



# Critical Skills for Life and Work



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The **Critical Skills for Life and Work** (CSLW) project aims to design and implement effective training tools for enhancing key skills and competences of highly-skilled refugees and the language teachers who work with them, and so enhance the employability and societal integration of skilled refugees.

The main output of the project will be a toolkit comprised of two training modules, one aimed at highly-skilled refugees and one at volunteer teachers.

The project is led by the **Newcastle University** (United Kingdom). Project partners are the **Universität Graz** (Austria), **Fryske Akademy/Mercator** (The Netherlands) and the refugee charity **Action Foundation** (United Kingdom).

The project team is currently piloting and disseminating the materials.

## CSLW workshop in Linz

On February 28th, 2019, University of Graz team members Sonja Babic and Sandra Radinger held a workshop entitled “Critical skills for Life and Work” at the first symposium on diversity in vocational education in Austria (German: “Diversität in der beruflichen Bildung”), held by the Pädagogische Hochschule in Linz.

Researchers, professors, headmasters, teachers, teacher educators, and students from various educational institutions across Austria have participated in the symposium.



*Graz team members Sonja Babic and Sandra Radinger holding a workshop at the symposium on diversity in vocational education in Austria*



The workshop started with a short introduction about the project itself, its funders, partners, aims and outputs. The introduction was followed by an adapted version of the “Silver Linings” activity from our toolkit (Unit 5). The aim of this activity was for participants to reflect on positive and negative aspects of their jobs, and to try to find at least one thing that can help them to see a positive side to the given situation. Participants shared their own thoughts and experiences in a group discussion. Next, building on another activity from the toolkit, we asked the participants to read a part of a success story from a highly skilled refugee, Madiika. The participants were asked to identify elements of PICC in the story, after which the relevance of PICC to teachers and students in vocational education in Austria was discussed. The participants brought up interesting comments inspired also by their own experiences with (highly skilled) refugees and vocational training in general.

The workshop sparked interesting discussions and raised awareness and interest about the CSLW project and the issue of helping highly skilled refugees to navigate the job market in Austria and across Europe. Furthermore, the discussions point to a general relevance of PICC for students and teachers in vocational education.

## Multiplier Event and Transnational Partner Meeting in Leeuwarden



*Impression of our first CSLW Multiplier Event at the Fryske Akademy/Mercator in Leeuwarden*

On March 14th, 2019, the Fryske Akademy/Mercator organised the first CSLW Multiplier Event. The event was visited by eighteen enthusiastic teachers and learners.

The Multiplier Event started with a short introduction about the project. This was followed by a workshop in which teachers and learners were invited to evaluate the toolkit. For the workshop, teachers and learners were split up in two groups. Nicola Brooks from Action Foundation (UK) led the workshop with the learners and asked them to evaluate Units 1 and 3 of the learner module. The teacher workshop was held by our project member Sarah Mercer from the Graz Universität (AT). She asked the teachers to evaluate Units 1 and 3 of the teacher module.

After the workshop, the partnership had a fruitful discussion with the participants about the materials. The consortium is grateful for the useful comments and suggestions, which will be helpful to further develop the toolkit.

The Multiplier Event was followed by the partnership’s Third Transnational Project Meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March, to discuss the piloting phase and the progress of the project.



## Critical Skills for Life and Work at CultNET 2019

On April 26th CSLW team members Sara Ganassin, Alina Schartner and Tony Young (Newcastle University) gave a presentation during at the 22nd Cultnet Conference hosted by the School of Education, Durham University. They discussed the current stage and next steps of the project including the dissemination activities.

Cultnet is an online network of researchers and teachers in intercultural communication and education, established by Emeritus Professor Michael Byram (School of Education, Durham University). Cultnet has more than 200 members from all over the world. The School of Education Cultnet Conference takes place every year at Durham University, and it offers a platform for academics, doctoral students, and teachers of language and intercultural education internationally to present their current work and future plans. You can follow the Culnet official twitter account @CultnetGlobal.

We thank all the Cultneters for their feedback and support!



### Save the date: Critical Skills for Life and Work International Conference

Our final project conference will take place on June 21st 2019, Newcastle University, Armstrong Building.

It will be a free event and we invite academics, teachers, students, and anyone interested in our work with refugees to attend. More information will be available on the project website at the beginning of May: <http://cslw.eu/>

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Fryske Akademy  
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