SKILLSMATCH PROJECT INFORMATION

(Please retain this document for your records)

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1   Project background and information

The European labour market is changing rapidly, and employers are looking beyond traditional qualifications when hiring employees. Non-cognitive skills such as team work, communication, and problem solving are now considered essential for many occupations and are becoming necessary for an individual's employment success.

However, employers report that young jobseekers, and citizens at risk of exclusion, need to improve the basic employability skills that will equip them to enter the labour market, face job requirements and adversities, and subsequently be productive at work. Thus, it is vital to develop interventions that can help jobseekers manage their non-cognitive competencies and build these skills in line with labour market demands.

To address this need the **SkillsMatch Project** will develop an online system to assess and evaluate a user's non-cognitive skill level and recommend training opportunities that bridge the gap between their current skill level and that of an occupation they aspire to. Furthermore, their learning will be validated using the Open Badge system and allows users to build a portfolio of learning which they can use to demonstrate their skills to potential employers.

The SkillsMatch Project is a European Commission funded initiative being conducted by partners from four European countries, including Sweden, Spain, Italy and Ireland, and runs from 2018-2020.

Project Objectives:

- Identify non-cognitive skills and develop a framework for training.
- Develop a prototype with tailored learning roadmaps for non-cognitive skills for different occupations.
- Test and validate the prototype at EU level taking into account cultural indicators.
- Provide tools to improve youth employability and help citizens at risk of exclusion.

If you would like to know more about the SkillsMatch Project and its development, please log on to the project website http://skillsmatch.eu/

2 Agenda – What's happening today

1   Welcome and introductions

2   Introducing the SkillsMatch project

3   What's involved today?

4   Obtaining your consent.

6   Questionnaire about your experience reaching your career goals

7   Scenarios – Exploring a number of different ways you can use the SkillsMatch platform

8   Questionnaire about how easy you found the SkillsMatch platform to use

9   Gathering your ideas around how you might use the SkillsMatch platform

10   Interviews with volunteer participants (Swedish pilot workshops only).

11   Thank you and end of pilot workshop

3   Informed consent

SkillsMatch is a two-year long project funded by the European Commission and aims to develop an online platform for the assessment, training and validation of 'non-cognitive skills', such as teamwork and communication. As part of this project we are keen to hear from those who might find such an online platform useful, whether to gain new skills for the workplace or when seeking new employment.

Why this research?

As you are aware the European labour market is changing rapidly, and employers are looking beyond traditional skills when hiring employees. Non-cognitive skills such as team work, communication, and problem solving are now considered necessary for an individual's employment success. However, employers report that some jobseekers are not equipped with these skills, and so it is necessary to help them build these competencies in line with the demands of the labour market.

Why take part?

For the platform to be effective it's important that those who will be using it are involved in designing and developing it.

Who are the SkillsMatch team?

We are an international team of educators and researchers from Ireland, Spain, Sweden and Italy, and all of us have worked in the field of education and are committed to ensuring that everyone has the best chance of success in the workforce. You can find out more about the team on the project website www.skillsmatch.eu

The personal perspective

While participation in this project is purely voluntary, we would really value your perspective and input when we're developing the online assessment and training platform. Your input will be valuable in helping us create a platform that's 'fit for purpose' and can have a positive impact on those seeking employment.

What will the pilots involve?

There will be three pilots as part of the SkillsMatch project, each taking approximately two hours to complete. Although it's not compulsory, we would be delighted if you could find time to attend all three pilots, as it means you will be involved in developing this platform from beginning to end. The pilots will take place as follows –

Pilot 1 –   Design together: What should we include in the platform?

Pilot 2 –   Testing in action: A first look at the platform, how can it be improved?

Pilot 3 – Final test and feedback: A final look at the working system to check its functionality.

What about confidentiality?

The information that is obtained during this project will be kept strictly confidential in accordance with GDPR legislation. Any sharing or publication of the research results will not identify any of the participants. More details about the SkillsMatch project's Data Protection Policy and your rights under GDPR legislation are outlined in more detail on the last page of this document.

What about consent?

In order for you to take part in this project and the pilots we are requesting your written consent. Participation in this project is purely voluntary, and you are free to withdraw from the project at any time without adverse consequences.

If you are interested in helping us out with this project, please complete the consent form attached and return to the pilot facilitators.

If you should have any questions at any stage during the pilot please feel free to ask, and if you had any questions afterwards, or needed to talk with the SkillsMatch team for any reason, please see details of your local contacts below.

Many thanks for taking the time to consider taking part in the SkillsMatch project.

Thashmee Karunaratne (Stockholm University)

On behalf of the SkillsMatch team.

SkillsMatch Data Protection Policy

European laws require us to provide you with the following information about our data collection and your related rights. Please take a few moments to read the following paragraphs.

The data and information you provide:

The information provided by you in this project is voluntary and will be used for research purposes only. It will not be used in a manner which would allow identification of your individual information. By participating, you will contribute to a better society by delivering inputs for the development of SkillsMatch.

Most participants will find the discussions and activities interesting and thought/provoking. If, however, you feel uncomfortable in any way during the interview / pilot session / activity, you can decline to answer any question or to end your participation.

Anonymized research data will be archived in the SkillsMatch data archive held by Stockholm University in order to make them available to other researchers in line with current data sharing practices.

When you participate in this project, the SkillsMatch team may use any photos or videos taken of you (if any) and material shared by you during the pilots, for project marketing materials without compensation to or prior authorization from you. You as a data subject have a right to object to such processing of personal data concerning you.

Risks:

We anticipate that there are no significant risks associated with this activity.

SkillsMatch is not liable for injuries during this activity.

Information about you (personal data):

By participating in this project, we obtain and maintain certain personal information about you (such as your contact details, educational background, areas of expertise). We use this information for a variety of project related purposes only. You can rest assured that we will not use your personal information for commercial purposes. We take steps to ensure that your personal data is stored safely. SkillsMatch partner Stockholm University guarantees that all personal data obtained from you in this project will be treated in compliance with EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Your rights

When you participate in this research project, your personal data will be processed, partly to fulfil commitments related to your participation and partly for other legitimate interests pursued by the

project team. If you wish to retract your personal data, to receive a copy of the data you provided or exercise your rights of access, cancellation, rectification and opposition, please identify yourself, the data and the time the data was collected and please contact Thashmee Karunaratne (University of Stockholm) at the address overleaf:

Thashmee Karunaratne,

Department of Computer and Systems Sciences,

University of Stockholm,

Nodhuset, Borgarfjordsgatan 12

SE-164-07, Stockholm, Sweden

Email: thasmee@dsv.su.se

More information about the SkillsMatch project is available at www.skillsmatch.eu

4 SkillsMatch NC skills

The seven clusters of SkillsMatch NC skills

A   **Self Management**
B   **Accountability**
C   **Tenacity (Resilience)**
D   **Leadership**
E   **Communication**
F   **Creativity**
G   **Ethical behaviour**

Full list of SkillsMatch NC Skills and descriptions

NCS	Description
accountability	perform, complete assigned tasks in a goal-oriented manner; take ownership; accept liability for professional decisions, involving self or others; realise that choices and actions have positive and negative consequences; recognise limits to autonomy; understand when to seek help
adaptability	demonstrate openness to change when faced with changing demands and circumstances; adjust plans, goals, behaviours and actions to effectively and successfully cope with change; demonstrate flexibility when coping with various circumstances
coaching	teach, guide others to act effectively, empathise; suggest optimum course of action; demonstrate and model best practice; guide by provision of relevant knowledge and support; prescribe exercises, drills to reinforce learning; acknowledge, praise, reward good practice and competence mastery
communication	Effectively exchange information and ideas through verbal, non-verbal, visual and written means with others; alter communication style for different situations, people and mediums; listen to understand; clarify understanding; take different viewpoints into consideration
conflict resolution	identify, prevent conflict; be diplomatic, sensitive; intervene, resolve conflicts or disputes in, proactive, peaceful manner; reduce negative impact of conflict; promote positive outcomes; create restorative working environment
creativity	suggest new ways of doing things; improvise, experiment confidently; be inspired by novelty; leverage experience for guidance; is in awe of new disciplines, topics; actively seek out, explore new areas; be curious, open-minded
critical thinking	ask appropriate questions to elicit quality information for a purpose; interpret information in context; be aware of "fake News" phenomenon"; appraise, analyse scenarios; exercise situational judgement
customer focus	aware of customer needs; respond to demands in timely manner; aware of key business drivers; provides optimum service to clients; focus on customer satisfaction.

decision making	weigh pros and cons in balanced way; reason logically; deductive; deliberate over arguments; exercise judgement based on situation, evidence, empathy; be pragmatic
diligence	demonstrate precision and accuracy in work; work in disciplined manner; demonstrate willingness to work hard; stay with tasks until completed, even when others give up
efficiency	plan effectively; use time productively; be competent in performing tasks; be economical in use of resources or time; work in logical sequence; seek help; collaborate when appropriate
entrepreneurship	act upon ideas and opportunities to transform them, over time, into cultural, financial or social value for others
ethical behaviour	act according to accepted principles of right and wrong; apply criteria of fairness, transparency and impartiality, in work practices, when dealing with people; respect human rights; be generous; honest; act with empathy; be socially oriented; act according to honourable principles
goal orientation	demonstrate strong ambition to successfully complete tasks; define strategies and plans effective for achieving the pursued objectives; give priority to actions that contribute to achieve pursued objectives; demonstrate focus on high performance and quality levels; seek continuous performance improvement
initiative	act without direction; is conscientious, motivated to innovate, invent; is energetic, dynamic in approach to tasks, routines; proceed in entrepreneurial fashion; approaches tasks, challenges proactively; is courageous; continuously seek new and challenging opportunities; take risks
leadership	guide, direct others to common goal by example and instruction; supervise, motivate and plan work for employees or teams; create and enforce time schedules, goals, metrics to maximise output; trust colleagues; work collaboratively with team mates; delegate within capability, responsibility parameters
manage quality	promote excellence in workplace processes, activities, deliverables; give relevant, constructive feedback on processes, products; establish procedures to prevent errors; pose appropriate questions to elicit accurate information for a purpose; encourage efficient, effective work practices; appraise, modify behaviour, performance

motivate others	get to know what drives and stimulates individuals to achieve goals and personal growth; demonstrate self-motivation and professionalism to inspire people; set realistic goals; engage in transparent planning of work with a clear division of tasks; ensure people understand how their role contributes to achieving corporate goals; encourage people by showing you appreciate their efforts and praising them for good work done; demonstrate people they have your trust; listen attentively and value other people's opinion; empower people to play a more active role in an organisation
motivation	the drive to perform a task and achieve results with enthusiasm, determination and autonomy; do what needs to be done, without influence from other people; find a reason and strength to complete a task, even when challenging, without giving up or needing others to encourage them
negotiation	communicate with others to reach a suitable outcome for all; build a common understanding; resolve a point of difference; stay focused on own and others' intentions or goals; demonstrate willingness to compromise; apply active listening to understand other's intentions or goals; build and adapt argumentation according to changing circumstances to improve chances for win-win solution
networking	Reach out to and meet up with people in a professional context; build a web of personal professional contacts; stay in touch with contacts with common interests and at influential positions in organisations; return favours; be open to help others without expecting to get something back
organisation	schedule and optimise activities and available resources; monitor and evaluate progress; set priorities; coordinate work to accomplish an objective; break down tasks into smaller components and delegate when possible
patience	accept or tolerate delay, trouble or suffering without getting angry or upset; remain composed when faced with emotional or conflict situations; give people the space to make mistakes and learn from the experience
personal development	understand own learning needs to progress in life, work and study; set goals to realise and maximise own potential; take control of own personal growth; embrace new experiences and learn from them; engage in continuous learning to develop, maintain and improve skills and knowledge; demonstrate a growing autonomy in acquiring knowledge, know-how and new behaviours

positive attitude	display energy, enthusiasm, passion, optimism and positive thinking; keep up the good spirit and believe in oneself and others, even in challenging situations
problem-solving	reason inductively, deductively; use systems thinking; analyse, evaluate alternative solutions; plan, conduct investigations; interpret information; draw conclusions; make decisions based on best analysis
reliability	act in a dependable, honest and trustworthy way; be loyal, authentic, and consistent in actions and relationships
resilience	handle challenges, disruption and change and recover from setbacks and adversity; tolerate and work constructively within unexpected, unpredictable and complex situations; stay calm and react in a constructive way to own or others' anger or when faced with obstacles or complaints; adapt to accommodate modifications in the workplace
respect privacy	be aware of high level provisions of GDPR; recognise the right to keep personal information private; respect, protect personal data; disclose personal information only to authorised people; be discreet; inform others of rights to privacy
respect for diversity	respect different cultural, social and sexual affinities; respond inclusively, equitably to all; actively promote social justice, confront discrimination in the workplace and society
respect the environment	respect home, workplace, neighbourhood environment proactively; show interest in nature, conservation, ecology; model positive environmental behaviour; enact environmentally friendly principles, policies, regulations in the workplace; promote environmental sustainability in society
self-control	regulate own emotions, thoughts, and behaviours in the face of temptations and impulses; control impulse; stop and think before acting; manage feelings by thinking about goals to keep going when faced with upsetting and unexpected circumstances; control body movements
self-management	get work done while operating alone, with little supervision; monitor and evaluate own performance; be aware of own strengths / weaknesses

strategic thinking	shape a vision for the future and be able to translate it into concrete ideas and plans; prepare strategies and come up with ideas and plans that can cope with changing environments and various challenges ahead; formulate achievable and cost-effective plans that address organisational goals and strategies; communicate a clear, vivid and relevant description or picture of where the organisation should be 3, 5 or 10 years
teamwork	work confidently within a group, assuming relevant role, to achieve both personal and collective goals; balance own contribution and success against others for benefit of the team; share the workload appropriately; recognise the value of other people's contributions and ideas; recognise and respect the role of others; support division or co-ownership of responsibilities
tenacity	stick to one's tasks achieving goals despite fatigue, frustration, failure and setbacks; meet personal commitments; demonstrates will to continue when work becomes difficult; goes above and beyond expectations; display firmness of character; demonstrate indomitable spirit; strive for excellence

6 The SkillsMatch features

The SkillsMatch platform aims to –

1   Raise awareness of soft skills
2   Assess your current level of soft skills
3   See the results of your assessment

Feature 1:   Raise awareness of your soft skills

Build your awareness of soft skills and their importance to employers

Feature 2:   Assess your current level of soft skills

Choose your favourite occupations and assess yourself against the soft skills required for each b
completing a simple questionnaire.

Feature 3:   See the results of your assessment

The results of your assessment will show you which soft skills you're strongest on, and which can be improved with the help of training.