

# The COOCOUCO-Training Curriculum

COmpetence Oriented COUnselling for cognitively impaired people

## Using the COOCOUCO-Toolkit and the Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language



The Erasmus+ funded EU-Project COOCOU - COmpetence Oriented COUnselling for cognitively impaired people is a project linked to the developments related to the ProfilPASS as an instrument for competence assessment. It addresses counsellors working with cognitively impaired people in six European countries, who bring forward their potentials and interests for competence development. For this purpose, the ProfilPASS is adapted to the needs of cognitive impaired people, i.e. a Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language is created. The project is realized by the DIE as a coordinator in cooperation with partner organizations from Austria, Greece, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

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**Publication Coordinated by:**



# The COOCOU-Training Curriculum

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# 1. Introduction

The Erasmus+ funded EU-Project COOCOU focuses on the recognition of skills, qualifications, and competences of cognitively impaired people by developing and using a set of tools to assess and document those competences. Based on the analysis of competences and with the guidance of counsellors, COOCOU aims to help cognitively impaired people to find out about their competences, boost their self-confidence, support their empowerment and support them in finding a job or educational measure that suits their competence profile and interests, i.e. support their social and economic inclusion. The project offers innovative solutions to foster integration of people with cognitive impairments and who lack opportunities regarding the integration into the labour market and into society.

The main objectives of this project are realized through the development of two intellectual outputs:

- Toolkit for competence assessment (including Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language) and
- Reference material for the Toolkit (Manual for Counsellors and a Curriculum to train counsellors).

As the ProfilPASS is a self-evaluation tool helping people to reflect on themselves, this can be a challenging process, especially for people with cognitive impairments. It is essential that these people are accompanied in this process by competent counsellors. Hence, the second central objective pursued by COOCOU is the support and training of counsellors working with cognitively impaired persons. Therefore, this Curriculum was set up as a basis for the training of counsellors. In addition, a Manual for Counsellors provides guidelines on how the Toolkit and the Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language are used to their best.

COOCOU is led by the [Deutsches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung – Leibniz-Zentrum für Lebenslanges Lernen \(DIE\)](#) [German Institute for Adult Education - Leibniz Centre for Lifelong Learning] in the role of coordinator, together with the following partner organisations:

- [die Berater@](#) from Austria,
- [DAFNI KEK - Dafni Kentro Epaggelmatikis Katartisis](#) from Greece,
- [SwIdeas AB](#) from Sweden,
- [Andragoski zavod Ljudska univerza Velenje](#) from Slovenia and
- [DEFOIN – Formacion para el Desarrollo y la Inserción](#) from Spain.

## 2. Target Audience

The COOCOU project aims to develop a Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language for people with cognitive impairments as well as for people with visual impairments and blind people. People with disabilities are restricted in various ways. Due to their impairments, these people are not only at high risk of being excluded from society but also from the labour market since they often cannot provide formal qualifications or certificates as they struggle with regular learning environments. In addition, they often lack the capability of adequately expressing their competences and thus convincing employers – also because they are not aware of their own skills and abilities. With the help of professional counsellors and the products developed they will be able to find out about their strengths and will be supported in finding a job or educational program that suits their competence profile and interests.

For this to occur, the **counsellors working with cognitive impaired people** need knowledge and skills, which they will gain through participation in the training. The COOCOU Curriculum aims to support training implementation and equip counsellors and educators by demonstrating usability of tools and methods as well as providing them with valuable background information. This way, the training will extend the counsellors' competences and professionalize their work with the target group.

Each partner will identify at least **5 counsellors (30 in total)** who will participate in the training. After the training, trained counsellors will implement their knowledge in practice with their counselees, i.e. cognitively impaired persons, in their countries.

Counsellors will be invited to participate based on the following selection criteria:

- The counsellors must have some experience in working with cognitively impaired people.
- Previous training or a degree in special educational needs will be an asset.
- Previous experience in working with the ProfilPASS will also be of advantage.



### 3. The Training

The Curriculum was developed to provide **guidance** and to serve as a reference point for the training which is to take part in the second year of the duration of the project. It includes all tools and suggests activities/methods to be used during the training. The Curriculum thus serves as a framework which offers basic information for the training but still, the suggested activities and methods are open to individual interpretations and adjustments to the counsellors in training.

The Curriculum refers to the needs identified in the first months of the project and the subsequently identified tools of the Toolkit. A special session is dedicated to the Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language as the tool was modified and adjusted to the needs of the people with cognitive impairment and as such presents the core element of the COOCOU project. The Curriculum suggests **activities and methods of work** for counsellors to get familiar with the suggested tools and to understand the needs of cognitively impaired people. The goal of the training is to analyse, and test identified tools in the partner countries keeping in mind specifics of the respective working environments of the counsellors and the situation of the target group.

Supporting materials:

- [COOCOU Comprehensive Report of Identification of Needs;](#)
- [COOCOU-Toolkit;](#)
- [Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language;](#)
- [COOCOU-Manual for Counsellors.](#)

The Curriculum presents the basis for the training; however, it does not require unified implementation of the training itself. This can be adjusted according to the counsellors in training and their needs/requirements. Time frame, methods and area of focus are to be decided prior the training. Sessions can be combined, or even carried out as stand-alone modules. This allows flexibility and makes implementation user friendly, relevant, and adaptable.



## 3. The Training

### 3.1 Trainers

As a final step, the Manual and the Curriculum will be used as a basis to conduct a training for counsellors in each country. The training will take between two and five days, depending on the previous experiences of the counsellors regarding work with the ProfilPASS. Due to the nature of the training it might prove difficult to find one person who has profound knowledge in all relevant topics to deliver the training. Therefore, the training could be delivered as cooperation between experts:

- experienced counsellors (counselling process),
- supported by project partners (familiar with project outputs) and
- mentors experienced in working with people with cognitive impairment.

The cooperation between experts would ensure quality and required expertise. As it might prove difficult to engage them face-to-face, the training could be organized in blended form, partially online and partially as a workshop (face-to-face).

The training will be evaluated which will serve as basis for revising and optimizing the reference material and the COOCOU-Toolkit.

### 3.2 Training Materials

Training materials consist of outputs developed within the COOCOU project and different versions of the ProfilPASS. The Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language might prove as most useful since it is adapted to the target users' needs, however other versions of the ProfilPASS can be used as well, depending on the type of cognitive impairment. All other versions are available online in all partner languages (<https://profilpass-international.eu/>).



#### 3.2.1 Comprehensive Report of Identification of Needs

Before starting to create the COOCOU-Toolkit, the partners carried out an identification of needs including a synopsis of examples of good practices in the COOCOU partner countries.

The content includes answers to the following questions:

- What do organizations working with cognitively impaired people need to assess their competences?
- What examples of good practice are already available?
- What do cognitively impaired people need to make their competences visible?

It also includes the recommendations for the development of the ProfilPASS which were considered when developing the Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language.

## 3. The Training

### 3.2 Training Materials

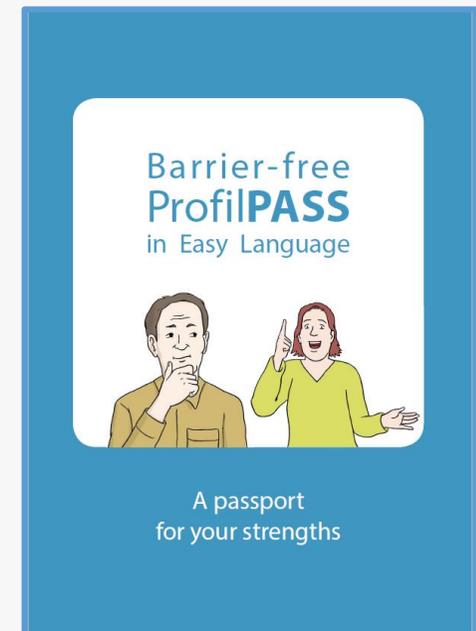
#### 3.2.2 The COOCOU-Toolkit

The Toolkit for competence assessment is a collection of **different methods and instruments** for assessing the **competences of cognitively impaired people**. All partners conducted a desk research in their countries and identified existing tools for competence assessment that might be suitable for the target group. The COOCOU-Toolkit intends to offer counsellors the opportunity to find methods of competence assessment that can help them work with cognitively impaired people. Thus, methods were included which are barrier-free and/or fit the needs of cognitively impaired people.

#### 3.2.3 The Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language

The Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language is the core of the Toolkit. **To meet the needs of the cognitively impaired people as well as the needs of people with visual impairments and blind people** the already existing ProfilPASS has been adapted with regard to the needs of this target group.

Therefore, according to the guidelines of the Easy Language Research Unit of the University of Hildesheim, Easy Language is used in combination with images for Easy Language to ensure that all text elements are easy to understand and the instructions are clear. The use of Easy Language considers, among other things, a short, easily understandable main sentence structure, the use of basic vocabulary, which avoids foreign and technical terms, synonyms and abbreviations. In addition, the text is sensibly structured by sections and headings and supplemented by explanations. Tables and filling-in aids as well as very shortened text passages also provide support. In addition, it is possible to fill out the form on an electronic terminal device to avoid possible writing difficulties. By additional chapters like "My daily routine" or "My household tasks", gap texts or similar, the work with the ProfilPASS is made even easier as it is oriented towards the life situation, the experiences and professional situation of the target group. **Biographical examples** serve as an additional aid, which gives the target group a better access to the self-reflective work in the ProfilPASS and facilitates the transfer to their own life reality. These serve not only as an orientation aid, but also as motivation.



## 3. The Training

### 3.2 Training Materials

#### 3.2.4 The COOCOU-Manual

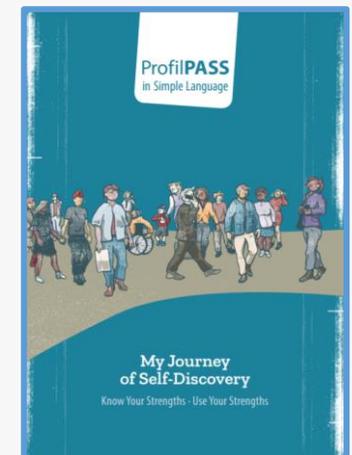
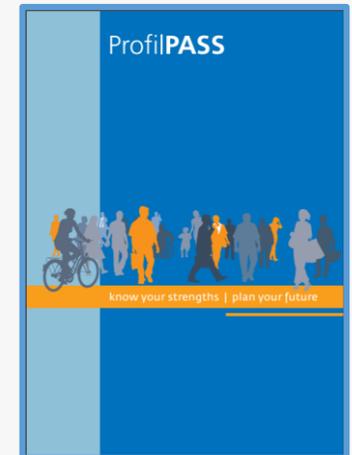
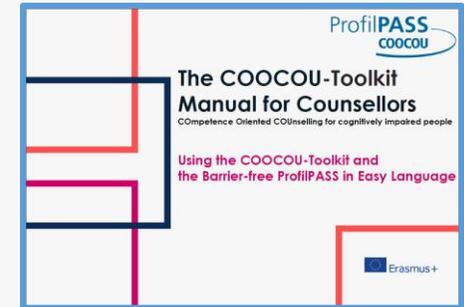
In order to ensure that counsellors are capable of successfully working with the Toolkit, it is necessary that they are provided with guiding reference materials and that they are trained for working with the Toolkit and with the target group. A Manual for Counsellors in which essential background information as well as guidelines and suggestions on how the Toolkit and the Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language can be applied best was developed. The Manual **supports** counsellors in their work with the Toolkit and it ensures a professional and competent usage of the Toolkit and the Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language.

#### 3.2.5 ProfilPASS for Adults (from project KISS)

The ProfilPASS is originally a German tool developed by the DIE that assists people in finding out what their strengths and competences are. With the help of a counsellor they discover their hidden competences and set their goals. Therefore, the ProfilPASS tool prevents people from dropping out of training and education and helps them to find a job and to decide which training or education suits them and their competences best. In the EU funded project [KISS](#) we adapted the tool to the participating partners' needs and made it available in several languages (<https://www.profilpass-international.eu>).

#### 3.2.6 ProfilPASS in Simple Language (from the SCOUT-project)

The [ProfilPASS in Simple Language](#) is based on the ProfilPASS – a tool for identifying and documenting skills and competences (SCOUT-project webpage <https://scout.profilpass-international.eu/>). The ProfilPASS in Simple Language specifically addresses new immigrants and supports counsellors in their work with this target group. It was specially adapted to the needs of the target group, so that content, language, and layout were modified. Using Simple Language means using simple short sentences with common words, without fillers or foreign words. In case foreign words are used, the moderators will explain them to the target group. The moderators serve as additional orientation and they will guide the target group through the ProfilPASS. The target group is addressed directly, and text passages are shortened. Additionally, the text understanding is supported by the increased use of illustrations and pictograms. Testimonials serve as further aids, which simplify the access to the text and the transfer to the realities of life. The content of the ProfilPASS is adapted to the life situation, experiences, and professional situation of new immigrants.



## 3. The Training

### 3.3 Preparation

For successful training implementation partners need to make sure that they have everything they need. The following checklist offers support and guidance during the preparation stage:

#### Before the training:

- Date and location set
- Training agenda available
- Invitation to the training sent to counsellors
- Invitation published (if training made public)
- Required number of counsellors available
- Materials available in partner language
- Materials printed (if face-to-face)
- Moderator materials available such as flipchart paper & pens, moderation cards, writing materials etc. (if face-to-face)
- Supporting materials ready (ppt, videos, etc.)
- Freebies available (notes, pens, etc.)

#### After the training – don't forget:

- Evaluation of the training
- Certificates for participants
- Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language available for testing phase
- Monitoring and support during the testing phase
- Evaluation of the testing phase



## 4. The Curriculum

### 4.1. The Structure

#### The Curriculum consists of 5 sessions:

- Session 1 – Counselling process
- Session 2 – The story of ProfilPASS
- Session 3 – The needs of cognitively impaired people regarding the assessment of competences
- Session 4 – The COOCOU-Toolkit
- Session 5 – Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language

#### Learning objectives of the training:

- Learn about the project background
- Understand the needs of the end users/target group
- Learn about strategies and methods to put in place when working with the target group
- Get familiar with the developed tools (COOCOU-Toolkit)
- Understand how to implement Toolkit in own work
- Learn about Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language and how to implement it
- Get familiar with other versions of the ProfilPASS that are available

Each group in training can decide on the importance and relevance of the individual session and on which one they wish to focus according to their actual needs and the needs of their clients, and of course according to the knowledge and experience that counsellors already have.

Although there is a general recommendation regarding dedicated time for each session, this can be seen as guidance as this may depend on several factors, such as the previous experience of counsellors, time availability and the actual need or interest in the single tools. The estimation of the total training duration is however 25 hours.

Participants will enter the training focusing on most relevant learning objectives; therefore, the Curriculum is designed in a way that allows individual implementation. The training should therefore be designed in a way that is efficient, relevant, and useful to the participants' needs – focus should be on those objectives identified as most relevant given the situation. For example, if a counsellor works with different target groups he/she might be interested in all ProfilPASS versions, on the opposite if he/she has used previous versions already but has little experience with this specific target group he/she might aim to learn more on needs of the target group the Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language is focussing on solely.

## 4. The Curriculum

### 4.2. Session 1 – Counselling process

All versions of the ProfilPASS are based on a common understanding of counselling. The following counselling process model was developed referring to the original procedure with the ProfilPASS for Adults. It serves as an orientation framework for counselling work with the ProfilPASS in Simple Language and it shows and explains the working steps that have to be completed during a counselling process with the Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy language.

Working step in the counselling process	Aim
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ developing a realization scenario</li> <li>→ organizing the counselling situation</li> </ul>
Starting Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ clarifying the counselling mandate (poss. with a contract)</li> <li>→ using the structure of the ProfilPASS in Simple Language</li> </ul>
Assessment Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ assessing the competences following the biography and experiences of the user</li> <li>→ accompanying and supporting the self-exploration</li> </ul>
Balancing Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ assessing strengths</li> <li>→ creating a competence balance</li> </ul>
Development Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ formulating development aims</li> <li>→ working out an action plan</li> </ul>
Evaluation Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ final counselling and handing out the competence certificate</li> </ul>
Post-Processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ overview of successful/problematic learning situations</li> <li>→ consequences for further learning situations</li> </ul>

**NOTE:** this part of the Curriculum is especially important for the less experienced counsellors or those new to counselling. The steps should be discussed in a group. Experiences should be exchanged between less experienced/new counsellors and more experienced ones.

This requires a mixed group which should be taken into consideration when selecting counsellors for the training.

## 4. The Curriculum

### 4.2. Session 1 – Counselling process

#### The Session Plan

<b>Session title:</b>	<b>Steps in counselling process</b>
<b>Participants:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less experienced counsellors</li> <li>• New counsellors</li> <li>• Mentors interested in the use of the Toolkit</li> </ul>
<b>Objectives and Learning outcomes</b>	<p><u>Objectives:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ To present and understand steps in counselling process,</li> <li>➔ to learn how to plan and prepare a counselling process for each client,</li> <li>➔ to discuss different counselling methods,</li> <li>➔ to discuss and exchange experience.</li> </ul> <p><u>Participants:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Understand the complexity of the counselling process,</li> <li>➔ can prepare a counselling process plan,</li> <li>➔ know and understand different counselling methods,</li> <li>➔ exchange their experience and learn their lessons.</li> </ul>
<b>Content:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is counselling</li> <li>• What are competences</li> <li>• How to prepare a counselling plan</li> <li>• Working steps in counselling process</li> <li>• Counselling with ProfilPASS</li> </ul> <p>+ <a href="#">See the COOCOUCO-Manual</a></p>
<b>Method and Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation with the Manual for Counsellors,</li> <li>• discussion with reflection on specifics of the target group,</li> <li>• to plan and to prepare for the piloting phase using counselling steps.</li> </ul>
<b>Suggested materials:</b>	Manual for Counsellors
<b>Duration:</b>	2-4 hours

## 4. The Curriculum

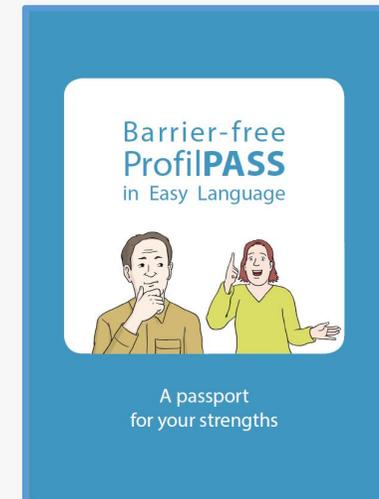
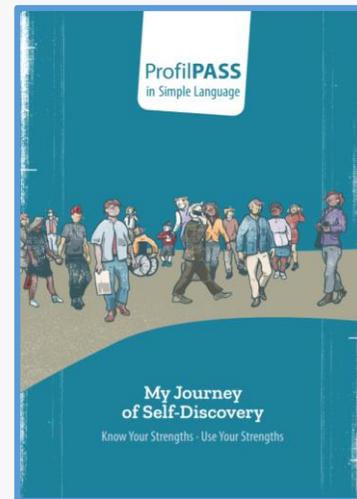
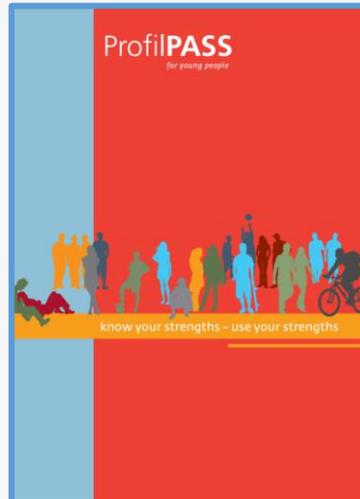
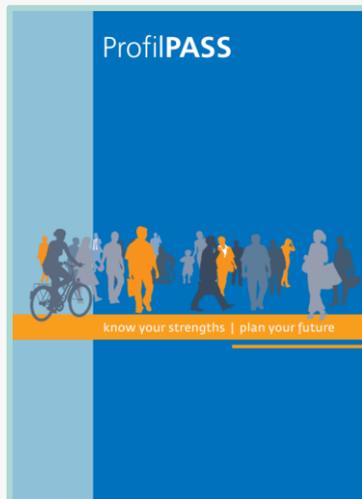
### 4.3. Session 2 – The story of ProfilPASS

The ProfilPASS is a German tool that assists people in finding out what their strengths and competences are. With the help of an advisor they discover their hidden competences and set their goals. Therefore, the ProfilPASS tool prevents people from dropping out of training and education. In different EU funded projects, the tool was adapted to the participating partner countries' needs and tested on young people, adults, and people with migration background.

The current ProfilPASS family includes:

- ProfilPASS for Adults
- ProfilPASS for young people
- ProfilPASS in Simple Language
- Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language

The aim of this session is to present all versions, discuss potential usability with this target group and to share previous experience, especially with those counsellors who already used different versions.



## 4. The Curriculum

### 4.3. Session 2 – The story of ProfilPASS

#### The Session Plan

<b>Session title:</b>	<b>The story of ProfilPASS</b>
<b>Participants:</b>	This session is especially useful for those who are not familiar with the ProfilPASS and have not participated in trainings that were carried out within previous projects (KISS, SCOUT).
<b>Objectives and Learning outcomes</b>	<p><u>Objectives:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Familiarize participants with the background of the ProfilPASS family</li> <li>➔ Introduce previously developed ProfilPASS tools (if available)</li> <li>➔ Discuss usability of ProfilPASS tools with regard to people with cognitive impairment</li> <li>➔ Learn about experience and lessons learned</li> </ul> <p><u>Participants:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Are aware of different ProfilPASS versions</li> <li>➔ Know the differences and adaptations</li> <li>➔ Understand the specifics of the Barrier-free ProfilPASS</li> </ul>
<b>Content:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ProfilPASS for adult – purpose and aim</li> <li>• Need for adaptations with regards to target users' needs</li> <li>• Case studies and examples from previous projects</li> <li>• Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language – needs for adaptation</li> </ul>
<b>Method and Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation of the previous projects – ppt and website</li> <li>• Working with group – testing all ProfilPASS versions available</li> <li>• Discussion – usability of different tool with specific target group</li> <li>• Showcases – good practices and case studies</li> </ul>
<b>Suggested materials:</b>	ProfilPASS for Adults & ProfilPASS for Young People ProfilPASS in Simple Language Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language Project website
<b>Duration:</b>	4 hours

## 4. The Curriculum

### 4.4. Session 3 – The needs of cognitively impaired people regarding the assessment of competences

#### The Session Plan

<b>Session title:</b>	<b>Needs of cognitive impaired people in counselling process</b>
<b>Participants:</b>	Especially counsellors less experienced with counselling cognitive impaired people
<b>Objectives and Learning outcomes</b>	<p><u>Objectives:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ To know different types of learning difficulties/cognitive impairments</li> <li>➔ To understand problem areas related to competence assessment for cognitively impaired people</li> <li>➔ To understand needs of cognitively impaired people regarding their competence assessment</li> <li>➔ To become aware of some best practices regarding counselling cognitively impaired people</li> <li>➔ To learn some methods/approaches suitable for working with cognitively impaired people</li> </ul> <p><u>Participants:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ Know the main types of learning difficulties/cognitive impairments</li> <li>➔ Understand the problem areas regarding competence assessment for cognitively impaired people</li> <li>➔ Are aware of the needs of cognitively impaired people in counselling process</li> <li>➔ Know good practices regarding counselling cognitively impaired people and have ideas of implementation in own work</li> <li>➔ Know suitable methods and approaches</li> </ul>
<b>Content:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Types of learning difficulties/cognitive impairments</li> <li>• Problem areas related to competence assessment for cognitively impaired people</li> <li>• Needs of cognitively impaired people regarding their competence assessment – state in respective partner country</li> <li>• Examples of best practices – especially in respective partner country</li> </ul>
<b>Method and Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation of result of COOCOU Report of Identification of Needs</li> <li>• Discussion on needs of and solutions for cognitive impaired people in counselling process</li> <li>• Exchange of knowledge and experience among counsellors</li> <li>• Discussion on best practices and potential implementation</li> </ul>
<b>Suggested materials:</b>	Comprehensive Report of Identification of Needs
<b>Duration:</b>	4 hours

## 4. The Curriculum

### 4.5. Session 4 – The COOCOU-Toolkit

#### The Session Plan

<b>Session title:</b>	The COOCOU-Toolkit	<b>Content:</b>	<p><u>Tools for supported counselling processes (complete competence assessment)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language – adapted version of the ProfilPASS for the target group of cognitively impaired people</i></li> <li>- <i>Berufswahlpass in simple language for young adults</i></li> </ul> <p>➔ The Handbooks for Counsellors ➔ The Lists of additional Tools and Apps</p>
<b>Participants:</b>	Counsellors in general		<b>Objectives and Learning outcomes</b>
<b>Content:</b>	<p>The Toolkit, which consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ The 'Fact Sheets' that describe:</li> </ul> <p><u>Self-assessment tools</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Competence cards</i></li> <li>- <i>Activity maps</i></li> <li>- <i>Womens' lives</i></li> <li>- <i>Picture card set</i></li> <li>- <i>meine-berufserfahrung.de</i></li> </ul> <p><u>Tools mainly for supported counselling processes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>So that I know what I can do</i></li> <li>- <i>Hamet2</i></li> <li>- <i>Competence cards</i></li> <li>- <i>Choosing a profession</i></li> <li>- <i>Employment Tool Kit</i></li> </ul>	<b>Method and Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fact Sheets review and online tool check,</li> <li>• discussion on usability and accessibility,</li> <li>• analysis of suitability with reflection on specific target group,</li> <li>• to define implementation strategies for the tools,</li> <li>• discussion on potential translations and adaptations/modifications.</li> </ul>
	<b>Suggested materials:</b>	The COOCOU-Toolkit	<b>Duration:</b>

## 4. The Curriculum

### 4.6. Session 5 – Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language

#### The Session Plan

<b>Session title:</b>	Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language		Content of the Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy language: - That's the way I am - My family and friends - My day - My household chores - My hobbies - My school - My education - My work - I can do that - My goals
<b>Participants:</b>	Counsellors in general Mentors working with people with cognitive impairment		<b>Method and Activities</b>
<b>Objectives and Learning outcomes</b>	<u>Objectives:</u> → To introduce the Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language and its usage during the counselling process, → to define steps in counselling processes with regard to Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language, → to evaluate and analyse the tool and its usability, → to discuss localisation with regard to migrants the trained counsellors are working with (if needed), → to provide project partners with feedback.  <u>Participants</u> → Are familiar with the tools and are able to reflect on the usability (when and how to use the tools) → Know the content and structure of the Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language → Know how to structure the counselling process with regard to the usage of the Barrier-free ProfilPASS in Easy Language → Know, when and how to use it, when working with cognitively impaired people	<b>Suggested materials:</b>	
		<b>Duration:</b>	6 hours

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