A competence-based approach to improve the social inclusion of migrant women

Handbook for professionals

Edited by Laura Sales Gutiérrez and Mar Camarasa i Casals
Surt Women’s Foundation
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Introduction

This Handbook is one of the main products of the project FORWARD, Competence portfolio and pedagogical tools to identify, recognise, validate and improve the competences acquired by migrant women in formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts.

This transnational project was carried out between 2012 and 2013 under the Grundtvig programme, funded by the European Commission’s Lifelong Learning Programme, in Austria, Finland, Italy, Lithuania, Romania and Spain. The main aim of the project was designing and implementing an innovative competence-based portfolio and pedagogical tools for the identification, recognition, validation and development of the competences of migrant women, as a way to improve their social inclusion.

This Handbook is a theoretical introduction to the conceptual and methodological approaches of the Forward competence-based model and also includes guidelines for facilitators to put the Forward methodology into practice.

This manual is organised in 4 chapters:

The first chapter provides an introduction to the Forward project, its background, main objectives and activities.

The second chapter is a presentation of the conceptual basis of the Forward competence-based model, including the theoretical framework of the project, the basis for the construction of the Forward classification of competences, and an introduction to the basis of competence-based approaches and the concept of empowerment.

The second chapter also includes the Forward list and definitions of key competences for the social inclusion of migrant women (a result of the research carried out during the project).

The third chapter of the handbook is devoted to the methodology devised under the Forward project to support migrant women towards their empowerment and social inclusion. This includes:

- An outline of the process designed to work with migrant women using the Forward methodology, including the different stages and actions.
- A presentation of two key tools designed to identify, systematise and validate competences acquired in all learning contexts: the Forward competence portfolio and the Forward questionnaire.
Finally, the fourth and last chapter provides some guidelines for trainers to implement the Forward methodology. This includes:

- A description of the competence background most appropriate for practitioners applying the Forward methodology.
- Guidelines to recognise competences when supporting women.
- Guidelines to recognise practitioners’ own prejudices towards migrant women.
- Guidelines and possible uses of the Forward questionnaire.
- Recommendations to apply the Forward portfolio.
- Orientations to act as counsellors of migrant women in the validation procedures of formal, non-formal and informal learning.

This Handbook has been translated into 7 EU languages (Finnish, German, Italian, Lithuanian, Romanian and Spanish, as well as English) and adapted to each local context and needs in each partner country. All versions are freely available for download on the project website: [http://www.forwardproject.eu](http://www.forwardproject.eu).

We are deeply grateful to all migrant women who participated in the research and workshops of the pilot tests, as well as to all the professionals who contributed with their insight to the development of these materials.

We sincerely hope that the resulting Forward methodology and materials are helpful for professionals in their support of migrant women in the process towards social inclusion and empowerment.

**The Forward consortium:**

SURT, Women’s Foundation. Private Foundation, Spain.

Frauenservice Graz, Austria.

Monika – Multicultural Women’s Association, Finland.

People, S.r.l., Italy.

Women’s Issues Information Centre (WIIC), Lithuania.

Romanian Institute for Adult Education (IREA), Romania.
1. The Forward project

Laura Sales Gutiérrez and Mar Camarasa i Casals
Surt Women’s Foundation

The project FORWARD is a transnational project carried out between 2012 and 2013 under the Grundtvig programme, with the financial support of the European Commission’s Lifelong Learning Programme.

The project was developed by a consortium of 6 partners from 6 countries of the European Union (Austria, Finland, Italy, Lithuania, Romania and Spain) and its main aim was designing and implementing an innovative competence-based portfolio and pedagogical tools for the identification, recognition, validation and development of the competences of migrant women, as a way to improve their social inclusion.

Background of the Forward project

The Forward project arises from the need to address an alarming situation: migrant women are one of the most disadvantaged groups in the European Union in terms of labour participation and social inclusion. Despite their diversity as a group, gender and origin crosscrisscross as disadvantage factors in their lives. Subsequently, migrant women have high unemployment rates, are among the lowest paid workers in the EU and are consistently de-skilled and pushed to casual jobs in unregulated sectors. This results in a systematic violation of their rights, an invaluable loss of talent and a high risk of poverty in the crisis economy.

The Forward project was built on a potential strong mechanism to overcome these problems: the promotion of the participation of migrant women in adult education, particularly through two key tools —competence-based methodologies and competence validation frameworks.

Competence-based models have proven extremely valuable for the empowerment of women. A competence approach allows for the recognition of socially discredited skills acquired in informal and non-formal contexts, such as those related to feminised tasks (care of dependents, housework), as well as their transference to work contexts and further development. The Forward project was designed on the basis of this approach to address the competences that migrant women may potentially develop during migration processes, such as stress management in transnational care tasks or the ability to adapt to change which every integration process requires.

The project was also based on another key mechanism for the employability and social inclusion of migrant women: systems of validation of learning acquired in formal, informal and non-formal contexts. However, in the 6 countries of the partnership, official validation
procedures of formal qualifications gained outside of the host country are inconsistent and/or ineffective, resulting in discrimination and an invaluable loss of human capital. On the other hand, existing validation procedures for competences acquired in non-formal and informal contexts are neither readily available nor effective for migrants.

Forward aimed at addressing these needs by learning from existing good practices of competence-based learning and validation models and providing, on the one hand, a specific pilot-tested competence portfolio. And, on the other hand, competence development and empowerment tools adapted to the experiences and needs of migrant women in the EU, and the very similar obstacles they find to achieve social inclusion in the host countries, despite their heterogeneity as a group.

**Aims of the Forward project**

As stated earlier, the main aim of the Forward project was to design and implement an innovative competence-based portfolio and pedagogical tools for the identification, recognition, validation and development of the competences of migrant women, as a way to improve their employability and social inclusion.

This main aim was translated into a set of specific objectives:

- To widen research in 6 EU Member States (Austria, Finland, Italy, Lithuania, Romania and Spain) on the specific situation of migrant women, focusing on their competence capital, competence acquisition, employability, experiences of competence assessment and validation, and participation in the labour market and adult education.

- To develop, pilot test and validate (by a panel of experts) a new competence-based model (portfolio and pedagogical tools) specifically adapted to migrant women in the EU.

- To transfer and promote the use of Forward materials (competence portfolio and pedagogical tools) among career guidance and adult learning professionals.

- To spread the knowledge, expertise and good practice obtained during the project at EU level and foster discussion of the usability and efficiency of competence-based methodologies and tools among professionals.

**Main activities and products of the Forward project**

In order to reach the above objectives, the consortium carried out three main types of activities: research, elaboration of pedagogical materials, and training and dissemination events and materials.

A summary of these activities is provided below, but extended information about the activities in each partner country and the resulting materials produced is freely available for download on the project website [http://www.forwardproject.eu](http://www.forwardproject.eu).
1. Research

This handbook and other materials produced under the project are based on previous documentary and qualitative research, in order to ground the development of materials in specific relevant information that provided evidence on the current situation of migrant women in each partner country.

Two kinds of research were conducted:

✓ Documentary research on existing competence-based models relevant to the needs and characteristics of migrant women, based on the previous experience of partners with different instruments and materials in different languages. The main aim was to identify common languages and working elements among partners from diverse EU countries, theoretical and methodological backgrounds, as to create a strong base for the development of the innovative Forward methodology and materials. Chapter 2.1 of this handbook provides a summarised version of the report of the research, but the full report is available on the project website.

✓ Qualitative research on the competences of migrant women in Austria, Finland, Italy, Lithuania, Romania and Spain, with the participation of migrant women and practitioners working with them. The results of the research were gathered in 6 country analysis reports, and a report comparing results in all countries was also produced. All reports are available on the project website.

2. Pedagogical materials

After the research phase, and on the basis of its results, the project was devoted to the elaboration, pilot test with migrant women and expert validation in the 6 countries of the innovative Forward methodology to help professionals in supporting migrant women in the process of self-recognition, validation and development of their competences.

The materials produced were gathered in two pedagogical deliverables in 7 languages, available in electronic format: this handbook and an accompanying toolbox containing a set of practical tools to support migrant women in individual and group settings towards the identification, transference and development of competences. Again, these and other materials created during the project are freely available for download on the project website http://www.forwardproject.eu.

3. Training, dissemination and multiplication events and materials

In order to multiply the impact of the project and its products, different activities were carried out:

✓ Training, dissemination, mainstreaming and multiplication events, such as workshops for professionals and public conferences in the 6 countries, as well as a final European conference in Rome.
✓ Publication of a leaflet in 7 languages providing information regarding the objectives and the partnership as well as information concerning the main activities and products of Forward.

✓ 3 press releases of the project in 7 EU languages.

The dissemination materials can also be downloaded from the project website http://www.forwardproject.eu.
2. Conceptual basis of the Forward competence-based model

2.1. Conceptual framework

*Rachele Serino and Paolo Serreri*  
People  
*Laura Sales Gutiérrez and Mar Camarasa i Casals*  
Surt Women’s Foundation

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to outline the key elements guiding the development of the Forward model, incorporating the experiences of the various different partners in a common and shared conceptual framework.

The identification, recognition, validation and certification of the competences of migrant women represent various ways of approaching the same, broader issue, i.e. that of policies for competences and competence policies; an issue which, in turn, calls upon European policies, in an ideal-typical way, to support the employability of female and male workers in view of balanced and socially inclusive growth.

Needless to say, the way in which the issue of migrant women’s competences has been structured does have a rather comprehensive and articulated theoretical-political background, in which the most important issues are those of the knowledge society, *lifelong and life-wide learning* as well as of human resources enhancement that respects differences.

Therefore, we think it would be useful to briefly revisit some of these issues, which form the basis of the theoretical framework of the Forward project.

Competences: between scientific debate and European policies

At the epistemological level, over the last forty years, i.e. since the essay by David McClelland *Testing for Competence Rather than for “Intelligence”* (1973), the various trends in scientific
research in the fields of psychology, ergonomics and sociology have helped define the general paradigm of competence, each from their own perspective.

This work can be taken as a basis for all subsequent studies on competences in general, and on professional competences in particular, and helped define the general paradigm of competence now more in use. We refer to—and only to remember some of the most renowned internationally—Spencer & Spencer (1993), to Goleman (1995), Le Boterf (1994, 2010a and 2010b) and De Montmollin (1986).

Given their close relationship with the subject matter of our Forward project and the (indirect but no less important) effect the OECD projects and surveys have on how European policies are designed, we will briefly focus on the role played by the DeSeCo Project1 [1999-2002] (Rychen & Salganik, 2003), the ALL Survey (2000) and, finally, the PIAAC Programme (launched in 2010), which is currently underway and is scheduled to end in 20132.

It has been said that the DeSeCo Project has led to the emergence of a new concept of competence. In fact, it approaches the concept of competence from a holistic perspective, rather than considering it the sum or, even worse, a mere list of knowledge, know-how, skills and attitudes. The holistic approach identifies and analyses the conditions and modes of reasoning and behaviour deemed essential for adult life, i.e. those able to determine success, realisation and effective action, in both professional and daily life.

The ALL Survey (Adult Literacy and Life Skills)3 adopts as its theoretical framework the analysis of the globalised world, characterised by constant processes of change. Therefore, it aims to explore and analyse the competences acquired by populations in a given socio-historical context, as well as their development potential and modalities, the cognitive features and socio-economic conditions that determine an adult’s performance.

It is quite clear that the paradigms at the base of the exploration and analysis of possessed competencies—depending on the setting of the ALL survey—can also be enlightening considering the identification and certification of competencies and, therefore, the construction of the tools most suitable for this purpose, including the portfolio of competencies. In particular, this applies to the subject adult-migrant-woman, whose

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1 The Project DeSeCo (Definition and Selection of Competencies) was launched by the OECD in 1997 and ended in 2002. The project aimed to provide a more solid conceptual framework of reference compared to what is available so far, and which could lead to international investigation with the intent to ascertain the level of prior learning and possession of several key skills.

2 PIAAC - Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies; http://www.oecd.org/site/piaac

3 The ALL (Adult Literacy and Life Skills) survey was born as the result of collaborative efforts between governments, national statistical agencies, research institutions and multilateral agencies. Development and coordination were supported by Statistics Canada and Educational Testing Service (ETS) in cooperation with the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES-US Department of Education), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) the regional office for Latin America and the Caribbean (OREALC) and the Institute of Statistics (UIS) of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). The survey was designed to answer the following fundamental question that, for brevity, we summarize as follows: is the description of the distribution of competencies of the analyzed adult population here and now sufficient to guide those who have the responsibility to take decisions on social policies and more specifically policies concerned with education and training for the near future? http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/all/
competencies mature, structure and develop in a procedural way, and socio-historical contexts in which the forms and characteristics are defined by the globalised world; or defined, rather, by the globalised world that is the first cause of population movements, with the peculiar characteristics by which they occur today (such as the autonomy of the migration project of women; autonomy that is related to, and varies from one ethnic group to another). But, in any case, it is very significant because it is the basis of any jurisdiction. Furthermore, it is unprecedented in the history of migration until the last quarter of the last century.

The PIAAC Programme (Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competences), launched in 2010 and is scheduled to be completed in 2013, has been defined by the OECD as the most comprehensive international survey on adult competences ever carried out. The PIIAC examines the results of the DeSeCo Programme in detail, adopting an approach that assesses competences from a broader perspective, i.e. in which competences are understood as complex constructs (integrating interests, aptitudes and skills) that allow individuals who have developed them to significantly and properly use their most valuable socio-cultural instruments, including digital technology and communication tools, to access, manage, select, integrate and evaluate information, to build new knowledge and communicate with others in order to participate more effectively in social life. The most innovative and distinctive feature of the PIAAC Programme is its focus on the collection of information about the relationship between competences and other (demographic, social, employment, etc.) variables, as well as on the impact that competences have on economic and social performance.

The PIIAC program, with reference to the DeSeCo Project, arises from this in a position of logical and epistemological continuity (see the common holistic approach to competence). But, above all, it is offered as a further development, allowing the evaluator’s lenses to benefit from both comparable tools at European level (the Forward methodology has taken this into account), and socio-cultural content and competencies, including: the ability to communicate, how to manage, integrate and evaluate information, how to participate effectively in social life, etc. All this is done taking into account the specific nature of the competencies and, therefore, their relationship with demographic, employment and intercultural variables. In practice, the PIIAC program places us within the very same field of action and intervention of the Forward project.

**Common European references**

Since the early 1990s, European policies have been putting the issue of competences at the heart of various initiatives and institutional proposals regarding the processes of the modernisation and reform of education, training and work. The key elements that characterise and distinguish the European Union’s competence-based approach and its approach to

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4 The direct evaluation of adult competencies is the core objective of PIAAC, the OECD program framework (currently in progress, to be finalised in 2013) to evaluate core competencies and their best use in the labour market, in an international comparative perspective (among OECD countries and even non-OECD members). PIAAC, in fact, aims to achieve a sample survey of a population segment between 16 and 65 years, focusing on the competencies acquired in working life, their implications on income, and other related aspects. 25 Countries are participating in the program.
competences revolve around two focal points, one that is conceptual/semantic and the other functional/language-related.

In semantic terms, competence does not correspond as much (or only) to the cognitive acquisitions that take place in formal education courses, but rather to what people are able to do at a professional level or, more generally, at a work level. That is, it refers to the set of skills and behaviours that enable people to cope with the complexity of the working world, according to a perspective capable of combining, shall we say, programmatically, work and lifelong learning.

In functional terms, competences have gradually come to be understood as a language capable of creating dialogue among different systems (education and qualifications; vocational qualifications; professional figures and work roles; walks of life and other diverse individual experiences).

The documents and the most important steps of the Union’s policies for and concerning competences should be evaluated from this perspective, starting with the turning-point and acceleration (because this is what it was) of the Lisbon Strategy (2000) up to the Recommendation on Key Competences (2006), the European Qualification Framework (2008), the New Skills for New Jobs Initiative (2010) focusing on the skills needed not only for the current job market but also for future jobs and the Europe 2020 Action Programme of the European Commission. Within Europe 2020, the ESCO Initiative (European Skills, Competences and Occupations Framework) stands out. Its ambition is to create a multilingual classification of skills and competences to facilitate communication and interaction among the different existing national and international classifications.

In this wide range of initiatives, the approval of the Decision on “Europass” plays an important role. The Europass is a portfolio of documents designed to facilitate the geographical and occupational mobility of European citizens by promoting one’s wealth of experience, knowledge and skills acquired over time. It brings together all of the already existing European mechanisms for transparency in a single “framework”, i.e. all the tools developed and promoted by European institutions (but also by the Council of Europe and UNESCO) to foster the readability of national certifications. The heart of the Europass portfolio is the European CV, which the other “Europass documents” are connected to (Europass Mobility, Certificate Supplement, Diploma Supplement and Language Passport). At the end of 2012, the European Skills Passport was launched, a user-friendly electronic portfolio designed to help gather the Europass CV and Language Passport, as well as other documents (copies of diplomas, attestations of employment bringing evidence of skills and qualifications listed, etc.) This new electronic platform implies progress towards the acceptance of the portfolio format at EU level, including documentary evidence of competences.

The implementation of the Bruges-Copenhagen Process also addresses other issues which are important for the construction of a system for the certification of competences:

- The adoption of a credit transfer system for vocational education and training.
- The definition of common principles for the recognition of formal and non-formal learning.
However, one critical issue still remains because, regarding non-formal and informal learning, the Council Conclusions on Common European Principles have established some key principles that Member States have been invited to consider, on a voluntary basis only, in order to allow for the transfer and acceptance of all competences in different fields.

Validation of learning in EU documents

The terms “non-formal learning” and “informal learning” have been defined by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop).

Non-formal learning is what the individual learns voluntarily in planned activities (work, study) that are, however, not explicitly formulated in terms of educational objectives.

Informal learning is acquired involuntarily through daily life activities related to work, family and leisure, and is not structured according to educational objectives.

Cedefop (2008a)

The issue of the validation of non-formal and informal learning has been on the European agenda since the early 1990s, related to lifelong learning.

Validation of learning outcomes is the confirmation by a competent body that learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and/or competences) acquired by an individual in a formal, non-formal or informal setting have been assessed against predefined criteria and are compliant with the requirements of a validation standard.

Validation typically leads to certification.

Cedefop (2008a)

References to the issue of validation can be found as early as 2002 in the Commission Communication on Lifelong Learning and in the Resolution on Enhanced Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training (Copenhagen Declaration). However, the key documents are: the Common European Principles for Identification and Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning (2004) and the European Guidelines (2008). Their principles can be summarised in individual rights (including the voluntariness of the validation process), the obligations of the parties concerned, including provisions for quality assurance, and the values of trust, credibility and legitimacy.

The Guidelines contain the rationale of validation. To date, however, not all Member Countries have established a validation system at the national level.

The Cedefop articulates the process of the validation of competences in three steps: identification, assessment and recognition (or validation) of non-formal and informal learning.

The first two phases entail reflecting on the learning process and aim at indicating the strengths and weaknesses of the individual’s educational career, offering suggestions for
personal improvement. Recognition is linked to learning outcomes, to their formalisation and certification.\(^5\)

The topic of identification, validation and recognition of informally acquired competencies, as well as their improvement, is the core issue of Forward. Not surprisingly, the most notable resources held by women migrants consist precisely in this kind of competencies. The main aim of the portfolio is precisely their recognition.

The Community method to promote the validation of non-formal and informal learning is based on open cooperation, the exchange of national experiences and the dissemination of pilot testing. In fact, the European Council supports the dissemination and exchange of good practices in member countries, listed in the European Inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning.

The distinction between identification and assessment and recognition is frequently referred to as that between formative and summative approaches to validation. The primary purpose of summative assessments is to generate a concluding statement about learning achieved to date and is explicitly about the formalisation and certification of learning outcomes. They are thus linked to and integrated into institutions and bodies authorised to award qualifications. The primary purpose of formative assessment is to enable learners to broaden and deepen their learning (Cedefop, 2008b).

Another element emphasised by the Cedefop, which is entirely part of the theoretical framework of the Forward project, is that the labour market in Europe requires and will require more and more soft skills (ways of working, organisational principles, client relationship management, self-organisation, event planning, organisational flexibility, immediate response to a problem). For all these new needs, the job placement of migrant women is one of the key points by which the real effectiveness of all these tools can be measured.

**The competence-based approach and the cultural dimension**

All recent theories warn that inter-culturalism\(^6\) should be reconsidered, as it is a very general approach not to be confused with and limited to the integration process of migrants, and is a valuable concept for the project.

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\(^6\) Through the intercultural can achieve transcultural, i.e. the ability to move within different cultures without being totally absorbed by any of them, which is possible only when we recognize each culture as an expression of a common foundation for each person. Being able to pass between the various expressions of human societies have appropriate means of intercultural principles and know how to express in different situations to meet with each other. A reference point can be considered G. Bateson (1979).
**Interculturalism** refers to a joint commitment that has as its focus the encounter between subjects with different cultures, open to dialogue, and be willing to adjust to change.

**Culture** must be regarded as the social heritage of a human group, always open to change, transmitted and at the same time always transformed over generational transfers. Therefore, the term culture refers to the human experience as a whole (Hannerz, 1992).

The notions of **culture** that seem most interesting to us are those that consider culture a “net of meanings” or a “forum to negotiate and renegotiate meanings”.  
*Bruner (1986)*

Therefore, while this network of meanings is, on the one hand, a context within which their acquisition and interpretation take place, in other plural societies, on the other hand, meanings can be negotiated, created and enriched with new elements and opportunities.

Adopting an approach which revolves around the concept of competence allows us to focus on the resource mobilisation capacity of each individual in response to different contexts. Moreover, it offers the opportunity to represent one’s own wealth of experience in a legible form, which can be extended to various different potential interlocutors, whether they are firms, training agencies or institutions, allowing for greater transparency of communication.

**The link between transparency and competences is evident** and it is against this background that the Forward project has been rightly included in the debate on the measurability, recognition and enhancement of non-formal and informal learning and experiences.

An especially significant competence in the Forward project is **cross-cultural competence**.

*Cross-cultural competence* means the ability to identify, understand and interpret the individual prospects of a specific situation and in different contexts, drawing on the appropriate modes of action.  
*Goldstein and Smith (1999)*

The prerequisite for the acquisition of various prospects is self-reflection and/or the conscious recognition of the socialisation of one’s own sphere of life. Only after examining one’s behaviours and values can prospects be changed. The inclusion of different realities of life and, in particular, of specific migration backgrounds consequently requires different approaches. To be competent from a trans-cultural point of view means knowing how to put the person at the centre, women in our case, with their own history and sphere of individual life.

A personalised methodology with an approach based on human capabilities (Nussbaum, 2000) and a gender perspective is the only combination capable of dealing with the consistency of the questions that women make to orientation and training in adulthood, in times of change and new design.
The Forward portfolio: the focal points of the gender perspective in the migration experience

Introduction

The scale and gender perspective of the migration experience of women should be included in a broader context that defines the new phenomenon of international migration. Within it, changes have occurred, and we cannot ignore them if we do not wish to run the risk of having to look at new phenomena from old perspectives (with the risk of not seeing them at all or seeing them distorted) or of confusing related and special issues with what we could define as issues with epoch-making significance. Europe is the area in which the most important structural changes in the migration phenomenon have already occurred. However, not all Member States have proved that they are fully aware of them. In other words, many parties have difficulty recognising that Europe has inevitably developed into a heterogeneous continent from a racial, ethnic and religious point of view.

This is not without consequences for employment and skills, as well as for personal life and life skills. In more general terms, currently defined post-assimilation paradigms (Cuche, 1996; Glazer and Monynihan, 1963; Semprini, 2000) have begun to emerge which, despite their heterogeneity, describe integration as an interactive process where the operating logics of the hosting society are as equally important as ethnic affiliations and play a fundamental role in determining the success or failure of people’s career paths and walks of life, with significant effects on life skills and job skills.

Not surprisingly, according to a proper post-assimilation perspective, strategies such as that of diversity management are beginning to emerge at work, aimed at creating inclusive organisations capable not only of promoting the specific potential of each worker, but also of turning this into added value. This applies to all specificities, starting with those that are gender related. This is the perspective from which women’s migration in Europe must be evaluated.

Stories at border crossings

There are methods, practices, routes, stories, shared by many migrant women, but to understand migration each migration path and the individual life story should be
reconstructed, because paths, histories, biographies, projects and experiences are very different.

Arriving before the husband, arriving before the children or arriving alone has different meanings in relation to geo-cultural origin, historical moment and family context. The different modes of arrival or the various reasons that push to leave or contribute to the departure influence and strongly shape the paths of individual women in the new context, even when coming from common cultural frames. The individual story, besides being drawn in relation to the place of origin, is affected by the migration project that each woman has matured personally and/or with the help of family and the cultural group she belongs to. Moreover, projects and pathways are affected by class, age, sexuality and ethnicity, among other elements. Projects can be motivated by the need to improve the economic situation, by the desire of freedom or an escape plan, by culture or family strategies, and can be a temporary stabilization project, for instance aimed at joining and/or reuniting with family abroad, etc.

Immigrant women not only live between two cultures but are forced to deal with and process constraints and restrictions to which they are subject in their countries of origin and to develop new patterns of behaviour, which are neither those of the country of origin nor of the country of refuge/reception/welcome. They are called to reinterpret the role of women and often their role within the family, according to a cross-cultural process. They are called to build a bridge between “here”, the host country, and “there” of the country of origin, between “here” represented by the family, when there is one, or the community, and “there” of the work, “public” life in the host country, between “here” of a nearest culture of origin and “there” of an unfamiliar culture of host country.

It is important to highlight the multi-faceted nature of women’s emancipation within the feminisation of international migration processes, but also the maintenance of tradition, the link between individual processes and the context in which these occur. The migration process transforms not only the places of arrival and departure but also the reasons for migration, individual and family strategies, as well as the communication structure of the communities of origin.

Through migration, women displace but also hybridise functions and meanings. The migration project and particularly that concerning women’s migration varies depending on the nature of push factors. According to their migration project (Favaro and Tognetti Bordogna, 1991), several roles may be identified:

- **Protagonists**, who have left their country of origin with the desire to access greater personal freedom and emancipation.
- **Breadwinners** or trail-blazers, who are able to trigger migration chains for their family and friends.
- **Target-earners**, who have left with a migration project of short duration and are focused mainly on maximising their economic interests.
- **Subordinates**, who have left to follow their husbands and are dependent on family ties or some other form of constraint.
- **Co-stars**, who are involved, like their family members, in the elaboration and realisation of the migration project.
Through migration, women may acquire autonomy and spaces of emancipation, even with and at considerable costs, such as the possible suffering associated to transnational motherhood. They may enhance their status and ensure the survival and a dignified lifestyle for their family of origin and their own family, in addition to procuring resources.

It is precisely because of the intensity of the border crossing experience that, after reaching the destination country, migrant women may become increasingly aware of the discrimination in the labour market linked to their nationality and gender. However, the “accidental” nature of competences (that is, precisely the origin, in non-formal and informal contexts, of many elements of competence) makes it possible for them to remain invisible, often also to the women they belong to.

The migration experience and gender specificity are two interrelated elements which are intrinsic to the Forward project. It is essential here to refer to intersectional theory to highlight that gender and migration are not two separate elements adding to the specific situation of migrant women. On the contrary, these two factors are involved in a more complex intersection which may result in a totally different and unequal situation which must be closely analysed by itself.\footnote{Intersectional theory or intersectionality was first highlighted by Kimberlé Crenshaw and has been extensively used to analyse combinations of gender, class and ethnic inequalities.}

\[\text{Relationship between the different elements involved in the conceptual framework of the Forward project}\]
Theoretical-methodological premises for the construction of a portfolio of competences according to the Forward model

**Pedagogical principles for the building of a portfolio of competences**

From a pedagogical point of view, a portfolio of competences may be defined according to two principles:

- The person to whom a portfolio belongs is not simply the repository or holder of a set of documents collected in a dossier, he/she is the author, and essentially the one who gives meaning to the materials it contains and organises them according to a specific development project.
- The production of a dossier is the result of a personal effort – made with the assistance of a facilitator, or an expert with supporting functions – of research, analysis and synthesis of professional, educational and social experience, identifying the competences these experiences have helped shape and develop. These competences will have to be effectively acquired and thus demonstrated, and as such they will play a key role in the construction of the project.

**The strategic significance of a portfolio of competences is:**

- To recover the memory of the individual’s evolutionary process from a perspective of growth and continuous enrichment, firmly placing the person in his/her history, time and professional and life prospects.
- To reinforce personal empowerment and, in the case of migrant women, placing them in a new sphere of meaning that is respectful of their original sphere of meaning.
- To increase the individual's range of possibilities, i.e., what he/she can do in his/her job, social life and personal life.

**Specific features of the portfolio of competences instrument:**

- The portfolio of competences must be constructed with the intention of carrying out vocational guidance and integration projects in the short and medium term, but also with career and life prospects. The dossier must be procedural in nature and allow for its development over the course of the individual’s life.
- The portfolio of competences must be integrated and completely comprehensible, and then appropriated by its holder. This means that all the documents created outside the process of the construction of the portfolio (e.g. external evaluations) must be intelligibly written.
- The portfolio of competences must be complete in content and flexible in form.
The Forward project must take into account the following factors, among others, in the construction of a portfolio:

- The construction and maturation processes of migrant women’s autonomy. The migration phenomenon may alter the patterns of gender. For example, the formation of transnational families may represent a process of women’s empowerment not only because they themselves become income generators, but also because the old patriarchal cultures of their countries of origin are weakened (Lucas, 2005).

- Migrant women’s ability to activate and use transnational networks as well as the dynamics of solidarity, support and connections among people who are having the same experience. Bonds are established that allow them to migrate, but then become continuous, although related to national specificity and the historical phase of the migration reality.

- Migrant women’s ability to network with historical and political projects in their countries of origin, since migration is often determined in close relation with them and also attempts to be a force of change.

- Women’s ability to access the public services of the destination countries. In addition to being a sign of inclusion, this is also evidence of their flexibility and ability to build new and different skills, additional skills according to Amartya Sen’s notion that the process of expanding the opportunities and freedoms that people can actually enjoy is the real focus of growth (Sen, 1999; Nussbaum, 2000).

Common basis of the tools and approaches of the Forward partners

In the first phase of the project, the Forward partners shared the tools and approaches they use in their daily practice. On the basis of the analysis carried out, some of them have been identified as helpful elements for the design of the Forward model. In particular:

- Identification and assessment of competences

Biographical approach. All the partners utilise a biographical approach, and in some cases a peer to peer approach (Monika) in the various services they offer to women. The use of the biographical approach allows all the non-formal and informal dimensions to be fully recovered. In particular, by observing the settings of HIDAEC (Surt), Famcompass (IREA), MIKA and the Language and Qualification Portfolio for Migrants & Refugees (Frauenservice) models it is clear that the competence-based approach is at the centre of their methodology, and that certain modules used by other methodologies, such as the balance of competences, are partly contained in the self-description and narration sections.
This allows for the construction of a common language and a good platform of experience and work tools. A basic conception of **competence** can be found for everybody, understood as the result of an on-going process of interaction between people and the environment from which significant elements are selected and transferred into a new context, starting from their personal and professional experiences.

**Classification of competences.** There are some differences among the different partners’ approaches regarding the criteria for the analysis of the quality and substance of a competence:

- HIDAEC proposes a 5-level scale that determines the degree of mastery and complexity, and connects this to the degree of autonomy, responsibility and management of resources, innovation and evaluation.
- Famcomp provides for a 0 level that indicates non-competence and 4 levels that identify the ability to use competence in an ever more complex way.
- MIKA and SQuP both use descending and ascending scales that indicate the presence or absence, a good or no quality, of competence on 4 levels.

These different competence-based models use different definitions and taxonomies of competences. Regardless of the discrepancies in terms of definitions and classifications, all models share common viewpoints and include specific competences which provide a good basis to build the Forward model.

**Validation of competences**

The process of validation of non-formal and informal learning is based on some basic principles, shared and guaranteed at European level through specific guidelines and methodological guidelines (Council of the European Union, 2004).

The **basic principles** of the process of validation of non-formal and informal learning are summarised as follows:

- **The role of the individual:** the process of validation of non-formal and informal learning should primarily be based on a precise determination of the individual. The voluntary nature of the process requires therefore a guarantee for all citizens, a fair and transparent access to validation devices, as well as the protection of privacy and fundamental rights of individuals.
- **The reliability of the device:** the validation process, the procedures and criteria used to identify and validate non-formal learning and informal learning must be clear, transparent and guaranteed by an effective and shared system of indicators and standards of quality.
As the framework defined by the European Union is one of principles, but not of law, this is a very interesting and complicated aspect of the Forward project because, in fact, the many different countries of the European Union are very heterogeneous in this regard. The Forward project partners referred to specific national laws, if not regional, regulating validation in their countries.

It should also be taken into account that the models under analysis for the Forward project are all based on self-recognition and self-assessment methods, mainly aimed at increasing women’s awareness and autonomy.

In this respect, the validation of acquired competencies in learning contexts other than formal ones could be aimed at the recognition of credits or the acquisition of a title or a qualification. Or it could be oriented to support projects of placement or re-integration into working life, or to facilitate individual paths of professional self-development and re-employment. The Forward project refers to all these possible questions of migrant women and therefore the portfolio’s objective is to be able to represent in a transparent manner the quality and consistency of the competencies they possessed.

At the closing point of this publication, available tools and procedures for the formal and institutional recognition of competences collected during career guidance processes have been partially tested by some of the Forward partners in their countries. For example, Surt is currently collaborating in a pioneer validation process by the Department of Labour of the autonomous government of Catalonia (Generalitat de Catalunya), while IREA is becoming a registered validation institution for the occupation of domestic workers in Romania. The Forward project and its resulting materials may contribute to progress in this direction.

2.2. The Forward classification of competences

*Rachele Serino and Paolo Serreri*
*People*

*Laura Sales Gutiérrez and Mar Camarasa i Casals*
*Surt Women’s Foundation*

The Forward competence model built during the project addresses the need to identify, assess and validate the competences of migrant women. To this aim, a *suggested list and classification of competences has been produced*, describing the main competences which migrant women may develop in informal and non-formal contexts, and are considered crucial to increasing their employability and social inclusion. The suggested competences were chosen by the partnership on the basis of the Forward research results and with a focus on the migration process.
Background of the classification of competences

The **taxonomy** of competences into the categories of basic competences, emotional competences (including personal competences and social competences) and meta-competences is based on the recommendations included in the Italian research report (fully available on the project website), which suggested following the classification by Daniel Goleman on *Working with Emotional intelligence* (1995). As stated in the Italian research report, the skills legacy of the migrant women emerging from the interviews focused basically on three areas: **basic competences**, **emotional competences** (referable somehow to transversal competences of the ISFOL model, and including **personal** and **social** competence) and **meta-competences**.

**Basic knowledge and competences** meet the need to help increase the chances to access the labour market. These competences allow also to deal with changes in working life, such as switching from one job to another one, from a production environment to another, from a production context to an association, recreational or training context, etc. (ISFOL, 1997).

As for the concept of **emotional competences**, Goleman (1995) defines emotional competence as a *learned capability*, thus not innate, based on a set of abilities or potentialities, such as: awareness and self-control, motivation, empathy or interpersonal skills. These abilities and potentialities develop two main typologies of competences: **personal competence**, that determines how we manage ourselves, and **social competence**, that determines how we handle relationships.

**Personal competence** is made up of:

- Knowledge about personal strengths and weaknesses.
- Self-confidence in one’s own abilities.
- Maintaining standards of honesty and integrity.
- Conscientiousness (i.e. the quality of acting according to the dictates of one's conscience and taking responsibilities).
- Flexibility in managing change.
- The ability to feel at ease when facing new approaches and information.
- The readiness to take chances.
- The persistence in pursuing goals despite obstacles and failures.

**Social competence** is made up of:

- Understanding of others.
- Anticipating, recognising and satisfying a customer’s needs.
- Being able to grab the opportunities offered by different types of people.
- The ability to negotiate and resolve disagreements.
- The ability to foster and nourish useful relationships.
On the basis of the results of the research carried out, three main groups of emotional competences (where they are usually placed in literature) were extracted and named as “meta-competences” because of their relevance.

Meta-competence is made up of:

- The ability/willingness to learn always and in all contexts.
- The ability to move in intercultural contexts.
- The ability to read the territory and oneself within the territory.

Meta-competences appear as second-level competences, i.e. as key competences that move and nourish other competences. Particularly, the ability of learning to learn is superior to any concept of basic learning and it is actually a resource that a person can use in different contexts (work, active citizenship, personal growth and development). The meta-competence of learning to learn implicates and mobilises its three major components: knowledge and control of its acquisition; knowing how and the relative control of acquiring, maintaining and developing; the sense of self-efficacy, motivation, causal attributions and volition.

If we should suggest a meta-competence standing out above all among our respondents we certainly would refer to learning to always learn in all contexts of education, work and daily life.

To sum up, these are the categories of competence used in the Forward model:

1. BASIC COMPETENCES: Competences necessary to increase the chances to access the labour market (and social inclusion) and deal with changes in working/personal life.
2. EMOTIONAL COMPETENCES
   2.1. PERSONAL COMPETENCES: Related to how we manage ourselves.
   2.2. SOCIAL COMPETENCES: Related to how we handle relationships.
3. META-COMPETENCES: Competences in the emotional category which are especially common among migrant women. They are competences that move or nourish other competences.

The next section includes the full list and definitions the competences of the Forward model, as well as a description of how they were selected and defined during the project.
2.3. Competence-based approaches towards social inclusion

Laura Sales Gutiérrez and Mar Camarasa i Casals
Surt Women’s Foundation

Competence-based approaches allow for the recovery and assessment of the resources each individual has as a result of his/her life experiences (both at work and outside the labour market). Recovering these resources and valuing them as positive assets is a fundamental condition to implementing a process of job placement and wider social integration.

This is specifically relevant to personal and social competences, which allow women especially to be active drivers of their own process of integration. At the same time, working with these competences facilitates the process of transference of experiences in different spheres (educational sphere, training sphere, family, labour experiences) to objectives of the occupational integration plans and wider social inclusion projects.

From this perspective, actions towards social inclusion are aimed at three main strategies:

1. **Identifying** personal resources and capabilities.
2. **Transferring** personal resources and capabilities to a work context (and others), contrasting them with the professional profile of a specific job or task.
3. **Experiencing** competences, that is, practising them in work (and other) contexts.

These strategies are based on the consideration that building competence is a continuous process of interaction between the person and the environment. This process starts from professional and personal experiences in order to allow women to think about them, selecting the most significant elements to transfer to a new context, testing their utility by practice. It is a dynamic process that is permanently repeated.

Throughout this process, the competence-based methodology also involves some degree of building and development of identified competences, especially personal and social competences, such as communication, problem-solving, autonomy, self-esteem and teamwork.
2.4. Competences for the social inclusion of migrant women: the list of Forward competences, definitions and elements of competence

Mar Camarasa i Casals, Carolina Pallàs and Laura Sales Gutiérrez
Surt Women’s Foundation
Birgit Aschemann and Anke Vogel
Frauenservice Graz
Giorgia Rossani, Rachele Serino and Paolo Serreri
People

Criteria of the Forward list of competences and definitions

The Forward competence list includes the main competences which migrant women may develop in informal and non-formal contexts (on the basis of the Forward research results and with a focus on the migration process) and are considered crucial to increasing their employability and social inclusion.

This list of competences is open and not exhaustive. The focus of the list and the Forward project is mainly on competences acquired in non-formal and informal contexts.

The criteria used to choose the competences for the list are:

✓ Competences developed by migrant women, especially during the migration process.
✓ Competences which are key to social inclusion.
✓ Competences that frequently appeared during our research in the 6 countries.
✓ Competences that are also in the EU Competence Framework (Key competences for lifelong learning, Europass).

To prepare the definitions, the partnership considered difficult to analyse a competence including different dimensions, so it was suggested that the definitions had two parts: a brief definition and a list of elements of competence, including the three elements used by the EU for the definition of key competences: knowledge, attitudes and skills.

The following pages present the list of the Forward competences, their definitions and elements of competence. In every competence definition, some of the elements of each competence are marked in blue. This is a visible way to outline the elements that were prioritised by the partnership to be taken into account when evaluating the level of each particular competence. In other words, the blue ones are the elements of competence chosen to evaluate each competence in the context of promoting social inclusion among migrant women. These elements are thus the ones being considered when elaborating the Forward Questionnaire of Competences (see section 3.2. of the Handbook and the tool Forward questionnaire and map of competences included in the Toolbox).
# LIST OF FORWARD COMPETENCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>NAME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BASIC</td>
<td>1. Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASIC</td>
<td>2. Mathematical competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASIC</td>
<td>3. Digital competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASIC</td>
<td>4. Awareness of the host country environment and use of services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASIC</td>
<td>5. Job and information search</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASIC</td>
<td>6. Civic competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERSONAL</td>
<td>7. Change management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERSONAL</td>
<td>8. Self-confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERSONAL</td>
<td>9. Acting with autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERSONAL</td>
<td>10. Self-knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERSONAL</td>
<td>11. Sense of initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERSONAL</td>
<td>12. Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERSONAL</td>
<td>13. Perseverance and resilience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERSONAL</td>
<td>14. Analysing and synthesising information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERSONAL</td>
<td>15. Organisation and management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERSONAL</td>
<td>16. Management of emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL</td>
<td>17. Team work and cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL</td>
<td>18. Grabbing opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL</td>
<td>19. Negotiation and conflict management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL</td>
<td>20. Establishment of useful relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>META-COMPETENCE</td>
<td>21. Capability to project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>META-COMPETENCE</td>
<td>22. Intercultural competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>META-COMPETENCE</td>
<td>23. Management of bicultural identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>META-COMPETENCE</td>
<td>24. Learning to learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>META-COMPETENCE</td>
<td>25. Interpretation and situation in context</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DEFINITIONS OF FORWARD COMPETENCES

1. COMMUNICATION

Understanding, expressing and interpreting verbal, non-verbal and written messages to interact in different language communities, mobilizing the necessary abilities, attitudes and knowledge to achieve an adequate and accurate interaction according to one’s needs and context requirements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>KNOWLEDGE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical knowledge of the structure, elements and norms of language/s at different levels (grammar, vocabulary, phonetics and semantics).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of the usage norms of language/s related to the social, cultural and historical context where communication takes place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of basic traits distinguishing different types of texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of verbal and non-verbal communication techniques in each language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ATTITUDES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation to interact and communicate with others, establishing critical and constructive dialogue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to develop an active listening.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect of communication codes different from one’s own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of the impact of one’s messages on the people we interact with and the context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation to learn a/different languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SKILLS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating orally in a variety of situations, with migrants and non-migrants in the home and host country and with different purposes, adapting language use to the communicative situation in a specific context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating in writing in a variety of situations, with migrants and non-migrants in the home and host country and with different purposes, adapting language use to the communicative situation in a specific context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searching for and processing written information and organising it in a coherent verbal and/or written discourse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressing one’s arguments in an organised and respectful way appropriate to the context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding written messages and organizing the information in a specific and coherent text to transmit the written message effectively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding and using the gestures, movements and use of space (non-verbal communication) that go with one’s message.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treating others with respect and promoting trust and exchange of ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using informal learning to improve one’s competences in language/s.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. MATHEMATICAL COMPETENCE

Developing and applying mathematical thinking in order to produce and interpret diverse types of information and solve a range of problems in everyday situations, built on the command of numeracy and with an emphasis on process and activity, as well as knowledge.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KNOWLEDGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of numbers, measures and structures, as well as basic operations, mathematical presentations and mathematical terms and concepts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTITUDES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive attitude towards mathematical modes of thought, like logical and spatial thinking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness (motivation) to solve mathematical-related problems and questions (such as questions around money) by active learning and logical proceeding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SKILLS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding numbers and measures and applying basic operations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasoning mathematically and communicating in mathematical language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handling money in daily life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying daily questions to which mathematics can offer answers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. DIGITAL COMPETENCE

Using confidently and critically Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) for work, leisure and communication.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KNOWLEDGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of the role and opportunities of ICT in everyday contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of the main computer applications, such as word processing, spread sheets, and databases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTITUDES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A critical and reflective attitude towards available information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-control and responsible use of the interactive media.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An interest in engaging in communities and networks for cultural, social and/or professional purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curiosity, openness to change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SKILLS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searching, collecting and processing information and using it in a critical and systematic way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchanging information in order to communicate and participate in collaborative networks via the Internet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying the right ICT tool and using it for one’s own goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrating innovation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 4. AWARENESS OF THE HOST COUNTRY ENVIRONMENT AND USE OF SERVICES

Getting acquainted with civic rules, customs and coexistence norms of host country and using the available services according to the life needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCE</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>KNOWLEDGE</strong></td>
<td>Knowledge of host country language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge of main cultural elements of host country, including general codes of conduct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge of the system and regulations for entrance and residence in host country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge of the labour system of the host country and its resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge of the requirements to use the Health system of the host country and its resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge of the social services available in the host country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge of the education and training system of the host country and its requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basic knowledge of local geography and transportation means in the host country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ATTITUDES</strong></td>
<td>Willingness to understand the formal and informal functioning rules of the host country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proactive attitude when searching for information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SKILLS</strong></td>
<td>Identifying the needed information according to each specific situation in the host country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Searching for the needed information and services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using the services according to personal needs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. JOB AND INFORMATION SEARCH

Searching, finding and updating information in relation to the reference context and to achieve one’s professional goals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| KNOWLEDGE | Knowledge of the main ICT tools, education, training and labour systems.  
Knowledge of the social, economic and normative environment in which one lives. |
| ATTITUDES | Curiosity.  
Communicative attitude.  
Responsibility.  
Determination. |
| SKILLS | Using appropriate tools.  
Understanding the links between information and prioritizing.  
Planning actions to achieve a goal.  
Assessing information and making decisions with relation to one’s own life or job search goals. |

6. CIVIC COMPETENCE

Capacity and willingness to commit to active participation in an effective and constructive way in a society and in different contexts of social life (school, local community, working place, leisure, public services, etc.).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| KNOWLEDGE | Knowledge of host country language.  
Knowledge of the main cultural elements of the host country.  
Basic understanding of the concepts of democracy, justice, equality, civil rights and citizenship. |
| | Basic knowledge of political systems, institutions and ways of public participation relevant to one’s situation.  
Basic knowledge of legislation and policies on migration relevant to one’s situation.  
Basic knowledge of legislation and policies on gender equality relevant to one’s situation.  
Knowledge of the rights, freedoms and obligations in the host country. |
| | Basic knowledge of contemporary events and social and political movements. |
### ATTITUDES
- Respect for human rights, including equality, democratic principles and other shared values that are necessary for community cohesion.
- Eagerness to constructively participate in public life.
- Solidarity, dialogue, tolerance and active listening.
- Respect of others’ values.
- Social and political responsibility.

### SKILLS
- Engaging with others in the public domain, from the standpoint of solidarity and respect.
- Getting involved and acting in the local community, being critical, seeking the common good and trying to improve things.
- Making use of one’s own rights.
- Negotiating and managing conflicts.

### 7. CHANGE MANAGEMENT
Capacity to respond to changing and diverse circumstances (contexts, people and responsibilities), understanding and valuing different positions or perspectives, and adapting one’s approach to what each situation requires, in order to building specific positive and effective strategies and responses for oneself and one’s context.

### ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCE

| KNOWLEDGE | Knowledge of the host country social and labour regulations and practices. |
| Knowledge of the main cultural elements of the host country. |
| Knowledge of the host country language. |

| ATTITUDES | Readiness to change: being open to integrate changes in life. |
| Positive attitude in front of new realities/circumstances, understanding them as opportunities for change. |

| SKILLS | Creativity: identifying, posing and solving problems differently from the established pattern. |
| Evaluation of the new situation, acknowledgement of the need to change and assessment of the possible responses to this new situation. |
| Generating adaptation strategies: ability to modify patterns and adapt one’s behaviour to new contexts and changing situations. |
| Open-mindedness, acceptance of other ideas: ability to establish different knowledge relationships, posing new questions and giving original answers. |
### 8. SELF-CONFIDENCE

Identifying one’s personal abilities and resources and giving value to them as powerful elements to modify life situations (personal, family, social and labour).

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<th>ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCE</th>
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<td><strong>KNOWLEDGE</strong></td>
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### 9. ACTING WITH AUTONOMY

Taking decisions and acting by oneself, according to one’s own judgement, but respecting general rules, with self-confidence and taking responsibility for these decisions.

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10. SELF-KNOWLEDGE

Awareness of one’s strengths and limitations, values, resources, potential and future plans, and the ability to talk about them.

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<th>ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCE</th>
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<td><strong>KNOWLEDGE</strong></td>
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11. SENSE OF INITIATIVE

Turning ideas into action by oneself, including creativity, innovation and risk taking.

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### 12. RESPONSIBILITY

Willingness and capacity to take active care for the own needs and situation, including reliable engagement in common projects.

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### 13. PERSEVERANCE AND RESILIENCE

Capacity that allows to live and positively develop oneself, and to manage own transition processes (at a personal, working and social level), despite the severe forms of stress or the particularly difficult or adverse living conditions experienced, which involve a high risk of failure. In doing so, the subject develops active adaptation strategies, and above all, change strategies.

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<th>ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCE</th>
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^{8} As resilience is a second level competence, that is, a higher grade competence that oversees and controls other specific competences (personal, social and/or technical and professional), it does not refer to any particular knowledge. Despite this, a good basic education (formal and/or informal) fosters the resilience processes.
14. ANALYSING AND SYNTHESISING INFORMATION

Capacity to understand (information, a message, a problem) in depth and in its various facets, first analysing the different aspects, and then reassembling them into a unified and global view.

ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCE

KNOWLEDGE
- Good command of the mother tongue, and good level of general knowledge.
- Knowledge of the host country (including culture and social and labour regulations and practices).

ATTITUDES
- Attention, patience and not acting hastily.
- Keeping clear the goals for which the information is to be used.

SKILLS
- Gathering information.
- Distinguishing the elements and synthesizing the most relevant information.
- Organising the elements of a speech, a problem, and a message according to priority.

15. ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

Prioritising and managing activities, optimizing resources and time in order to achieve the expected outcome.

ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCE

KNOWLEDGE
- Good knowledge of the language of the host country, as well as knowledge of habits and customs of the host country.
- Knowledge of the host country (including culture and social and labour regulations and practices).

ATTITUDES
- Collaboration and openness to dialogue.
- Determination and responsibility.

SKILLS
- Planning activities in advance respecting deadlines and according to schedule.
- Coordinating activities and people in order to achieve complex goals.
- Supporting one’s own point of view.
- Managing time effectively.
- Locating logical connections and consequences of actions.
## 16. MANAGEMENT OF EMOTIONS

Recognizing, interpreting and managing one’s emotions and those of others.

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<td>KNOWLEDGE</td>
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⁹ Being an emotional competence, there is no specific knowledge directly related to the management of emotions.

## 17. TEAM WORK AND COOPERATION

Capacity to integrate and fully participate in a group by working towards the achievement of a common goal.

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18. GRABBING OPPORTUNITIES

Identifying and making use of chances found by accident ("serendipity").

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<tr>
<th>ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KNOWLEDGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional (may be implicit): Knowledge about one’s needs and strengths.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTITUDES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being open for others and their ideas and benefit from that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open attitude towards accident and its positive aspects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SKILLS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking advantage from an unpredictable chance (like a surprising information, event or contact).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putting a focus on potential instead of threats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Including unpredictable chances into one’s plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognizing a need and scanning the (social) environment accordingly.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

19. NEGOTIATION AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Handling different interests in a constructive and respectful way that supports equal solutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KNOWLEDGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Command of the language/communication techniques.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional (may be implicit): Knowledge of negotiation techniques.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTITUDES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to accept and respect different values, attitudes, needs and strategies as equal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness that truth is a social construction and the own position is relative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to cooperate and orientation towards positive, constructive solutions even against obstacles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SKILLS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking about one’s feelings, needs and requests clearly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to others’ feelings, needs and requests empathically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressing constructive feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handling different interests in a balanced way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bearing temporary stress and sustaining contact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking for solutions and compromise carefully and slowly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stating one’s position and rejecting demands respectfully.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
20. ESTABLISHMENT OF USEFUL RELATIONSHIPS

Capability to find and develop a wide range of relationships with different people in order to grow and improve their life condition in the host country (at personal, labour, housing, etc. level).

<table>
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<tr>
<th>ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KNOWLEDGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of the laws that regulate the labour market, including knowledge of their rights and duties in the host country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of the employment services and vocational guidance services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of the host country (including culture and social and labour regulations and practices).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociability; adaptability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTITUDES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability (maintaining standards of honesty and integrity).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of one’s strengths and weaknesses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence in one’s values and capabilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociability, adaptability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchange, cooperation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SKILLS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making conversations, talking and listening carefully to interlocutors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fostering and nurturing useful relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating and managing change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiating and resolving disagreement situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing how to present oneself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing how to handle a job interview.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

21. CAPABILITY TO PROJECT

Imagining a relatively close future, identifying and meeting one’s own interests (personal, family, social, work...) and planning a strategy to reach them.

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<tr>
<th>ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KNOWLEDGE</td>
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<tr>
<td>N.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTITUDES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive attitude towards interests and aims to be achieved in the future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation and proactive attitude to meet challenges and follow a process to reach one’s own interests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SKILLS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying one’s own interests and motivations in the diverse life contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying the needed sources of information to reach them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying one’s own capacities and resources that support or interfere in the achievement of one’s own interests.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## SKILLS
- Imagining the future in diverse spheres (personal, family, social, work).
- Prioritising spheres and actions.
- Defining actions, schedule and resources to reach one’s own interests and objectives.
- Planning a strategy to meet the defined objectives.

### 22. INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

Communicating, interpreting and interacting in an adequate, flexible and effective way with people from other cultures, with diverse cultural codes and in a variety of cultural contexts.

#### ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KNOWLEDGE</th>
<th>Knowledge of host country language.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge of one’s own cultural identity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understanding of the main cultural elements of the host country, other cultures significantly present in the country of destination and of the European cultural identity. This includes the codes of conduct and manners generally accepted in different societies and contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understanding of the diversity and cultural identities in the EU and the whole world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge of the stereotypes about other cultures present in the host country.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTITUDES</th>
<th>Empathy, flexibility, tolerance, imagination, trust, collaboration and active listening.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Respect for and value of other cultures and recognition of diversity as a positive contribution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Motivation to observe and learn from other cultures.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appreciation and self-confidence in terms of cultural identity, being prepared to overcome prejudices.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SKILLS</th>
<th>Interpreting diverse cultural codes, in particular, those of the host society.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Analysing, evaluating and comparing one’s own culture with the one(s) of the host country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coping with stress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using adequate strategies to establish contact and constructively communicate with people from the host society and from other cultures.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
23. MANAGEMENT OF BICULTURAL IDENTITY

Capacity to access two (or more) cultural frames actively and to keep two (or more) cultural identities in a positive way (a competence which is likely to grow with the duration of stay in the host country).

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<th>ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCE</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>KNOWLEDGE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of the culture of the host country (traditions, language, customs).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of the culture of origin (traditions, language, customs).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ATTITUDES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation and positive attitude towards two different cultures and the willingness to understand and value both of them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to integrate different views and values (in the sense of: tolerance for contradictions).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SKILLS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shifting between different cultural systems and adjusting one’s perceptions and behaviour accordingly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrating different views and values (tolerance for contradictions).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adapting to different social environments.</td>
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24. LEARNING TO LEARN

Pursuing and persisting in learning, and gaining, processing and assimilating new knowledge and skills.

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<th>ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCE</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>KNOWLEDGE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge of possible learning strategies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge about learning opportunities and available support (like guidance).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ATTITUDES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness and confidence to pursue and succeed in learning throughout life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to take learning challenges and look for support when needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curiosity and problem-solving attitude.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning aspirations: motivation for further formal education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation of prior learning and life experience as a base of further growth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SKILLS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Identifying one’s learning needs and knowledge, skills or qualifications required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applying one’s preferred and successful learning strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicating time to learning with the necessary self-discipline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning from others in an informal and sustainable way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applying knowledge and skills in new contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizing one’s own learning process.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
25. INTERPRETATION AND SITUATION IN CONTEXT

Considering a problem or information according to the context in which it developed and occurred, analysing problems with a pluralist insight and by comparing different cultural perspectives, and producing reflective and transformative thinking.

**ELEMENTS OF COMPETENCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KNOWLEDGE</th>
<th>Knowledge of experiences which differ from one’s own.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good knowledge of the language of the host country, as well as knowledge of habits and customs of the host country.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>A good basic education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTITUDES</td>
<td>Thoughtfulness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Patience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SKILLS</td>
<td>Thinking over.</td>
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<td>Suspending judgment.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Accepting and proposing different interpretations.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Fitting events in a given space and time.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>People’s skills.</td>
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2.5. The concept of empowerment

*Josefina Rubio Serrano*
*Surt Women’s Foundation*

The empowerment of the individual is the focus of the counselling process and the transversal axis that articulates all the actions from a point of view that places the individual at the centre of his/her own process and takes into account the diverse spheres of life and not just employment.

Empowerment means **increasing the authority and power of the individual over the resources and decisions that affect their lives**. It defines the process through which people enhance their capabilities, their role and autonomy, as well as their authority, as individuals and as a social group, in order to drive change and transform relations of subordination.

Empowerment refers to nonlinear processes of transformation of unequal power relations, understood as domination over another person (“power over”), driving a new notion of shared power (“power with”), based on more democratic social relations. From a transformative perspective, it responds to the need to generate changes in power relations, changing its distribution both in personal relationships and in the institutions of society.
To be a truly transformative process, empowerment has both an **individual** and a **collective** and social dimension. Regarding the individual dimension, the focus is on changes aimed at achieving higher levels of self-confidence, self-worth and the negotiation of individual interests. Concerning the group dimension, the process is intended to strengthen and enhance bonding, support and mutual recognition, which may allow dealing with common problems and advance the defence of common interests. In the social dimension, changes are collective-social, political and economic-directed to visualise and appreciate migrant women and to eradicate gender, origin and ethnic discrimination in all spheres of social relations.

Empowerment is therefore not something you can “provide”, but a dynamic process embodied by the individual and collective effort. It is closely related to a new notion of power, based on social relations and the democratic impulse of shared power, a “sustainable” power seated on building mechanisms of collective responsibility, decision-making, participation and equity.

From a methodological point of view, supporting migrant women towards empowerment means understanding empowerment as a process, whereby each participant becomes aware of their rights, identifies areas of discrimination and subordination, recognises and values her interests, strengthens their capacities and initiates change that enhances her empowerment at the individual, collective and relationship levels.

This methodological approach involves:

- Promoting awareness of the inequalities that shape each woman’s situation, so that she knows the structural and social causes that generate it.
- Promoting increased self-confidence (“personal power”).
- Respecting and strengthening her role and position as subject of the processes she wants to carry out.
- Defending the autonomous organization of women to decide about their lives and therefore on their processes and projects (“power with”).
- Mobilising to identify interests and transform relations, structures and institutions that restrain and perpetuate migrant women’s subordination (“power for”).

Accordingly, the role of professionals is to facilitate the process of empowerment, opening spaces and offering possibilities for migrant women to get involved, on the basis of their diversity, identities and different factors (sex/gender, ethnicity, class, sexual identity, etc.) that make up the specific ways in which discrimination occurs.
3. Methodology

3.1. The Forward methodology to work with migrant women

Laura Sales Gutiérrez and Mar Camarasa i Casals
Surt Women’s Foundation

As already stated, the main aim of the Forward project has been to design and implement an innovative competence-based methodology and pedagogical tools to identify, recognise, validate and develop competences of migrant women, as a way to improve their social inclusion and employability.

This objective translates into a specific methodology to work with migrant women, on an individual and group basis, towards their identification, reflection and development of competences, as well as its future validation.

To this aim, the Forward partnership has created a series of specific tools to work with migrant women, which are included in the Forward Toolbox. This chapter provides the framework in which these tools can be used, while chapter 4 provides some practical guidelines for facilitators to put them into practice.

The Forward tools

The Forward tools are practical instruments for implementing the Forward model with migrant women, on an individual and group basis, within adult education and career guidance programs.

This set of tools is organised within a defined structure and will guide the process of identification, reflection, validation and development of competences with migrant women.

The transversal axes of this process are:

1. Awareness-raising on competences: recognising, experiencing, developing and promoting the validation of competences during the whole process.
2. Awareness-raising on gender, migration and interculturality.
3. Awareness-raising on **individual and social situation** of migrant women in order to define a personal empowerment project to improve employability and social inclusion.

See the introduction of the Forward toolbox for more details on the practical aspects of the programme and tools.

**Individual and group tools**

The methodology involves two kinds of activities: individual and group activities:

- **Individual activities.** Creating and implementing an individual inclusion and empowerment project is complex and for this reason some tutorial support should be provided throughout the process. This allows for taking into account the specific individual circumstances of each migrant woman. The tutor supports and guides the individual from the start and throughout the development of her project, promoting reflection, facilitating the integration of new skills and knowledge, and stimulating decision-making.

- **Group activities.** Even though it is important to customise the process and adjust it to each migrant woman’s circumstances and objectives, experience shows that especially for women contact with other women often is a catalyst in defining their project. For this reason, the Forward methodology puts an emphasis on group activities, as a space open to mutual exchange between migrant women.

**Outline of the Forward process: phases and objectives**

The following outline of the Forward methodological process shows how the process is organised in **three phases**: introduction, development and final portfolio.

The table on the next page summarises the structure of the Forward phases according to individual and group activities, with the specific objectives of each phase.

A more detailed description of the tools aimed at achieving each objective, as well as the tools themselves, can be found in the Forward Toolbox, conceived as a vast collection of materials which allows for selecting those most relevant in each case, according to the time and resources available and the specific needs.

However, the two most complex tools of the Forward methodology (competence portfolio and questionnaire) deserve more attention and are dealt with in the next section.
Forward process for the construction of a portfolio of competences of migrant women

**Phase 1: Introduction**

- **Individual Tools Objectives**
  - Identification of needs.
  - Selection of participants.

- **Group Tools Objectives**
  - To get to know each other and create group cohesion.
  - To present the contents and methodology of the Forward process and identify participants’ stance and expectations towards it.
  - To establish the commitment to participate and general rules and responsibilities.

**Phase 2: Development**

- **Awareness of the individual and social situation**
  - To move from personal resources to competences
    - To support women in the recognition of their individual resources.
    - To support women to become familiar with the term “competence”.
    - To support women in the identification and systematisation of their competences with the Forward competence list as a suggested guide.
  - To raise awareness and reflection on gender, migration, interculturality and diversity
    - To promote reflection on different diversity and discrimination issues, from a biographical and social perspective.
  - To define a personal project
    - To support women to reflect about the different spheres in their lives (personal, family, work, health, etc.) and design a project for their empowerment and social inclusion, with specific objectives and measures.

- **Individual Support to Women to Identify Competences**

- **Final Support to Portfolio**
- **Support for Final Project**

**Phase 3: Final Portfolio**

- To conclude the individual competence portfolio presenting the competences of each woman.
3.2. Two key tools of the Forward methodology: the Forward competence portfolio and the Forward questionnaire

The Forward competence portfolio and the Forward questionnaire and map of competences are two key tools of the Forward Toolbox, as well as two of the main products of the innovative Forward methodology.

Its complexity requires some detailed explanation about their background, provided in this section, as well as guidelines for facilitators which may be very useful for its practical implementation in different contexts (see chapter 4).

The Forward competence portfolio

The Forward competence portfolio (available in the Forward Toolbox) is the main product of Forward methodology, produced at the final stage of the process. It is an instrument for migrant women gathering all the relevant information for their personal project of employability and social inclusion.

The Forward competence portfolio is a collection of documents gathering information about the life experience of women, learning, paid and non-paid work, the competences which emerged as the result of the self-reflection process promoted through the Forward methodology, and documentary evidence proving that they have these competences.

Following the theoretical guidelines provided in the conceptual framework (see chapter 2), the Forward competence portfolio was produced as a synthesis document, based on the Europass format, but adapted to the features of the Forward process.

The choice of the Europass format for the Forward Competence Portfolio was due to the will to promote the use of common European Union standard documents and its adaptation for its use by migrant women. On the basis of the Europass CV and the Europass Language Passport, and their accompanying guidelines, the partnership produced an adapted version which takes into account common needs and experiences of migrant women, as identified in the research phase of the project, as well as their difficulties to achieve recognition of their competences.

Accordingly, the adaptation of the Europass format in the context of the Forward project was guided by the following criteria:

- Providing space to visibilise life experience outside paid work.
- Focusing on competences acquired in informal and non-formal contexts.
- Emphasising life experience as a continuum, and encouraging the inclusion of experience acquired in different countries.

10 The Europass format is used under the recognition of the source (© European Union) and web address (http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu). The Europass Language Passport is used under the recognition of the sources (© European Union and Council of Europe) and web addresses (http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu and http://www.coe.int/portfolio).
Encouraging the provision of documental evidences that may promote the validation of migrant women’s competences, especially those acquired in informal and non-formal contexts.

Providing clear and detailed guidelines adapted to the identified needs of migrant women.

Following these criteria, the Forward competence portfolio includes the following sections:

- **Section 1. Personal information.**
- **Section 2. Experience** (including not only paid work, but also non-paid experience, for example in care tasks, community participation or even the process of migration itself).
- **Section 3. Education and training.**
- **Section 4. Competences.** Detailed inventory of skills and competences acquired in the course of training, work and daily life, and adapted to the Forward competence-based classification (basic, personal, social and meta-competences) and the contextualisation of the acquisition of each competence.
- **Section 5. Languages passport.** Description of language skills (mother tongue, skills in the host country language and other languages) based on the structure of the Europass languages passport.
- **Section 6. Evidence.** Table including list of documents providing evidence of the competences.
- **Section 7. Additional information.**
- **Section 8. Annexes.**

The Forward competence portfolio was pilot tested during the project with 150 migrant women in all partner countries, which allowed fine-tuning it to its actual usability in diverse countries of Europe.

It is fully integrated in the Forward methodology and other tools in the Toolbox can be used to support women both in the self-reflection and recovering of competences, which can later on feed the Forward competence portfolio, and in the process itself of building their portfolio.

To facilitate and promote use of the portfolio, detailed guidelines for integrating the portfolio into the Forward methodology are provided. This will help facilitators to support women in the process of gathering information and filling in the Forward portfolio. These guidelines can be found in chapter 4.5 of this handbook.

It should be especially noted that the portfolio is not a tool which can be directly applied into the labour market. It is not a CV which can be sent to apply for a specific job. However, women can use the information collected in the portfolio to build a CV intended for a specific job. With all the information available, it will only be then a task of picking and choosing the relevant experience and competences for a specific job, and expressing them in the format and language most appropriate in each case. In this sense, it can be a useful instrument in job search workshops.
The Forward questionnaire

The Forward Questionnaire (included in the Forward Toolbox) is designed to assist migrant women and practitioners supporting them in the process of **self-reflection of migrant women competences acquired mainly in informal and non-formal settings**.

The Forward questionnaire was designed to obtain information about the **actual attitudes**, **skills** and experiences that women had in their own life experience, their level of certain competences and the perception that they have of their own competences, by facilitating their recognition and empowerment. In this way, it is a self-assessment tool that fosters women’s processes of reflection and recognition of their competences and leads to a systematisation of their competences through a visible tool, the map of competences.

The questionnaire collects a set of 74 questions that asks about the 25 Forward competences for the social inclusion of migrant women (*see section 2.4*). In this way, one competence is generally evaluated through several questions (2, 3, 4 or even more questions). In general, each question is linked to an element of competence (one of the prioritised elements of competences marked in blue in the tables above).

Each question simulates a life situation, which tries to be as close as possible to the experiences of migrant women identified during the qualitative research carried out with them. For each question, then, 3 possible answers are given. Each answer is linked to a level of competence: low, medium and high. The distance between levels (and thus possible answers) was tried to be as much equal as possible.

The writing of the answers was also done on the basis of the definition of the competences and their elements as well as on the information obtained through the research fieldwork carried out with migrant women. The close link between the questionnaire and the research makes the questionnaire easier to use by women and allows for more accurate results.

On the basis of woman’s responses, a level of competence for each competence is given. The final evaluation of each competence in the Forward questionnaire is the product of the evaluation of all the chosen elements of competence for that specific competence. This final level of competence is obtained through a calculation that gives the same weight to each element of competence. On the basis of the levels given to each competence, then, each migrant woman can draw their own map of competences, which is a visible and good starting-point for the self-reflection and identification of own competences.

In any case, it should be stated that the results of the questionnaire can never be understood as a concluding assessment or proof that someone has a competence or a set of competences. The questionnaire, as said, is rather a starting point for approaching and identifying competences which can be later on contrasted with other sources of information, such as women’s self-evaluation, evaluation through interviews, peer evaluation, etc.

Chapter 4 provides guidelines for facilitators on how to use the Forward questionnaire within the Forward methodology and in different programmes, as a flexible tool that can be adapted to individual needs and the time and resources available.
4. Working with the Forward methodology: recommendations for trainers

4.1. Competence background of trainers

Laura Sales Gutiérrez and Mar Camarasa i Casals
Surt Women’s Foundation

The Forward materials will be best applied by professionals with some previous competences that capacitate them to work with the target group of migrant women.

As a guideline, a recommended list of knowledge, attitudes and skills is provided below. If necessary, trainers should go through an additional capacity-building course before they start their training to migrant women.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Competence-based learning methodologies, with a focus on informal learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Feminist and gender theories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Migration and human movements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Notions of psychology and sociology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Theories of empowerment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Diversity management and intercultural relationships (minority and majority groups).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Knowledge about mediation and conflict resolution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Social groups and their organisation (in home and host countries).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Group organisation and facilitation techniques.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Knowledge of legislation relevant to the target group (especially migration and gender equality).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Basic knowledge of resources available in the home country of migrant women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Knowledge of available resources and networks in the host countries, and how they work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Models of personal development and interpersonal relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Languages and theory of communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Intercultural communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Knowledge of the labour market legislation and reality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Knowledge of procedures for the recognition of qualifications and competence validation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Methodologies to analyse needs and demands.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Attitudes**

- Openness.
- Creativity.
- Curiosity.
- Self-knowledge.
- Empathy.
- Solidarity.
- Self-confidence.
- Respect and tolerance.
- Believing in the capacity of other people.
- Negotiation and flexibility.
- Team work and cooperation.

**Skills**

- Communication skills: active listening, paraphrasing, positive reformulation, etc.
- Ability to facilitate groups.
- Ability to analyse and synthesise information
- Ability to evaluate other people’s interests and demands.
- Ability to analyse sociocultural systems: approach to different cultural logics.
- Ability for negotiation and resolution of intercultural conflicts.
- Ability to generate confidence and empathy.
- Ability to be impartial when intervening in situations.
- Learning from others in an informal and sustainable way.
- Noticing opportunities for innovation or change.
- Identifying one’s areas of responsibility (and their limits).

4.2. How to recognise competences while monitoring women

*Birgit Aschemann and Anke Vogel*

Frauenservice Graz

Several questions may arise during portfolio work with migrant women: How can women’s competences be recognised in their discourse? How can competence-focused questions be asked? How does competence-conscious dialogue work?

Compared to qualifications (which are certified and shown in exam situations, and provide evidence mainly about knowledge, but show little information about behaviour in new situations), competences are person-centred and negotiable in different situations and tasks.
Competences are not necessarily the result of school attendance or education but are mostly acquired in informal settings, for example in daily routines, the working environment, family life or spare time. Competence is usually not written down in certifications; competence is everything someone is able to do in real life.

A specialised, resource-oriented view is required to identify the competences together with each individual woman. A woman’s life is viewed as a series of opportunities for acquiring a treasure trove of experiences and skills. Looking at it this way, everything that helps to manage daily life can be called a competence. A high level of personal openness to different ways of living and various coping strategies, as well as education in therapeutic and/or social work fields are good prerequisites to be able to develop such a view.

Moreover, it might also be helpful to have a list of possible competences in mind beyond the common ones (such as the 8 EU key competences). The box on the next page may be a useful source or ideas. On the other hand, The Forward competence list (see pages 28-43) provides a useful framework based on the experiences of migrant women in Europe. However, this list is neither closed nor exhaustive. Practitioners are encouraged to be open to the identification of other competences in the individual case of each woman.

**Asking women about their competences**

To initiate a narration of competences, the question “What do you like to do?” can be more helpful than “What are you able to do?”. Experience shows that the same competences may appear, but the focus on the term ‘able to’ seems to be more severe and the women may hesitate with their answers.

**Initial questions to ask:**

Please describe your activities and work within each area of your life (including family and spare time), keeping the following questions in mind:

- What are you doing, in detail? (Use verbs).
- Which of the above mentioned activities do you like in particular?
- What have been your highlights/successes up to today?
- For which did you get special external recognition?
- What is typical or non-typical for you within these roles?
- In which way do you like to work? Which way do you like less? Which way do you dislike?

The individual as she is today can only be understood by looking backwards, i.e. by reflecting on the curriculum vitae.

Particular attention should be paid to exciting, satisfying and enjoyable events: In what kind of situations was the woman’s endurance and efficiency at its highest level?
Examples of competences or skills which may be kept “in mind”

Strength in acquisition, analytical capabilities, analytical/logical thinking, flexibility, knowledge of application, work methodology, willingness to execution, insistency, ability to cope with pressure, ability to take consulting, judgment, relationship work, ability to delegate, openness to dialogue, discipline, personal initiative, willingness to accept personal responsibility, empathy, readiness for action, emotional intelligence, ability to make decisions, result-oriented actions, keenness to experiment, domain-specific recognition, multidisciplinary knowledge, specific knowledge, factual knowledge, effort, awareness of outcome, holistic thinking, organisational will, diligence, credibility, readiness to help, sense of humour, ability to give impetus, eagerness to innovate, communicative skills, ability to handle conflict situations, conflict resolution, consistency, sociability, conceptual skills, ability to cooperate, creativity/constructive ability, capacity of discernment, customer orientation, ability to teach, ability to learn/willingness to learn, learning techniques/work techniques, loyalty, knowledge of the market, personnel development, mobility, motivation, normative-ethnic approach, openness to change, optimism, organisational skills, sense of duty, time management skills, management behaviour, presentation techniques, problem-solving ability, project management, objectivity, quick-wittedness, assertiveness, self-management, willingness to self-reflect, independence, social commitment, eloquence, systematic methodological approach, energy, team-working skills/preference for teamwork, willingness to be responsible, sense of responsibility, appreciation, aim-oriented guidance, reliability, ability to define boundaries, communication skills, courage, basic trust, power to put things into practice, willingness to reflect, tolerance of emotional stress, project support, balance...

Questions about individual skills to help women discover their competences:

✔ When do others value your support? What are you known for? What do others appreciate about you? Where and in what kind of situation is your support demanded?
✔ What do you complain about to others?
✔ What do you take for granted and what seems very easy to you?
✔ What would you like to do more often?
✔ Describe the circumstances in which you become enthusiastic. Are there any tasks that are a lot easier for you than for others? In which situations are you more appreciated than others?
Instruction for individual needs to help women discover their competences:

✓ Consider your experience in the field of professional activities (including commitments as volunteer). Then describe the circumstances in which you are the most efficient.

Questions about interests to help women discover their competences:

✓ Think of a time when you spent a very interesting evening with another person. What did you talk about? What were you mainly interested in?
✓ What topic would you choose if you had the chance to organise a conference (on a topic of your choice)?

Questions about personal qualities and interests to help women discover competences:

Imagine it’s your 80th birthday and your best friends are preparing a speech about you.

✓ What would you like to hear?
✓ Looking back, what would you regret not having done?

Resource-oriented questions based on the systemic questioning techniques to help search for competences:

✓ Ask for exceptions to problems. For example: “How often/how long/when/where did the problem not appear?”, “What did you and/or others do differently at that time?”, “How can you repeat things you did during this unproblematic ‘time’?”.
✓ Ask for resources. For example: “What should remain as it is in your life now? What works out well?”, “What do you like/appreciate about yourself and others?”, “What do you like to do?”, “What could you do to make more of it?”.
✓ Circular questioning. For example: “What do your friends appreciate about you?”; “A good friend is doing a lonely hearts ad/a job search for you, which information about you would it include?”.

Reframing presumed weaknesses to help search for competences (cf. Neuro-linguistic programming)

Every weakness is a resource in reverse (that is not a rhetorical trick!). Ask the woman to describe her deficits. Then, find the resource behind it and help her reinterpret it as a strength instead of a weakness.

Some examples:

✓ Lateneness – strong presence in the moment (at the expense of structure and schedule, but with great orientation to processes).
✓ Perfectionism – high identification with the outcome of work.
✓ Sloppiness – ability to maintain an overview of work and not get lost in details.
✓ Laziness – high ability to find simple ways (shortcuts, a way of doing things with little effort).
4.3. Becoming aware of our own prejudices towards migrant women

Anke Vogel and Maria Nimmerfall, Frauenservice Graz
Mar Camarasa i Casals and Laura Sales Gutiérrez, Surt Women’s Foundation

As mentioned before (see pages 17-19), professional work with migrants requires a sharp look onto the own cultural imprinting as a result of socialization; each society is imprinted by its own culture and cultural norms, which affect and construct social life and relations under certain paradigms. In doing so, each society and social group develop their collective stereotypes concerning its own culture/ethnicity/origin, as well as concerning different cultures/ethnicities/origins.

Stereotypes are cognitive “short cuts” (Kubik, 2010), which ascribe a sample of qualities to a group of people, ignoring the diversity of its members. The exaggeration of these stereotypes and its widespread attribution to all members of a group transform them into prejudices. A prejudice, thus, goes further than stereotypes, as it implies a hostile and mistrustful attitude towards any person that belongs to a group only because of her/his pertinence to this group (Allport, 1954).

Stereotyped prejudices are difficult to tackle because they are simple and are easily transmitted. They usually persist during a long period of time, even without existing any contact or interaction between the diverse social groups. In this way, we, as individuals and professionals of a certain culture and social group, may also transmit or act according to stereotyped prejudices without questioning them and even without having any contact with the members of the concerned social, cultural or ethnic group.

Therefore professionals working with migrant women have to be aware of their own “pictures in mind” concerning migrant women and question their own prejudices towards them (e.g. poverty, lack of education, strong patriarchal values, low motivation to work, etc.).

How can we become aware of our own prejudices towards migrant women?

Identifying and accepting one’s own prejudices and stereotypes may be a difficult process. Below there is a collection of practical tips to have in mind when intervening with migrant women, as well as three exercises that may be useful for professionals to become aware of their own prejudices towards migrant women.

Concerning intervention, it is important to:

✓ Consider migrant women as individuals, not as members of a culture, country, religion, etc.
✓ Allow migrant women to express their situation and needs, without taking them for granted.
Avoid simplistic interpretations of the reality we associate to an ethnic or cultural minority, as it can influence our contact and intervention with individuals of such minority.

Avoid paternalistic attitudes. Equal relations should be promoted between users and professionals. Try to promote women’s capacity to choose for themselves and treat them as adults.

Exercises to become aware of one’s own prejudices and stereotypes

First exercise: Imagining the life of a migrant woman

Imagine a woman called Miriam. She has been living in your town for one year. Try to describe her story of immigration and her everyday life in the host country:

✓ Where does Miriam come from?
✓ Why did she leave her country?
✓ Why did she come to our country?
✓ Do you know her? Why? Why not?
✓ Does she have an education? Which one?
✓ How does she spend her days?

Afterwards compare and discuss your story with the stories of your colleagues.

These questions may help you: Which kind of migrant woman did you have in mind? Was she poor, rich, single, married, well-educated, not-well-educated? A black woman from Africa or from the United States? A woman wearing a headscarf?

Second exercise: Imagining oneself as a migrant woman

Imagine yourself as a migrant woman who visits your working institution. List your feelings during the walk through your working place:

✓ What do “you” expect?
✓ Which things do “you” like?
✓ Which things “you” don’t like?
✓ Do “you” feel welcome?

Afterwards analyse your own thoughts as described in the first exercise.

Third exercise: Stereotypes about migrant women

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about migrant women? Why?

✓ They do not want to integrate in our society.
✓ They prefer to live according to traditional women’s roles.
✓ They are not well educated.
✓ They are not aware of gender equality.
After thinking about these statements, reflect around these questions:

- What evidence do you have supporting your opinions (research, credible sources)? Or is your perception based on your own previous beliefs and the social consensus on how people are?
- Do you associate some of these statements to women from a specific country of origin?
- How many migrant women do you know?

Note: The above statements can be adapted to those relevant to the local stereotypes in each area.

4.4. Working with the Forward questionnaire and map of competences

General guidelines for using the Forward questionnaire

- The questionnaire may be used in individual and group settings. The group setting is the general framework described in the tool “Forward questionnaire and map of competences” in the toolbox. However, individual support is indispensable to ensure that each participant fully understands the questions and is able to provide informed answers.

- Whenever possible, the questionnaire should be distributed among women in their mother tongue. In this respect, the joint work of the partnership has produced versions of the questionnaire in partners’ country languages, with minor adaptations to their local contexts. All of them are available at the project website http://www.forwardproject.eu.

- Using the questionnaire in different languages also provides a learning opportunity for women to compare versions and learn the host country language or other languages. This option is especially fruitful when the questionnaire is used in group settings, as the peer group provides an opportunity for discussion and mutual learning.

- Producing a questionnaire in seven languages which can be used in different European countries and by diverse migrant women is a challenging task. The partnership encourages adapting the questionnaire to the needs and requirements of each setting and target group. In this sense, some minor rephrasing, comments and specific examples adapted to local context can all contribute to the usability of the questionnaire. The following elements should be taken into account:
  - Some of the questions (for example, 14 or 31) reflect a Western understanding of target-oriented planning which may not be useful in all contexts. This should be taken into account when passing the questionnaire.
  - The experiences replicated in the questions try to reflect common experiences of migrant women, as identified during the research of the project. For example, references to preparation of food and the encounter with a new environment are two common experiences of a large proportion of migrant women. However, these
experiences may vary in different local contexts and among diverse women; changing the examples may increase the usability of the questionnaire.

✔ The resulting map of competences should always be **analysed with each migrant woman**, in order to confront her views on the results and revise those questions and results that may be perceived as non-corresponding to her perception.

In a group setting, the facilitator may decide to **divide work on the questionnaire** into several sessions. Some possibilities are:

✔ Choosing a specific set of questions covering one competence (e.g. communication) or a set of competences (e.g. personal competences). After presenting the definition of the competence/s, the selection of these questions may help participants to better understand the concept and interiorise it relating it to their personal experience.

✔ Preparing a shorter version of the questionnaire, including one question per competence. Facilitators may select the most relevant questions on the basis of the section **Supporting material for facilitators: Elements of competence evaluated in each question**, included in the toolbox.

In a validation framework, the questionnaire has a limited use as the only competence assessment tool. It is better understood as a self-reflection tool to be combined with other tools and the portfolio itself. For this reason, it is not recommended that the map of competences is directly attached to the portfolio.

**The Forward questionnaire: a flexible tool**

The Forward questionnaire and map of competences is a very flexible tool that allows a **diversified use** by the practitioners who, depending on their needs, the available time or the type of service provided, can use it in the most appropriate way.

Consequently, it can potentially meet **several needs and requirements**:

✔ Facilitating the **discovery, emergence and recognition** of acquired competences to migrant women participating in **different kinds of programmes** (professional guidance, active labour market integration, professional analysis, etc.).

✔ Activating a process of **reflection and self-assessment of competences** that have been acquired to rank themselves more effectively compared to **future choices**.

✔ Discovering and recognizing **women’s strengths and weaknesses** in order to improve their **choices in their training path**.

✔ **Updating the self-image** through the building of a competence profile that takes into account the definition of a professional profile.

**Examples of uses of the questionnaire in specific programmes**

The Forward Questionnaire can be introduced in different ways within career guidance and empowerment programmes, as well as in educational and training contexts.
Among the activities of the Forward project, the partnership was able to test some ways the questionnaire can be used, revealing the effectiveness and versatility of this tool. Some examples are provided below.

**Using the Forward questionnaire in career guidance, assessment and training groups**

The Forward questionnaire may be passed to women as part of the competence-based approach, as a way to go deeper into the concept of competence.

After a brief introduction, the facilitator should highlight the qualitative and self-assessment nature of the tool, clarify its goal and exemplify the methodology. Distribute the questionnaire and ask to fill it out individually, either at the classroom or in general as homework. The time devoted to answering the questionnaire will vary depending on each woman. Once completed, the questionnaire will be reported to the next group meeting.

The handouts for women including the results of the questionnaire and the map of competences (handouts 4 and 6) can be an incredible source of comparison with other women who share similar paths. This phase of discussion and reflection within the group (which can also be used in face-to-face meetings) is a source of enrichment for each woman, as it provides more elements to determine their actual level of competence.

The handout 3, points for each answer, will be especially helpful for migrant women to interpret and discuss their maps of competences, as it explains the specific element of competence tackled in each question.

Some useful questions to guide their discussion can be: Do they think that the map of competences accurately reflects their level at a specific competence? And that of their classmates? Why? How would they prove it?

At the end of this exchange, each woman is asked to draw a new map of competences, as a result of a group negotiation and acceptance, recognition and enhancement of their competences. Deviations (whether they have a higher or lower level of competence) compared to the results of the filled out questionnaire will in this way be justified by the intention to give a direction to the path of growth and/or professional change.

The use of the Forward questionnaire in this context can be exemplified in its ability to consolidate the process of empowerment through communication, reporting, comparison and group negotiation.

**Using the Forward questionnaire in individual career guidance programmes and methodologies of balance of competences (bilan de compétence)**

Within individual career guidance and methodologies of balance of competences (bilan de compétence), the Forward questionnaire can be offered as a way of strengthening the women’s ability to reflect, recognise and update their competences.
After describing the goals and the meaning of the questionnaire, the facilitator distributes it among women for them to fill it out independently at home.

The return to the setting of the individual interview will be an opportunity to discuss the areas that provoked the most interest or concern for women, thus giving the opportunity to improve the analysis process and place it within the life experience and areas of competence. In particular, when it comes to women who have had limited opportunities for an open discussion, it is recommended that more time is devoted to the discovery and self-recognition phase.

The individual setting also allows women to confront, in a more targeted way, the stereotypes that have had an impact on the construction of women’s self-image, as well as the construction of their image of their environment.

In a completely mirrored manner, the use with women who have already had other experiences of confrontation, hand have matured and become accustomed to them as a consequence, the relationship with a peer group is particularly useful.

In this usage of the Forward questionnaire, the negotiation of its results is an opportunity to examine situations and examples, as well as to display the complexity and multiplicity of the circumstances in which competences are enriched. Again, the stereotypes and criticisms will be highlighted. The negotiation in this case is almost a dialogue with themselves, through the role of mirror and the stimulation of the guidance counsellor.

The competence map will be given at the end of that interview to fully reflect what the woman recognises within herself. The areas of excellence, as well as those areas for improvement, can be included in their personal action plan.

In this case, the Forward questionnaire is recognised as an activator of autonomy, decision-making and empowerment.

### 4.5. Using the Forward Portfolio

*Laura Sales Gutiérrez and Mar Camarasa i Casals*
*Surt Women’s Foundation*
*with the contributions of all Forward partners*

The following pages include some guidelines for professionals to support migrant women in elaborating their competence portfolio.

As described in chapter 3, the Forward competence portfolio is an instrument aimed at migrant women gathering all the relevant information for their personal project of employability and social inclusion.

The document is based on the Europass format, but it has been adapted to the features of the Forward process. The guidelines for participants and facilitators are also adaptations of the
Europass materials, but also take into account the results of the pilot tests carried out during the project in the partner countries.\footnote{The Europass format is used under the recognition of the source (© European Union) and web address (http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu). The Europass Language Passport is used under the recognition of the sources (© European Union and Council of Europe) and web addresses (http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu and http://www.coe.int/portfolio).}

There are \textbf{two templates available} of the Forward competence portfolio:

1. \textbf{Your competence portfolio – preparing your draft} (see Forward Toolbox).

   This template is designed to be printed and distributed among women so that they are able to prepare a first draft version of their portfolio.

   It is recommended that women, individually or in group, fill in the portfolio on paper first, to be able to make notes and comments either in the classroom or in guidance sessions with the facilitator/tutor.

   This template includes brief guidelines for women to help them understand the content of each section.

   Pages of sections 2-6 can be printed as many times as needed to include all the experience, education and training and competences they have.

2. \textbf{Competence portfolio digital template}

   This template is available at the project website as a Word document: \url{http://www.forwardproject.eu}.

   This template includes all sections of the portfolio but without the instructions. We recommend using it when preparing the final version of the competence portfolio.

   The format is designed to be used as a digital file, but it can also be printed. Participants can add or delete the sections and boxes as necessary.

### Integrating the portfolio into the Forward process

The construction of the portfolio is an on-going, transversal process throughout the whole workshop and not an isolated activity. The \textbf{Forward Toolbox} contains many tools which are useful for this purpose, but these are especially relevant:

- ✔ All the tools in phase 2, section 1: “To move from personal resources to competences”, aimed at developing women’s identification and training of competences.
- ✔ The three tools of phase 3, but especially “Preparation of the individual portfolio”, aimed at helping facilitators to devote time along the whole process to support women in the elaboration of their individual portfolio (specially the section on competences).
- ✔ The individual tool “Mid-course interview” is useful to identify on a case per case basis the particular needs of women and support them identifying documentary evidence relevant to build the portfolio.
General recommendations for facilitators

✓ The facilitator may offer support to women when preparing the portfolio either individually or in groups. Combining both settings may be very productive.

✓ It is especially recommended that women first read and fill in the template on paper (with brief instructions and tips) and then transfer the information on to a computer file.

✓ The facilitator must read carefully and be familiar with the template and the instructions. The instructions and tips provided for women are also very useful for facilitators. These instructions refer to using the portfolio in English and in English-speaking contexts. It is recommended to refer to the specific Europass instructions in each language and EU Member State, available at http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/documents/curriculum-vitae/templates-instructions

✓ Print as many pages of section 2-6 as it is necessary and distribute them among women so that they are comfortable preparing as many drafts as necessary.

✓ As with the Forward questionnaire, when migrant women are not very fluent in the language of the host country, they may decide to fill out Forward competence portfolio in their mother tongue. In this respect, the joint work of the partnership has produced versions of the questionnaire in their languages (English, Finnish, German, Italian, Lithuanian, Romanian and Spanish). Please take into account that in the process of translation some adaptations may have been introduced in order to adapt the portfolio to local contexts. All of them are available at the project website http://www.forwardproject.eu.

✓ Please remember that the competence portfolio is not a CV which can be directly used in job search and sent to employers. Instead, it is a reflection instrument for women to identify and gather all their experiences, competences and documentary evidence. After this process, writing a CV for a specific job position will be a matter of selecting and adapting those elements of the portfolio which are relevant for a specific position. For example, individual portfolios may be very useful in job search workshops.

Structure of the Forward competence portfolio

The template of the Forward competence portfolio follows the Europass structure, with some modifications to adapt it to the particular experiences of migrant women.

The Forward competence portfolio includes the following sections:

✓ Section 1. Personal information.

✓ Section 2. Experience (including not only paid work, but also non-paid experience, for example in care tasks, community participation or even the process of migration itself).

✓ Section 3. Education and training.
Section 4. Competences. Detailed inventory of skills and competences acquired in the course of training, work and daily life, and adapted to the Forward competence-based classification (basic, personal, social and meta-competences) and the contextualisation of the acquisition of each competence.

Section 5. Languages passport. Description of language skills (mother tongue, skills in the host country language and other languages) based on the structure of the Europass languages passport.

Section 6. Evidence. Table including list of documents providing evidence of the competences.

Section 7. Additional information.

Section 8. Annexes.

The facilitator may freely decide to make changes to the structure and sections of the portfolio, so that they are better suited to the requirements of the local labour market or individual needs. For example, if an individual has still limited life/work experience, education and training may be described first.

Similarly, it may not be always convenient to gather absolutely all experiences and competences of an individual on the portfolio. The facilitator should support women so that they analyse their goals and prioritise the relevant information accordingly.

Specific guidelines for sections 2 (experience) and 3 (education and training)

Migrant women may tend to focus only on their work and training experience in the host country. They should be encouraged to reflect on all their experience as a continuum, including the process of migration itself.

The facilitator should support women so that the presentation of the information meets the requirements of the local labour market.

Regarding training courses, tracing international equivalents may be a very challenging task. The following resource on ISCED (International Standard Classification of Education) devised by UNESCO may be useful for facilitators: [http://www.uis.unesco.org/Library/Documents/isced97-en.pdf](http://www.uis.unesco.org/Library/Documents/isced97-en.pdf)

Specific guidelines for section 4: competences

This section is dedicated to skills and competences acquired in the course of life and career but not necessarily covered by formal certificates and diplomas. In other words, they aim to give a complete picture of skills and competences acquired both in the course of education and training and in an informal or non-formal manner (in the course of occupational, leisure or family activities). This includes, of course, the experience of migration, during all its phases (departure, trip and settlement).
The headings describe the several types of the competences in the Forward classification. Please refer to the full list and definitions as a guide:

- Basic competences (excluding languages and communication, which are covered in the next section of the portfolio).
- Personal competences.
- Social competences.
- Meta-competences.

Facilitators will find useful materials in the Forward Handbook and Toolbox helping both facilitators and migrant women to identify competences. Chapter 4.2 (“How to recognise competences while monitoring women”) provides useful guidelines for facilitators, as also do the individual tools in the Forward Toolbox, while the competence learning diary, for example, may be a very useful tool to support women completing the portfolio.

The right column of the competence tables is a space for women to explain the context where each competence was acquired over the course of their lives, i.e. the specific places and activities which led to the acquisition of each competence.

Participants should be encouraged to analyse their experiences in order to make visible their competences. However, not all competences will be relevant for women and they may be left blank when there is nothing relevant to say.

**Specific guidelines for section 5: Language passport**

This section is based on the structure of the Europass Language passport. For every language, women are asked to describe the following:

- Name of the language
- Self-assessment of language skills, a grid used to present the European Language Levels (CEFR) of several language skills (listening, reading, spoken interaction and production, and writing). Please refer to the handout “self-assessment grid for languages” for details.
- Diploma(s) or certificate(s) evidencing their language skills.
- Linguistic experience(s). This space may be used to include all kinds of linguistic development experiences, both in the home and the host country, in the past or at present. As in section 4 on competences, this is the space to explain context where each competence was acquired over the course of their lives, i.e. the specific places and activities which led to the acquisition of each competence.

Women should be encouraged to describe all their linguistic capital, including their command of host country language.

Both the experience in the home country and over the course of the migration experience should be taken into account.
Specific guidelines for section 6: Evidence

This section includes a list of the specific supporting documents which prove having a specific competence and which are provided as annexes to the portfolio.

For each piece of evidence, the name of the document should be provided, together with a brief description of its content and the competences it proves.

Specific guidelines for section 7: Additional information

This section allows for inclusion of any other relevant information. This may vary among women, but some examples may be: other certificates, driving licenses, publications or research; membership of professional organisations, etc.).

General recommendations when preparing the digital version (computer file):

- Retaining the suggested font and layout.
- Not changing the wording of the left-hand column.
- Avoiding underlining or writing whole sentences in capitals or bold: it affects the readability of the document.
- Not splitting an entry under one heading over two pages (e.g. the list of training courses) – to avoid this use the ‘page break’ command in the word processing software.
- To invert the order of the headings, use the ‘copy/paste’ command in your word processing software.
- To delete any heading (e.g. a specific competence if no information can be provided), use the cut command in your word processing software.
- You may reproduce any table (using the ‘copy/paste’ command in your word processing software) as many times as required.
4.6. Facilitating the validation of formal, non-formal and informal learning of migrant women

Maria Toia, IREA
Laura Sales Gutiérrez and Mar Camarasa i Casals, Surt Women’s Foundation

Validation of competences: why, how?

As described in the conceptual framework of the project (see section 2.1), the validation of learning outcomes is the confirmation by a competent body that knowledge, skills and/or competences acquired by individuals in formal, non-formal or informal settings have been assessed against predefined criteria and are compliant with the requirements of a validation standard. Validation typically leads to certification.

In this chapter we intend to assist practitioners to support migrant women in the process of obtaining validation and certification of the skills, knowledge and experience they have acquired in formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts. It is essential that all the competences that are valuable and useful can be recognised and formalised, as an effective way to increase labour market integration and social inclusion.

Migrants and refugees are a relevant target group for validation, as they may have acquired skills and competences in their home country which are not sufficiently acknowledged in the receiving country, which hampers their integration to the labour market. Migrant women are doubly vulnerable to this lack of acknowledgement because, as women, competences that may have been acquired in non-paid feminised care tasks, for example, remain socially under-recognised.

In addition, migrants also face difficulties to have their formal qualifications fully recognised in the host country (Duchemin, Hawley, 2010). This is a serious problem for many migrants, especially those with university studies, because this lack of recognition promotes the existing trend of underemployment in low-paid jobs.

Practitioners should be fully familiar with the available procedures and resources for the recognition of formal qualifications acquired by migrant women in their countries and provide them with the necessary support to achieve this recognition. However, this is not always the most effective procedure, for several reasons. As shown by the research carried out during the project, long, exhausting and expensive procedures for recognition of formal qualifications can in fact hinder women’s short-term goals of job placement and entry into training programmes. For this reason, too, validation of competences, involving or not official recognition, is a way to explore to promote the labour integration and social inclusion of migrant women. The Forward project has, in part, sought to put into practice this idea by providing an unofficial recognition and validation of migrant women’s competences by a panel of external experts.
When talking about validating the competences of migrant women, several direct and indirect benefits can be noted:

✓ Motivation of participants to access validation opportunities can represent a route into a lifelong learning pathway, into employment, or simply a means of acquiring ‘softer’ outcomes such as increased self-awareness and self-esteem (Duchemin, Hawley, 2010).

✓ Validation of acquired competences helps the socially excluded to re-integrate into the labour market and society as a whole (Otero, McCoshan, Junge, 2005).

✓ For immigrants and refugees, identifying and validating competences from prior education and/or work experience can prevent racism and discrimination (European Commission, 2009).

✓ Recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes becomes a real mechanism for social and professional integration, especially if the recognition procedure can be completed in a relatively short space of time. (Werquin, 2010).

✓ Access to employment is central to successful integration (Match, 2011).

**Steps in the validation process: different approaches in Europe**

As described in the conceptual framework of the project (see chapter 2), the procedures and steps of the validation process can differ from one country to another, according to the formal regulations and the different bodies involved in the validation and certification process, and their responsibilities. In some countries the whole validation and certification process is done by the centre of evaluation and certification of competencies (i.e. Romania) while in other countries external bodies have the role of certification (France, Netherlands etc.). Depending on these elements, therefore, the steps to carry out the process will be different.

Similarly, the roles of the validation practitioners are different. In some countries, a career counsellor or a competence assessor can assist the client only in the first phase or phases of information, identification and documentation while in other countries the career counsellor or competence assessor can run the whole validation process, and an external body only gives the certification (Sava and Crasovan, 2013).

Thus, different bodies differentiate three or four steps of the validation and certification process, according with the accent put on different parts along with the continuum of the process and its logic of running. So, for instance, CEDEFOP and the Council of Europe (2012) distinguish four phases: (1) identification, (2) documentation, (3) formal assessment, (4) recognition leading to a certification (Council of Europe, 2012, p.17).

The OECD (Werquin, 2010, p.8) differentiates: “the first step of identification and documentation – identifying what someone knows or can do, and typically recording it. This is a personal stage, possibly with guidance. The second step is establishing what someone knows or can do. This may be a personal stage of self-evaluation (with or without feedback) or, where there is significant formalisation, it could involve reliance on an external evaluator. The third step is the validation – establishing that what someone knows or can do satisfies certain requirements, points of reference or standards. In this stage, a level of performance is set and requires the involvement of a third party. The fourth step is certification – stating that what someone knows and can do satisfies certain requirements, and awarding a document
testifying to this. This necessitates the involvement of an accredited authority to certify performance and possibly its level. The last step is social recognition – acceptance by society of the signs of what someone knows or can do. Ultimately, it would be possible for a recognition process to deliver fully equivalent qualifications to those obtained through formal learning”.

At EU level, the agreement on the Common European Principles for Identification and Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning (2004) and the subsequent European Guidelines for Validating Non-formal and Informal Learning (2008) have initiated a process to mainstream validation processes in Europe. Since 2004 these principles (see section 2.1 for a summary) have been used in countries as a reference for national developments. It should also be taken into account that the existing procedures are sometimes currently available only to country nationals or EU citizens, leaving out migrants.

**How can the Forward project contribute to the validation of migrant women’s competences in EU Member States?**

Given the different classifications and differentiations of the steps to cover in a validation and certification process, it is impossible to provide a valid framework useful for different national realities. However, promoting the validation of migrant women’s competences has been a core concern of the Forward project, sensitising policymakers and civil servants, promoting advocacy for the implementation of validation processes where they do not exist or consolidate them and make them fully effective and available to migrants elsewhere. Beyond them, the Forward project and materials have tried to promote the general social recognition of migrant women’s competences as well as an informal (verbal) validation of migrant women’s competences by an external panel of experts.

In parallel, the Forward materials have been designed with a European dimension that can be integrated into in-force or future validation procedures, notably:

- The Forward list of competences and their definitions include competences defined under the EU framework.
- The Forward competence portfolio is based on the framework, structure and concepts of the Europass CV and the Europass Language Passport.

The Forward methodology uses a portfolio method, a set of documents including relevant documentary evidence proving the command of specific competences. This assessment method is recommended for the validation of non-formal and informal learning in the European Guidelines for Validating non-formal and informal learning. The portfolio, as an organised collection of materials presenting and verifying skills and knowledge acquired through experience, is considered “of particular relevance to validating non-formal and informal learning because it allows the individual candidate to contribute actively to the collection of evidence and also offers a mix of approaches strengthening the overall validity of the process” (Cedefop, 2009).

The Forward approach is also in line with the Common European Principles for Identification and Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning and the subsequent European Guidelines
on this matter. Some of those principles are key elements of the Forward approach, and thus should be acknowledged by any professional implementing the Forward model:

- The migrant woman is in the centre of the validation.
- The whole process should be undertaken voluntarily.
- The privacy of migrant women should be respected.
- Equal access and fair treatment should be guaranteed.

Facilitating the validation process

The validation process requires guidance that is carefully tailored the needs of each individual. It involves producing and distributing information, motivating potential candidates and offering individualised advice and support during the whole process from identification of learning to certification. This can take many months.

The process of validation can be a complex and difficult one, and will require some level of skill from the practitioners which allows them to confidently extract the relevant information from migrant women. In order to be able to use the Forward model and provide appropriate advice and support to migrant women, we recommend a minimum level of competence on the part of the validation practitioners (see section 4.1 on the competences of trainers and section 4.2 on how to recognise competences).

The levels of training and qualification for validation practitioners across Europe varies dramatically and at present in many countries there is no single recognised minimum professional standard for delivery of validation of competences. With this disparity in mind, the model is aimed at practitioners with sufficient experience to be able to deliver a good quality service.

The process of validation involves the participation of different professionals. Two key figures are counsellors and assessors:

- **Counsellors** facilitate the whole process of validation and should have among other elements: a thorough knowledge of the education system and the validation process, an understanding of the labour market. It also implies a list of expert contacts to answer specific technical questions.
- **Assessors** seek and review evidence of an individual’s learning and judge what meets or does not meet specific standards. They must be familiar with the standards of validation and the relevant assessment methods. They should have no personal interest in the validation outcome, to guarantee impartiality and be able to inspire trust and to create a proper psychological setting for the candidates.

The guidelines included in this chapter apply specifically to the role of counsellors, as facilitators of the validation process, and not specifically to the role of assessors.
Information that individuals may need during the validation process

The following table may be useful for practitioners to understand the kinds of information and support that migrant women may need at the different stages of the validation process (Cedefop, 2009).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before taking the decision</th>
<th>During the process of validation</th>
<th>After the validation or certification process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Added value.</td>
<td>✓ Forms of evidence of learning outcomes.</td>
<td>✓ Potential routes to further qualification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ What to expect.</td>
<td>✓ Sufficiency of evidence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ What standards have to be met.</td>
<td>✓ Quality and standards.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ What form the evidence of learning outcomes needs to take.</td>
<td>✓ Presentation of evidence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Timelines for validation.</td>
<td>✓ Assessment and how best to approach the process.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Costs.</td>
<td>✓ Support available.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Procedure.</td>
<td>✓ Appeal procedure.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Migrant women will also be faced with a different range of choices to be made at each stage of the project. Being aware of them will help counsellors to provide the adequate support to women at each stage. The following table may be of help (Cedefop, 2009).

### Choices of individuals during validation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of validation</th>
<th>Choice to be made</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access and motivation</strong></td>
<td>Whether or not to begin thinking seriously about prior learning and whether opportunities for validation are available and suitable.</td>
<td>The motivation to begin the process is important here. Personal reasons can be based on boosting self-esteem or for economic reasons such as getting a new job or through the recruitment process for a formal learning programme. Sometimes employers can initiate this thinking about validation through changes to work practices and presenting new opportunities that require proof of competences. Another important condition for this stage is the extent to which individuals are empowered to manage their involvement with validation and the extent to which they sense they are...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiation</td>
<td>To identify in outline the knowledge and skills that have been learned.</td>
<td>Accurate, timely and accessible information, advice and guidance are critical to the decision to proceed with the documentation process. It is also critical to the decision to undertake any supplementary learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-documentation</td>
<td>How to find out about the requirements of the documentation process?</td>
<td>The standards that are expected for formal qualification or for a job represent a starting point for identification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whether to proceed to documentation?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentation</td>
<td>How best to carry out evidence gathering and mapping? What is sufficient evidence?</td>
<td>From the perspective of the individual this is the substantial part of the validation exercise. Issues arising during the process need to be discussed with expert counsellors (on subject content and documentation process). Decisions on sufficiency of evidence will be based on these discussions. The need for additional learning will become clear during documentation. Here too advice will be required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What to do about areas of insufficient evidence?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whether to submit for validation?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal recognition</td>
<td>Whether to accept or seek informal recognition for the evidence of competences that have been documented?</td>
<td>Sometimes this recognition will be automatic, for example, if it is part of a company appraisal scheme. Otherwise it might be possible to use the documented evidence in the process of seeking promotion or applying for a place on an education or training programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further learning</td>
<td>Whether any further learning is necessary and how best to arrange for learning experiences?</td>
<td>The need for further learning may arise as the standards are used for documentation (learning gaps) or through the need to show recent and up-to-date knowledge of a familiar field. The learning may best be achieved through arrangements for different work experience or through a formal learning programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submission for validation</td>
<td>Does the evidence meet the standards for validation? How best to prepare for interview questions and for independent assessment?</td>
<td>Independent advice is needed on the sufficiency of evidence and how best orally to support the evidence base.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Validation</td>
<td>How to understand and use the various possible outcomes of validation?</td>
<td>Credit, partial qualification or full qualification are the outcomes. Each of these may be useful in different situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certification</td>
<td>Whether to seek certification?</td>
<td>Advice is needed on the added value of certification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further qualification</td>
<td>Decision to make a further step in learning and certification.</td>
<td>It is well known that achieving recognition is likely to lead to the desire for more learning and more qualification.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**How to choose the learning to be assessed?**

The wealth of experience of migrant women may translate into a long list of different kinds of learning. It may be necessary to apply some criteria to select the learning that is most relevant to include in the portfolio.

Criteria will vary depending on the individual and their (occupational) integration goals. However, as guidelines, these are some of the criteria recommended in the *European Guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning*, and that can be useful for facilitators supporting preparation of the portfolio:

- The breadth of knowledge, skills and competences to be assessed;
- The depth of learning required;
- How current or recent are the knowledge, skills and competence.
- The sufficiency of information for an assessor to make a judgement.
- The authenticity of the evidence being the candidate’s own learning outcomes.

**Other recommendations for practitioners**

When agreeing to begin the validation process with the migrant woman, there are a number of issues and considerations to think about that will help practitioners to get the best out of the process:
✓ Ensuring that the sessions with the migrant woman take place in a secure and safe setting. Private space is needed so that the woman feels comfortable speaking about often very personal matters.

✓ Establishing whether the migrant woman has any additional needs. Does she require any adjustments due to a physical disability? Is the meeting room accessible? It should be assessed whether she has any communication needs, or learning needs, and ensure that communication and information provided is appropriate to their needs. For example, a woman with dyslexia may appreciate any written information being produced according to how they can best use it (coloured paper, etc.). In the case of migrant women, the language issue should be specially taken into account, as it may affect greatly communication. When possible, facilitators speaking the mother tongue of migrant women are preferable, and language mediators can be also extremely helpful.

✓ Agreeing on a plan of action with the migrant woman. A fully explanation of what the validation process involves is needed. They will need to know exactly what will be expected of them, how long the process is likely to take, and if there will be any writing for them to do. Most importantly they will need to know why the process is useful for them. At the first meeting, clarifying what their requirements are, and agreeing what their goals are, e.g. to return to employment within a period of time. It is important that the woman recognises how the process is going to benefit them – this will make them feel at ease, and will help ensure they are committed and enthusiastic.

✓ Assuring the migrant woman that any information they share is private, and will remain confidential. Obviously much of the information given in the portfolio has to be detailed, but this should always be checked together with each woman. During the course of sessions they may disclose very personal details about themselves, and a practitioner must always have the agreement of their client before sharing any personal information with a third party.

✓ It can be useful, before embarking on the process, to have an initial meeting with the migrant woman to establish a rapport and a good working relationship. The individual interview tools in the Forward toolbox may be helpful for this purpose. Trust is an important factor in the process, and an informal introductory session can also be a good way to get to know the woman, and for them to become used to speaking to the practitioner. (D’Arcy and Daley, 2013)
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MATCH project (2011). *MATCH project. Informal and non-formal competences matching devise for migrants’ employability and active citizenship*, Final comparative report, Project number: 510739-LLP-1-2010-1-IT-GRUNDTVIG-GMP,

http://match.cpv.org/bin/MATCH_Final_comparative_report.pdf


SURT, Women’s Foundation. Private Foundation, Spain.
Frauenservice Graz, Austria.
Monika – Multicultural Women’s Association, Finland.
People, S.r.l., Italy.
Women’s Issues Information Centre (WIIC), Lithuania.
Romanian Institute for Adult Education (IREA), Romania.

FORWARD. Competence portfolio and pedagogical tools to identify, recognize, validate and improve the competences acquired by migrant women in formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts