



# Critical Curation and Collaboration in Learning (Cur8)

European Experience Report and Roadmap

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## Project Information

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## 1. Introduction

Critical curation plays an increasingly important role in the learning process and is an important prerequisite for the digital literacy of all knowledge workers. In this context, the skills of educators and trainers need to change from the role of "sage on the stage" (creating and presenting learning content) to a "curator-concierge" model, guiding adult learners to excellent existing learning content. This is a shift in mindset and skills. To meet these changing demands, learning and development professionals need the skills to source, filter, create and manage digital content to improve the effectiveness of learning.

As part of the Cur8 project, we have developed a set of training resources and materials aimed at improving these critical digital competencies for learning content development in the context of designing and delivering blended, collaborative and self-directed learning programmes for adult learners. These training resources (including a blended learning course, a toolbox and a learning platform) were tested in the project, recording the impact and assessing learning, skills development and behaviour change. Participants in the testing activities carried out a learning project in which they applied what they had learned in real-life situations to ensure effective learning transfer and retention. They made suggestions and provided feedback on how to improve the training resources and reported on their experiences, detailing the application of these approaches and providing examples of good practice.

The Cur8 experience report describes the piloting activities and demonstrates the impact of the interventions during the Cur8 pilot project on improving critical curation competences of educators and trainers in the VET, C-VET and adult education sectors. The report includes a detailed description of the process of piloting the Cur8 training resources in the five partner countries and summarises the evaluation and feedback results on the application and feasibility of the Cur8 training and tools. It also provides good practice examples from the experiences of the pilot participants.

As a final part of this report, a roadmap illustrates our conclusions and recommendations for wider implementation, exploitation and replication of the Cur8 training tools.





## 2. Piloting strategy

### 2.1 Methodology of pilot tests

The main purpose of the pilot was to test and evaluate the outcomes and intellectual outputs of the Cur8 project in order to identify necessary improvements and assess the likely impact of our interventions. In doing so, we also wanted to test how we could enable the transfer of learning into work practice and ensure the development of key digital skills and competences among our target groups.

The objectives of the pilot projects were:

- ◆ To test and evaluate the outcomes and achievements of the Cur8 project based on the individual qualification needs of the participants.
- ◆ To promote the development of new skills and techniques in the participating learners (upskilling and re-skilling)
- ◆ To ensure that the learning experience is maintained and transferred into practice to ensure and validate competence development through implementation in national learning projects
- ◆ To train professionals who then transfer their knowledge (through the learning projects) to other learning and development professionals and/or adult learners, thereby improving their critical digital skills and competences.

The Cur8 training resources include:

- ◆ The Cur8 Train-the-Trainer Format: a methodology and modular training programme; including a digital competence framework for applying Critical Digital Literacy to Learning Content Curation, Self-directed Learning and Collaborative Learning
- ◆ The Cur8 Toolbox for Educators: an array of tools and resources to support critical digital literacy, self-directed learning, content curation for learning and approaches to collaborative learning.
- ◆ The Cur8 Learning Experience Platform: an innovative learning and gamification environment that supports quiz-based and peer-to-peer learning, and interactive Apps. to facilitate content discovery, pathing and indexing, learning content 'mashups', multi-media content development.

The **impact on the users** was assessed by means of the validation system LEVEL5, which is a system that has been designed to validate personal, social and organisational competence development. In the Cur8 Project, LEVEL5 was applied to assess and recognise the new competences developed during the piloting trainings and to identify behavioural changes and impact on those involved in the piloting.

The Cur8 experience report combines results of the feedback of participants gathered in the piloting period mentioned above with the result of the LEVEL5 competence development assessment.

All Cur8 partners produced a National Pilot Report. These reports examine and evaluate the applicability and feasibility of the Cur8 training and tool, as well as the impact of the Cur8 training





activities on learners in the given national context. All the individual results are included in this general report and the main findings are summarised and presented in the following sections.

Regarding the **impact** of the learning during the piloting phase, the main questions are, if learners

- ◆ gained a better understanding of critical content curation,
- ◆ improved their ability **“to transform teaching and learning through effective collection, categorisation, critiquing, conceptualisation, and circulation of resources deemed to have (curricular and) content value”**
- ◆ are better prepared for effectively navigating abundant and complex information and media landscapes.

## 2.2. Testing period

The overall testing period started in June 2022 with a webinar and subsequent training course to launch the blended learning programme, and the final testing activities were completed in February 2023.

Each phase is described in more detail in the relevant section.

## 2.3 Piloting participants

The **professionals** involved in the national piloting activities were professionals in adult education, CVET and VET, workplace trainers and adult educators. These cascaded their learning through the learning projects to other professionals in the same fields or to learners in adult education and CVET.

More detailed information about the groups involved can be found in the partner country learning project summaries.

Overall, the quantitative target was met. It was planned that 18 participants would take part in the training programme (phase 1) and that they would then cascade their knowledge to 10-15 participants each. Due to very short term COVID related absences of 2 people, 16 people participated in the first part of the programme and cascaded their learning to 138 people.

## 2.4 Processes involved

The pilot phase included the following processes:

### Stage 1

The first stage of the piloting process involved 2-3 representatives of each partner organisations. All in all 16 adult educators, content developers, HR experts or CVET trainers were involved, committing to undertaking the Cur8 Train-the-Trainer programme.

This stage consisted of:

- ◆ A Preparatory e-learning phase – (reading materials) initiated by a 1.5 hrs webinar
- ◆ Phase 1 – A 3-day Face-to-Face course (C1 Training) in Uppsala, Sweden
- ◆ Phase 2 – Putting learning into practice through a Learning Project (learning transfer)
- ◆ Phase 3 – Reporting on the piloting experience – a Learning Project Report



The Phase 1 face-to-face course (C1 training) was designed as a 'study circle'. It aimed to help the participants develop the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to be able to support CVET Trainers/Learning and Development Professionals in learning about:

- ◆ curating, creating and sharing digital learning resources
- ◆ managing and orchestrating collaborative and self-directed learning, and
- ◆ empowering and actively engaging learners through digital technologies

...whilst at the same time seeking their feedback on and contributions to the learning approach and content: a self-directed, collaborative and collective learning experience.

It was a very practical learning experience with the aim of developing the skills and competences of these educators in the following areas

- ◆ Critical content curation for learning
- ◆ Digital Content and Mashup Creation
- ◆ Critical Digital Literacy
- ◆ Managing and facilitating Collaborative Learning
- ◆ Engaging and empowering adult learners Self-Directed learning through the use of digital technologies
- ◆ Game-based learning and how to produce learning quizzes
- ◆ Planning how to implement these new digital technologies within their teaching
- ◆ Competence self-assessment and validation
- ◆ Undertaking a Learning Project

The following methods were applied:

- ◆ a. expert input
- ◆ b. hands-on sessions
- ◆ c. group activities
- ◆ d. simulation and role plays
- ◆ e. workshops
- ◆ f. experimentation

At the start of the course, all participants assessed their current level of competence against the Cur8 Competence Framework via the Cur8 Competence Spider:

[https://mahara.vita-eu.org/survey/cur8\\_questionnaire1](https://mahara.vita-eu.org/survey/cur8_questionnaire1)

In reporting on their Learning Projects they re-assessed their competence as part of the evaluation process i.e. to record their competence developments.

## Stage 2

The second stage of the piloting process involved the implementation of the Learning Projects by all the professionals who had attended the C1 course in stage 1. This was Stage 2 of the Cur8 Train-the-Trainer Programme. The implementation of the Learning Projects was designed to ensure learning retention and transfer into working practices. On completion, each of the pilots was written up in a Learning Project Report. The Report was designed to evaluate the effectiveness of





the intervention and assess its impact on both the target group for the Learning Project and on the implementing trainer/educator.

### 2.5 Feedback

During the three-day course in Sweden, participants were invited to provide comments in feedback sessions in order to change or improve the learning approach and content where necessary. In addition to a final round, there was also an online questionnaire that allowed for detailed feedback on the individual modules and the learning approach. In the learning project reports there was again the possibility to give qualitative feedback on the materials and content.

The feedback forms received, together with the feedback from the learning projects, provide a meaningful overall evaluation of the Cur8 programme and materials.

## 3. Organisation of the Piloting

As described above, the pilot period had two stages. The first stage was the same for all partners - the training programme was tested in the blended learning course. This was then followed by the second stage in which the participants implemented their own learning project. These are very different and are therefore briefly presented below, country by country, to illustrate the diversity and different applications of the Cur8 learning approach.

### 3.1 die Berater, Austria

#### a. Learning project 1: 4-week course “TrainerInnen als Content-KuratorInnen”

The project involved eight adult educators within die Berater, mainly working in Austrian Public Employment Service funded upskilling and reskilling projects.

The aim of the project was to test the content developed in the course of the Cur8 project and to present innovative approaches and digital tools to support staff delivering training.

During the month of November, based on the five-stage model for e-moderation, new content was shared every Tuesday via the internal Moodle platform, accompanied by emails informing participants of new content and activities, and providing an opportunity to share their own resources and questions. A final Zoom webinar was held on 29 November to summarise the course, discuss the content and lessons learnt, and support participating educators with questions about learning content curation and digital tools.

Key outcome: There are so many tools available for training. However, it is sometimes overwhelming because there is too much information and too many tools for everything and every topic. The tools are also constantly evolving and improving. It is therefore becoming increasingly important to curate a good selection of tools that are really useful for trainers and participants the participants in the upskilling and re-skilling courses. The Cur8 toolbox will be very useful in helping to focus this. In the end it is all about curation: We can support educators and trainers by providing them with tried and tested tools and telling them how to use them, without focusing too much on the technical side.



### **b. Learning project 2: Webinars on digital tools for educators**

The project involved adult educators within die Berater, mainly working in Austrian Public Employment Service funded upskilling and reskilling projects.

The aim of the learning project was to encourage the trainers to use online tools for their lessons, particularly Mentimeter (for gamification) and Mindmeister (for mindmapping and notetaking).

During two online sessions, these tools were presented and practised and combined with information on the principles of collaborative learning, content curation and gamification.

Key outcome: The webinars gave participants the opportunity to get to grips with new tools. This is often not possible in daily practice. With this introduction, they were highly motivated to use digital tools in their training. Following this experience, die Berater intend to continue with this type of webinar and highlight digital tools in their internal training programme, with Trello, Moodle, Canva and H5P in the next semester.

### **c. Learning project 3: Gamification for youth and young adults training**

The project involved trainers within Berater, mainly providing training courses to young people.

The aim was to introduce the principles of gamification and its benefits in motivating young learners to those trainers in die Berater who work primarily with young audience.

During a training session input was given on collaborative learning coupled with gamification from the Cur8 LXP. Then trainers shared their experience and discussed the opportunities for using gamified learning content in their training.

Key outcome: It's easy to get caught up in the day-to-day running of the business, so the Cur8 module on gamification was a good base to return to and ensure we keep up with our peer-to-peer learning efforts.

## **3.2 CATRO, Bulgaria**

### **a. Learning project 1: Creating a holistic CVET education programme**

The learning project involved CVET trainers, primary and secondary-school teachers, kindergarten teachers, college and university professors, personal trainers and coaches.

The aim was to build up Cur8 learning materials to create a holistic CVET education programme with focus on professional educators' upskilling.

In collaboration with the Sindeo Academy, which started in November 2022, CATRO sought to build on the Cur8 modules, with full reference to the project, and create a training programme for educators that would be accredited by the Ministry of Education and Science. The programme is based on the Cur8 materials and will be provided by the Academy. This is currently underway, and if the programme is approved, it is expected to continue for at least one year until September 2024.

Key outcome: The Learning Project has shown that educators are opening up to more contemporary teaching methods that take into account a wider range of factors that mitigate or facilitate quality learning, including psychological, socio-cultural and neuroscientific studies. This



indicates a shift in thinking that is very motivating for our project and helps us to keep moving forward.

### **b. Learning project 2: The in-between**

The learning project involved 16 secondary-school teachers, VET-teachers, university lecturers.

The aim was to introduce the Cur8 learning experience platform and toolbox to Sofia-based educators, show them how to use it, and instil in them an understanding of the benefits of modern technologies for their practice.

The pilot included two seminars in January 2023, the first focused on all Cur8 modules, including a practical task (with homework) for digital curation, while the second was a Digital Wellbeing session with a smaller group of educators, including theory and practical exercises the Digital Wellbeing module.

Key outcome: The best way to facilitate the increased use of digital technologies among educators and trainers in continuing vocational education and training is to first familiarise them with empirical facts and data about the profile of the modern student. Many educators make the mistake of taking a top-down approach to teaching rather than a bottom-up approach, neglecting the learning needs and requirements of the individual. The result is a very rigid learning experience where students are not allowed to develop their own potential.

With this in mind, the next step is to equip educators with the relevant tools and approaches needed to facilitate high quality, student-centred learning. These include curation tools and approaches, mash-up skills, learner empowerment teaching practices and modern methods of gathering continuous feedback and supporting learners as a 'guide from the side'.

### **3.3 BUPNET and blinc, Germany**

The BUPNET and blinc teams work very closely together and have jointly implemented the testing phase across teams so that the individual projects also reached a larger target group at the same time.

### **c. Learning project 1: Setting up a CPD offer – blinK – Knowledge in the blink of an eye**

This first learning project is, so to say, the framework for all learning projects undertaken in Germany and is a joint learning project.

The learning project involved the five participants that took part in the blended learning course in stage 1 and approx. 30 BUPNET and blinc team members – personnel in CVET and AE (course developers, trainers, HR) aged 30-65.

The aim of this learning project was to develop a long-term, sustainable initiative for knowledge sharing and training in the team on topics related to critical content curation. The subsequent learning projects are dedicated to specific topics within the wide range of content curation and are part of the CPD that was set up within the Cur8 project.

The learning project is about setting up a CPD offer called blinK – Knowledge in the blink of an eye – and consists of a series of training aimed to provide valuable and engaging content related to



work-life for busy professionals who face time-pressure and intensive schedules. The topics were curated by the five professionals from blinc and BUPNET's EU team and presented in condensed training modules either in English or in German (the language in which the participants felt more at ease).

Key outcome: In the digital age, where digital content and tools are rapidly evolving and training staff have little time for their own training, a training series of small knowledge bites seems the appropriate format. The desire for more knowledge sharing and upskilling is inherent in people, but is often forgotten due to heavy workloads. Sometimes it takes a little nudge to get people engaged and involved in a training programme.

The 5 facilitators who were involved in the CPD were able to enhance the competences they were aiming for and all of them increased their facilitation competences in an online environment. They have all been able to pass on what they have learnt to others in a meaningful and coherent way through a series of training activities that are described in the following section.

#### d. Learning project 2: Learning Content Curation

This learning project was part of the blink initiative (as were the subsequent projects) developed during the Cur8 pilot phase in Germany and was carried out by a European expert in project management and content development. It involved 11 trainers and educators.

The aim was to put own learning into practice by introducing trainers and project managers in the company to a number of key concepts and processes, starting with learning resource curation and mashups.

The pilot included an online seminar that was followed by practical exercises. During the online session the subject of curation and why it matters was discussed, concrete steps for an online curation approach were reviewed and concrete examples and tools were given.

Key outcome: Content curation is a new area. The participants had never thought about it or used the approach before. They were definitely interested in learning about concrete new tools that they could use, and the willingness to engage in this new way of preparing content has increased or even been sparked.

Understanding the context is key – then it comes to an exchange with the educators about the best possible ways to implement digital solutions to their learning environments, trying out new things and adapting

#### e. Learning project 3: Open educational resources

This learning project was part of the blink initiative and was carried out by a part-time course developer at blinc. It involved 11 BUPNET and blinc team members – personnel in CVET and AE (course developers, trainers, HR) aged 30-65.

The aim was to deepen her own knowledge and skills about OER, to become an expert in the field and to share her knowledge so that her colleagues could also make good use of the licences involved.



After a period of self-study, she prepared her own comprehensive OER guide, which was then presented step-by-step in one of the blink sessions. She also prepared some exercises so that the participants could test their knowledge directly.

Key outcome: The trainer has delved deeply into the subject of OER and has created a comprehensive guide with examples and exercises. She was able to pass on her competences very well and in a clear manner, and was thus able to eliminate many ambiguities among the participants. It is only thanks to this pilot that the potential of OER has become really clear to many, and with it the realisation of how important it is to take a critical look at resources.

#### **f. Learning project 4: Digital storytelling**

This learning project was carried out jointly by a content developer and European expert from BUPNET and a content developer from blinc. It involved 10 BUPNET and blinc team members – personnel in CVET and AE (course developers, trainers, HR) aged 30-65.

The aim of the project was to deepen their knowledge of tools and methods for developing exciting stories and to introduce colleagues to (digital) storytelling and its use and benefits in educational work.

The learning project included a self-study phase in which the two explored a range of digital tools that can be used to tell visually interesting stories and created a collection of tools. They then experimented with a number of tools and created some stories to gain confidence in using them. During the blink session they introduced the participants to storytelling and its benefits in educational work and did some practical exercises to stimulate creativity and to try out one tool directly.

Key outcome: All participants recognised the potential of digital storytelling in educational contexts, e.g. with learners from different cultural backgrounds, as a means to improve communication skills and language expression. They will delve further into the topic and discover tools themselves. A new session will be organised to bring together what has been learned.

#### **g. Learning project 5: Digital wellbeing**

This learning project was carried out by an experienced HR consultant and trainer from blinc, who was keen on widening her knowledge in the field of digital wellbeing as she felt it has become an important issue in HR management during and after the pandemic. It involved 7 BUPNET and blinc team members – personnel in CVET and AE (course developers, trainers, HR) aged 30-65.

The aim was to bring this issue into the two companies and raise awareness. Besides knowledge and skills growth, the aim of the learning project was also creating stronger inter-team relationships.

After a self-study phase she prepared a training session based on the Cur8 materials. The participants were invited to prepare the session with some practical tasks. During the session the importance of digital leadership, but also digital wellbeing, were discussed. The main focus was on in-depth sharing on and allowed for vulnerability, which additionally brought together the participants.



Key outcome: The trainer was very engaging and was able to create the necessary trust in the group to open up and allow them to share about their well-being and the problems they have with it. The group was able to open up and share their challenges in caring for their digital wellbeing. People allowed themselves to be vulnerable. It was important that we decided NOT to record the training, which helped a lot with the level of trust between the participants.

#### **h. Learning project 6: Introduction to Canva designs and its use for content curation**

This learning project was carried out by a content developer and designer from blinc. It involved 10 BUPNET and blinc team members – personnel in CVET and AE (course developers, trainers, HR) aged 30-65.

The primary objective for the project owner was to improve her competences in the field of design in order to create more appealing learning content and to introduce her colleagues to the Canva design tool and help them develop new skills in graphic design. She wanted to teach them how to create eye-catching visual content that could enhance their work and also their courses /trainings.

She prepared a session and looked into how best facilitate it online. During the session she gave her colleagues some examples of designs created with Canva. Participants signed up for a free Canva account and were guided through the basics of navigating the Canva dashboard. After an overview of the design tools and features available in Canva and how to use the various tools to create designs and discussed best practices the participants had the chance to get hands-on and practice creating a design using Canva.

Key outcome: Not just talking about the features, but actively demonstrating what certain things do and how they work gives people more confidence to use the tools on their own.

Recognition that collaborative and game-based learning are key technologies for enhancing education and training: The hands-on and laid-back approach to the tool helped the participants (with some of them having no prior knowledge and being fearful of learning about “yet another tool”) get a positive start with the tool that can help them in the future to create learning content (also from their curated content).

### **3.4 Folkuniversitetet, Sweden**

#### **a. Learning project 1: Job-oriented podcast**

The learning project on the topic “Jobs and Careers” was part of a B2 English Language Course. It involved 12 adult learners (B2 students).

The aim of the pilot was to boost speaking and listening skills in English using technical tools, tasks and innovative approaches among the learners.

The project was tied in with the module on “Jobs and Careers” of a speaking practice course. For the first two weeks, the students worked on the information worth being included in the podcast, divided it into blocks and made scriptures. They worked independently on this stage with weekly Q&A sessions at the end of their regular classes. During the third week, they recorded different



blocks of the podcast and organised into one episode. The post-production part was on the responsible students and the facilitator.

Key outcome: The project had a great influence on the facilitator's approaches to teaching. Namely, incorporating a specific range of digital technologies into the educational process, facilitating collaborative self-led learning, raising awareness of the importance of digital literacy.

For the participants of a target group, this experience was beneficial in terms of developing their language skills as well as increasing their digital literacy level.

### **b. Learning project 2: Edutainment**

The project 'Edutainment' serves as an extension to the module "Education" which is annually studied by B2 students of English Language Course at Folkuniversitetet.

The aim of the pilot was to extend the traditional course by introducing the peculiarities of remote education and showing the usage of online tools in practice in order to diversify the learning process, enhance students' active engagement in learning a language and demonstrate the real practical value of such tools that students of English Language Course can later use in their own learning.

Within 3 week in the framework of the module 'Edutainment' in the classes of English Language Course for B2 students at Folkuniversitetet a number of tools (e.g. Kahoot, Padlet, Mentimeter, Jeopardy, Memrise) were used for teaching that were up to the topic, level, and interest of the learners. These fairly assisted in prolonging their attention span and promoting active participation.

Key outcome: The participants have increased their awareness of interactive assignments and learned how to critically assess the relevant content for learning. They have become more digitally literate and independent with the use of modern technology for studying purposes. Such an entertaining approach to learning has appealed to the students to a great extent so that from now and on they can challenge themselves while performing online activities beyond the classroom.

Trainers need to critically assess and thoroughly check educational materials and tools borrowed from the Internet. Despite the fact that the initial aim is for students to boost their knowledge through entertainment, at no rate, must the tasks be simple or primitive since it discourages them and ingrains a negative disposition toward such a type of activities in the future. Some tools may simply not work with specific age groups or students having different learning backgrounds even if they are designed in a proper way. Therefore, educational materials are better to be selected individually depending on what works precisely in this group/class and what does not.

### **c. Learning project 3: Digital travelling curation**

The 4-month learning project was carried out by a trainer of Folkuniversitetet who involved, in turn, 12 adult learners of a B2 language class in a number of online sessions.

The aim of the trainer was to increase her digital literacy and boost knowledge and skills on finding the best content from multiple sources, filtering it to the needs and level of the students and thus, making classes up-to-date and more engaging and entertaining.



In the pilot the trainer developed an online content curated module “Travelling” which can be used by the colleagues in English classes of the same level of students. The purpose the module “Travelling” is to develop communication skills and vocabulary knowledge. For this, multiple curative platforms were used, such as Flipboard and Pinterest. For each session with the students separate boards with subtopics were arranged. The students also actively used video presentations and podcasts, so in the end each student created an audio guide of some travelling spot they chose.

Key outcome: Teaching online shifts teacher's role crucially from running the class to moderating and facilitating the process of learning. To do this, a teacher has to change his mindset and acquire new knowledge, skills and competences in digital literacy. Effective content curation can transform the learning process in a very valuable way helping people continuously learn and stay up to date.

Equipping the learners with suitable tools enhances their self-directed learning in such a way that their attitude to the process of studying is much more positive.

### **3.5 Apricot, UK**

#### **a. Learning project 1: Web-writing techniques for MOOCs and online self-directed learning**

This learning project, undertaken between June 2022 and January 2023, by one of the C1 Participants, involved creating the structures and guidance for 12 educator-authors who had set out to create a MOOC for aspiring social entrepreneurs.

The aim was to develop better understanding/perspective of the online learner, studying alone (self-directed learner) and to produce guidance (and exemplars and support) which can be used by self and others, in the materials we create, to give an improved experience for the independent, online learner.

As part of the pilot project, research was first conducted on existing online courses, the guidelines were written into a MOOC module template and a sample module was created and disseminated. Subsequently, 12 partner MOOC authors were trained in the use of the template and web-writing techniques and provided with ongoing support. Editing and checking the compatibility of 8 modules (developed by the 12 authors for conversion to Storyline Articulate and upload to the MOOC).

Key outcome: There is a need to flex learning, support and guidance according to each local need. There is a vast spectrum of starting points – in terms of knowledge, skills and speed of assimilation – across contributors in a project consortium.

#### **b. Learning project 2: Accounting Period End Best Practice**

This learning project, undertaken between November 2022 and January 2023, by one of the C1 Participants, involved 5 workplace learners.

The project owner wanted to learn and convey how to create a training that could be easily used online by bringing together existing resources on the internet rather than creating all the learning materials himself.





The pilot involved 5 workplace learners: staff working either in a business or in an accountancy practice who want to improve their workplace skills. The online training was then created using a mixture of articles and videos. The LXP platform was used to find suitable resources.

Key outcome: There is so much training material already available that it is not the best use of time to create more of it. Better results can be achieved much faster by curating existing material to produce an online learning programme. It is also fairly straightforward to create and integrate an online assessment.

### c. Learning project 3: Curation: CVET Skills Updating Apps

This learning project, undertaken between October 2022 and February 2023, by one of the C1 Participants, involved s

The aim of the learning project was to test out a variety of Curation Apps for finding, classifying and storing websites that offer high quality (CVET) Skills Updating opportunities.

The pilot involved trying out a number of Curation Tools with the aim of transforming the learning and see if these tools made the learning process more effective than the more traditional (knowledge management) methods of collating useful materials and sources – and how these tools might help me to collaborate and share with others. To this end to project owner signed up to several of the Curation tools/Apps, setting up the ‘search mechanisms’ to find Skills Updating Apps/websites. She then trained two employees in the techniques of Learning Content Curation and supported them in their own self-directed Learning Projects 1) developing entrepreneurial soft skills 2) Neurodiversity in learning and development.

Key outcome: The Cur8 Toolbox will be incredibly useful as a curated collection of tools and apps with built-in mechanisms for critical analysis.

It is important that trainers understand and open their eyes to the vast range of quality OER materials so that they can break out of the 'not invented here' mentality that many educators have. Mash-ups are a great way forward!

## 4. Key findings from the Piloting

The diversity of the learning projects underlines the variety of ways in which the Cur8 approach and the resources developed can be used. Despite the great diversity of learning projects, general achievements can be derived, which are presented below.

### 4.1 Achievements

The piloting has been a very successful method for transferring learning from theory into practice. It has also been a powerful vehicle for raising awareness about the changing role of the trainer, and enabling trainers to seize the potential of digital technologies in enhancing and innovating creative learning solutions.

The skills of Learning and Development Professionals are having to change from those of being the ‘sage on the stage’ (creating and presenting learning), to a ‘curator-concierge’ model – directing





learners to excellent existing learning content and helping them to access it. This is clearly a shift in mind set as well as skill set and one in which we must all engage.

Educators are also increasingly confronted with the challenge of sourcing, filtering, creating and managing digital content to enhance learning effectiveness. Developing competence in Learning Content Curation is now an essential skill for the Learning and Development Professional, as is the ability to facilitate technologically enhanced learning whether it is for self-directed learning or collaborative online learning.

These concepts take professionals well beyond the 'expert' role of the past. In CVET there is a need for actively engaging with new and emerging technologies in order to support upskilling, reskilling and informal on the job learning effectively. Digital technologies must be used wisely to facilitate and enable CVET learning.

The piloting process of the Cur8 project led to an increased awareness of the importance of self-directed learning for all involved staff. It also provided an overview of the status of open educational resources (OER) for CVET. On a personal level, it increased motivation for continuous education and a willingness to engage with new topics. It also helped develop fundamentals in learning design in order to make the most of the material developed for the Cur8 platform and toolbox.

The Cur8 Learning Experience Platform and Toolbox are innovative, one-of-a-kind resources that can be further exploited to help educators adapt their teaching approach to the contemporary academic and socio-cultural reality of increasing digitalization – as per the feedback of piloting participants across all Cur8 partnering organisations. The Cur8 modules include cutting edge theory and know-how, while the LXP Toolbox is the only such online, free-to-use space for educators' knowledge sharing. As such the Cur8 Learning Experience Platform and Toolbox are high quality resources for staff training and will find a permanent place in internal training in the partner organisations and beyond. They provide easy access to innovative tools and well-researched content that can be used immediately for self-directed learning by adult educators and trainers in continuing vocational education and training. This will make it even more feasible to reuse the content in our internal training provision.

As the Cur8 modules themselves aim to convey, a more personal approach in teaching is far more desirable and effective, regardless of whether it is applied in train-the-trainer or educator-learner format. It is extremely important to utilize this in other European projects, and the resources required to do so are minimal.

The project was successful in strengthening teamwork and increasing confidence in using different tools, as well as introducing concepts such as curation and OERs. The project produced high quality training resources that will be used for future internal training in the partner organisations and beyond. In addition, the involved professionals were able to discuss and evaluate a range of tools, encouraging critical thinking about which digital technologies are best suited to their needs and those of their learners.

Concepts such as curation and OERs were partly unknown and thanks to dealing with them, both the trainers and educators involved in the blended learning course and the participants involved in the learning projects learned a lot and gained more confidence in dealing with existing external content.



The involved professionals were committed to diversify their teaching methodology with new approaches and digital tools. The learning projects have been a success, raising the digital literacy of both trainers and students. The involved learners have shown increased engagement and motivation in the classroom due to the innovative learning projects. Each project was unique, and the open-mindedness of the trainers was a crucial factor in the success. Adult learners have shown a great enthusiasm for the new digital tools, and they are eager for more opportunities to use them for learning. These findings demonstrate the need for trainers to continue to embrace innovation and digital tools in their teaching. With the right support, they can create engaging learning projects that will have a lasting impact on the students.

More than a 130 adult educators, course developers, CVET and VET trainers from different spheres have been equipped with tools and technique to utilize digital media resources in their teaching practice. They have received all Cur8 resources, as well as instructions and practical examples how to implement them in their teaching practice.

#### 4.2 Challenges

While the achievements are shared across the different learning projects, the challenges are, in most cases, very much related to the respective learning project. Nevertheless, the challenges that the learning projects had to deal with are named here. The challenges are presented for the learning professionals and for the learners who were involved in the learning projects:

##### a. Challenges for the CVET and VET learning professionals

- ◆ Finding Tools and Apps that supported skills-based activities – for upskilling and reskilling in the workplace through experiential, on-the-job training.
- ◆ Finding digital learning content was time-consuming for the curator as a critical assessment of the quality, validity, and potential of learning content took a lot of preparation. In addition, sometimes, getting the copyright of the scope took time, and students needed to remember it
- ◆ It remains exceedingly time-consuming producing quality materials for the independent online learner. No matter the guidance and support, even supposed ‘experienced trainers’ often find it challenging perceptually positioning themselves in the shoes of a learner working online, alone. This is particularly evident in cultures where the ‘front of class, teacher-led, didactic’ approach to imparting knowledge remains prevalent, or where learner-led is a relatively new concept, or a work in progress.
- ◆ Writing a Guidance Document to complement the training was very difficult. It was so much easier to be able to demonstrate and explain approaches and tactics face-to-face or virtually.
- ◆ Accepting a non-traditional approach to presenting a topic and being able to adapt processes on a ‘need-to-know/need-to-be-able-to’. This involved a change in mindset from traditional linear learning to facilitating a bite-sized, just-in-time approach that met the needs of the learner in terms of their job requirements
- ◆ Finding efficient and effective ways to critique the quality of OER materials sourced.
- ◆ Getting the message across very clearly about the importance of copyrights and knowledge of CC licences. Because it is all too easy to copy things.



- ◆ Establishing and sharing Categorisation Criteria when undertaking collaborative learning content development
- ◆ Managing copyright when repurposing curated materials
- ◆ Discuss with the learners what they need in their work lives, but also what they deem is feasible under normal circumstances, based on their workload and abilities.

#### b. Challenges for the involved learners

- ◆ Making sure that all the learners have necessary equipment (e.g. microphone) to be able to use new tools, e.g. record the sound without any noises and hindrances.
- ◆ It is becoming increasingly important to curate a good selection of tools that are really useful for both our educators and the participants of upskilling and reskilling courses.
- ◆ It was difficult to keep all participants on board. More than half of the participants were highly motivated, but everyday challenges hindered some of them to participate in all activities.

## 5. Impact Assessment

The partners in the Critical Curation and Collaboration in Learning (Cur8) project recognise the importance of assessing the effectiveness of their activities and interventions. They understand that impact assessment should go beyond the mere presentation of evidence. It must include an analysis of the evidence to demonstrate the changes that occur as a result of the interventions. This includes what difference our project interventions make to individuals, organisations, sectors and systems, whether changes can be clearly identified and proven, and whether we can demonstrate a significant impact on the problem we set out to address. We also recognise the strong links between impact, evaluation and sustainability. Impact evaluation is a key tool for assessing outcomes, behavioural change, return on investment (ROI) and evidence of sustainable/embedded activity.

To this end, an Impact Assessment Plan has been prepared which describes the indicators and approaches (tools/methods) to be used to measure the expected impact of the project's activities on the different target groups and stakeholders.

All the information collected is summarised in an Impact Assessment Report, which provides both an assessment of each individual impact and an assessment of specific project activities on the identified target groups. Evidence of impact has been systematically collected and analysed throughout the life of the project. Emerging and proven impacts have been assessed through the regular progress reports and also at our five transnational partnership meetings.

The Cur8 project aims to help adult educators and vocational trainers to develop digital literacy so that they can use digital technologies more effectively and innovate in education and training. The impact of the project was demonstrated both directly in terms of main outcomes and indirectly through dissemination and exploitation.

In the short term, the impact on the target groups, partners and stakeholders has been observed and measured. In the long term, it is hoped that critical thinking skills and media literacy will be incorporated into curricula and that the innovative resources and gamification environment



provided to trainers, educators and tutors will help young disadvantaged adults to develop media literacy and critical thinking skills. The impact assessment will help to verify whether the project has achieved its objectives.

### *5.1 Assessment methodology and tools*

In the Cur8 project the impact was assessed and measured, using a mixed method approach of both quantitative and qualitative research. The partners applied surveys, focus groups, interviews and quarterly reports to collect data which have been used to measure changes in practices, behaviours and achievement of objectives.

In this report we focus mainly on the learning outcomes and competences acquired by all the learning and development professionals involved, for whom we used the following tools:

- ◆ Questionnaires on the level of contentment with the learning activities and projects
- ◆ Registered collaborative activities and participation in learning projects
- ◆ Interviews and case studies
- ◆ Learning Project Reports and Case Studies
- ◆ National Experience report
- ◆ Validation of competence development

While the previous chapters report on the learning activities and projects and describe the achievements, including those related to competence growth, the following sections describe in more detail how we actually measured and evidenced competence growth.

The impact of learning in terms of competence development was assessed using the LEVEL5 validation system and the Kirkpatrick model.

The Kirkpatrick Model of evaluation is a chain of evidence for the effectiveness of a project or learning programme, divided into four levels: Reaction, Learning, Behavioural Impact and Results. Level one assesses how beneficiaries of a project react to their experiences, level two measures the amount of learning that has occurred as a result of an intervention, level three evaluates the transfer of newly acquired skills, knowledge or attitude to behaviour and level four measures the impact of the project, including its contribution to the EU priorities and desired results. The impact assessment uses quantitative and qualitative research to track and measure the progress of the project, with impact indicators and output indicators for each target group.

LEVEL5 is a specific validation system used to assess, document and visualise the development of social and personal competences acquired through informal or non-formal learning. In the context of the Cur8 project, it was relevant to observe and assess the participants of the training programme in terms of their development of competences in critical content curation.

The following table shows which tools were used for which level of the Kirkpatrick model:

Level	What to evaluate?	How to evaluate?
1. Reaction	<p>Level of satisfaction of trainers/learners with the material</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Did they like it?</li> <li>◆ Was it useful and relevant?</li> <li>◆ Was the material attractive and accessible?</li> <li>◆ ...</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Online questionnaire to trainers involved in the C1 course</li> <li>◆ Learning project report and case study</li> </ul>
2. Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ What were the learning outcomes?</li> <li>◆ Learning effects?</li> <li>◆ Competence development?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Learning project report and case study</li> <li>◆ LEVEL5 Validation of competence development: Reference Systems</li> <li>◆ LEVEL5 Competence Spider</li> </ul>
3. Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Learning transfer:</li> <li>◆ Was the participant able to apply the learning content in his/her working context?</li> </ul>	<p>This usually requires a longer period of observation after a course/training.</p> <p>In the Cur8 piloting context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Learning project report</li> <li>◆ National experience report</li> <li>◆ LEVEL5 Validation– Reference Systems / Competence Spider - skills dimension</li> <li>◆ Open questions / reflection</li> </ul>
4. Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Benefit for the organisations</li> </ul>	<p>This usually requires a longer time of observation and organisational keydata and benchmarks to evaluate it</p> <p>In the Cur8 piloting context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Open questions and reflections</li> <li>◆ Statements on benefits for the organisation in general,</li> <li>◆ Sustainability plans</li> </ul>

## 5.2 Implementation of LEVEL5

Besides well-known taxonomies such as Bloom's or the EQF (European Qualification Framework), there is also the LEVEL5 taxonomy. Bloom's taxonomy focuses more on "learning", whereas the EQF has qualification as its purpose and intention. LEVEL5 was designed to facilitate and arrange learning in a competence-oriented way in all kinds of possible learning settings, be they formal, non-formal or informal (but not 'unintentional'). It has been developed and tested since 2005 by experts from the Cooperative of Blended Learning Institutions (blinc eG). It has been applied in more than 40 European projects and 200 micro-learning projects in different educational sectors with a focus on needs-based, constructivist learning. Since 2013, the LEVEL5 approach and associated tools have been widely disseminated through the European REVEAL network.

The LEVEL5 taxonomy is based on a three-dimensional model which maps the development of: Knowledge (-> cognitions) Skills (-> actions) and Attitudes (-> emotions and values) along five quality levels – from beginner to competent expert.. According to the LEVEL5 philosophy, all three dimensions have to be considered to design learning and validate competence development along a comprehensive, holistic and effective learning approach.

Therefore this model forms the basis for the two core LEVEL5 instruments: The LEVEL5 cube visualises a person's competence development in a specific (preferably practical) learning field which is described in the so called LEVEL5 reference system. The LEVEL5 reference systems facilitate the design and planning of informal/non-formal learning and the validation of competences in a specific practical action and learning field.

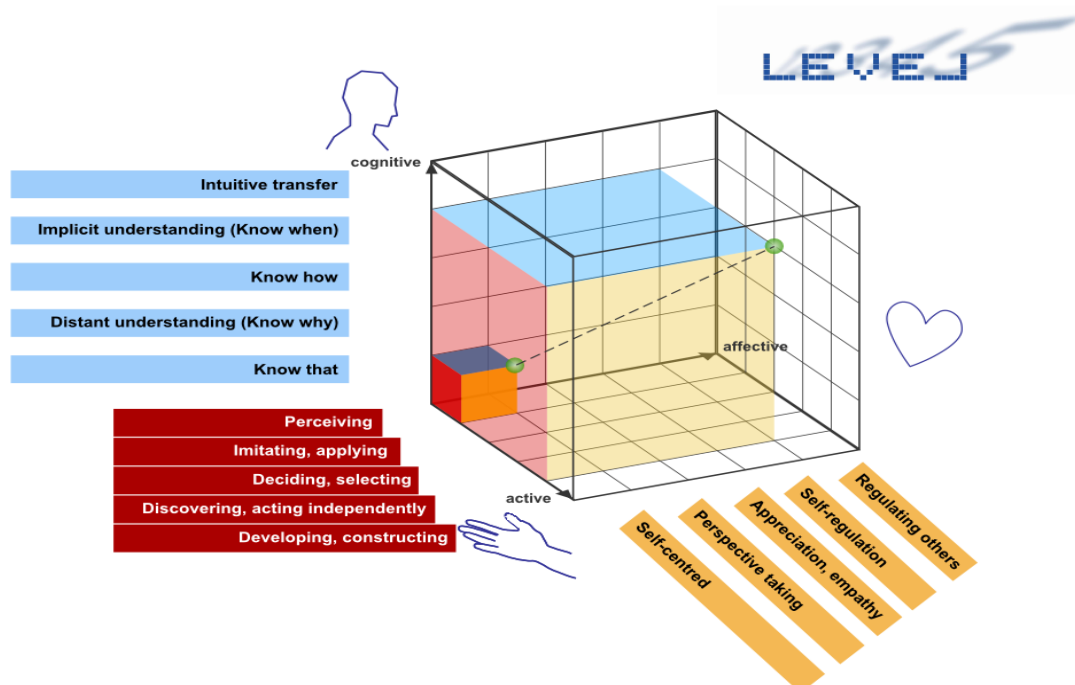


Figure 1: LEVEL5 Cube



The LEVEL5 cube model reduces significantly the complexity when visualising and describing learning outcomes and therefore provides an attractive presentation and documentation system for learning.

As a first step, the partners defined the Competence Framework related to digital critical curation which identifies and describes the key competences that are the focus of the project.

These are:

- ◆ Critical Digital Curation of Learning Content
- ◆ Promoting critical digital literacy and managing required changes
- ◆ Facilitation of collaborative online learning in CVET

The framework consists of detailed description of curation as a core digital literacy competence and of the competences and the reference systems used to assess them.

The Competence Framework is complemented by the Competence Spider, which has been used as an ad hoc assessment tool. This allows users to intuitively engage with different statements - here on elements of critical content curation. For deeper reflection, the reference systems were used to assess the competence development of the participants.

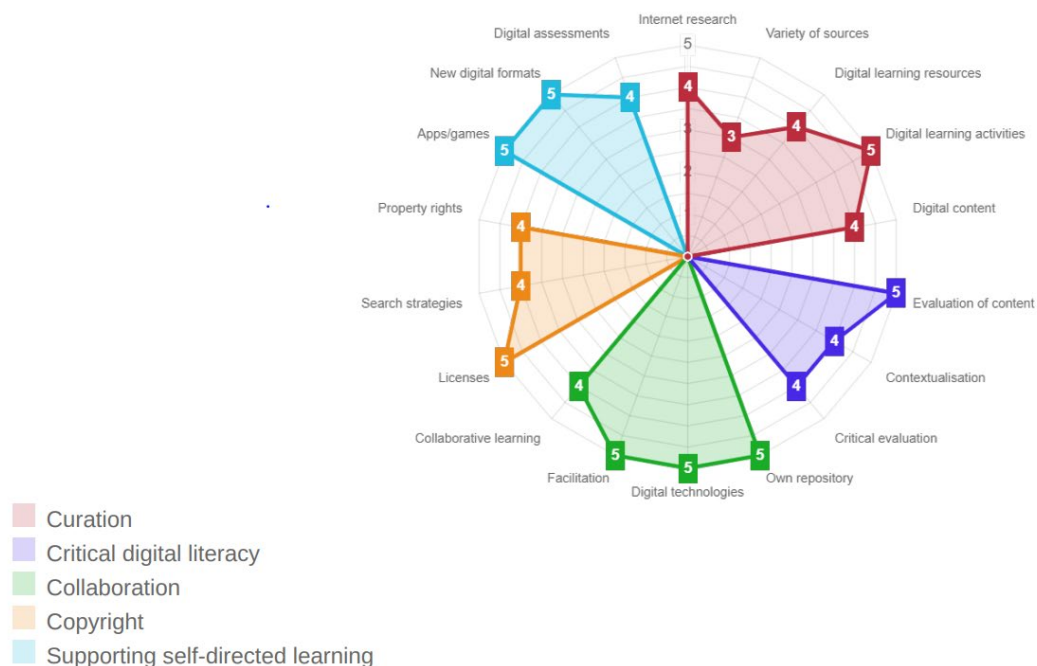


Figure 2: Example for a filled self-assessment before the training course: visualisation in the competence spider





The LEVEL5 system and assessment tools were introduced in the C1 course, wherein participants conducted a first assessment with the help of the competence spider. Following this, they reflected on their level of competence in the two competences using the competence framework, discussed their findings with a peer, and documented the results of their assessments. After the pilot phase, they repeated the assessment and documented their results in a matrix, which then served as the basis for the creation of the LEVEL5 certificate with the LEVEL5 cube.

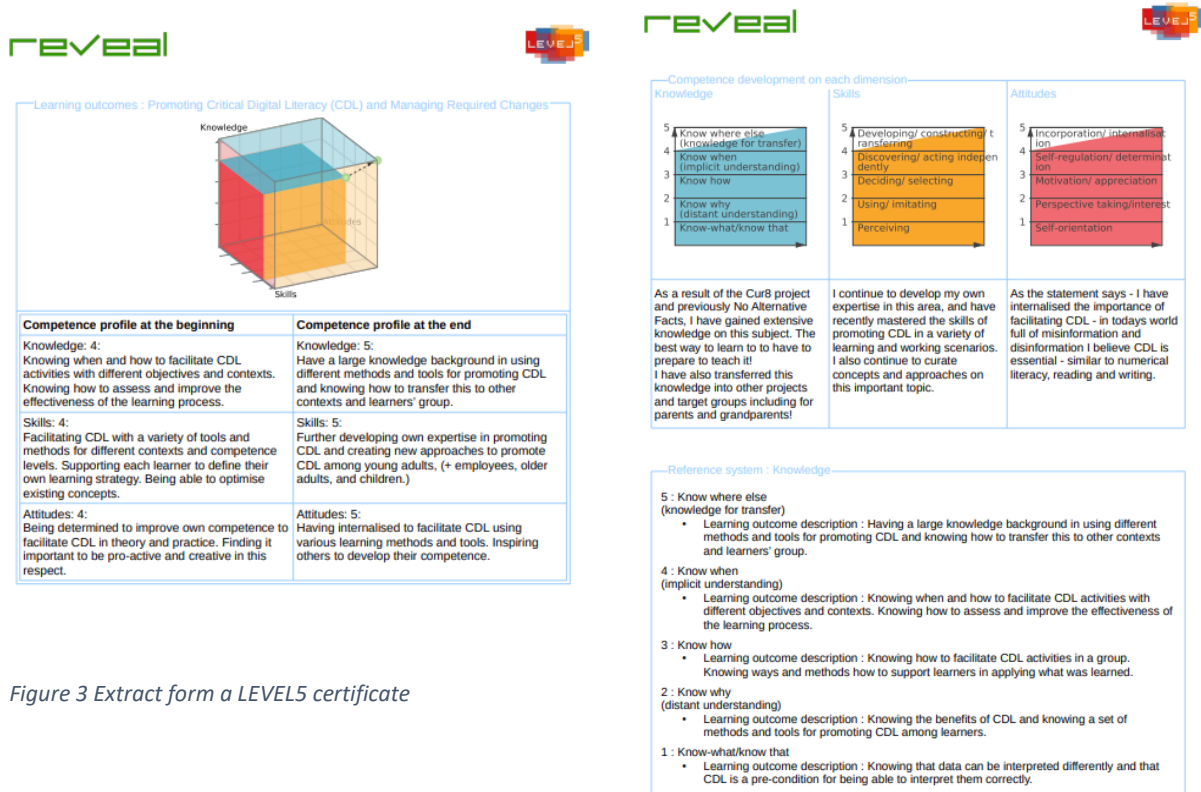


Figure 3 Extract from a LEVEL5 certificate

The LEVEL5 validation tool also enabled the project to identify areas of improvement for the participants and develop individualised plans for each individual's development. This gave the participants a clear focus on which areas they needed to improve on, and allowed the project to tailor their training and coaching sessions to the individual.

The competence spider was also extremely beneficial in providing a visual representation of the participants' current knowledge and skills. This enabled the project to quickly spot any gaps in knowledge, and provided a clear understanding of what each participant needed to focus on in order to improve.

The combination of the LEVEL5 validation tool and competence spider proved to be an invaluable resource for the project, and enabled the participants to gain a better understanding of their progress and competences. This was especially beneficial for participants who had previously been unable to accurately assess their own competences. In addition, the use of these tools allowed the project to develop effective strategies for the participants in order to help them reach their desired goals. This included providing tailored training, as well as offering additional resources and support



if needed. The project was also able to track the progress of the participants throughout the course, providing them with an accurate picture of their current level of understanding.

Overall, the LEVEL5 validation tool and competence spider were extremely effective in helping the project to measure the impact of the project on learning outcomes. Not only did they enable the project to gain a better understanding of the participants' current competences, but they also allowed the project to develop tailored strategies to help the participants reach their desired goals.

### 5.3. Impact

Using the impact measurement tools for the main target groups of the project, we were able to demonstrate the following impacts.

#### c. C-VET trainers

C-VET trainers are the main target group of the Cur8 project, and the primary users of the project outputs. The Cur8 course fosters the professional development of C-VET trainers in the following areas:

- i. Digital upskilling – Understanding the changing role of the L&D Professional; adopting Critical Digital Literacy skills in curating learning content, including for collaborative curation and use of Open Educational Resources (OER)
- ii. Learner-centricity – Understanding psychological empowerment, encouraging growth mindset in learners as well as fostering their self-motivation, understanding the importance of interpersonal relationships in digital context
- iii. Digital wellbeing - understanding the effect of the digital environment on the own wellbeing, adopting strategies to prevent burnout and the blurring of personal and professional roles
- iv. Competence Assessment – being able to document and assess own competence development as well as assisting learners.

Most piloting participants report that the project has resulted in concrete knowledge, skills and competences in terms of using a specific range of digital technologies, including content curation, collaborative learning and the interactive games and embedding it effectively in their educational activities. They also mention Increased use of blended learning and self-directed learning techniques and the ability to use digital technologies to support these techniques. In addition, trainers are able to empower others to take greater control of their own learning and help them become self-directed learners using digital technologies. Overall, trainers are able to adopt modern approaches to teaching and learning: becoming a 'curator- concierge' in supporting learners (instead of 'a sage on the stage'). In many cases, these developments have become apparent through competence assessment using the LEVEL5 tool.



#### d. Adult learners

It should be noted that most learners engaged in the Cur8 piloting (except for Sweden) were themselves C-VET trainers, so evidence of impact on adult learners should be evaluated in light of the specific skills and mindset of the trainers. Nevertheless, participants in the learning activities repeatedly mentioned the following impacts:

- b. Improved learning achievements and personal growth;
- c. Increased awareness of the power of self-directed learning;
- d. greater awareness about the opportunities presented by open educational resources; (OER) including massive open online courses (MOOCs);
- e. improved critical digital literacy;
- f. ability to safely handle content from the internet (OER / licenses);
- g. improved team collaboration and networking;
- h. adoption of practical new digital tools suited for the daily work.

#### e. Stakeholders

There is strong evidence for significant impact on organisations participating in the development and piloting of project outputs. Partners consistently report that participation in the project activities (learning projects, course, using the LXP and Toolbox) results in developments in the following areas.

- i. Networking. Organisations report improved cooperation and exchange of experience.
- j. Awareness raising. Organisations are starting to accept that the process of finding, aggregating, filtering and selecting relevant content is a key skill in learning design
- k. Adoption of new methodologies. Organisations report an enriched experience with creative and innovative non-formal methods
- l. Improved staff competence regarding IT based learning
- m. Access to an exciting and engaging Learning Experience Platform as well as a Toolbox of resources to support teaching and learning practices

The current evidence of impact is mostly based on the results of the piloting and is thus limited to project partners and organisations closely aligned with them.



## 6. Sustainability

Sustainability does not apply to all aspects of the Cur8 project. For the Cur8 consortium, this means that the Cur8 project is considered sustainable if its results, or parts of them, continue to be used after the end of the funded project period. There is a strong focus on the products developed in the project to be maintained or further developed after the end of the Erasmus+ co-funding. Another aspect is that the project partners have taken the necessary steps to build and maintain a network that can provide services in the field of learning content curation in vocational and adult education. The project consortium is therefore confident that their cooperation and the products developed will deliver an important contribution to the adult education, VET and workplace learning community.

Referring to the areas of the Kirkpatrick model in our impact evaluation, the fourth category "RESULTS" represents the positive impacts and benefits for the organisations. In the Cur8 pilot, trainers and learners provided an assessment of the potential benefits to the organisation, sustainability plans and other related aspects. The high level of satisfaction with the quality, variety and usability of the Cur8 materials was reflected in the high level of agreement to recommend the Cur8 materials to others. The educators and trainers involved in the pilot activities saw many benefits in using the Cur8 materials for training providers in VET, CVET and adult education. These benefits were mainly seen in the positive impact on critical curation skills and increased willingness to engage in training and retraining projects, as well as improved team cohesion and communication.

In terms of improved team cohesion and communication, the pilots reported that the Cur8 materials fostered successful collaboration across boundaries and educational disciplines. The new competences developed through the use of the materials can include both technical and cognitive skills and abilities, leading to improved problem solving, critical thinking and the ability to interpret and synthesise different sources of information to tell meaningful stories and create meaningful knowledge. Leadership development could also be enhanced through active participation in material building activities. As a result, they are more likely to be successful in making decisions and working in teams.

The results of the pilot activities also showed that the Cur8 materials have the potential to increase the job satisfaction of team members. Higher job satisfaction can lead to greater engagement and motivation to learn, as well as increased productivity and a sense of accomplishment. In addition to the positive impact on users' cognitive and technical skills, Cur8 materials can also contribute to a better understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity. This in turn can shape the perspectives of team members, leading to better decision-making processes and outcomes.

Finally, the Cur8 materials can also lead to improved organisational competitiveness as team members gain significant training and development benefits from using the materials. Better performance, increased efficiency and greater confidence can result from the resulting knowledge and understanding of the latest developments in the industry. Higher quality learning and training resources can also lead to improved products and services, which in turn can significantly increase the company's chances of competitive success.



After piloting, the Cur8 materials proved to be a sustainable training and qualification resource, due to both the high benefit that the trainers involved attest to the materials and the easy transferability of the materials to other learning settings.

## 7. Good practice examples which the Cur8 partners experienced during the piloting

Below are some concrete examples from the pilot phase that show the ways in which Cur8 has been successfully implemented.

### *7.1. Austria: 4-week course “Trainers as content curators”*

In the autumn of 2022, we launched an online training through Interne Weiterbildung, an internal upskilling platform in Austria. Eight colleagues from all across the country registered for the course, which was facilitated by two participants from the C1 training. The course content was based on the German translations of the Cur8 material and focused on topics such as Collaborative Tools for On-line Learning, Learning Content Curation, Finding, Sorting and Assessing OER/Content, Mashups, Understanding Copyright and Podcast Production. It was accessible on Moodle throughout November 2023, with new content and activities shared every Tuesday afternoon. In addition, the participants received e-mails informing them of new content and activities and providing an opportunity for sharing own resources and questions.

Different tools such as ogy.de, Check-In Generator, Google Jamboard, Padlet, Wakelet, Miro, Telegra.ph and xTiles were used to support the learning process. On November 29, a final Zoom webinar was held to recap the course, discuss the content and lessons learned, and support the participating educators regarding their questions on learning content curation and digital tools.

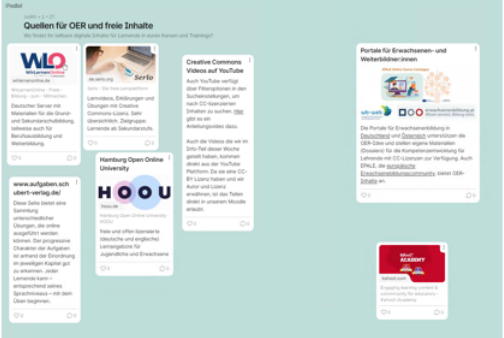
Since then we tried to stay in contact with the participants through e-mail to guide them through the Learning Experience Platform and Toolbox, update them on new content in the LXP, and demonstrate how they could contribute to the project results. The feedback from the participants was very positive.


Here is a screenshot from the Padlet we created together in the course. The task was to share sources for open educational resources that educators can easily use in their learning offers.




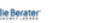


We revisited the Padlet during the webinar to discuss not only OER that are accessible online, but also to discuss the sharing possibilities of content that educators are creating themselves.

## Suche nach OER, freien Inhalten


- ◆ [Suchmaschinen](#)
- ◆ OER-Repositorien und OER-Sammlungen
- ◆ [Offen zugängliche](#) Lehrbücher, Kurse, [andere Quellen](#)
- ◆ [Vorlagen](#) in EdTech (z.B. Kahoot)
- ◆ Unterschätzen Sie niemals das Potenzial von Zufällen, persönlichen Kontakten und sozialen Medien!





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The course was a great success, and the two trainers were able to test new tools as well as integrate them into their work routine. The whole process was very encouraging for both the participants and the facilitators. Not only did they gain knowledge and skills, but there was also an opportunity for exchange of experiences, and the trainers were even able to reassure the educators to integrate tools that their trainees were already using into their training.

With the Cur8 content finalized, the two trainers are eager to take another cohort through the course in autumn 2023 and take advantage of the LXP.

After the course, the trainers had increased their knowledge and skills regarding the competence “Facilitating Collaborative Learning” and were particularly happy to see an improvement in their attitudes concerning collaborative learning. The two trainers are now even more prepared to take on the challenge of facilitating collaborative learning.

### 7.2 Bulgaria: Education and Digitalization – The in-between

One educator who was impressed by the practical examples during the piloting session on the 17th of January asked for further assistance the following day with regards to Calibre – the digital tool for converting and formatting text files.

Due to the evident lack of education resources in Bulgarian, she was particularly motivated by the idea of downloading academic papers and literature in English from different web sources, translate them and convert them into a format she can use with her high-school students. The facilitator of the learning project completed an hour-long session over the phone, explaining the different tools Calibre possesses, how to navigate them and most specifically, how to convert MOBI/EPUB text files into PDF files with adequate letter shrifts – the standard 300 words average per page. She was also given instructions how to utilise the Talk & Comment Chrome extension (usable only online) to insert instructions, comments, tasks, etc. in Google word documents used by students as

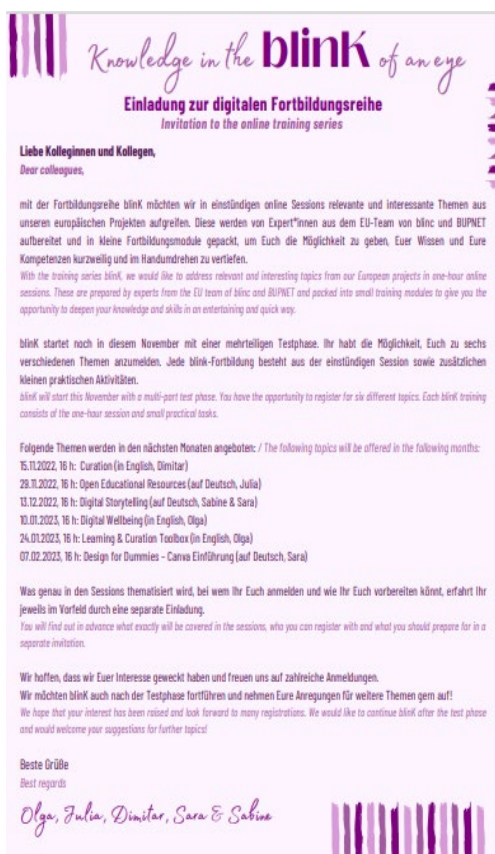
homework or self-directed learning. The educator found this personal consultation incredibly useful.

One significant conclusion we can draw from this is the importance piloting coordinators and trainers explicitly communicating their availability to participants for individual help and guidance. Very often people would have specific questions or needs that cannot be properly addressed during the standard piloting format of group work and sessions.

Our CATRO trainers explicitly stated their willingness to provide personal consultation to the piloting participants at all times after the completion of the Cur8 piloting with regards to any questions they might have on how to use the shared materials.

We live in a digital world – sometimes it takes a minute, sometimes an hour – to help somebody with a simple phone call.

### 7.3 Germany: blink – Knowledge in the blink of an eye



The five participants of the Cur8 blended learning course had developed learning projects to enhance and transfer their knowledge in an area of critical content curation. They were all eager to share their knowledge and skills with the rest of the team in the two companies blinc and BUPNET.

The desire for more knowledge sharing and upskilling within the team has been a recurring concern over the past few years. Due to the heavy workload of various projects, this was often forgotten. That's when the idea of creating a long-term and sustainable initiative to share knowledge and upskill the team on topics related to critical content curation came to fruition. The team decided to create a series of small knowledge bites, appropriately named "blink – Knowledge in the blink of an eye", as a way to provide valuable and engaging content around working life for busy professionals under time pressure and intense deadlines.

Topics have been curated by the five educators and presented in condensed training modules in either English or German (whichever language participants are more comfortable with). As well as improving knowledge and skills, the learning project also aimed to strengthen relationships between the teams.

The blink offer was very well received and each of the sessions was attended by an average of 10 participants. The CPD initiative also aimed to strengthen relationships between the teams and



addressed all Cur8 principles. It involved 30 CVET trainers/Learning and Development Professionals in blinc and BUPNET.

The team is now working on new topics. They are also inviting colleagues to suggest and even teach topics. They want the CPD offer to be one that is supported and nurtured by everyone.

We can certainly consider the introduction of the CPD offer at blinc and BUPNET as good practice. Not only does it provide a platform for knowledge sharing and upskilling, but it also helps strengthen relationships between the teams.

#### ***7.4 Sweden: Edutainment – Using gamified tools for language learning***

It was a typical day in the English class. The students, ranging from all ages and backgrounds, were excited to learn new things and practice their language skills. The day's lesson was about using digital tools and approaches to optimize learning. The trainers, sensing the students' enthusiasm, decided to incorporate a few digital tools into the class. Using Kahoot and Mentimeter, the students were asked to answer questions and participate in various activities.

At first, there were a few students who were hesitant to use the digital tools. Some of them had never used a camera before and felt a bit intimidated. But, as the class went on, the trainers could see that the students' level of engagement was increasing. Soon enough, even the most shy students had their cameras on and were actively participating in the activities. The trainers noticed that the students, who were once passive learners, had now become active participants. They were excited to be in the class and were showing great enthusiasm when using the digital tools.

The trainers were delighted to see the transformation in the students' attitude towards the class. It was clear that the use of digital tools had left a very positive impact on the students' learning process. They felt empowered and successful, and this was reflected in their performance. By the end of the module, the trainers were very pleased with the results. They knew that the digital tools had been the key to encouraging the students to become more active and engaged in the class.

The trainers had a great example of how digital tools could be used to optimize learning, and they were excited to share their experience with other teachers. They knew that this was a very good practice and would be beneficial to other classes as well.

#### ***7.5 .UK: Web-writing techniques for MOOCs and online self-directed learning***

An example of good practice in Critical Curation and Collaboration in Learning was demonstrated by the Learning Project Pilot 'Web-writing techniques for MOOCs and online self-directed learning'. This Learning Project address all the key features of the Cur8 project including supporting the development of digital content creation skills amongst Learning and Development Professionals, shared content development, collaborative learning and the facilitation of self-directed learning for adult learners. It involved 12 CVET trainers/Learning and Development Professionals from the SECE Erasmus+ project learning how to write web-based skills development modules for self-directed, 'pick-and-mix' learning.

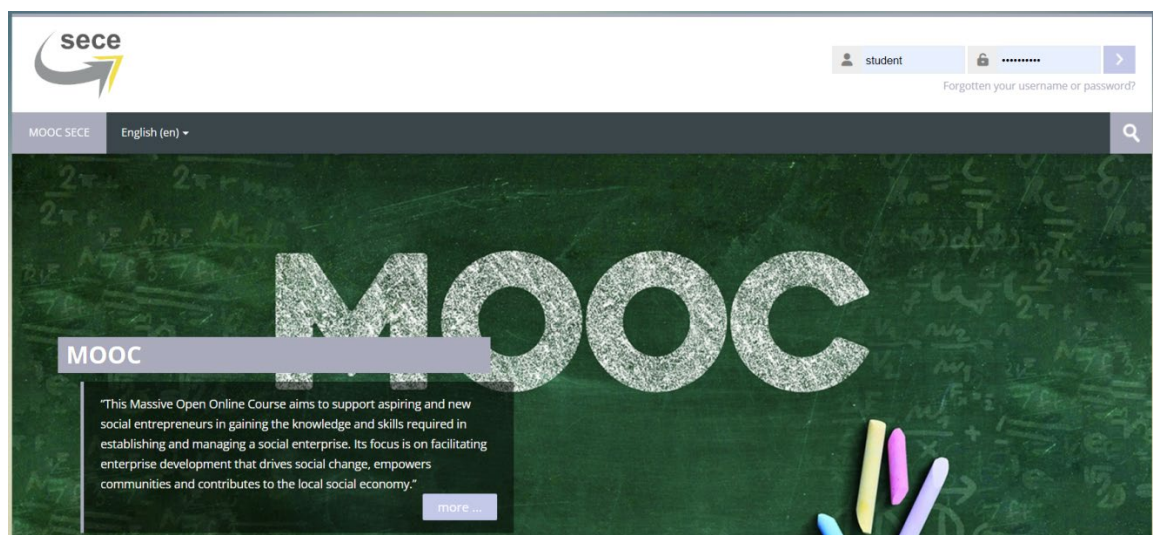


The training provided sought to change the mindset of these trainers from being ‘the sage on the stage’ to becoming a ‘guide on the side’ by providing a vehicle for self-directed learning for aspiring social entrepreneurs via a MOOC.

The process of web writing for on-line self-directed learning changes the traditional step-by-step approaches to learning. This is particularly true for learning new work related skills or upskilling. People read differently online: they scan. They’re trying to find information quickly in order to find out how to do things or answers to a problem. Writing with this goal in mind makes web-writing for online learning more appealing and makes learners more likely to dip in and out of the learning they need. Learning becomes work-related, informal and experiential.

The outcome of this Learning Project was a MOOC designed to support aspiring and new social entrepreneurs in setting up social enterprises that empower communities.

In addition to developing the specific skills of web writing for self-directed learning, guidance was given on how to present interactive learning activities (using Storyline Articulate software) and a flexible template structure was created to ensure a consistency of approach, look and feel to all of the modules. (The MOOC is available in English, Greek, Turkish, German, Spanish and Lithuanian).





## 8. Conclusions

The Cur8 project partnership can point to a very successful pilot phase with very positive results. While the quantitative target of people involved in the pilot activities was achieved, it is much more important to point out the very positive results we were able to achieve during the test phase of Cur8.

- a. The trainers and the learners showed a high satisfaction about the training and the Cur8 resources in general. Their evaluation demonstrates overall good level of satisfaction in terms of content, delivery, facilities, personal learning, and usefulness/practicality.
- b. Participants in the training course highlighted:
  - i. The new tools and resources
  - ii. The exchange of experience and views among the professionals.
  - iii. The opportunity to discuss with other professionals and/or colleagues
  - iv. The experiential examples and the case studies
- c. Regarding the impact of the Cur8 piloting phase the results show that the project has improved concrete knowledge, skills and competences in terms of using a specific range of digital technologies, including content curation, collaborative learning and the interactive games and embedding it effectively in their educational activities. In addition, trainers are able to empower others to take greater control of their own learning and help them become self-directed learners using digital technologies.
- d. Overall, trainers are able to adopt modern approaches to teaching and learning: becoming a 'curator- concierge' in supporting learners (instead of 'a sage on the stage'). In many cases, these developments have become apparent through competence assessment using the LEVEL5 tool.
- e. The Cur8 materials proved to be a sustainable training and qualification resource. This is partly due to the high value of the materials as attested to by the trainers involved, but also because the materials are easily transferable to other learning settings.

## 9. Recommended Guide for Implementation

Following the successful implementation of the learning projects, the Cur8 partners formulated recommendations for applying the Cur8 approach. These are summarised here:

### 9.1 Upskilling and Reskilling

Cur8's approach to training trainers is rooted in the need to move away from a traditional model of education where educators primarily produce and present content to a model of education that focuses on the ability of educators to enable learning. This shift requires trainers to develop new digital competences that enable them to use digital technologies to enhance and innovate education. To address this need, Cur8 has developed a unique approach to training that is based on the curator-concierge model. This model employs strategies such as leveraging existing resources,



developing new ones, and creating digital tools to enable learners to move from mere consumers to active creators and curators of knowledge. By providing a platform for trainers to develop and refine the digital competences they need to become enablers of learning, Cur8 is empowering educators to be at the forefront of educational innovation.

CVET Educators are in a unique position to shape the future of work and the workplace. In order to do so, they need to be aware of the changing role they now play in the world of work. With the advent of digital technology, the way people learn, work, and interact has changed drastically. As a result, CVET Educators need to update their skills and knowledge to keep up with the latest developments in the industry. They must have a clear understanding of the potential of digital technology to enhance learning and teaching, and an understanding of the implications of digital technology on the workplace. Additionally, CVET Educators need to be aware of the importance of upskilling specific digital competences. CVET Educators must be aware of the different digital tools and techniques that can be used to improve their teaching, as well as the importance of digital literacy for their students. Finally, CVET Educators need to focus on developing a change in mindset. This includes an understanding of the importance of technology and digital transformation in the world of work and teaching. They must also be open to new ideas and approaches, and be willing to embrace change. By developing a mindset that is open to change and innovation, CVET Educators can ensure that they remain relevant and can better prepare their students for the future. Educators and Trainers (CVET and VET providers, Workplace Trainers and Adult Educators) apply the 'curator-concierge' model in their teaching and learning strategies and master the skills and competences of Learning Content Curation in order to enable and facilitate effective CVET, upskilling, reskilling and workplace learning.

We also want to highlight here the importance of bite-sized learning units that can be used as needed in the workplace/at work (via the LXP), e.g. I want to create a digital story - how do I do that? Bite-sized chunks of learning are becoming increasingly important for today's modern workplace. They provide employees with the ability to quickly and easily access the information they need in order to stay current on skills and trends that are relevant to their job. With the Cur8 Learning Experience Platforms (LXP), trainers and educators now have the ability to search for and access bite-sized learning content as and when they need it. This content can be used to help them develop their own skills or those of their learners, or to help them gain a better understanding of new technologies and trends. For example, an educator may want to create a digital story, but they don't know how to do it. With the LXP, they can quickly and easily find the relevant bite-sized learning content that will help them understand the process and gain the skills they need. By providing professionals with access to this type of content, they have the resources they need to stay effective in their roles.

## 9.2 Learning projects

In Cur8 it was confirmed that learning projects are a great way to ensure that knowledge is retained and transferred into workplace behaviour. Through active learning, projects can help to develop a deeper understanding of the content and help to create connections between the knowledge acquired and the workplace. It also helps to make learning more engaging, as learners are able to apply their knowledge to real-life scenarios. Additionally, learning projects can help to develop problem-solving, teamwork, and communication skills, which are all invaluable in the workplace.



Furthermore, learning projects can help to create a sense of ownership of the learning process, as learners are actively involved in creating and working on the project. By allowing learners to create their own projects, they become more invested in their own learning and are more likely to retain and transfer the knowledge. Finally, it helps to create a sense of collaboration, as learners are able to work together and learn from each other.

### 9.3 Competence validation and self assessment

Regular self-assessment is a key element of professional development and an important part of any CPD programme. By using the LEVEL5 Competence Validation tool and the Cur8 Competence Framework, professionals are able to assess their progress and plan their individual learning pathways. This helps them to identify areas for improvement, set goals, and track their progress. This approach is particularly useful for professionals who are self-directed learners as it allows them to identify their own weaknesses and strengths, and then develop a plan to address them. It also provides a platform for professionals to discuss their learning with peers and mentors, and to receive feedback on their competence. Furthermore, it encourages lifelong learning by providing professionals with an ongoing process of self-reflection and assessment. Regular self-assessment is therefore a valuable approach to CPD and can help professionals to stay up to date and develop their skills and knowledge. It will help trainers to:

- Identify: Understand where they have come from, where they are and where they want to be.
- Plan: Plan how they can get to where they want to be, with clear outcomes and milestone to track progress.
- Act: Act upon a plan, and be open to learning experiences.
- Reflect: Make the most of their day-to-day, informal learning by reflecting upon experience.
- Apply: Create opportunities for translating theory into practice and put new learning to work.
- Share: Share their learning in communities of practice to generate greater insight and benefit from the support of the wider network of Learning and Development Professionals.
- Impact: Measure the overall impact that their learning has had on the work they do.

### 9.4 Cur8 Resources

The Cur8 Learning Experience Platform (LXP) is a great resource for trainers and educators looking to enhance their skills and knowledge. With its open educational resources (OERs), educators can easily access a variety of content and customise it to their needs. Not only do these OERs provide a wide range of content, but they can also be used to upskill educators in a variety of areas. With the access to this vast library of educational resources, educators can stay up to date with the latest trends and technologies in their field. Furthermore, the OERs are also a great way to keep up with the changing demands of the workplace. From courses in technology to industry specific topics, the OERs are a great tool to help educators stay ahead of the curve.

The Cur8 LXP toolbox has the potential to initiate a snowball effect with its knowledge-sharing capacity. To ensure this effect is sustainable, it is essential that the results of the project are effectively disseminated once the project is completed. Additionally, partnering organisations should provide educators with assistance and guidance on how to implement Cur8 theories and



tools into their practice, and this needs to be communicated clearly through multiple channels, such as digital media and face-to-face networking.

More concrete recommendations on the implementation of Cur8 approach can be found in the Roadmap “Guidelines and recommendations for a wider implementation of Cur8” available on our project website: <https://cur8learning.online/roadmap>.

In addition, LinkedIn has proven to be a valuable resource to connect with people in the same or similar fields and to spread the word about Cur8's resources and encourage other learning and development professionals to use them. It is a good way to share and find up-to-date information on current trends or news. Other important uses of the platform in Cur8 were to enable research and to use LinkedIn groups to participate in conversations and discussions with other professionals, which helps build knowledge and relationships. With its wide reach, LinkedIn is certainly an invaluable tool for networking, disseminating information.

## 10. Outlook

The Cur8 Project Partners continue to promote the advantages of the Cur8 approach and in particular signposting Educators/Trainers/ Learning and Development Professionals to the Learning Experience Platform and associated Toolbox. This will enable these professionals to undertake their own self-directed and continuous professional development (CPD).

The Cur8 will make every effort to ensure that the products of the Cur8 approach are properly utilised in their activities and further projects. All partners will take into account their capacity to do this and ensure that their plans are properly implemented.

The Cur8 Toolbox, LXP, Competence Spider, and Competence Framework will be incorporated as an essential part of the practice of educators, trainers, learning and development professionals in order to ensure that they are providing up-to-date learning to their learners. By actively using these products, they will be able to remain current and attractive, as the Toolbox will be filled with relevant reviews and feedback from the field. Additionally, encouraging self-reflection among educators and learners can be beneficial in stimulating their motivation to learn. The Competence Spider offers an enjoyable way to do this, as it is easy to use and individual development can be tracked by everyone. Alternatively, the Competence Framework can be used for more in-depth reflection and assessment.