

# **SOURCE: Teaching and visual methods for online instructors**

**KA220-ADU - Cooperation partnerships in adult education**



# **SOURCE**

**WP5 R5.5 Policy brief no.2**



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## Policy Brief:

# Strengthening the impact of the SOURCE project on Adult Educators through Skills Development and Relevant Initiatives

## Introduction

The document in hand is the second edition of the SOURCE policy briefs. This policy brief builds upon the findings of the first one presented earlier in 2024, and expands on the policy recommendations and suggestions.

This policy brief provides an overview of the SOURCE project's progress, objectives, and current achievements. The project's results are organised into five work packages, each contributing to achieving the project's objectives. Policy recommendations include investing in continuous professional development, providing technological infrastructure support, promoting collaborative initiatives, and encouraging ongoing research.

The SOURCE Consortium recognizes the pivotal role of educators in developing interactive online learning experiences. The project partners agreed that educators often lack the essential digital competencies needed to move beyond conventional online delivery methods, blocking the creation of dynamic and participatory virtual learning environments.

This policy brief aims to formulate additional policy recommendations that can enhance SOURCE's impact on adult educators. As the digital world evolves within the educational landscape, the focus on empowering educators becomes essential to ensuring the success of online learning experiences.

## Overall aim

The aim of the SOURCE project is to support adult education teachers in acquiring and validating their knowledge and competencies in delivering online courses across three dimensions: technological, content, and pedagogical.

The SOURCE project is developing an online training course that meets the specific needs of instructors and educational experts. Via its Massive Open Online Course (MOOC), the project aims to provide a high-quality and accessible online learning experience, fostering the acquisition of relevant skills and knowledge in the field.

The project concentrates on the use of Open edX, an innovative technology in the field of online education. Open edX is an open-source platform that offers a range of interactive features, collaborative tools, and learning analytics. This technology ensures that participants can benefit from an engaging learning environment, promoting active participation and knowledge acquisition.

## SOURCE Project Specific Objectives

Aligned with the European Union's Digital Education Action Plan (2021-2027) and its objective to reshape education and training for the digital era, this project is dedicated to supporting the digital transformation plans specifically targeting Adult Education experts.

### The project aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Propose an online instructor profile based on EU policy instruments and frameworks, ensuring the alignment with established guidelines and standards.
2. Actively involve beneficiaries and stakeholders in all project activities, fostering collaboration, and incorporating their valuable insights and perspectives.
3. Implement a systematic approach to the instructional design process, ensuring a structured and effective framework for designing and delivering online learning experiences.
4. Create and develop Open Educational Resources (OERs) that prioritize engaging and participatory online learning experiences, fostering interactivity and active participation.
5. Enhance the digital technology skills and teaching methods of Adult Education experts through targeted upskilling and reskilling initiatives.
6. Empower educators to become "design scientists" who can independently drive their own learning and lead the digital transformation, encompassing skills, attitudes, and knowledge.
7. Provide policy recommendations for educational technologies, offering guidance on their integration and usage to support digital education initiatives at both national and EU levels.

Through these objectives, the project aims to contribute to the advancement of digital education in the Adult Education sector, aligning with EU policies and fostering the development of capable and digitally adept educators.

## Project Results

A principal outcome of the project involves the development of the project's visual identity. This includes designing and developing the SOURCE website, logos, leaflets, newsletters, and social media accounts, all translated in all respective languages of the partners. These visual elements will be utilized throughout the project's duration to effectively communicate project information.

Six national info days are to be conducted, focusing on presenting all the tools and resources developed by the project. These info days serve as a platform to showcase the project's outputs and will also act as a pitching activity to attract participants to the SOURCE MOOC.

The SOURCE project produces also two short policy briefs that concentrate on the use of EU instruments such as DigCompEdu, e-CF, and ESCO. These briefs will demonstrate how these instruments can be used to identify skills gaps and recommend extensions or updates to the profile of online instructors.

Moreover, a digital repository, is created to compile and present trends related to educational technologies and innovative teaching or learning methods. This repository, called at this project the 'Innovation Watch', provides an easily understandable and digestible resource for accessing information in this field.

Overall, these results contribute to the effective dissemination of the project's outcomes, raising awareness, promoting collaboration, and facilitating the adoption of best practices in the field of online education.

The results of the SOURCE project are organized into five Work Packages (WP), each focusing on specific tasks and objectives.

**The list of project results per Work Package and with their activities is as follows:**

<b>WP1: Project Management and coordination</b>		<b>WP2: Online Instructors - best practices, skills, and competences</b>	
<b>A1.1: Managing work plan activities</b>		<b>A1: The SOURCE Research Framework</b>	
<b>A1.2: Coordination and Communication</b>		<b>A2: Research on best practices and relevant profiles</b>	
<b>A1.3: Quality Assurance</b>		<b>A3: Design and development of a decision support tool</b>	
<b>R1.1: Project management handbook</b>		<b>R2.1: Terms of reference – handbook</b>	
<b>R1.2: QA reports</b>		<b>R2.2: Desk research report</b>	
<b>R1.3: Interim and final report</b>		<b>R2.3: Qualitative Research field report</b>	
		<b>R2.4: Recommendations – list of skills and competences</b>	
		<b>R2.5: The SOURCE Decision Support Tool</b>	

Table 1. List of project results of Working Package 1 and 2.

<b>WP3: Design and development of training material</b>	
<b>A1: Curricula development</b>	
<b>A2: Training material development</b>	
<b>A3: Assessment methodology</b>	
<b>R3.1: SOURCE MOOC design methodology</b>	
<b>R3.2: SOURCE training modules</b>	
<b>R3.3: Assessment methodology</b>	

Table 2. List of project results of Working Package 3.

WP4: Pilot the SOURCE MOOC	WP5: Dissemination & Exploitation
<b>A1: MOOC development</b>	<b>A1: Design of dissemination and exploitation strategy</b>
<b>A2: Beta testing and promotion</b>	<b>A2: Implementation of dissemination activities</b>
<b>A3: MOOC piloting</b>	<b>A3: National info days</b>
<b>R4.1: The SOURCE MOOC</b>	<b>A4: Innovation Watch</b>
<b>R4.2: MOOC delivery report</b>	<b>R5.1: Dissemination &amp; exploitation plan</b>
	<b>R5.2: Visual identity</b>
	<b>R5.3: Info days</b>
	<b>R5.4: Innovation Watch</b>
	<b>R5.5: Policy briefs</b>

Table 3. List of project results of Working Package 4 and 5.

These Work Packages present various activities, research, development, and reports that contribute to achieving the project's objectives and ensuring the effective management, development, and dissemination of the SOURCE project and its outcomes.

### SOURCE Project Progress and Achievements

The SOURCE consortium has completed all project objectives and milestones at this stage. The successful development and launch of the SOURCE website and MOOC have enhanced project visibility and accessibility to various stakeholders.

Additionally, the dissemination efforts through flyers, newsletters, and the SOURCE social media platforms have amplified the project's reach and engagement. The successful development and implementation of digital tools through the SOURCE MOOC has enabled the project Consortium to deliver impactful outcomes.

## Policy Recommendations

Based on the overall project progress, lessons learned, and partners' feedback, the SOURCE Consortium has developed the following policy recommendations.

### Enhanced Mentorship and Peer Support Networks

Focus on establishing structured mentorship programs within institutions. Those programs will allow digitally experienced educators to guide their peers. Additionally, peer support networks or digital forums can be created, where educators can share challenges and solutions in real time.

### Policy Alignment with Digital Skills Frameworks

Promote advocacy towards local and national education authorities to adopt or adapt existing digital competency frameworks, e.g. DigCompEdu, as standard requirements for adult educators.

By aligning policy with digital skills frameworks, clear benchmarks can be set up for digital skill levels and pathways can be established for ongoing development in digital education.

### Incentivized Certification Programs

Policymakers should encourage institutions to offer certifications in digital teaching skills through tangible incentives (e.g., professional credits, salary enhancements).

These programs could involve assessments based on practical learning to ensure educators have the necessary skills to use digital tools effectively.

### Incorporating AI Literacy in Digital Competencies

AI tools and AI literacy can be featured as part of digital competencies training for educators.

It is important to emphasize how to integrate AI-based resources like adaptive learning systems or AI-driven assessment tools to enhance online education.

### Long-term Data and Feedback Collection on MOOC Impact

SOURCE partners should promote continuous research into the impact of the SOURCE MOOC on teaching practices by collecting data on participants' progress, challenges, and areas for improvement, also in the post-funding period.

This data can provide insights for future iterations and guide policy adjustments as digital education evolves.

### Regional Digital Literacy Workshops

Promote the organization of regional workshops focused on digital literacy for educators with a focus on remote or underserved areas. These workshops could be either in-person or hybrid workshops, emphasizing on the basics of digital infrastructure and online teaching practices.



## Conclusion

To conclude, the SOURCE project at its completion has proven itself as a proactive initiative in addressing the evolving needs of digital education, aimed at empowering educators with the tools and competencies needed to thrive in online learning environments.

Through the second SOURCE Policy Brief, the Consortium addresses wider policy-related topics in adult education and digital education. The ramifications of this policy brief touch upon local, regional, and national policymakers, as well as education providers and educators.