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*Digital and
business skills*
for an incubator
for freelance
entrepreneurship

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Project background

The Freelance Economy is a trend that is gaining increasing importance in the world of work and business enabled by new technologies and social change. The term 'freelance' dates back to the 1800s and, as is often the case, derives from the name given to mercenary soldiers in military jargon. Although people have been talking about freelancing in the business world since the 1970s, it is only in the last two decades that the phenomenon has taken on major proportions, thanks to the rapidly growing potential of the Internet and of the advantages that companies gain from working with 'on-demand talent'.

The 2008 financial crisis marked the introduction of this new type of 'service provider' onto the market. The pandemic of the Corona Virus and the subsequent Big Quit phenomenon has turned or will turn many employees into freelancers. While digital professions have, since their inception, found their natural outlet in the formula of freelance work, it is true that there is an emerging trend whereby freelancers are being created in every field of service, whether craft or intellectual. The number of freelancers is growing steadily in Europe and worldwide, but neither the policies to support and protect the category nor the training opportunities aimed at increasing not only their number but also their quality in terms of entrepreneurial skills are growing at the same rate.

DIGIfreelancer is a two-year EU project financed under the ERASMUS + program. Our goal is to develop a model of virtual incubator, strengthening the freelancers in order to:

- decrease their "mortality rate"
- improve the overall income of the category
- reduce "undeclared work" in favour of more stable and well-paid jobs
- promote a work style that provides a better work-life balance
- reduce the dissatisfaction rate of workers, who would be engaged in a job that they are passionate about and allows them to use their talents



The project aims to carry out:

- A nationwide and European-wide survey of freelance services containing all the information to guide the future development of the project.
- A methodology for VET trainers for coaching freelancers in the form of a handbook. The handbook will provide an accurate picture of the training methodology to be adopted in order to build a solid and sustainable freelance economy. This will lead to the creation of a model that combines the wishes of the self-employed with opportunities for their entrepreneurial growth, which until now have not been taken into account.
- a platform acting as a virtual incubator for freelance business and aspiring freelancers. Within the incubator there will be statistical data, research, content for training and self-training, curriculum for freelancers and "practices" on which "ancillary" services are necessary or optional for freelance business and localized information on how to find them in one's own territory as well as tricks and secrets to simplify life and business.

