

Collaborative Partnership

AMaP is a collaborative project of the European Union co-ordinated by the

[University of Strathclyde \(UK\)](#)

in cooperation with

[GEB \(Germany\),](#)

[Lifelong Learning Research Institute \(Greece\),](#)

[Semper Avanti \(Poland\),](#)

[Kerigma \(Portugal\)](#)

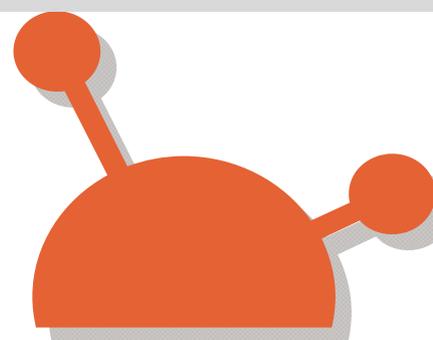
[Folkuniversitetet \(Sweden\)](#)



AMaP Learning Model

Monitoring and Evaluation Report

You can follow the developments of the project by visiting the AMaP website [http:// www.a-map.eu](http://www.a-map.eu)



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2. Intro to project

The Age Management in Practice (AMaP) project is a collaborative partnership involving organizations from Germany, Greece, Poland, Portugal, Sweden and the UK. AMaP aims to address the challenge around access to, and participation in, Continuing Vocational Education and Training (CVET) among older workers aged 50+, and to increase awareness of the European Qualification Framework (EQF). The project also considers the challenge of an ageing workforce through the lens of employers, seeking current views and attitudes towards older workers and promotes the implementation of age management practices.

The project is working towards a number of set objectives aligned with improving knowledge and access to CVET for older adults and in partnership with key stakeholders, influencing organizations on the issues surrounding an ageing workforce.

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The Challenge

“The impact of demographic changes within the EU is likely to be of major significance in the decades ahead. Consistently low birth rates and higher life expectancy at birth mark the transition to a much older population, already apparent in several regions.” (Eurostat Regional Yearbook, 2011).

One of Europe’s greatest challenges is its ageing population. With many EU countries implementing policies and reforms that encourage older adults to work longer in later life, the employment rate of older adults aged 50+ is expected to increase significantly over the next decade. Innovative programmes and interventions are required to support **older adults** update their skills and knowledge and help them to re-engage with learning to enhance their employability.



Guidance and support is also required for **employers** in implementing policies and procedures that are inclusive of older workers and allow meaningful economic contribution in later life.

2.1 Aims

The key aims of the project are:

1. Improve access to VET/CVET for older workers with a focus on identifying the key challenges faced by this client group in participating in lifelong learning activity;
2. Investigate and (positively) influence the attitudes of employers towards older workers across Europe;
3. Disseminate findings through a variety of European networks and engage with key policy makers, such as Cedefop and the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network to ensure maximum impact is achieved.

2.2 Project Overview

1. To increase older worker awareness and participation in VET/CVET to support and enhance employability in later life;
2. Support key management staff within organisation in recognising the value and distinct needs of older workers and the benefits of implementing effective age management and lifelong guidance practices.

2.3 Methodology

Based on the principles of the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework:

1. Planning
2. Implementation
3. Assessment & Evaluation
4. Feedback

3. Background to the challenge and why a learning model is required

One of Europe's greatest challenges is its ageing population. With many Member States implementing policies and reforms that encourage older adults to work longer in later life, the employment rate of older adults aged 50+ is expected to increase significantly over the next decade. Action and interventions are required now to support older adults update their skills and knowledge, and to help them re-engage with learning and enhance their employability to ensure both economic and personal needs are met. "Taking no action would weaken the EU's ability to meet the future needs of an ageing population" (European Commission, 2009).

Many organisations, particularly in a time of economic recession, adopt strategies which adversely affect older workers, for example, through early retirement/redundancy programmes. The true value of the older worker, the tacit knowledge and hidden skills which often exist can often be lost to the labour market. Older adults who exit the labour market at 50+ are less likely to re-enter employment than their younger counterparts (TAEN, 2009). To ensure growth and economic prosperity in the future, employer attitudes and views of older workers must change. However, for this to be achieved, assistance must be provided to help companies understand the wider implications of losing experienced, older workers. A key business solution that could be implemented by organisations is effective age management practices and provision of effective lifelong guidance for staff (Cedefop, 2010). For this to be effective, however, training and development may be required to help managers fully understand the benefits of adopting such practices.



While Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Continuing Vocational Education and Training (CVET) are now familiar terms for many individuals, they are less likely to be recognised by older adults.

In addition, older adults who have become disengaged from learning are even less likely to engage in VET/CVET activity, with participation rates considerably lower than their younger counterparts (Cedefop, 2010).

Thus, it makes the process of engaging older adults in VET extremely difficult, resulting in a need to educate older adults on firstly what VET/CVET is and secondly the benefits and values it can bring. In order to achieve this, foundations must be built to increase confidence and motivation and help older adults re-engage in learning.

The AMaP Learning Model encourages older workers to engage in lifelong learning. The model is designed specifically for workers aged 50+ and is tailored to improve their participation rates in VET/CVET activity by increasing confidence and motivation for learning.

4. About the learning model

The Learning model aimed to ENGAGE and INSPIRE older workers to re-engage in learning and development and to help them to find out more about the value of VET/CVET and lifelong learning.

Its conception was inspired mainly on two other models:

1. The RYP (***Realising Your Potential***) model, from the University of Strathclyde, addressed to older workers;
2. The Recognition and Validation of Competences methodologies, used in Portugal, for the adult population in general;

Training materials were used for piloting with older workers in each of the pilot countries, DE, PL and PT. The duration of the learning programme is planned to be for 18 hours and designed to be delivered in a flexible way. It will predominantly be face-to-face learning to help with the initial confidence building and does not assume that the end users will necessarily be ICT literate.

It is a training programme for older workers created to help improve engagement with VET/CVET.

The model was successfully tested in 3 partner countries - DE, PL and PT - with between 15-20 older workers in each country.

4.1 The AMaP Learning Model : The Programme

The model consists of a programme of **six sessions** where the 50+ learners experience a variety of activities which promote personal exploration and development.

The programme aims to:

- increase learner self-confidence and motivation by identifying strengths and skills;



Age Management in Practice

- encourage self reflection for personal awareness and development;
- gather evidence of prior learning and achievements;
- identify individual learning pathways;
- demystify the National Qualifications Frameworks (NQF) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF);
- introduce skills analysis and profiling tools;
- prompt interest in VET/CVET;
- accelerate the achievement of vocational qualifications;
- Deliver a quality learning experience.

4.2 The AMaP Learning Model: The Guide for Trainers

The six sessions of the training programme are set out in a summary with suggested activities which should be adapted by the trainer to suit the needs of the group.

The trainer is asked to deliver and pilot these activities in a context of supportive learning environment which endeavours to increase the confidence and improve the motivation of older adults to re-engage in learning.

A guest speaker should be invited to present an overview of VET, CVET and EQF and the linkages with the National Qualifications Framework. The guest speaker has been placed in session 5 when the group will have bonded.

An **AMaP Participant's booklet** accompanies the programme. This provides additional materials which may be of interest to participants.

The **AMaP log** is a useful way of recording the programme experience and participants should be encouraged to use it.

Contents – guide for trainers

Contents
The AMaP Learning Model : Guide for Trainers
The AMaP Learning Model : Training Programme Session 1

	<i>Confidence for Learning</i>
The AMaP Learning Model : Training Programme Session 2	<i>Defining Learning</i>
The AMaP Learning Model : Training Programme Session 3	<i>Lifelong Learning</i>
The AMaP Learning Model : Training Programme Session 4	<i>Motivation for Learning</i>
The AMaP Learning Model : Training Programme Session 5	<i>Learning Development</i>
The AMaP Learning Model : Training Programme Session 6	<i>The Learning Journey</i>
Evaluation:	<i>Sharing Learning</i>

4.3 The AMaP Learning Model: The Booklet for participants

A 6 Booklet toolkit was created, one for each session with activities and reflections about the themes addressed in each session.

Thus, the participants after the session in a more comfortable environment (at home, for example) can review what was covered and make a few more activities.

The trainer opens the programme with an overview of the content of the AMaP programme and invites the participants to agree in some ideas for their learning environment.

Themes of the booklet (the same of the trainers guide):

Session 1: Confidence for Learning

Session 2: Defining Learning

Session 3: Lifelong Learning

Session 4: Motivation for Learning



Session 5: Learning Development

Session 6: The Learning Journey

Evaluation: Sharing Learning

This booklet is for participant own use to reflect on the session. It has additional information which you may like to us.

4.4 The AMaP Learning Model: Evaluation

The trainer is asked to evaluate the programme. While evaluation prompts for the trainer are illustrated session of the learning model an overall assessment would be welcome.

Evaluations available within this document include:

- A trainer's behavior observation table of AMaP participants
- A participant's evaluation of the AMaP programme
- A participant's evaluation of the delivery of the AMaP trainer
- An impact assessment for AMaP participants

5. The results of the pilots in 3 regions

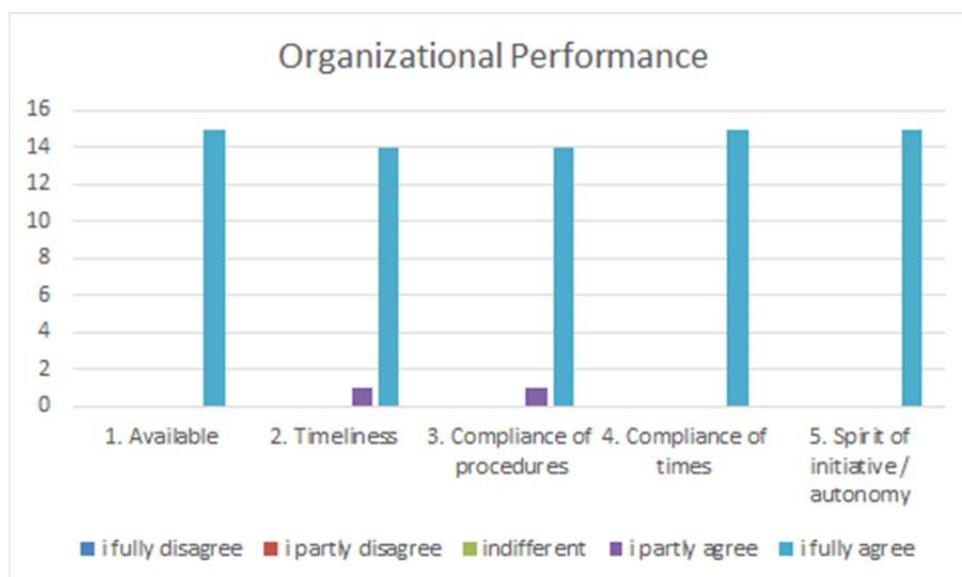
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** the piloting of the learning model took place in Portugal, Germany and Poland. Full analysis of the pilots was carried out through a comprehensive evaluation form to collate feedback from participants.
- **Performance indicators:** 67 older workers successfully completed the learning programme in the 3 pilot countries.

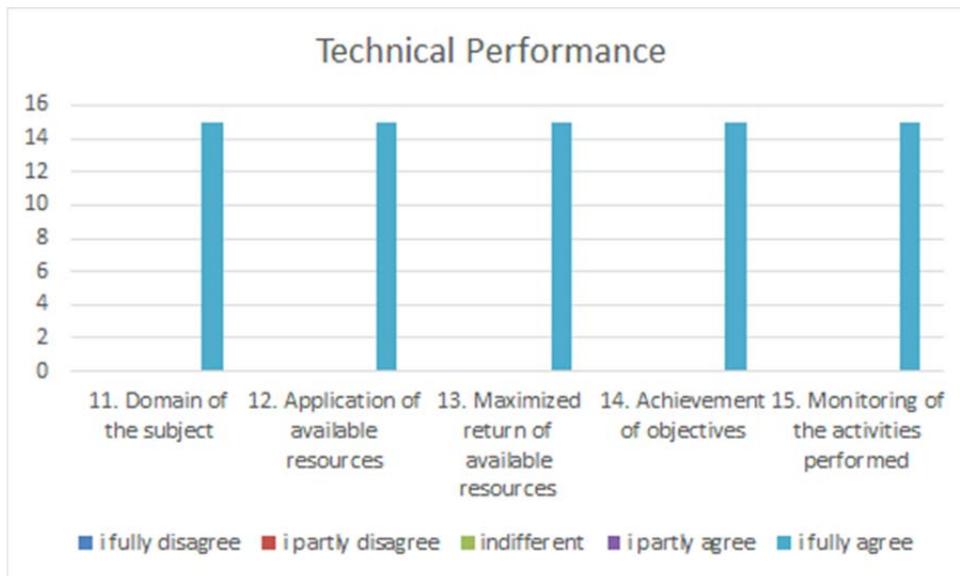
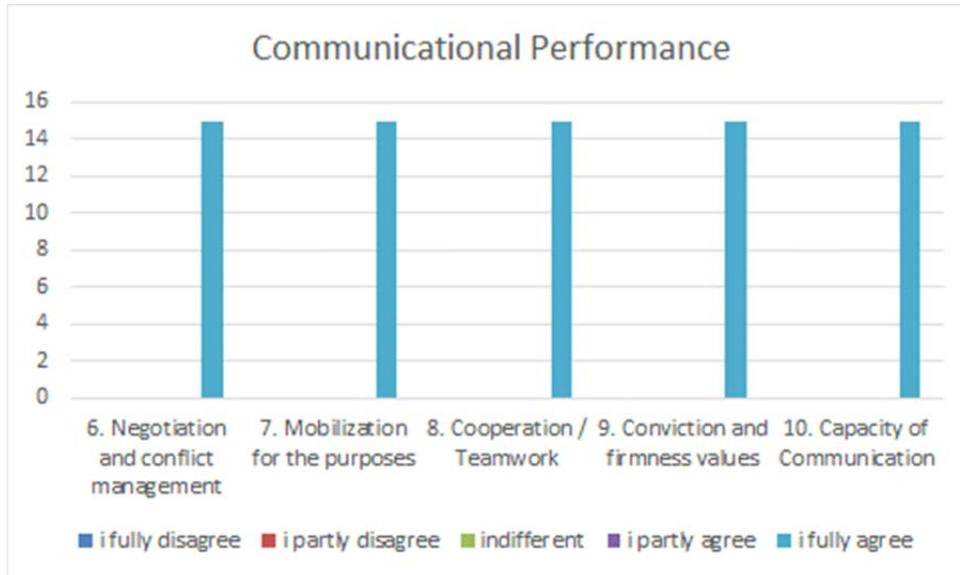
In the end of the sixth session, participants completed a questionnaire assessing of the Learning Model, where the aim was to assess participants' satisfaction with regard to:

- PERFORMANCE EVALUATION: Organizational Performance; Communicational Performance; Technical Performance.
- WORKSHOP EVALUATION

Looking at the results per each country (PT, PL, DE):

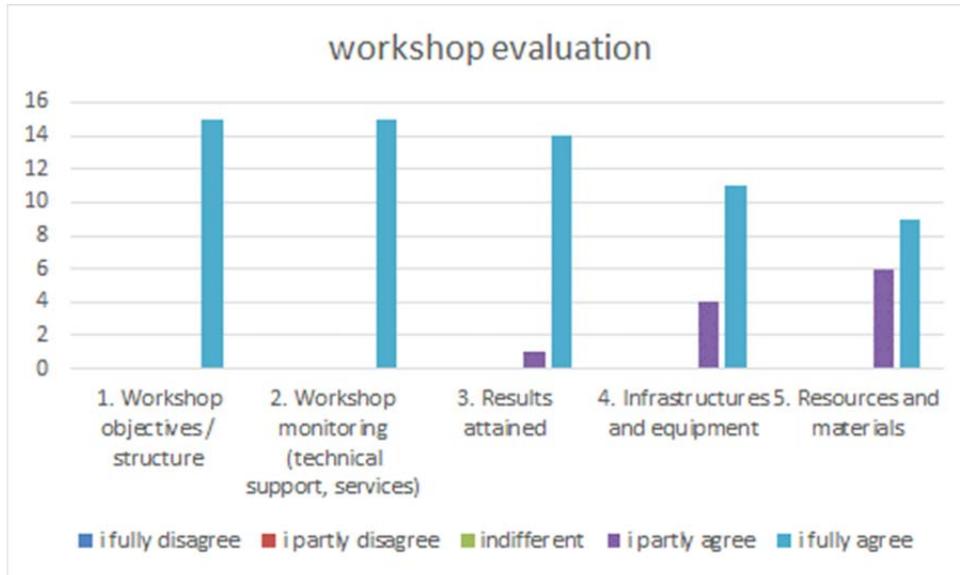
5.1 Performance Evaluation - PT





In Portugal, the performance evaluation was very positive and was therefore not recorded any negative evaluation.

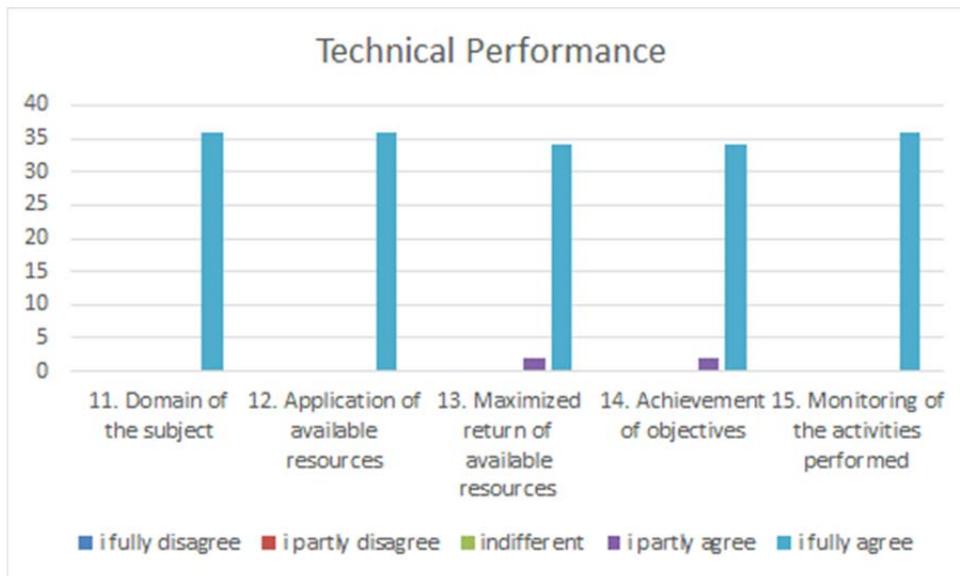
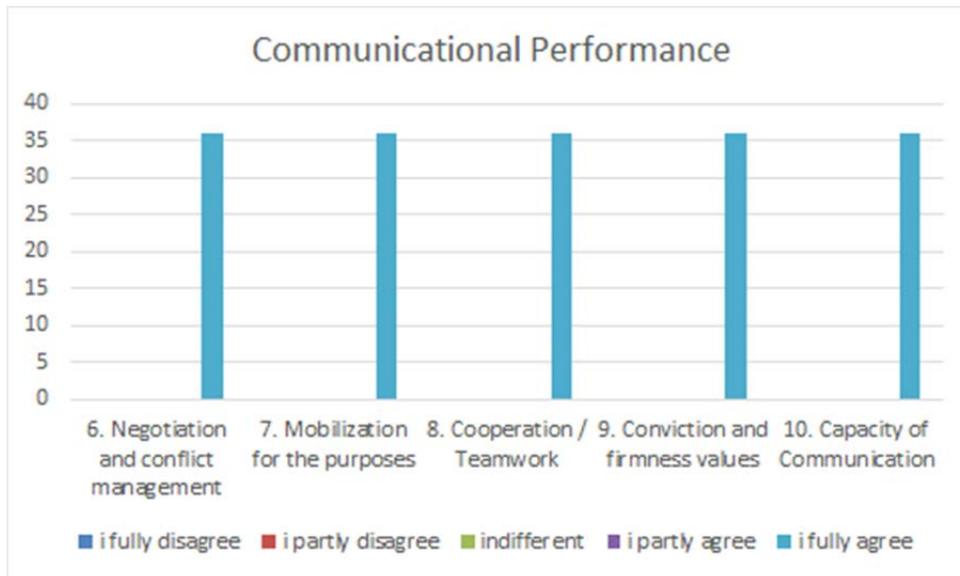
Workshop Evaluation - PT



Regarding the workshop evaluation, we found that the participants' assessment is positive, and the level 'i partly agree', had some prominence in respect of Resources and Infrastructures and equipment and materials. We consider that although some participants have selected this level the overall view was quite positive.

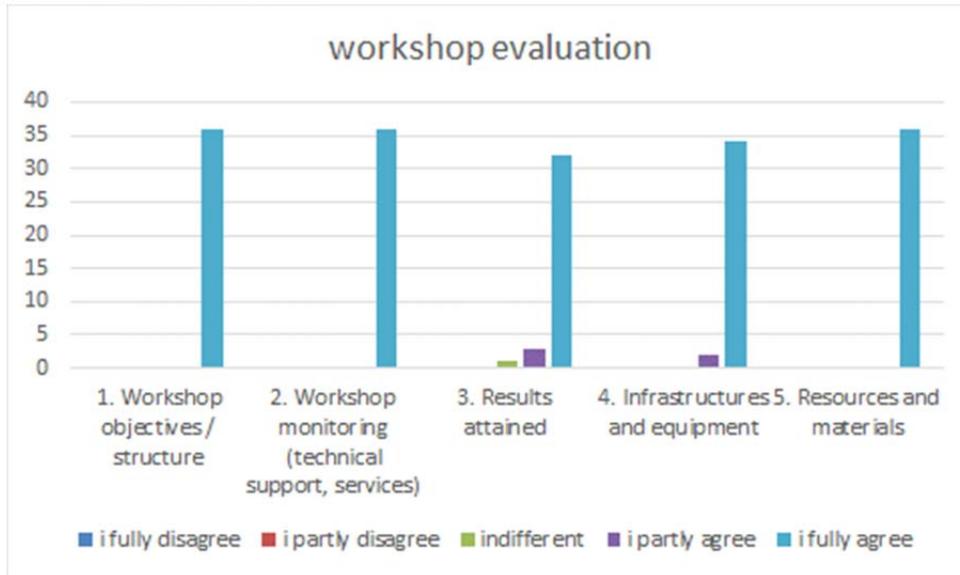
5.2 Performance Evaluation - PL





Very positive evaluation with the majority of responses were 'i fully agree'.

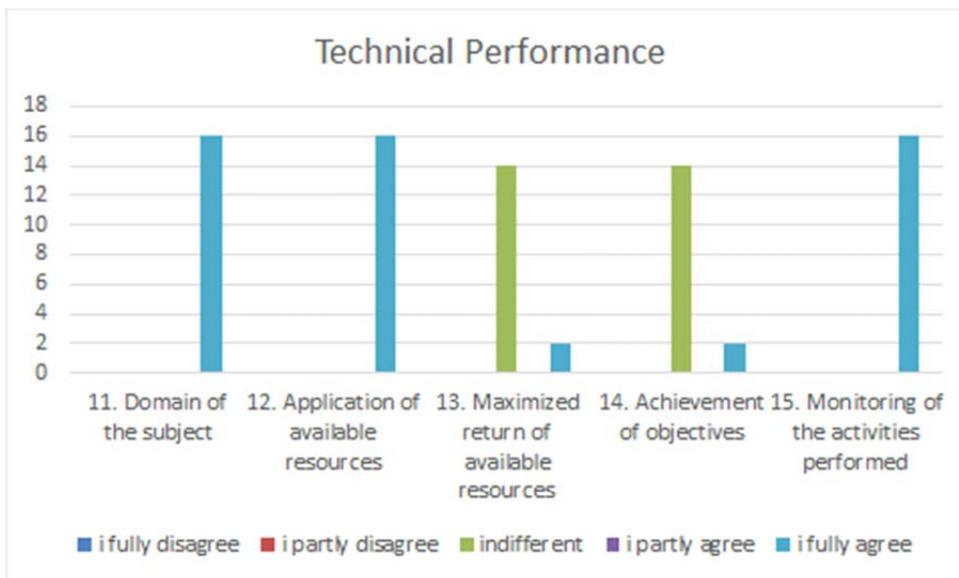
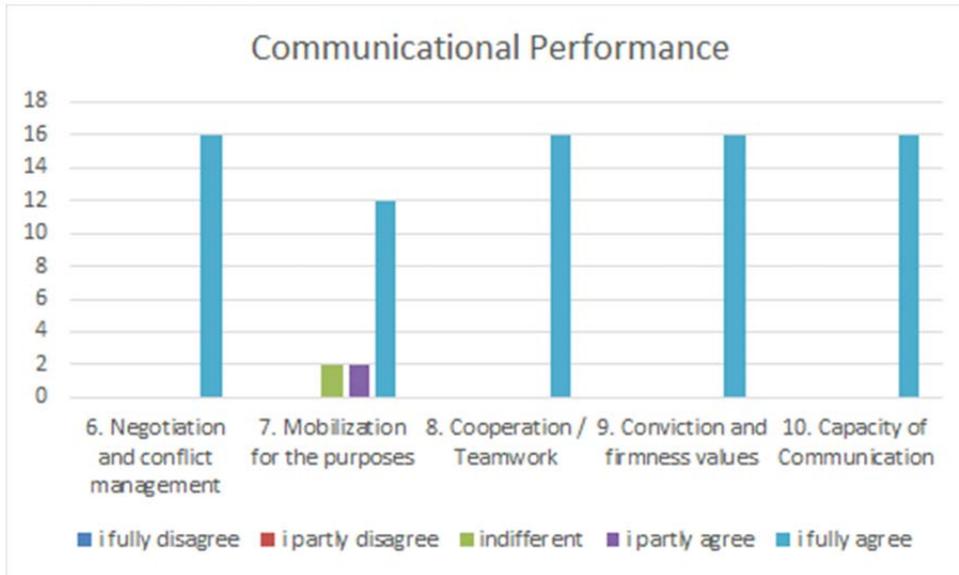
Workshop Evaluation



With regard to the evaluation workshop, the evaluation was also positive, only one response was recorded at the level 'indifferent' as regards 'Results attained'.

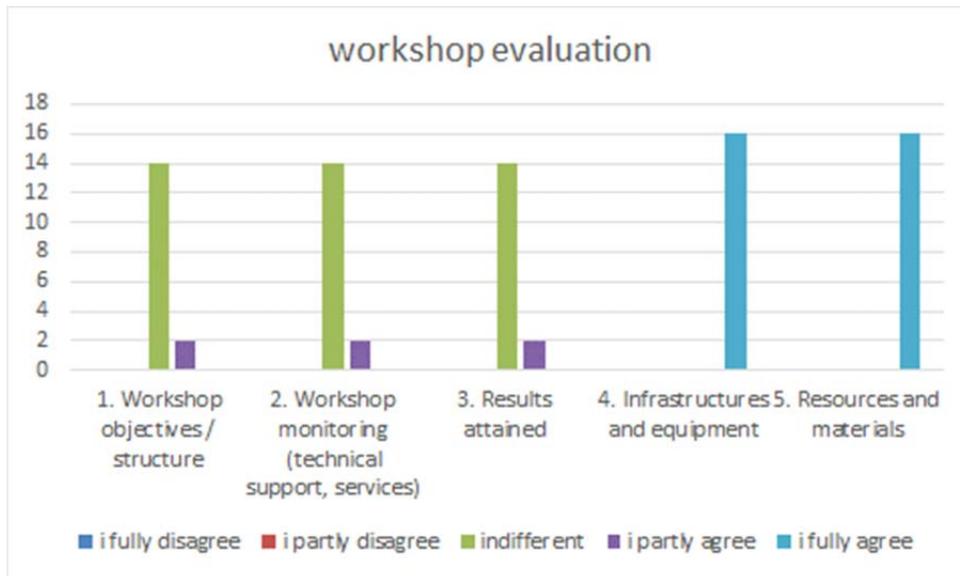
5.3 Performance Evaluation – DE





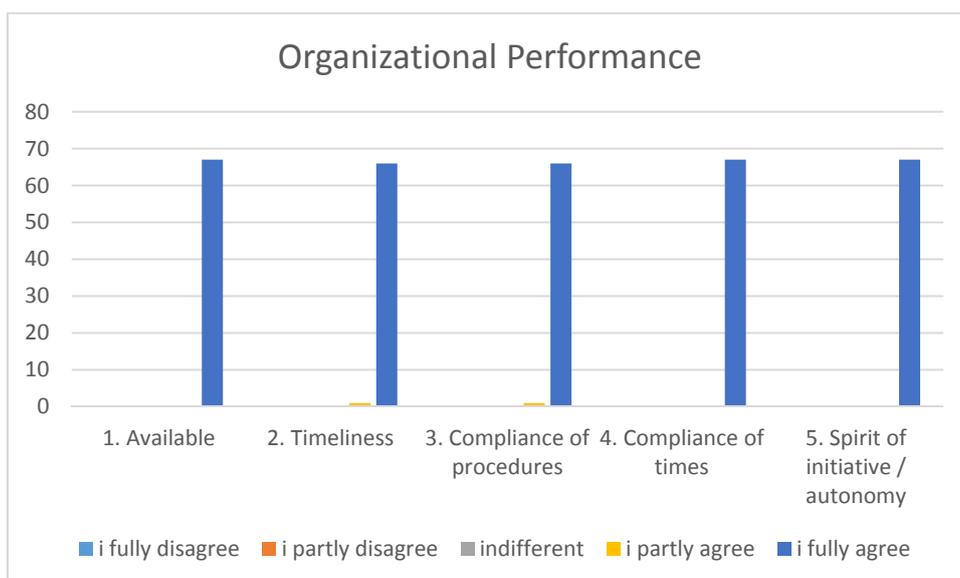
Interestingly as regards the assessment by the German participants, there are 4 participants who did not select the level 'i fully agree' in the Communicational Performance. In the level of Technical Performance, various participants selected the level 'indifferent' in as regards the "Maximized return of resources available" and "Achievement of objectives'.

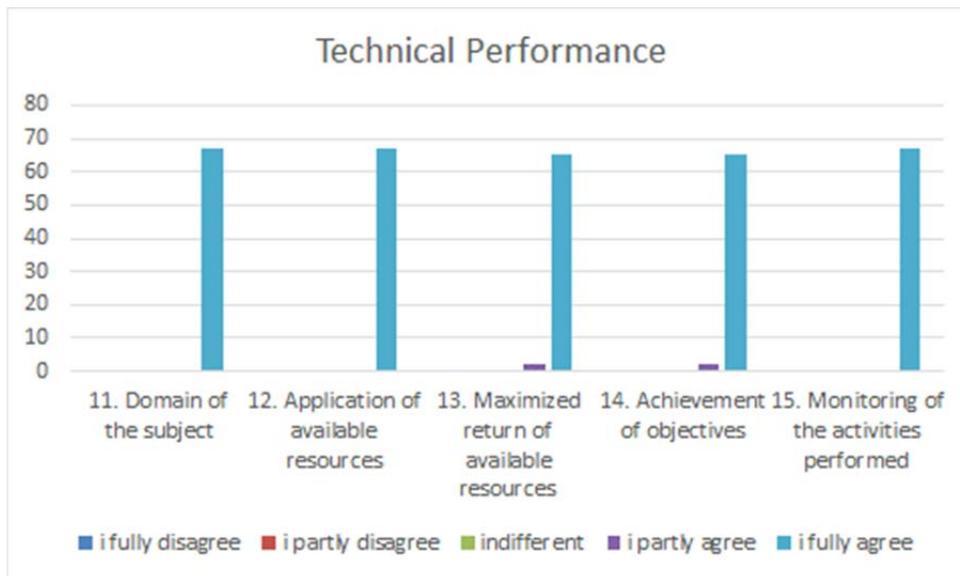
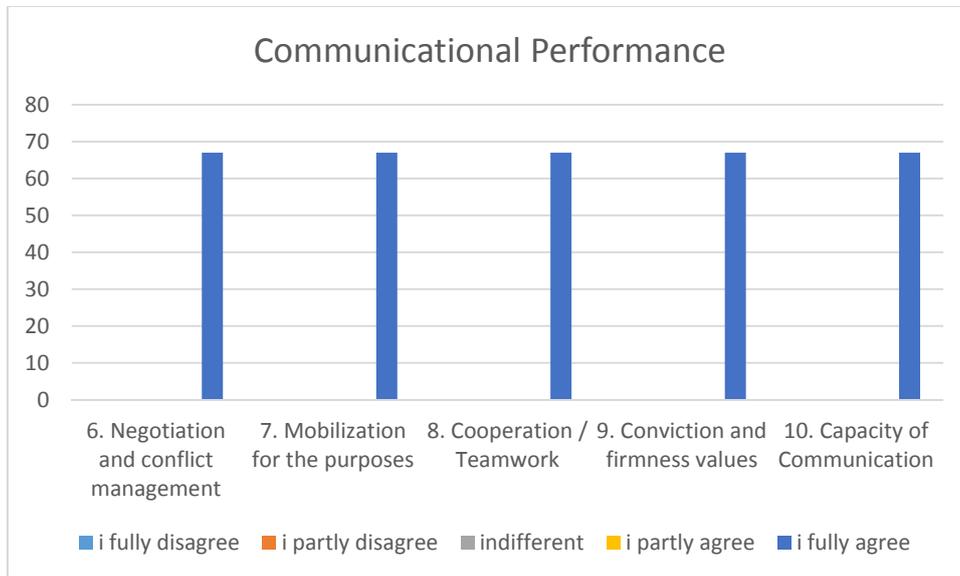
Workshop Evaluation

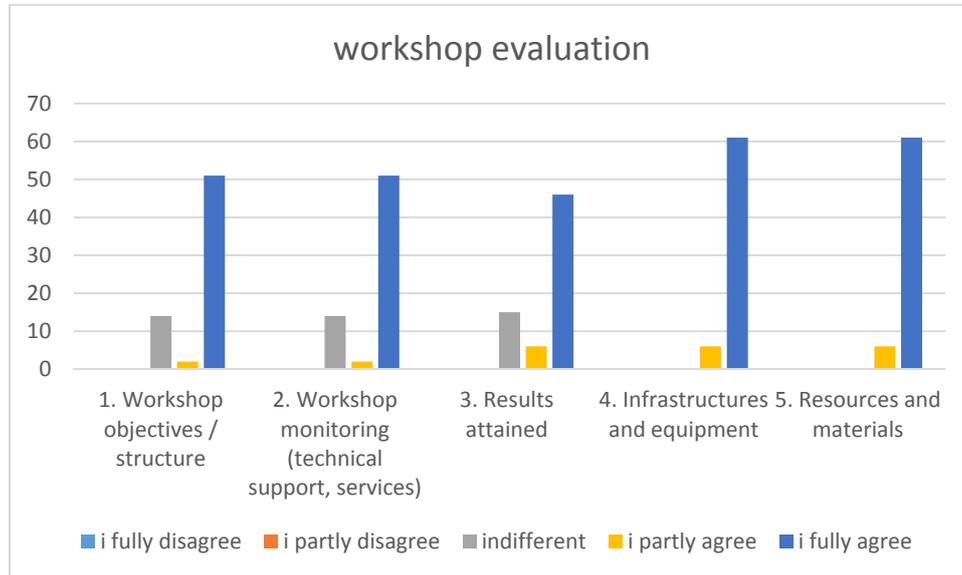


Regarding the evaluation workshop, like we already saw previously in performance evaluation, several participants have selected the level 'indifferent': Workshop objectives / structure; Workshop monitoring (technical support, services); Results attained. Looking at these results it seems that the participants did not understand the goals of the learning model or have not founded results.

5.4 Performance Evaluation –PT+PL+DE







Looking at the overall assessment to the three countries, we see that it is very positive, and there was no any assessment at level 'i fully disagree' and 'i partly disagree'.

After a few months of rigorous preparation of materials and recruitment and selection of participants, it was finally piloted the AMAP-Age Management in Practice model, a model of non-formal learning, based on the reflection of life experiences of workers + 50. The application of the model was designed to work motivation levels of employees for CVET, through an innovative approach, based on different models experienced and successfully implemented in the partner institutions of the project.

The six sessions of the model were successfully piloted, the desired results have been achieved, especially in a perspective of short-term analysis, since the participants have signed up to attend continuing training actions in areas that were, by the participants themselves, indicated as core competencies to be developed, in particular, related to ICT and the knowledge of foreign languages.

Arising from the piloting of the model, more people seem to be interested in going through this experience of reflective balance of their own lives.

The model also provides an impact evaluation methodology that we will do 6 months after the application of the model.

Some of the Sugesttions/ Comments presented by the participants:

- The benefits that are coming from the participation in this type of training is the ability to self-discovery of new competence, reflect on his own person, own life and approach to the reality.
- For the employees, it gives the opportunity to discover new powers, so it can be a chance for retraining and start something new.
- Acquisition of new tools that is useful in working life and beyond. Mentioned tool could be used both to employed and unemployed people.
- The participants said that they are not the right target group because the fact that they attended this course is the proof that they are motivated for VET.
- Participants showed increased self-esteem and self-concept as the main consequences of the application of the model as well as the perception of aspects to improve, namely, the need to attend CVET as a tool of personal and professional enrichment or the need to acquire skills as instrument for competitiveness.

6. What worked/what didn't work? – A SWOT analysis

SWOT Analysis	
<p style="text-align: center;">Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duration of the programme; • Duration of the sessions; • Structure of the sessions (non formal approach); • Participants have signed up to attend continuing training actions; • Participants showed increased self-esteem and self-concept as the main consequences of the application of the model. • Motivation, which was one of the key aims, was successfully achieved. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The approach by the trainer, creating an environment of empathy with the participants, is one of the most important aspects. This trainer should have specific training methodologies on this kind of approach, as a key success factor. • The trainer should have with him more than one practical activity for groups that are more active; Trainers should focus on the groups of people and not on the trainer's guide. The trainer's guide works as a guide, and should not be faced as a static tool. • The trainer should clarify very well in the first session the objectives of the program.
<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guiding principle of the supply and participation in continuous learning, regardless of the context; • Develop methods of teaching and learning effective for the continuum of lifelong learning and in all areas of life; • Easy access of all the training information; • Opportunities of the lifelong learning as close as possible for learners • The model can easily be adapted to other adult learner groups, as it works perfectly as motivational tool; • Probably, one of key elements to produce in the future is training of 	<p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The model can lose its sense if it is not run by a trainer who has complete domain on the techniques and methodologies of the model, namely, non formal approach based on life and sharing of experiences;

trainers on the model and EQF mapping System, in a e-learning and b-learning perspective, for example.

The best way to give an answer to the challenge of a demographic change and a post-modern society is by using lifelong learning opportunities.

Learning for adults is a big step for achieving higher aims in life. Knowledge, skills, competences and life experiences help us to understand why it is so important to keep updated in this post-modern society. Although this understanding, in adult age, the motivation for learning processes is more demanding, in the sense that adults expect specific results. So, in this model, one of the challenges we faced was precisely the subjectivity of the results to achieve in a short term approach: It was not a course, in the formal sense; it “did not bring any added value or knowledge for their professional life immediately”; these were some of the words that the trainers heard in the awareness sessions. But, after a first contact with the approach, the results appeared in a very systematic way, once people immediately began to see that they “knew” a lot more than they thought. The relevance of the model was shown since the very first session.

The Learning Model has allowed the participants to make their self-analysis and understand VET and Lifelong Learning as a continuous process, with no interruptions. We learn everywhere, in all contexts of our life.

The “dark side” of the Learning Model piloting, in our opinion was on the side of the trainer. More than a trainer, this person should be a guide for the people + 50 that have experienced the model. This trainer should be, this was one of the recommendations since the conception of the model, someone with a background on adult learning, not necessarily an educator or a teacher. It should be someone that knows methodologies and techniques to use on non formal approaches in adult learning and, first of all, how to create an empathetic relation with the participants. This is very important, once there is the need to provide to the participants enough moments of reflection and sharing opportunities in a very attractive approach that makes Lifelong learning something positive and a reality. This carries extra responsibility to the trainers of this Learning Model.

This is why we suggest a possible Training of Trainers' course (e-learning or b-learning), as a measure to improve this less positive aspect of such an open Learning Model, which can have the contradictory result, if not used in the correct way. The trainers' abilities are, then, one of the key pillars for the success of the model. This trainer should have characteristics such as: empathy building, active listening, assertive communication, motivation and leadership – for the success of the Learning Model and its aims.

In particular, in Portugal and in Poland, the results showed us that the Learning Model was the “trampoline” that the participants needed for a change in their careers, for the development of a Personal Development and Qualification Plan, based on the NQF's and EQF and also on their personal aims. Most of the participants (almost 100%) have applied for CVET courses in short term. The reality was different in Germany, which leads us to this understanding of the role of the trainer as crucial. Most of the participants evaluate the workshop as being “indifferent” in what concerns the achievement of the objectives. Did they understand the objectives? Probably, they didn't. Even though these statements, an impact evaluation will be undertaken, and we will be able to better understand the results and make our critical analysis.

7. Conclusions/Recommendations

'Life, it seems, is nothing if not a series of initiations, transitions and incorporations.'

Alan Dundes

This learning model showed that regardless of the age of the participants, the motivation for learning and training are real and possible to achieve. In the end of the six sessions, participants devised a personal development plan for the integration project qualification/training in their life.

The participants with this learning model reflected and founded answers for these questions:

- Who am I?
- What have I achieved in my life?
- Where do I want to go now?
- What challenges are actually being presented to me in my daily life (at a professional, social or/ and personal level)?
- How far am I prepared for those challenges?
- How can I work myself to face those challenges?

As stated before, this learning model can be used as a motivational tool in the companies, to implement before any training course, in order to increase self-confidence of potential learners, to raise their awareness on the importance of CVET, their own strengths and weaknesses. For the employers, in the companies, it can be a precious tool in discovering new skills, soft skills in their employees.

This model can be used in a more flexible way, not only as a 6 sessions x 3 hours model. It is important that each trainer look to the potential group of participants and can adapt the model to the needs of the individuals.



It should be linked to the Mapping System also developed in this project, as a tool for validation; if not possible, this model can also be used as a complement for any other validation and/ or certification process in adult learning.

Like any other tool, the AMaP Learning Model has a lot of “free space” for improvements and additions. It is a dynamic toolkit of materials, with a very empathetic approach with the participants/ learners, which leaves a lot of challenges to those who wish to work on it.