Go-Digital: promoting employment in the digital sector by female learners

Have you ever thought of changing your career and considered working in the digital sector? What were your motives and what challenges you faced?

EU study "Women in Digital Age" (2016) shows that women are under-represented in the digital sector as women represent only 21.5% of all workers.

According to the Commission's 2020 Women in Digital (WiD) Scoreboard, only 18% of ICT specialists are women and the gender gap is present in all 12 indicators measured.

The importance of jobs in the digital sector is increasing in the EU during the last years; however, women are afraid to choose jobs in the digital sector. Some of the reasons why women are not taking training to enter employment in the digital sector are defined as a lack of inspiration and role models.

The project "Go-Digital: Increasing adult educators' competencies to encourage female employment in the digital sector of the labour market" seeks to promote gender equality in the access to learning and use of employment in the digital sector by female learners.

The main aim of this project is motivating disadvantaged women to get employment in the digital sector.

The lack of role models is one of many different barriers standing in the way of women's access to participation in re/training programs helping them to find a job in the digital sector. The project Go-Digital presents 20 inspiring success stories of women requalification to work in the digital sector. In these stories from 5 European countries (Lithuania, Cyprus, Poland, Romania and Spain) women share their current situation, way to the digital sector from different fields and how they benefit from that.

In project website (https://godigital.lmlo.lt/) you can read about the motives of different women to choose the career in the sector, challenges faced and results reached. At the same time the advice of successful women based on their experience, efforts taken and decisions made motivates other women:

• to learn: "Never stop learning, exploring, expanding to your higher self. Each of us can be landscapers of our careers";

• to overcome challenges: "Take a risk for yourself and for the greater good"; "No matter what

you end up studying/qualifying, you can shift to another sector. Yes, it might be challenging but nothing is set in stone. Be open to ANY opportunity that rises";

- <u>to take new opportunities</u>: "Grab any opportunity!"; "There is always time for change!"; "Never settle with less than you know you can achieve. If you are not happy about your career, make a change now. Start somewhere, learn a new skill, sing up for a training. It's never too late to find your way, especially on the digital job market";

- <u>to be inspired:</u> "Go ahead, don't be afraid, it will help you trust yourself more, open your mind, learn new skills and help you leap in your career too. You can do it too!"; "If you really want to do it, you can. It is never too late to learn and get training, opportunities appear where you least expect them"; "The world belongs to brave people"; "Try everything and find something for yourself. Become an expert in your field".

And it is very important to "Don't doubt your abilities based on gender! If women would understand that being a programmer is not harder than many jobs that they do already, they could also enjoy the benefits and financial freedom that working in the IT sector provides. So I would like to say to all girls and women - give it a chance"; "We achieve our goals by doing".

These and other advice and stories from women working now as designers, bloggers, digital project managers, computer support technicians, developers, etc. you can find on our website.

The project as well aims at developing adult educators' competences in motivating disadvantaged women to take part in learning towards employment in the digital sector of the labour market. In the project website, you can find the Curriculum of the training program for adult educators "Coaching for female employment in the digital sector in order to promote gender equality in the labour market".

The project Go-Digital seeks to contribute to the implementation of EU strategy through education. The project also contributes to achieving Europe 2020 benchmarks: to increase the employment rate by 75%; to raise the participation of adults in lifelong learning by 15%.