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Empowering Single Mothers for Resilience and New Opportunities

Digital Toolkit for Adult Educators Supporting Single Mothers



Prepared by the SHE-LEARNS Consortium

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1. Introduction

1.1. About SHE-LEARNS

SHE-LEARNS: Empowering Single Mothers for Resilience and New Opportunities supports more inclusive, flexible and accessible adult education for single mothers.

The project recognises that participation in adult learning is shaped by the everyday realities of single mothers, including care responsibilities, limited time, financial pressure, digital barriers, interrupted education or employment, and emotional and cognitive overload. These conditions can affect when, how and to what extent learners are able to engage. SHE-LEARNS therefore promotes flexible, accessible and practical learning approaches that respond to learners' actual circumstances and support meaningful participation. At the same time, SHE-LEARNS strengthens the capacity of adult educators, trainers, facilitators and other professionals to support learners through practical, learner-centred approaches. The project combines skills development with methods that make participation more manageable, relevant and sustainable.

Five connected areas of support

RECONNECT Learning & confidence	**ACCESS** Digital participation	**STABILISE** Financial decisions	**TRANSITION** Employment pathways	**SUSTAIN** Wellbeing & participation

1.2. About This Toolkit

The SHE-LEARNS Digital Toolkit for Inclusive Adult Education is a practical resource for adult educators and other professionals supporting single mothers in adult learning, social inclusion, community learning, employability and related settings.

It translates the evidence and pedagogical approach developed through SHE-LEARNS into five practical training modules. The modules combine learning content with activities, case studies, assessment tools, educator guidance and ready-to-use supporting materials.

The toolkit was developed from the research and needs analysis carried out within WP2 and subsequently refined through the SHE-LEARNS study visit and Train-the-Trainer activities. Feedback from educators and professionals across partner countries strengthened practical usability, flexibility, accessibility, emotional safety, and adaptation to different learner realities and institutional settings.

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What educators will find in each module

LEARNING OBJECTIVES Clear outcomes for educators and learners	**PRACTICAL CONTENT** Concise information linked to real-life needs	**INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES** Ready-to-use learning activities
CASE STUDIES Realistic situations for discussion and reflection	**ASSESSMENT TOOLS** Practical outputs and reflection tools	**EDUCATOR GUIDANCE** Adaptation notes and supporting materials

Each module provides the information and tools needed to adapt learning to the topic, learner group and delivery setting.

1.3. How to Use the Toolkit

The toolkit provides structure while remaining flexible in how it is used. Educators may use the full learning pathway or select the modules and activities most relevant to their learners. The priority is to create useful and manageable learning experiences that respond to learners' actual circumstances.

Flexible Use of the Modules

The five modules are connected, but they are also designed to work as self-contained learning units.

- **Use one module independently** when it responds to an immediate learner need.
- **Combine modules** to create a broader learning pathway.
- **Select particular activities** rather than delivering every activity.
- **Divide learning into shorter sessions** where time, energy or attendance is limited.
- **Adapt examples and materials** to the national, local and organisational context.
- **Allow learners to pause and return** without treating interrupted attendance as failure.

Three practical ways to use the toolkit

ONE MODULE	A FEW ACTIVITIES	FULL PATHWAY
Select one module for a specific learner's need.	Choose activities that fit the available time and context.	Use all five modules to support broader progression.

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The Five-Module SHE-LEARNS Pathway

The Training Framework connects the five modules through a progressive pathway from re-engagement to sustainable participation. Each module responds to a different barrier or condition affecting participation in adult learning.



STAGE	MODULE	WHAT IT SUPPORTS
ENTRY	Module 1 – Re-engagement and Learning Activation	Reconnecting with learning, recognising strengths and identifying a realistic next step
ACCESS	Module 2 – Digital Literacy for Access and Inclusion	Building practical digital confidence for everyday participation
STABILITY	Module 3 – Financial Literacy and Stability	Increasing financial visibility and supporting safer everyday decisions
TRANSITION	Module 4 – Employability and Transition Pathways	Translating lived experience into skills and exploring realistic work pathways
SUSTAINABILITY	Module 5 – Wellbeing, Resilience and Sustainability	Maintaining participation under conditions of stress, overload or changing circumstances

ENTRY → ACCESS → STABILITY → TRANSITION → SUSTAINABILITY

The pathway is a guide, not a compulsory sequence. Learners may enter at different points, use individual modules, pause, return or combine modules according to their needs and circumstances.

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Core Principles for Adult Educators

Across all five modules, SHE-LEARNS follows five common principles. These provide a shared approach while allowing educators to adapt delivery to different learners, topics and settings.

1. START FROM STRENGTHS AND EXISTING EXPERIENCE

Learners bring knowledge and skills from everyday life, caregiving, work, community participation and managing responsibilities. Begin with what is already there rather than focusing first on what is missing.

2. KEEP LEARNING PRACTICAL AND CONNECTED TO REAL LIFE

Use relevant tasks, examples and situations that learners can recognise and apply. Practical learning is more useful than unnecessary theory or abstract exercises.

3. ALLOW FLEXIBLE AND LOW-PRESSURE PARTICIPATION

Participation can take different forms. Learners may speak, write, observe, work with others, complete something privately or take part more lightly when needed. Participation should feel manageable.

4. ADAPT TO THE LEARNER AND THE CONTEXT

Single mothers are not one uniform group. Literacy, language, digital confidence, care arrangements, financial circumstances, attendance and available support may differ considerably. Adapt activities and examples accordingly.

5. FOCUS ON REALISTIC PROGRESS

Progress does not require completing everything. One useful insight, one completed task or one manageable next step can be a meaningful learning outcome.

Each module provides more specific guidance on how these principles can be applied to its particular learning area, activities and learner needs.

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SHE-LEARNS Training Modules



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Module 1: Re-engagement and Learning Activation

1. Module Overview

Aim of the module: This module helps adult educators support single mothers in reconnecting with learning in a safe, practical, and manageable way. It focuses on recognising existing strengths, lowering psychological pressure, and helping learners identify one realistic next step for re-engagement.

Target group: Adult educators, trainers, facilitators, social workers, and other professionals working with single mothers in adult education, social inclusion, community learning, or employability contexts.

Duration: 2–4 learning hours, organised in short and flexible activities of 15–30 minutes each.

Main learning approach: Microlearning, strengths-based facilitation, guided reflection, oral and visual participation, low-threshold engagement, and action-oriented planning connected to real-life experience.

Final module output: A one-page Personal Learning Plan including one recognised strength, one current barrier, one realistic next step, and one source of support.

2. Learning Objectives

By the end of the module, adult educators will be able to:

1. identify at least three common barriers and at least three existing strengths that may shape a single mother's re-engagement in learning, using a learner case or real-life profile;
2. facilitate two low-pressure re-engagement activities and adapt at least one of them for learners with low literacy, irregular attendance, or low confidence;
3. support learners in preparing a simple Personal Learning Plan with one realistic next step and one support need linked to their current life situation.

3. Theoretical and Practical Rationale

Key concepts

- **Re-engagement:** The process of reconnecting with learning after interruption, overload, self-doubt, or disengagement. In this module, re-engagement is supported through low-pressure tasks, realistic expectations, and gradual participation.

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- **Learner identity:** The way a person sees themselves in relation to learning, growth, and capability. Many adults with interrupted education develop a negative learner identity, so this module works to rebuild confidence through small, achievable learning experiences.
- **Informal competences:** Skills developed through daily life, caregiving, problem-solving, and managing responsibilities outside formal education or paid work. These competences are treated as valid learning resources and starting points for re-engagement.
- **Low-threshold participation:** A learning design that simplifies involvement by reducing pressure, complexity, and public exposure. Participation may be oral, visual, partial, private, or gradual.
- **Self-efficacy:** A learner's belief that she can act, learn, and make progress. In re-engagement contexts, self-efficacy grows through early success, respectful facilitation, and realistic next steps rather than through pressure.
- **Strengths-based approach:** An approach that starts from what learners already know, do, and manage rather than from what is missing. For single mothers, this means recognising everyday caregiving, coordination, communication, and resilience as meaningful competences.
- **Psychological safety:** The degree to which a learner feels safe to participate, make mistakes, ask questions, or pause without judgement. It is a basic condition for confidence-building and sustained participation.
- **Social connection and belonging:** The sense that a learner is accepted, supported, and able to participate without judgement or isolation. For some single mothers, reconnecting with learning may also depend on rebuilding social contact, trust, and a sense of belonging, particularly after periods of isolation or disrupted participation.

Link with European frameworks

- EQF (European Qualifications Framework): The module supports outcomes related to recognising prior experience, reflecting on strengths and barriers, and identifying realistic next steps with increasing learner autonomy.
- ECVET logic: The content functions as a short, self-contained learning unit with one practical output, the Personal Learning Plan, which can be completed independently from later modules.
- European Skills Agenda: The module supports inclusion in lifelong learning by helping adults re-enter education and prepare for further skill development through accessible, confidence-building participation.
- Key Competences for Lifelong Learning (EU, 2018): The module directly supports personal, social, and learning-to-learn competence, including self-efficacy, reflection, realistic planning, and adaptive participation.

Useful links

- European Skills Agenda — https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies-and-activities/skills-and-qualifications/european-skills-agenda_en
- Council Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways – New Opportunities for Adults

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https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies-and-activities/skills-and-qualifications/helping-people-develop-skills-throughout-their-lives/upskilling-pathways_en

- Key Competences for Lifelong Learning (Council Recommendation, 2018) https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/297a33c8-a1f3-11e9-9d01-01aa75ed71a1/language-en
- EPALE – Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe — https://epale.ec.europa.eu
- Overcoming Participation Barriers in Adult Education (EPALE resource) https://epale.ec.europa.eu/en/resource-centre/content/overcoming-participation-barriers-adult-education

For many single mothers, returning to learning is not mainly a question of motivation. It is a question of whether learning feels possible, safe, relevant, and manageable. Interrupted participation often reflects structural overload, confidence loss, care pressure, financial strain, and previous negative educational experiences rather than lack of interest. This module therefore starts by creating the conditions that make participation possible: recognition, psychological safety, flexible entry points, and one manageable next step.

Key principles for implementation

- Start from strengths, not deficits. Everyday caregiving, coordination, and problem-solving are learning resources.
- Keep participation low-pressure. Learners should be able to observe, respond orally, use visuals, or complete tasks privately.
- Support connection without forcing interaction. Re-engagement may also involve rebuilding confidence in learning with others. Pair work, small-group participation, peer support, and gradual involvement can strengthen belonging, but learners should always be able to choose quieter or more private forms of participation.
- Use concrete examples. Abstract language should always be supported with real-life situations.
- Plan for different learner realities. Single mothers are not a uniform group. Participation may be shaped differently by literacy and language needs, migration experience, widowhood, separation or co-parenting arrangements, limited or conflictual support, financial pressure, social isolation, or severe social and economic disadvantage. Adapt the activity to the learner's actual situation rather than assuming a common experience of single motherhood.
- Focus on one realistic next step. Progress is gradual and does not require perfect conditions.

Link with the pilot feedback

The study visit and subsequent Train-the-Trainer seminars confirmed the relevance of the strengths-based approach, low-pressure participation, and activities that help learners recognise existing competences. Feedback also reinforced the need to simplify language, reduce reliance on written reflection, and provide oral, visual, private, and flexible participation options. Further feedback highlighted the diversity of single mothers' circumstances, including differences in family and support

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arrangements, language and migration experiences, and levels of social connection. Educators also noted that implementation conditions vary considerably across adult education, NGO, social service, community-based, and other institutional settings. These considerations are integrated throughout the module without changing its core focus on safe and manageable re-engagement in learning.

4. Learning Content

Key information learners need

Participation may look different from motivation. Missed sessions, incomplete activities, silence, or hesitation often reflect stress, childcare responsibilities, fatigue, or low confidence rather than lack of interest.

Early signs of low learner identity matter. Comments such as “I am not good at studying” or “I have nothing to offer” often reflect previous negative educational experiences, not lack of ability.

Emotional safety affects participation. Learners are more likely to engage when they feel respected, supported, and free from judgement or public exposure.

Low-threshold participation supports re-engagement. Short activities, flexible pacing, repetition, practical examples, and multiple response formats make re-entry more manageable.

Small achievements matter. For some learners, progress may mean attending one session, identifying one strength, or naming one realistic next step rather than completing everything at once.

Everyday experience is a learning resource. Organisation, communication, problem-solving, emotional regulation, scheduling, and crisis response already used in daily life can become the foundation for rebuilding learner confidence.

- Re-engagement is often conditional: learners participate more easily when pressure is reduced and early success is possible.
- Low learner identity may appear through silence, hesitation, avoidance of writing, or self-devaluing statements.
- Participation may be irregular for practical reasons. Missed sessions should not be treated as disengagement or failure.
- Informal competences matter. Single mothers often use organisation, communication, crisis response, resource management, and emotional regulation every day.
- Emotionally safe learning environments are essential. Learners should not be forced into disclosure, comparison, or public exposure.

Inclusion and adaptation reminders

- Do not assume that single mothers form one uniform group. Consider differences in family arrangements, including whether parenting responsibilities are shared or carried primarily by one parent; the availability or absence of family and community support; widowhood or separation;

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migration and language barriers; literacy levels; social isolation; and different levels of care, work, and financial pressure.

- Do not rely on written tasks only. Oral response, visual prompts, pair talk, card sorting, and educator-supported completion should be available.
- Consider whether the learner also needs a gradual route into social participation. Pair work, peer support, or a small-group activity may help rebuild connection and confidence, but social interaction should not be compulsory.
- Use short, manageable activities that can stand alone and allow re-entry after absence.
- Keep examples grounded in daily life: childcare, appointments, school communication, forms, budgeting, transport, and crisis management.
- Adapt delivery to the institutional setting. Adult education centres, NGOs, public social services, community organisations, and online programmes may offer different levels of time, privacy, space, continuity, and individual support. Where privacy or one-to-one support cannot be ensured, use activities that do not require personal disclosure.

Key message for learners

Returning to learning does not start with being fully ready. It starts with recognising what you already do, what you already know, and what one realistic next step could be.

5. Interactive Teaching Materials

Activity 1: My Invisible Skills

- **Duration:** 20 minutes
- **Type:** Individual work + pair discussion
- **Purpose:** Recognise existing competences developed through daily life, caregiving, and practical problem-solving.
- **Supporting material:** Worksheet A – My Invisible Skills Map (Annex 1)
- **Facilitation note:** Use the lighter or oral version when learners are tired, hesitant, or have low literacy. Sharing remains optional in all activities.

Activity 2: My Learning Story in 3 Moments

- **Duration:** 20–25 minutes
- **Type:** Individual reflection + optional pair sharing
- **Purpose:** Identify three moments that shaped the learner's relationship with learning and the conditions that helped or blocked participation.
- **Supporting material:** Worksheet B – My Learning Story in 3 Moments (Annex 2)
- **Facilitation note:** Use the lighter or oral version when learners are tired, hesitant, or have low literacy. Sharing remains optional in all activities.

Activity 3: One Small Step Forward

- **Duration:** 15–20 minutes

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- **Type:** Individual task
- **Purpose:** Turn reflection into one realistic next step and one support need.
- **Supporting material:** Worksheet C – One Small Step Forward Card (Annex 3)
- **Facilitation note:** Use the lighter or oral version when learners are tired, hesitant, or have low literacy. Sharing remains optional in all activities.

Activity 4: What Helps Participation?

- **Duration:** 20 minutes
- **Type:** Small-group work or card sorting
- **Purpose:** Identify practical conditions that support or block participation in learning.
- **Supporting material:** Worksheet D – What Helps Participation? Matrix (Annex 4)
- **Facilitation note:** Use the lighter or oral version when learners are tired, hesitant, or have low literacy. Sharing remains optional in all activities.

Suggested check-in and check-out prompts

- Opening check-in: “What feels manageable for you today?”
- Closing check-out: “What is one thing you are taking with you from today?”

6. Case Studies

Case Study 1: “I haven’t studied in years”

Maria is 35, a single mother of one, and has not taken part in formal learning since secondary school. She says she has “forgotten how to learn” and avoids written tasks. Educators should identify what is happening beyond the surface, what strengths are present, and what one realistic next step could be.

Case Study 2: “I can’t promise I’ll be here every week”

Elena is 29, a single mother of two, with irregular part-time work and changing childcare arrangements. She wants to continue learning but cannot guarantee weekly attendance. Educators should consider what flexible participation can look like and how re-entry can remain shame-free.

Case Study 3: “I do everything, but I still do not see it as a skill”

A learner describes managing appointments, dealing with institutions, handling crises, and keeping family life together, but still says she has “no skills”. Educators should explore how to name existing competences in accessible and affirming ways.

Case Study 4: “I want to learn, but I still feel outside the group”

Sara recently moved to the area and is raising her child with limited informal support. She understands most of the course content but is less confident speaking the language used in the sessions and rarely joins group discussions. She attends when she can but usually sits quietly and leaves immediately afterwards. Educators should consider how language confidence, limited support, and social isolation may affect re-engagement, and how participation and connection can be supported gradually without forcing public speaking or personal disclosure.

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7. Assessment Tools

Practical assessment output: Personal Learning Plan

The learner completes a one-page plan including: one strength I recognise in myself; one thing that makes learning difficult; one realistic next step; one support that could help me; when I want to try this step.

Reflection tool: Exit Reflection Card

At the end of the session, learners complete a short reflection on what they discovered, what now feels more possible, and what support would help them continue.

What successful completion looks like

- The learner can name at least one existing strength or competence.
- The learner identifies one realistic next step.
- The learner identifies at least one condition, barrier, or support need relevant to participation.
- The educator can see movement from general reflection toward a concrete next action.

8. Educator Notes

Supporting learners with low literacy or low confidence

- Use short instructions, oral explanation, and visual prompts.
- Offer educator-supported writing where needed.
- Allow pair discussion before individual completion.
- Treat observation, short answers, and partial completion as valid participation.

Working with vulnerable learners

- Do not assume that a learner will disclose that she is a single mother or explain her situation openly.
- Avoid tasks that require public self-exposure or personal disclosure as the default option.
- Use concrete everyday examples instead of abstract language or institutional terminology.
- Be prepared to adapt the same activity into oral, visual, private, or simplified versions.
- Avoid assumptions about family situations or available support. Single motherhood may involve widowhood, separation, shared or conflictual co-parenting, migration, language barriers, or limited practical and social support.
- Where learners experience social isolation, offer optional pair work, peer support, or small-group participation without making interaction or disclosure compulsory.
- Adapt activities to organisational conditions. If privacy, individual support, or continuity cannot be guaranteed, use fictional examples, private reflection, oral or visual alternatives, and tasks that do not require sensitive personal disclosure.

Managing irregular attendance

- Design activities as stand-alone units that allow learners to return without penalty.

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- Briefly recap key points without drawing attention to absence.
- Offer take-home or catch-up versions where helpful.

9. Supporting Materials and Annexes

The following annexes accompany the module and should be used as support documents during implementation:

Annex 1 – Worksheet A: My Invisible Skills Map

Purpose: recognise competences already used in daily life, caregiving, problem-solving and managing responsibilities. Use only the examples that feel relevant.

Name (optional): _____

Date: _____

Everyday situation	What I already do	What this shows	Skill words I can use
Organising family routines			organisation / planning / time management
Appointments, school or service communication			communication / coordination / follow-up
Solving an unexpected problem			problem-solving / decision-making / adaptability
Managing limited time or resources			prioritisation / resource management / planning
Supporting or caring for another person			responsibility / patience / emotional regulation
Keeping track of several tasks at once			attention / organisation / reliability
Something else I do often			

One strength I recognise more clearly now: _____

One strength I could use in learning: _____

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Annex 2 – Worksheet B: My Learning Story in 3 Moments

Purpose: reflect on experiences that shaped the learner's relationship with learning. Learners do not need to describe sensitive events. They may write, draw, use keywords or answer orally.

Name (optional): _____

Moment	What I remember	What helped	What made learning harder
1. A time when learning felt possible or useful			
2. A time when learning became difficult, stopped or changed			
3. Where I am now and what I would like to try next			

Looking across the three moments

Something that has helped me learn before:

_____

Something that would make learning feel more manageable now:

_____

One thing I want the educator to know about how I learn best (optional): _____

Annex 3 – Worksheet C: One Small Step Forward Card

Purpose: turn reflection into one realistic next step. The step should be small enough to try even when time, energy or support are limited.

Name (optional): _____

1. What would I like to move towards?

A learning goal, task or opportunity I am interested in:

_____

2. What is the smallest useful step I can take?

My next step:

_____

3. When could I try it?

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A realistic day / time / situation:

_____

4. What support could make this easier?

A person, service, reminder, resource, quieter format or other support:

_____

5. If this step becomes too difficult, what lighter option could still keep me connected?

_____

Annex 4 – Worksheet D: What Helps Participation? Matrix

Purpose: identify practical conditions that support or block participation. This can be completed from personal experience, through a fictional example, or as a group discussion.

Name (optional): _____

Area	What helps participation	What makes participation harder	One possible adjustment
Time and schedule			
Childcare / other care responsibilities			
Transport / location / access			
Confidence and previous learning experiences			
Language / reading / writing needs			
Learning format: speaking, listening, writing, visual or pair work			
Social connection / feeling part of the group			
Privacy, safety or space			

The two conditions that matter most for me right now: _____

_____

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Annex 5 – Worksheet E: Personal Learning Plan

Main module output. The plan should remain short, realistic and connected to the learner's current life situation. Oral or educator-supported completion is valid.

Name (optional): _____

Date: _____

1. One strength I recognise in myself
Something I already know, do or manage that can help me learn:
_____

2. One thing that currently makes learning difficult
_____

3. One realistic next step
What I will try:
_____

4. One source of support
Who or what could help:
_____

5. When I want to try this step
_____

A participation format that would help me (optional)
For example: shorter task, oral response, pair work, visual support, quieter/private completion, flexible timing:
_____

Annex 6 – Worksheet F: Exit Reflection Card

Print and cut if useful. Learners may complete only the prompts they want to answer. A short oral check-out can be used instead.

EXIT REFLECTION CARD
One thing I discovered or recognised today:
_____
One thing that feels a little more possible now:
_____
One support or condition that could help me continue:
_____
One small thing I want to remember or try:
_____

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EXIT REFLECTION CARD

One thing I discovered or recognised today:

_____

One thing that feels a little more possible now:

_____

One support or condition that could help me continue:

_____

One small thing I want to remember or try:

_____

Annex 7 – Scenario Cards for Educator Use

Use one or two cards for pair or small-group discussion. The aim is not to "solve" the learner's life situation, but to identify what may be happening, what strengths are present, and what low-pressure response could support re-engagement.

Card 1 – "I haven't studied in years"

Maria is 35 and has not taken part in formal learning since secondary school. She says she has "forgotten how to learn" and avoids written tasks.

Discuss:

- What might be happening beyond the surface?
- What strengths may already be present?
- What is one low-pressure first step?

Card 2 – "I can't promise I'll be here every week"

Elena has irregular part-time work and changing childcare arrangements. She wants to continue learning but cannot guarantee weekly attendance.

Discuss:

- How could participation remain flexible?
- How can re-entry after absence stay shame-free?
- What should the educator avoid assuming?

Card 3 – "I do everything, but I have no skills"

A learner manages appointments, school communication, household routines and unexpected problems but still says she has "nothing to offer".

Discuss:

- Which informal competences can be named?
- How could the educator translate them into accessible language?
- What would affirm rather than exaggerate her strengths?

Card 4 – "I still feel outside the group"

Sara recently moved to the area, has limited informal support and is less confident speaking the language used in the sessions. She attends but rarely joins group discussion.

Discuss:

- How might language confidence and isolation affect participation?
- What gradual routes into connection could help?
- How can participation remain voluntary and safe?

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Card 5 – "Today I can only listen"	Card 6 – "There is nowhere private to talk"
A learner arrives tired and says she cannot write or speak much today, but she does not want to lose contact with the course. **Discuss:** • What can count as valid participation today? • How can the activity be reduced without making the learner feel singled out? • What small next step could preserve connection?	A public-service educator is working in a busy setting with no room for confidential one-to-one discussion. A learner seems hesitant when a personal reflection task begins. **Discuss:** • Which parts of the activity should remain non-personal? • What fictional, oral or visual alternative could be used? • When should the educator avoid inviting disclosure?

Quick debrief guide for educators

Across all scenarios, keep the discussion focused on educational support rather than personal diagnosis or counselling.

Ask	Look for	Avoid
What may be affecting participation?	Practical barriers, confidence, literacy/language needs, care pressure, social isolation, previous learning experiences.	Assuming low motivation or lack of ability.
What strengths are already present?	Everyday competences, coping strategies, persistence, communication, organisation and problem-solving.	Turning strengths into unrealistic praise or pressure.
What could make the next step manageable?	Shorter tasks, oral/visual options, flexible timing, pair work, private completion, educator support.	Requiring disclosure, public performance or full completion.
What does the setting allow?	Actual time, privacy, space, continuity and available support.	Using a one-to-one or personal task when confidentiality cannot be ensured.

Flexible worksheets for written, oral, visual or educator-supported completion. Sharing is optional. Learners may use short words, drawings, symbols or oral responses, and may leave any item blank.

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Module 2: Digital Literacy for Access and Inclusion

1. Module Overview

Aim of the module: This module helps adult educators support single mothers in building practical digital confidence for everyday life. It focuses on simple, real tasks that matter in daily routines: email, online forms, school communication, public services, online meetings, and safe navigation. The module is designed to reduce pressure, build confidence step by step, and help learners use digital tools in ways that feel useful, manageable, and safe.

Target group: Adult educators, trainers, facilitators, social workers, and professionals working with single mothers in adult education, community learning, social inclusion, or employability contexts.

Duration: Suggested 2.5 to 3.5 learning hours, divided into 4 short sessions of approximately 20 to 35 minutes. Sessions can be delivered face-to-face, online, or blended and may be adapted to local context.

Main learning approach: Microlearning, guided practice, real-life task-based learning, confidence-building, repetition, and low-pressure progression.

Final module output: One completed real-life digital task and one short Personal Digital Action Plan.

2. Learning Objectives

By the end of the module, adult educators will be able to:

1. Identify learners' digital starting points, confidence levels, access barriers, and one everyday digital task relevant to their current life situation.
2. Facilitate at least two practical digital activities and adapt them through step-by-step, visual, oral, or observation-first support for learners with low digital confidence, literacy or language barriers.
3. Support learners in completing one useful digital task safely and preparing a short Personal Digital Action Plan with one realistic next step and one source of support.

3. Theoretical and Practical Rationale

Digital participation is now part of everyday life. For many single mothers, access to education, public services, school communication, benefits, job opportunities, health appointments, and banking increasingly depends on digital tools. This means that digital exclusion is not only a technical issue. It is

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also a participation issue shaped by time poverty, unstable access, low confidence, previous negative experiences, and fear of making mistakes.

Key concepts

- Functional digital literacy: The ability to complete specific, real-life digital tasks such as using email, finding trusted information, accessing online services, joining a meeting, or uploading a document.
- Digital access and inclusion: The conditions that allow people to participate in digital life, including device access, internet connection, confidence, clear guidance, and affordable, usable tools.
- Digital confidence and self-efficacy: A learner's belief that she can successfully complete a digital task. Confidence often grows through repetition, reassurance, demonstration, and small successes.
- Safe internet use: Practical habits that protect personal data and reduce risk, including recognising suspicious links, protecting passwords, checking website trustworthiness, and slowing down before acting.
- Digital tools for communication, services, and employability: Everyday platforms used for messaging, school communication, health appointments, online forms, benefits access, job search, and document sharing.
- AI-assisted digital tools: Digital tools that use artificial intelligence to help users generate, explain, organise, translate, or revise information. In this module, AI is treated as an optional support tool for simple everyday, learning, or employability tasks. Learners should be encouraged to protect personal information, question AI-generated content, and verify important information rather than assuming that an AI response is always correct.
- Common digital risks and safety challenges: Phishing, scams, fake job offers, oversharing personal information, weak passwords, and emotional pressure tactics that push users to act quickly without checking.

Link with European frameworks

- EQF (European Qualifications Framework): The module supports practical outcomes related to knowledge, skills, and autonomy in everyday digital participation and problem-solving.
- ECVET logic: The module is organised into short, practical units focused on real-life tasks that can be delivered and assessed independently.
- EQAVET: The module supports a simple cycle of planning, practising, checking understanding, and adapting activities to learner starting points and participation barriers.
- European Skills Agenda: The module contributes to essential digital and transversal competences linked to employability, lifelong learning, and social inclusion.
- EU Upskilling Pathways Initiative: The module is designed as a flexible, accessible, and practical adult learning offer for learners with diverse educational backgrounds and life conditions.
- DigComp 2.2: The module aligns especially with communication and collaboration, information and data literacy, safety, and problem-solving.

Useful links

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- DigComp 2.2: The Digital Competence Framework for Citizens https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC128415
- Your Europe – Citizens' Portal — https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/index_en.htm
- Europass Digital Skills Resources — https://europa.eu/europass/digitalskills/screen/home
- EPALE – Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe — https://epale.ec.europa.eu
  Digital inclusion – Shaping Europe's digital future — https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/digital-inclusion

Key principles for implementation

- Start from everyday tasks, not from abstract digital theory.
- Use simple and plain language, supported by visuals, icons, and examples.
- Build digital confidence through small successes, repetition, and reassurance.
- Embed digital safety within practice tasks instead of teaching it only as warnings.
- Use AI only where it serves a real task. AI tools should be introduced through simple and relevant uses, such as explaining unfamiliar information, drafting a short message, generating ideas, or simplifying a text, rather than as a separate technical topic.
- Keep AI use safe and critical. Learners should not enter sensitive personal, financial, health, employment, or family information into AI tools. Important information should be checked against a reliable source, because AI-generated content may be incomplete or inaccurate.
- Allow flexible pacing, observation-first participation, and low-pressure progression.

4. Learning Content

Key information learners need

Learners do not need advanced technical knowledge to benefit. The priority is to complete simple and useful digital tasks connected to daily life, services, communication, and work.

Digital confidence is as important as digital skill. Many adults already use smartphones and apps in daily life but still feel anxious in formal learning or work-related digital settings.

One task at a time works best. Sending an email, completing an online form, joining a meeting, or checking whether a message is safe are meaningful learning goals.

Safe participation matters. Learners need practical ways to recognise suspicious messages, protect passwords, avoid oversharing, and slow down before clicking or sending information.

AI can support simple digital tasks. AI tools can help explain unfamiliar information, simplify a text, suggest wording for an email, generate ideas, or help organise information. Learners do not need advanced technical knowledge to use these tools for simple purposes.

AI output still needs judgement. An AI-generated answer can sound convincing and still be incomplete, inaccurate, or inappropriate for the learner's situation. Learners should avoid sharing sensitive personal information and should check important information with a trusted source before acting on it.

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Progress should be practical, not perfectionist. A useful session is one in which learners leave with one clearer task, one repeated success, or one safer online habit they can use again.

Inclusion and adaptation reminders

Digital learning should begin with recognition, not deficiency. Many single mothers already use digital tools in daily life. The first pedagogical step is to recognise existing practice and build from there.

Confidence is as important as skill. Fear of mistakes, embarrassment, and previous negative experiences can block participation even when a learner is capable of completing the task with support.

One task at a time works best. Digital participation becomes more manageable when each session focuses on one clear action, such as opening an email, finding a trusted website, or completing one form.

Safety should be embedded in practice. Safe website recognition, password habits, and protection of personal data should be modelled within real tasks.

Progress should be measured through usability, not perfection. What matters is whether learners can complete or partly complete a useful task with growing confidence.

Practical example

Maria is a single mother returning to adult learning after several years. She uses a smartphone every day for messages, school updates, and online payments, but says she is “not good with technology.” During a learning session, the educator begins by mapping the digital tasks Maria already uses. From there, they practise one new task: sending an email with an attachment. The educator uses simple words, visual guidance, and slow repetition. Maria makes mistakes, but is reassured that mistakes are part of learning. By the end of the session, she completes the task and identifies one next step she can try again at home.

Check-in for starting points

Before implementation, facilitators should use a short check-in or pre-session self-assessment to understand who is in the room. The aim is not to test learners, but to identify starting points, digital confidence levels, literacy needs, language barriers, access issues, and the kinds of tasks that would feel most relevant and most manageable.

Key message for learners

Digital literacy is not about becoming an expert. It is about learning how to do simple and useful things online with more confidence, less stress, and more independence.

5. Interactive Teaching Materials

Activity 1.1: Quick Start Check-In and Digital Confidence Snapshot

- **Duration:** 10–15 minutes
- **Type:** Individual check-in and optional pair discussion
- **Purpose:** This short starting activity helps educators identify learner starting points, digital confidence, access barriers, and immediate priorities before the main practical work begins.
- **Materials needed:** Printed check-in sheet, pens, optional icons or coloured cards.

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- **Instructions for educator**
  - Explain that this is a starting-point check, not a test.
  - Invite learners to use short prompts or icons to show what feels easy, difficult, or unfamiliar.
  - Allow oral, pair-based, or educator-supported completion.
  - Use the responses to choose a relevant and manageable task.

- **Instructions to learners** Answer a few short questions about what digital tools you already use, what feels easy, what feels stressful, and what kind of support would help.
- **Debrief questions** What digital tasks already feel familiar? What usually creates stress or hesitation? What would make today's session feel manageable?
- **Adaptation tips** Use icons, smiley-scale confidence ratings, oral completion, or educator support for low-literacy learners.

Activity 1.2: Recognising Existing Digital Skills

- **Duration:** 20–25 minutes
- **Type:** Individual reflection and group mapping
- **Purpose:** This activity helps learners recognise digital skills they already use in everyday life. It reduces anxiety, builds confidence, and gives educators a clearer picture of learner starting points.
- **Materials needed:** "My Digital Skills Map" worksheet, pens, flipchart or whiteboard, optional icon cards.
- **Instructions for educator**
  - Explain that everyday digital actions also count as digital skills.
  - Ask learners to identify digital tools or tasks they already use.
  - Group examples under simple categories such as communication, family, services, work and learning, payments, and information.
  - Allow writing, drawing, icons, or oral responses; sharing remains optional.
  - Highlight the digital strengths learners can already build on.

- **Instructions to learners** Think about the digital tools or online tasks you already use. Note which ones feel easy, which feel difficult, and which are most important in your current life.
- **Debrief questions** Which tasks do you already use confidently? Which tasks feel stressful or confusing? What kind of support makes digital learning easier?
- **Adaptation tips** Use icons or examples for low-literacy learners. Allow pair discussion first. Offer verbal participation instead of written responses.

Activity 2: Safe or Suspicious? Recognising Trustworthy Online Communication

- **Duration:** 25–30 minutes
- **Type:** Pair work and guided discussion
- **Purpose:** This activity helps learners build confidence when using digital communication by recognising trustworthy messages, suspicious requests, and safe next steps.

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- **Materials needed:** Scenario cards or screenshots, “Safe or Suspicious?” worksheet, pens, optional smartphones or projector.
- **Instructions for educator**
  - Briefly discuss common online messages, such as school updates, service reminders, delivery texts, job offers, or emails.
  - Give learners 3 to 5 example messages or screenshots to review in pairs.
  - Check five simple signs: sender, request, personal data, urgency or unusual wording, and the safest next action.
  - Reinforce that checking before responding is a positive digital habit.

- **Instructions to learners** Look at each message or screenshot and discuss: does it feel safe, suspicious, or unclear? What would you do next?
- **Debrief questions** What signs helped you identify suspicious communication? What information should be protected? What can someone do when they are unsure?
- **Adaptation tips** Use visual examples, simplify text, and allow oral discussion. Use locally recognisable examples linked to school communication, public services, employment, or other platforms learners actually encounter.

Activity 3: One Real Digital Task, Step by Step

- **Duration:** 35–40 minutes
- **Type:** Individual or pair work with educator support
- **Purpose:** This activity helps learners practise one relevant digital task connected to their daily life, learning, or employability. The emphasis is on manageable progression and practical completion.
- **Materials needed:** Smartphone, tablet, or computer; internet access if available; printed step-by-step guide; “My Online Task” worksheet; screenshots or simplified navigation guides.
- **Instructions for educator**
  - Ask learners to choose one relevant task, such as sending an email, joining an online meeting, accessing a trusted service, completing a short form, or using an AI tool to explain, simplify, or draft a short piece of everyday information.
  - Demonstrate the task slowly using simple words and clear visual steps.
  - Let learners observe first, try with support, and then repeat the task more independently.
  - Break the task into small, visible steps and acknowledge progress.
  - Model digital safety during the task. If AI is used, show learners not to enter sensitive personal information and to verify important AI-generated information before using it.

- **Instructions to learners** Choose one online task that matters in your life now. Follow the steps slowly, ask for help when needed, and focus on completing one clear action.
- **Debrief questions** Which step felt easiest? Which step felt confusing? What helped you continue? What support would help you repeat this task again?

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- **Adaptation tips** Use a shared website or locally relevant service for beginners, screenshots for low-connectivity settings, and pair support for low-confidence learners. Where interfaces differ by country or language, use examples that match the learner's actual digital environment.

Activity 4: Personal Digital Action Plan

- **Duration:** 15–20 minutes
- **Type:** Individual reflection and optional pair discussion
- **Purpose:** This activity helps learners identify one realistic next step after the session and leave with a clear, manageable action plan.
- **Materials needed:** Personal Digital Action Plan worksheet, pens, optional visual prompt cards.
- **Instructions for educator**
  - Explain that digital progress comes through small, repeated actions.
  - Ask learners to identify one skill they already use, one task to improve, one likely barrier, and one realistic next step.
  - Keep the goal small, useful, and realistic.
  - Keep sharing optional.
- **Instructions to learners** Think about one digital skill you already use, one digital task you want to improve, one challenge you face, and one next step you can try after the session.
- **Debrief questions** What digital skill do you already use? What would you like to practise more? What support would help you continue?
- **Adaptation tips** Allow verbal completion, use icons or examples for lower-literacy learners, and keep goals very small and practical.

6. Case Studies

Case Study 1: "I do everything on my phone, but I still feel I don't know anything"

Profile: Samira is a single mother of two children. She uses her smartphone every day for messages, maps, school communication, and online payments, but becomes anxious when she has to use email, upload documents, or log into official platforms.

Situation: She wants to register for a short training course online, but leaves the process unfinished because she is afraid of clicking the wrong thing.

Task: Help Samira identify what she already knows how to do digitally, what the real barrier is, and what one realistic next step could be.

Discussion questions: What is Samira already able to do digitally? What part of the task creates anxiety? What support would make participation feel safer?

Case Study 2: "I opened the message, but I didn't know if it was safe"

Profile: Elena is a single mother receiving school messages, support reminders, and occasional job information through her phone.

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Situation: She receives a message with a link asking her to confirm personal details. She is unsure whether it is genuine and avoids responding at all.

Task: Help Elena analyse the message and decide what a safe next step would be.

Discussion questions: Which signs make a message feel safe or suspicious? What should Elena avoid doing immediately? What kind of support would help her act with more confidence next time?

Case Study 3: "The AI answer looked convincing, so I thought it must be right"

Profile: Ana has recently started using an AI assistant on her phone because a friend showed her how it can help with emails and unfamiliar information.

Situation: She asks the tool to explain information related to an administrative application. The answer is clear and confident, but she does not know whether the information is current or accurate. She is also unsure what personal information is safe to include in her questions.

Task: Help Ana identify what AI can usefully support, what information she should keep private, and how she can check an important answer before acting on it.

Discussion questions: What is useful about the tool? What should Ana avoid sharing? When should an AI-generated answer be checked against another source?

7. Assessment Tools

Practical assessment output

Each learner completes one real-life digital task and prepares a short Personal Digital Action Plan.

Suggested assessment logic

Assessment should be supportive and progress-oriented. It should focus on practical usability, confidence-building, and one realistic next step, not on technical mastery or comparison between learners.

What successful completion looks like

Criterion	Yes	Partly	Needs Support
The learner identified a relevant digital			
The learner completed or partly			
The learner showed growing confidence			
The learner identified one realistic next			
The learner can name one kind of support that would help			

Reflection prompts

What digital task did I manage to try? What became easier or clearer? What still feels difficult? What is one small step I feel ready to take next?

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8. Educator Notes

Creating a safe learning space

Emphasise that the aim is to make everyday digital tasks easier, not to pass a test. Normalise mistakes, allow questions, and avoid asking for detailed personal information in front of others.

Supporting vulnerable learners

Adult educators may not always know who in the room is a single mother or how complex her situation is. Do not rely on disclosure. Build in flexibility as standard practice through oral, visual, private, and lower-pressure options.

Supporting learners with low literacy or language barriers

Use clear visuals, icons, short phrases, demonstration, repetition, and observation-first participation. Encourage learners to use familiar words or their own language where helpful.

Managing irregular attendance

Treat each session as a stand-alone micro-step where possible. Recap briefly, allow repetition, and do not frame incomplete attendance as failure.

Low-pressure progression

Keep one clear task per session, validate partial progress, and celebrate small successes. Digital confidence grows through repeated manageable experiences.

Adaptation pathways for vulnerable learners

Each activity can be adapted through oral completion, icon-supported worksheets, pair work, private completion, educator-supported note-taking, and lighter versions for lower-energy groups.

Check-in and check-out

Use a short opening check-in to understand starting points and a short closing question to help learners name one useful takeaway or next step.

Responsible use of AI

If AI tools are used, treat them as optional support rather than as a requirement for participation. Do not ask learners to enter sensitive personal data, and model simple verification of important outputs. Where access, accounts, language, or confidence create barriers, provide a non-AI alternative that achieves the same learning objective.

Local digital environment

Adapt examples to the digital services and applications learners actually encounter. Use familiar interfaces, locally relevant screenshots, and language support where possible rather than assuming that all learners use the same platforms.

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9. Supporting Materials

The following annexes accompany this module as separate support documents:

Annex 1 – Quick Start Check-In and Digital Confidence Snapshot

Purpose: understand the learner's starting point. This is not a test. Use only the parts relevant to the session.

Name (optional): _____

Date: _____

A. What do I have access to today?

Access / tool	Yes	Sometimes / shared	Not today
A smartphone			
A computer or tablet			
Internet connection			
An email account I can			
A phone number that can receive			

B. How do these tasks feel right now?

Mark one box in each row. "With help" is a valid starting point.

Digital task	I can do this	With help	Not yet	Not relevant
Read and send messages				
Use email				
Open or attach a document/photo				
Complete a simple online form				
Join an online meeting				
Find information on a trusted website				
Use a school, health, public-service or employment platform				

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Digital task	I can do this	With help	Not yet	Not relevant
Decide whether a message or link may be suspicious				
Use an AI tool for a simple task (optional)				

C. My priority for today

One digital task I would like to practise: _____

What usually makes this task difficult or stressful? _____

What kind of support would help me today? _____

Annex 2 – My Digital Skills Map

Purpose: recognise digital skills already used in everyday life and identify one area for further practice. Learners may add examples orally or with educator support.

Name (optional): _____

Area	What I already do	What feels difficult / needs help	What I would like to learn next
Communication Messages, calls, email, video calls			
Family and childcare School apps, calendars, appointments, sharing documents			
Public and health services Online appointments, forms, benefits, municipal or national services			
Work and learning Job search, CVs, training platforms, online meetings			

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Area	What I already do	What feels difficult / needs help	What I would like to learn next
Payments and everyday transactions Online banking, bills, tickets, purchases			
Information Maps, searches, trusted websites, checking information			
AI-assisted tools (optional) Explaining, simplifying, translating or drafting information			

My starting point

One digital skill I already use more than I realised: _____

One task I would like to practise next: _____

Annex 3 – Safe or Suspicious? Scenario Cards

Educator use: print or display the cards. Ask learners to decide whether each message feels SAFE, SUSPICIOUS or UNCLEAR and what the safest next step would be. All examples are fictional.

Card 1 – School update

"Reminder: the parent meeting is tomorrow at 17:00. Please check the usual school platform for details."

The message comes through the same school app the learner normally uses. It does not ask for a password, payment or personal details.

Card 2 – Delivery payment

"Your parcel is waiting. Pay EUR 1.99 in the next 30 minutes or it will be returned. Click here: bit.ly/claim-now."

The learner is not sure whether she is expecting a parcel.

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Card 3 – Remote job offer

"Congratulations! You have been selected for a home-based job earning EUR 250 per day. No interview needed. Send a photo of your ID and pay a EUR 30 registration fee to start today."

Card 4 – Public-service reminder

An email says that an application needs attention and includes a link. The sender name looks familiar, but the learner is not sure whether the email address is official. The message is not urgent and does not ask for payment.

Card 5 – Urgent message from a friend

A message from a familiar account says: "I lost my bank card and need money urgently. Please transfer EUR 100 now. I cannot speak on the phone."

The wording does not sound like the person normally writes.

Card 6 – Password reset

The learner requested a password reset herself. A few seconds later, the official service sends a one-time code and says: "Do not share this code with anyone." A second message from an unknown number then asks her to send that code back.

Educator Answer Key – Annex 3

Card	Suggested judgement	Safe next step
1	**SAFE**	Use the usual school platform; no extra action is needed if the message matches normal communication.
2	**SUSPICIOUS**	Do not click the shortened link. Check the delivery through the retailer/courier website or app.
3	**SUSPICIOUS**	Do not send ID or money. Verify the employer independently and avoid jobs requiring upfront payment.
4	**UNCLEAR**	Do not rely on the link. Open the official public-service website/app independently and check there.
5	**SUSPICIOUS / UNCLEAR**	Verify the request through another trusted channel before sending money.
6	**SAFE first message; SUSPICIOUS second message**	Use the code only in the official reset process. Never send a one-time code to another person.

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Annex 4 – Safe or Suspicious? Analysis Sheet

Use this sheet with scenario cards or with locally relevant screenshots/messages. Avoid real messages containing personal data unless the learner has chosen to use them and privacy is protected.

Scenario	Sender / source	What am I being asked to do?	Red flags: personal data, urgency, unusual wording	Safe / suspicious / unclear	Safest next step
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					

Before I click, reply, pay, or share information, I can ask:

- Do I recognise the sender or service?
- Was I expecting this message?
- Is it asking for a password, one-time code, ID, bank information, money, or other sensitive data?
- Is it creating pressure to act immediately?
- Can I check the request another way through the official website/app/phone number or a trusted person?

My safest habit to remember:

_____

Annex 5 – My Online Task, Step by Step

Choose one useful task only. Examples: send an email, upload a document, join a meeting, use a trusted service, complete a short form, or use an AI tool to explain, simplify or draft information.

Name (optional): _____

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My task today: _____

Why this task matters to me: _____

A. My steps

Step	What I need to do	Done / Need help
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

B. Quick safety check

Before I continue, I check…	My note
I am using the correct website/app/service.	
I know what information I am being asked to	
I pause if a link, request or payment feels	
If the task matters, I know how I can check the	

C. If I use an AI tool (optional)

Information I should NOT enter because it is private or sensitive: _____

Important information I should verify before I use it: _____

D. After the task

What was easier than I expected? _____

Where did I need help? _____

Could I try this task again? What would help? _____

Annex 6 – Personal Digital Action Plan

Keep the plan small and realistic. The goal is one useful next step, not complete digital mastery.

Name (optional): _____

My digital action plan	My answer
One digital skill I already use	

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My digital action plan	My answer
One digital task I want to improve	
One thing that makes this task difficult	
My next small step	
When I will try it	
One person, service or resource that can support me	
One digital safety habit I want to remember	
If I use AI: one privacy or verification habit I will remember (optional)	

My confidence after today

Mark the statement that feels closest to your experience.

1	I still need a lot of support, and that is okay.
2	I can try part of the task with support.
3	I can probably repeat this task with a reminder or guide.
4	I feel ready to try this task again more independently.

One thing I want to remember from this module:

_____

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Module 3: Financial Literacy and Stability

1. Module Overview

Aim of the module: This module helps adult educators support single mothers in building practical financial awareness, visibility, and safer decision-making for everyday life. It focuses on emotionally safe financial learning, realistic short-term planning, and low-pressure methods that help learners understand what creates pressure and what one manageable next step could be.

Target group: Adult educators, trainers, facilitators, social workers, and professionals working with single mothers in adult education, community learning, social inclusion, or employability contexts.

Duration: Suggested 2.5 to 3.5 learning hours, divided into 4 to 5 short sessions of approximately 20 to 35 minutes. Sessions can be delivered face-to-face, online, or blended, and may be adapted for short or fragmented participation.

Main learning approach: Microlearning, fictional and approximate scenarios, practical task-based learning, guided reflection, low-pressure participation, and emotionally safe financial discussion.

Final module output: One simple Money Visibility Sheet and one Small-Step Financial Stability Plan. If appropriate, these may remain private or be completed with approximate information.

2. Learning Objectives

By the end of the module, adult educators will be able to:

1. identify at least three financial realities or pressure points that may affect a single mother's participation in learning, using a practical and non-judgmental approach;
2. facilitate at least two financially safe activities using fictional, approximate, or private formats, while avoiding pressure for personal disclosure;
3. support learners in completing one simple money-visibility tool and one realistic financial next-step plan linked to their current situation.

3. Theoretical and Practical Rationale

For many single mothers, financial pressure affects not only daily wellbeing but also access to learning, confidence, concentration, and decision-making. This module therefore approaches financial literacy as a

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practical and emotionally sensitive area linked to participation, stability, and realistic short-term choices, rather than ideal budgeting or "perfect" financial behaviour.

The study visit in Slovenia confirmed that this module is highly relevant, but also emotionally delicate. Participants stressed that money-related activities can easily trigger shame, defensiveness, or stress, especially where debt, irregular income, delayed bills, borrowing, or family dependency are involved. For this reason, the final module must remain practical, non-moralising, and psychologically safe.

Key concepts

- **Financial literacy:** The ability to understand, use, and manage money-related information in everyday life in order to make clearer, safer, and more realistic short-term decisions.
- **Money visibility:** A basic understanding of what money comes in, what goes out, and where pressure points appear. For vulnerable learners, visibility may be more realistic than full budgeting at first.
- **Fixed, flexible, and unexpected costs:** Fixed costs are relatively stable, flexible costs change over time, and unexpected costs appear suddenly and often create immediate pressure.
- **Financial safety:** The ability to recognise risks such as predatory lending, scams, emotionally pressured decisions, unrealistic easy-money promises, or unsafe online financial behaviour.
- **Small-step financial stability:** A practical approach that focuses on one manageable next step, such as tracking money flow, identifying pressure points, prioritising essentials, or avoiding a risky financial choice.

Link with European frameworks

- EQF (European Qualifications Framework): The module supports learning outcomes related to knowledge, skills, responsibility, and autonomy in everyday financial decision-making.
- ECVET logic: The content is structured into short, practical learning units such as tracking costs, prioritising spending, and making safer decisions under pressure.
- EQAVET: The module follows a simple quality cycle through planning activities around learner needs, testing practical tools, reflecting on what worked, and adjusting support.
- European Skills Agenda: The module supports employability, lifelong learning, and social inclusion by strengthening a core adult competence linked to stability and participation.
- EU Upskilling Pathways Initiative: The module is practical, accessible, and flexible for adults who need support in basic competences affected by financial stress and instability.

Useful links

- European Commission – Financial literacy: https://finance.ec.europa.eu/consumer-finance-and-payments/retail-financial-services/financial-literacy_en
- Joint EU/OECD-INFE Financial Competence Framework for Adults: https://finance.ec.europa.eu/publications/joint-euoecd-infe-financial-competence-framework-adults-eu_en
- European Skills Agenda: https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies-and-activities/skills-and-qualifications/european-skills-agenda_en
- Consumer Financial Protection Bureau – educator tools:

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https://www.consumerfinance.gov/consumer-tools/educator-tools/

Key principles for implementation

- Start with visibility before budgeting. Some learners first need to see what comes in, what goes out, and what creates pressure.
- Use fictional or approximate scenarios first. Group work should not require personal financial disclosure as the default.
- Recognise existing coping strategies. Many single mothers already prioritise essentials, stretch limited resources, and manage instability every day.
- Keep the language plain and non-judgmental. The module should not imply that learners are irresponsible or financially "failing."
- Include financial safety. Learners may be vulnerable to scams, exploitative lending, unrealistic quick-fix solutions, or emotionally pressured decisions.

Link with the pilot feedback

The study visit and subsequent Train-the-Trainer seminars confirmed the need to keep financial learning practical, non-judgmental, and emotionally safe. Feedback reinforced the value of using fictional or approximate scenarios before personal reflection, allowing private completion, and starting with money visibility rather than formal budgeting. Trainers also identified several usability improvements: introduce basic financial concepts before practical tasks, align activity, worksheet, and annex numbering clearly, and offer a simple table or spreadsheet format for money-flow activities. These points are integrated into the final module while preserving its focus on realistic short-term decisions and safer participation.

4. Learning Content

Key information learners need

Before moving into practical activities, learners may benefit from a simple financial basics primer:

- **Money coming in:** income, benefits, support, and irregular or occasional income.
- **Fixed costs:** costs that are usually similar or predictable over a period of time.
- **Flexible costs:** costs that can change depending on use, circumstances, or priorities.
- **Unexpected costs:** expenses that appear suddenly and can create immediate pressure.
- **Pressure points:** payments, debts, delays, or responsibilities that create uncertainty, urgency, or stress.
- **Priority:** what needs attention first to protect basic needs or avoid greater risk.

A budget is a tool, not a test. Its purpose is to make daily financial reality more visible, not to prove success or personal worth.

Not all costs are the same. Learners need simple ways to distinguish between fixed costs, flexible costs, unexpected expenses, delayed payments, and hidden pressure points.

Short-term visibility often comes before long-term planning. In periods of instability, seeing what comes in, what goes out, and what needs urgent attention may be more useful than ideal budgeting.

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Financial stress increases when people cannot see the full picture. Clarity about priorities, risks, and support options helps reduce panic and improve decision-making.

Asking for support or using available services is not failure. Practical financial management may include slowing down, seeking advice, and avoiding risky decisions made under pressure.

- Financial learning should begin with everyday reality, not with ideal planning or abstract theory.
- Money conversations can trigger shame, stress, silence, or defensiveness. Emotional safety matters as much as practical usefulness.
- Some learners may not have a clear overview of their own financial situation. Tracking may be more appropriate than budgeting at first.
- Financial reality may include irregular or informal income, delayed bills, debt repayment, informal borrowing, emergency family costs, and hidden household contributions.
- A useful financial activity should increase visibility, prioritisation, and practical decision-making, not pressure or self-blame.
- Financial safety is part of financial literacy. Learners may need help recognising predatory lending, misleading "easy money" offers, scams, and unsafe online financial behaviour.

Inclusion and adaptation reminders

- Do not require personal disclosure in group activities. Offer fictional, approximate, or private formats as standard practice.
- **Protect privacy in the delivery setting.** If privacy cannot be ensured, do not ask learners to move from fictional or approximate scenarios to personal financial information.
- Use oral, visual, and card-based options for learners with low literacy or low confidence.
- Allow rounded numbers, partial completion, and home-based reflection when exact figures feel stressful or unsafe.
- Expect irregular attendance and design activities as stand-alone micro-steps where possible.
- Support vulnerable learners through simple instructions, slower pacing, and one-step planning rather than complex financial targets.

Key message for learners

Financial literacy is not about perfect money management. It is about seeing your situation more clearly, making safer choices, and identifying one small step that can reduce pressure or increase stability.

5. Interactive Teaching Materials

Activity 1.1: Financial Confidence Snapshot

- **Duration:** 10–15 minutes
- **Type:** Individual check-in + optional pair discussion
- **Purpose:** Create a low-pressure entry point and help the educator understand learner starting points, confidence, and how manageable the topic feels today.
- **Supporting material:** Worksheet A – Financial Confidence Snapshot (Annex 1)

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- **Facilitation note:** This check-in should stay brief and non-exposing. Learners may answer with ticks, symbols, or short oral responses.
- **Activity 1.2: My Money Flow This Week**
- **Duration:** 20–25 minutes
- **Type:** Individual work + optional educator support
- **Purpose:** Help learners document what money came in, what money went out, and which exchanges or responsibilities feel unclear, hidden, or stressful**.**
- **Supporting material:** Worksheet B – My Money Flow This Week (Annex 2), available as a simple paper table or optional fillable spreadsheet.
- **Facilitation note:** Learners may use categories, rounded figures, or approximate information; exact amounts are not required. Oral or educator-supported completion is also valid.

Activity 2: Real Costs, Hidden Costs, Pressure Points

- **Duration:** 20–25 minutes
- **Type:** Individual or pair work
- **Purpose:** Help learners identify not only fixed and flexible costs, but also hidden costs, delayed payments, debt, borrowing, and other pressure points that influence daily decisions.
- **Supporting material:** Worksheet C – Real Costs, Hidden Costs, Pressure Points (Annex 3)
- **Facilitation note:** Begin with a fictional household or example. Personal application is optional and should only be offered when the learner feels comfortable and privacy can be protected.
- **Activity 3: Safe Scenario Budgeting and Decision-Making**
- **Duration:** 25–30 minutes
- **Type:** Small-group work
- **Purpose:** Use fictional or example-based cases to practise prioritisation, decision-making, and safer responses under financial pressure.
- **Supporting material:** Worksheet D – Scenario Cards Pack + Worksheet E – Scenario Response Sheet (Annexes 4 and 5)
- **Facilitation note:** Start with fictional group scenarios. Personal application is optional and should only be offered when the learner feels comfortable and privacy can be protected.

Activity 3: One Small Step for More Stability

- **Duration:** 15–20 minutes
- **Type:** Individual work
- **Purpose:** Turn reflection into one realistic next step that supports visibility, safety, or short-term stability.
- **Supporting material:** Worksheet F – One Small Step for More Stability (Annex 6)
- **Facilitation note:** Keep planning modest and realistic. The task may remain private if learners prefer.

Suggested check-in and check-out prompts

- Opening check-in: “How safe does this topic feel for you today?”
- Closing check-out: “What is one thing that feels a little clearer or more possible now?”

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6. Case Studies

Case Study 1: "The month is longer than the income"

Nadia is a single mother of two. Her income changes slightly each month depending on available shifts. She always covers rent and utilities first, but by the third week unexpected school and medicine costs create panic. She says she feels she has "lost control" without knowing exactly where the pressure is building.

Case Study 2: "I don't know what really counts as my cost"

Elena lives in a shared family arrangement where some costs are paid directly by relatives, some are informal, and some suddenly become her responsibility. She finds it difficult to see what is stable, what is uncertain, and what she can realistically plan for.

Case Study 3: "It looked like a quick solution"

A mother under pressure sees an online offer for a very fast loan with almost no checks. The monthly payment seems manageable, but the full cost and late-payment consequences are unclear. She is tempted because she needs immediate cash for urgent expenses.

7. Assessment Tools

Practical assessment output: Money Visibility Sheet and Small-Step Financial Stability Plan

Learners complete one simple visibility tool showing the main financial flows or pressure points in their situation, followed by one realistic and manageable next step. Depending on the context, this may be done with fictional data, approximate information, or private reflection.

Reflection tool: Exit Reflection Card

At the end of the session, learners complete a short reflection on what became clearer, what still feels difficult, and what one next step or support need they want to remember.

What successful completion looks like

- The learner identifies at least one source of financial pressure or uncertainty.
- The learner completes a simple visibility tool using real, approximate, or fictional information.
- The learner identifies one realistic next step linked to stability, safety, or visibility.
- The educator can see movement from stress or confusion toward one practical decision or support need.

8. Educator Notes

Supporting learners with low literacy or low confidence

- Use short instructions, oral explanation, visual prompts, and example-based discussion.
- Offer educator-supported writing where needed.
- Allow pair discussion or card sorting before individual completion.

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- Treat observation, short answers, symbols, and partial completion as valid participation.

Working with vulnerable learners

- Do not assume that learners will disclose debt, financial distress, or their full family situation openly.
- Avoid activities that require public financial disclosure as the default option.
- Use fictional or approximate scenarios to create emotional safety before personal application.
- Be prepared to adapt the same activity into oral, visual, private, or simplified versions.
- **Protect confidentiality.** If private space cannot be ensured, keep activities fictional, approximate, or private and do not request personal financial details.
- **Use locally recognisable examples.** Adapt household costs, public benefits, financial services, consumer risks, and support options to the learner's country and local context rather than assuming the same systems exist everywhere.
- **Keep professional boundaries clear.** The educator's role is to support understanding and safer decision-making, not to recommend specific financial products, lenders, investments, or debt solutions.
- **Signpost specialist support when needed.** Where a learner needs individual financial or debt advice, refer or signpost to an appropriate local specialist service rather than trying to resolve the situation within the learning activity.

Managing irregular attendance

- Design activities as stand-alone units that allow learners to re-enter without penalty.
- Briefly recap key points without drawing attention to absence.
- Offer take-home or catch-up versions where helpful, especially for private reflection tasks.

9. Supporting Materials and Annexes

The following annexes accompany the module and should be used as support documents during implementation:

Annex 1 – Worksheet A: Financial Confidence Snapshot

Purpose: create a low-pressure starting point and understand how manageable the topic feels today. This is not a test and learners may skip any item.

Name (optional): _____

Date: _____

A. How manageable do these areas feel today?

Mark one box if useful. "With support" and "Prefer not to answer" are valid choices.

Area	Comfortable	With support	Difficult today	Prefer not to answer

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Seeing what money comes in and goes out				
Sorting costs into simple categories				
Talking about money in a learning activity				
Comparing financial choices				
Recognising suspicious or risky financial offers				

B. What would make today's activity easier?

Option	Mark if helpful
Work with a fictional example first	
Use rounded or approximate amounts	
Keep my work private	
Use a table, symbols or oral explanation	
Get educator support for one step at a time	
Focus on only one small task today	

C. My priority for today

One thing I would like to understand more clearly: _____

One type of support that would help: _____

Annex 2 – Worksheet B: My Money Flow This Week

Purpose: make money flow more visible without requiring perfect records or exact amounts. This table can be completed on paper or copied directly into a simple spreadsheet. Use real, approximate or fictional information.

Name (optional): _____

Week / example period: _____

My money-flow table

Item / source	Money in (approx.)	Money out (approx.)	Type	Note / pressure point

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			Fixed / Flexible / Unexpected / Unclear	

What do I notice? _____

What seems relatively stable? _____

What changes or is difficult to predict? _____

What needs attention first? _____

Privacy reminder: exact amounts are not required. If this activity is used in a group, personal figures should remain private unless the learner chooses otherwise.

Annex 3 – Worksheet C: Real Costs, Hidden Costs, Pressure Points

Purpose: identify costs that are visible, changing, delayed, shared or difficult to predict. Begin with a fictional household whenever personal discussion would feel exposing.

A. Map the situation

Area	What is known / regular?	What may change or stay hidden?	Pressure point / question
Housing and utilities			
Food and transport			
Childcare and school			
Health and medicines			
Debt, borrowing or delayed payments			
Shared or family contributions			
Unexpected / other costs			

B. Decide what needs attention

Which cost or uncertainty creates the most immediate pressure? _____

What information is missing or unclear? _____

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What could be checked before making a decision? _____

What is one safer or more manageable next step? _____

Annex 4 – Worksheet D: Scenario Cards Pack

Educator use: print, display or read the cards aloud. All scenarios are fictional. Ask learners to identify the pressure point, missing information, possible risks, and one safer next step. Personal financial disclosure is not required.

Scenario A – The month is longer than the income
Nadia has irregular weekly shifts. Rent and utilities are paid first, but an unexpected school cost and medicine expense appear in the same week. She feels she has "lost control" but has not yet written down what money is coming in and what has already gone out.

Scenario B – Shared costs are hard to see
Elena lives with relatives. Some household costs are paid by her, some by family members, and some change from month to month. A cost that was usually covered by someone else suddenly becomes her responsibility. She is unsure what she can realistically plan for.

Scenario C – A quick loan looks like the only solution
A mother needs money urgently and sees an online loan advertised as fast and easy. The monthly payment appears manageable, but the total cost, fees and consequences of late payment are not clear. She feels pressure to decide immediately.

Scenario D – An "easy money" message arrives
A learner receives an online message promising a simple way to make money quickly if she transfers a small amount first and provides some personal financial information. The message creates urgency and says the opportunity will disappear today.

Suggested prompts: What is creating pressure? What is not yet known? What should be checked? What could increase risk? What would be one safer next step?

Annex 5 – Worksheet E: Scenario Response Sheet

Purpose: support structured discussion of a fictional financial situation without moving immediately into personal disclosure.

Scenario: _____

Question	**Notes**

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What is happening in this situation?	
What is the main pressure point?	
What information is missing or unclear?	
What could increase risk or make the situation worse?	
What should be checked before a decision is made?	
What safer or more manageable options could be considered?	
What type of support or specialist service might be useful?	
What is one realistic next step?	

Educator reminder: the aim is to practise visibility, prioritisation and safer decision-making. Do not turn the discussion into individual financial counselling.

Annex 6 – Worksheet F: One Small Step for More Stability

Purpose: turn reflection into one modest and realistic action. The plan may remain private and does not require exact figures.

Name (optional): _____

My small-step plan

Prompt	My note
One thing about my financial situation that feels clearer now	
One pressure point or uncertainty I want to pay attention to	
One small step I can realistically take	
What I need in order to take this step	
When I would like to try it	
One person, service or source of support that may help	
One risky or pressured decision I want to slow down before making	

My step should be small enough to feel possible. It can be about visibility, prioritisation, checking information, seeking support, or avoiding a risky choice.

Annex 7 – Worksheet G: Exit Reflection Card

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Purpose: close the session with a short reflection. Learners may write, speak, use symbols, or complete only the questions that feel useful.

One thing that became clearer today: _____

One thing that still feels difficult or uncertain: _____

One next step or support I want to remember: _____

How manageable does this topic feel now? More manageable / About the same / I need more support

Annex 8 – Financial Safety Reminder Cards

Educator use: cut out, display or discuss the cards. They are general learning prompts for safer decision-making, not individual financial advice.

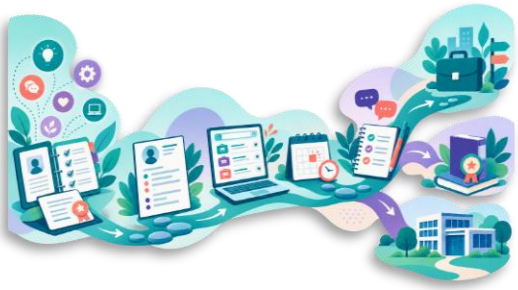
PAUSE BEFORE ACTING Pressure and urgency can make decisions harder. Slow down when possible before accepting an offer, borrowing, transferring money or sharing information.	**CHECK THE FULL PICTURE** Look beyond the first payment or promise. Ask what the total cost, conditions, fees, deadlines or consequences may be.
QUESTION "EASY MONEY" PROMISES Offers that promise unusually fast or effortless money may carry hidden risks. Check what is being asked and what is not being explained.	**PROTECT PERSONAL INFORMATION** Do not share personal or financial information simply because a message or offer creates urgency. First check who is asking and why.
VERIFY BEFORE YOU TRUST Check the source, organisation, website, message or offer before acting when something feels unclear or suspicious.	**ASK FOR APPROPRIATE SUPPORT** When a financial situation is difficult or specialised, seek a trusted local service or qualified adviser rather than trying to solve everything alone.

Use only locally appropriate referral information. The toolkit does not replace financial, debt, legal or social-service advice.

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Module 4: Employability and Transition Pathways

1. Module Overview

Aim of the module: This module helps adult educators support single mothers in turning lived experience into realistic employability pathways. It focuses on translating everyday responsibilities into work-relevant skills, choosing safer and more feasible opportunities, and preparing one practical employability output without pressure for perfection or public performance.

Target group: Adult educators, trainers, facilitators, social workers, counsellors, career guidance staff, and other professionals working with single mothers or other adult learners facing interrupted work histories, low confidence, precarious employment, literacy barriers, or complex care responsibilities.

Duration: 2.5–3.5 learning hours, organised in 4 to 5 short sessions of 20–35 minutes. The module can be delivered face-to-face, online, or in blended formats and may be broken into stand-alone micro-sessions.

Main learning approach: Microlearning, strengths-based facilitation, task-based practice, scenario-based discussion, guided reflection, safer self-presentation formats, and low-pressure employability support.

Final module output: One practical employability output matched to learner readiness, such as a short skills profile, a visual pathway map, a basic CV draft, a short application message, or one clearly identified next step linked to a safer and more realistic work opportunity.

2. Learning Objectives

By the end of the module, adult educators will be able to:

1. identify at least three transferable skills that single mothers may already use in daily life, caregiving, informal work, or previous employment and help learners translate them into simple labour-market language;
2. facilitate at least two employability activities using safer alternatives such as fictional vacancies, paired practice, visual mapping, or educator-supported completion for learners with low confidence or low literacy;
3. support learners in preparing one realistic employability output and one manageable next step while also discussing labour-market safety, work conditions, and signs of exploitative or unrealistic opportunities.

3. Theoretical and Practical Rationale

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For many single mothers, the gap between adult learning and employment is not caused only by lack of skill. It is also shaped by interrupted work histories, care responsibilities, low confidence, unstable schedules, limited support, literacy barriers, and exposure to precarious or unsafe employment options.

The study visit and subsequent Train-the-Trainer seminars confirmed that this module is most useful when it remains strongly strengths-based and practical. Participants valued the translation of lived experience into employability language, realistic career planning, and safer employment choices.

Feedback also reinforced the need to adapt examples to different institutional and national contexts and to provide clear routes to local employment, family-support, and rights information without turning the module into legal or individual employment counselling.

For this reason, the revised module focuses on realistic employability rather than idealised aspiration. It protects confidence, offers safer task options, and supports learners in identifying feasible work pathways without forcing premature disclosure, performance, or high-pressure career planning.

Key concepts

- **Transferable skills:** Skills developed through caregiving, household management, informal work, volunteering, community involvement, and previous employment that can be used across many work contexts.
- **Skills translation:** The process of naming lived experience in labour-market language, for example describing school and appointment coordination as scheduling and organisation.
- **Accessible employment pathways:** Work options that are realistic within a learner's actual circumstances, including childcare compatibility, transport, schedule predictability, emotional readiness, and income stability.
- **Safer self-presentation:** Ways of describing strengths and experience without unnecessary exposure, using written, oral, visual, paired, or educator-supported formats.
- **Labour-market safety awareness:** The ability to notice warning signs such as vague pay, commission-only roles, fake remote jobs, informal arrangements, or unsafe flexibility.

Link with European frameworks

- **EQF (European Qualifications Framework):** Supports practical learning outcomes related to identifying skills, preparing simple employment tools, and making realistic decisions about work pathways.
- **ECVET logic:** The module functions as a self-contained unit that can be delivered and assessed independently through practical outputs.
- **EQAVET:** Encourages a learner-centred cycle of drafting, testing, feedback, and revision for outputs such as a skills profile, short application, or CV section.
- **European Skills Agenda:** Links employability support to the upskilling of vulnerable adult learners and to better labour-market participation.
- **EU Upskilling Pathways Initiative:** Supports short, flexible, and accessible learning opportunities for adults facing participation barriers.

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- **EU Work-Life Balance framework:** The SHE-LEARNS project aligns its activities with the Work-Life Balance Directive and the European Pillar of Social Rights. In this module, this means considering care responsibilities, predictable working arrangements, and the compatibility of employment conditions with family responsibilities. National rights and available support measures should always be checked locally.

Useful links

- Europass – free EU CV editor and digital credentials: https://europass.europa.eu/en
- EURES – European employment services and job mobility portal: eures.europa.eu
- ESCO – European multilingual classification of skills and occupations: esco.ec.europa.eu
- Eurofound – research on flexible work and work-life balance: eurofound.europa.eu
- EIGE – European Institute for Gender Equality, resources on women's labour market participation: eige.europa.eu

Key principles for implementation

- Keep the strengths-based logic visible throughout. Start from what learners already do, manage, solve, and coordinate.
- Allow facilitators to use either real or fictional vacancies depending on learner readiness and emotional safety.
- Offer safer alternatives to exposed self-presentation tasks. Pair work, one-to-one role-play, visual mapping, or educator-supported completion are valid routes.
- Use low-literacy and non-text-heavy options. Learners should not have to rely only on written tasks in order to participate.
- Address labour-market reality honestly. Include precarious work, unclear pay, misleading remote jobs, employment scams, and exploitative flexibility.
- Keep outputs practical and modest. A short, usable draft is more valuable than a polished but unrealistic product.

Link with the pilot feedback

The study visit and subsequent Train-the-Trainer seminars confirmed the core strengths of this module: translating lived experience into employability language, making exposed tasks safer, allowing flexibility between real and fictional opportunities, providing low-literacy and non-text-heavy alternatives, and addressing structural labour-market barriers and unsafe work conditions. Train-the-Trainer feedback also reinforced the practical value of the employability content and highlighted the need for locally recognisable examples, adaptation to different institutional settings, and clear signposting to relevant employment, family-support, anti-discrimination, and rights information. These points are integrated while keeping the module focused on realistic employability learning rather than legal counselling or pressure toward immediate employment.

4. Learning Content

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Employability should begin with recognition, not deficiency. Many single mothers already use organisation, scheduling, budgeting, communication, problem-solving, and coordination skills in daily life. Employment pathways should be realistic and accessible. The key question is not only "What job exists?" but also "Which pathway fits this learner's current reality, care responsibilities, energy, and support?"

Not every learner is ready for a full CV or a real application. Alternative outputs such as a strengths profile, visual pathway map, or short message draft are equally valid. Self-presentation should support confidence, not exposure. Learners may need paired rehearsal, structured prompts, or educator-supported speaking instead of plenary presentation. Employability support must also include labour-market safety. Learners may need help recognising vague pay structures, commission-only work, fake remote jobs, and exploitative flexibility.

Key information learners need

Skills come in more than one form. Many learners recognise only formal jobs as valid experience. This module reminds educators to distinguish between job-specific skills and transferable skills developed in daily life.

Your experience translates. Everyday tasks such as organising appointments, managing a household budget, mediating conflicts, caring for family members, selling items online, or coordinating routines can be translated into labour-market language such as scheduling, budgeting, communication, customer service, problem-solving, and reliability.

A CV is a summary, not a biography. Learners do not need to tell their whole life story. A short, clear document that shows who they are, what they can do, and what kind of work they are aiming for is often enough for a first step.

Not every opportunity needs to be "ideal" to be realistic. For many single mothers, accessible entry points may include part-time work, hybrid roles, flexible but predictable schedules, entry-level jobs with on-the-job training, or pathways that can be tested gradually.

Flexibility is not automatically supportive. A job described as flexible may still be difficult to combine with care responsibilities if working hours change at short notice, income is unpredictable, availability is expected at all times, or childcare cannot be planned.

Applications are about clarity, not length. A short, specific message is often more useful than a long generic text. Learners may begin with a few sentences that explain the role, a relevant strength, and their availability or interest.

Safety matters in employability. Learners also need help noticing red flags such as unclear pay, commission-only arrangements, fake remote jobs, requests for upfront payments, or jobs that look flexible but make childcare or income planning impossible.

Examples of everyday experience that can be translated into labour-market language:

- Managing children's school and medical appointments → scheduling, coordination, time management

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- Running a household on limited income → budgeting, prioritisation, cost control
- Helping at school or in the community → communication, organisation, teamwork
- Selling products or second-hand items online → customer interaction, pricing, basic digital sales

Inclusion and adaptation reminders

- Do not require learners to work with real vacancies if this increases stress, shame, or risk. Fictional but realistic opportunities are valid learning tools.
- Offer oral, visual, paired, and educator-supported routes for learners with low literacy, language barriers, or low confidence in writing.
- Keep self-presentation private or semi-private where needed. Pair exchange, role-play, prompt cards, or written rehearsal can protect the same learning aim.
- Use local, recognisable examples and discuss structural barriers openly, including care incompatibility, discrimination, unstable hours, and transport constraints. Where relevant, signpost learners to national or local employment services, career guidance, childcare or family-support services, anti-discrimination information, and reliable job-search platforms. Do not assume that the same rights, services, or employment arrangements exist in every country.
- Design activities as stand-alone micro-steps so that a learner who completes only one task still leaves with something useful.

Key message for learners

You do not need to start from zero. Many of the things you already do in daily life are skills. The goal is not to prove yourself, but to recognise what you already bring, choose safer and more realistic options, and take one manageable next step.

5. Interactive Teaching Materials

Activity 1: What I Already Do That Counts as Work

- **Duration:** 20–25 minutes
- **Type:** Individual reflection + optional pair discussion
- **Purpose:** Help learners identify transferable skills from daily life, caregiving, community involvement, informal work, and previous employment.
- **Supporting material:** Worksheet A – Skills Translation Map (Annex 1)
- **Facilitation note:** Use examples first and avoid abstract language. Learners may write, speak, sort cards, or work with educator support.

Activity 2: Which Opportunity Feels Safer and More Realistic?

- **Duration:** 20–25 minutes
- **Type:** Pair or small-group activity
- **Purpose:** Compare real or fictional job opportunities using practical criteria such as pay clarity, contract or employment status where relevant, schedule predictability, childcare compatibility, transport and work-related costs, availability expectations, emotional readiness, and opportunities for learning or on-the-job training.

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- Supporting material: Worksheet B – Real or Fictional Vacancy Choice Sheet (Annex 2)
- **Facilitation note:** Begin with fictional vacancies where real opportunities could create urgency, disappointment, or pressure. Move to real opportunities only when this is useful and appropriate for the learner. The goal is decision-making, not pushing learners toward immediate application.

Activity 3: My Pathway, My Format

- **Duration:** 25–30 minutes
- **Type:** Individual task with optional support
- **Purpose:** Create one practical employability output in a format that matches readiness: visual pathway map, simple CV outline, skills profile, or next-step card.
- **Supporting material:** Worksheet C – Visual Career Pathway Map and Worksheet D – Skills-Based CV Builder (Annexes 3 and 4)
- **Facilitation note:** Learners do not all need to complete the same output. Offer choice and keep the task manageable.

Activity 4: Safer Self-Presentation Practice

- **Duration:** 20–25 minutes
- **Type:** Pair work or one-to-one role-play
- **Purpose:** Practise communicating strengths in a low-pressure format such as interview prompts, paired role-play, or a short strengths message.
- **Supporting material:** Worksheet E – Interview Prompt Cards and Worksheet F – Strengths Message Builder (Annexes 5 and 6)
- **Facilitation note:** Do not require plenary pitching. Pair practice, written rehearsal, or educator-supported speaking are valid alternatives.

Activity 5: Safe Work Choices Check

- **Duration:** 15–20 minutes
- **Type:** Guided discussion + individual reflection
- **Purpose:** Help learners recognise labour-market red flags and identify what to check before accepting or applying for a job.
- **Supporting material:** Worksheet G – Safe Work Choices Checklist (Annex 7)
- **Facilitation note:** Keep the conversation practical and non-frightening. The aim is critical awareness, not fear.

Suggested check-in and check-out prompts

- Opening check-in: “What kind of work-related step feels realistic for you today?”
- Closing check-out: “What is one thing you can say more clearly about your skills or next step now?”

6. Case Studies

Case Study 1: “I have not worked in years, so I have nothing to put on a CV”

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A learner dismisses caregiving, informal selling, and family coordination as “not real experience.” How can the educator help translate these into strengths without forcing a polished CV?

Case Study 2: “I do not want to talk in front of everyone about applying for jobs”

A learner becomes anxious when asked to present herself publicly. What safer alternatives can be offered while still keeping the learning aim of self-presentation?

Case Study 3: “This job looks flexible, but something feels wrong”

A learner is interested in a remote or flexible role, but the pay is unclear, expectations are vague, and the message feels rushed or suspicious. How can the educator turn this into a labour-market safety discussion?

Case Study 4: “I understand better when I can see it, not just write it”

A learner with low confidence in writing wants to participate but avoids text-heavy tasks. How can the employability work be adapted through visuals, oral prompts, or educator-supported completion?

7. Assessment Tools

Practical assessment output: One realistic employability output

Successful completion means the learner prepares one practical output in a format matched to readiness and safety, for example a short skills profile, a visual pathway map, a basic CV outline, a short application message, or one realistic next-step card.

Reflection tool: Exit Reflection Card

At the end of the session, learners complete a short reflection on one strength they recognise more clearly, one work-related step that feels realistic, and one condition or support that would help them move forward.

What successful completion looks like

- The learner can name at least two transferable skills drawn from lived experience.
- The learner can identify one pathway, opportunity type, or work condition that feels more realistic or safer.
- The learner completes one practical output in written, oral, visual, or educator-supported form.
- The learner identifies one realistic next step without being pushed toward premature or unsafe action.

8. Educator Notes

Facilitation reminders

- Do not frame employability as a test of confidence or readiness. A learner may need time, practice, and several safer steps before applying for work.
- Keep the language practical and non-corporate. Learners should not feel that they must perform professionalism before they can begin.
- Avoid comparison between learners’ CVs, histories, or confidence levels.

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- Treat hesitation as information, not resistance. Anxiety, long gaps, and previous negative experiences may shape how learners respond to employability tasks.
- If a learner becomes visibly overwhelmed, reduce exposure, simplify the task, and return to one manageable next step.
- **Local employment context:** Adapt examples to local labour-market conditions, employment services, common recruitment practices, and available support. Where information concerns legal rights, benefits, contracts, discrimination, or employment status, use reliable local sources or signpost to appropriate specialist services.
- **Keep the educator's role clear:** The module supports employability learning and safer decision-making. Educators should not provide legal advice, promise employment outcomes, recommend questionable opportunities, or pressure learners to accept or apply for a specific job.

Working with vulnerable learners

- Do not assume that learners will disclose unemployment, debt, abusive work histories, or their full family situation openly.
- Avoid public self-presentation as the default. Use pair work, cards, guided prompts, or educator-supported formats first.
- Be prepared to adapt writing-heavy tasks into oral, visual, or partially completed versions.
- Use fictional vacancies where real opportunities increase shame, urgency, or risk.
- When a learner needs specialised employment, legal, benefits, discrimination, or safeguarding support, signpost to an appropriate local service rather than trying to resolve the issue within the learning activity.

Managing irregular attendance

- Design activities as stand-alone units that allow learners to return without penalty.
- Briefly recap key points without drawing attention to absence.
- Offer take-home or catch-up versions where helpful, especially for pathway-mapping or reflective tasks.

9. Supporting Materials and Annexes

The following annexes accompany the module and should be used as support documents during implementation:

Annex 1 – Worksheet A: Skills Translation Map

Purpose: help learners recognise transferable skills from caregiving, daily responsibilities, informal work, volunteering, community activity or previous employment and express them in simple labour-market language.

Name (optional): _____ Date: _____

A. Translate experience into skills

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Everyday responsibility / experience	What I actually do	Skill it shows	Simple labour-market wording
Organising school or medical appointments	Plan times, remember deadlines, coordinate transport	Organisation / time management	Scheduling and coordination
Managing a household on limited income	Compare costs, prioritise, adjust spending	Budgeting / prioritisation	Cost awareness and prioritisation

B. My strongest transferable skills

1. _____ Example:

2. _____ Example:

3. _____ Example: Reminder: the aim is to describe experience accurately, not to exaggerate it. Informal and unpaid experience can still demonstrate real skills.

Annex 2 – Worksheet B: Real or Fictional Vacancy Choice Sheet

Purpose: compare two opportunities using practical criteria. Use fictional vacancies first when real opportunities could create urgency, disappointment or pressure.

Opportunity A: _____ Opportunity B: _____

What to check	Opportunity A	Opportunity B	What matters to me
Pay is clear and understandable			
Contract / employment status is clear where relevant			
Working hours are predictable enough			
Childcare / care responsibilities can be planned			
Location / transport is manageable			
Costs of taking the job are manageable			

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Availability expectations are realistic			
Training / on-the-job learning is available if needed			
No upfront payment or suspicious request			
The opportunity feels safe and realistic overall			

Which option currently feels safer or more realistic, and why?

_____

What information would I need before deciding?

_____

Flexibility reminder: "flexible" is not automatically supportive. Check whether hours, income and availability are predictable enough for real-life care responsibilities.

Annex 3 – Worksheet C: Visual Career Pathway Map

Purpose: create one realistic route from the learner's current situation to a manageable employability step. The map can be completed with words, drawings, symbols or educator-supported notes.

Step	My notes
1. Where I am now	
2. What I already bring: skills, experience, strengths	
3. Work conditions I need to consider: care, schedule, transport, income, energy	
4. One pathway or type of opportunity that feels realistic	
5. One skill / document / piece of information I may need	
6. One next step I can take	
7. One person, service or resource that could support me	

My next step should be small enough to feel possible now. It does not need to be a job application.

Annex 4 – Worksheet D: Skills-Based CV Builder

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Purpose: prepare a simple CV outline without requiring a full employment history. Use only information the learner chooses to include. This worksheet is a draft, not a requirement to disclose personal circumstances.

Name: _____

Contact details I choose to use: _____

1. Short profile – 2 or 3 lines about what I can do and what kind of work I am interested in

_____

_____

2. Skills I want an employer to notice

Skill	Where I developed / used it	Short example

3. Relevant experience – paid, informal, volunteering, community or other experience that I choose to include

Role / activity	Organisation / context (if useful)	What I did / achieved

4. Education / training / certificates I want to include

_____

5. Digital, language or other practical skills

_____

CV reminder: a CV is a summary, not a biography. Personal family circumstances do not need to be included unless the learner chooses to disclose them for a specific reason.

Annex 5 – Worksheet E: Interview Prompt Cards

Educator use: cut out, display or read the prompts aloud. Learners may practise in pairs, write a response first, or answer only selected cards. Plenary pitching is not required.

Card 1 – Introduce yourself	Card 2 – Give an example
What would you like an employer to know about your skills or interests? Start with: "I have experience in…" or "One strength I bring is…"	Tell me about a time you organised, solved, coordinated or handled something difficult. What did you do? What skill did you use?

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Card 3 – Talk about a gap safely	Card 4 – Discuss availability
You do not need to tell your whole personal story. Practise a short answer that keeps the focus on what you can do now and what you are looking for.	What working conditions would make the role feasible? Practise asking about schedule, predictability, location or other practical conditions.
Card 5 – Why this role?	**Card 6 – Ask the employer**
What interests you about this role or type of work? Name one relevant strength, skill or experience.	What would you like to know before deciding? Examples: hours, pay, contract, training, location, remote-work expectations, start date.

Facilitator reminder: do not treat confidence, eye contact or polished language as proof of employability. The purpose is to practise clear, safer self-presentation.

Annex 6 – Worksheet F: Strengths Message Builder

Purpose: build a short application or introduction message. The learner may write it, say it aloud, or complete it with educator support.

1. The role / opportunity I am interested in

I am interested in _____.

2. One strength or skill that matches

One strength I bring is _____.

3. One short example

I have used this skill when _____.

4. Why I am interested

This opportunity interests me because _____.

5. Closing

I would be happy to discuss

_____.

My short message

_____

Alternative spoken version: "I am interested in… One strength I bring is… I have used it when… I would like to learn more about…"

Annex 7 – Worksheet G: Safe Work Choices Checklist

Purpose: help learners slow down and check the conditions of a job or work opportunity before applying, accepting or sharing personal information. This is an educational checklist, not legal advice.

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What I want to check	Clear / yes	Not clear yet	I need to check
Who the employer / organisation is			
What the role actually involves			
Pay and how it is calculated			
Working hours and how much notice is given for changes			
Contract / employment status where relevant			
Location, travel and other work-related costs			
Remote-work expectations and availability			
Whether childcare / care responsibilities can be planned			
Whether training or support is provided			
Whether I am asked to pay money upfront			
Whether the employer is asking for unnecessary personal / financial information			
Whether anything feels rushed, vague or too good to be true			

Before I decide, one thing I still need to verify: _____

A reliable person, service or source I can check with: _____

Red-flag reminder: vague pay, requests for upfront payment, pressure to act immediately, unclear identity, unrealistic earnings, or "flexibility" that requires constant availability all deserve a closer check.

Annex 8 – Scenario Cards for Educator Use

Use one or two cards for pair or small-group discussion. The aim is to recognise strengths, barriers, safer alternatives and realistic next steps, not to push learners toward immediate application.

Card 1 – "I have not worked in years"
A learner says caregiving, informal selling and family coordination are "not real experience" and believes she has nothing to put on a CV. Discuss: Which transferable skills are already present?

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How can they be described accurately?
What output could be used instead of a full CV if she is not ready?

Card 2 – "I do not want to present in front of everyone"

A learner becomes anxious when asked to present herself publicly and stops participating.

Discuss:
What is the learning aim?
Which pair, written or educator-supported alternative could meet it?
What should the educator avoid?

Card 3 – "This flexible job feels wrong"

A remote role promises flexibility, but pay is unclear, availability seems constant and the message pressures the learner to respond immediately.

Discuss:
Which red flags should be checked?
Is the flexibility genuinely compatible with care responsibilities?
What information is needed before any decision?

Card 4 – "I understand better when I can see it"

A learner has low confidence in writing and avoids a text-heavy CV activity, but participates well with images and spoken examples.

Discuss:
How can the task become visual or oral?
Which skill can still be assessed?
What could a realistic output look like?

Annex 9 – Worksheet H: Local Employment and Support Resources

Purpose: localise Module 4 without placing country-specific legal or institutional information in the common European module. Complete this sheet with reliable local information before using it with learners.

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Country / region: _____ Last reviewed: _____

Resource area	Organisation / service	Website / contact	When it may be useful	Last checked
Public employment service				
Career guidance / adult learning support				
Official employment-rights information				
Equality / anti-discrimination information				
Childcare / family-support services				
Reliable job-search platform(s)				
Legal or specialist employment advice / referral				
Social support / benefits information				
Local NGO / community support relevant to single mothers				
Other relevant resource				

Localisation checks

- Are the services still active and accessible to the intended learners?
- Is the information available in relevant languages and accessible formats?
- Are eligibility rules, opening hours or referral procedures clear?
- Is the source official or otherwise reliable enough to share?

Important: this worksheet supports signposting only. Educators should not provide legal advice, promise access to benefits or services, or guarantee employment outcomes.

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Module 5: Wellbeing, Resilience, and Sustainability

1. Module Overview

Aim of the module: This module helps adult educators support single mothers in sustaining participation in learning under conditions of stress, overload, emotional strain, and unstable everyday realities. It focuses on practical ways to reduce pressure, protect emotional safety, and help learners remain connected to learning even when participation is partial, interrupted, quieter, or lower in energy.

Target group: Adult educators, trainers, facilitators, social workers, counsellors, mentors, and other professionals working with single mothers in adult education, lifelong learning, employability, or upskilling contexts.

Duration: 2.5–3.5 learning hours, organised in 4 to 5 short sessions of 20–35 minutes. The module can be delivered face-to-face, online, or in blended formats and can be adapted to lower-energy groups or shorter sessions.

Main learning approach: Microlearning, scenario-based facilitation, guided reflection, practical self-regulation tools, low-pressure participation, educator modelling, and flexible adaptation for vulnerable learner profiles.

Final module output: One short Personal Sustainability and Participation Plan identifying one or two signs of overload, two realistic coping or support strategies, and one manageable next step for sustaining participation in learning or daily routines.

2. Learning Objectives

By the end of the module, adult educators will be able to:

1. identify at least three signs of overload or unsustainable participation that may affect single mothers in learning contexts and describe one low-pressure response for each;
2. facilitate at least two practical wellbeing and participation activities using safer formats such as oral, private, pair-based, low-energy, or educator-supported participation;
3. support learners in completing one simple Sustainability and Participation Plan that includes signs of pressure, realistic coping or support options, and one manageable next step.

3. Theoretical and Practical Rationale

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For many single mothers, participation in adult learning is affected not only by motivation or interest, but by cumulative pressure. Care responsibilities, financial strain, unstable routines, emotional fatigue, and lack of recovery time can make participation fragile even when learners want to continue. In practice, missed sessions, silence, slower engagement, or temporary withdrawal often reflect overload rather than disengagement.

The study visit and subsequent Train-the-Trainer seminars confirmed that this module is especially useful when it helps participants move from recognition to action. Feedback reinforced the value of low-pressure and emotionally safe formats, visual or non-intrusive check-ins, fewer activities explored in greater depth, and practical options for adjusting participation when energy or concentration is limited. Train-the-Trainer feedback also highlighted the need for clearer professional boundaries when wellbeing activities generate emotional reactions or personal disclosure.

For this reason, the revised module does not treat resilience as a demand to keep going at all costs. It focuses on participation sustainability: helping learners stay connected to learning through realistic expectations, flexible engagement, boundaries, support systems, and practical self-regulation. The module should remain educational and supportive, not therapeutic.

Key concepts

- **Sustainable participation:** The ability to remain connected to learning over time, even during periods of stress, instability, fluctuating energy, or changing life circumstances.
- **Emotional overload:** A state in which stress, exhaustion, and competing responsibilities reduce the learner's capacity for concentration, decision-making, and participation.
- **Self-regulation:** Practical strategies for managing stress, energy, emotions, boundaries, and participation without increasing pressure or shame.
- **Adaptive participation:** A flexible understanding of learning participation that allows pauses, lighter engagement, irregular attendance, and gradual re-entry without shame or penalty.
- **Support systems:** Formal and informal sources of emotional, practical, social, or institutional support that help learners maintain wellbeing and continued engagement.
- **Boundary-setting:** The ability to protect time, energy, and participation by reducing unrealistic demands and making pressure more manageable.
- **Re-entry without shame:** A low-pressure return to learning after interruption, without explanations, catch-up pressure, or embarrassment.

Link with European frameworks

- EQF (European Qualifications Framework): Supports learner autonomy, self-awareness, and practical decision-making related to participation, wellbeing, and next-step planning.
- ECVET logic: The module functions as a flexible and self-contained unit of learning that can be delivered and assessed independently from the other modules.
- EQAVET: Encourages learner-centred reflection, supportive assessment, and revision of participation strategies based on realistic needs and feedback.

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- European Skills Agenda: Connects wellbeing, resilience, and lifelong learning competences with sustainable participation in adult education and employability pathways.
- EU Upskilling Pathways Initiative: Supports accessible and flexible adult learning opportunities for vulnerable learners who need realistic, manageable participation routes.

Useful links

- EPALE – Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe: https://epale.ec.europa.eu/en
- Mental Health Europe: https://www.mhe-sme.org
- World Health Organization – Mental Health: https://www.who.int/health-topics/mental-health

Key information learners need

Adult educators using this module should help learners understand a small set of practical messages that reduce shame and increase sustainable participation:

- Participation can change form without losing value. Listening, slower pacing, shorter responses, quiet engagement, partial completion, pauses, or temporary interruption can still count as meaningful participation.
- Overload is not personal failure. Tiredness, silence, avoidance of tasks, emotional shutdown, missed sessions, or difficulty concentrating are often signs that pressure is too high, not proof that the learner does not care.
- Early recognition helps. A quick check such as “What feels manageable today?” or “What feels too demanding right now?” can help learners adjust before full withdrawal or burnout.
- Small steps work better than pressure. Reducing the task, slowing down, choosing a lighter format, or focusing on one next step often supports participation more effectively than pushing for full completion.
- Support and boundaries matter. Asking for help, protecting rest, reducing unnecessary demands, using flexible deadlines, or returning gradually after absence are all valid participation strategies.
- Public disclosure is not required. Learners should be able to participate meaningfully through private reflection, oral responses, pair work, visual tools, or educator-supported note-taking without being pushed into personal sharing.
- **Wellbeing activities are invitations, not disclosure requirements.** Learners can benefit from the module without explaining the causes of stress, sharing difficult experiences, or describing personal circumstances. Choosing a symbol, identifying a participation need, or naming one practical adjustment can be sufficient.

4. Learning Content

Understanding sustainable participation

For many single mothers, participation in adult learning changes depending on stress levels, caregiving responsibilities, work demands, financial pressure, and available emotional energy. Participation is therefore not always stable or continuous. This module approaches participation as flexible and adaptive rather than fixed or linear.

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Sustainable participation means maintaining a realistic connection to learning without increasing exhaustion, guilt, or emotional pressure. A learner may participate actively one week, only listen or do shorter tasks the next, and later return to fuller engagement when her situation becomes more stable.

Stress, overload, and emotional wellbeing

Stress and exhaustion may affect concentration, sleep, emotional regulation, confidence, and willingness to engage. Common signs of overload include difficulty concentrating, emotional tiredness, avoidance of tasks, feeling constantly under pressure, shame connected to rest, or a sense that even small tasks feel too heavy. Recognising these signs early can help educators and learners reduce pressure before participation breaks down completely.

Self-regulation and adaptive participation

Self-regulation means using practical strategies to manage stress, energy, and participation during changing life circumstances. It does not mean forcing productivity or ignoring exhaustion. Useful strategies may include taking smaller steps, slowing down, reducing unnecessary pressure, using a grounding exercise, asking for support, or choosing a lighter participation format. Adaptive participation means that learners can still stay connected through shorter, quieter, or less demanding forms of engagement.

Support systems, boundaries, and re-entry

Sustainable participation becomes easier when learners can identify support systems and boundaries that protect their energy. Support may be emotional, practical, social, educational, or institutional. Boundaries may involve saying no to unrealistic demands, protecting rest time, or reducing non-essential obligations during stressful periods. Interrupted participation should not be treated as failure. Learners should be able to pause, return gradually, and re-enter without embarrassment, pressure, or lengthy explanations.

Key message for learners

You do not have to participate in the same way all the time for your learning to matter. Slower, quieter, shorter, or interrupted participation can still be real participation when it helps you stay connected without increasing pressure.

5. Interactive Teaching Materials

Flexible delivery note: The five activities do not need to be completed in one session. For shorter or lower-energy formats, educators may select two or three activities according to learner needs. A useful short pathway may combine one check-in activity (Activity 1 or 2), one practical adjustment activity (Activity 3 or 4), and Activity 5 as the final planning output.

Activity 1: Recognising My Signs of Overload

- **Duration:** 15–20 minutes
- **Type:** Individual reflection + optional pair discussion
- **Purpose:** Help learners notice early emotional, physical, and participation-related signs that tell them pressure is increasing.

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- **Supporting material:** Worksheet A – Emotional Weather Check and Worksheet B – My Signs of Overload Map (Annexes 1 and 2)
- **Facilitation note:** Keep this activity concrete. Learners may respond with words, ticks, symbols, colours, icons, or oral responses and may choose a simple visual indicator without explaining why they selected it. Do not push for detailed personal disclosure.

Activity 2: Traffic-Light Participation Check

- **Duration:** 15–20 minutes
- **Type:** Guided reflection + practical discussion
- **Purpose:** Introduce a simple tool for identifying when participation feels manageable, strained, or no longer sustainable in its current form.
- **Supporting material:** Worksheet C – Traffic-Light Participation Check (Annex 3)
- **Facilitation note:** Use a worked example first. Keep the three levels action-oriented: green means participation feels manageable; amber means a lighter format, slower pace, shorter task, or additional support may help; red means the learner may need to pause, observe, step out, or choose a different activity. Red is information for adaptation, not failure.

Activity 3: Micro-Planning Under Pressure

- **Duration:** 20–25 minutes
- **Type:** Individual task with optional educator support
- **Purpose:** Practise reducing pressure by breaking a stressful situation into one small, realistic next step instead of trying to solve everything at once.
- **Supporting material:** Worksheet D – Micro-Planning Under Pressure (Annex 4)
- **Facilitation note:** Encourage learners to choose one manageable action only. This activity should reduce pressure, not create a larger task list.

Activity 4: Support Systems and Boundaries Map

- **Duration:** 20–25 minutes
- **Type:** Individual reflection + optional pair work
- **Purpose:** Help learners identify what support already exists, what is missing, and what one boundary or adjustment could protect participation more effectively.
- **Supporting material:** Worksheet E – Support Systems and Boundaries Map (Annex 5)
- **Facilitation note:** Support can be practical, emotional, social, educational, or institutional. Keep discussion realistic and non-judgmental.

Activity 5: My Sustainability and Participation Plan

- **Duration:** 20–25 minutes
- **Type:** Individual completion + brief reflection
- **Purpose:** Bring the module together through one short plan that names warning signs, realistic strategies, one support option, and one next step.
- **Supporting material:** Worksheet F – Personal Sustainability and Participation Plan (Annex 6)

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- **Facilitation note:** This is the main practical output. Learners may complete it privately, orally, visually, or with educator-supported note-taking.

Suggested check-in and check-out prompts

- Opening check-in: “What feels manageable for you today?”
- Alternative opening check-in: “What kind of participation feels realistic right now — speaking, listening, writing, pair work, or something lighter?”
- Closing check-out: “What is one small thing you want to remember or try after today?”
- Alternative closing check-out: “What would help participation feel more sustainable for you this week?”

6. Case Studies

Case Study 1: “I am too tired to do the activity properly, so maybe I should skip today”

A learner arrives exhausted, apologises repeatedly, and says she cannot focus. How can the educator reduce pressure while still protecting connection to the session?

Case Study 2: “I missed two sessions and now I feel embarrassed to come back”

A learner wants to return but believes she is too far behind. What would a low-pressure re-entry response look like?

Case Study 3: “This topic is making me emotional, but I do not want to talk about it in the group”

A learner becomes quiet during reflection and avoids eye contact. How can the educator protect emotional safety without turning the session into therapeutic processing?

Case Study 4: “Today I can only listen — I cannot talk or write much”

A learner is present but has very low energy. What lighter forms of participation can still keep her connected to the session?

7. Assessment Tools

Practical assessment output: Personal Sustainability and Participation Plan

Successful completion means the learner prepares one short plan that includes at least one sign of overload, two realistic coping or support strategies, and one manageable next step. The output may be written, oral, visual, or completed with educator-supported note-taking.

Reflection tool: Exit Reflection Card

At the end of the session, learners complete a short reflection on one useful idea from the module, one pressure-reducing strategy that feels realistic, and one next step they may try.

What successful completion looks like

- The learner can name at least one or two signs that participation is becoming harder to sustain.
- The learner can identify one practical adjustment that reduces pressure, such as slowing down, asking for support, choosing a lighter format, or pausing temporarily.

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- The learner completes one short sustainability output in written, oral, visual, or educator-supported form.
- The learner leaves with one realistic next step rather than with a larger burden of expectations.

8. Educator Notes

Facilitation reminders

- Do not present wellbeing as an individual duty to stay productive. Keep the focus on realistic participation conditions, not on self-optimisation.
- Avoid therapeutic or trauma-processing language. The module should stay educational, practical, and time-bounded.
- Model one activity before asking learners to work independently. This reduces uncertainty and lowers emotional demand.
- If a learner becomes visibly overwhelmed, reduce the task, shift to private or pair work, and return to one manageable next step.
- Keep discussion concrete. The most useful question is often: “What would reduce pressure today?”

Working with vulnerable learners

- Do not assume learners will disclose stress, violence, poverty, mental health strain, or family instability openly.
- Offer oral, visual, and educator-supported routes for learners with low literacy, low concentration, or exhaustion.
- Protect quiet participation. Listening, note-taking, shorter responses, or leaving part of the sheet incomplete can still count as participation.
- Use private reflection instead of plenary sharing when the topic becomes emotionally sensitive.
- One-to-one follow-up may be useful where the learner requests or benefits from quieter support, but only when appropriate privacy, time, and professional boundaries can be maintained. If confidentiality cannot be ensured, do not invite sensitive personal disclosure; use a non-personal, fictional, visual, or practical alternative instead.

Managing emotional safety and irregular attendance

- Welcome returning learners without asking for explanations or listing what they missed.
- Use short recaps and one manageable entry point rather than catch-up pressure.
- Keep boundaries visible. The facilitator should acknowledge emotion respectfully without inviting the group into counselling, trauma processing, or unstructured disclosure.
- If a learner becomes distressed, pause or reduce the activity and acknowledge the reaction without asking the learner to explain it.
- Offer a quieter participation option, a short break, observation-only participation, or the possibility not to continue the activity.
- Ask only what is needed to support participation in the present learning situation; do not investigate the learner’s personal history.

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- The educator should not diagnose, interpret trauma, provide therapy, or attempt to resolve situations involving violence, severe mental health difficulties, grief, abuse, or other complex personal circumstances within the learning session.
- Where additional support is needed, signpost the learner to an appropriate local professional or service and follow organisational safeguarding or emergency procedures where applicable.
- Before delivering the module, identify the relevant local referral or signposting options available in your setting, such as social services, psychological support, domestic violence services, emergency services, family support, or other specialised services. The common European module should not substitute for local referral information, which should be completed during localisation.
- Before the session, educators should also know their organisation's safeguarding or emergency procedure, what privacy the setting can realistically provide, and what falls outside their professional role.

9. Supporting Materials and Annexes

The following annexes accompany the module and should be used as support documents during implementation:

Annex 1 – Worksheet A: Emotional Weather Check

Purpose: offer a quick, non-intrusive visual check-in. Choose one option that best reflects what participation feels like today. You do not need to explain your choice.

Name (optional): _____ Date: _____

Today participation feels…	What this may mean	What could help today
MANAGEABLE	I can take part in the planned way.	Continue as planned; ask for help if needed.
STRETCHED	I can participate, but I may need less pressure.	Slower pace, shorter task, pair work, more time, or a quieter option.
OVERLOADED	The planned activity feels too much right now.	Pause, observe, step out briefly, or choose a different/lighter activity.
UNSURE / PREFER NOT TO SAY	I am not sure, or I do not want to describe how I feel.	Choose the participation format that feels safest and most manageable.

One thing that would make participation easier today:

_____

Educator note: a colour, word, tick, or icon is enough. Do not ask learners to justify their choice.

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SHE-LEARNS

Annex 2 – Worksheet B: My Signs of Overload Map

Purpose: notice early signs that pressure is increasing. Complete only the sections that feel useful. Words, ticks, symbols, or educator-supported notes are all valid.

Area	What I may notice	My signs / examples
Body / energy	Tiredness, tension, low energy, restlessness, difficulty slowing down	
Thoughts / concentration	Difficulty focusing, forgetting, feeling that everything is too much	
Emotions	Irritability, worry, numbness, sadness, feeling under pressure	
Participation	Avoiding tasks, arriving late, missing sessions, staying silent, wanting to leave	

An early sign I want to notice sooner:

_____

When I notice it, one pressure-reducing response could be:

_____

Reminder: this is a learning tool, not a diagnosis. You do not need to explain why a sign appears.

Annex 3 – Worksheet C: Traffic-Light Participation Check

Purpose: decide what form of participation is realistic now. The aim is adaptation, not judgement.

Level	What it means	Possible action choices
GREEN – manageable	I can participate in the planned way.	Continue; ask questions; take part in the chosen format.
AMBER – stretched	Participation is possible, but the current format or pace may be too demanding.	Shorten the task; slow down; work in pairs; listen first; ask for support; complete only part.
RED – too much right now	The activity is not sustainable in its current form.	Pause; observe; step out; choose a different task; return later; use a private or lighter option.

My colour today: _____

One adjustment that would help:_____

Red is not failure. It is information that the activity, pace, or form of participation needs to change.

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SHE-LEARNS

Annex 4 – Worksheet D: Micro-Planning Under Pressure

Purpose: reduce a demanding situation to one manageable next step. The goal is not to solve everything today.

1. What feels demanding right now? (Keep this as general as you want.)

_____

2. What part can wait, be reduced, or be left for later?

_____

3. What is the smallest useful action I could take?

_____

4. What would make that action easier?

_____

5. When will I know I have done enough for now?

_____

My one next step: _____

Keep the next step small. A shorter or partial action can still be meaningful progress.

Annex 5 – Worksheet E: Support Systems and Boundaries Map

Purpose: identify support that already exists, what may be missing, and one boundary or adjustment that could protect participation.

Type of support	What I already have	What might help / what is missing
Practical – childcare, transport, tasks, scheduling		
Emotional / social – trusted people, peer support, community		
Learning – educator, flexible deadline, catch-up option, learning materials		
Institutional / professional – services, counselling, social support, other specialist help		

One boundary or adjustment that could protect my time or energy:

_____

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One support I could ask for or use:

_____

You choose what to share. This worksheet can remain private.

Annex 6 – Worksheet F: Personal Sustainability and Participation Plan

Purpose: bring the module together into one short, realistic plan. Written, oral, visual, or educator-supported completion is acceptable.

Name (optional): _____ Date: _____

My plan	My notes
One or two signs that tell me pressure is increasing	
Two realistic strategies that could reduce pressure or protect participation	1. 2.
One person, service, or type of support that could help	
One participation adjustment I can use when energy is lower	
One manageable next step	
When I want to try or review this step	

My plan does not need to be perfect. It should help participation feel more possible and sustainable.

Annex 7 – Worksheet G: Exit Reflection Card

Complete with a few words, a tick, a symbol, or an oral response. You may leave any item blank.

1. One useful idea I am taking from this module:

_____

2. One pressure-reducing strategy that feels realistic for me:

_____

3. One form of participation I can use when I have less energy:

_____

4. One next step or support I want to remember:

_____

Optional check-out: What would help participation feel more sustainable this week?

_____

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SHE-LEARNS

Annex 8 – Scenario Cards for Educator Use

Use the scenarios for discussion, paired reflection, or facilitator practice. The aim is to protect participation and professional boundaries, not to diagnose or solve personal situations.

Scenario 1 – "I am too tired to do the activity properly"

Situation: A learner arrives exhausted, apologises repeatedly, and says she cannot focus.

Discuss: *How can you reduce pressure while keeping the learner connected to the session? What lighter form of participation could be offered?*

Scenario 2 – "I missed two sessions and now I feel embarrassed to come back"

Situation: A learner wants to return but believes she is too far behind.

Discuss: *How can you support re-entry without explanations, catch-up pressure, or shame?*

Scenario 3 – "This topic is making me emotional, but I do not want to talk about it"

Situation: A learner becomes quiet during reflection and avoids eye contact.

Discuss: *How can you acknowledge the reaction and offer choice without inviting therapeutic processing or personal disclosure?*

Scenario 4 – "Today I can only listen"

Situation: A learner is present but has very low energy and says she cannot talk or write much.

Discuss: *Which forms of quiet, partial, or observation-based participation can still count?*

Scenario 5 – "She starts telling the whole group about a very difficult personal situation"

Situation: During a wellbeing activity, a learner begins sharing detailed personal experiences and becomes increasingly emotional.

Discuss: *How can you respond respectfully, reduce exposure, and re-establish the educational boundary? When might signposting be appropriate?*

Scenario 6 – "There is nowhere private to talk"

Situation: A learner asks to speak privately after the session, but the venue has no confidential space and other people are nearby.

Discuss: *What can you safely offer? What should you avoid? How can you protect confidentiality and refer to another appropriate setting or service if needed?*

Annex 9 – Worksheet H: Educator Professional Boundaries and Referral Quick Guide

Purpose: support educators in responding to emotional reactions while keeping the session educational, safe, and within professional role boundaries. This is not clinical or therapeutic guidance.

If this happens…	Educator can…	Educator should avoid…	Consider signposting when…

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Learner becomes emotional	Pause or reduce the task; acknowledge the reaction; offer choice, quiet participation, or a short break.	Ask for details, interpret causes, or push completion.	Distress extends beyond the learning situation or additional support is requested/needed.
Learner discloses a difficult personal situation	Listen briefly and respectfully; clarify only the immediate participation need; remind the learner of available options.	Investigate the story, diagnose, counsel, promise confidentiality you cannot provide, or try to solve the situation.	Specialist, safeguarding, legal, social, psychological, or emergency support may be appropriate.
Learner asks to talk privately	Check whether suitable privacy, time, and professional boundaries can be maintained.	Hold a sensitive discussion in a public or unsuitable space.	Confidential or specialist support is needed beyond the educator's role.
Learner cannot continue the activity	Allow pause, exit, observation, or a lighter alternative; support re-entry later without shame.	Pressure the learner to finish or explain why she cannot continue.	The learner indicates ongoing difficulty that requires support outside the learning session.

Before the session, know:

- your organisation's safeguarding and emergency procedures;
- what privacy the setting can realistically provide;
- the local services or professionals to which learners can be signposted;
- what falls outside your professional role as an educator or facilitator.

Local referral / signposting map

Type of support	**Local service / organisation**	**How to access / contact**	**Notes for educator**
Social / family support			
Psychological / counselling support			
Domestic violence / safeguarding support			
Emergency support			
Other specialist service relevant locally			

Important: the educator's role is to support learning, participation, and appropriate signposting. Do not diagnose, provide therapy, interpret trauma, or attempt to resolve complex personal situations within the learning session.

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