



# Upskilling Adults 45+ with a Migrant Background

The vulnerable group of unemployed and de-skilled return migrants and migrants above the age of 45 receive a mix of affirmative measures to support their employment and social inclusion.



## iQ | GOOD PRACTICE to the point

### **Target groups for Transfer:**

adult education providers, counsellors, social workers, integration practitioners and policymakers, municipalities

### **UPAM 45+ in a nutshell:**

UPAM 45+ aims to provide solutions for the social and labour market integration of adults 45+ with a migrant background through basic skills learning

### **Implementing organization:**

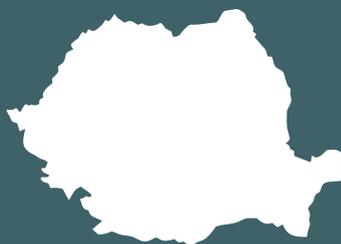
Romanian Institute for Adult Education (IREA)

[www.irea.ro](http://www.irea.ro)

[www.upskilling.ilabour.eu](http://www.upskilling.ilabour.eu)

[www.facebook.com/irea.uvt](https://www.facebook.com/irea.uvt)

[www.formacionatuaire.com](http://www.formacionatuaire.com)



### **Romania**

Population (March 2022):  
19,024,556 million

Population with a migration  
background: 73,999

Unemployment rate for population  
with migration background  
(10,45 per 1 000 inhabitants in 2019)

Source: <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/romania-population/> & Eurostat

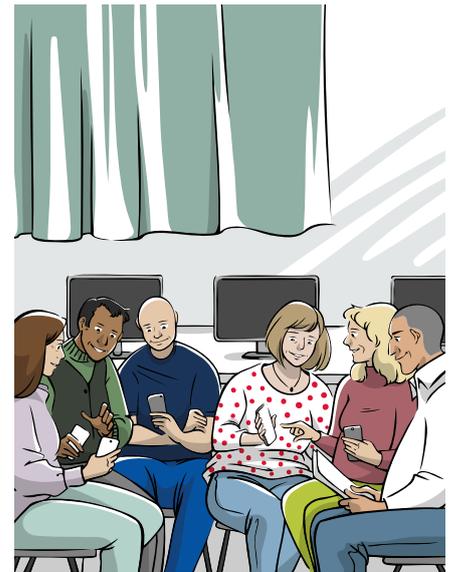
### **Starting position/challenge**

The current scale of transnational migration is unprecedented. Wealthy countries are using migration as a strategy to fill gaps in their labour market and to replenish an aging workforce, draining resources from the East or the South. Migrant workers from Eastern Europe often work in elderly care or the construction industry. A parallel phenomenon of return migration, especially in countries of South-Eastern Europe, triggers challenges in terms of reinsertion into the local labour market, but also in terms of reintegration into local communities and society as a whole. Adults aged 45 years or older (45+) are particularly affected by these challenges, especially if they have spent a longer period living and working abroad and now wish to re-enter the local labour market. This group faces specific difficulties to reintegration, due to (long-term) unemployment, de-skilling, and competency gaps. Affirmative measures are needed in order to compensate for these disadvantages. The group of adults 45+ deserves more attention as its size will increase in aging European societies.

### **Implementation of the UPAM45+ project**

The project aims to tackle the difficulties of (re)inserting return migrants as well as EU- and non-EU-migrants into the labour market and the wider community. To achieve this end, the project developed integrated solutions necessary for adult education providers to support (re)migrants aged 45+ to acquire basic skills, such as entrepreneurship, digital and soft skills. Moreover, solutions were created for adult education providers to advice and accompany migrants aged 45+ in getting their competencies validated. In this way, the social and professional inclusion of adults 45+ with a migrant background is supported holistically.

The general objective of the programme was to provide solutions for the social and labour



market integration of migrants 45+ through basic skills learning. Three specific objectives have been achieved: First, dedicated programmes designed for training staff working with adults 45+ were developed. Second, tailored, holistic services for adults 45+ with a migration background were provided, so that they can access the local labour market and actively participate in their community. These provisions offer a mix of validation, services and trainings for upskilling and qualifying. Third, a learning strategy with two components has been developed: digital skills and soft skills that can be adapted to different contexts and target groups. Further, other important materials and tools created were a handbook for basic skills awareness and understanding of migrants aged 45+ together with a training package with two modules. This strategy incorporates training elements on digital skills and soft skills. The package also includes a guide for trainers. Special care was given to updating tools for evaluation and validation of existing competences in the building sector, and for transversal skills that are needed across industries and sectors of the labour market.

# Adapted methods, digital literacy, and an open door

Dan Lazar, training coordinator and deputy director of the Romanian-German Foundation, Timișoara, gives insights into the adaptation of trainings to the target group of (re)migrants above the age of 45



“In working with migrant adults over the age of 45, one of the challenges was to identify occupations in which they wanted to find a job, and to identify which skills they had already acquired from previous work experiences, or courses, and which competencies needed to be trained. The training of new skills had to be adapted to people whose time for study is limited, using interactive methods with examples from practical experience, using digital technology, training interactivity.

The training was designed with a strong focus on practical rather than theoretical elements.

A broad mix of didactical tools and methods were used, such as sequences, simulators, online platforms, teamwork, small group and role play sessions. The small group exercises facilitated the communication and openness of the participants in terms of involvement and cooperation. As most of the participants had limited knowledge in the digital field, an introductory module was used for the use of portable equipment (smart phone, tablet or laptop), the use of mobile phones not only for the purpose of receiving messages or calls.

Thus, they learned to use the phone for location, use of maps and navigation software, payments for travel tickets and internet banking but also the use of dedicated software, for example for public transport or education. Another important

aspect was the identification of jobs, job placement agencies, databases with employers, job postings published online, all of which are only possible using digital technology.

In the practice of training, a training kit was developed that contains materials necessary for the realisation of a CV as well as possible questions and answers suitable for a job interview, preparation of the portfolio, etc. Finally, the personal relationship between course participants and trainers was very important. For the target group of migrants aged 45 or older, it is particularly important that there remains an open door for them, even after the completion of the training sessions and after graduating from certain courses.”

Three questions for Denisa Centea, researcher and trainer, Romanian Institute for Adult Education (IREA)

## Tackling the needs of migrants and return migrants 45+



### **What is the innovative part of the UPAM 45+ approach?**

The choice of the target group of adults facing multiple challenges: aged 45+, migrants or return migrants, with basic skills, coming from disadvantaged areas. They are addressed in a holistic, integrative manner, with a combination of services, tailored to their situation, interests, and

further plans, to fulfill professional and social needs. So, the project is completely innovative in terms of choice of target groups, but also because of the flexible, integrative solution: by equipping them with a mix of digital and soft skills, the beneficiary can address the labour market in a more flexible way.

### **Is it possible to introduce the format in other countries? How can challenges be overcome during implementation processes?**

Yes, absolutely, all our results can be successfully applied in other countries and in other learning contexts. Due to their flexible design and inner structure, they are easily adapted to adapt to different groups of

students, with differing experience and interests. Our handbook for basic skills awareness and understanding of migrants aged 45+ and the training package for the modules digital skills and soft skills enable trainers and career counsellors to propose tailored solutions and a mix of services adapted to the individual educational pathways the adults undertook so far, as well as to their interests and further plans.

### **Which long-term achievements does the UPAM 45+ approach hold?**

First and foremost, the materials developed in the project will remain available for free access for at least five years after the completion of the project. After five years, the e-learning module (<http://www.formacionatuare.com/>) will be available for purchase by service providers in the field of adult education. The staff members involved in the project and those who were trained as basic skills educators for migrants and return migrants will continue to use the competences they acquired in this project. They will participate in training modules set up by employment departments or companies and will also conduct several trainings for (return) migrants in their own organisation.

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**Network IQ**  
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In cooperation with:

