LABEL TOOL

Interreg
EUROPEAN UNION
Danube Transnational Programme
eDigiStars

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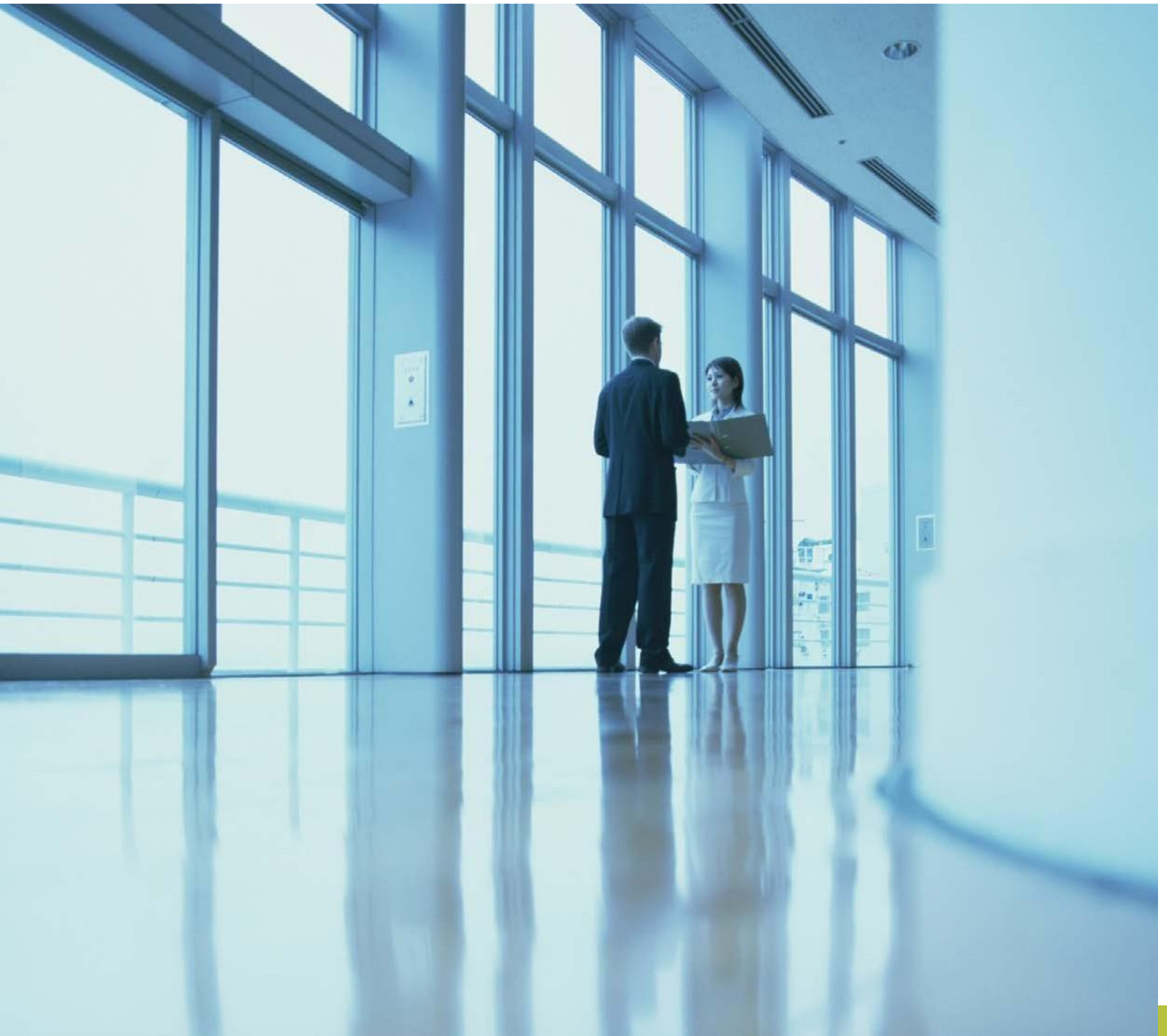

Introduction

We all can agree – digital literacy brings countless benefits for our personal and professional lives. Unfortunately, digitally untrained people, in particular the older generation (50+), find it tricky to handle new technologies and therefore they often remain disadvantaged from the opportunities of the digital world.

That`s why we are here – 19 partners from 8 countries (Hungary, Austria, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Romania, Slovenia, Ukraine) gathered in eDigiStars project, co-funded by Danube transnational programme.

POWERYOU tool

Welcome to the eDigiStars journey and learn more about how to deal with 3 common issues in the Danube macro-region:

- Lack of skilled workforce in digital fields
- Ageing population & employability difficulties
- Lower competitiveness of the whole Danube region

CAMPUS tool

The solution is hidden in eDigiStars' innovative ecosystem based on three tools:

- POWERYOU tool – how to reach the target group 50+ and change their mindset that they can learn and scale up their digital career
- CAMPUS tool – how to adapt training courses to the needs of adults 50+
- LABEL tool – how to build trust and prove adults 50+ competences to employers

LABEL tool

All tools are developed by professional cooperation of vocational training and adult training organizations, labor offices, NGOs, local governments, chambers of commerce, industry and economic development organizations and disadvantaged target groups.

Developed tools will be tested and adjusted according to the feedbacks. We will start with the POWERYOU tool and train the employees of labour offices or NGOs targeting adults 50+ how to build positive attitudes towards older workers/employees, how to engage and motivate adults 50+. In each territory, we will select one education provider who will, based on CAMPUS tool, adjust one existing training course. Afterwards this course will be carried out with the 40 participants recruited / selected per territory (320 in total) at the end of POWERYOU tool pilot. Furthermore, certification of adults 50+ and building trust towards employers with the LABEL tool pilot is necessary. LABEL tool is targeting actors working intensively with industry or representing them, e.g. chambers of commerce, industry associations and other business supporting institutions. With the help of this tool two things will be achieved: First of all, widely recogniced certificates for participants of eDigiStars. Secondly, trust in the (re-)qualified target group 50+ (in total 120 persons) will be established, that they are valuable contribu- tors to the digitalised working environment.

We stronly believe that you'll find eDigiStars tools useful and one of the crucial parts for changing the target groups chances for a new career in the digital work.

Wishing you a pleasant eDigiStars journey in empowering the generation 50+ for a brighter future.

1. The Development of LABEL

How to set up an eDigiStars LABEL System in each territory.

The eDigiStars Project aims to develop three innovative tools: POWERYOU Tool, CAMPUS tool and LABEL tool. The LABEL tool will function as a guideline for project partners:

How to set up an eDigiStars LABEL System in each territory.

Within our project we developed the LABEL tool in several intensive working group workshops that focused on different aspects regarding the definition of the eDigiStars LABEL. Very early on it became clear that CAMPUS and LABEL are very closely linked. In order to define the targeted competence levels you need to know which skills and competences are developed specifically within the eDigiStars CAMPUS training programme. Originally, the eDigiStars LABEL was targeted at an intermediate level of skills. The pilot implementation of each tool, however, showed that there is also a big need for beginner level trainings on the labour market. Based on this learning the partnership concluded that LABEL should remain open for both beginner level courses as well as intermediate level courses. The level of skills should always be adapted to the needs of the labour market as well as the needs of the participants. Nonetheless it is encouraged that the participants should have at least a basic set of digital skills, on which the eDigiStars programme can built on. The eDigiStars LABEL will then serve as proof for their acquirement of a higher-level set of skills.

Learnings within the project:

The process and implementation of an accreditation for an independent and recognised certificate is not feasible within the framework of the project. For this reason, it is necessary to work closely with a high-quality education provider that already enjoys high recognition within the industry and on the market of each territory.

As stated in the introduction this tool will be revised after the implementation of the pilots. Any further learnings will be incorporated in the LABEL tool and serve as a baseline for further improvement of the tool?

2. Sustainable System for Labelling

This chapter only functions as a guideline. Territorial differences and specifications must be considered accordingly and the tool must also be adapted according to specific national requirements (i.e. funding, finding the right training provider, etc.).

What is necessary for a sustainable certificate?

Step 1: Choose a field of training (see CAMPUS for details) according to the needs of the market in your territory.

Step 2: Choose a training provider you trust and that is well recognised in the business world.

Step 3: eDigiStars certificates should then be issued by this recognised institute, which already offers established certificates.

Step 4: Seek cooperation with labour office, chamber of commerce, industry representatives, unions and Advisory Group members.

Step 5: Ensure sustainable financing.

Step 6: Implement the developed eDigiStars LABEL logo.

Additionally, high transparency is important as well as close collaboration with other tools. In general, we need to have a consistent and comprehensible structure across all tools. As pointed out in Step 3 it is crucial to coordinate our activities closely with the local labour offices. It is also very important for labour offices to learn about the needs and opportunities of employees, so that employers take this into account when making decisions about employees.

Furthermore, the specifications in the respective country must be considered and the eDigiStars LABEL implemented accordingly, as only general instructions can be drawn up. It would be desirable to develop a method to ensure that certificates reflect practical knowledge and project-based knowledge. The final responsibility regarding this lies in the hands of the selected training institutes (see chapter 3). Nonetheless, it is highly recommended for training institutes to provide a competence assessment in accordance with The Digital Competence Framework 2.0 to ensure the sustainability and alignment to a common framework.

Territorial differences can also be added after the first pilot as learnings within the project. For the pilot training it is important for project partners to follow the steps and create a system that works for their specific territory. All the learnings and insights gained within the pilot should be documented and function as a baseline for improvement of the LABEL tool in a later phase of the project.

3. Quality Criteria of the Label

We want to highlight, that we reference our project tools to the Digital Competence Framework 2.0 of the EU. The Digital Competence Framework was closely analysed by both the LABEL and CAMPUS working group and a common evaluation of each territory's input showed that on average an intermediate level should be targeted within the eDigiStars project (level 3 or 4 of the Digital Competence Framework). However, due to the different territorial conditions and demands, it is not possible to set a general level for all territories for starting the eDigiStars training or for achieving the eDigiStars certificate. Nonetheless, it is important to note that the assessment of the start and target level is aligned with the EU Digital Competence Framework 2.0.

It is also very important to note that it is crucial to pay attention to very high-quality criteria when selecting the training institute and the training course in order to be well recognised by the industry. Furthermore, it is important to ensure that both the selected training courses and the certification processes are adapted to the needs of the 50+ target group as documented in POWERYOU. There are plenty of digital trainings offered on the market, however, they are not specifically adjusted to the needs of the generation 50+.

The following steps will help project partners to ensure a high-quality implementation of the eDigiStars LABEL in their territory:

What is necessary for a high-quality certificate?

Step 1: Selection of the digital subject area requested by the industry.

Step 2: Definition of the minimum requirements of the entry level – important for the selection of the participants or potential entry test.

Step 3: Definition of the minimum requirements of the target level which is necessary for the certification and potential final exam.

Step 4: Adapt training according to the target group of 50+ while maintaining the high-quality criteria.

Step 5: Adapt existing certificates according to eDigiStars requirements.

The quality of the certification process will very much depend on the selection of the training provider therefore it is very important to search and select a well-established training provider. The methodology for certification is the responsibility of the training provider. Preferably the certification assessments are not held like tests in schools, but are very practically oriented, e.g. involving practical tasks and/or simulations in the workplace.

In order to help project partners to find a suitable training provider that aligns with standard quality criteria regarding certification, the following general descriptions were added. These function as a reminder for what should be paid attention to when issuing certifications.

• Validity

Validity is the quality of ways in which scores are interpreted and used; it is not a quality of the assessment itself. It assures that the test is related to the content of the course – the obtained knowledge, abilities and processes.

• Reliability

The fundamental meaning of reliability is that a score a test taker accomplishes in an assessment should be essentially the same under different conditions.

• Impartiality, objectivity and fairness

This means that the evaluation decision should not be influenced by contextual dependence, culture or bias of the evaluator.

• The cognitive scope

Refers to whether the tool enables evaluators to assess the breadth and depth of what the candidate has learned. We can relate it also to the criterion of Balance.

• Suitability for evaluation purposes

Ensuring that the purpose of the evaluation tool corresponds to the use for which it is intended. Related to the criteria of Practicality and Usefulness.

• Comparability and equating

If performance assessments are to be used to make comparisons across programmes and states, these assessments must themselves be comparable.

• Balance

Balance in the test between the different skills the training provides.

• Specificity

The test should be focused on the specificity the training provides.

• Practicality

Emphasizes on the practical side of the training and its further relation to the skills requested for the job.

• Usefulness

Emphasizes on the useful side of the training and its further relation to the current jobs on the market.

• Transparency

The approach to assessment, the methods and tools used, the context, timing and the criteria applied as well as the implications of its results (e.g. regarding grades or pass/fail decisions) must be known by all the parties involved in assessment (and in particular by the candidates).

On an additional note, mentors who accompany the eDigiStars process play an important role in motivating the 50+ target group to participate in digital training, but also in the final certification. These are members of the 50+ target group who have already made successes in their careers through digital training and act as positive examples. They can both actively accompany the process and passively be used as a "success story" by the trainers.

4. Financial Sustainability of the Label System

Another topic we already shortly addressed, is the funding of the eDigiStars system and LABEL after the end of the project timeline. As the following table shows, the ideas among the partnership were very varied and therefore, each partner will have to form close alliances with the organisations of their territories in the next step of the development of theeDigiStars LABEL.

What is necessary for sustainable funding?

Step 1: Research what possible funding options exist in your own territory.

Step 2: Contact relevant stakeholders and promote eDigiStars.

Step 3: Selection of the optimal sustainable financing system in the respective territory (maybe combination with already existing financing options).

EU Funds	National Funds	Funding by official organisations	Self-Financing	Financed by employers	Other creative options
EU grants specifically targeting disadvantaged persons (e.g. women, people over 50, mothers with small children, other minorities etc.) EU funds (esp. within projects)	National funds (state budget) specifically targeting unemployed people National/regional funds (e.g., "Arbeit Menschen Digital" of Upper Austrian Chamber of Labour and by Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Research) Financed by Federal Ministry for Digital and Economic Affairs and Fit4Internet (association for raising digital competences in Austria) Financial support by domestic and foreign donors (funds or private donors?)	Funding from nationally recognised organisations (business and industry, branch and sector organisations, employers etc.) Funding by Labour Office for training courses with target group 45+	Self-financing Paid by participant Self-paid (tuition fees + all other associated costs like travel, accommodation etc.)	Paid for by employer (covering some or all of training expenses) + contract about remaining at the same workplace for some time Paid for by employers who employ candidates after training Cooperation with companies, that are looking for employees in a certain area and would cover part of the training costs. Potentially charging the employee through the monthly salary after employment	Fundraising Cooperation with banks or microcredit organisations (repayments on a monthly basis according to salary) Peer-to-peer learning model (successfully trained participants transfer their knowledge to others)

In addition to our table, it could be possible that a patron or a sponsor assists as financial supporter. It is important to involve the policy makers and decision makers as well as the advisory board to establish it on a wide basis. Furthermore, it is advised to involve the companies in order to support the trainings that their employees will benefit from.

On the eDigiStars webpage you can find more information regarding resources for funding in each territory.

5. Promotion and Branding of eDigiStars Label

This chapter focuses on **How to build trust through awareness creation and branding activities?** and provides partners with practical examples of how to achieve this.

Regarding successful labelling and broadly recognised certification, there are a few **crucial factors for the eDigiStars LABEL**:

- Providing the relevant training and certifying the attendees go hand in hand.
- The Advisory Group members are important for eDigiStars in general, but also in LABEL activities and especially for the recognition of the LABEL in particular.
- Take advantage of the support of the local employment centres, chambers of commerce and industry in the region to select the right companies.
- Find the right training provider in corporation with project partners to issue the LABEL certificates and add value to the eDigistars system.
- Find companies to ensure internships and practical experience for the older workers after the certification (this should be done before training to motivate adults 50+ as well as other companies to take part in the training)
- Implement an effective marketing strategy by communicating the success of promoted trainees who received the eDigiStars certificate at the end of the training.

In general, it is very important to include private sector partners in promoting the programme as well as close personal contacts who can be mentors of the programme. In order to receive wide attention an extensive marketing campaign needs to be implemented, that introduces the LABEL tool to all relevant stakeholders (industry representatives, employment services, employers etc.). This needs to be part of the communication activities within the eDigiStars project and is not the sole responsibility of the LABEL tool. In general, however, the following steps are recommended to be followed to create brand equity for the eDigiStars LABEL:

Step 1:

Build basic awareness of your brand.

Make sure companies recognize the eDigiStars LABEL and see it in the way you intend.

Step 2:

Communicate what the eDigiStars LABEL stands for.

You have to describe how well your training content and the successful trainees fill the skills gap on the market and meet company needs. This can help attract employers who understand the value of these course and support them.

Step 3:

Reshape how companies think and feel about your brand.

Companies respond to your brand and tell you their opinion related to important aspects such as quality, credibility, and whether the eDigiStars system provides added value in comparison to the available trainings on the market.

Step 4:

Share success stories of companies' experiences related to the eDigiStars system to ensure the longevity of the LABEL tool.

As already mentioned, close cooperation with the industry and getting a clear idea of the demands of the industry is essential for high quality training and certificates. Therefore, a dialogue between all involved partners and stakeholders on a regular basis, such as hiring companies, policy makers, training providers, labour offices, etc. is desirable, e.g. through a collaboration contract or an exchange at regular intervals (e.g., annually or biannually). For this purpose, it is advised to organize events such as info days and attend B2B events and conferences to introduce the eDigistars LABEL and describe how older workers can be beneficial to their business activities, especially after attending an eDigiStars training.

Next to the close collaboration of all involved stakeholders, the quality of the training content must be on a high level. On the one hand the training content has to involve innovative digital educational materials that provide a bonus to the hiring company compared to the existing trainings on the market. On the other hand, the materials should also be flexible as well as adaptable to react quickly to market changes.

The importance of finding the right training institute was already mentioned. To ensure high quality of both the eDigiStars courses and the eDigiStars label, several factors should be considered when choosing the training institute (also see Chapter 3):

• The training institute must provide professional trainers with a pedagogical background.

• It has to offer highquality courses that meet industrial demand to prevent skills mismatch.

• The trainings should also reflect the European perspective and the requirements of the 21st century.

It is also important to create awareness among the companies that this programme is beneficial for them. Through their involvement they can be the "designer" of the programme, therefore it is advised to involve the private sector as soon as possible in the development of the programme. The aforementioned programmes are aimed to improve the employment prospects by boosting trainee's skill sets and

employability. To reach the desired goals, there are some practical tips that should be considered in the implementation of LABEL:

• Analyse job advertisements in the digital field to understand the current situation on the market and the specific needs of the companies in your territory.

• Make a direct connection between companies and training organizations in order to bridge skill gaps between companies and trainees.

• Look for large, innovative companies where there is a critical evaluation of demandoriented training.

• Working with small and mediumsized businesses also offers distinct advantages:

Based on their specific business needs, many of them are not satisfied by available trainings on the market and strive for special trainings. In that case, the eDigiStars system could be particularly beneficial to them.

• In cooperation with these companies organise workshops to understand the specific skills they require from their employees and align the focus of your chosen training course accordingly.

• When working with companies it's important to use the persuasive power of personal encounters to convince them that the training is planned to fit their business and the successful trainees will, in fact, be beneficial to them and their business activities.

• Involve selected businesses in the eDigiStars marketing strategy. The communication of project results should also strengthen the visibility of partner companies for greater commitment.

• If an eDigiStars mentor is assigned to the trained employees, they should keep in touch with the HR professionals of the cooperating companies for the continuous exchange of information and further trust building.

In addition to the findings above, feedback of the trained people must be implemented in the eDigiStars system in order to understand how the programme helped them find a job. This will help to adapt the eDigiStars system in a longterm perspective. It may be important to note that success stories are only useful if the content therein is useful and if they are delivered in a way that other people can understand easily. That is why it is important to produce well researched and compelling success stories about the successful trainees in the project. This can be achieved, for example, through followingup the 50+ employees participating in the programme. In general, there are some practical approaches on how to share these success stories:

• Send information about the project to specialized journals regarding the employers' organizations as well as success stories of the participants in the project. It will be more than welcome as they are also constantly looking for interesting information to forward to their members.

• Ask employers' organizations to share information about the project on their websites.

• Participate in HR and career events with presentations about the project.

• Send short but meaningful emails with information about the project to HR contacts.

Annex 1. LABEL design and colours

Standard logo

Colours

		Pantone	CMYK	HEX	RGB
	Reflex Blue	100/80/0/0	003399	0/51/153
	109C	0/24/90/2	FBBF18FF	251/191/24

One-colour logo

Negative logo

Black&White logo

Grayscale logo

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