WP1
Development of Guidelines
how to better set up effective group dynamics in online learning environment

T4T - Tools4Teaching in Digital Education Settings

Erasmus+ project number:

2021-1-ES01-KA220-ADU-000033654

For the first activity within result 1 the partners produced six modules that cover six different aspects of teaching in digital education settings. The modules provide general methodological guidelines for adult educators on how to be more effective in building and sustaining group dynamics in online learning environment, what digital tools and software they can make use of, what behaviours to adopt, how to engage learners in small group online activities and how to use artistic exercises to boost creativity.

The modules target adult educators, teachers, trainers, mentors, coaches and other training professionals, who work in the field of formal, non-formal and informal adult education. Furthremore the modules enable the target audience to enrich their knowledge and skills on how to effectively build and maintain group dynamics in their online courses and training sessions and how to actively involve learners in different types of activities. This allows for a better response to the increasing expectations of nowadays learners not to be passive recipients of knowledge, but to be actively involved in the online educational process.

All partners participated in the identification of the resources and in the creation of the modules. The general coordination of the process was done by the Dutch partner – ViOne Consultancy.

At the beginning, the partnership reached a common agreement about what they understand by 'blended learning' and in order to do so they defined the 3 types of learning environment. For the purpose of the project and in line with its objectives, the partners agreed to follow the most common definition of blended learning as a 'combination between face-to-face and online learning', known as rotation model of blended learning.

The partnership agreed on the following themes to be developed in the form of six modules:

- Specifics of online learning environment comparing to physical settings and blended learning
- Suitable digital tools and software for maintaining effective online interaction
- Specifics of engaging learners and working in small groups in online learning environment
- Creating engaging energisers and warm up exercisers suitable for online environment and remote learning
- Boosting online teaching creativity and learners' engagement through artistic activities
- Educator's role and behaviour in online teaching environment some tips for success

In order to create the modules, the partners agree to apply the following steps:

1) Creation and agreement on a document (Word) template for consistency purposes that included a general outline of what kind of content each module should contain.
2) Creation and agreement on a presentation (PowerPoint) template that includes attractive visuals and follows the structure of the document template.
3) Agreement on common knowledge checking activities in a form of open and closed questions on the website, in the presentation and in the form of a practice case study in the document.
4) The partners also reached an agreement on the design, look and feel of the results and the timeline
5) The partners agreed to apply the following methods: desktop research on the topic, identifying techniques from formal, non-formal and informal education that can be used in digital education setting, providing guidelines how to develop online learning activities suitable for distant teaching and remote learning, etc.

All six modules were combined as a structured document that created the 'Guidelines', which were developed in a user-friendly format. All modules and resources for each module were uploaded on the project website.

The partnership received feedback that the Guidelines meet the increasing needs of training professionals to learn how to easily adapt the face-to-face interaction to digital settings. This allowed them to give 'human face and sense' to online education and help learners not be treated as passive recipients of information but become active participants in the process.

The modules and hence the 'Guidelines', were created in English and later translated in all project languages. Each partner was responsible for their translation.

The modules can be viewed on the project website:
https://digitaltools4teaching.eu/results/guidelines