

Self-directed Learning

Learn.Empowerment



Self-directed Learning for Low-skilled Unemployed People

Toolbox

Learning Materials, Methods and Implementation Models for Self-Directed Learning



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and Implementation Models
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PROJECT PARTNERSHIP

The project consortium comprises 14 partners from 11 countries. The multi-actor partnership comprises, apart from the expert and development partners, labour market administration organisations and social partners.

- BEST Institut für berufsbezogene Weiterbildung und Personaltraining GmbH (AT)
- Urad Prace Znojmo (CZ)
- Büro für berufliche Bildungsplanung (DE)
- Volkshochschule Cham (DE)
- Hessisches Sozialministerium (DE)
- IRFA Sud (FR)
- Győr-Moson-Sopron Munkaügyi Központ (HU)
- Città della Scienza S.c.p.a.-ONLUS (IT)
- Vytautas Magnus University (LT)
- Fundatia Romano-Germana (RO)
- Folkuniversitetet Kristianstad (SE)
- Urad Prace Dunajska Streda (SK)
- University of Glasgow Department of Adult and Continuing Education (UK)
- Bexley College (UK)

Detailed partner profiles and contact information: www.learn.empowerment.org

INTRODUCTION AND “ARGUMENTARIUM”

“Self-directed learning (SDL) activates present competences, helps to develop perspectives and promotes the development of professional methodological, social and personal competences as tools for self-discipline...”

Argumentarium

The partners of the project “Learn.Empowerment Self-directed Learning for Low-skilled Unemployed People” have developed a joint concept for self-directed learning.

Self-directed learning enables and supports the development of personally and socially relevant self-management competences. It strengthens self-confidence and leads thus to the ability to act in an emancipated and self-confident way in the social and work environment.

Especially target groups who have no affinity with and no current experience of learning – and these are the target groups the project is focusing upon – connect “learning” with failure, imposition and with pointlessness, because they cannot experience learning as useful and valuable for themselves. It is at this point where self-directed learning can begin, starting at the individual person and his/her interests and ideas: it activates existing competences, helps to develop future perspectives and promotes the development of professional methodological, social and personal competences as tools for self-discipline.

Self-directed learning imposes on the learner responsibility for his/her own learning process. Learners are integrated into the design of their learning process and thereby experience the fact that learning has something to do with them personally. If learners are supported and accompanied in their self-direction by a trainer and/or by fellow learners in a learning group, learning can become a sustainably valuable experience.

Educational practice in the countries of the project partners shows that there is a need for supporting self-directed learning with structures, instruments and processes. In this Handbook, we will identify them, demonstrate which aspects should be taken into consideration when implementing self-directed learning and explain the underlying didactic concept of self-directed learning.

Toolbox

The Toolbox describes self-directed learning as a didactic concept as elaborated by the partners in this project. It reflects the situation and understanding of the partners and their philosophy, their ideas of teaching and learning on which this concept is based upon.

Besides the *definition and introduction* (chapter 1), the concept of self-directed learning is illustrated in *cases of good practice* (chapter 3). These case studies also describe the spectrum of target groups and of methods in the context of the implementation of self-directed learning.

In addition, the Toolbox illustrates overlapping aspects of self-directed learning that need to be taken into consideration during implementation:

- Practice shows that the implementation of SDL is aligned with a change of work cultures and organisational structures: when introducing SDL concepts, institutions keep stumbling across different regulations, which make structural and organisational changes inevitable. Eventually they have to make changes in the learning organisation.

Chapter 2 deals with the *organisational aspects* of SDL. It shows which challenges training providers will face when they plan to implement SDL as a didactic concept. Furthermore, it looks at the conditions that proved useful, in the partners' experience, during the introduction of SDL. They can be regarded as recommendations for organising the framework conditions that enable the introduction of SDL.

- In chapter 4, the *role of trainers as tutors* in SDL learning settings will be described. In the learning culture characterised by SDL, this role changes from a knowledge agent to a knowledge provider, knowledge counsellor and knowledge companion which, in turn, leads to changes in the competences needed by tutors.
- Chapter 5 deals with the *special role of learning interests and personal learning goals* in self-directed learning settings. We describe how unemployed target groups who are not used to or have withdrawn from learning can find access to their personal interests and goals, and which criteria should be observed in the design and formulation of these objectives in order to guarantee a successful learning process.

- Chapter 6 describes the *context or competence recognition and self-directed learning*. For the learners, it clarifies the role of determining their standpoint as a prerequisite for self-directed learning processes and a controlling instrument during the process.
- Chapter 7 provides *Links to SDL* with sources for further information for implementing self-directed learning with people with a low level of education. The project partners have collected a number of methods and instruments that can be used for various target groups (disadvantaged young people, migrants, long-term unemployed people etc.) and gives them the possibility of developing their competences.

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Education and Culture

Leonardo da Vinci

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