital Skills needed within a job.

Despite all the efforts made, in countries like Greece and Cyprus where unemployment is really high, in Romania where is a lack in digital skills, training programs such as eSkills4all which facilitates the exchange of experience between organizations and countries will meliorate the situation in the future.

Comparative Report: Survey Analysis - Digital and employability skills mismatches and gaps - Target group: Employers

This document falls under Intellectual Output 1 of the eSkills4All project 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

Also, the surveys carried out under this project aims to create a digital skills tool-kit for low skilled adults focusing on re-entering the labor market.

Our target market is adults who have been removed from Education and Training for a number of years and are either unemployed or would like to improve their digital skills to gain a better job. Our goal is to develop a tool-kit that equips these adults with sufficient digital employability skills that will allow these adults to get back into the labor market.

In order to better define the target group reported at the level of each participating country in the project and for a better identification of needs of labor market when it comes to digital and employability skills mismatches and gaps, surveys have been applied to a total number of 24 employers, companies with various sectors of activity.

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