RALExILA

RALExILA

The Essential Guide to ALE National Registries

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EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF ADULTS

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1. Introduction

1.1. OVERVIEW OF THE HANDBOOK'S PURPOSE

This Handbook aims to be the ultimate guide to develop national registries of adult education opportunities and Individual Learning Accounts platforms that are accessible and interoperable, within and across European Member States.

This Handbook serves as a practical and conceptual guide for policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders engaged in the co-design, implementation, and management of such systems.

The Handbook is composed of four main parts.

- Part 1 - General principles for ALE ecosystems and ILA as an instrument and related tools (ALE registries and ILA platforms)
- Part 2 - Design and technical aspects of ALE registries and ILA platforms
- Part 3 – A playbook to support the whole co-designing process for ALE registries and ILA platforms in a specific country
- Annexes – The full set of tools used to implement the RALExILA co-design process across research, development, and piloting phases

These guidelines address as primary users and stakeholders the following organisations.

- National and regional authorities, including representatives from department and agencies and services for employment, education, quality assurance and information systems.
- ALE providers and networks of any type, including formal education organisations (VET, HE), non-formal education organisations, community-based learning organisations, public and private sector organisations.
- Learners from all areas and demographics (adults).
- Experts from national and international organisations and institutions, such as European Commission, CEDEFOP, EQF working group, Europass and EDC, academia, and private sector.

Part 1 of the RALExILA Handbook establishes the foundation for understanding how quality and governance shape Adult Learning and Education (ALE) systems across Europe.

Part 2 provides practical implementation guidance for designing and deploying Adult Learning and Education (ALE) registries and their integration with Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs). It translates the RALExILA System Model into actionable guidance for policymakers, system owners, and technical teams, while deliberately avoiding prescriptive technical or architectural solutions.

Finally, Part 3 provides a detailed guidelines to co-design ALE registries and ILA platforms, as per the approach and protocols developed and implemented within the RALExILA initiative. It serves the purpose to help to re-run the co-design process, based the materials provided in this Handbook.

1.2. WHAT ARE ALE REGISTRIES AND ILA PLATFORMS?

This Handbook emerges in response to the growing recognition of the pivotal role ALE registries and ILA-like instruments play in fostering lifelong learning, improving workforce adaptability, and addressing societal challenges such as digitalization and demographic shifts. While ALE registries provide essential frameworks for tracking participation, outcomes, and quality assurance, ILAs offer mechanisms for empowering individuals to make informed and autonomous learning decisions. Together, these instruments contribute to the European Union's strategic objectives for inclusive education and upskilling.

1.2.1 What is an ALE registry?

An ALE registry is a system or platform that collects, organises, and makes accessible information about learning opportunities for adults. It is designed to help adults find relevant courses, programmes, and resources to improve their skills, knowledge, and qualifications.

1.2.2 What is an ILA platform?

Online platform with features to manage funding or credit (allocate and use) and personal accounts with information on programmes and achievements, through public, private or hybrid funding

1.2.3 Why are they important?

In summary, ALE registries and ILA platforms constitute foundational instruments to support inclusive and accessible lifelong learning ecosystems in Europe.
They are central tools of information and functionalities that connect learners, providers, and policymakers, also addressing core challenges related to accessibility, quality, and alignment of learning opportunities with individual and societal needs.

ALE registries functions

- Enhance accessibility to learning opportunities (user friendly, multilingual, centralized, easy navigation)
- Supporting quality of information and data (quality and consistency of information, usefulness, and relevance of information, updated and accurate records, data on participation and impact)
- Support inclusivity and equity in education (accessible, tailored, inclusivity by design)
- Data-driven decision making (participation, programme, outcomes, demographics)

- Contribute to the sustainability of lifelong learning (overview of opportunities and resources, gaps and overlaps, investment)

ILA platforms functions

- Enhance efficiency, flexibility, and accessibility to funding and to learning opportunities
- Offer targeted support to individuals with a centralized one stop shop for discovering opportunities (ALE registries) and individual funding management
- Allow transparent and accurate information on quality, eligibility, fund allocations
- Collect feedback from learners (diverse modality, with quantitative and qualitative methods)
- Data-driven decision making (participation, programmes outcomes, financial investment, topics)

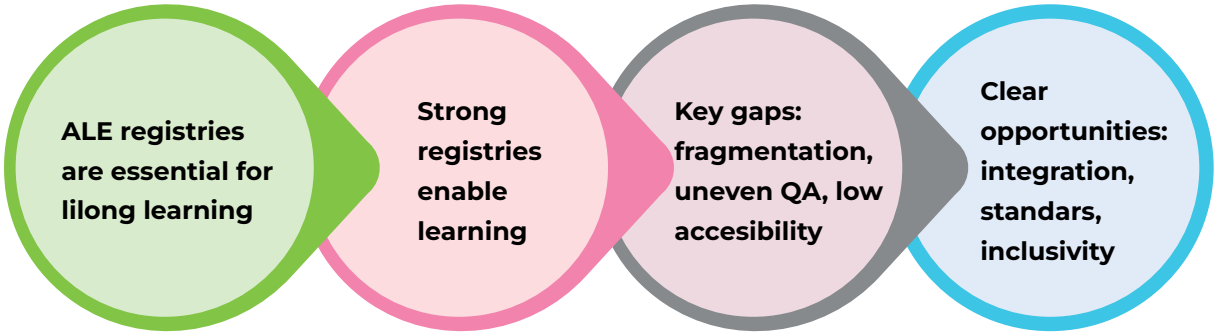

Figure 1 – Main functions and benefits for ALE registries

1.3. WHAT IS RALEXILA?

RALExiLA is an initiative co-funded by the European Union born to develop a model for national registries for adult education to support the implementation of individual learning accounts in European countries.

The RALExILA approach proposes a foundational model that is scalable at national level across Europe, promoting knowledge exchange among countries and stakeholders. The model includes two main components: the registry of adult education learning opportunities (ALE registry) and the individual learning account platform features (ILA platform).
This model has the potential to be one of core components of the foundational digital ecosystem to support the Union of Skills and similar forward-looking vision.
In fact, an ALE registry and ILA platform develop according to this approach can:

- Serve as a reliable tool for monitoring participation, supporting planning, and reducing duplication in the currently fragmented ALE system.
- Provide data for future forecasting tools and instruments.

- Support system governance by offering system analysis, benchmarking of learning outcomes, and data on skills gaps and labour market alignment.
- Support financial management through monitoring and oversight of fund allocation and financial transactions.

1.4. HOW WAS THE RALEXILA MODEL DEVELOPED?

The RALExILA co-design approach and its system model were developed through an almost two years long design thinking process.

In the first phase, the multi-country research explored the implementation and effectiveness of ALE registries and ILAs across ten European countries. The study focused on four core countries, Croatia, Slovakia, Cyprus, and Malta, and extended its analysis to six additional countries: Finland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, and France. These countries were strategically selected to ensure a balanced representation of diverse contexts, encompassing geographical regions, levels of digital and ALE maturity, and varying policy approaches.

To ensure the model is user-centred and applicable, in the second phase, four dedicated co-design workshops, enabled a collaborative exploration of stakeholders' needs, system functionality, and implementation pathways. Through iterative, collaborative problem-solving, these workshops helped shape a model that responds directly to the needs of learners, training providers, and policymakers.

This part of the co-design process followed four key stages: understanding challenges and defining problem statements, defining user groups and personas, creating user stories, mapping use cases, and developing system capabilities and functionalities.

Finally, in the last phase, another set of co-design workshops were conducted in the four main countries, to evaluate and refine the system model with stakeholders.

The core results of the initial research are also available in the report ''Building ALE National Registries in Europe – Frameworks, insights and needs for supporting individual learning accounts''.[1]

[1] Gołębiowska, A., Mršić, L., Pavić, S., Pinzi, V., Pelucco, G., Steinkampf, L., Jahnke, S., Poličnik, J., Aristidou, X., & Šilhár, K. (2024). ''Building ALE National Registries in Europe – Frameworks, insights and needs for supporting individual learning accounts. Algebra University. http://ralexila.eu/wp-content/uploads/sites/91/2025/05/Ralexila_Del-2.1_FIN_EN.pdf

2 .Part 1 – The building blocks: Governance and quality assurance in ALE systems

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Part 1 of the RALExILA Handbook establishes the foundation for understanding how quality and governance shape Adult Learning and Education (ALE) systems across Europe. Quality assurance (QA) provides the trust and transparency on which all effective lifelong learning systems depend. It ensures that learning opportunities remain relevant, reliable, and accessible in a context where technologies, skills requirements, and user expectations are continually evolving. Today, QA is not only about meeting standards; it also supports innovation, inclusion, and the transition towards more digital, user-centred learning environments.

At the same time, no ALE system can function without clear and coherent governance. Governance defines how responsibilities are allocated, how decisions are made, and how different actors – ministries, agencies, providers, employers, and learners – collaborate. ALE depends on cooperation across many levels, so transparent and well-structured governance is essential to keep systems adaptable, equitable, and aligned with social and economic needs.

Together, QA and governance create the framework within which ALE registries and Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs) can operate effectively. They determine how information is managed, how quality is assured, and how learners are supported in navigating diverse learning pathways.

The three chapters in this part examine these foundations in depth:

- The principles that define quality and their application across ALE registries and ILAs,
- Governance models and the roles of the different actors involved, and
- the current landscape of European ALE registries and ILA platforms, illustrating how these elements are implemented in practice.

This part provides the conceptual and practical basis for the development-oriented guidance presented in Part 2.

2.2. CHAPTER 1 - CONTEXTUALISING QUALITY ASSURANCE IN ALE REGISTRIES

This chapter explores how QA principles can be effectively applied within ALE registries and Individual Learning Account (ILA) platforms, where quality is both a foundation and an ongoing process.

These tools – ALE registries that make learning visible and ILA platforms that make it affordable – depend on robust and transparent quality systems to function as trusted public assets.

This chapter provides a structured overview of how QA operates across ALE systems and their digital extensions. It progresses from principles to practice, from challenges to opportunities, and from current achievements to potential future models.

As ALE systems become more digital, quality assurance must also evolve. ALE registries and ILA platforms are not merely databases; they are dynamic systems that connect learners, providers, and policymakers through data, transparency, and trust.

> ***Quality assurance gives these systems credibility, coherence, and a human focus, ensuring that learning opportunities are visible, meaningful, and fair.***

2.2.1 General principles of QA in ALE and ILA system

2.2.1.1 Why quality assurance matters?

> ***Quality in adult learning is not a static standard; it is a dynamic process that builds trust, transparency, and inclusion.***

QA in ALE is a cornerstone of trust, transparency, and improvement. It ensures that learning opportunities respond to the needs of individuals, employers and society while maintaining high standards of accessibility, inclusivity, and relevance.

In modern lifelong learning ecosystems, QA operates across multiple layers. It encompasses not only the quality of individual programmes and the performance of providers, registries, and digital learning platforms, but also the work of adult learning professionals who function at different levels of the system. In many countries, these professionals are not formally part of provider structures, yet they play a central role in supporting relevance, guidance, and learner engagement. Together, these layers form the structure that connects ALE systems, ALE registries, ILAs, and ILA platforms into a coherent, reliable, and learner-focused ecosystem.

QA is not only about control or compliance. It is about creating a culture of continuous improvement, where data, user feedback, and collaboration drive better outcomes for learners and stronger alignment with labour market and social priorities.

In practice

A registry displaying accreditation labels and learner ratings enables transparency and trust, two pillars of quality assurance in adult learning.

2.2.1.2 Core Principles of Quality Assurance

Effective QA in ALE and ILAs is based on a few universal principles. Together, these form the foundation for trustworthy, transparent, and inclusive lifelong learning.

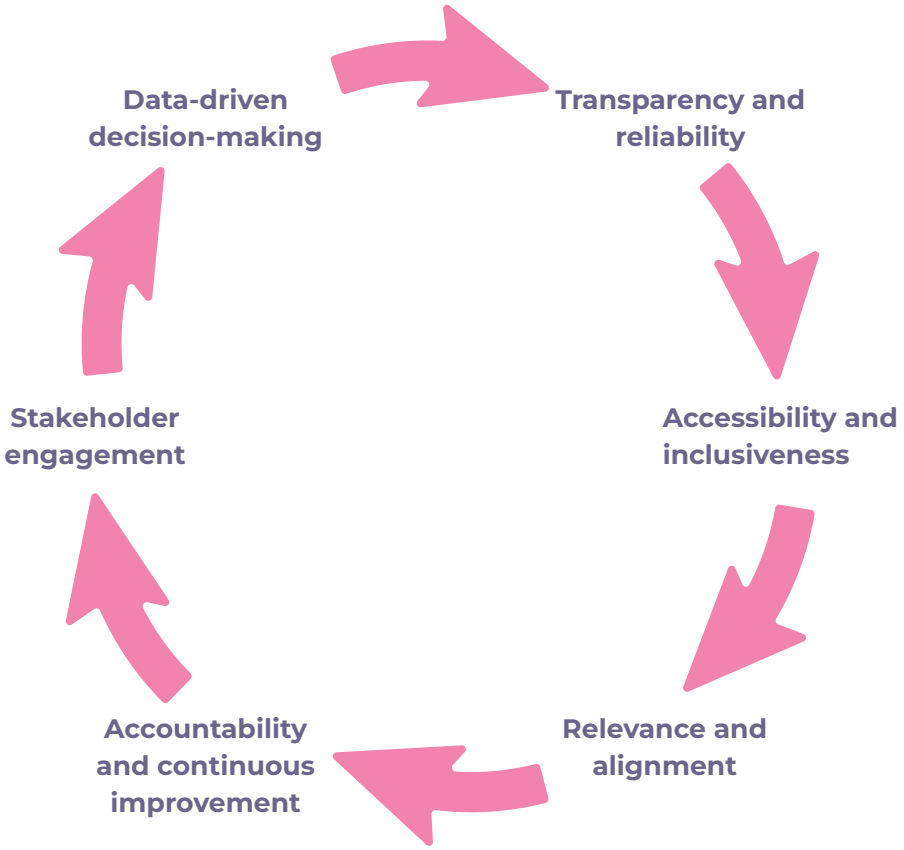

Figure 2 - The QA Principles

Transparency and reliability

Purpose: To help learners make informed choices and build trust among providers, policymakers, and the public.

- ALE registries and ILA platforms should display clear, verified and regularly updated information on programmes and providers.
- Accreditation labels, data on outcomes and provider descriptions make systems credible and comparable.
- Transparency acts as a “quality filter” – learners can see which programmes meet agreed standards.

Accessibility and inclusiveness

Purpose: To ensure that everyone can participate in lifelong learning, regardless of background or ability.

- QA systems must guarantee fair, open, and barrier-free access to learning.
- ALE registries should be multilingual, mobile-friendly, and accessible to people with disabilities or low digital literacy.
- Inclusive design also means targeted outreach, such as support for rural learners, migrants, or older adults.

Relevance and alignment

Purpose: To connect education with real labour market needs and broader policy goals.

- A QA framework should ensure that learning opportunities correspond to current and future skills demand.
- ALE registries and ILA platforms can use labour market data to guide learners towards sectors with strong growth potential.
- National systems should align with EU priorities for the digital and green transitions.
- Maintaining high-quality, regularly updated skills taxonomies or ontologies is essential – even without a highly granular structure – to ensure that courses, registries, and guidance tools remain aligned with evolving occupations and skill needs.

Accountability and continuous improvement

Purpose: To ensure all actors understand their roles and use feedback for continuous improvement.

- QA systems must clearly define the responsibilities of providers, ALE registries, and policymakers.
- Regular evaluation, learner feedback, and transparent reporting ensure accountability. Feedback should come not only from learners, but also from employers and other users of ALE services
- Data analytics should inform improvement cycles, enabling institutions to respond to change promptly and effectively.

Stakeholder engagement

Purpose: To ensure QA systems remain relevant, trusted, and grounded in real needs.

- Learners, providers, employers, and policymakers should all have formal roles in governance, evaluation, and feedback.
- Multi-stakeholder structures help identify gaps early and maintain shared ownership.
- Engagement should be continuous, not limited to consultations or reviews; it also includes keeping the database and digital tools accurate, up to date, and responsive to user needs.

Data-driven decision-making

Purpose: To use data and evidence as the basis for improvement and accountability.

- ALE registries and ILA platforms should collect and analyse participation, satisfaction, and outcomes in real time.
- Data insights can inform course design, provider support and policy decisions.
- Transparent publication of data strengthens public trust and enables benchmarking across systems.

Each principle reinforces the others, ensuring that ALE and ILA systems are coherent, inclusive, and trusted.

2.2.2 From Principles to Standards

QA in ALE cannot rely on a single, universal model. Each country has its own combination of governance structures, learning traditions, and policy priorities. However, international frameworks such as ISO 21001, ISO 29990, ISO 29993, and EQAVET provide a valuable foundation for building coherent and transparent systems.

These standards help align ALE with broader education and training frameworks, ensuring that quality is maintained not only within national borders but also recognised across Europe. They promote consistency in how providers design, deliver, and evaluate learning, while allowing flexibility for local adaptation.

Adopting elements from international standards can therefore strengthen trust in ALE and ILA systems, giving learners confidence that what they access is credible, accountable, and comparable.

Several European and international frameworks provide guidance for implementing QA in ALE and ILA systems.

Framework	Focus Area	Key Relevance
ISO 21001	Management systems for educational organisations	Institutional accountability and learner focus
ISO 29990	Learning services for non-formal education	Non-formal provider standards
ISO 29993	Learning services outside formal education	Transparency and learning outcomes
EQAVET	Vocational education and training	Cross-border comparability and EU alignment

Table 1- Key QA Frameworks Relevant to ALE and ILA

Key Policy insight
Combining international standards with national frameworks provides flexibility while maintaining coherence and recognition across borders.

2.2.3 Who Ensures Quality and How?

QA in ALE and ILA systems operates across several interconnected levels. Each level has its own mechanisms and actors, but together they form a single ecosystem linking local learning experiences with national and European policy goals.

In many countries, this also includes using broader monitoring tools, such as balanced scorecard approaches, and regularly reviewing skills taxonomies to ensure that non-formal learning remains aligned with labour market and societal needs.

Level	Main focus	Examples of QA mechanisms
Programme level	Quality and relevance of courses, learning outcomes, and teaching methods	Accreditation, learner feedback, curriculum reviews, and review of learning outcomes against updated skills taxonomies
Provider level	Institutional capacity and compliance with standards	External audits, self-assessment, certification; balanced scorecard components such as customer perspective, process efficiency, and learning innovation
ALE Registry level	Quality of data, functionality, and trustworthiness of information	Data validation, system updates, user satisfaction monitoring; periodic review of the taxonomy and metadata used to classify skills and programmes
ILA level	Financial transparency, quality of funded programmes, and user guidance	Eligibility rules, performance indicators, reporting on outcomes; balanced scorecard-style dashboards integrating quality, uptake, completion, and user experience

Table 2 - Levels of QA Responsibility

2.2.3.1 Actors in QA Governance

Providers → conduct internal quality reviews and ensure compliance with national standards.

QA Agencies → conduct accreditation, audits, and external evaluations.

Ministries → coordinate policy, oversee funding, and ensure system coherence.

Learners & Employers → contribute feedback that shapes relevance and improvement.

EU and international bodies → offer frameworks and comparability tools such as EQAVET or ISO standards.

> *Collaborative governance ensures that QA is not only a control mechanism but also a shared responsibility.*

2.2.3.2 Building Effective Collaboration

Quality improves where dialogue is continuous. Systems that actively link feedback from learners to policymaking and funding decisions achieve greater responsiveness and credibility.

Practical steps for alignment

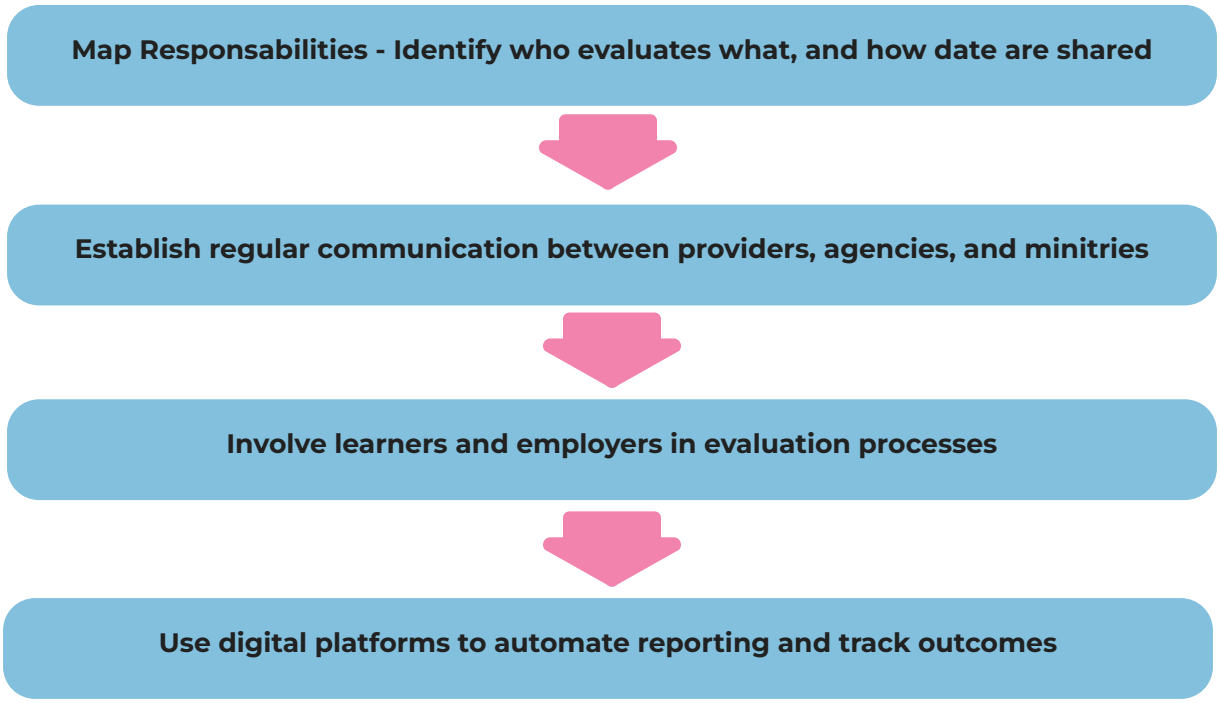

Figure 3 - Steps to build effective collaboration

> *Quality arises from dialogue among those who teach, those who learn, and those who govern.*

Tip for Implementation

Before establishing new QA mechanisms, create a simple responsibility map. Clarify:

- Who monitors quality?
- How often is feedback collected?
- Where are results published or shared?

Transparent governance reduces duplication, strengthens trust, and helps maintain a culture of continuous improvement.

2.2.4 Building a Quality Culture

2.2.4.1 From Compliance to Culture

QA in ALE and ILA systems is not merely a matter of rules or formal checks. A genuine quality culture requires everyone involved – from providers and ALE registries to learners and policymakers – to regard improvement as a shared, ongoing responsibility.

2.2.4.2 Embedding quality in daily practice

Effective QA begins within institutions, not outside them. It develops through daily routines, reflection, and shared standards.

- **Leadership is important.** Management must communicate that quality is a continuous learning process, not merely an audit exercise.
- **Staff development is essential.** Teachers, coordinators, and administrators should have access to quality assurance training, peer review, and mentoring.
- **Feedback loops support improvement.** Learners' experiences and employer insights must regularly inform internal reviews.

> ***When QA becomes part of the workflow, it builds trust and motivation and narrows the gap between policy design and classroom reality.***

2.2.4.3 Making inclusivity and transparency part of quality

Inclusivity and transparency are not add-ons to quality; they define it.

- Inclusive QA ensures that learning opportunities reflect diverse learner needs.
- Transparent reporting strengthens accountability and public confidence.
- Openly sharing evaluation results helps both providers and learners understand where progress is being made.

Embedding these dimensions at all levels of ALE and ILA systems makes QA a driver of equality and innovation.

> ***Effective QA links the learner's experience to institutional accountability, transforming information into improvement.***

2.2.5 Quality assurance and technological maturity

Digital transformation is reshaping how quality is monitored, evaluated, and communicated in ALE systems. The digital maturity of ALE registries and ILA platforms determines whether QA functions as a repository of information or as an interactive, data-driven ecosystem that learns and improves in real time.

2.2.5.1 From static lists to smart ecosystems

Digital registries progress through three main stages of maturity. Each stage presents new opportunities to apply QA principles, including transparency, data reliability, user engagement, and feedback integration.

Registry type	Main characteristics
Basic	Provides lists of accredited providers and available learning opportunities. Updates are often manual, with limited interactivity or integration.
Intermediate	Includes accreditation data, learning outcomes and online application features. Data are updated regularly, allowing users to interact with providers.
Advanced	Integrates real-time analytics, digital credentials, and links to labour market data. Supports automated quality monitoring, personalised guidance features, and richer descriptions of learning outcomes aligned with skills demand. Formal validation of prior learning may be supported but remains a specialised and optional function.

Table 3 - Digital maturity of registries and ILA platforms

2.2.5.2 How digital maturity supports quality

Each level of digital sophistication introduces new quality functions:

- **Transparency and trust:** verified, public data reduce information gaps and ensure reliability.
- **Continuous monitoring:** automated analytics detect quality issues and performance trends.
- **User engagement:** feedback tools enable learners to rate courses and providers, supporting improvement cycles.
- **Evidence-based policy:** data dashboards assist ministries and QA agencies in aligning programmes with labour market needs.
- **Recognition and mobility:** digital credentials and open data facilitate cross-border recognition and learner portability.

Figure 4 - Digital Maturity Ladder

2.2.6 Integrating ILAs and QA mechanisms

ILAs play an active role in promoting quality within lifelong learning systems. Their structure links public investment directly to accredited, high-quality training opportunities.

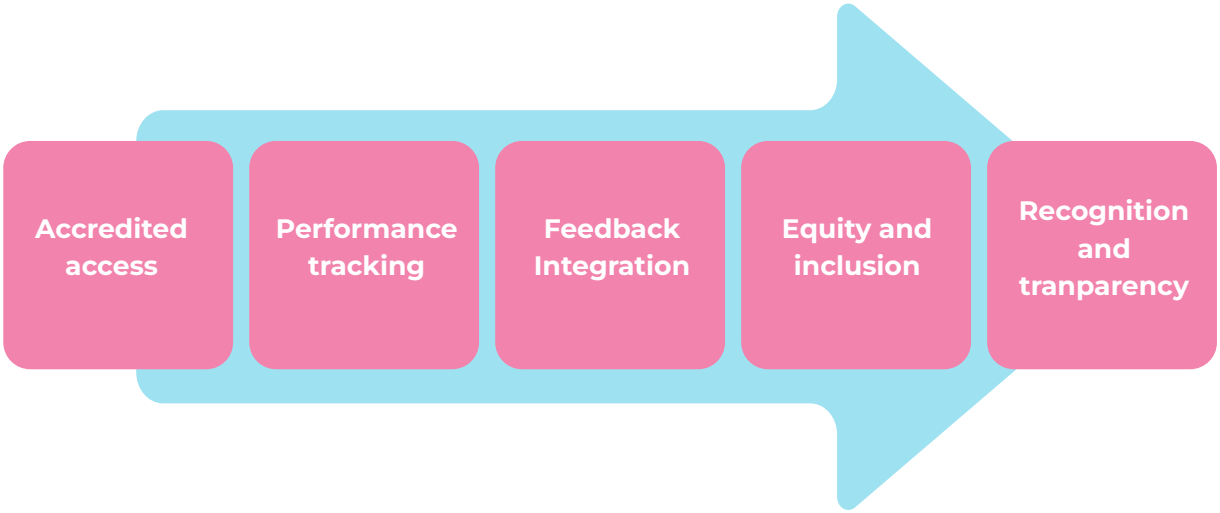

Figure 5 - QA enhancement by ILA

How ILAs reinforce QA

- **Accredited access –** learners may use funds only for approved programmes that meet defined quality criteria.
- **Performance tracking –** ILA data capture participation, completion rates and employment outcomes.
- **Feedback integration –** users' experiences feed directly into continuous improvement processes.
- **Equity and inclusion –** ILA funding reduces financial barriers, particularly for low-skilled and unemployed individuals.
- **Recognition and transparency -** by linking funding rules with ALE registries, ILAs can support clearer documentation of learning outcomes in non-formal pathways. In systems where validation processes exist, ILAs can facilitate access to these, but this remains an optional, desirable feature rather than a core function.

Quality assurance readiness checklist

- Is there a transparent mechanism for provider and programme accreditation?
- Does the system integrate both formal and non-formal learning pathways?
- Is the registry user-friendly, multilingual, and accessible to all?
- Are data regularly updated and used to inform improvement?
- Are learners and stakeholders involved in feedback processes?
- Are inclusivity and equity incorporated into QA criteria?
- Are financial and performance aspects of ILAs monitored and reported?

Summary tip

QA in ALE and ILA systems is not a single policy instrument but a dynamic ecosystem. It connects learning quality, institutional responsibility, digital innovation, and user empowerment. The key to success lies in collaboration, data transparency, and continuous improvement.

2.2.7 Challenges and good practices for QA

Quality assurance is the backbone of credible lifelong learning systems.

QA ensures that opportunities provided to adult learners are relevant, transparent, and responsive to social and labour market needs. While the underlying principles are well established across Europe, their implementation varies widely between countries.

This section summarises current challenges, opportunities, and good practices identified across Europe.

Based on cross-country analysis, this chapter identifies key challenges, opportunities, and good practices organised around four interlinked pillars:

- **ALE systems –** policy and provision
- **ALE registries –** infrastructure for transparency and access
- **ILAs as instruments –** funding and motivation mechanisms
- **ILA platforms –** digital environments supporting quality, accessibility, and monitoring

Figure 6 - Quality ecosystem in ALE

These four dimensions together constitute the ecosystem of quality in adult learning.

2.2.7.1 QA in ALE Systems – Building coherence and trust

Robust QA frameworks in ALE foster public trust and ensure that investments in lifelong learning yield meaningful outcomes. They balance flexibility with accountability, enabling providers to innovate while adhering to consistent standards.

Figure 7 - The QA in ALE

Key challenges for QA in ALE

1. **Fragmented governance and lack of coherence:** ALE often involves multiple ministries or agencies, resulting in duplication or inconsistent accreditation rules.
2. **Diversity of providers and uneven quality:** ALE includes universities, community centres, NGOs, companies, and online platforms. Although diversity increases access, it complicates the implementation of uniform QA procedures.
3. **Limited inclusivity:** Marginalised groups, such as low-skilled workers and migrants, often face barriers to access, guidance, or recognition.
4. **Insufficient funding and staff capacity:** Small, non-formal providers may lack the expertise or resources to implement systematic QA.

Key opportunities for QA in ALE

- **Integrated frameworks** that connect ALE with vocational education and training (VET), employment policy, and regional development.
- **Participatory QA** involving learners, employers, and educators in assessment and planning.
- **Continuous feedback mechanisms** using surveys, focus groups or, digital tools to capture learner satisfaction and social impact.

Key policy insight

Countries that treat inclusivity as a measure of quality, rather than as a separate goal, achieve more resilient and equitable ALE systems.

2.2.7.2 QA in ALE Registries – Linking information with credibility

ALE registries enable adult learners, employers, and policymakers to identify credible learning opportunities. An effective registry links transparency with quality by listing only verified providers and programmes.

Key Challenges for QA in ALE registries

- **Fragmented or outdated data:** Many ALE registries rely on manual updates and lack consistent data structures.
- **Limited QA integration:** Some ALE registries list programmes without verifying their quality.
- **Lack of interoperability:** ALE registries are rarely connected to qualification frameworks, ILAs, or employment data.

Key opportunities for QA in ALE registries

- **Centralised or hybrid models** combine national oversight with regional adaptability.
- **Integration with QA frameworks:** ALE registries should automatically link to accreditation and evaluation systems.
- **Data analytics** are used to monitor quality trends.

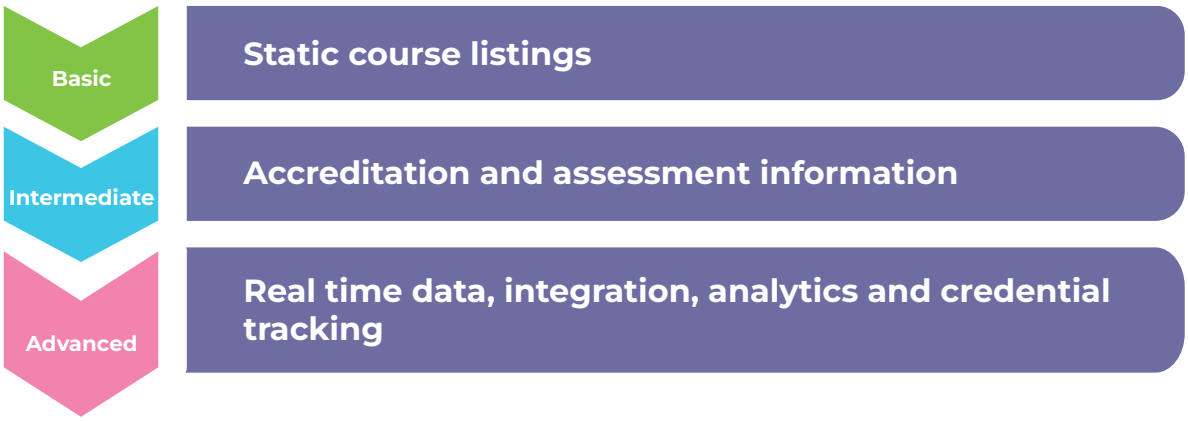

Figure 8 - QA in ALE Registries

Key policy insight

Advanced ALE registries inform learners and generate evidence for national policy and funding priorities.

2.2.7.3 QA in ILAs – Quality through funding and accountability

ILAs link quality and funding. By allocating resources to learners for use on approved courses, they introduce accountability and create incentives for providers to maintain standards.

Key Challenges for QA in ILA

- **Ensuring that public funds are allocated only to accredited**, high-quality learning opportunities.
- **Balancing learner choice** with quality assurance.
- **Avoiding the exclusion of innovative non-formal providers** that lack formal accreditation.

Key Opportunities for QA in ILA

- **QA-linked eligibility:** Programmes must meet specific quality standards to be eligible for ILAs.
- **Learner feedback integration:** ILAs can collect post-course feedback to inform future approval decisions.
- **Recognition of prior learning:** ILAs can fund validation of informal competences, enhancing inclusivity.

Figure 9 - Quality Assurance in ILAs

Key Policy insight

When funding follows quality, rather than the reverse, ILAs become a key mechanism for continuous improvement.

2.2.7.4 QA in ILA platforms – Technology as the quality enabler

Digital platforms are where QA principles meet practical implementation. They integrate access, funding, information, and feedback in one space, shaping the learner experience and trust in the system.

Key Challenges for QA in ILA platforms

- **Limited technological capacity** for real-time quality monitoring.
- **Concerns regarding data** security and privacy.
- **Digital inequality:** some adults struggle to use platforms or lack access to devices.

Key Opportunities for QA in ILA platforms

- **Real-time data and analytics:** ILA platforms can automatically monitor completion rates and satisfaction.
- **Integration with registries and labour data:** ILA platforms can display the labour market relevance of each course.
- **User-centred design:** Accessibility, multilingual interfaces, and inclusive navigation must be included in QA.

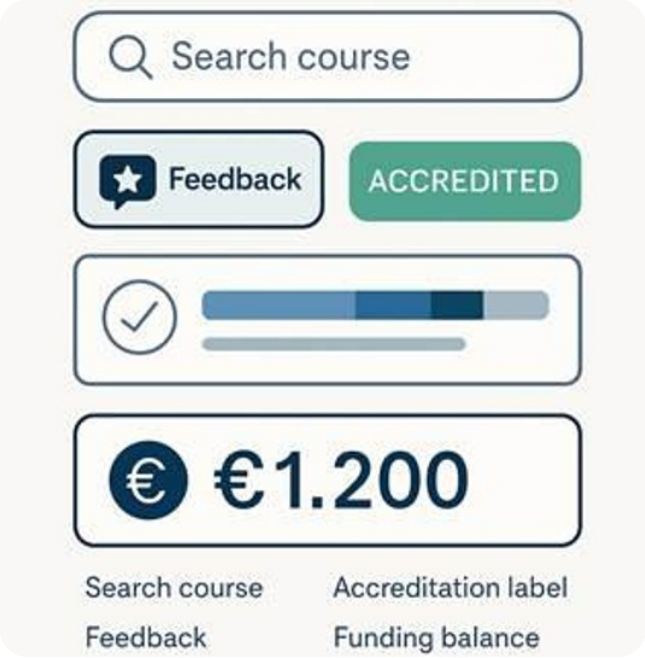

Figure 10 - Example of ILA platform

Key Policy insight

Digital platforms can transform QA from a static compliance process into a dynamic, data-driven cycle of improvement.

2.2.8 Towards an Integrated Quality Ecosystem

A resilient quality system connects policy, infrastructure, funding, and technology. Each pillar reinforces the others through shared standards and feedback.

2.2.8.1 Building a Connected Quality Ecosystem

QA in ALE and ILA systems should not function in isolation. Instead, it should form a coordinated ecosystem where:

- ALE systems define strategic quality frameworks;
- ALE registries ensure transparency and comparability;
- ILAs reinforce accountability through funding;
- ILA platforms enable data collection and learner engagement.

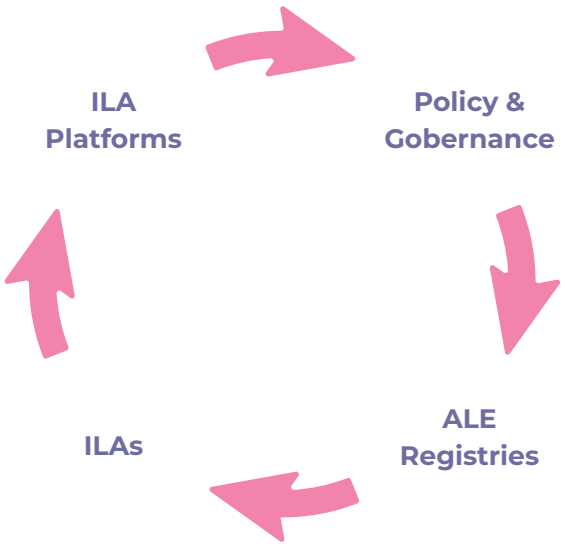

Figure 11 - Quality Ecosystem

2.2.8.2 Practical Recommendations

- Establish national QA frameworks connecting all four pillars.
- Apply ISO 21001, 29990 and 29993 as cross-sector quality references.
- Embed inclusivity and learner-centred design as mandatory quality criteria.
- Introduce feedback loops between learners, providers, and policymakers.
- Ensure interoperability of data systems between ALE registries and ILA platforms.
- Provide stable funding for QA implementation and staff development.

Quality in adult learning is not a control mechanism; it is a culture of transparency, inclusion, and continuous learning.

2.2.9 Maturity model for QA in ALE – A self-assessment checklist

QA in ALE systems develop gradually, progressing from basic compliance to a culture of continuous improvement.

ILA administrators and policy bodies assess their current position and identify steps to strengthen their approach. Here, ILA administrators refer to the public authorities or agencies responsible for managing ILA rules, eligibility, and funding flows, while policy bodies include ministries, national councils, or coordinating institutions that guide adult learning strategies. The model is not a certification tool but a guideline for reflection and planning. Each level shows how institutions can progress from meeting minimum requirements to achieving excellence through collaboration, innovation, and data-informed decision-making.

Level	Main Characteristics	Focus of Development
1. Foundational – Compliance	QA exists mainly to meet legal or administrative requirements. Processes are fragmented, reactive and limited to formal providers.	Establish minimum QA standards and clarify responsibilities. Build awareness of quality culture among staff.
2. Structured – Process-based	QA mechanisms are formalised. Providers follow standard procedures (e.g. audits, feedback surveys). Data collection begins but is not yet systematic.	Strengthen internal QA systems and introduce regular self-assessment. Begin linking QA data with registries.
3. Integrated – Data-driven	QA data is centralised and used for planning, funding, and improvement. ALE registries collect and share performance data. Learner feedback informs decision-making.	Use analytics for real-time monitoring. Integrate QA indicators into registry dashboards and ILA platforms.
4. Transformative – Learning Ecosystem	QA is embedded in a continuous learning culture across programmes, providers, and policy levels. Digital systems enable transparency, inclusion, and predictive analysis.	Sustain cross-sector collaboration. Apply AI and open data for proactive quality improvement. Embed inclusivity and lifelong learning values.

Table 4 - Four Levels of QA Maturity

2.2.9.1 Self-Assessment Questions

Use this short checklist to assess your current level of maturity.

For each question, rate your institution or system on a scale of 1–4 (1 = No/Not yet, 4 = Fully in place).

Area	Key Question	1	2	3	4
Strategy & governance	Do you have a defined QA policy that aligns with national or EU frameworks such as EQAVET or ISO 21001?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Processes & tools	Are QA procedures standardised and regularly reviewed?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Data & evidence	Do you use ALE registry or ILA data to inform decisions and monitor impact?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Learner engagement	Are learners and employers actively involved in quality feedback processes?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Inclusivity	Are under-represented groups considered in QA planning and monitoring?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Digital integration	Are digital tools (dashboards, analytics, feedback apps) used for QA and reporting?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Continuous improvement	Is there a clear process for acting on feedback and adjusting programmes?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Table 5 – QA maturity self-assessment

How to read the results

- **Mostly 1–2 →** Foundation stage – build structure and responsibility.
- **Mostly 3 →** Integration stage – focus on data and coordination.
- **Mostly 4 →** Transformative stage – sustain collaboration and innovation.

As systems mature, QA shifts from control to collaboration – from proving quality to improving quality.

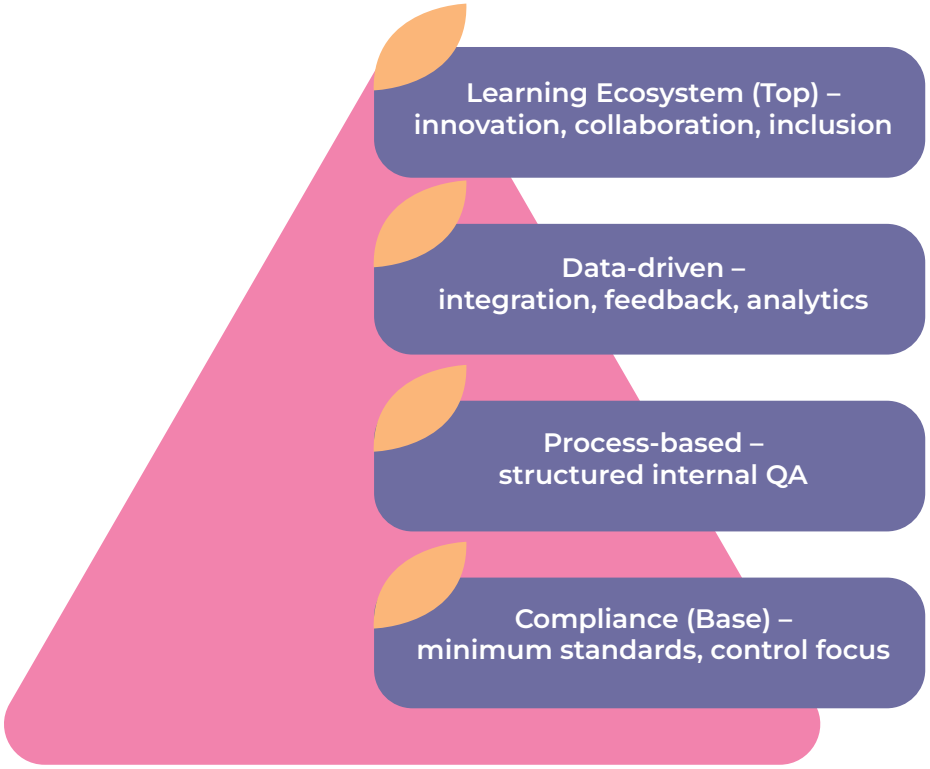

Figure 12 - Four Levels of QA Maturity

2.3. CHAPTER 2 – GOVERNANCE MODELS FOR ALE REGISTRIES AND ILAS

This chapter examines how governance frameworks shape the organisation and performance of ALE systems, ALE registries, Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs), and ILA platforms. It focuses on the relationships between policy, implementation, and stakeholder coordination, highlighting how governance affects quality, equity, and innovation in lifelong learning.

2.3.1 General principles of governance for ALE

Governance defines how ALE systems operate – who decides, who delivers, and who ensures that quality, transparency, and accountability are upheld.

Strong governance translates policies into practice. It aligns institutions, builds trust among stakeholders, and ensures that resources are used efficiently and equitably.

In the context of ALE, effective governance spans four interconnected dimensions: the ALE ecosystem, ALE registries, ILA instruments, and ILA digital platforms. Together, these form the operational backbone of lifelong learning systems.

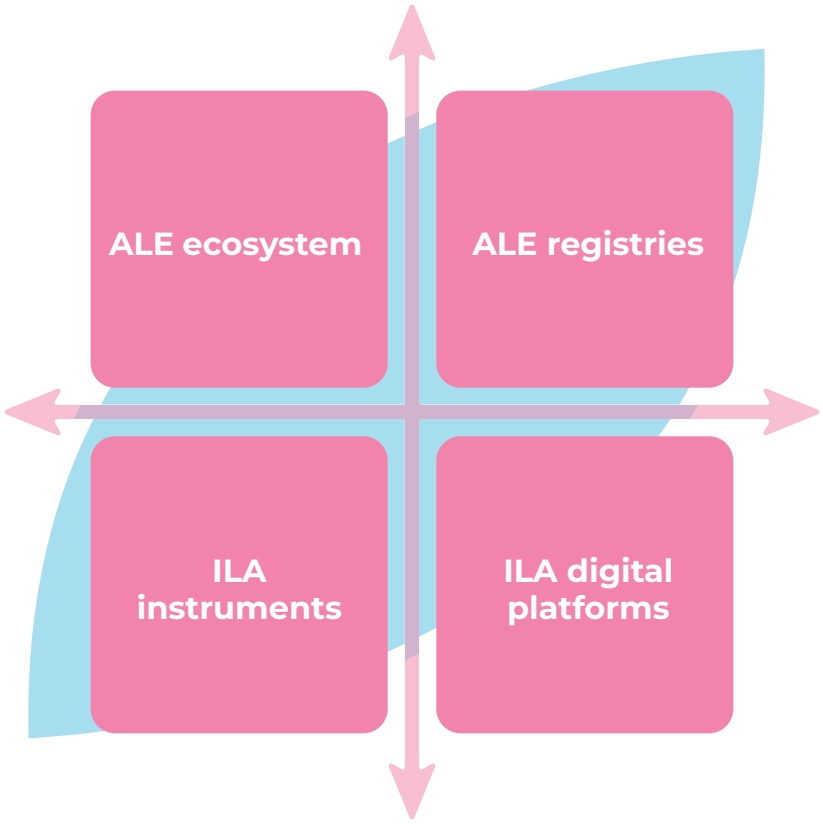

Figure 13 - Four Dimensions of Governance in ALE

2.3.1.1 Why governance matters?

Governance in ALE is not only an administrative structure; it is a mechanism that ensures coherence, fairness, and trust. It links national strategies with local implementation and translates principles such as transparency and inclusiveness into measurable actions. Good governance strengthens the efficiency and credibility of lifelong learning systems.

2.3.1.2 Core Governance Principles

The same foundational principles apply across all four dimensions of ALE. They determine how decisions are made, how responsibilities are distributed, and how quality is maintained.

Figure 14 - Principles of Effective Governance

Transparency

Transparency ensures that decision-making, resource allocation, and accreditation processes are visible and understandable to all involved. In transparent systems, learners, providers, and policymakers have access to the same reliable information.

In practice

- **ALE ecosystem:** Policies, funding mechanisms and performance indicators are publicly available.
- **ALE registries:** Accreditation and programme information are clearly displayed and regularly updated.
- **ILA instruments:** Eligibility criteria and financial balances are transparent and traceable.
- **ILA platforms:** Interfaces communicate data sources and update frequency.

Policy insight

Transparency fosters accountability and accountability sustains trust.

Accountability

Accountability establishes clear responsibilities at every level of governance. Each actor, from ministries to digital platform managers, must be answerable for the quality and outcomes of their work.

In practice

- **ALE ecosystem:** Ministries set standards and fund providers based on results.
- **ALE registries:** Operators verify data accuracy and remove outdated entries.
- **ILA instruments:** Funding is allocated to programmes that meet predefined quality benchmarks.
- **ILA platforms:** Systems log actions and publish periodic reports on usage and outcomes.

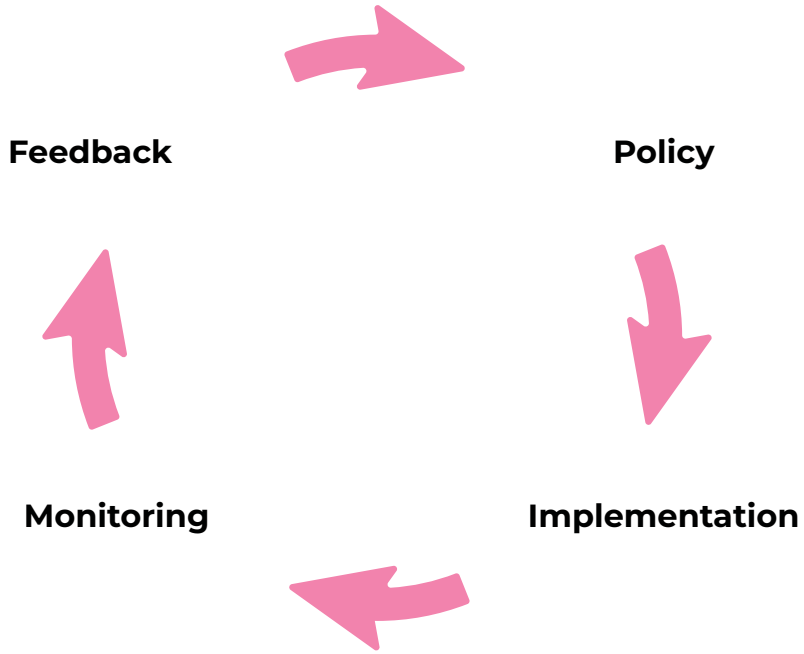

Figure 15 - Accountability Chain

Implementation tip

Begin by mapping governance responsibilities. Clarify who monitors each area, how frequently data are reviewed, and how results are shared.

Participation

Participation ensures that governance reflects actual needs. Stakeholders – learners, providers, employers, and civil society – contribute knowledge that makes ALE systems more relevant and adaptable.

The scope and form of participation vary widely: in smaller systems, it may operate through structured stakeholder councils, while in larger countries, it is often embedded in vertical governance chains, consultations, sector-specific advisory groups, or regional coordination bodies.

In practice

- **ALE ecosystem:** Stakeholder involvement may occur through national councils, regional working groups, or periodic consultations, depending on the governance structure. In large systems, vertical governance channels (national–regional–local) ensure that diverse needs are represented.
- **ALE registries:** User feedback and consultation with providers inform improvements to navigation, data structures, and accessibility. Some systems involve regional authorities or sectoral bodies in updating registry content.
- **ILA instruments:** Employer organisations, training bodies and, where relevant, learner representatives may contribute to defining eligible programmes or identifying priority areas. Their involvement may be formal, such as through advisory committees, or informal, such as through consultations or surveys.
- **ILA platforms:** Feedback tools, satisfaction surveys, and usage analytics enable users to influence platform design and service quality. In some models, platform governance includes periodic stakeholder review cycles

Policy insight

Systems designed with users are more trusted and more sustainable than those designed for them.

Inclusiveness

Inclusiveness ensures that governance is equitable and able to address the needs of all learners, especially those facing barriers related to geography, disability, age, migration background, or socio-economic status. In practice, inclusiveness depends not only on national policy choices but also, in many EU countries, on the role of regional governments, which design and implement significant parts of ALE provision.

In practice

ALE ecosystem

National strategies define overarching equity goals, but in countries with strong regional governance (e.g. Italy), regions play a key role in outreach, provision, and support for under-represented groups.

Coordination between national and regional levels ensures that inclusivity commitments are translated into operational practice.

ALE registries

ALE Registries demonstrate inclusivity through accessible design, such as multilingual content, clear navigation, and mobile compatibility.

In decentralised or federal systems, regional authorities may manage their own interfaces or contribute regional data, ensuring relevance for local populations.

ILA instruments

Funding rules often prioritise low-skilled, unemployed, or vulnerable learners, but implementation may vary by region depending on labour market conditions and local policy priorities.

Co-financing models sometimes involve regional authorities or sectoral bodies.

ILA platforms

Universal design principles ensure accessibility by incorporating assistive features for users with disabilities and providing support for learners with low digital literacy.

In multi-level governance systems, platforms must work consistently across regional contexts and integrate region-specific information where relevant.

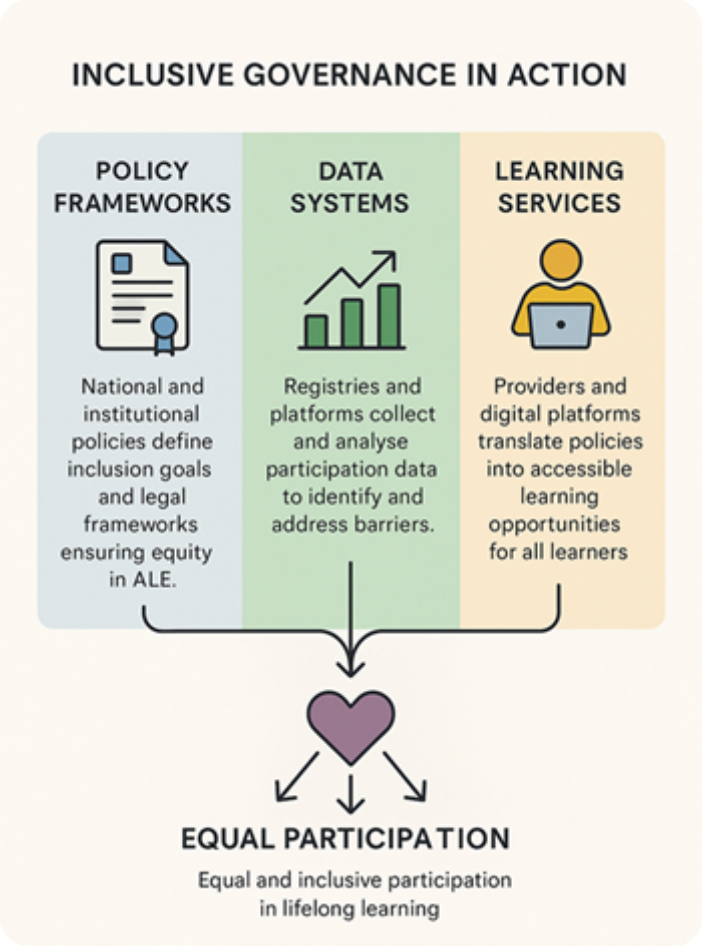

Figure 16 - Inclusive Governance in Action

Policy insight

Inclusiveness depends on both national vision and regional implementation capacity. Governance models that align these levels are better positioned to provide equitable access and consistent learner support across diverse regions.

Continuous Improvement

Governance in ALE must evolve continuously. Monitoring, evaluation, and feedback enable adaptation to new social, technological, and economic conditions.

In practice

- **ALE ecosystem:** Policies are revised following impact evaluations.
- **ALE registries:** Data analytics identify trends and gaps in provision.
- **ILA instruments:** Outcome tracking guides funding adjustments.
- **ILA platforms:** Regular user testing informs interface and content improvements.

Policy insight

Continuous improvement makes governance a learning process – responsive rather than reactive.

2.3.2 Governance Roles and Coordination

Effective governance in ALE depends on cooperation among multiple actors and levels, from ministries to individual learners. Good governance involves not only structure but also communication, accountability, and shared responsibility. When each actor understands its role, and when data and feedback circulate freely, systems become coherent and adaptive.

Governance is often visualised as a pyramid, but in practice it functions more like a network with constant feedback loops. Information moves upward from providers and learners, while decisions and guidance flow downward from ministries and agencies.

Quality, efficiency, and inclusiveness depend on how smoothly this exchange operates.

2.3.2.1 The Logic of Multi-Level Governance

ALE governance operates across six interconnected levels. Each level contributes to transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement. Good governance recognises that public responsibility extends beyond public institutions, supporting a diverse range of providers, including NGOs, community organisations, private training centres, and employer-led programmes.

Level	Main Role	Governance Function
Ministries and Central Authorities	Set strategic direction and allocate public resources, including funding for provision delivered by both public and non-public organisations.	Coordinate policy and legislation, integrate ALE into national learning strategies, and ensure coherence with EU framework
Quality Assurance Agencies	Define and monitor standards	Conduct accreditation, external evaluations, and system audits; ensure comparability and rigour across public, private, and non-formal sectors
Registry Operators	Manage data integrity and visibility	Verify provider status and programme information; ensure that ALE registries are reliable, interoperable, and open
ILA Administrators	Oversee funding, eligibility, and user guidance	Link financial mechanisms with quality criteria; track participation and outcomes and ensure compliance with QA rules
Providers	Deliver learning services	Maintain internal QA processes; collect learner and employer feedback, update data in registries, and report to funders
Learners and Employers	Act as end-users and evaluators	Provide feedback on relevance, quality, and outcomes; identify emerging skill needs and labour market changes.

Table 6 - Levels of Governance and Core Responsibilities

2.3.2.2 Coordination and Communication

Smooth coordination ensures that no level operates in isolation. While ministries create frameworks, the true quality of ALE emerges where policy meets practice through dialogue between learners, providers, and QA bodies.

Effective coordination mechanisms include:

- Inter-institutional councils – regular forums linking ministries, agencies, and providers to align strategies and resolve overlaps.
- Digital data exchange systems – shared dashboards or APIs connecting ALE registries, ILA platforms, and national statistics offices.
- Joint evaluations – collaborative assessments involving multiple stakeholders in reviewing outcomes and setting improvement priorities.
- Public reporting – publishing results, audits, and performance indicators to ensure transparency and accountability.

When coordination is weak, fragmentation occurs, with consequences as duplicated registries, inconsistent accreditation, and misaligned funding. Strong governance transforms this risk into a network of shared information and mutual accountability.

2.3.2.3 Towards Collaborative Governance

Modern ALE governance is shifting from hierarchical control to collaborative partnership. Instead of a single central authority directing all actions, effective systems establish feedback cycles that allow evidence from practice to inform policy. Learner feedback, provider reports, and ALE registry data are not merely statistics; they are governance tools.

Core principles of collaborative governance

- Trust and transparency – open information sharing between institutions and the public.
- Mutual accountability – clear responsibilities, supported by data validation and performance tracking.
- Evidence-based policymaking – decisions grounded in data from ALE registries and ILA platforms.
- Continuous learning – regular review and adaptation of frameworks based on feedback and innovation.

Figure 17 - Multi-Level Governance Model

Design a pyramid or layered network diagram showing:

- Top: Ministries and QA Agencies (policy and oversight).
- Middle: ALE registries, ILA administrators, and providers (implementation and monitoring).
- Bottom: Learners and employers (users and feedback).

Implementation Tip

Before introducing new governance mechanisms, conduct a simple mapping exercise:

- Who is responsible for what?
- How is information exchanged between levels?
- Where are decisions made, and where is feedback collected?

Clear mapping avoids duplication, clarifies authority, and ensures that evidence from practice shapes policy development.

> ***Governance is most effective when everyone can see how their actions contribute to the system's improvement.***

2.3.3 Governance Across the Four Aspects

Governance must operate as a coherent framework across four interrelated aspects: ALE ecosystem, ALE registries, ILA instrument, and ILA digital platforms.

Each of these dimensions has a distinct role but relies on the others to function effectively. Together, they form a continuous loop that links policy intent, implementation, monitoring, and improvement.

2.3.3.1 ALE Ecosystem: Policy and Strategic Coordination

The ALE ecosystem constitutes the strategic layer of governance. It establishes the national vision for ALE, defines priorities, and links ALE with broader education, labour market, and social inclusion policies. Its effectiveness depends on coordination among ministries, agencies, and regional authorities.

Governance objectives

- Ensure that national strategies prioritise ALE in policy agendas.
- Integrate ALE governance with VET, higher education, and employment frameworks.
- Coordinate financial instruments and ensure consistency across sectors.
- Maintain alignment with European frameworks, such as the Skills Agenda, EQAVET, and the Council Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways.

In practice

Policy coherence and institutional cooperation are essential. When ministries and agencies share data and align objectives, ALE ecosystems become more agile and efficient. Strong national coordination prevents fragmentation and promotes trust between institutions and learners.

Good governance begins with shared goals, not shared control.

2.3.3.2 ALE Registries: Transparency and Data Integrity

ALE registries serve as the transparency layer of the ALE ecosystem. They convert policy and quality standards into public, accessible information about accredited providers, learning opportunities, and pathways. Effective governance ensures that registries are reliable, up to date, and interoperable with other national systems.

Governance objectives

- Define clear criteria for including providers and programmes.
- Set rules for data verification and update frequency.
- Ensure interoperability with qualification frameworks and ILA databases.
- Maintain independence from political and commercial influence.

Governance mechanisms

- Accreditation and validation procedures are integrated into the registry design.
- Regular audits ensure accuracy and fairness.
- Transparent management of metadata and open data protocols.
- Secure IT and data protection standards.

ALE registries are not passive databases; they are governance tools. They enable policymakers to monitor participation, identify skill gaps, and assess policy impact. At the same time, they empower learners by providing access to reliable information.

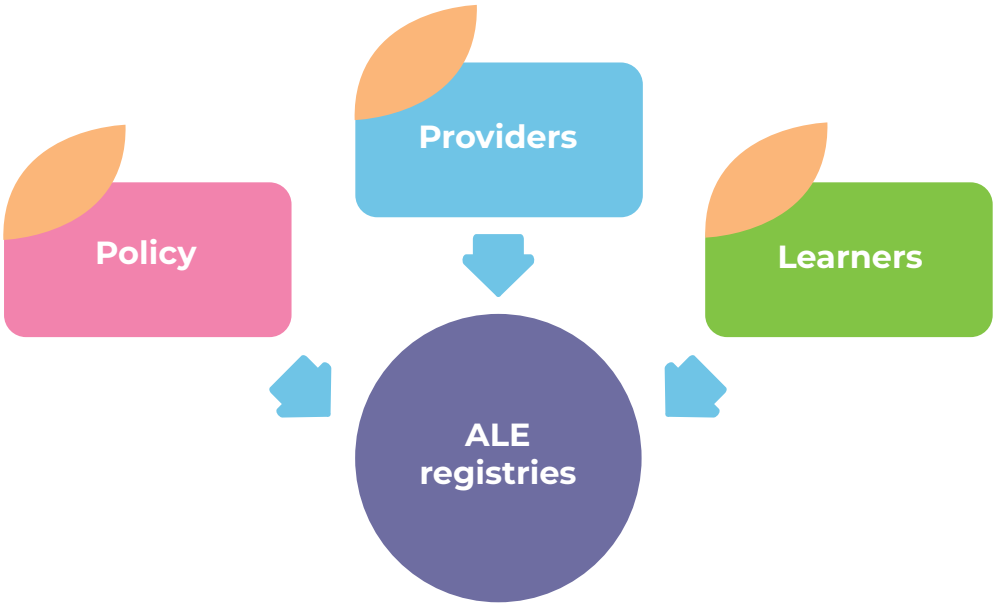

Figure 18 - ALE registries data integrity

2.3.3.3 ILA Instruments: Funding, Fairness and Quality

ILAs form the financial and operational layer of governance. They place the learner at the centre by linking funding directly to participation in quality-assured programmes. Good governance ensures that financial mechanisms promote fairness, accountability, and results, not just access.

Governance objectives

- Establish transparent eligibility and funding rules.
- Ensure that only accredited providers receive ILA funding.
- Monitor participation, completion, and employment outcomes.
- Ensure data-driven reporting and evaluation of system impact.

Governance mechanisms

- Legal framework specifying the rights and responsibilities of learners and providers.
- Clear institutional responsibility for financial oversight and data protection.
- Performance-based funding and periodic review of approved offerings.
- Mechanisms for learner feedback and dispute resolution.
- ILAs also strengthen policy integration: they translate national strategies into incentives that support individual motivation. By linking funding to quality, they align financial efficiency with educational impact.

Policy insight

When funding follows quality, improvement becomes self-sustaining.

2.3.3.4 ILA Platforms: Digital Governance and User Trust

ILA platforms form the technological and interface layer of governance. They make the system visible, interactive, and user-centred. As digital public services, they require robust governance for data protection, usability, and ethical design.

Governance objectives

- Ensure data security, privacy, and compliance with EU standards (GDPR, accessibility, cybersecurity).
- Provide transparent, intuitive interfaces that guide learners through their options.
- Integrate ALE registry, QA, and financial data into one interoperable system.
- Enable analytics for continuous monitoring and evidence-based improvement.

Governance mechanisms

- Independent oversight of IT infrastructure and cybersecurity.
- Regular user testing and accessibility audits.
- Algorithms that recommend learning paths transparently and without bias.
- Publication of anonymised system data to support policy evaluation.

ILA platforms are where governance meets the learner. The way information is presented, verified, and updated directly influences public trust. Design and ethics are therefore part of governance, not merely technical details.

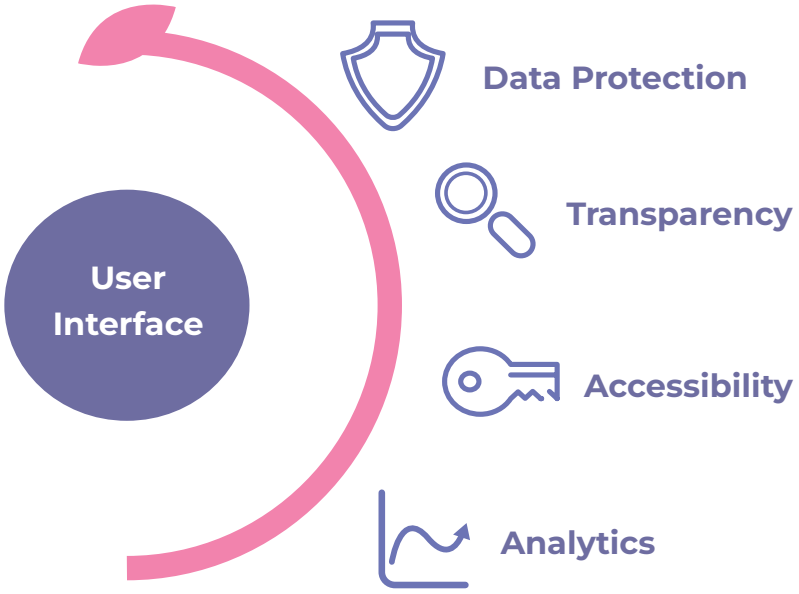

Figure 19 - Digital Governance

2.3.3.5 Integration in Practice

Governance across these four aspects is simultaneous, not sequential. Each dimension reinforces the others:

- ALE ecosystem sets direction and standards.
- ALE registries operationalise transparency and accountability.
- ILA instruments connect funding with quality and participation.
- ILA platforms make everything visible, measurable, and adaptive.

Integration principle

Governance must be coherent, data-driven, and user-oriented. When all four aspects are synchronised, the ecosystem becomes transparent, equitable, and continuously improving – the true foundations of lifelong learning governance.

2.3.4 From Structure to Culture

Governance cannot rely solely on regulation. It becomes effective when institutions internalise principles of openness, responsibility, and collaboration. This governance culture develops through training, leadership, and consistent communication among actors.

> ***Good governance is not about control; it is about coordination, learning, and shared responsibility.***

In practice

- Promote regular dialogue between authorities, providers, and learners.
- Build staff capacity for evidence-based management.
- Use data not only for compliance but also for improvement.
- Communicate achievements and challenges openly to maintain trust.

Summary Tip

Governance in ALE systems is the underlying structure that supports trust, quality, and innovation. When principles of transparency, accountability, participation, inclusiveness, and continuous improvement are applied consistently across the ALE ecosystem, ALE registries, ILA instruments, and ILA platforms, the result is a coherent and adaptive system that links strategic vision with practical outcomes for every learner.

2.3.5 Challenges and good practices for governance

Governance in ALE defines how decisions are made, how responsibilities are allocated, and how accountability is maintained across the system. While strong governance fosters trust and efficiency, weak coordination or unclear mandates can result in fragmentation and inequality. This section summarises the main governance challenges identified across European ALE systems and presents good practices and policy recommendations to support transparent, inclusive, and adaptable lifelong learning governance.

2.3.5.1 Key Governance Challenges

Despite significant progress across Europe, several recurring challenges affect the coherence and effectiveness of ALE governance. These can be grouped into five core areas.

Challenge	Description	Implications
Fragmentation of responsibilities	Multiple ministries or agencies share overlapping mandates for ALE, QA, and labour market integration.	Leads to duplication, gaps in coordination, and inconsistent policy implementation.
Centralisation vs. regional autonomy	The balance between national consistency and regional relevance is complex. Centralised systems provide coherence but may lack adaptability, while in federal or highly devolved systems, regional actors can outperform the central level; however, performance varies widely between regions	Requires coordination mechanisms that support excellence at all levels, reduce regional inequalities, and preserve flexibility without compromising quality
Limited stakeholder engagement	Employers, civil society, and learners are not consistently included in governance processes.	Reduces responsiveness and undermines ownership of policies.
Insufficient data integration	ALE registries, ILA platforms, and national statistics operate separately.	Limits evidence-based policymaking and cross-sector collaboration.
Equity and inclusion gaps	Governance mechanisms often overlook the needs of marginalised populations.	Restricts access and perpetuates inequality in ALE.

Table 7 - Common governance challenges

2.3.5.2 Good Governance Practices

Effective governance models show that clear coordination, open data, and stakeholder participation can make ALE systems more transparent, inclusive, and results oriented.

Coherent and Transparent Governance Structures

Governance models that define clear institutional roles and data-sharing mechanisms promote coherence and accountability across the system.

- Transparency ensures that responsibilities and decision-making are visible to all stakeholders.
- Data integration enables ministries, ALE registries, and QA bodies to monitor performance in real time.
- Regular reporting supports evidence-based decisions and reduces duplication.

Policy Insight

Clearly defined mandates and data protocols are the backbone of trustworthy governance.

Collaborative and Participatory Governance

Strong ALE governance is inherently collaborative, involving ministries, providers, learners, and employers in joint decision-making.

- National coordination councils or multi-stakeholder platforms help align education with labour market needs.
- Social partners and learners' organisations ensure that policies reflect real-world perspectives.
- Participatory governance fosters ownership, innovation, and public trust.

Figure 20 - Collaborative Governance Cycle

Clarifying Governance Objectives

Governance should define why and how policies are implemented - linking strategic priorities to practical mechanisms.

- Establish alignment between funding, ALE registry management and QA.
- Define measurable outcomes, such as increased participation or improved recognition of non-formal learning.
- Regularly review objectives to adapt to economic and social change.

Policy Insight

Clear objectives create accountability and ensure that innovation aligns with policy goals.

Governance Supporting ALE Registries

Effective ALE registries rely on strong governance foundations. They are not only technical tools but also governance instruments that ensure visibility, comparability, and quality. Good governance of ALE registries means:

- Establishing clear ownership and management structures (e.g. who validates provider data and who maintains updates).
- Ensuring interoperability among education, employment, and funding databases.
- Embedding QA and inclusivity criteria in registry operations.

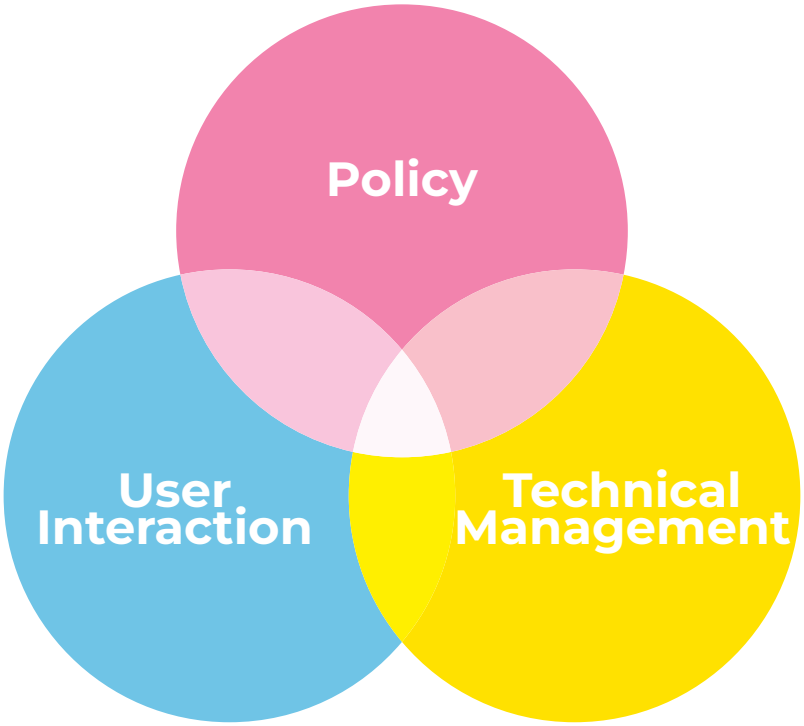

Figure 21. - Registry Governance Framework

Digital and Operational Good Practices

Digitalisation has transformed governance processes by improving data usage, efficiency, and accountability.

User-Centred Design

ALE registries and ILA platforms should prioritise accessibility and intuitive navigation:

- Multilingual interfaces and mobile compatibility increase participation.
- Assistive technologies support users with disabilities or low digital literacy.
- Continuous feedback loops enhance usability and satisfaction

Policy tip

Good governance starts with design that puts the learner first.

Interoperability and Integration

Seamless data exchange enhances coordination between education and labour market systems.

- APIs and standardised data formats enable communication between ALE registries, ILA platforms, and employment services.
- Integrated systems allow policymakers to track skills gaps and respond promptly to emerging needs.

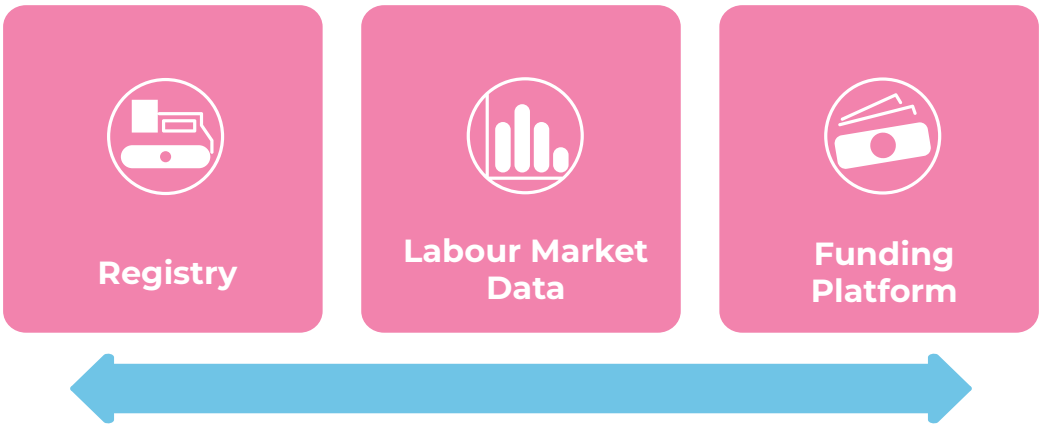

Figure 22 - Connected Systems

Data-Driven Decision Making
Governance improves when data guides decisions instead of following them.

- ALE registries and ILA platforms should monitor participation, completion rates, and satisfaction levels.
- Analytics can identify underrepresented groups or low-performing regions.
- Machine learning tools can predict future skills needs, enabling proactive policymaking.

Policy insight

Data transforms governance from reactive to anticipatory.

Ensuring Inclusivity and Equity

Governance systems must ensure that access barriers are recognised and addressed.

- Outreach programmes and targeted communication help reach low-skilled or rural populations.
- Funding mechanisms should prioritise under-represented learners.
- Inclusive governance requires constant monitoring of who participates and who is left behind.

Sustainability and Scalability

Long-term governance requires adaptable systems and stable funding.

- Modular ALE registry architectures enable upgrades without complete rebuilds.
- Open-source technologies lower costs and foster innovation.
- Governance frameworks should incorporate periodic reviews and renewal mechanisms.

Policy tip

Sustainable governance evolves with technology and user needs, not against them.

2.3.6 Integrating Good Governance with Registry and ILA Development

Governance should be a dynamic framework that connects strategy, implementation, and feedback, rather than merely an administrative layer.

Key takeaways for policy and design teams:

- Establish joint governance mechanisms connecting ALE registries and ILA platforms.
- Encourage public-private partnerships for co-financing and innovation.
- Incorporate learner and employer feedback to guide national policy priorities.
- Enhance transparency through open data and reporting.

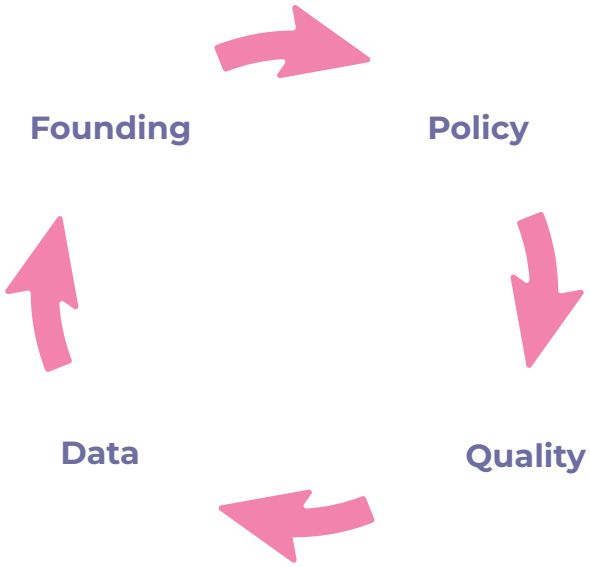

Figure 23 - Governance as an Ecosystem

Summary tip

Governance is not about control, but connection. It aligns people, processes, and information towards one purpose: making lifelong learning accessible, credible, and inclusive for all.

2.3.7 RACI model for governance analysis and development

Overview of RACI method and how to use it to analyse/develop the governance model of ALE registries and ILA Platforms.

Governance / Management Activity	Policy Maker – Ministry / National Agency	Admin-istrator / Registry Operator	Adult Learning Providers	Learners	Quality Assur-ance (QA) Agency	Funder	Social Partners / Employers
Define national ALE / ILA strate-gy and policy	A / R	C	C	C	C	C	C
Establish data standards and interoperability rules	A	R	I	I	C	I	C
Approve provider eligibility and accreditation rules	A	I	C	I	R	I	C
Operate and maintain national ALE / ILA platform	I	A / R	I	I	C	C	I

Table 8 – Example of RACI tool applied to ALE registries and ILA platforms

2.4. CHAPTER 3 – ALE REGISTRIES AND ILA PLATFORMS: WHAT DOES EXIST IN EUROPE?

This chapter provides an overview of how Adult Learning and Education (ALE) registries and Individual Learning Account (ILA) platforms function in ten European countries.

It builds on the principles discussed in Chapters 1 and 2 (quality assurance and governance) by demonstrating how these principles are implemented in national systems.

The examples gathered through research illustrate not only current practices, but also how different countries address transparency, funding, and inclusion in adult learning.

The focus is practical and comparative:

- How countries organise and govern their ALE registries.
- How QA mechanisms are integrated.
- How digital tools support learners and providers.

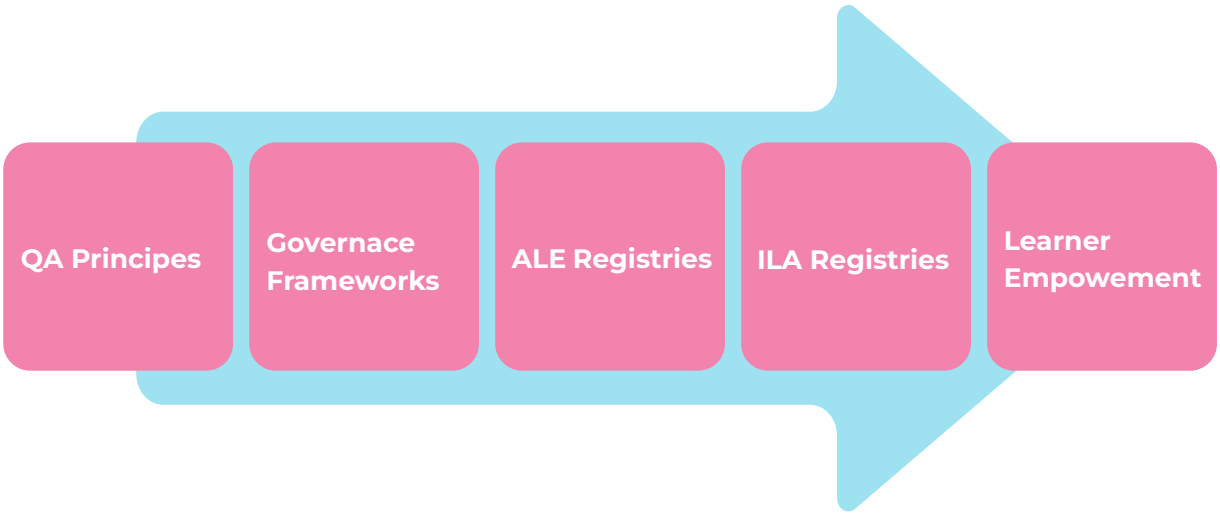

Figure 24 - From Principles to Practice

The analysis covers ten European countries that reflect a range of governance traditions, technological maturity, and ALE priorities. The observed models are shaped not only by policy choices but also by demographic, territorial, and administrative contexts. They broadly represent:

- Centralised systems typically found in smaller or more administratively uniform states, where coherence and oversight are easier to maintain.
- Decentralised systems more common in countries with strong regional identities or federal structures, where local responsiveness is a priority.
- Hybrid systems which combine national coordination with regional or sectoral adaptability.

Together, they reveal how policy, technology, and QA interact to create mature and sustainable ALE ecosystems tailored to national contexts.

Tip for readers

When reading the examples, focus on how each system connects governance, QA, and technology. This connection is where innovation and often sustainability begin.

2.4.1 ALE registries models in Europe

Across Europe, the landscape ALE registries and ILA platforms is highly diverse. Some countries are still developing the basic infrastructure to ensure transparency and quality, while others have established advanced, interoperable systems that connect funding, data, and user services. This diversity reflects not only different policy traditions but also varying stages of digital maturity, institutional coordination, and public investment in ALE.

Despite these differences, several common trends are evident:

- The integration of QA frameworks and ALE registry functions is becoming the norm rather than the exception.
- Governance models are increasingly hybrid, balancing national coherence with local adaptability.
- ALE registries are evolving from static databases into dynamic platforms that combine course search, funding eligibility, and learner feedback.
- Many countries are exploring ILA-type instruments, linking individual financing with quality-assured provision

In Annex 1, the overviews of ten European countries are available (Croatia, Malta, Slovakia, Cyprus, Slovenia, Ireland, Portugal, Countries: Finland, Netherlands, France). Each profile highlights these dynamics in practice and provides a concise snapshot of how governance, quality assurance, and digital platforms support adult learning.

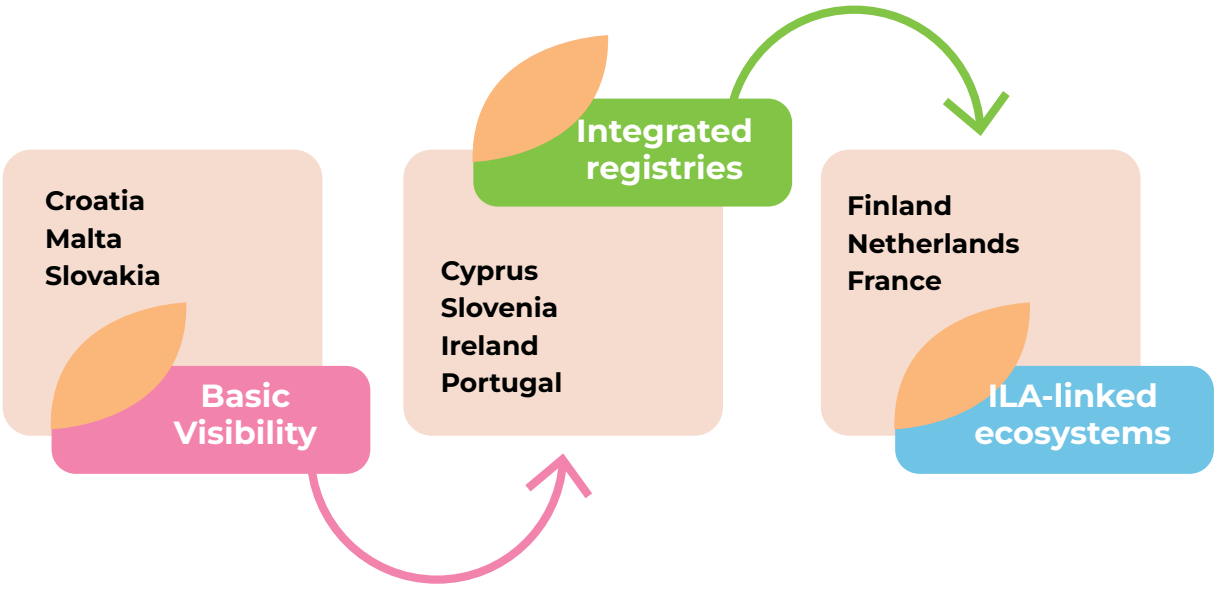

Figure 25 - Evolution of Registries Across Europe

2.4.1.1 Registry Maturity Levels in Europe

European ALE registries differ not only in technological sophistication but also in how governance structures shape their operation.

Across the ten countries analysed, three main governance models – centralised, decentralised, and hybrid or integrated – broadly correspond to three levels of registry maturity: basic, intermediate, and advanced.

These models together reveal how policy coordination, digital development, and stakeholder engagement evolve within Europe's lifelong learning ecosystems.

Basic Registries – Foundations of Trust and Transparency

Countries: Croatia, Malta, Slovakia

Basic ALE registries focus on visibility and control. Their role is to provide reliable information on accredited providers and programmes, ensuring minimum quality standards and public trust. Managed centrally by ministries or national agencies, they serve as compliance tools rather than interactive systems.

While they ensure coherence and credibility, they often lack real-time updates, interoperability, and user-oriented features.

Intermediate Registries – Integration and Accessibility

Countries: Cyprus, Slovenia, Ireland, Portugal

Intermediate ALE registries represent a transitional phase between control-oriented and user-centred systems. They introduce interactive features, connect partially with quality assurance and funding mechanisms, and begin collecting data for analysis.

These ALE registries improve accessibility and coordination but still rely on manual updates and fragmented governance structures. Sustainability and interoperability remain key challenges.

Advanced Registries – Smart Ecosystems for Lifelong Learning

Countries: Finland, Netherlands, France

Advanced ALE registries integrate data, funding, and QA into a single digital ecosystem. They enable real-time monitoring, transparent financing, and personalised learner support. Fully interoperable with labour market and represent the most mature form of governance, where registries serve as instruments for policy coordination and continuous improvement.

Their effectiveness, however, depends on sustained investment, robust data governance, and institutional trust.

Patterns of Evolution

European ALE registries show a clear evolutionary path:

- Basic provide transparency and control.
- Intermediate enable coordination and inclusion.
- Advanced achieve interoperability and data-driven improvement.

Policy insight

The maturity of ALE registries reflects the maturity of governance. As systems evolve, they shift from controlling providers to empowering learners, and from proving quality to improving it.

2.4.1.2 Governance Models in ALE Registries and Platforms

European ALE registries vary widely in governance, functionality, and technological sophistication. Despite these differences, three main structural patterns can be identified across the ten countries analysed: centralised, decentralised, and hybrid or integrated models. Each reflects a specific balance between coherence and flexibility, as well as different stages of digital maturity.

Model Type	Countries	Strengths	Limitations
Centralised	Croatia, Malta, France	Coherent governance, uniform standards, simplified oversight, strong QA mechanisms	Limited flexibility, slower adaptation to regional needs, limited personalisation for users
Decentralised	Slovakia, Netherlands (partially)	Strong regional links, responsiveness to local labour market demands, stakeholder engagement	Inconsistent data structures, fragmented QA systems, weak national comparability
Hybrid / Integrated	Finland, Portugal, Ireland, Cyprus, Slovenia	Balanced governance, interoperability between systems, integration with ILA or QA frameworks	Requires strong coordination, digital maturity, and continuous investment in data management

Table 9 - Comparative Overview of ALE Registry Models

Centralised Models – Coherence and Control

Centralised ALE registries, as seen in Croatia, Malta, and France, ensure coherence and transparency through national-level control. They are typically managed by ministries or central agencies responsible for ALE, which guarantees consistency and public accountability.

Key features

- A single national database managed by a central authority.
- Clear accreditation and eligibility criteria.
- Easy integration with national QA systems.

Strengths

- These models excel in quality assurance, standardisation, and data reliability.
- Malta's National Commission for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE) maintains an authoritative list of all accredited providers and courses, ensuring trust and clarity for users.
- In France, the Compte Personnel de Formation (CPF) goes further by connecting the ALE registry with a national ILA platform, allowing users to enrol in and finance courses through one system.

Challenges

- Centralised systems often face limitations in adapting to regional diversity or specific sectoral needs.
- In Croatia, a single ALE registry ensures consistency but struggles to capture local variations in ALE demand, particularly in rural regions.
- The strong top-down approach ensures stability but risks rigidity in implementation and slower innovation cycles.

Decentralised Models – Flexibility and Local Relevance

Decentralised ALE registries are based on regional autonomy and local governance, as seen in Slovakia and partly in the Netherlands. These systems prioritise alignment with regional labour markets and community priorities.

Key features

- Regional or municipal management of registries
- Localised programme validation and funding allocation
- Diverse interfaces and data sources reflecting local priorities

Strengths

- They promote innovation and responsiveness.
- In Slovakia, regional authorities adapt ALE offers to local industries and demographics, ensuring that ALE registries reflect the actual needs of each region.
- In the Netherlands, several linked registries (e.g. Blik op Werk, Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs, Basisregister Onderwijs) provide decentralised yet interoperable systems focused on labour market alignment.

Challenges

- Such flexibility has its costs.
- Data fragmentation and the absence of a unified national framework make it difficult to ensure consistent QA or collect comparable data for policymaking.
- Differences in software, metadata, and governance models complicate integration, requiring additional investment in interoperability and standardisation.

Hybrid and Integrated Models – Towards a Connected Ecosystem

The hybrid model combines national coordination with regional adaptability, offering the most balanced approach. This category includes Finland, Portugal, Ireland, Cyprus, and Slovenia – countries that integrate ALE registries with QA frameworks, funding instruments (such as ILAs), and guidance services.

Key features

- National registry standards combined with regional implementation.
- Integration with QA, validation, and ILA mechanisms.
- Continuous data exchange through digital infrastructure.

Strengths

- These systems achieve the best balance between efficiency, inclusiveness, and adaptability. Finland's KOSKI system is the most advanced, linking all learner records with qualification frameworks and labour market data.
- Portugal's Qualifica Portal integrates ALE registry, guidance, and funding services within a single national ecosystem.
- Ireland's FETCHcourses.ie platform provides real-time information on accredited courses and direct enrolment options, aligned with national QA and funding mechanisms.
- Cyprus demonstrates how hybrid governance can combine central oversight with regional implementation flexibility.
- Slovenia integrates non-formal learning and community education, showing that hybrid models can also support social inclusion.

Challenges

- Hybrid systems require high coordination capacity, advanced digital maturity, and stable long-term funding.
- They are also vulnerable to governance gaps if roles between ministries, agencies, and regional actors are not clearly defined
- Maintaining interoperability between multiple data systems (e.g. education, labour market, finance) requires both technical and institutional readiness.

Comparative Trends and Emerging Patterns

Across all ten countries, several trends are evident.

1. Convergence of functions – ALE registries are evolving into multi-purpose systems that combine course information, funding eligibility, QA monitoring, and guidance services. Example: France's CPF integrates ALE registry, funding – ILA, and user feedback.
2. Shift towards data-driven management – Even smaller systems such as Malta's and Slovenia's are introducing analytics dashboards to track participation and performance.
3. Hybridisation as the dominant trend – Most countries are moving from centralised or decentralised models towards hybrid governance that enables interoperability and shared standards.
4. Interconnection with ILA platforms – ALE registries are increasingly linked with financial mechanisms (ILAs or vouchers), ensuring that only quality-assured providers receive funding.
5. Inclusion as a quality criterion – ALE registries now embed accessibility requirements, outreach features, and support tools for marginalised learners.

2.4.2 Current practices and recommendations for ALE registry and ILA platforms

European countries have taken different approaches to developing their ALE registries and ILA platforms, but common patterns emerge. The most successful systems combine **trust, usability, integration, inclusivity, and accountability.** They demonstrate that the key to sustainability is not the scale of technology, but the clarity of governance and the consistency of QA.

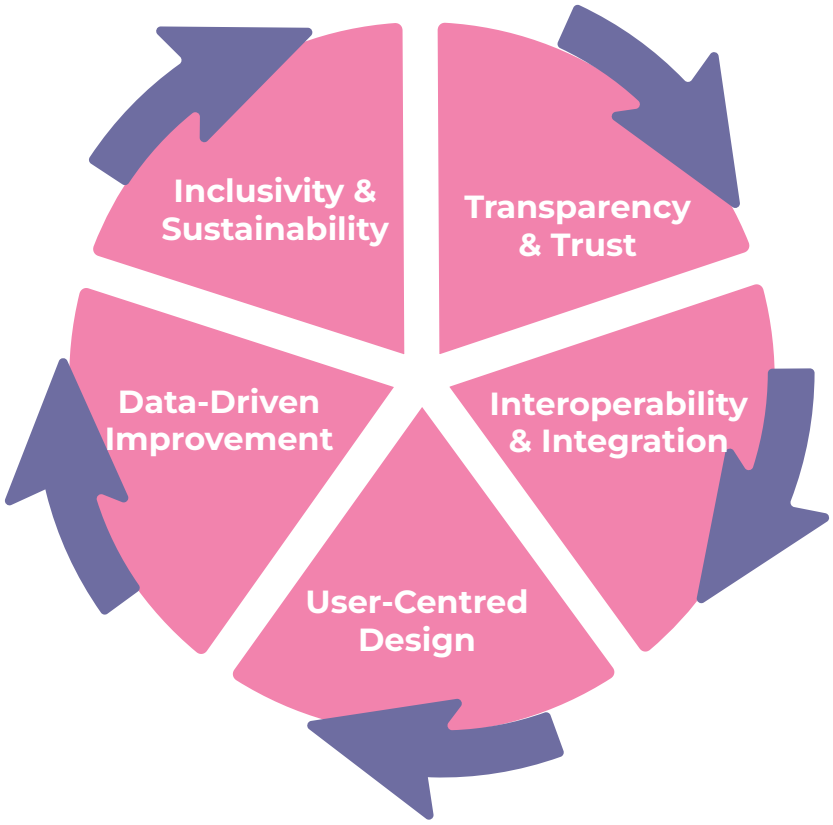

Figure 26 - Quality Cycle of ALE Registries and ILAs

Below are selected good practices and **practical recommendations**, based on national examples.

2.4.2.1 Transparency and Trust

Transparency builds credibility. Countries that provide open, verified, and regularly updated data gain stronger user confidence and stakeholder engagement.

In Ireland, the Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) database publishes full details of every validated programme, including learning outcomes, qualification level, and accreditation status. This public access enables learners to make informed choices and allows employers to verify qualifications instantly.

In France, the Compte Personnel de Formation (CPF) ensures that only certified courses from accredited providers appear on the platform. Learners can view the exact price, duration, and funding options before enrolling – a strong example of transparency in action.

Key recommendations

- Maintain open databases of accredited providers and programmes.
- Publish QA results and accreditation renewal dates.
- Display funding conditions clearly on ILA platforms.
- Enable public feedback and transparent response mechanisms.

Policy tip

When users can see who provides, who pays, and who guarantees quality, they are more likely to trust and engage with lifelong learning systems.

2.4.2.2 Integration and Interoperability

Integration makes systems efficient and future-proof. The most robust registries function as interconnected ecosystems rather than isolated databases.

Finland's KOSKI system and the Studyinfo.fi portal demonstrate a high level of interoperability. Learner records, provider data, and qualifications are synchronised in real time, enabling seamless information flow between the education, employment, and social sectors.

Portugal's Qualifica Portal connects the national registry with the Qualifica Passport ILA tool. It links recognition of prior learning (RPL) with new learning pathways, ensuring that adults can validate and upgrade their skills within a single integrated digital environment.

Practical enablers

- Adopt open data standards (XML, JSON) and APIs for data exchange.
- Connect ALE registries with qualification frameworks and labour market information systems.
- Enable automatic updates between registries and ILA platforms to prevent duplication.

Policy tip

The real value of AKE registry lies not in the number of entries, but in how easily data can move between systems and support decisions.

2.4.2.3 User-Centred Design

User-friendly design directly affects participation. The easier a platform is to navigate, the more people use it, especially those with lower digital skills.

Finland's Studyinfo and Ireland's FETCHcourses.ie are examples of intuitive interfaces that prioritise accessibility and relevance. They allow searches by region, skill, or occupation, and clearly display funding or recognition options.

Malta's national registry, though smaller, demonstrates the benefit of consistent design: it uses the same structure for all providers, ensuring comparability and reducing confusion.

Recommended design features

- Simple search filters (sector, region, mode of delivery, funding availability).
- Multilingual interfaces and mobile compatibility.
- Clear visual indicators for accreditation and quality labels.
- Integration of personalised dashboards showing course progress or funding balance.

Policy tip

In France, the CPF app uses a colour-coded interface to display available credits and compatible courses, allowing users to register for training within minutes without administrative intermediaries.

2.4.2.4 Data-Driven Quality and Accountability

Data analytics is transforming QA in ALE. Digital ALE registries now collect detailed participation and satisfaction data to guide continuous improvement.

In France, the CPF platform monitors completion and dropout rates, learner feedback, and post-training employment outcomes. Providers with poor results can lose eligibility for public funding, linking accountability to performance.

The Netherlands uses aggregated labour market data from Blik op Werk to evaluate which programmes deliver real employability outcomes. ALE registry analytics inform **government planning for future skills investment.**

Key recommendations

- Include real-time dashboards to monitor participation, satisfaction, and outcomes.
- Introduce automated alerts when providers fail to update or meet standards.
- Combine quantitative indicators (such as completion rates) with qualitative feedback (such as learner surveys).
- Use data for proactive improvement rather than retrospective control.

Policy tip

Quality in ALE is no longer solely about audits; it now involves active, data-informed management of learning ecosystems.

2.4.2.5 Inclusion and Equity

Inclusive governance ensures that ALE registries and ILAs are accessible to everyone, not only the digitally confident.

Slovenia has embedded inclusion in its ALE registry by cooperating with municipalities, NGOs, and social partners. Local learning centres assist users in navigating the system, and the ALE registry lists community-based and informal learning options.

Portugal's Qualifica centres offer blended guidance – both digital and face-to-face – for low-skilled adults. The portal provides personalised suggestions and information on financial support for those seeking to re-enter education.

Ireland's Skills to Advance platform prioritises workers in sectors most at risk of automation, combining digital access with regional outreach initiatives.

Actions for inclusion

- Integrate outreach and counselling services directly into ALE registry platforms.
- Use simple, multilingual communication and icons to guide users with low literacy.
- Offer voice-over navigation and accessible formats (WCAG 2.1 compliant).
- Provide targeted subsidies or vouchers for disadvantaged groups.

Policy tip

A system is only as inclusive as its design; accessibility must be a planned feature, not an afterthought.

2.4.2.6 Governance and Sustainability

Strong digital systems require clear governance and stable resources. Countries with defined ownership and multi-stakeholder oversight achieve higher system reliability and user trust.

France manages the CPF through a public–private governance model: the Ministry of Labour oversees the platform, while social partners co-finance it through employer contributions. This ensures both accountability and shared ownership.

Finland and the Netherlands maintain public open-data policies that allow other actors – from researchers to employers – to reuse registry data, fostering transparency and innovation.

Malta, by contrast, benefits from compact coordination but faces capacity constraints; sustainability could be enhanced through regional cooperation or EU-level interoperability projects.

Recommendations

- Define clear governance roles for ministries, agencies, and platform operators.
- Establish permanent funding lines combining national and EU sources (ESF+, Erasmus+, Digital Europe).
- Use open-source technology to reduce vendor lock-in and maintenance costs.
- Create advisory councils with user and employer representation.

Policy tip

Sustainable ALE registries are living infrastructures; they evolve through policy feedback, stakeholder dialogue, and continuous reinvestment.

2.4.2.7 Combined Lessons for ALE Registries and ILA Platforms

When comparing all ten countries, several overarching lessons emerge:

1. **Centralised** systems (Malta, Croatia, France) guarantee quality but must invest in personalisation and data interoperability.
2. **Hybrid** systems (Portugal, Finland, Ireland, Cyprus) balance national coherence with regional flexibility and innovation.
3. **Decentralised** models (Slovakia, Slovenia, Netherlands) foster responsiveness but require stronger coordination and common standards.

Across these variations, one trend is universal: the convergence of ALE registries and ILA platforms into integrated ecosystems.

Rather than acting separately, they increasingly operate as complementary components – one ensuring visibility and reliability, the other providing access and empowerment.

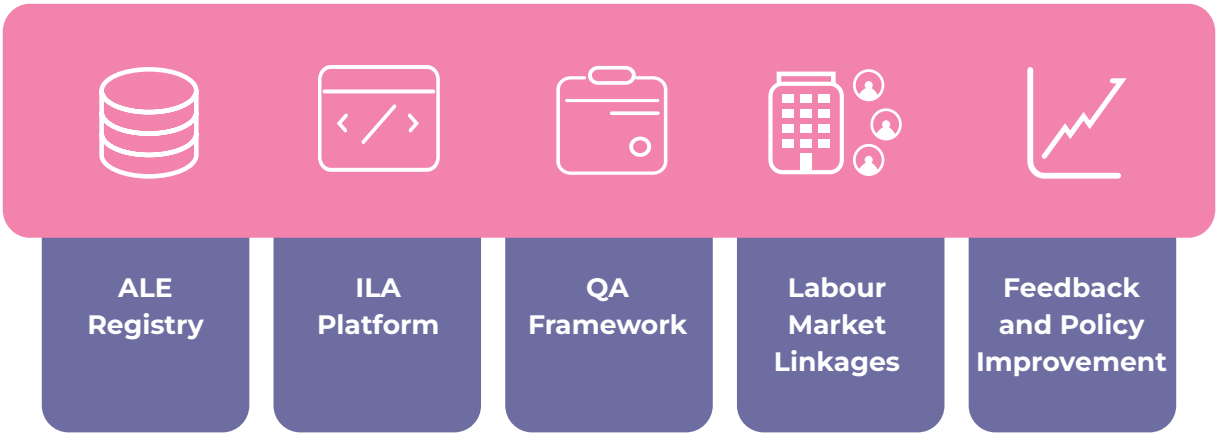

Figure 27 - From Registry to Ecosystem

2.4.2.8 Final Reflections

European practice shows that no single model fits all, but certain conditions consistently lead to success:

- Transparent governance builds trust.
- Interoperable systems make data valuable.
- User-centred design drives participation.
- Inclusive features widen access.
- Stable funding ensures sustainability.

ALE registries and ILAs together form the nervous system of lifelong learning.
One makes opportunities visible; the other makes them possible.

The next step for Europe is to connect them seamlessly and make learning a lifelong right, not a privilege.

3 .Part 2 – Developing ALE registries and ILA platforms

3.1. INTRODUCTION

Part 2 provides practical implementation guidance for designing and deploying Adult Learning and Education (ALE) registries and their integration with Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs). It translates the RALExILA System Model into actionable guidance for policymakers, system owners, and technical teams, while deliberately avoiding prescriptive technical or architectural solutions.

The RALExILA System Model defines what information and system capabilities are required for a functioning ALE/ILA ecosystem and why they matter. This Handbook Part focuses on how these elements can be implemented in practice, recognising that countries start from different levels of digital maturity, governance arrangements, legal frameworks, and institutional capacity. It therefore supports adaptation rather than uniform adoption.

The System Model and the information models referenced in this Handbook describe high-level information needs and relationships. They are not database schemas, API specifications, or implementation-level data models. Implementing organisations are expected to translate these conceptual models into technical solutions that fit their national context, select technologies and vendors according to local constraints, and preserve semantic alignment with the RALExILA model to ensure interoperability and comparability.

This document should be read in conjunction with:

- The RALExILA Primer[2], which introduces the co-design approach and phased prototyping roadmap; and
- the RALExILA System Model[3], which defines conceptual information models, system capabilities, and interoperability principles.

Together, these documents form a coherent pathway from policy intent, through co-design and modelling, to system implementation and piloting. While the Primer focuses on collaborative design and experimentation, and the System Model establishes a shared conceptual reference, this Handbook Part supports national teams in translating these foundations into concrete, implementable system choices.

[2]The RALExILA Primer is available in Annexes – Annex 2
[3]Jahnke S., (2026). RALExILA system model - Developing interoperable registries of adult education in Europe. Knowledge Information Center. http://ralexila.eu/

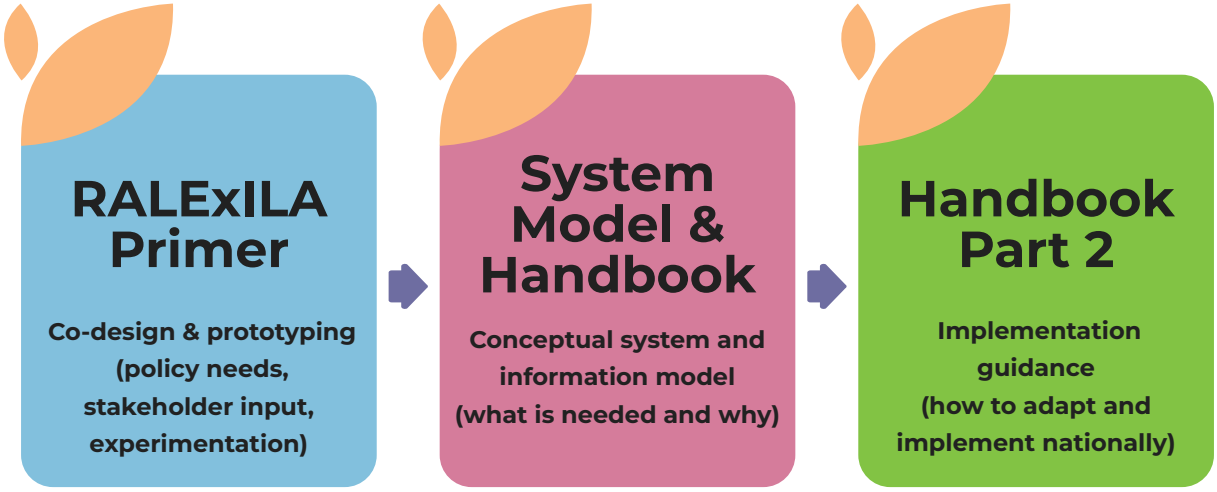

Figure 28 - Relationship between the RALExILA Primer, System Model, and implementation guidance.

3.1.1 System Modelling and Implementation Framework

The **RALExILA System Model** serves as the foundation for these guidelines, offering a structured framework for defining key system capabilities, technological principles, and phased implementation strategies. Developed through real-world insights gathered from ten countries—Cyprus, Croatia, Malta, Slovakia, France, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Ireland, Portugal, and Finland—the model reflects a diverse range of national approaches, challenges, and best practices.

To ensure the model is **user-centred and applicable**, we conducted **four dedicated workshops**, two hybrid and two online, engaging 15+ adult education experts per session, including representatives from national education authorities, adult learning organisations, and policymakers.

By applying design thinking methodologies[4], these workshops enabled a collaborative exploration of stakeholder needs, system functionality, and implementation pathways. Through iterative, collaborative problem-solving, these workshops helped shape a model that responds directly to the needs of learners, training providers, and policymakers.

[4]Brown, T. (2009). Change by Design: How Design Thinking Creates New Alternatives for Business and Society. Harper Business.

The design thinking process followed four key stages:

S1: Understanding challenges and defining problem statements

The process began with identifying the most pressing challenges in ALE and ILA implementation. Through expert discussions, participants articulated and clustered key issues, such as user engagement, accessibility, security, data protection, quality assurance, interoperability, and funding complexity. This problem-framing phase ensured that the system model addressed real obstacles rather than hypothetical concerns.

S2: Defining user groups and personas

Once the key challenges were mapped out, the next step was to define user groups and personas, ensuring that the system design reflected real-world needs and motivations. Stakeholders developed learner, provider, administrator, and policymaker personas, exploring their interactions with the system, pain points, and expectations. This step helped refine how different users experience and navigate the ALE/ILA system.

S3: Creating user stories and mapping use cases

Building on the defined personas, participants created user stories to outline specific interactions and expectations for each stakeholder group. This stage translated high-level user needs into concrete use cases, helping the system model align with learner pathways, provider workflows, and administrative processes. Through iterative refinement, participants ensured that each user journey was clear, actionable, and aligned with policy objectives.

S4: Developing system capabilities and functionalities

The final stage involved translating the user stories and use cases into core system features. Stakeholders defined and refined essential system functionalities, including course discovery, user and provider management, entitlement allocation, and skills and competence management. Throughout this phase, usability, security, and interoperability remained central concerns, ensuring that the model supports scalability and long-term sustainability.

By embedding the **design thinking methodology** at every stage, this process ensured that the RALExILA System Model is not only technically robust but also practical, adaptable, and directly aligned with user needs.

3.2. CHAPTER 4 – KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS AND CORE FEATURES

The research and workshops identified critical gaps and opportunities in the development of Adult Learning and Education (ALE) registries and Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs).

The findings highlight the need for interoperability, user-centric design, quality assurance, and funding transparency, all of which directly inform the design principles and system architecture of the RALExILA System Model.

3.2.1 Core features recommended through research

3.2.1.1 Fragmented ALE Registries & Limited Interoperability

National ALE registries vary significantly in structure, accessibility, and interoperability. Many systems lack standardised data models, unified course directories, and seamless integration with European frameworks such as Europass, ESCO, and the European Learning Model (ELM). As a result, learners and training providers often struggle with inconsistent information, duplicated administrative efforts, and difficulties in recognising learning achievements across borders.

The RALExILA System Model addresses these challenges by defining a modular and scalable approach that supports standardised course discovery, provider validation or accreditation, and structured data. The use of open data formats (JSON, JSON-LD), API-based integration, and controlled vocabularies ensures that national systems can interoperate while maintaining flexibility for country-specific adaptations.

Implementation implications

To address fragmentation and enable interoperability, national ALE/ILA systems should

- prioritise structured and standardised representations of courses, providers, and credentials rather than free-text listings;
- adopt a modular system architecture that allows interoperability without requiring full system replacement;
- align key data elements with European reference models (e.g. ELM, ESCO, Europass) while retaining national flexibility;
- plan interoperability as a progressive capability, not a one-off technical integration.

3.2.1.2 Need for a More Accessible and User-Centric System

Existing ALE and ILA platforms are often complex and difficult to navigate, particularly for learners with low digital literacy or limited awareness of funding opportunities. Research findings indicate that many users struggle with confusing enrolment processes, unclear entitlement rules, and limited guidance on selecting appropriate training options.

To improve accessibility, the RALExILA System Model integrates learner-centred design principles, such as:

- Simplified user interfaces including issues such as mobile accessibility, single access points and multi-lingual support.
- Personalised learning pathways and AI-driven course recommendations based on skill portfolios and setting of individual goals.
- Integrated learner feedback tools and support systems to improve usability.

Ensuring compliance with the EU Web Accessibility Directive is also a key consideration, ensuring that all users, including individuals with disabilities, can fully engage with the system.

Implementation implications

User-centred design should be reflected in system implementation by:

- designing interfaces and workflows around learner and provider journeys rather than administrative structures;
- ensuring that core functions (search, enrolment, funding visibility) are accessible via mobile and in most cases low-bandwidth environments;
- integrating guidance and feedback mechanisms directly into the platform, rather than as external services;
- treating accessibility and usability as core system requirements, not optional enhancements.

3.2.1.3 Quality Assurance Gaps in Non-Formal Learning

Quality assurance mechanisms remain inconsistent and diverse across countries, particularly for non-formal and informal learning. While many countries have established accreditation standards for formal education providers, the recognition of micro-credentials, skills acquired through work experience, and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), particularly for Adult Learning, is often fragmented. This can limit the recognition, portability, and employer recognition of non-traditional learning experiences.

The RALExILA System Model supports improved quality assurance and accreditation through:

- Clear validation mechanisms for training providers and courses.
- An ALE registry data model designed around micro-credentials.
- Integration of RPL features into ALE registries.
- Course ratings and learner feedback to contribute to QA.
- Features suggesting automated compliance checks.

By incorporating these mechanisms, the system ensures that learners can trust the quality of their education, and employers can rely on recognised skills and certifications.

Implementation implications

To address quality assurance gaps, ALE/ILA systems should:

- clearly separate quality assurance processes from their representation in the system, allowing QA to be managed by external bodies while being referenced digitally;
- ensure that quality-related information (e.g. accreditation status, validation references, learner feedback) is visible and interpretable for users;
- support multiple QA approaches (formal, non-formal, sectoral, voluntary) rather than enforcing a single model;
- link quality assurance information to funding eligibility and learner trust mechanisms where relevant.

3.2.1.4 Complexity in Funding and ILA Management

Many learners and training providers face challenges related to ILA funding transparency, eligibility rules, and disbursement mechanisms. Research indicates that funding processes are often unclear and difficult to navigate, leading to confusion about how entitlements are allocated, which courses qualify for funding, and how payments are processed. Inconsistent rules and complex administrative requirements can deter learners from using ILAs effectively and create inefficiencies for training providers managing funding claims.

The RALExILA System Model introduces an ILA component data model to simplify and enhance financial processes. By modelling features that enable real-time balance tracking, learners can easily access updated information on their funding entitlements and make informed decisions about course selection.

The model also integrates automated eligibility verification mechanisms, reducing administrative burdens by ensuring that only approved courses and accredited (or otherwise quality assured) providers qualify for ILA funding. Additionally, proposed fraud prevention tools would help maintain the integrity of the system by detecting misuse and ensuring compliance with funding regulations.

To promote accountability, the system includes transparent reporting features that provide clear insights for learners, funders, and policymakers, ensuring that financial resources are allocated fairly, efficiently, and in alignment with national and European priorities.

Implementation implications

To reduce funding complexity, ALE/ILA system design should:

- make entitlement rules, balances, and eligibility conditions visible and understandable for learners;
- automate eligibility checks based on structured course and provider data;
- separate funding logic from course management logic to allow policy changes without system redesign;
- ensure that financial tracking and reporting functions are embedded from the outset, not added retrospectively.

3.2.1.5 Need for Policy Support and Data-Driven Decision Making

Effective policymaking in adult learning and education requires real-time insights into learner participation, funding utilisation, and emerging skills gaps. However, many existing ALE and ILA systems lack the necessary analytics and reporting features to track learning outcomes, workforce alignment, and the impact of funding allocations. Without comprehensive data, policymakers struggle to make evidence-based decisions, adjust funding models, or anticipate future skills needs of adult learners.

To address this, the RALExILA System Model proposes advanced features such as policy support tools that enable data-driven decision-making. The system proposes interactive analytics dashboards that would allow policymakers to monitor system performance, learner engagement, and funding trends in real time.

It also includes skills gap assessments and labour market alignment reports, helping decision-makers identify critical areas where workforce upskilling is needed. Additionally, benchmarking tools allow countries to compare their progress against European lifelong learning targets, ensuring that policies remain aligned with broader strategic goals.

Implementation implications

To support data-driven policymaking, national systems should:

- design reporting and analytics capabilities as integral system functions rather than external add-ons;
- distinguish between operational data (used for system management) and aggregated data used for policy analysis;
- ensure that data collected for learners and providers can be meaningfully reused for monitoring and evaluation;
- plan governance arrangements that allow policymakers access to timely, reliable, and interpretable system insights.

3.2.2 User needs assessment

A clear understanding of user needs is critical for designing effective Adult Learning and Education (ALE) registries and Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs).

Research conducted across ten European countries helped us identify the main user groups and is the basis for articulating the user-stories that plays a key role in establishing the RALExILA system model.

3.2.2.1 User Groups

To ensure that the System modelling approach effectively meets the diverse needs of all stakeholders involved in Adult Learning and Education (ALE) and Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs), user groups were carefully segmented based on their **roles, interactions, and needs** within the learning ecosystem.

This segmentation was guided by the findings from **the desk research, focus groups, surveys, and design thinking workshops**, ensuring that system development aligns with real-world needs and priorities. And is evidence-based.

A segmentation of users is crucial for several reasons:

- Tailored Solutions – Each group has distinct needs, expectations, and challenges that must be addressed through targeted solutions.
- Effective System Design – Understanding user behaviours enables the development of more intuitive, accessible, and functional ALE registries and ILAs.
- Policy and Governance Alignment – Clear user categorisation helps policymakers define rights, responsibilities, and engagement strategies for different stakeholders.
- Interoperability Considerations – A system that recognises the needs of multiple user types can be better integrated into existing institutional and policy frameworks and as a result is more sustainable and useful for the users.

Learners

Learners should be at the centre of the system, with easy access to learning opportunities, funding options, and personalised guidance, ideally resulting in widely recognised learning achievements. The system should allow them to search for courses, compare options, and track progress in a user-friendly way.

Since many learners face barriers such as low digital literacy, lack of awareness of available funding, and complex administrative processes, accessibility should be a key consideration. To support diverse learning pathways, the system should facilitate formal education, non-formal training, and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) while allowing learners to progress at their own pace.

Flexibility is crucial, enabling individuals to balance work, education, and personal commitments. Additionally, career guidance and learner feedback tools could help learners make informed decisions, ensuring they can effectively navigate their education and employment options.

Training Providers

Training providers play a key role in delivering quality learning opportunities and should benefit from enhanced visibility, accreditation support, and streamlined learner engagement. The system should allow them to list and manage their course offerings in a structured and searchable manner, improving accessibility for learners.

Ensuring compliance with accreditation and quality assurance frameworks, where relevant, is important for maintaining the credibility of available courses. Access to feedback and learner insights could further support providers in refining and improving their offerings.

Additionally, interoperability with existing national and European frameworks would help ensure that credentials or certifications are recognised, and that training is aligned with labour market needs.

Administrators

System administrators oversee the technical and operational management of the ALE and ILA system. Their responsibilities should include maintaining course listings, provider registrations, learner data, and funding allocations, ensuring usability, security, and compliance with national and European policies.

Administrators also play a key role in fraud prevention, quality assurance, and system optimisation. The system should support automated workflows for key tasks such as provider approvals, compliance monitoring, and reporting. Intuitive dashboards and analytics tools could help administrators track system performance and refine functionalities over time, ensuring that the system remains efficient, transparent, and responsive to evolving needs.

Policy-Makers

For policymakers, the system should provide real-time data to support evidence-based decision-making and long-term planning. Access to insights on learner participation, funding utilisation, and training outcomes could help in shaping effective education policies. The system could also facilitate the assessment of skills gaps and the alignment of learning opportunities with labour market demands, ensuring that policies remain responsive to economic and social needs.

Benchmarking progress against European frameworks for lifelong learning would further enhance strategic oversight, allowing policymakers to track developments and adjust regulations accordingly. By integrating customisable reporting tools and governance mechanisms, policymakers could evaluate the effectiveness of funding allocations, training quality, and learner success, refining the system to better serve its users.

Funders

Funders, primarily public authorities, but can also include employers and private sector partners, require visibility into how ILAs are utilised, which training programmes are most effective, and where funding gaps exist. The system should offer granular tracking of fund disbursement and learner participation, ensuring that resources are allocated efficiently and fairly. Funders want impact assessment tools to evaluate the return on investment in skills development and workforce upskilling.

Ensuring compliance with funding regulations is another key requirement. The system must provide audit-ready financial records, automated reporting on fund utilisation, and fraud detection mechanisms to prevent misuse. By fostering transparency and accountability, funders can collaborate more effectively with policymakers and training providers, ensuring that investments in lifelong learning contribute to broader economic and social objectives.

3.2.2.2 User Stories by Group

The following user stories represent the detailed expectations and requirements of each stakeholder group identified for both the ALE registries and the ILA component as developed by the system modelling process described at the beginning of this chapter.

Learners

As a learner, I want to access information about learning programmes so that I can make informed choices.

I want to know the feedback of other learners regarding the education they attended so that I can learn from their experiences.

I want to use the ILA entitlements for both professional and personal development so that I can grow holistically.

I want comparable credentials from all providers so that they are transparent and easily usable.

I want control over my private data, deciding what information is shared publicly.

I want to use my ILA and access learning opportunities without too limiting technical prerequisites (e.g., smartphones, high-speed internet).

I want my feedback to have consequences so that the system is truly adjusted for my needs.

I want to share feedback about educational programmes that are not currently offered so that I can suggest future courses.

I want to know which providers I can trust so that I feel confident using my ILA entitlements.

I want a single-entry point for ILA and ALE registries so that I can see the entire range of educational services.

Training Providers

As a provider, I want to reach new customers so that I can gain visibility in the education market.

I want to use the registry to identify my position in the education market and foster collaboration with other providers.

I want my learning opportunities linked to career guidance and the job market to better market my courses.

I want to use the registry to network with others, including stakeholders outside my national context.

I want a single data entry form that can be used across different platforms to reduce administrative burden.

I want to be included in the registry to gain the prestige and quality assurance it provides.

I want to receive feedback to improve the quality of the programmes we offer.

I want the registry to function as a regulator to ensure quality and prevent scams.

I want a clear value proposition for joining the registry that aligns with my business needs.

Administrators

As an administrator, I want an easy-to-use interface for data entry to save time and ensure accuracy.

I want assisted data entry functionality to improve the coherence of the information.

I want tagging guidelines and training to improve the accuracy of the registry's data.

I want supervision and peer support over time to ensure continuous improvement in registry management.

I want to access learner feedback and statistics to refine the registry and improve user experience.

I want a strategy to validate data accuracy and fill information gaps.

Policy-Makers

As a policymaker, I want an integrated register that provides an overview of educational offerings to address specific needs and groups.

I want adult education registries linked with awareness campaigns, guidance programmes, and quality assurance mechanisms for coherent policymaking.

I want real-time data comparison with projections to make proactive adjustments to the system.

I want the system designed modularly to allow individual adjustments without disrupting the entire framework.

I want insights into the business motivations of training providers to engage all types effectively.

I want a quality assurance system with audits and regular updates to ensure high standards.

Funders

As a funder, I want to track ILA performance metrics (e.g., distribution, success) to allocate resources effectively.

I want the system to align with funding regulations to ensure transparency and compliance.

3.2.2.3 User Journey

The User Journey section provides a structured view of how different stakeholder groups interact with the ALE/ILA system in practice. These user journeys are directly informed by the User Stories, which outline the expectations, challenges, and needs of learners, training providers, administrators, policymakers, and funders.

By linking the User Stories to the User Journey, this section translates stakeholder needs into step-by-step interactions within the ALE/ILA system. From a system perspective, these user journeys also illustrate where information must be structured, visible, and trustworthy, including learning opportunity data, funding eligibility, quality assurance references, and credentials issued after learning completion. While some processes may take place outside the digital platform, their outcomes should be represented or referenced within the system to support transparency, trust, and interoperability.

Each journey reflects the core system components, including the ALE registry (cataloguing learning opportunities) and the ILA component (enabling funding and fiscal management of learning).

The Adult Learning and Education (ALE) Registry serves as the backbone of the system, ensuring that high-quality learning opportunities are accessible, transparent, and structured. The Individual Learning Account (ILA) builds upon this foundation, introducing financial mechanisms that allow learners to access training opportunities effectively.

By mapping user experiences across these components, the User Journey provides a practical, end-to-end perspective of how the system facilitates lifelong learning.

Adult Learner perspective

The Adult Learner (Learner) enters the ALE registry in search for Learning Opportunities (LO). Once they identify a fitting Learning Opportunity, they then enrol for this LO, either via the platform or directly via the Training Provider (provider). If the LO is eligible for the use of an ILA entitlement, the Learner can use the entitlement made available through the ILA to cover (parts of) the cost of the LO. Alternatively, they can fund the LO via their personal funds. The provider then conducts the training, usually on a training premise, online or as a hybrid course/programme. After the learning activity is completed, the provider will issue some type of certification e.g. a license, certification, or credential for the successful completion of the course which is stored in the ALE/ILA platform. Lastly, the learner will evaluate the course, which could either happen directly through the provider or via the ALE/ILA platform.

Training Provider perspective

The Training Provider (provider) creates a listing of Learning Opportunities (courses). Before providers offer their courses via an ALE/ILA platform, a quality assurance process takes place. While quality assurance processes may be conducted outside the platform, their outcomes (such as accreditation status, validation references, or eligibility decisions) should be visible or referenced within the system to inform learners, administrators, and funding decisions. Quality Assurance mechanisms differ greatly based on the country, sector, and applicable policies. The QA process could be complemented by processes like eligibility checks via the ALE/ILA platform. Once the provider is eligible to offer their courses, they list them via the ALE/ILA platform. They then train the adult learners based on the course offers and schedules and provide them some type of certification e.g. a license, certification, or credential for the successful completion of the course. Courses could either be (co-) funded directly by the learner or through the ILA entitlement used by the learner.

Government perspective

Governments provide financial incentives through the provision of entitlements via the Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs). The type and focus of these entitlements are typically based on a prior skills need assessment.

User Journey

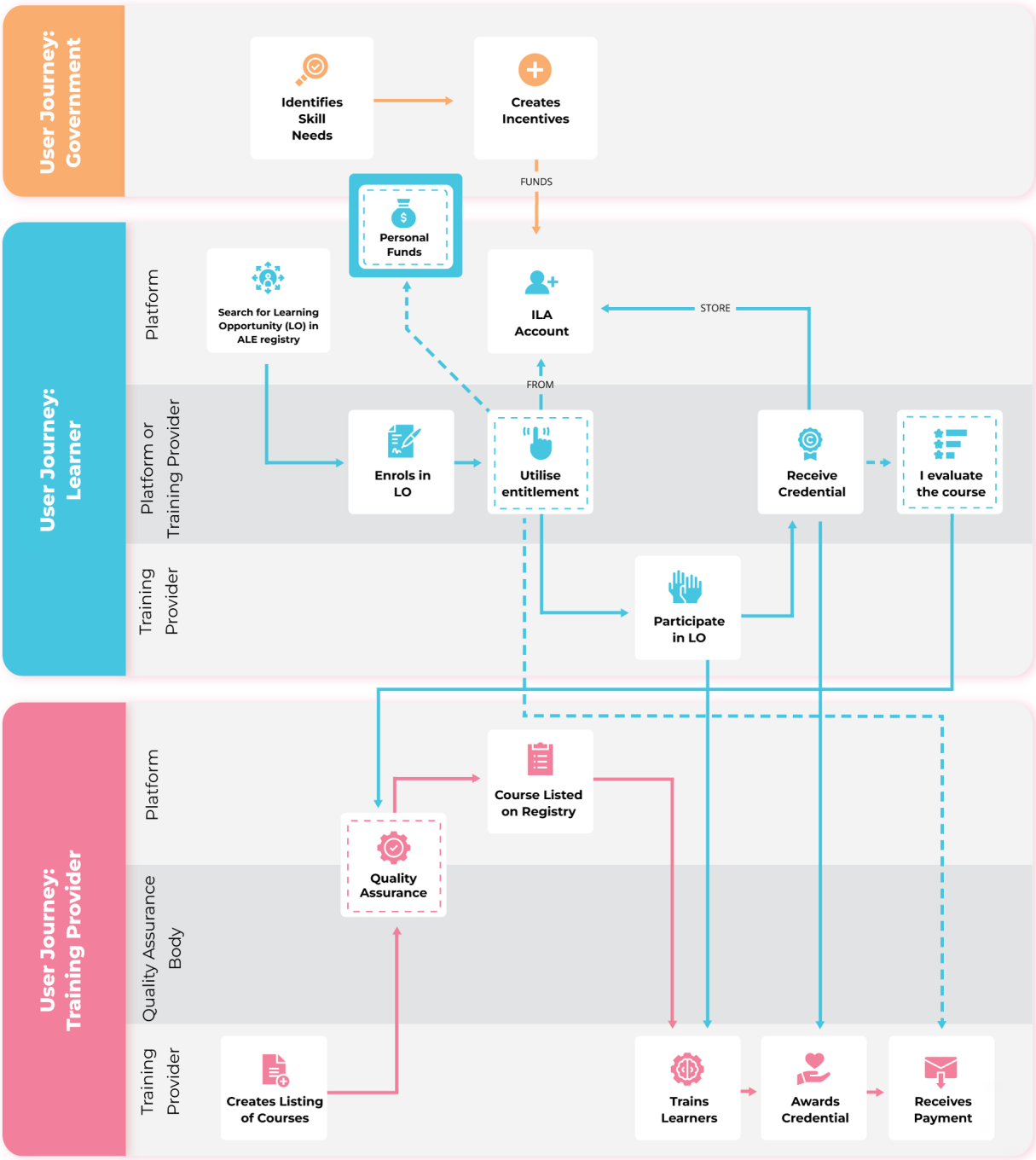

Figure 29 - User Journeys - Government, Learner, and Training Providers

3.3. CHAPTER 5 – ROADMAP FOR DEVELOPMENT AND ADAPTING SYSTEMS

3.3.1 Mapping, Developing, and Adapting National ALE/ ILA Systems

Developing or adapting an Adult Learning and Education (ALE) Registry and Individual Learning Accounts (ILA) system requires a structured yet adaptable approach. Rather than following a rigid step-by-step model, national authorities should focus on four interrelated areas of action that together ensure a sustainable, transparent, and effective system.

Each country's starting point will differ - some may already have an ALE registry but lack a funding mechanism, while others may need to build a system from the ground up. Regardless of the context, national authorities will need to map their existing system, define governance structures, develop a robust technical framework, and ensure long-term sustainability.

3.3.1.1 Understanding the Existing Landscape

Before designing an ALE/ILA system, it is essential to assess the current infrastructure, policy environment, and stakeholder landscape. This involves answering fundamental guiding questions.

What systems are already in place?

A national audit of existing ALE registries, funding mechanisms, and interoperability with education and employment databases helps determine whether an entirely new system is needed or if an existing platform can be adapted.

How do learners and providers currently interact with the system?

Understanding barriers to access, data accuracy, and administrative bottlenecks helps in shaping a more efficient future system.

What are the policy and regulatory constraints?

Compliance with data protection laws, accreditation requirements, and financial oversight rules needs to be established from the outset to avoid obstacles later.

Once this assessment is complete, a **baseline system map** can be developed, outlining existing capabilities, gaps, and areas for potential alignment with the RALExILA capabilities map. While the **RALExILA model** provides a structured reference, national contexts may require additional capabilities beyond those identified in the framework, as use cases, requirements, and policy ambitions vary significantly. Nevertheless, using the RALExILA model as a guiding framework can provide valuable structure and clarity, supporting a more cohesive and informed system development process.

3.3.1.2 Defining the Governance and Funding Model

Governance structures and funding mechanisms will determine how the ALE/ILA system operates, evolves, and remains accountable. A clear governance and funding model not only helps in efficient system operation but also builds trust among learners, providers, and policymakers. Several key decisions need to be made.

Who will oversee and manage the system?

Ministries of Education, Labour, and Finance, alongside regulatory bodies, and digital infrastructure teams, should have clearly defined responsibilities. A governance board or advisory group may be necessary to provide oversight.

How will funding be structured?

Countries need to decide whether to implement direct government funding, employer co-funding, voucher-based subsidies, or a hybrid model. This also involves defining learner entitlements, eligibility criteria, and fund allocation rules.

What mechanisms ensure transparency and accountability?

Funding flows need to be tracked and monitored, ensuring that funds are used appropriately and reach the intended learners and providers. How will training providers be accredited? A provider registration and quality assurance system ensure that only verified organisations participate in the ALE/ILA ecosystem.

3.3.1.3 Developing the Technical and Interoperability Framework

Once the governance and funding structures are in place, attention turns to technical implementation. By addressing following questions early, national authorities can ensure that their technical infrastructure supports long-term growth and integration with broader education and employment systems. Designing a system that is interoperable, user-friendly, and scalable requires careful planning in several areas.

What data infrastructure is needed?

A centralised course and provider database must be established if one does not already exist, ensuring structured data management and ease of access.

How do different systems communicate?

The ALE/ILA system must integrate with education databases, employment services, and funding bodies. Clear API standards and interoperability protocols should be established from the start.

How will users interact with the system?

Learner and provider dashboards should be designed for ease of use, mobile accessibility, and multi-language support. Consideration must be given to user authentication, security, and data privacy.

What reporting and analytics tools are needed?

The system should allow policymakers to monitor participation, track learning outcomes, and assess funding efficiency.

3.3.1.4 Ensuring Long-Term Sustainability and System Evolution

The final consideration is how the system will remain effective and relevant in the long term. By embedding ongoing evaluation and adaptation into the roadmap, national authorities can ensure that their ALE/ILA system remains relevant, effective, and aligned with long-term policy goals. Systems that are not actively maintained, updated, or aligned with policy shifts risk becoming outdated or underutilised.

How will the system be evaluated and improved?

Continuous monitoring, stakeholder feedback loops, and regular policy reviews ensure that the system evolves based on real-world use and changing needs.

What mechanisms will ensure financial sustainability?

Beyond initial implementation funding, there should be a strategy for long-term financial viability, including public-private partnerships, employer contributions, or evolving funding models.

How will digital and policy advancements be incorporated?

The system should have the flexibility to integrate emerging technologies (AI-driven learning recommendations, predictive analytics) and adapt to policy changes over time.

Countries should most certainly approach ALE/ILA system development as an iterative process, allowing for incremental improvements, stakeholder-driven refinements, and ongoing policy alignment. With a clear roadmap and well-defined priorities, national authorities can create scalable, transparent, and user-centred ALE/ILA systems that equally support lifelong learning and workforce development.

3.3.2 Step-by-Step Modular Implementation Approach

Countries will have different starting points for implementing ALE/ILA systems. The RALExILA System Model follows a modular approach, allowing for gradual development based on national priorities and available infrastructure.

Phase 1: Establishing a Core ALE Registry (Foundational Components)

For countries that do not yet have a structured ALE system, the first step is to establish a digital registry that centralises verified course and provider information.

Key Actions

- Develop a national course and provider database, ensuring alignment with accreditation frameworks.
- Define basic interoperability data standards to allow future integration with other systems and an easier implementation of ILAs.
- Establish data governance policies, clarifying who manages the registry and how information is updated.

Phase 2: Expanding the System with ILA Integration

Once the ALE registry is operational, the next step is to enable learners to manage individual learning entitlements through an ILA system.

Key Actions

- Implement user accounts where learners can track their ILA balances and funding history.
- Define rules for funding eligibility, ensuring that learners can easily determine which courses are covered.
- Develop payment and verification workflows, including automated fraud detection mechanisms.

Phase 3: Enhancing the System with Advanced Features

For countries that have an established ALE and ILA framework, further enhancements can improve personalisation, analytics, and cross-border recognition.

Key Actions

- Integrate credential management, skills portfolios, and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) features to support lifelong learning pathways.
- Deploy AI-powered learning recommendations that guide learners based on their career goals and skills needs.
- Ensure cross-border interoperability through the establishment of APIs and the consistent use of standardised data based on European standards (Europass, ESCO, ELM) to enable learning recognition across EU countries.

Case Study:

ALE System Maturity – Slovenia and Malta

Countries implement ALE and ILA systems at different levels of maturity. Slovenia and Malta illustrate how systems can evolve from basic registries to fully integrated funding mechanisms.

Slovenia – National ALE Registry Evolution

Slovenia's ALE registry started as a basic course database but has progressively integrated quality assurance, learner tracking, and funding mechanisms. The system now supports provider accreditation and automated funding allocation for ILAs.

Key Challenge: Transitioning from a data collection platform to an active funding and learning management system.

Solution: Gradual system upgrades, introducing accreditation, funding integration, and data-driven policy tools.

Lessons Learned: A phased approach allows for scalability without overwhelming system administrators or users.

Malta – JobPlus Platform

Malta's JobPlus platform is a government-led system that verifies training providers, aligns courses with labour market needs, and connects learners with funding options. It functions as both an ALE registry and an ILA management tool, streamlining enrolment, tracking, and funding approval.

Key Challenge: Ensuring public oversight of course quality while facilitating employer-supported learning.

Solution: Centralised provider verification, funding alignment with workforce demands, and automated learner tracking.

Lessons Learned: Tight integration between ALE registries and funding mechanisms improves transparency and accessibility.

Key Takeaways for Practitioners

- Slovenia demonstrates how a basic registry can evolve into a full-service ALE/ILA platform.
- Malta highlights the benefits of a government-driven system that links training quality with funding eligibility.
- Both cases show the value of phased system expansion, ensuring smooth adoption and long-term sustainability.

3.3.2.1 Capability Maturity Model for ALE/ILA Systems

To help practitioners assess their current system maturity and identify priority actions, the following Capability Maturity Model provides a structured way to determine which capabilities should be implemented next.

Maturity Level	Characteristics	Key Next Steps
Basic (ALE Registry Only)	A central registry exists but lacks ILA integration. No automated funding or quality assurance.	Strengthen data governance, ensure interoperability, integrate funding eligibility tracking.
Intermediate (ALE + ILA Integrated)	Learners can access ILAs and funding, but quality assurance and analytics are still underdeveloped.	Introduce provider accreditation frameworks, integrate micro-credentials, improve reporting and analytics.
Advanced (Fully Digital & Interoperable)	AI-driven learning pathways, real-time data analytics, automated funding, and compliance monitoring.	Enhance cross-border interoperability, optimise AI-driven learning recommendations, explore new funding models.

Table 10 – Capability Maturity Model

For practitioners, this model helps answer key questions such as:

- What level of infrastructure and governance does our national system currently have?
- What capabilities are essential for the next phase of implementation?
- How do we ensure alignment with European frameworks as we advance system maturity?

Case Study:

Funding Transparency and Policy Decision-Making – Finland and Croatia

Effective ALE and ILA systems require transparent funding and data-driven oversight. Finland and Croatia offer strong models for real-time tracking and structured funding allocation.

Finland – KOSKI Registry for Real-Time Learner Data Tracking

Finland's KOSKI Registry is a national digital database that centralises learner records, enrolments, and funding allocation. It enables policymakers to track participation and adjust funding based on skill demand.

Key Challenge: Aligning funding with workforce needs while reducing administrative complexity.

Solution: A national digital database that integrates learner records, funding disbursement, and policy monitoring tools.

Lessons Learned: Real-time data enables responsive policymaking, ensuring funds are directed where they are most effective.

Croatia – Voucher-Based ALE System

Croatia operates a voucher-based ALE funding model where learners receive government-issued training vouchers to enrol in approved courses. This system is co-financed by public and private stakeholders, ensuring shared responsibility for workforce upskilling.

Key Challenge: Balancing learner choice with financial oversight to prevent funding misuse.

Solution: A voucher system linked to accredited training providers, with strict reporting requirements for fund utilisation.

Lessons Learned: Public-private funding models can increase accessibility and employer engagement while maintaining financial transparency.

Key Takeaways for Practitioners

- Finland demonstrates the power of real-time learner tracking to optimise funding allocation and skills development strategies.
- Croatia's voucher system showcases how structured funding models can enhance learner choice while maintaining financial oversight.
- Both cases highlight the importance of integrating funding mechanisms with data-driven policymaking for sustainable ALE systems.

3.4. CHAPTER 6 – RALEXILA MODEL FOR ALE REGISTRIES AND ILA PLATFORMS

3.4.1 High-Level Overview of the ALE/ILA Model

3.4.1.1 Applying the System Model in Practice

The RALExILA System Model provides a structured approach to developing and integrating Adult Learning and Education (ALE) registries and Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs). This section serves as a practical guide for policymakers, system architects, and practitioners responsible for implementing ALE/ILA systems at the national level.

Rather than a one-size-fits-all solution, the model offers modular and scalable options that can be adapted to different national contexts, allowing for gradual implementation based on existing infrastructure and policy priorities.

This section outlines:

1. Key relationships between ALE and ILA components - how different system elements interact and how they can be integrated.
2. ALE/ILA capability map – providing a high-level overview of identified capabilities of an integrated ALE/ILA system.
3. A step-by-step modular implementation approach - guiding you through a phased development strategy.
4. A capability maturity model - helping you assess your current system and define next steps.

3.4.1.2 Key Relationships Between ALE and ILA Components

A well-functioning ALE/ILA system requires the integration of multiple components that must work together to provide a seamless experience for learners, providers, and funders.

At the core of this system are:

- The National ALE Registry – A centralised course and provider database that ensures verified learning opportunities, accreditation, and quality assurance.
- The ILA Mechanism – A system that allows individuals to track, manage, and spend learning entitlements.
- Funding & Payment Systems – A structured framework for allocating, verifying, and disbursing funds from public authorities, employers, or other funders.
- Interoperability & Standards – Ensuring that national systems align with European frameworks (Europass, ESCO, ELM) for improved recognition.
- User-Centric Digital Infrastructure – A platform that provides intuitive access, guidance tools, and real-time learning insights for users.

For practitioners, the question is: **How do we ensure these components interact effectively?**

Key Implementation Considerations

By considering the following questions, you can plan integration efforts efficiently, ensuring that ALE and ILA systems are developed in a cohesive and interoperable manner.

- If a country already has an ALE registry, what additional data structures are needed to integrate ILA funding and learner accounts?
- What mechanisms are required for secure data exchange between funding bodies, providers, and national authorities?
- How can a single sign-on system (SSO) or digital identity framework help unify access to ALE and ILA services?

Case Study:

Governance and Integration Model – France (Compte Personnel de Formation - CPF)

A well-governed, centralised ALE and ILA system ensures quality control, transparency, and seamless integration of funding mechanisms. France's Compte Personnel de Formation (CPF) serves as a strong example of a nationally managed, centralised ILA system that is fully integrated with a national ALE registry.

France – Compte Personnel de Formation (CPF)

France's CPF system enables individuals to accumulate training credits throughout their working lives, which they can use to enrol in accredited courses. The CPF is managed through Mon Compte Formation, a single national platform that serves as the official ALE registry, listing only approved training providers.

The platform is directly linked to national funding mechanisms, allowing users to search for courses, check their available funding balance, and register online without additional administrative steps. This fully centralised model ensures that all training providers undergo strict accreditation, reducing risks of low-quality offerings and misuse of public funds.

- **Key Challenge:** Creating a learner-friendly, digital-first ILA system while maintaining rigorous quality assurance and financial accountability.
- **Solution Implemented:** A nationally regulated digital platform that integrates course listings, funding eligibility, and enrolment into a single system, removing bureaucratic barriers for learners.
- **Lessons Learned:** A centralised approach enhances transparency, funding efficiency, and quality control, but requires strong governance and policy coordination.

Key Takeaways for Practitioners

- A single national platform reduces fragmentation, ensuring a coherent, user-friendly system.
- Direct funding integration simplifies enrolment and reduces administrative burdens for learners.
- Strict provider accreditation guarantees course quality and financial accountability.
- Digital automation enhances user experience, tracking, and fraud prevention.

3.4.1.3 ALE and ILA capability Map

The ALE/ILA Capability Map, presented on the next page, provides a visual representation of the key functional areas that make up an effective Adult Learning and Education (ALE) registry and Individual Learning Account (ILA) system.

This map is based on the RALExILA System Model and was developed through extensive stakeholder consultation across participating countries.

Each capability within the map corresponds to a specific function or feature that supports the design, implementation, and governance of ALE and ILA systems. These capabilities are categorised based on their role within the system and are further prioritised according to their perceived importance in the implementation process.

A detailed description of each capability, along with a prioritisation framework indicating its implementation urgency (e.g., MUST, SHOULD, COULD), can be found in the RALExILA System Model document. The prioritisation reflects how participating countries ranked the importance of each capability based on national priorities, system needs, and implementation feasibility. However, this ranking should be considered indicative rather than prescriptive. Each country should adapt the prioritisation based on its own policy goals, funding availability, digital infrastructure, and system maturity.

The capability map serves as a practical tool to help policymakers, system designers, and stakeholders assess their current ALE/ILA landscape, identify gaps, and prioritise development efforts. It provides a structured framework to guide implementation, ensuring that countries can progress step by step while maintaining flexibility to align with their unique governance models, regulatory environments, and user needs.

ALE/ILA system capabilities map

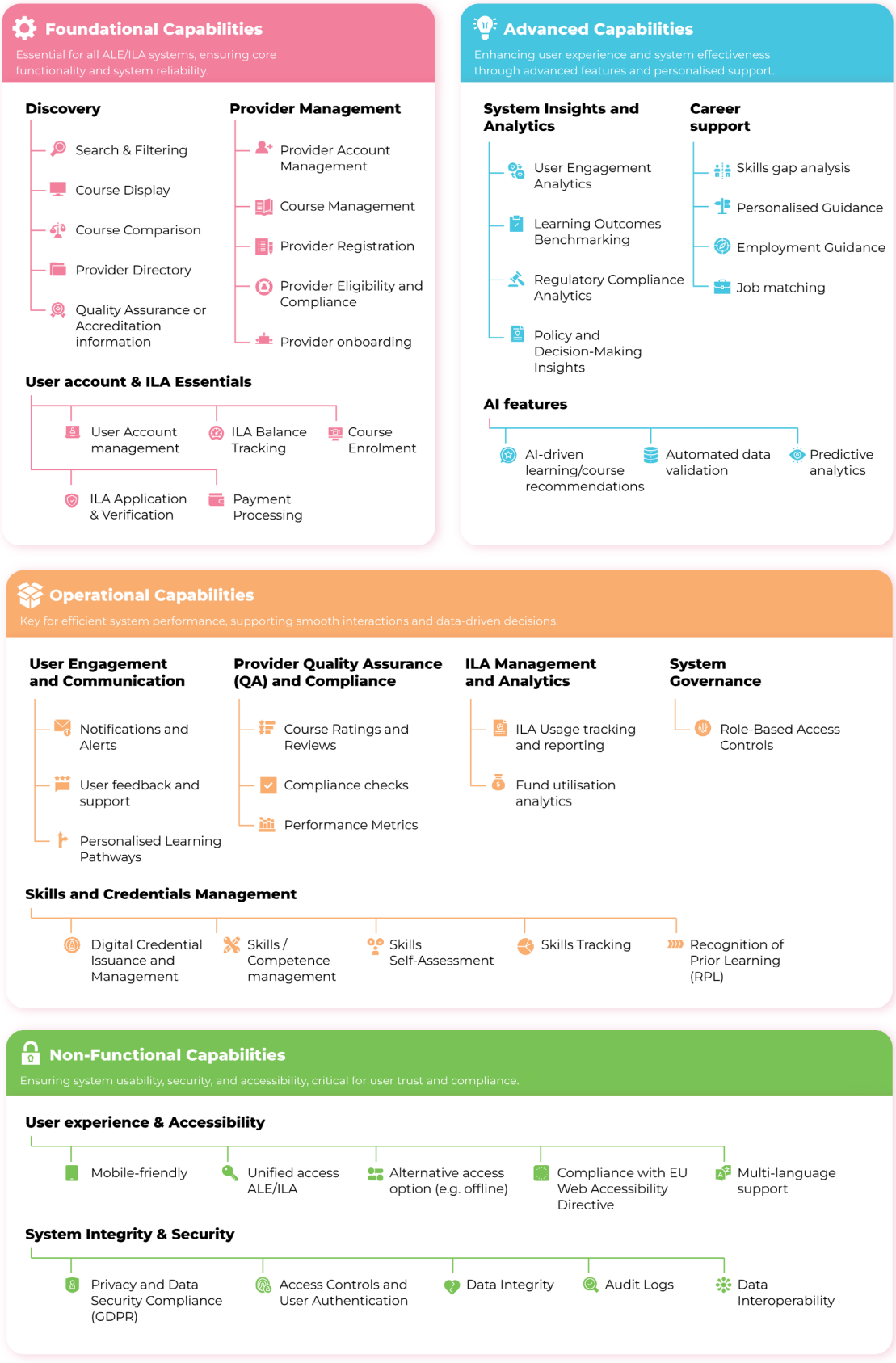

Figure 30 – ALE registries and ILA platforms capability map

Case Study:

Implementation of Modular System Features – Ireland and Portugal

A modular approach to ALE and ILA systems allows for scalability, flexibility, and phased implementation. Ireland and Portugal have successfully developed national ALE registries that integrate course catalogues, funding mechanisms, and skills validation while allowing for future expansion.

Ireland – FETCH & Qualifax Databases

Ireland operates two complementary platforms for adult learning and training:

- FETCH (Further Education & Training Course Hub) – A centralised directory listing government-funded FET programmes.
- Qualifax – A national database covering all education and training options, including higher education, apprenticeships, and further education.

These platforms interact with Ireland's National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and European education databases.

Key Challenge: Ensuring comprehensive course information while integrating funding mechanisms.

Solution: A phased rollout, first establishing a national course catalogue (Qualifax), followed by integrating funding eligibility and provider management (FETCH).

Lessons Learned: Incremental system development reduces complexity while aligning with policy priorities.

Portugal – Qualifica Portal

Portugal's Qualifica Portal is a national ALE registry that integrates career guidance, skills validation, and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). Unlike traditional course catalogues, it allows learners to:

- Explore accredited training programmes aligned with employment goals.
- Validate prior learning and experience through RPL.
- Receive personalised recommendations for further education.

The portal is linked to Portugal's National Qualifications System (SNQ) and public employment services for better labour market alignment.

Key Challenge: Developing a learner-centred ALE registry that goes beyond course listings.

Solution: A holistic platform combining course discovery, career guidance, and RPL validation while remaining scalable.

Lessons Learned: Integrating skills validation and guidance tools can enhance learner engagement and employability.

Key Takeaways for Practitioners

For national policymakers and system developers, these examples show that modularity supports sustainable ALE and ILA system development.

- Ireland's modular approach separates course listings from funding management, enabling gradual system enhancement.
- Portugal's Qualifica model extends beyond course catalogues to support career transitions and personalised learning pathways.
- Both cases highlight the benefits of phased implementation, ensuring core functionalities are built first, with room for scalability.

3.4.2 Data Governance and Management in the ALE/ILA System

3.4.2.1 Why Data Governance Matters

A **well-structured data governance framework** is essential for the success of an ALE/ILA system. Without clear policies on data collection, storage, interoperability, and security, system fragmentation and inefficiencies can undermine the platform's effectiveness. The **RALExILA System Model** outlines key capabilities that depend on reliable data management, including course and provider accreditation, skills & competences management, learner entitlements tracking, funding allocation, and analytics-driven policymaking.

To ensure a cohesive and well-regulated system, national authorities should establish a **clear data governance structure** that defines:

- What data is collected (content and structure).
- How data is stored and maintained (security, access, and quality control).
- Who owns, accesses, and updates the data (roles and responsibilities).
- How data is shared across systems (interoperability and integration).

3.4.2.2 Data governance approach

This following section provides some practical steps for data collection, management, and governance based on international best practices, including the FAIR Principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable)[5], ISO standards for data quality, and the Data Management Body of Knowledge (DMBOK) framework.

Step 1: Data Collection: Defining and Standardising ALE/ILA Data

The first step in system development is defining the data elements to be collected, ensuring consistency, usability, and integration with national and international frameworks. The RALExILA System Model provides a structured Data Model that categorises data elements into three broad groups:

1. Adult Learning and Education (ALE) Registry Data Model – Covers courses, providers, accreditation, and quality assurance data.
2. Individual Learning Account (ILA) Data Model – Includes learner entitlements, funding transactions, and account status.
3. Complementary Data for an Integrated ALE/ILA System – Encompasses additional contextual data that enhances system functionality, such as labour market insights and user engagement metrics.

The **first two categories** are **detailed models** that specify core data elements and their alignment with the European Learning Model (ELM), ensuring interoperability with European frameworks. The **third category** is more flexible, **offering value-added** data that can enhance the functionality and impact of an ALE/ILA system but is not strictly required for implementation.

While these **three categories provide a structured blueprint**, each country must define its own national data model based on policy priorities, regulatory requirements, and system capabilities. The RALExILA models serve as a reference, helping national authorities align their data architecture with best practices and international interoperability standards.

[5]FAIR Principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable): Available at https://www.go-fair.org/fair-principles/

Best Practices for Data Collection

- Use structured, standardised data formats (e.g., JSON-LD, XML, or RDF for interoperability).
- Leverage controlled vocabularies e.g. alignment of Skills and Competence data with ESCO (European Skills, Competences, and Occupations framework).
- Ensure real-time validation (technical feature) to prevent duplicate or incorrect entries.
- Adopt automated data collection methods (e.g., API-driven data submission by providers) or alternatively consider bulk-import or expert of data to avoid lengthy and error-prone manual data entries.

Reference Frameworks

- ISO/IEC 11179 – Metadata Registry Standard (Ensures consistent data structuring).[6]
- FAIR Data Principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable).[7]

Step 2: Data Storage & Security: Safeguarding System Integrity

Once data is collected, it must be securely stored and efficiently managed. A centralised or federated database model can be used depending on governance preferences.

Key Considerations for Data Storage

- Scalability: Ensure that storage infrastructure can manage future data expansion.
- Security: Implement role-based access control (RBAC) to limit data access.
- Encryption & Compliance: Use AES-256 encryption for sensitive learner data and ensure GDPR compliance.
- Backup & Disaster Recovery: Establish redundant storage solutions and automated backup procedures.

[6]ISO/IEC 11179 – Metadata Registry Standard: Available at https://www.iso.org/standard/78914.html
[7]FAIR Data Principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable): Available at https://www.nature.com/articles/sdata201618

Common Data Storage Models

Model	Description	Best Used For
Centralised Database	A single national database stores all ALE/ILA data	Countries with a strong governance authority overseeing the system
Federated Model	Data remains with institutions but is accessible via a common API gateway	Systems requiring decentralised management (e.g., multi-agency oversight)
Blockchain-Based Storage	Transactions are logged securely in a distributed ledger	Ensuring tamper-proof funding transactions and learner record tracking

Table 11 – Common Data Storage

Reference Frameworks

- ISO/IEC 27001 – Information Security Management.[8]
- GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) Compliance Guidelines.

Step 3: Data Interoperability & Integration: Ensuring Seamless Data Exchange

Interoperability has been a recurring theme throughout this handbook and the **RALExILA System Model**. While countries tend to prioritise existing data structures over interoperability, a truly **sustainable, scalable, and internationally compatible** ALE/ILA system must be designed with **interoperability at its core**. Beyond technical integration, interoperability also plays a crucial role in **ensuring a collective understanding** of data, facilitating seamless collaboration not only between systems but also among stakeholders.

Integration with National & International Frameworks Align with national education and workforce databases (labour market monitoring tools, social security records). Enable cross-border recognition via Europass & ELM (European Learning Model). Use Open API Standards (e.g., RESTful APIs for secure data exchange).

[8]ISO/IEC 27001 – Information Security Management: Available at https://www.iso.org/standard/27001

Integration with National & International Frameworks

- Align with national education and workforce databases (labour market monitoring tools, social security records).
- Enable cross-border recognition via Europass & ELM (European Learning Model).
- Use Open API Standards (e.g., RESTful APIs for secure data exchange).

3.4.3 Governance and Sustainability of the ALE/ILA System

The successful implementation of an integrated national ALE/ILA system requires a clear governance framework that ensures long-term sustainability, accountability, and adaptability.

The RALExILA System Model provides a structured reference for aligning governance, funding, and policy oversight.

3.4.3.1 Governance Structure and Responsibilities

The successful implementation of **an integrated national ALE/ILA system** requires a clear governance framework. The RALExILA System Model provides a structured reference for aligning governance, funding, and policy oversight. A well-defined governance model ensures all three key aspects - the efficient operation, oversight, and continuous improvement of the ALE/ILA system.

While national structures vary, key governance roles typically include:

- National Authorities (Ministries of Education, Labour, and Finance): Oversee policy alignment, regulatory compliance, and long-term funding sustainability.
- System Operators (Public Agencies or Designated Entities): Manage technical infrastructure, provider accreditation, and learner support services.
- Training Providers and Employers: Ensure course quality, learner engagement, and alignment with labour market needs.
- Learners and Social Partners: Participate in system evaluation, feedback mechanisms, and quality assurance processes.

3.4.3.2 Funding and Financial Sustainability

The **long-term viability of an ALE/ILA system** depends on sustainable financing models. In an ideal scenario, such model balances public investment, employer contributions, and learner incentives. Three key funding approaches are:

- Publicly Funded ILAs (State-managed entitlements with targeted allocations).
- Co-Financing Models (Employer-matched contributions or sectoral funding schemes).
- Voucher-Based Systems (Learner-directed funding with accredited provider participation).

While countries can opt for a combination or several of these models, planning strategic sustainability is of utmost importance for sustainability.

3.4.3.3 Ensuring System Adaptability and Policy Evolution

A governance framework must evolve alongside technological advancements, policy shifts, and changing learner needs. However, as the research highlights, when governments implement digital platforms or new funding schemes such as ILAs, long-term planning for policy evolution and system development is often overlooked. The need to adjust priorities, refine funding mechanisms, and expand system capabilities based on evidence tends to become an afterthought, making later adjustments complex and resource intensive. To avoid this, countries should embed adaptability into system design from the outset, ensuring that mechanisms for policy refinement and continuous system improvement are integrated early in the implementation process.

Key mechanisms to support long-term system adaptability include:

- Regular Policy Reviews, ensuring that eligibility criteria, funding models, and interoperability standards are continuously aligned with national priorities and workforce demands.
- Data-Driven Decision-Making by design - leveraging learning analytics and labour market insights to refine funding allocation, course offerings and system capabilities based on real-time evidence.
- Interoperability Standards, integrating the system with European reference models such as the ELM (which uses ESCO, Europass and micro-credential considerations) facilitates the long-term success, enables cross-border recognition and workforce mobility, and contributes to a more cohesive European education system, benefiting adult learners in particular.

4 .Part 3 RALExILA Co-design Play-book

4.1. INTRODUCTION

Part 3 provides a detailed guidelines to co-design ALE registries and ILA platforms, as per the approach and protocols developed and implemented within the RALExILA initiative. It serves the purpose to help to re-run the co-design process, based the materials provided in this Handbook.

4.2. CHAPTER 7 - MULTI-STAKEHOLDERS' APPROACH

The RALExILA approach aim to involve a variety of external experts and national participants in national and transnational capacity building activities to develop the core outputs.

The main stakeholders identified for these processes are:

- National and regional authorities, including representatives from department and agencies and services for employment, education, quality assurance and information systems
- ALE providers and networks of any type, including formal education organisations (VET, HE), non-formal education organisations, community-based learning organisations, public and private sector organisations
- Learners from all areas and demographics (adults)
- Experts from national and international organisations and institutions, such as European Commission, CEDEFOP, EQF working group, Europass and EDC, academia, and private sector.

Additional stakeholders' group to be considered are also:

- Social partners, both on employers and employee's side
- Developers of information system (private or public organisations depending on the context)
- Employers and sector bodies (e.g. sector skills councils, professional bodies)
- Career guidance and employment services
- Qualifications and recognition authorities (e.g. NQF, awarding and RPL bodies)
- Digital identity authorities
- Data protection, cybersecurity authorities
- Financial, payment and audit bodies
- Inclusion and outreach organisations representing disadvantaged groups
- Labour market intelligence and statistics bodies

Stakeholders can be organised broadly in at least 4 levels of engagement and role in the process.

- Core facilitators (experts in each field, national or international level)
- Core participants in the co-design process (national organisations, experts in each field)
- Pilot activities participants (the same groups as the whole co-design processes while ideally expanded to more organisations at this stage)
- Advisory Panel/s (the Panel/s can also be organised in National and International sub-groups)

4.2.1 Stakeholders' identification

4.2.1.1 Stakeholders mapping

The first step of any co-design process is to identify the core stakeholders to engage to be able to represent all the diverse perspectives for the processes at hand. A specific stakeholders' mapping exercise has to be conducted, for all the relevant levels (international, national etc.) and sectors. The stakeholder mapping process aims to identify all the groups and stakeholders that 1) are affected by the aims of the project, 2) can influence results and/or 3) have interest in the results.

4.2.1.2 Levels of engagement

In the second step of stakeholders' identification, the groups are organised by priorities and level of engagement (current and expected/needed), for example using methodology like the Engagement Ladder Theory or at least a basic identification of interest level and potential influence.

''The Ladder of Engagement is a tool that can be used to build relationships with your audience over time in order to deepen their commitment to your organization. This theory suggests that people are likely to become supporters of your organization by taking easy actions, but can be consciously led up the ladder to take harder and harder actions. Six steps are identified to build effective and long-term engagement: observing, following, endorsing, contributing, owning, and leading.''[9]

To implement this approach for a specific initiative, we need to link specific actions to each level of the ladder (for example followers on social media are linked to communication, while active participants can be linked to contributing). We also need to take a snapshot of the current engagement level, to be able to identify appropriate calls to action for each of them.

4.2.1.3 Relationships and roles

Finally, we need to analyse relationships between stakeholders and relevant roles within the group/s. There are a range of methods to analyse the role of individuals.

[9]Niosi, A. & KPU Marketing 4201 Class of Summer 2020. (2020). An open guide to integrated marketing communications. https://kpu.pressbooks.pub/openimc/

''The following questions can help to know the group better and also to identify incentives for participation, which will help in the recruitment:

1. What is the stakeholder's primary interest in the co-creation process/results?
2. To what degree is the stakeholder relevant in the field of interest?
3. To what degree is the stakeholder involved in the processes in the region?
4. Does this stakeholder oppose or support the vision we would like to reach?
5. Will the co-creation activity benefit or harm the stakeholder?
6. What alliances exist with other stakeholders?
7. What conflicts exist with other stakeholders?"[10]

4.2.2 Onboarding and engagement

Once the stakeholders' identification is conducted, we can define the full value proposition for each group/role (initial one) and start outreach and onboarding processes.

The value proposition can be developed in writing, in a multimedia format or just be a set of clear statements.

The core aspects to define are in any case 1) motivation to join (which influence the onboarding process) and 2) motivation to stay (which affects the way we design our engagement actions and the co-design activities).

A good approach for any engagement strategies aiming at a satisfactory and successful co-design process is based on:

- a multilevel engagement model (the ladder) and expansion model (options to add and engage new stakeholders at any given stage);
- continuous feedback cycle;
- blended and flexible methods for the concrete activities (synchronous/ asynchronous, face to face, online and hybrid etc.).

[10]Pinzi, V., Schammer, M., Kalai, K., Hatvani, N., Polyacskó, O., Szerencsés, R., & Kranendonk, R. (2022). Guidelines for Hubs co-creation workshops, Engage4BIO project. https://www.engage4bio.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/engage4bio_WorkshopsGuidelines_26072023.pdf

4.3. CHAPTER 8 - CO-DESIGN APPROACH

The core approach of this co-design process is Design thinking.

''Design thinking is a non-linear, iterative process that teams use to understand users, challenge assumptions, redefine problems and create innovative solutions to prototype and test. It is most useful to tackle ill-defined or unknown problems and involves five phases: Empathize, Define, Ideate, Prototype and Test.'' [11] The version of DT used as based method for the RALExILA Approach further differentiate the first step into Discover and Empathize and the last step into Evaluate and Refine.

Designing thinking approach is particularly suited to developing innovative processes or instruments, when the matter is deeply interdisciplinary (cross-functional teams involved) and the problem at hand is ill-defined (often referred to as ''wicked problems). The approach focuses on discovering specific user's needs (exploration of the problem space) and letting creative solutions emerge (exploration of the solution space).

Based on the Designing Thinking approach and the diverging/converging process, the overall RALExILA co-design process is organised in five main steps.

- P1 context and mapping > Discover
- P2 needs elicitation and user stories > Empathise/Define
- P3 capability mapping & prioritisation > Define/Ideate [transition]
- P4 prototyping solutions > Ideate/Prototype
- P5 pilot testing, feedback, and revision > Evaluate/Refine

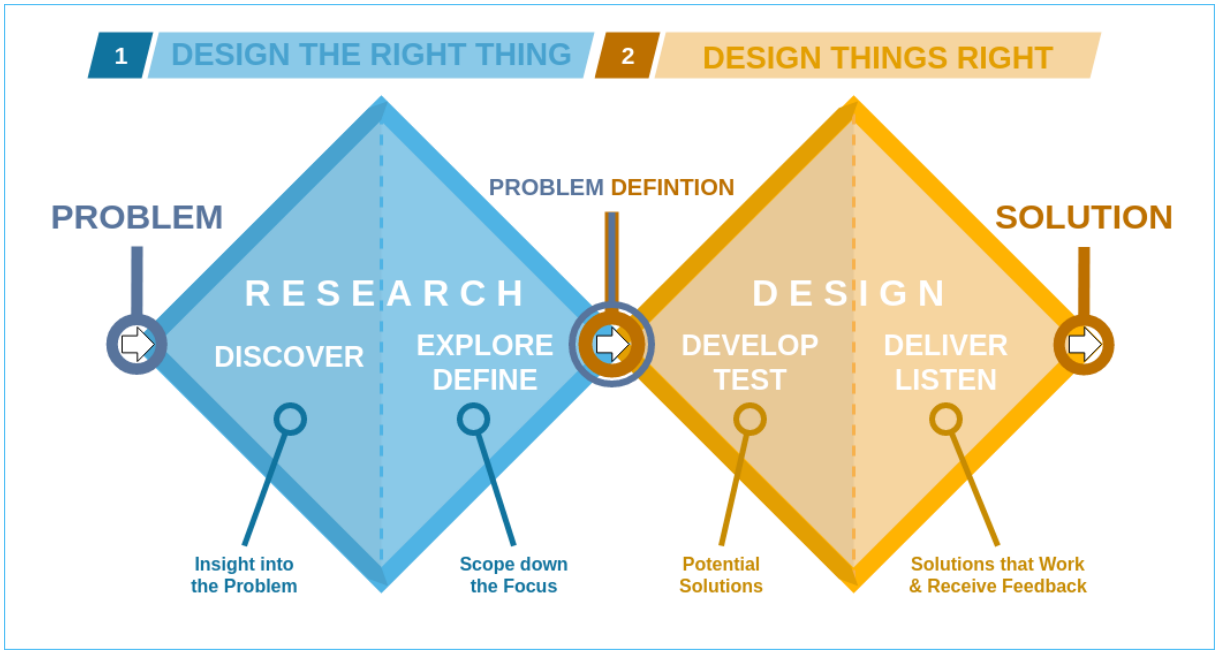

Figure 31 – Problem and solution spaces

[11] IxDF - Interaction Design Foundation. (2016, May 25). What is Design Thinking?. IxDF - Interaction Design Foundation. https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/topics/design-thinking
Picture credit
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/bd/Double_diamond.png, Digi-ark, CC0, via Wikimedia Commons.

4.3.1 From discover to define

The RALExILA initiative aims to enhance adult learning and education through the development of models for Adult Learning and Education (ALE) National Registries to support the implementation of Individual Learning Accounts (ILA). This initiative seeks to address the evolving needs of adult learners to engage in learning experience and the demands of modern educational frameworks, harmonised with growing supply in various types of education content and delivery channels.

The project analyses contexts, needs and benefits for the deployment of integrated and interoperable National Adult Learning and Education (ALE) Registries, in Europe. The need for robust governance frameworks, quality assurance, and efficient interoperable information models in adult education is evident but requires an adequate approach to be achieved.

The objective of this phase is to identify gaps in the integration of comprehensive systems and training databases that support adult learning and education, in selected countries, and **develop an in-depth understanding** of the current state of play, at both theoretical and policy levels related to Individual Learning Accounts implementation, **with a focus** on governance frameworks, quality assurance methods, and data/information models.

Specific Objectives

- To gather and analyse up-to-date experience from national, local and organisation level initiatives, including pivotal updates on these initiatives and responses from stakeholders,
- To analyse systems that exists on national or regional level, including structure and functionality of databases related to ALE and ILA,
- To analyse governance frameworks and quality assurance mechanisms in place,
- To assess the needs and contexts for deploying ALE registries that can support the implementation of Individual Learning Accounts.

4.3.1.1 Core questions

How are governance frameworks and quality assurance mechanisms structured for adult learning and education?

Having in mind that different countries are currently at different levels of maturity and inclination regarding implementation of ALE and ILA systems, the research will focus on a variety of aspects of the development and implementation cycle of such systems. This includes starting motivation to develop them, an overview of expected results, strategic planning and timeline, maturity level of the system, enablers and obstacles and lessons learned. The focus will stay on governance frameworks and quality assurance mechanisms and related factors.

What are the current systems and databases implemented for adult learning and education opportunities at a national and regional level?

The research will analyse current systems and databases used in adult learning and education in the contexts identified (geographical scope). The research will focus specifically on the information models, considering other technical aspects (such as infrastructure or service model) only in relation with the necessity to understand the data/information model in place.

What are the specific needs and contexts for deploying Individual Learning Accounts for all stakeholders?

Research will analyse perspective, expectations, and experiences of different stakeholders, including needs and contextual aspects that can favour or prevent participating in Individual Learning Accounts initiatives. We will consider issues such as usability and accessibility, as well as aspects related to trust and quality.

What are the main motivational aspects and implementation drivers for an ILA system from the point of view of the relevant stakeholders involved, including existing policy and strategies and contextual factors?

Finally, the research will analyse various perspectives of the core stakeholders (as identified in the following text), aiming to identify the main motivational aspects and implementation drivers of the ILA system, considering also state-of-the-art experience and expectations of the stakeholders involved.

4.3.1.2 Scope of the Study

Subject Matter

Examination of existing national registries, databases, governance frameworks, quality assurance frameworks, and information models in adult learning and education and in the implementation of the ILA systems. The research focuses on the analysis of selected contexts and practices related to ALE, considering their significance and impact on educational systems in selected countries, considering both the supply (i.e. provision) and demand level (i.e. participation) of ALE. The research aims to deepen the understanding of existing practices, their effectiveness, and potential areas for improvement to serve as a basis for the proposal of the project frameworks and models.

Geographical Scope

At this stage, it is fundamental to:

1. identify core contexts and practices of relevance to include in the research, beyond the co-creation contexts (the ones involved directly in the co-design and possibly future implementation process).
2. provide a pre-analyse and rationale for inclusion in the Discover phase.

The core principles of the RALExILA approach are as following.

- Presence of national, regional, and sectorial registries for adult education, in particular when linked to national and international qualifications frameworks, skills and competences frameworks, quality assurance frameworks and funding schema, including innovative form of credentialling (like micro-credentials).
- Presence of registries for adult education implementing interoperability approaches, in particular related to European level schema (such as European Learning Model).
- Existing integrated learning offered and possibly related registries implementing a multi-stakeholder's approach, for example involving HE, VET and non-formal education training providers, social partners, industry-led training providers and civil society organisations.
- Examples where centralized (national) and decentralized (regional) adult learning offer and registries coexists already and are developed/owned by different institutions.
- Presence of structured and/or formalized quality assurance systems for adult education (programmes and providers), mandatory or voluntary, linked or not to use of public funding schema.
- Presence (in place, already implemented) of individual funding schema for adult education (past or present), from paid offer (to providers, while based on individual entitlements), to ILA-like system (like voucher) to fully fledge ILA, in particular related to the European Council Recommendations principles.

These guiding principles can be applied to any other initiative for the Discover and Define phases, while specific principles should be also considered and integrated based on the specific Research Questions defined.

Additional practices to be analysed

In addition to specific contexts (geographical and policy contexts), it is relevant to embed in the desk research and analysis of model's other practices.

The core principles to identify additional practices of interests were the same as per the Geographical context (see above), while, at this level, the criteria related to the pool expanded to:

- the global context (for example, practices from international organisations);
- international contexts (from countries and contexts outside of the European space);
- and single examples (for example, single providers).

4.3.1.3 Study implementation

Time

The time for this phase largely depends should be defined based on the number of target contexts, target audience and methods selected.
As, an example, to implement this phase in the scope of the RALExILA initiative level (10 countries and the variety of study methods described in the next section), a time of 10-12 months should be considered. Furthermore, it is important also to set a time of relevant practices and policies to analyse (for example, up to the year before the starting date of this phase).

Population and Sample

The main target population for such Discover phase should include the following groups, as minimum requirements.

- **Adult learners from different backgrounds:** understanding their needs, preferences, and challenges is essential for designing ALE registries that are user-centred and meet their expectations.
- **Educational institutions from all levels of education (formal and non-formal):** engaging with educational institutions helps in understanding the existing landscape of ALE provision and the capacity and challenges for delivering ALE registries.
- **Employers and employment agencies (private and public):** understanding employers' perspectives on ALE, including their training needs and preferences, will help in aligning ALE offerings with labour market demands.
- **Policy makers:** national and/or regional government bodies that are responsible for formulating policies, regulations, and funding mechanisms related to adult learning and education and the ILA system. Their involvement is essential for ensuring the sustainability and scalability of ALE registries.

Clear sampling guidelines are also needed to provide understanding among partners on how to proceed to identify and select the research participants at various levels.

Adult Learners

Strategy: Combination of Purposive and Snowball Sampling

Rationale: Adult learners are a diverse group with varying backgrounds, learning needs, and experiences. Purposive and snowball sampling, while easier to deploy than stratified, will still ensure representation across different demographics. This approach can help in understanding the accessibility and impact of learning registries and accounts on different segments of the population.

Implementation: Segment the adult learner population based on key characteristics (e.g., age groups, employment status). Select participants from each segment, ensuring a broad spectrum of perspectives.

Educational Institutions

Strategy: Purposive Sampling

Rationale: Educational institutions vary by size, type (vocational, higher education, adult education centres), and geographical location. Purposive sampling allows for the selection of institutions that are actively engaged in adult learning programs and could provide in-depth insights into the use and impact of national registries and learning accounts.

Implementation: Identify institutions known for innovative adult education programs across different regions and types of education, ensuring a broad spectrum of perspectives.

Policy Makers

Strategy: Snowball Sampling

Rationale: Policy makers in the field of adult education may be a relatively small and interconnected group. Snowball sampling can help in identifying key informants with in-depth knowledge of the development, implementation, and oversight of learning registries and accounts. Representatives of associations at national level, as well as representatives of quality assurance bodies can be included.

Implementation: Start with a small set of known policy makers in adult education and ask them to recommend others who are involved in or knowledgeable about adult learning policies.

Employers

Strategy: Quota Sampling

Rationale: Employers can offer perspectives on the relevance of adult learning programs to workforce development and the value of learning registries and accounts for employee training. Quota sampling ensures representation across different sectors, sizes, and regions.
Implementation: Set quotas for various categories of employers (e.g., by industry sector, company size, geographical location) and select participants to meet these quotas, ensuring a diverse range of employer perspectives.

Employment Agencies

Strategy: Purposive Sampling

Rationale: Employment agencies, particularly those specialising in adult employment and re-skilling programs, have unique insights into the job market and the role of adult learning in employability. Selecting agencies known for innovative practices or partnerships with educational programs can provide valuable insights.

Implementation: Select a variety of employment agencies, including public employment services and private recruitment firms, with a record of supporting adult learners in their career paths.

4.3.1.4 Study methods

A mixed-methods approach should be adopted, combining quantitative analysis of existing data with qualitative interviews and case studies to explore the governance, quality assurance, and deployment of ALE registries and Individual Learning Accounts in depth.

Examples of materials templates to implement the Discover and Define phase are available in Annexes.

Method	Context	Participants
Desk research	Overall scope	N/A
Focus groups	Specific contexts defined as core for the process	20 per country
In-depth interviews	Specific contexts defined as core for the process	3-5 interviews per country
Surveys	Specific contexts defined as core for the process	30-50 respondents per country (suggested)
Design thinking workshops	Contexts participating in the full co-design process and potential field of application	20-30 per country

Table 12 – RALExILA research methods

Preparation

Scoping to identify specific practices for the desk research and qualitative interviews, which can be from different contexts and at lower level, such as organisational level (see Scope of the Study section).

Desk research

The desk research involves gathering existing information, data, and insights from available sources and then analysing and synthesising this information to address our research questions.

It allows to gain a comprehensive understanding of the current state of ALE in the selected contexts, identify gaps, challenges, and opportunities, and inform the development of ALE registries, ILA, and policy recommendations.

Sources to be considered

- Reports and surveys from educational institutions and organisations involved in adult learning
- Government and NGO reports on adult education policies and trends
- Academic journals and articles focusing on adult education and learning

Expected result

- Identification of gaps in current ALE registries and recommendations for improvement (if any)
- Insights that can inform the design of user-centred ALE registries, aligned with the actual expectations and requirements of adult learners
- Insights into experiences with ILA implementations

Focus groups

The FG are moderated as group discussions with a small number of participants (8 to 10 people) representing the specific target groups of the study. Participants share their opinions, experiences, and perspectives on the topic under study.

Focus groups allow to deeply understand the views and reactions of the group as well as the interactions between participants.

This method is embedded as a prequel to the first co-design workshop (Discover) or even as the first Discover Design Thinking workshop. It is a format that is more familiar to an average stakeholder and might help research participants (members of the focus group/Discover workshop) to get to know each other, making them more open and thus more ready for the workshop. Likewise, insights from the focus group might help fill in the gaps of the Discover workshop.

Target sources/audience to be involved

- Individuals representing specific target groups of the study, such as adult learners, educators, policy makers, or employers.
- Selection based on relevant characteristics to the ALE national registers and ILA topic, like age, background, professional experience, or educational level.

Context

The purpose of the focus groups is to gather qualitative data by facilitating open discussions among participants, to explore opinions and motivations of the research participants.

Target number of participants

Each focus group should have 8 to 10 participants, participants spread between target groups. This size is small enough to allow everyone to contribute, yet large enough to provide a diversity of perspectives.

Expected result

- Rich qualitative data in the form of detailed insights, opinions, and experiences shared by participants
- An understanding of the dynamics of group interaction, which can reveal social and group norms influencing individual behaviour
- A comprehensive report summarising the findings from the discussions, highlighting key themes, patterns, and divergent views
- Actionable insights that can inform decision-making and strategy development related to our study's focus area.

In-depth interviews

The one-on-one interviews serves to explore experiences, beliefs, motivations, or opinions on a particular topic. They allow to obtain detailed, comprehensive information and understand subtle aspects of the topic under study.

The purpose is to gain an in-depth understanding of individual perspectives and experiences and as a follow-up or fill in the gap of both the desk research and the survey.

Target sources/audience to be involved

- Knowledgeable individuals representing the specific target groups relevant to the study, such as educators, policymakers (namely, experts)
- Participants who can provide rich, detailed insights into their experiences, beliefs, motivations, or opinions on the topic. (namely, the participants of the co-design process).

Contexts

- To be performed in the core countries fully participating to the co-design and implementation processes, both with experts and participants.
- It is suggested to conduct interview also related to the additional contexts and practices, at least with experts, in particular as method of filling in the gaps of the practices for which we are to provide an in-depth analysis, when the information is not fully publicly available

Target number of participants

- The target number of participants is 3 per target country

Expected result

- Comprehensive insights into the personal experiences and opinions of the participants,

- Detailed qualitative data that can reveal new themes or deepen understanding of our research topic,
- The findings can be used to inform policy, practice, or further research, providing a nuanced understanding

Surveys

Survey are structured forms consisting of a series of questions that can be distributed to respondents to collect data about their opinions, beliefs, preferences, or experiences.

Surveys are to be used to collect data from a large number of respondents in a short period of time and have to be focused on simple straightforward questions.

The results of the survey help to understand the current level of awareness and knowledge that the relevant target groups (adult learners and employers) have regarding existing national registries.

This data helps identify gaps in awareness and misconceptions, which can inform targeted information campaigns and adjustments in how registries are presented to these groups.

Insights from surveys can be used to structure discussions in focus groups/Design Thinking workshops, probing deeper into themes that emerged and validating survey findings with different stakeholders.

Target sources/audience to be involved

- A broad audience that represents the demographic or interest group relevant to research; in our case, this would be adult learners and employers
- Respondents will be able to choose among diverse perspectives and data points on the subject matter

Context

Surveys should be designed to gather quantitative data or categorical qualitative data

Target number of participants

At least 30 respondents per national contexts (at least two thirds to be adult learners and the rest representatives of employers)

Expected result

Surveying adult learners can provide quantitative data on the accessibility, usage, satisfaction, and perceived impact of these initiatives on their learning and career advancement.

A survey can capture employers' perspectives on the relevance of adult learning programs to workforce development, skills gaps, and the importance of lifelong learning in the context of employability and organisational growth.

Design thinking workshops

These workshops are the core part of the Discover phase.

They are designed as collaborative sessions that use the principles and methods of design thinking.

Target sources/audience to be involved

- Participants selected based on desk research, representing various stakeholders relevant to the study such as educators, policy makers, and representatives from target groups
- Individuals who can contribute diverse perspectives and creative ideas to address the complex problems under study

Context

- The workshops are designed to leverage the principles and methods of design thinking
- Each workshop (Discover, Empathise, Define) focuses on different stages of the design thinking process

Format and structure

- Discover Workshops: Aimed at understanding the broader context of the problem, identifying challenges and opportunities
- Empathise Workshops: Focus on gaining a deep empathetic understanding of the needs and experiences of the target groups

- Define Workshops: Involve synthesising the information gathered to define clear problem statements for ideation

Target number of participants

- Face-to-face, 1-day workshop, total of 3 workshops per country (12 workshops overall)
- Diverse group, 8 participants, 2 per each target group

Expected result

Innovative ideas for confronting our research question and designing solutions for our recommendations concerning the structure of national ALE registries and ILA deployment practices.

4.3.2 Ideate and Prototype

This phase corresponds to step 3 and 4 of the overall process.

- P3 capability mapping & prioritisation > Define/Ideate [transition]
- P4 prototyping solutions > Ideate/Prototype

It is suggested to organise it in at least four workshops: two face to face and two online.

4.3.2.1 Workshop 1

Format and duration

Face to face, 1-2 days

Participants

The workshop includes both, **face-to-face** and **online participation** by stakeholders such as adult learning providers, national/regional authorities, ILA experts, and technology/data experts. Participants will work together to map user needs, define problem statements, and ideate solutions.

Workshop Objective

The aim of this workshop is to collaboratively define the main system requirements and information model for National Registries of Adult Learning and Education (ALE), ensuring interoperability with European systems and integration with Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs) where applicable.

This workshop is the first step in shaping a European approach to ALE registries, guided by design thinking methodology and focusing on user-centred approaches.

At the end of the workshop, a core result should be also the identification of the core topics and aspects to be tackled in the following workshops (and possibly not yet considered in the design process), as emerged from the discussions.

Methodology

The Design Thinking methodology is user-centred and focuses on understanding user needs and ideating solutions.

This workshop guide participants through the first phase of the Design Thinking process to collaboratively develop comprehensive and user-friendly system requirements and information models for ALE registries.

Structure of the workshop

Opening Remarks & Icebreaker	• Welcome • Introduction to Objectives and agenda • Expected learning outcomes (Understanding broad requirements and user requirements) • Ice-Breaker
Overview of National ALE registries	• Current state of ALE registries based on the research analysis • Goals and ambitions for interoperability and integrating ILAs into ALEs
Main User Flow → Define - Articulate Problem	• Participants will map out the current journey of users interacting with ALE registries from different perspectives • Problem statements about general user-flow (gaps, critical phases, prioritisation)
Networking Session	• Guided question to discuss insights from the day and build meaningful connections amongst participants
User engagement and accessibility	• Identify problem statements for user engagement scenarios, including accessibility and usability aspects • Best practices for user engagement • Strategies for engaging users to provide feedback
Privacy and Security	• Identify problem statements for privacy and security, also in relation the user engagement scenarios • Best practices for protecting user data and compliance with privacy regulations • Adapt users feedback strategies based on privacy aspects
Provider Information and Quality Assurance	Problem Statements - Develop clear problem statements based on the insights from the definition phase, focusing on key issues to address, such as: • Explore essential information required from ALE providers (data) and data collection processes and standards • Quality Assurance indicators and expression of QA indicators in registries and relation with accessibility of information • How to ensure credibility and accountability of the information
Summarising Key Findings and Next Steps	• Summarise key findings • Draft System requirements and define Use Case Scenarios
Closing Remarks and Farewell	• Present project timeline and outline and discuss next steps • Save the date for next workshops • Closing remarks by facilitators

Examples of materials and templates for this workshop are available in Annexes.

4.3.2.2 Workshop 2

Format and duration

Online, 0.5 day

Participants

Ideally, the workshop includes the same participants of Workshop 1. Expansion of the group can be considered for each workshop for 1) participants from the same organisations but with specific expertise on the topics at hand 2) external experts to support for a specific process or topic.

Workshop Objective

Collaboratively refine and expand the requirements identified in Workshop 1 (internal validation step) and tackle the additional topics emerged in Workshop 1.

The specific objectives of this workshop are as following:

- Refine User Stories: Validate and enhance user stories to ensure they address real-world needs and integrate ILAs effectively into ALE registries.
- Tackle Key Challenges: Identify and propose solutions for challenges related to system competitiveness, funding, career links, and learning outcomes.
- Promote Collaboration: Facilitate dialogue among stakeholders to co-develop user-centred and interoperable system requirements.
- Plan Next Steps: Finalise outputs from the workshop and outline clear next steps, including engagement in future project activities.

Structure of the workshop

Introduction	Short recap on the overall project and work done so far, with special emphasis on the role of ILAs based on high quality ALE registries
User Stories	Validating initial User-Stories for the use of ALEs with considerations on how they are integrating ILAs.
Identifying main challenges	**Tackling three main topics by identifying main challenges** **Competitiveness:** How the system can position itself as a valuable tool for learners and education providers compared to other platforms. **Funding and Career Links:** Exploring how the system can connect users with funding opportunities, such as Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs), and help them align their learningwith career development. **Learning Outcomes:** Defining how learning outcomes will be tracked and validated within the system to ensure learners achieve their educational and career goals.
Wrap-up and next steps	Finalising User-Stories How to stay involved and next activities

Examples of materials and templates for this workshop are available in Annexes.

4.3.2.3 Workshop 3

Format and duration

Face to face, 1-2 days

Participants

Ideally, the workshop will include the same participants of Workshop 1 and 2. Expansion of the group can be considered for each workshop for 1) participants from same organisations but with specific expertise on the topics at hand 2) external experts to support for a specific process or topic.

Workshop Objective

The specific objectives for this workshop are as following.

- Validate Use Cases: Review and confirm the applicability of core use cases to meet interoperability, user satisfaction, and data security requirements.
- Refine System Functionalities: Improve system functionalities related to user engagement, accessibility, privacy, and quality assurance.
- Ensure Quality Assurance Integration: Define data requirements and quality assurance indicators for ALE registries, focusing on inclusiveness and privacy.
- Enhance Cross-Border Interoperability: Align system functionalities with European frameworks such as Europass, ELM, and ESCO to support seamless cross-border functionality.

Structure of the workshop

Welcome & Orientation	Welcome remarks, overview of workshop objectives, agenda, and hybrid event logistics.
Presentation of Data Models	Overview of developed data models from Step 2, focusing on Europass, ELM, and ESCO alignment and key functionalities such as quality assurance and user engagement.
Session 1: Use Cases Validation	Interactive session to validate core use cases, ensuring they meet key requirements for interoperability, user satisfaction, and data security.
Session 2: Functionalities Feedback	Review and refine system functionalities, including ease of use, accessibility, privacy, and engagement tools.

Session 3: Quality Assurance Integration	Focus on quality assurance indicators and data requirements for ALE registries, with special attention to privacy and inclusiveness.
Cross-Border Functionality Discussion	Discussion of the system's cross-border interoperability features and alignment with European frameworks.
Session 4: Final Validation of Data Models	Review and refine data models based on the feedback from Sessions 1-3, also ensuring all critical elements are addressed.
Wrap-Up Discussion	Summarise validated elements, address outstanding points, and outline adjustments for the next steps in the system's development.
Closing Remarks & Next Steps	Closing comments and guidance on transitioning into the next activities, with a focus on system implementation.

Examples of materials and templates for this workshop are available in Annexes.

4.3.2.4 Workshop 4

Format and duration

Online, 0.5 day

Participants

Ideally, the workshop will include the same participants of previous workshops. Expansion of the group can be considered for each workshop for 1) participants from same organisations but with specific expertise on the topics at hand 2) external experts to support for a specific process or topic.

Workshop Objective

The final workshop of this phase serves as moment of transition from the modelling process to the upcoming piloting and implementation phase and to validate the core aspects of the system model with experts. Structure of the workshop

Structure of the workshop

Introduction	Short recap on the project and work done so far, with special emphasis on the role of ILAs based on high quality ALE registries
Core functionalities	Presentation of the current System model with a special emphasis on core functionalities and different scenarios for implementation
System Model input	Interactive session (Miro board) to gather input and provide space for experts to highlight short-comings and opportunities in the presented model. Discussion by national level experts on the feasibility of implementation and input on how the results of this co-design process and its main output can provide further support in making high quality ALE registries, ready to implement ILAs a reality
Wrap-up	Finalising and summarising key inputs and presenting the next phase of the project - piloting and validation of feasibility to implement ALE/ ILAs in focus countries.

Examples of materials and templates for this workshop are available in Annexes.

4.3.3 Evaluate and Refine

This phase corresponds to the last step of the co-design roadmap: P5 pilot testing, feedback, and revision > Evaluate/Refine.

These workshops aim at supporting local adaptation and refinement of the model, testing and validation of the registry prototype, and evaluation and refinement of the overall model as developed in the first 4 steps.

For this phase, the RALExILA approach recommends organising 3 workshops in national contexts, possibly two face to face.

4.3.3.1 Workshop 1

Format and duration

Face to face, 0.5-1day

Participants

The pilots should involve the groups of participants already engaged in the full process from the beginning (Workshop of the Research phase), which include adult learners, educators, policy makers and employers.

Number of participants in each workshop should be between 7 to 15 participants.

Workshop Objective

National Prototype Workshop

This first workshop focuses on presenting and discussing the national version of the ALE registry prototype. Participants will review key components such as the governance model and system structure, offering feedback based on national realities. The goal is to assess how well the prototype aligns with national needs and priorities.

Structure of the workshop

Introduction	Objective: Set the stage for the workshop, introduce participants, and explain the goals and agenda. Activities: • Welcome and introduction by the facilitator. • Brief overview of the project and its objectives. • Introduction of participants (name, role, and interest in adult learning and ILAs). • Outline the workshop structure and expected outcomes.
Setting the context	Objective: Present the current state of ALE/ILA systems nationally and in Europe. Presentations: Use presentations of relevant ALE/ILA systems'' Activities: Presentation on the current state of adult learning and ILAs, existing ALE registries and basic info ((who owns them, what they include already, how/for which purpose are they used). Highlight key statistics, existing policies, and frameworks. Open floor for initial questions and comments. How to develop an ALE registry and ILA for a country? (stakeholders involved, accessibility, access for training providers)
Exploring the primer	Objective: Presentation of the RALExILA system primer. Presentation: Introduction – Primer Presentation Activities: Discussion Questions: Does the prototype reflect your country's ALE priorities and realities? What gaps or overlaps exist compared to current national systems? How could this prototype be better aligned with local policies and practices? Does the modular approach provide sufficient flexibility? Are there missing functionalities or technical challenges not covered?

Identifying challenges and opportunities	Objective: Identify the main challenges and opportunities in using the RALExILA prototype/model integrating in the system of your country, in terms of ALE registries and platform. Activities: Discussion Questions: What are the main barriers to using the RALExILA approach for expanding and improving the existing systems and platforms? Which are the benefits of the RALExILA approach? Is it feasible to be implemented? How? Which barriers you may face?
Stakeholder perspectives	Objective: Gain insights from different stakeholders on their experiences and perspectives. Activities: Small group discussions or breakout sessions Stakeholder questions: How would you use this prototype? What would make it more relevant or usable in your context?
Conclusion and next steps	Objective: Summarise the key takeaways from the workshop and outline the next steps. Activities: Recap of the main points discussed. Outline the next steps in the research process. Q&A session to address any remaining questions. Thank participants and provide information on how they can stay involved.

Examples of materials and templates for this workshop are available in Annexes.

4.3.3.2 Workshop 2

Format and duration

Face to face, 0.5-1day

Participants

The pilots should involve the groups of participants already engaged,

Workshop Objective

Evaluate Workshop

The second workshop addresses the technical and operational aspects of the registry. It includes a discussion of user stories, system functionalities, and possible implementation scenarios based on the local context. The aim is to identify strengths, gaps, and areas for improvement.

Structure of the workshop

Recap and objectives	Objective: Briefly recap the previous workshop and set the objectives for the Evaluate Workshop: To examine system functionalities, user stories and practical implementation in the national context. Activities: • Quick review of key insights from the National Prototype Workshop. • Outline the goals for the Evaluate Workshop
Setting the context	Objective: Examine the functionality and possibilities for implementation Presentation: Introduction – Primer Presentation (focus on primer) Activities: • Discussion Questions: 1) How intuitive is the proposed design and functionality? (user centredness, simple course registration, administrative tools, digital inclusivity) 2) What features do you find most useful or promising? (look at primer core components) 3) What technical or administrative barriers might arise during implementation? • Case Studies: o Use the case studies from RALExILA approach or custom developed case studies (see Presentation on the Primer)

User stories and Interfaces	Objective: Provide information on user stories and possible user interface Presentation: User Stories Activities: • Discussion Questions: 1) Do the use cases reflect the roles and processes of ALE in your country? 2) Are the data flows logical and feasible to implement nationally? 3) Which user roles (e.g., learners, providers, policymakers) are best served by the current interface design? 4) What would be essential to include in the user experience to encourage widespread adoption?
ALE registry and ILA platforms governance	Objective: To reflect on governance structures, funding models and data governance models and how these can be managed in national contexts. Presentation: Governance Models Activities: • Discussion Questions 1) Are the roles of national authorities, system operators, providers, and learners clearly defined and well-coordinated (in national contexts)? 2) What improvements could be made to increase accountability and operational efficiency in you ALE/ILA system? 3) How is funding currently allocated and monitored? Are there gaps in transparency or efficiency? 4) How adaptable is your current ALE/ILA system to new technologies or shifting labour market needs? 5) How is data quality ensured, and how is it used for decision-making? 6) How can your system improve interoperability with European data standards (e.g., ESCO, ELM, Europass)?
Conclusion and next steps	Objective: Summarise key insights from the Empathise Workshop and outline the next steps. Activities: • Recap main points discussed. • Outline the goals and structure of the upcoming Refine Workshop. • Q&A session to address any remaining questions.

Examples of materials and templates for this workshop are available in Annexes.

4.3.3.3 Workshop 3

Format and duration

Face to face, 0.5-1 day

Participants

The pilots should involve the groups of participants already engaged in the full process from the beginning (Workshop of the Research phase), which include adult learners, educators, policy makers and employers
Number of participants in each workshop should be between 7 to 15 participants.

Workshop Objective

Refine Workshop

The final workshop focuses on refining the registry model using insights gathered in the previous sessions. It addresses any remaining issues and collects final suggestions. The outcomes will inform updates to the final model to implement and strengthen the model's readiness for national implementation.

Structure of the workshop

Recap and objectives	Objective: Briefly recap the key insights from the National and Evaluate Workshops and set the objectives for the Refine Workshop: to refine the registry model and to addresses any remaining issues. Activities: • Quick review of key findings from the previous workshops. • Outline the goals for the Refine Workshop.
Prototype Review	Objective: Synthesise the key insights and feedback on the registry model. Activities: • Overview of the key insights (benefits, challenges, suggestions) changes made • Open Q&A
Validation	Objective: Agree with the participants the main changes and refinements to be made in the RALExILA model to meet the needs of the national contexts. Discussion Questions: 1) Do the proposed changes address initial concerns? 2) What additional refinements are still needed? 3) Are stakeholders ready to utilize and adapt the RALExILA model in their national setting?

Final barriers and solutions	Objective: Discuss concerns, challenges, and possibilities for implementation on the following topics: • Governance • Technical components • User engagement
Long-term sustainability	Objective: Discuss how the system will remain effective and relevant over time. Discussion Questions: 1) How will the system be evaluated and improved? 2) What mechanisms will ensure financial sustainability? 3) How will digital and policy advancements be incorporated?
Conclusion and wrap up	Objective: To recap the key outcomes Activities: • Group brainstorming: Generate initial ideas and potential solutions for the top problem statements. • Discussion questions: 1) How can these insights inform the implementation strategy of national contexts? 2) Recap main points discussed. 3) Q&A session to address any remaining questions

Examples of materials and templates for this workshop are available in Annexes.

4.3.3.4 Pilot evaluation

The RALExILA approach include also a final evaluation process for the piloting phase, organised in two levels: internal evaluation (organisers, facilitators) and with participants.

- For organisers/facilitators, the suggestion is to use observation and to organise at least one internal evaluation meeting among core organisers and facilitators.
- For participants, the suggestion is to organise at least one short focus group between 30' to 1 hour (qualitative aspects) and a short questionnaire (quantitative aspects). In alternative, questionnaires can be used for both the qualitative and quantitative aspects, possibly to be done face to face, can be used as well.

The focus of the Pilots evaluation is on qualitative aspects and on the process (design thinking, co-design) and the experience of participants. Basic questions on the organisation of the workshops are also included, in a quantitative manner, to support the overall evaluation of the quality of the pilots.

4.3.4 Short prototyping workshops

In the final phase of the development process and also for sustainability purposes, it is important also to conduct short demo/prototyping workshops with extended groups of stakeholders in the contexts involved in the co-design process and also with groups of external stakeholders.

The purposes of the demo/prototyping short workshops may vary depending on the stage of implementation, while generally they serve the following purposes.

Contexts directly involved in co-design

- Expand the pool of testing and validation participants in the contexts of co-design, in the last phases of the co-design process (in terms of numbers but also type of stakeholders)
- Expand the pool of stakeholders to be involved in the potential implementation and development phase
- Present the results of the co-design work to a larger audience to support stakeholders buy-in for the systems use and citizens motivation, for example in the development phase
- Support awareness and outreach campaigns once the systems are implemented and close to launch

Other contexts, not involved in the process

- Present and shortly evaluate the results of the co-design work with stakeholders from other contexts (other countries, institutions, single organisations) in order to prepare potential transfer of these processes and/or model
- Present the results of the co-design work to potential ''buyers'' or developers
- Conduct awareness and outreach campaigns at l arger scale in order to foster understanding and policy development for ALE integrated system and ILA-system schema.

4.3.4.1 Workshop protocol

Format and duration

Face to face, 2 hours

Structure of the workshop

Setting the scene

Facilitator gives a **short, story-based intro:**

- What is the RALExILA approach, existing material i.e. Handbook, System Model, Methodology for the development of adult learning registries (data backbone) and individual learning accounts (funding mechanism).
- How does it work? Start small, focus on clear user value, build in phases. Countries have very different realities and starting points and their approaches depend on those
- Key concept: Capabilities before complexity.
- Show one slide illustrating 3 examples of national starting points Strong ALE/No ILA,
- Decentralised ALE/Simple ILA,
- No system yet

Group work — Year-1 Capabilities	Participants will work in mixed groups based on the **Give each group one scenario card** (as above). Each group has a **simple worksheet with three columns:** *a. User need / problem* *b. Core capability to address it (Year 1)* *c. Why this is essential / what depends on it* Encourage them to focus on **5–7 must-have capabilities** (e.g. learner registration, provider listing, course search, financial management, reporting dashboard) Prompt questions (Displayed on big screen): • "What must be operational in Year 1 for learners and providers to benefit?" • "Chose 5-7 capabilities from the capability matrix that you think would be the most important to develop or refine" • "Which existing systems could feed or benefit from this?" Facilitator circulates, helping link their ideas to the RALExILA *system model and phased development logic*.
Group summary & plenary synthesis	Each group briefly reports: • **What was their scenario** • **Top 2-3 capabilities and decisions (do not share all of them)** • **Main point of contention or difficulty** Facilitator or rapporteur writes these on flip-chart columns labelled: • "Capabilities" • "Decisions / Governance" • "Main challenges identified" Debrief/Reflection for the Facilitator: "What patterns do we see across groups? "Which areas seem to require most cross-ministerial collaboration?"

Examples of materials and templates for this workshop are available in Annexes.

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Government of Croatia – Adult Learning Voucher Scheme: https://www.hzz.hr

Government of Slovenia – ALE Registry, available at: https://www.acs.si

Government of Malta – JobPlus Platform, available at: https://www.jobsplus.gov.mt

6 .Annexes

6.1. ANNEX 1 - ALE REGISTRIES MODELS IN EUROPE

6.1.1 Croatia – Centralised but evolving

Governance Model

Croatia operates a centralised governance model under the Ministry of Science, Education and Youth and the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education (ASOO). Policy decisions, programme authorisations, and ALE registry management are concentrated at the national level, ensuring coherence and oversight.

Quality Assurance

Quality is ensured through mandatory programme accreditation and regular evaluation managed by ASOO. Providers must meet established national standards and are subject to periodic reviews.

Existing Registries and Platforms

National Registry of Adult Education Providers and Programmes – managed by ASOO; lists accredited institutions and approved training programmes.

Voucher System for Adult Education – introduced in 2022 under the National Recovery and Resilience Plan; enables funding-linked enrolment in accredited courses for both employed and unemployed adults.

Figure 32 - Voucher system for ALE in Croatia

Policy note

The Croatian model demonstrates coherence but requires digital expansion and improved inclusion of non-formal education.

6.1.2 Malta – Centralised quality control

Governance Model

Malta operates a centralised system coordinated by the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research, and Innovation, and implemented through the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA).

Quality Assurance

QA is mandatory for all institutions offering accredited qualifications. The MFHEA is responsible for external audits, institutional licensing, and programme validation. All qualifications must align with the Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF).

Existing Registries and Platforms

MFHEA Register – the official national database of accredited providers and qualifications mapped to MQF levels.

Jobsplus Portal – the national employment and training portal listing accredited and non-accredited learning opportunities and ESF-funded programmes.

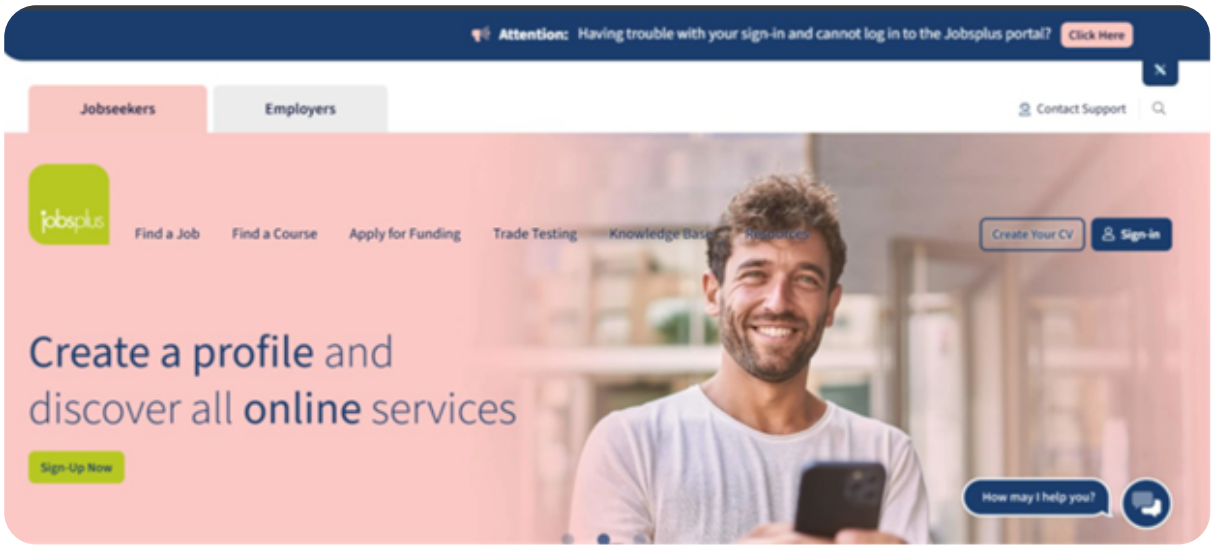


Figure 33 - Jobplus portal

Policy note

Malta's model ensures clarity and quality but requires greater user interactivity and cross-sectoral data links.

6.1.3 Cyprus – Hybrid governance and coordinated data flow

Governance Model

Cyprus operates a hybrid governance model coordinated by the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth, the Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA/ANAD), and the Cyprus Productivity Centre (CPC). The Deputy Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digital Policy ensures digital alignment.

Quality Assurance

The HRDA is responsible for accrediting training providers and programmes. QA processes include audits, provider certification, and monitoring of participation and outcomes. The CPC supports additional training quality and innovation initiatives.

Existing Registries and Platforms

Hermes Digital Portal (HRDA/ANAD) – registry of accredited providers, programmes, and professional qualifications.

e-Gnosis Platform (CPC) – catalogue of adult learning opportunities in technical and digital fields.

Cyos Learn Platform (CPC) – new integrated platform consolidating lifelong learning offers.

Cyprus Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition Platform – national-level aggregator of training opportunities, coordinated by the Deputy Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digital Policy.

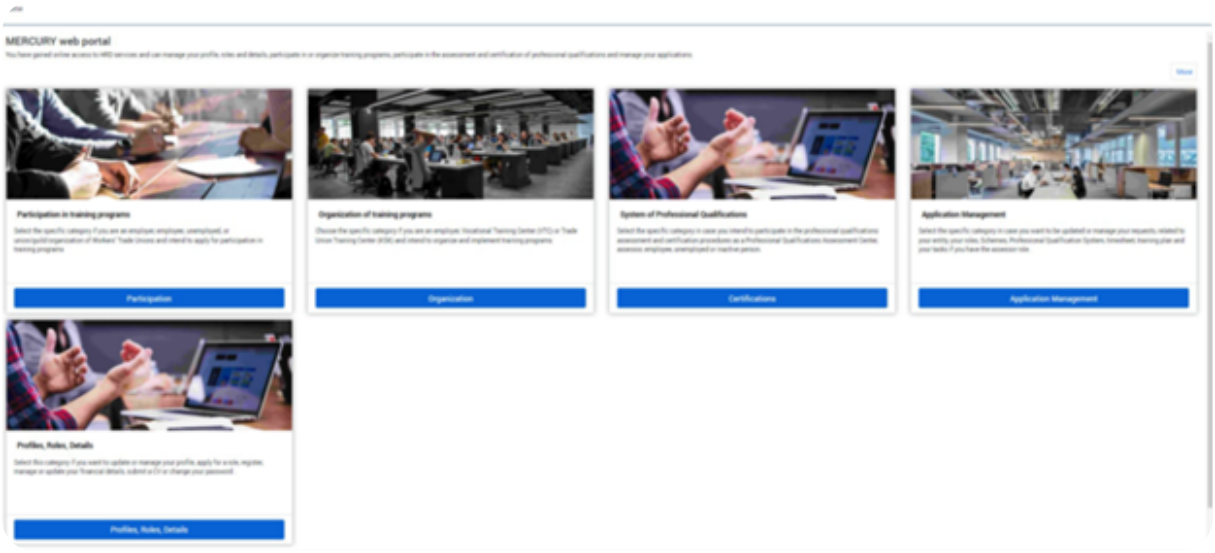


Figure 34 - Hermes platform

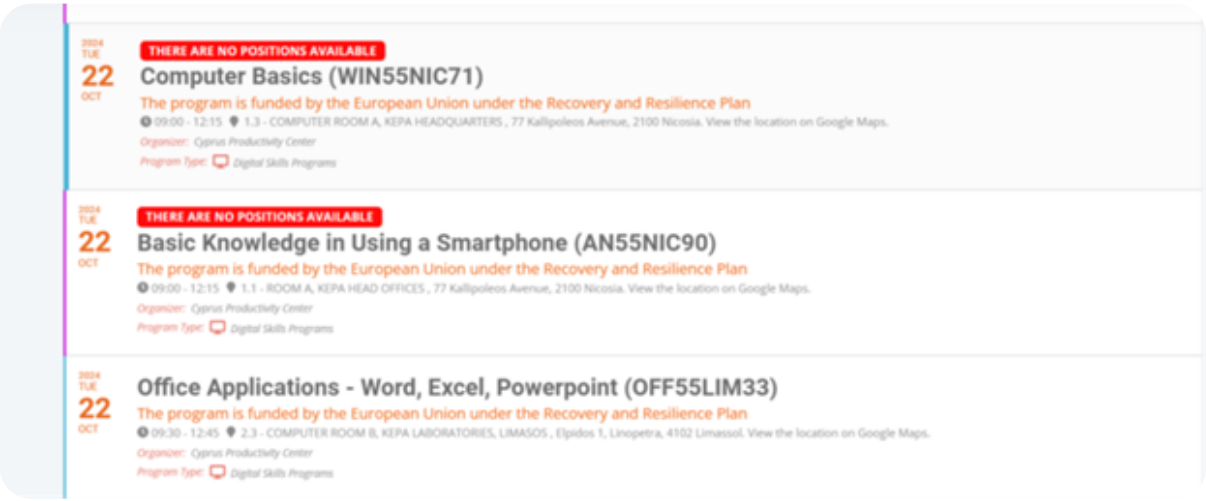


Figure 35 - e-Gnosis platform

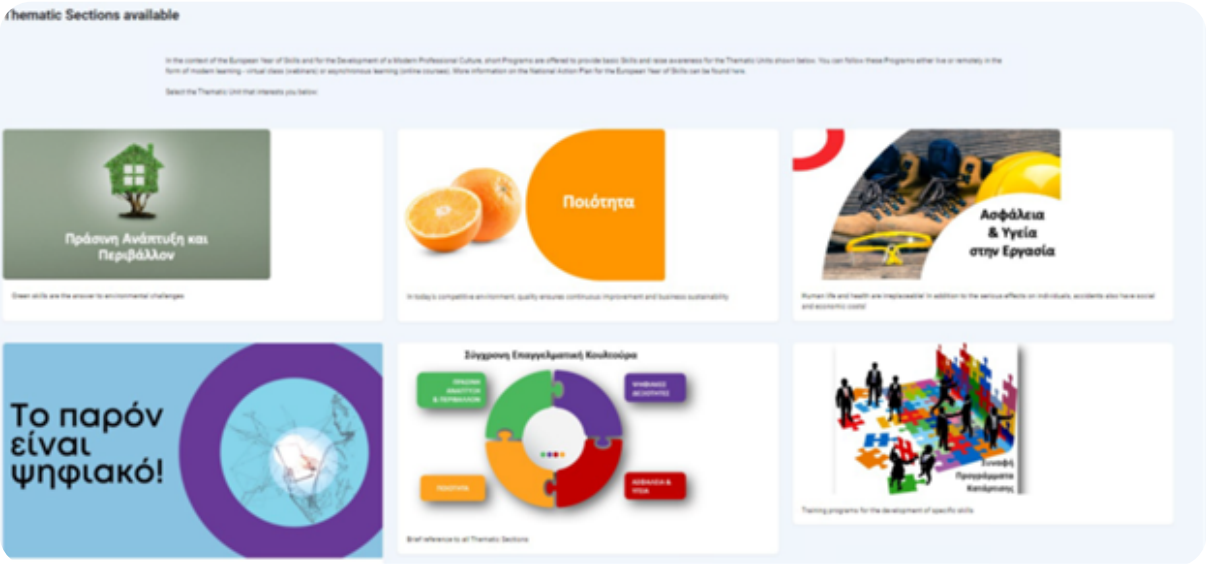


Figure 36 - Cyos learn platform

Policy note

The Cypriot model balances national coherence with regional responsiveness.

6.1.4 Slovakia – Regional flexibility and fragmented data

Governance Model

Slovakia operates a decentralised governance model with strong regional authority. Implementation and programme management are the responsibility of regional governments, coordinated by the Ministry of Education, Research, Development and Youth (MERDY).

Quality Assurance

The Accreditation Commission for Further Education oversees QA, focusing on programme relevance, trainer qualifications, and infrastructure quality.

Existing Registries and Platforms

Further Education Information System (ISDV) – the official national registry of accredited programmes and institutions, managed by MERDY.

Registry of Certified Institutions – an accreditation-based registry linked to future ILA funding mechanisms, effective from 2025.

Education.sk/Kurzy.sk – private national portals listing a wide range of adult learning courses by provider and thematic area.

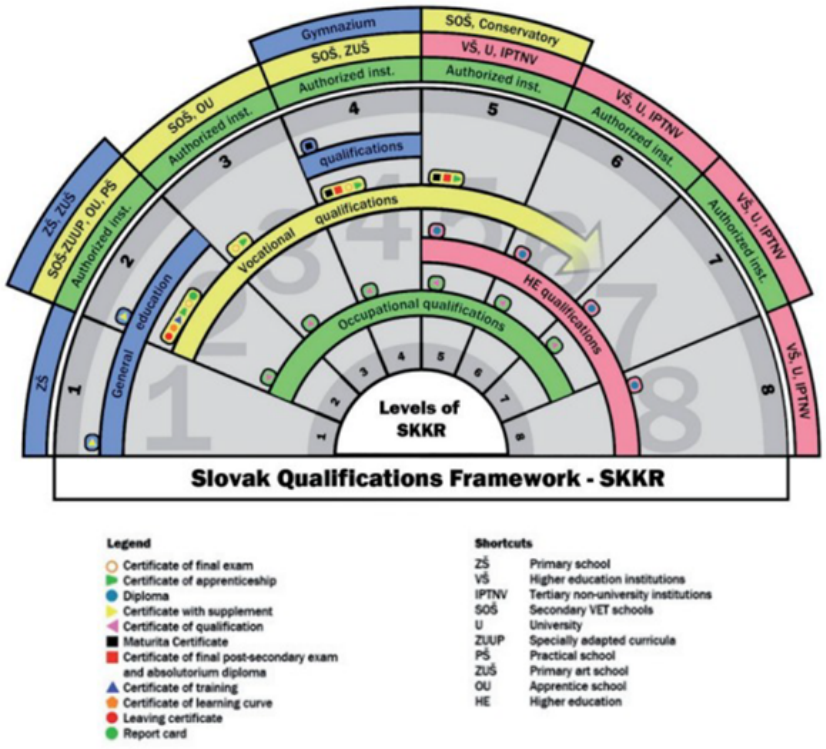


Figure 37 - The structure of SQF

Policy note

Decentralisation fosters responsiveness but requires stronger data governance.

6.1.5 Finland – A digitally mature and integrated system

Governance Model

Finland operates an integrated governance system coordinated by the Finnish National Agency for Education (EDUFI). Responsibilities for ALE are shared across ministries but unified through interoperable data structures.

Quality Assurance

QA is embedded in the national data infrastructure and driven by systematic evaluation cycles. EDUFI oversees QA standards and continuous improvement processes at both institutional and system levels.

Existing Registries and Platforms

KOSKI – national data repository for study rights and completions across all education levels.

My Studyinfo (Opintopolku/Studyinfo.fi) – national learner-facing platform for access, application, and recognition of learning.

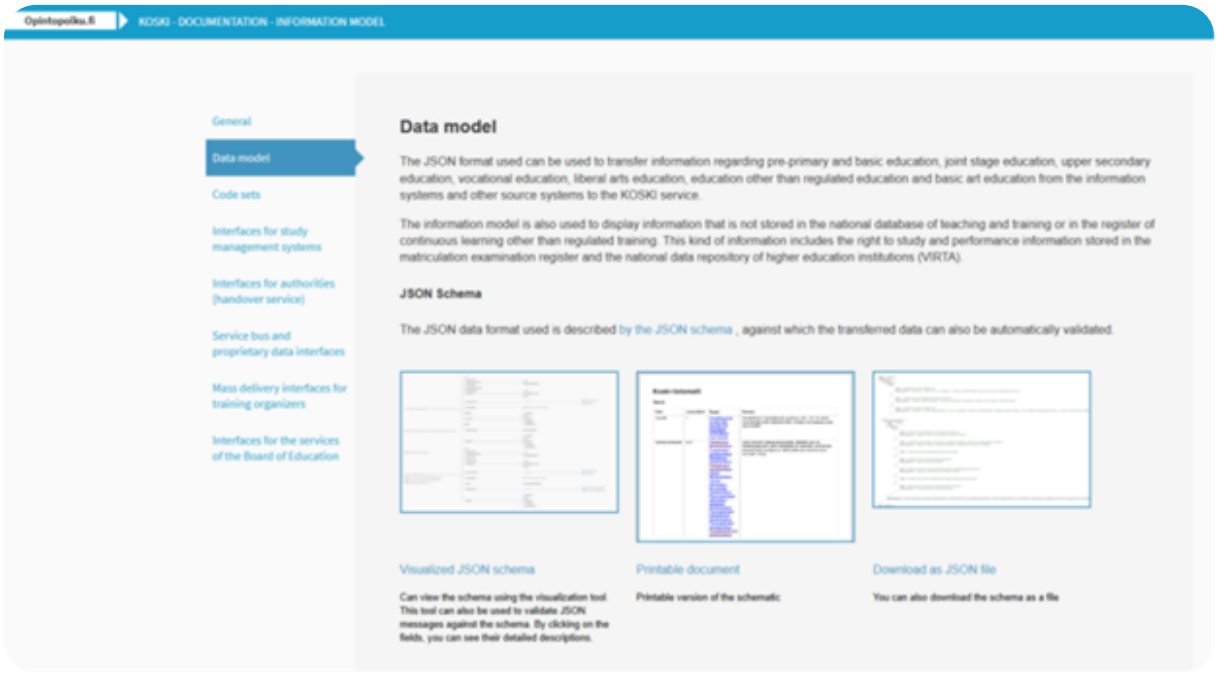


Figure 38 - KOSKI registry

Figure 39 - Studyinfo platform

Policy note

Finland exemplifies interoperability, open governance, and learner-centred transparency.

6.1.6 Portugal – Registry linked with validation and guidance

Governance Model

Portugal's governance structure is hybrid, coordinated by the Ministry of Education and the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training (IEFP), with operational roles for regional Qualifica Centres.

Quality Assurance

QA is ensured through the accreditation and monitoring of providers under the IEFP and ANQEP (National Agency for Qualification and Vocational Education and Training). Validation of non-formal and informal learning is also part of the QA framework.

Existing Registries and Platforms

Qualifica Portal – integrates ALE registry, career guidance, and funding mechanisms for adult learners.

Portal da Oferta Formativa – national public platform providing access to courses offered by accredited institutions.

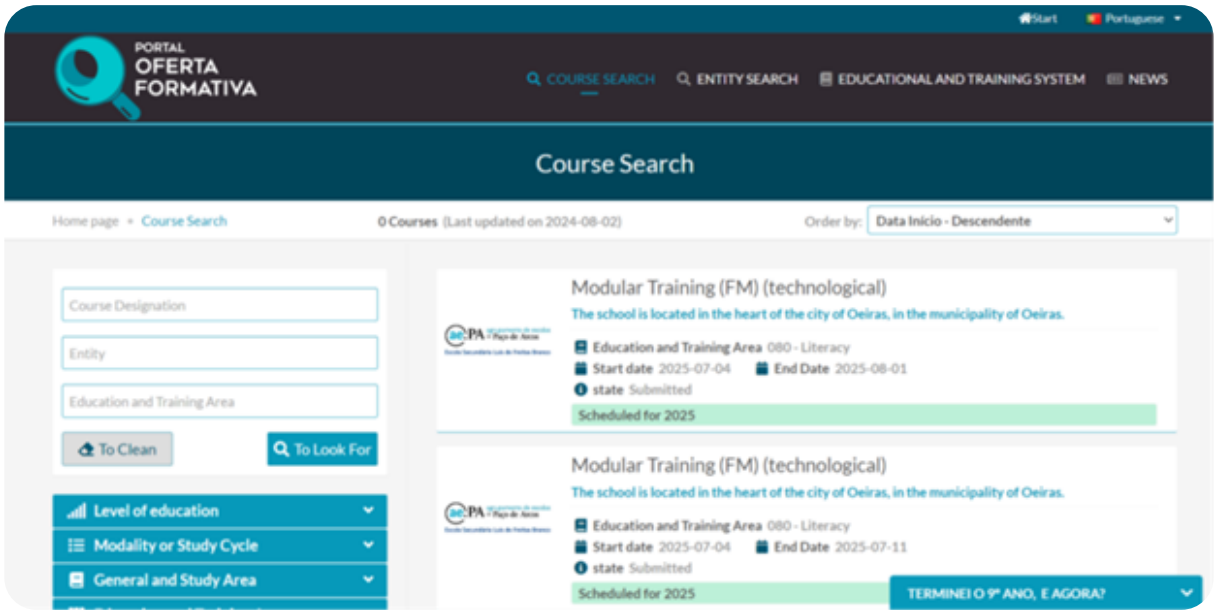


Figure 40 - Portal da Oferta Formativa

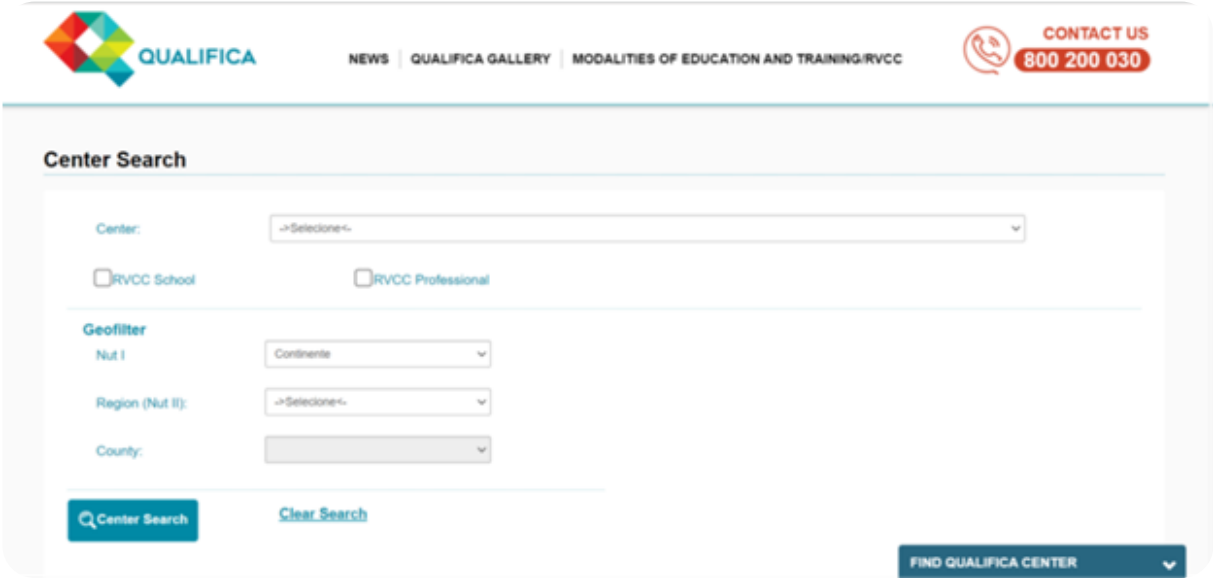


Figure 41 - Qualifica Programme portal

Policy note

Portugal demonstrates how ALE registry and ILA can function as a unified digital ecosystem.

6.1.7 Ireland – Quality and transparency as guiding principles

Governance Model

Ireland uses a hybrid governance structure coordinated by the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS). Implementation is managed through SOLAS and the Education and Training Boards (ETBs).

Quality Assurance

The Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) agency sets QA standards, validates programmes, and conducts institutional reviews. QA processes are mandatory for all publicly funded ALE providers.

Existing Registries and Platforms

FETCHcourses.ie – national platform listing accredited programmes, with real-time enrolment and integration with employment services.

QQI Provider Register – public registry of accredited providers and validated courses.

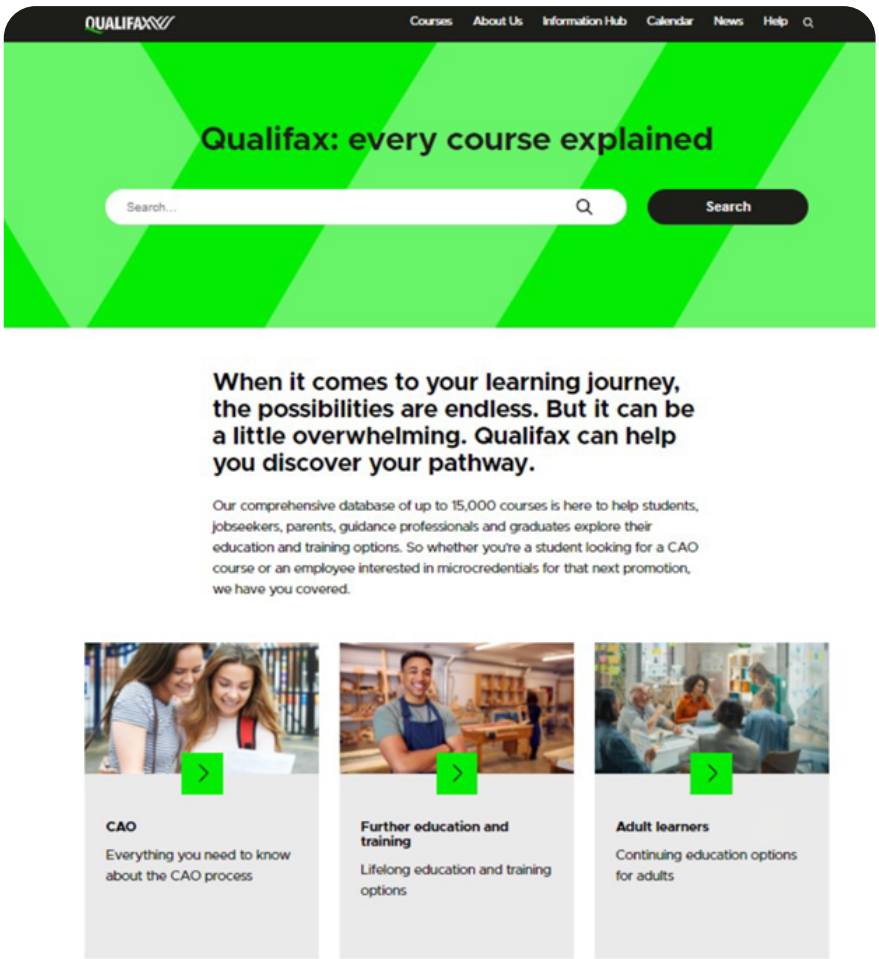


Figure 42 - Qualifax database

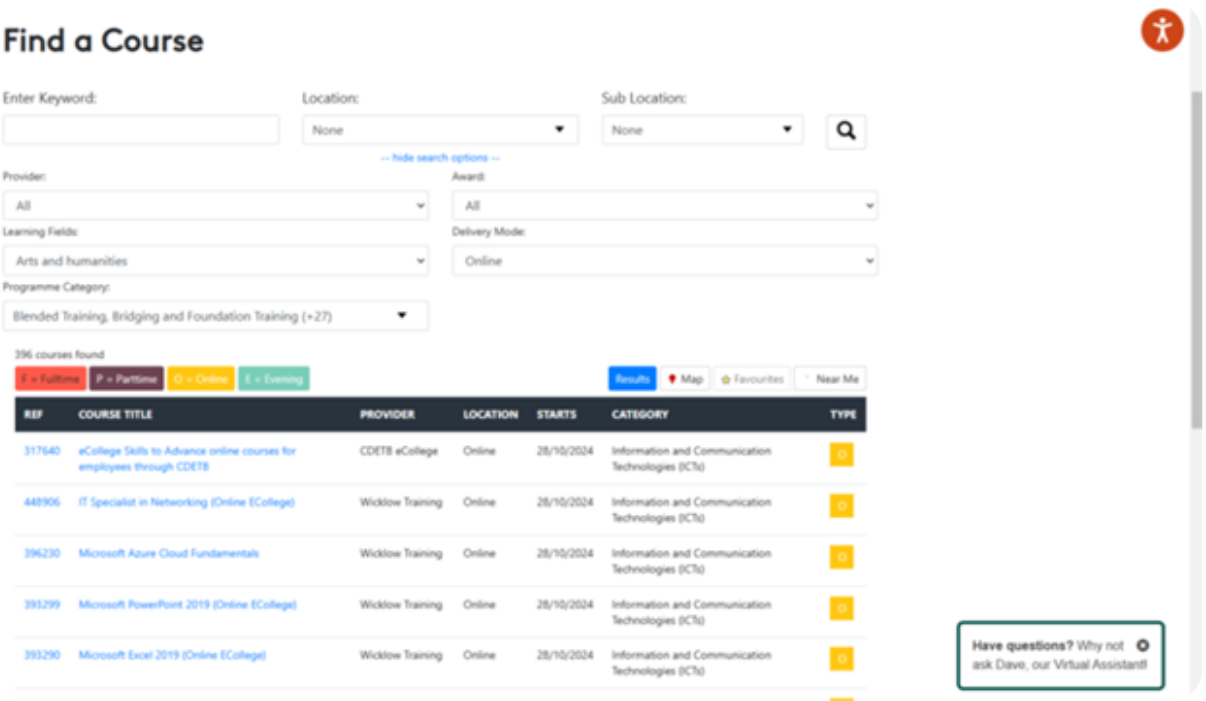


Figure 43 - FetchCourses portal

Policy note

Ireland's model sets a benchmark for openness, QA integration, and user trust.
Slovenia – Inclusion and stakeholder engagement

6.1.8 Slovenia – Inclusion and stakeholder engagement

Governance Model

Slovenia employs a hybrid and participatory model coordinated by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, and implemented by the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (ACS).

Quality Assurance

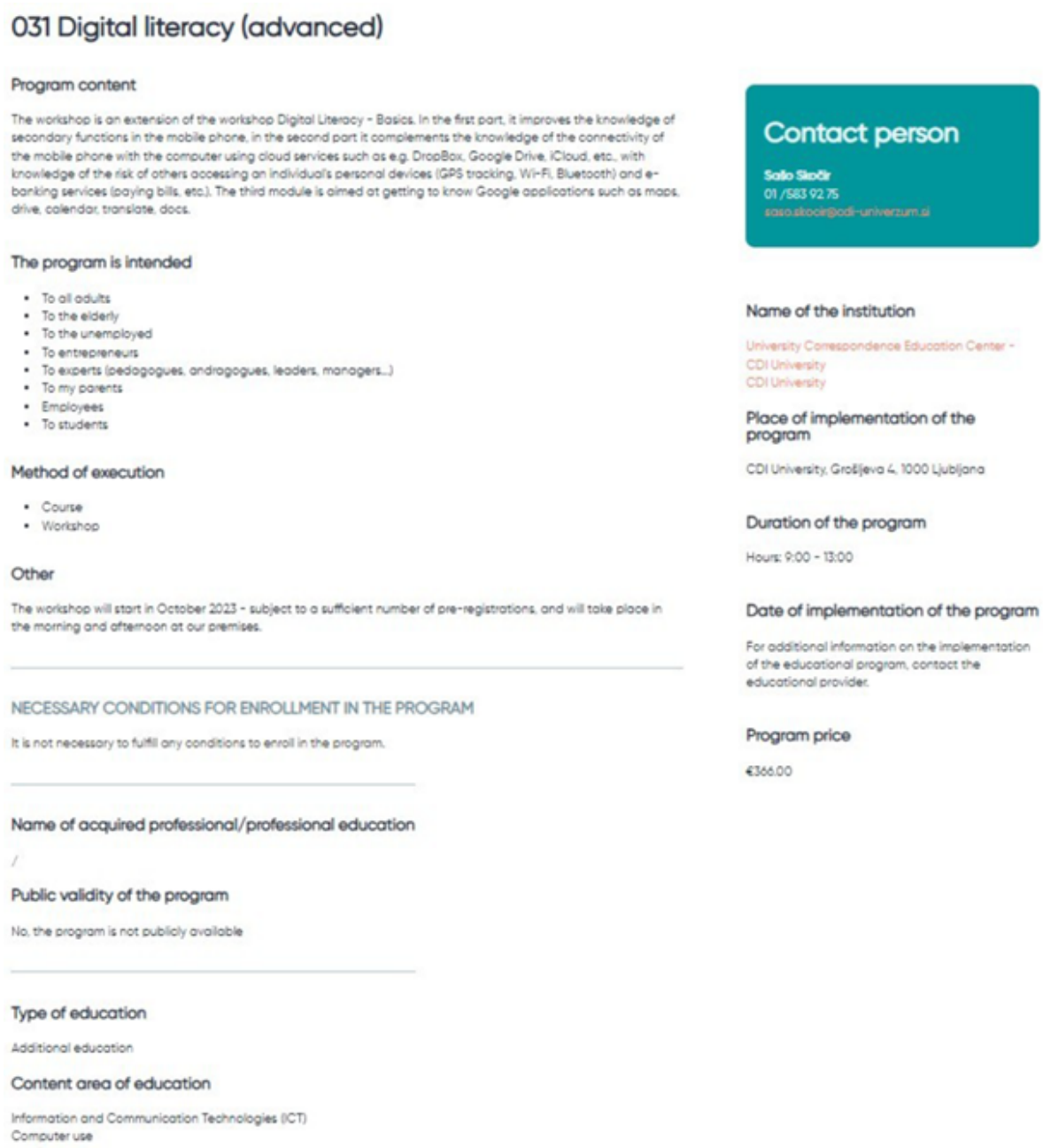
QA combines internal self-evaluation and external verification, focusing on inclusion, accessibility, and recognition of non-formal learning. The ACS supports continuous improvement through data collection and peer review.

Existing Registries and Platforms

Adult Education Programmes Registry – the official national database of accredited institutions and publicly recognised programmes.

ACS Portal (Mozaik/ACS.si) – a comprehensive national information portal with searchable programmes and guidance tools.

National Qualifications Framework Catalogue – a public database of qualifications across education sectors.



031 Digital literacy (advanced)

Program content

The workshop is an extension of the workshop Digital Literacy - Basics. In the first part, it improves the knowledge of secondary functions in the mobile phone, in the second part it complements the knowledge of the connectivity of the mobile phone with the computer using cloud services such as e.g. DropBox, Google Drive, iCloud, etc., with knowledge of the risk of others accessing an individual's personal devices (GPS tracking, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth) and e-banking services (paying bills, etc.). The third module is aimed at getting to know Google applications such as maps, drive, calendar, translate, docs.

The program is intended

- To all adults
- To the elderly
- To the unemployed
- To entrepreneurs
- To experts (pedagogues, andragogues, leaders, managers...)
- To my parents
- Employees
- To students

Method of execution

- Course
- Workshop

Other

The workshop will start in October 2023 - subject to a sufficient number of pre-registrations, and will take place in the morning and afternoon at our premises.

NECESSARY CONDITIONS FOR ENROLLMENT IN THE PROGRAM

It is not necessary to fulfill any conditions to enroll in the program.

Name of acquired professional/professional education

/

Public validity of the program

No, the program is not publicly available

Type of education

Additional education

Content area of education

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)
Computer use

Contact person

Saša Skočir
01 /583 92 75
sasa.skocir@cdi-univerzum.si

Name of the institution

University Correspondence Education Center - CDI University
CDI University

Place of implementation of the program

CDI University, Grošljeva 4, 1000 Ljubljana

Duration of the program

Hours: 9:00 - 13:00

Date of implementation of the program

For additional information on the implementation of the educational program, contact the educational provider.

Program price

€366.00

Figure 44 - Example of course description - Automated translation from Slovenia

Policy note

Slovenia's approach demonstrates inclusive, participatory governance.

6.1.9 The Netherlands – Data integration and employability focus

Governance Model

The Netherlands employs a hybrid structure that combines national coordination with local implementation. Responsibility for education data and QA is shared between ministries and semi-public agencies.

Quality Assurance

QA in ALE is integrated into the national qualification framework and sectoral accreditation mechanisms. Independent agencies ensure compliance with professional standards.

Existing Registries and Platforms

Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs (DUO) – the main national education registry managing provider and learner data.

Blik op Werk – a registry of certified training and integration providers.
Basisregister Onderwijs – the foundational national register integrating education levels and providers across sectors.

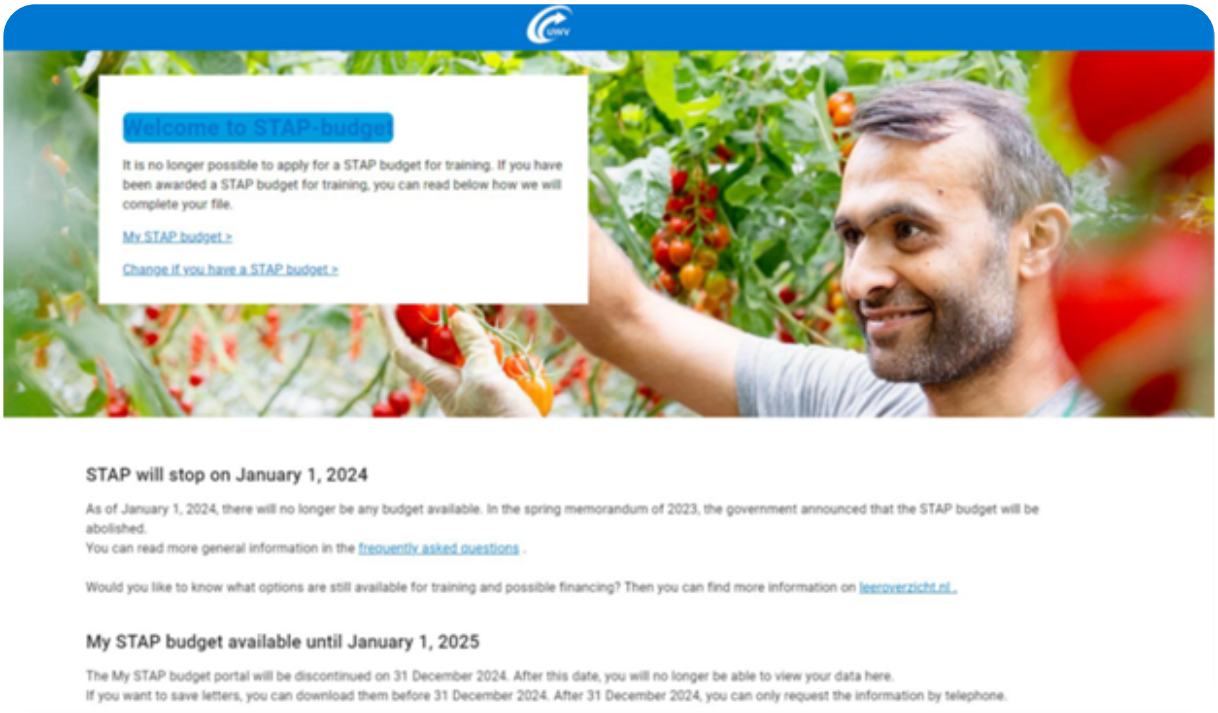


Figure 45 - STAP portal

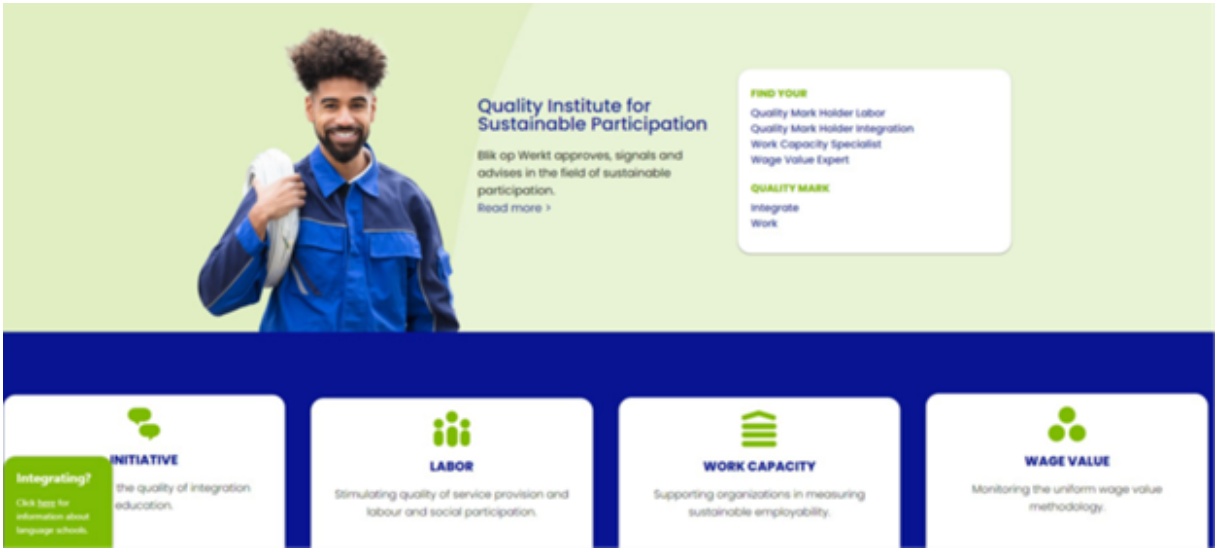


Figure 46 - Bilk op Werk portal

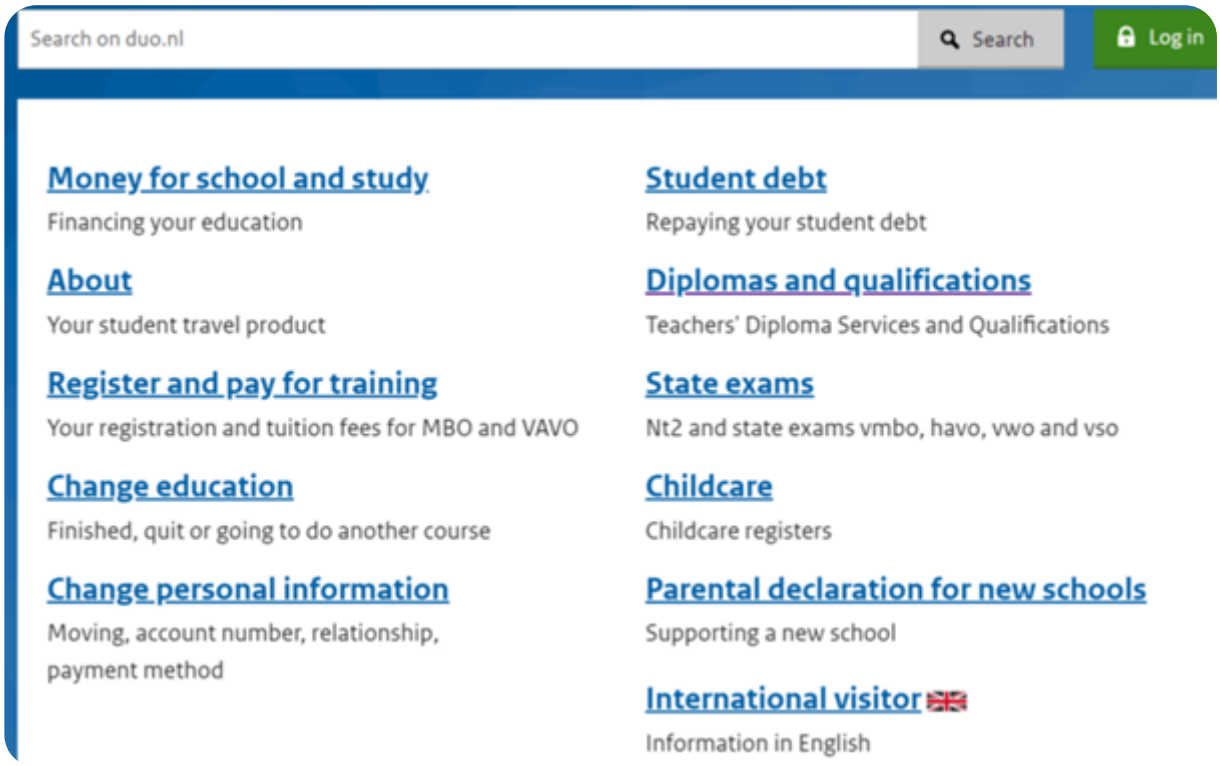


Figure 47 - DUO Database

Policy note

The Dutch approach highlights data intelligence as a driver of policy innovation.
France – Linking quality, funding, and accessibility

6.1.10 France – Linking quality, funding, and accessibility

Governance Model

France operates a highly centralised governance model under the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Economic Inclusion and the national agency France Compétences.

Quality Assurance

All providers offering publicly funded training must hold Qualiopi certification, a national QA label assessing the quality of processes, outcomes, and learner satisfaction. QA is also implemented through accreditation within the registries.

Existing Registries and Platforms

France Compétences Portal – central coordination hub for vocational training, funding, and policy.

Répertoire National des Certifications Professionnelles (RNCP) – national register of recognised vocational qualifications.

Répertoire Spécifique (RS) – complementary register of professional and sectoral certifications.

Mon Compte Formation (CPF) – national ILA platform integrating training search, enrolment, and funding management.

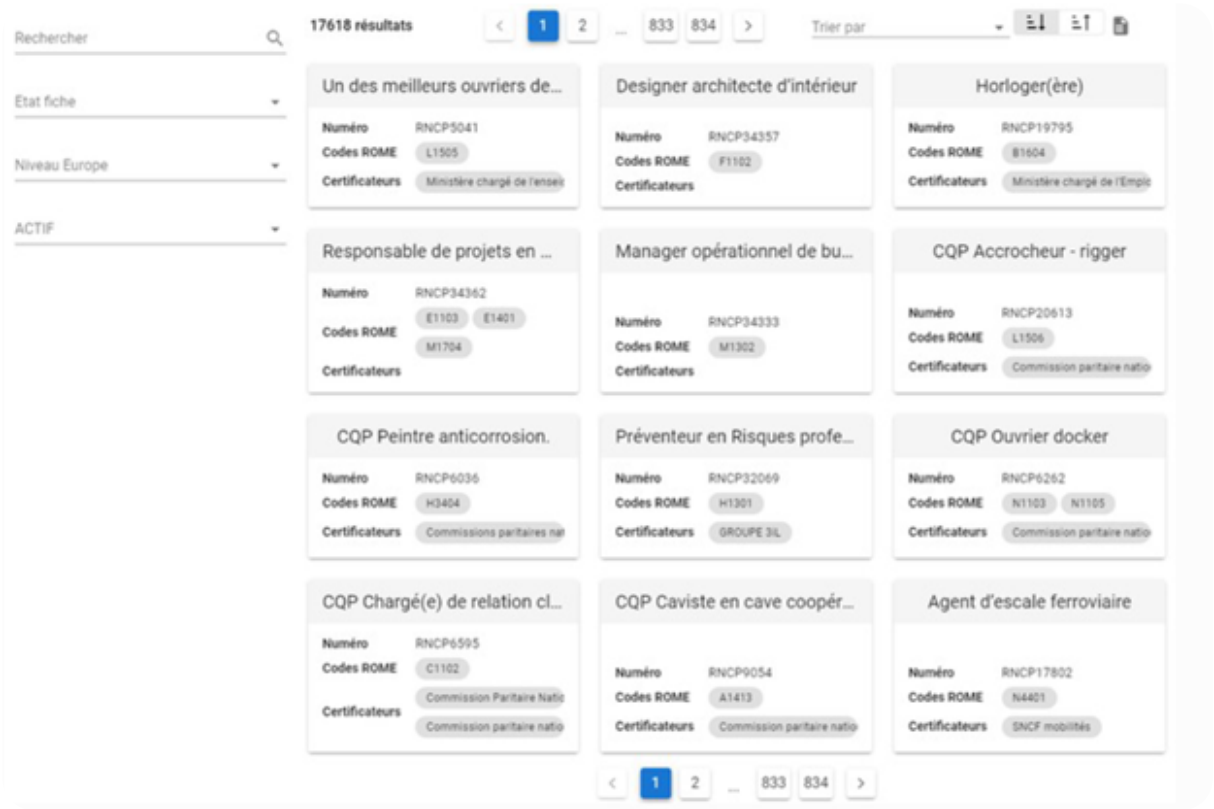


Figure 48 - National Directory of Professional Certifications research example

Policy note

France offers the most advanced model, integrating registry, funding, and quality into a single national system.

6.2. ANNEXES 2 - RALEXILA PRIMER

RALExILA

RALExILA Primer

Establishing National Adult learning registries for individual learning accounts

Work package 4

Co-funded by
the European Union

References and contacts

Project Acronym	RALExILA
Project Title	National Registries of Adult Learning and Education to support the deployment of Individual Learning Accounts
Project Grant Number	101132300
Project Coordinator	EAEA – European Association for the Education of Adults www.eaea.org
Partners	Knowledge Innovation Center https://knowledgeinnovation.eu/ ALGEBRA BERNAYS University https://www.algebra.hr/sveuciliste/en/ Asociácia inštitúcií vzdelávania dospelých: AIVD https://aivd.sk/ CARDET - Center for the Advancement of Research and Development in Educational Technology https://cardet.org/
Project Duration	27 months
Period	January 2024 – March 2026
Website	www.ralexila.eu
Main contacts	viola.pinzi@eaea.org stefan.jahnke@knowledgeinnovation.eu maja.brkljacic@algebra.hr

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1 INTRODUCTION

This primer provides essential guidance for ministries and agencies of education and labour engaged in prototyping Adult Learning and Education (ALE) registries with integrated Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs). Drawing from the comprehensive RALExILA research across ten European countries, it outlines core components, implementation strategies, and governance considerations for creating effective national systems that enhance lifelong learning opportunities.

2 WHY IMPLEMENT ALE REGISTRIES AND ILAS?

Adult Learning and Education registries serve as centralised repositories of learning opportunities that connect learners, providers, and policymakers. When integrated with Individual Learning Accounts, they create a powerful ecosystem that:

- **Enhances accessibility** by providing a unified platform for discovering learning opportunities
- **Improves quality assurance** through transparent accreditation and evaluation mechanisms
- **Enables data-driven policymaking** based on participation trends and outcomes
- **Facilitates targeted funding** through ILAs that empower individual learning choices
- **Supports workforce development** by aligning education with labour market needs

3 CORE COMPONENTS OF AN INTEGRATED ALE/ILA SYSTEM

The Core Components of an Integrated ALE/ILA System section outlines the three fundamental building blocks needed to create an effective national adult learning ecosystem: the Adult Learning Registry as a centralised database of learning opportunities, the Individual Learning Account component for financial mechanisms and learner empowerment, and the data infrastructure that ensures secure, interoperable, and GDPR-compliant system operations.

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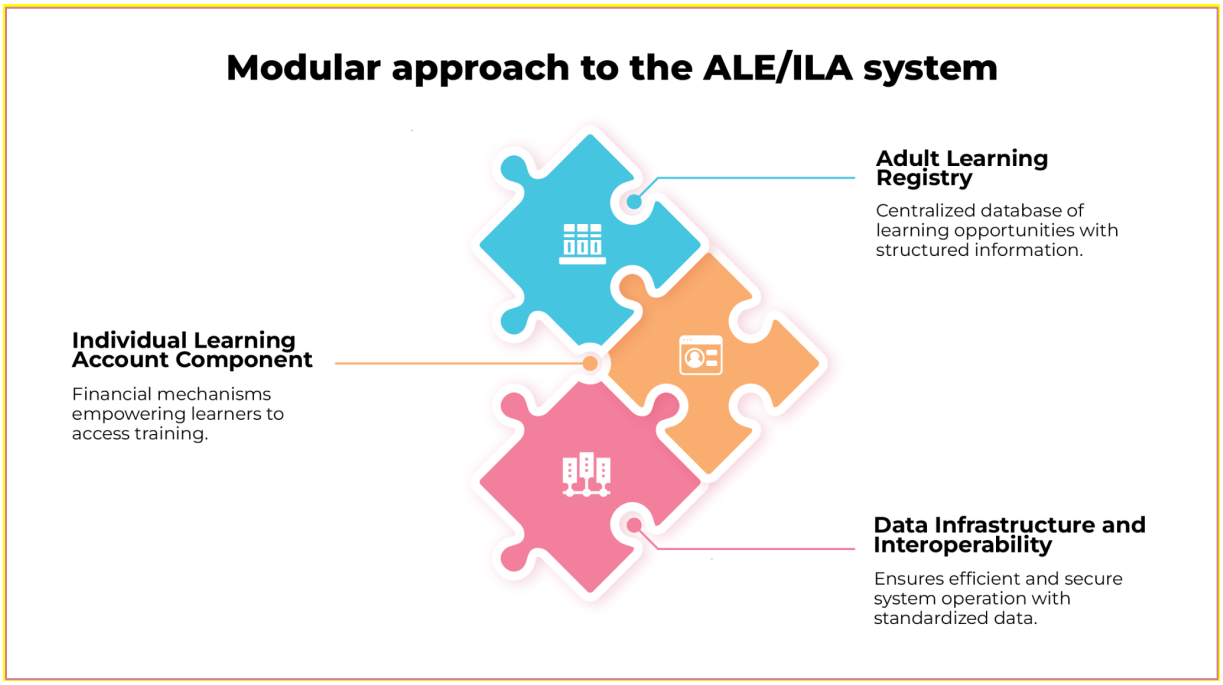

3.1 1. The Adult Learning Registry

The ALE registry forms the backbone of the system, functioning as a centralised database of learning opportunities. It should contain:

- Structured information on accredited and non-accredited courses
- Details about training providers and their quality assurance status
- Learning outcomes, assessment methods, and certification pathways
- User interfaces for learners, providers, and administrators

3.2 The Individual Learning Account Component

The ILA component enables financial mechanisms that empower learners to access training. Key features include:

- Personal accounts for tracking entitlements and funding history
- Eligibility verification systems for different funding sources
- Payment processing capabilities for course enrolment
- Transparent reporting on fund utilisation

3.3 Data Infrastructure and Interoperability

A solid data infrastructure ensures that the system operates efficiently and securely:

- Standardised data formats aligned with European frameworks (ELM, ESCO)
- APIs for integration with employment services and education platforms
- GDPR-compliant security measures for personal data protection
- Analytics capabilities for monitoring system performance

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4 IMPLEMENTING A MODULAR APPROACH

The RALExILA System Model recommends a phased implementation approach.

Phase 1: Core Registry Establishment

- Create the basic ALE registry database and provider management system
- Implement quality assurance mechanisms for learning opportunities
- Develop user-friendly interfaces for course discovery

Phase 2: ILA Integration

- Introduce individual user accounts and entitlement tracking
- Establish funding eligibility verification processes
- Implement payment mechanisms for approved courses

Phase 3: Advanced Features

- Add personalisation and career guidance tools
- Integrate skills recognition and validation features
- Implement advanced analytics for policy support

4.1 Governance Models and Quality Assurance

The choice of governance model significantly impacts the operation and effectiveness of ALE/ILA systems. Each model offers different advantages.

Governance Model	Characteristics	Best For
Centralised	National oversight with standardised processes	Countries with strong central governance
Decentralised	Regional authority with local adaptation	Diverse regions with varying needs
Hybrid	National frameworks with regional implementation	Balancing consistency with flexibility

Regardless of the governance model chosen, robust quality assurance mechanisms are essential:

- Clear accreditation procedures for training providers
- Standardised evaluation criteria for learning programmes
- Continuous monitoring and feedback collection
- Regular audits and system performance reviews

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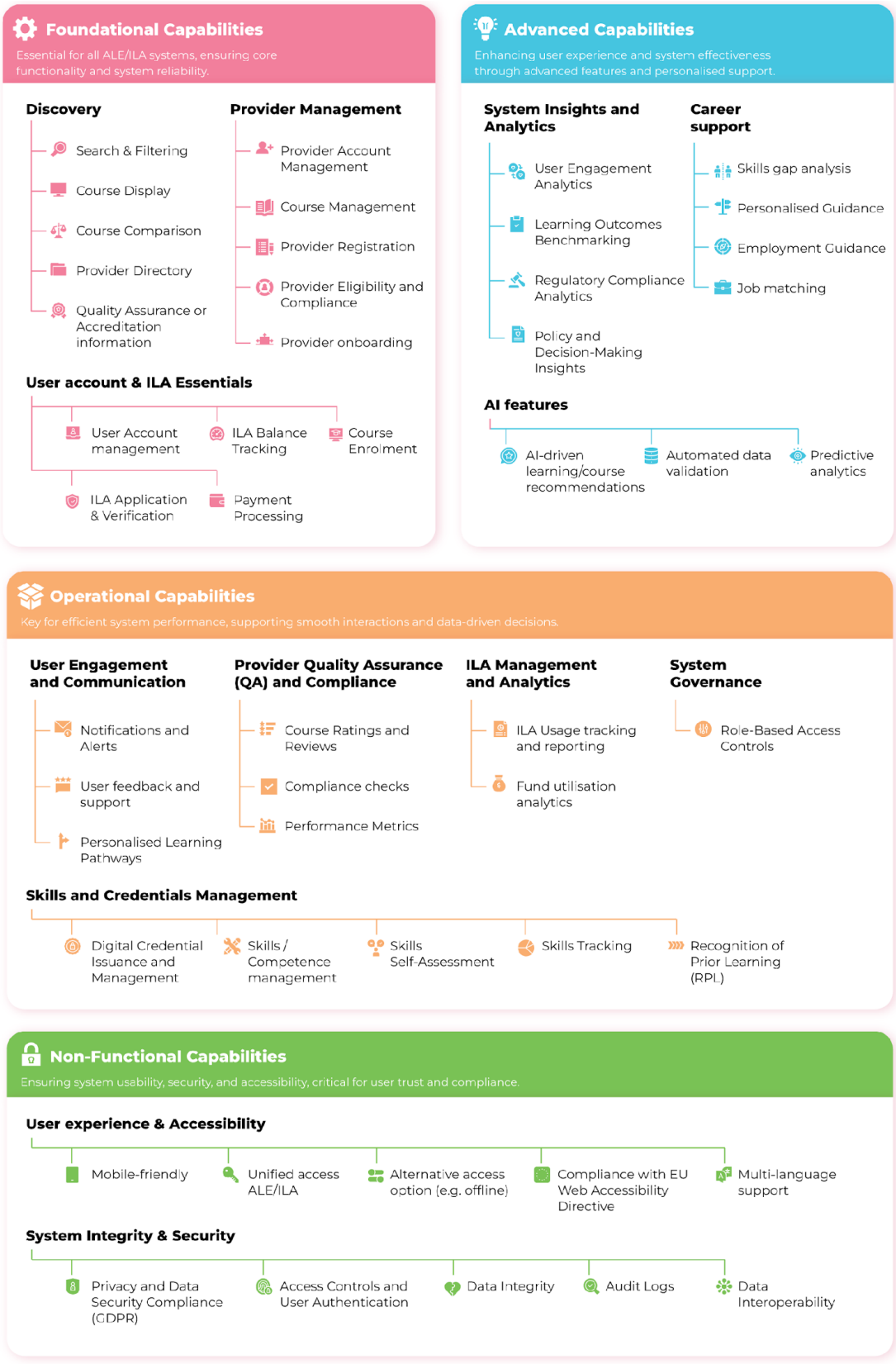
5 CORE FEATURES



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6 TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR PROTOTYPING

When prototyping an ALE/ILA system, focus on these key technical aspects:

- **User-Centred Design**: Ensure intuitive interfaces for diverse users, including those with low digital literacy
- **Data Architecture**: Structure data to align with the European Learning Model for future interoperability
- **Security Framework**: Implement robust authentication and authorisation controls
- **Interoperability**: Design APIs that allow integration with existing education and employment systems
- **Scalability**: Build a modular infrastructure that can expand as system needs grow

6.1 Key Success Factors

Research across European implementations reveals several critical success factors:

- **Stakeholder Collaboration**: Involve learners, providers, employers, and policymakers in system design
- **Transparent Governance**: Clearly define roles, responsibilities, and decision-making processes
- **Labour Market Alignment**: Ensure learning opportunities address current and emerging skills needs
- **Inclusivity**: Design features that support underserved populations and regions
- **Data-Driven Refinement**: Implement continuous evaluation and system improvement

6.2 Getting Started: A Roadmap for Prototyping

Assess Your Starting Point

- Map existing ALE infrastructure and stakeholders
- Identify policy priorities and resource constraints
- Review legal frameworks for data sharing and funding

Define Your System Architecture

- Select appropriate governance model
- Determine core technical components
- Plan for interoperability with existing systems

Develop a Phased Implementation Plan

- Start with high-priority capabilities from the **RALExILA capability map**
- Establish clear milestones and success metrics
- Create feedback mechanisms for continuous improvement

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Build Stakeholder Engagement

- Form advisory committees with diverse representation
- Conduct user testing throughout development
- Establish communication channels for ongoing input

Plan for Financial and Operational Sustainability

- Establish diversified funding through public-private partnerships and learner contributions
- Use modular, open-source architecture to minimise long-term operational costs
- Create shared governance structures with distributed stakeholder responsibilities
- Monitor key sustainability metrics like cost per learner and system ROI
- Build internal capacity to reduce vendor dependency and ensure continuity

7 HOW TO CONTINUE

Implementing an ALE registry with integrated ILAs represents a significant step toward enhancing lifelong learning opportunities and workforce development. By adopting a modular, user-centred approach and learning from existing European examples, ministries and agencies can develop systems that are both robust and adaptable to national contexts.

The complete **RALExILA Handbook** and **System Model** provide detailed guidance for each implementation phase. As you progress through your prototyping journey, these resources offer comprehensive frameworks, case studies, and technical specifications to support your success.

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Consortium Partners

ASOCIÁCIA INŠTITÚCIÍ VZDELÁVANIA DOSPELÝCH

CARDET

EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF ADULTS

Knowledge INNOVATION Centre

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RALExILA
Primer

National Registries of Adult Learning and Education to support the deployment of Individual Learning Accounts – RALExILA

Project Ref: 101132300

6.3. ANNEX 3 RALEXILA CAPACITY BUILDING MATERIALS

6.3.1 Discover and Define

- Outreach and onboarding - Invitation letters, consent form and information sheets
- Survey – Adult learners
- Survey – Employers
- Interview protocol
- Workshops protocol
- Research report template (national context)

6.3.2 Ideate and Prototype

Presentations

- Introduction to co-design with Design Thinking
- Persona and user flow
- User engagement and accessibility

Practice and Templates

- User engagement and accessibility
- Personas and User flows development
- User stories
- Main challenges
- Functionalities/capabilities mapping and definition

6.3.3 Evaluate and Refine

Presentations

- Introduction and Primer approach
- Governance models
- User stories
- ALE registries (Note: this is specific for each project)

Templates

- Outreach and onboarding - Invitation letter, consent form and information sheet
- Facilitators cards
- Facilitators discussion questions
- Evaluation protocol
- Workshop report template

6.3.4 Short workshop

Presentation

- Prototyping an integrated ALE/ILA System

Templates

- Worksheet – Stakeholders overview
- Worksheet – Decision making canvas
- ALE registry and ILA platform – Capability map
- Scenario cards

References and contacts

Project Acronym	RALExILA
Project Title	National Registries of Adult Learning and Education to support the deployment of Individual Learning Accounts
Project Grant Number	101132300
Project Coordinator	EAEA – European Association for the Education of Adults www.eaea.org
Partners	Knowledge Innovation Center https://knowledgeinnovation.eu/ ALGEBRA BERNAYS University https://www.algebra.hr/sveuciliste/en/ Asociácia inštitúcií vzdelávania dospelých: AIVD https://aivd.sk/ CARDET - Center for the Advancement of Research and Development in Educational Technology https://cardet.org/
Project Duration	27 months
Period	January 2024 – March 2026
Website	www.ralexila.eu
Main contacts	viola.pinzi@eaea.org stefan.jahnke@knowledgeinnovation.eu maja.brkljacic@algebra.hr

Consortium Partners

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INVITATION LETTER FOR PARTICIPANTS - INTERVIEWS

Subject: Invitation to Participate in Research Study on Adult Learning and Education

Dear [Participant Name],

We are excited to invite you to participate in our research study conducted as part of the project "RALExILA – National Registries of Adult Learning and Education to support the deployment of Individual Learning Accounts" co-financed by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union, aimed at enhancing adult learning through the development of National Adult Learning and Education Registries and Individual Learning Accounts. The aim of the project is to develop and deliver a model and proof of concept for an integrated information system of the national registries for training opportunities, focusing on Adult Learning and Education (ALE). This system will be based on interoperability, accessibility, and inclusiveness, ensuring the quality of ALE provision and the relevance of such training in terms of employability and personal development.

The aim of this research is to gather detailed insights from key informants about existing national registries, and Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs). We aim to identify gaps and analyze the effectiveness of current systems while exploring innovative approaches to governance and quality assurance in adult education. Your contributions will be instrumental in shaping future policies and practices in adult learning across Europe. As a token of our appreciation, you will receive a thank-you gift.

We will explore your experiences and perspectives on governance frameworks, quality assurance mechanisms, existing systems and databases, staheholders needs and challenges, motivational aspects, and the impact and outcomes of ILAs. Each individual interview will last approximately 60 minutes and will be conducted [in-person/online] at a time convenient for you.

Your participation in the interview is highly valued. All responses will be kept confidential and processed in accordance with the GDPR directive 2016/679. Data collected will be securely stored by Algebra University (Croatia) and used in scientific publications and educational materials, and will always be fully anonymized to protect your privacy.

Please confirm your availability by [date] by responding to this email or contacting us at [contact information]. Please find attached an information sheet and a consent form for your review.

We look forward to your valuable contribution to this important initiative.

Warm regards,

[Your Name]

[Your Title]

[Contact Information]

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INFORMATION SHEET – INTERVIEWS AND RESEARCH WORKSHOPS

Project title: National Registries of Adult Learning and Education to support the deployment of Individual Learning Accounts

Project lead: European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA)

Project partners: Knowledge Innovation Centre (KIC), Algebra University (AU), Association of Adult Education Institutions (AIVD), Center for the Advancement of Research and Development in Educational Technology (CARDET)

Purpose of the project:

The RALExILA project aims to develop comprehensive models for National Adult Learning and Education (ALE) Registries to support the implementation of Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs) across Europe. The primary objectives are to understand the current systems, identify gaps, and propose effective strategies for governance and quality assurance in adult education. Furthermore, the project's activities will include:

- Identifying, assessing, and adapting existing European and national registries of training opportunities into an integrated, interoperable model with the European Learning Model V3.
- Promoting active participation and inclusiveness through a co-design approach involving national/regional authorities, training providers, civil society organizations, and learners, based on the Design Thinking method.
- Ensuring long-term systemic change in ALE governance and environment.
- Supporting the transfer and future exploitation of the RALExILA model across European, national, and regional levels, with potential for it to become a joint European model for future projects and initiatives.

Purpose of the research:

This study will examine the existing national registries, governance frameworks, quality assurance mechanisms, and information models in adult learning and education. We aim to gather insights from a diverse group of stakeholders, including adult learners, educators, policymakers, employers, and employment agencies, to inform the design and implementation of user-centered ALE registries and ILAs. The research aims to identify gaps in the integration of comprehensive systems and training databases supporting adult learning and education (ALE) in selected countries (France, Netherlands, Slovenia, Ireland, Portugal, Finland, Cyprus, Croatia, Malta, and Slovakia). It seeks to develop an in-depth understanding of the current state of play at both theoretical and policy levels regarding Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs), focusing on governance frameworks, quality assurance methods, and data/information models.

Key objectives include:

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- Analyzing selected contexts and practices related to ALE, considering their impact on educational systems.
- Examining both the supply (provision) and demand (participation) levels of ALE.
- Deepening the understanding of existing practices, their effectiveness, and potential areas for improvement.
- Using this analysis as a basis for proposing project frameworks and models.

Participant Involvement:

Participants will be involved in one or more of the following activities:

a) Interviews: One-on-one interviews lasting approximately 60 minutes. These interviews will focus on understanding your experiences and perspectives regarding the integration of comprehensive systems and training databases supporting adult learning and education (ALE), as well as your insights on the implementation of Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs) in your country.

b) Workshops: Collaborative sessions aimed at exploring and ideating on ALE and ILA implementations. Workshops will include group discussions, brainstorming sessions, and problem-solving activities. Participants will work together to innovative ideas for confronting our research question and designing solutions for our recommendations concerning the structure of national ALE registries and ILA deployment practices.

Procedures:

a) Interviews: Conducted either in person or online, depending on participant preference and location.

b) Workshops: Held in a convenient location with materials provided in advance. Participants will engage in various activities designed to gather qualitative data on their experiences and suggestions.

Confidentiality:

All information collected during the study will be kept strictly confidential. Data will be anonymised before analysis, and no personally identifiable information will be disclosed in any reports or publications. Recordings of interviews and workshops will be securely stored and only accessible to the research team.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at any time without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you choose to withdraw, any data collected from you up to that point will be retained and included in the study unless you request otherwise.

Benefits:

Your participation will contribute to a greater understanding of adult learning and education systems, potentially influencing policy and practice improvements. Additionally, you will have the opportunity to share your insights

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and experiences, which can help shape future initiatives and models in ALE. As a token of appreciation, participants will receive a thank-you gift.

Risks:

There are no known risks associated with participating in this study. However, if you experience any discomfort or wish to discuss your concerns, please contact the principal investigator.

Contact Information:

For further information or if you have any questions about this study, please contact:

Principal Investigator: [Researcher's Name]

Email: [Researcher's Email]

Phone: [Researcher's Phone Number]

Institution: [Researcher's Institution]

Consent:

By agreeing to participate, you acknowledge that you have read and understood the information provided above, and you consent to participate in the study. You will be asked to sign a consent form before beginning any study-related activities.

Next Steps:

Please review the attached consent form. If you agree to participate, sign the consent form and return it to [contact information]. We will then schedule your interview or workshop session.

Thank you for considering participation in this important research initiative. Your insights and experiences are invaluable to the success of this project.

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Text in red colour contains guidelines for adjusting this template and should be deleted.

Text in grey colour contains examples and should be adjusted to the context of each activity.

Text included in < > and/or highlighted with yellow should be replaced with content that is suitable to the context of each activity & project as well as to the organisation seeking to obtain the consent.

Before using this template take the time to carefully read and adjust it to the needs of the activity at hand as well as to any relevant regulations and particularities applicable to your country and organisation.

INFORMED CONSENT FORM – INTERVIEWS AND RESEARCH WORKSHOPS

Who we are:

We are < Insert Partner Name > and we are contacting you in the framework of RALExILA, a project funded by the European Union under the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). A detailed description on how RALExILA handles personal data is presented in the project's Privacy Policy available through the project's web page / that accompanies this Consent Form.

Project:

RALExILA – National Registries of Adult Learning and Education to support the deployment of Individual Learning Accounts (GA Number 101132300).

Partner:

Organisation name: < Insert Partner Name >

Address: < Insert Partner Address >

Phone: < Insert Partner Phone >

E-mail: <Insert Partner Generic E-mail Address >

Responsible persons:

You may delete the line referring to the Data Protection Officer if your organisation does not have one.

#	Role	Name	E-mail
1	RALExILA Project Manager	< Insert name of project manager from your organisation, NOT the name of the Project Coordinator >	< Insert email of project manager from your organisation, NOT the email of the Project Coordinator >
2	Interviewer	< Insert name of interviewer from your organisation >	< Insert e-mail of interviewer from your organisation >
3	Data Protection Officer	< Insert name of DPO from your organisation >	< Insert e-mail of DPO from your organisation >

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What do we need from you?

Please explain in a brief paragraph (4-5 lines) the activity and its purpose under the frame of the project.

Example (e.g., specifically tailored to interviews for Task 1.1): We would like you to participate in an interview that will be carried out by RALExILA with a view to understanding your experiences and perspectives regarding the integration of comprehensive systems and training databases supporting adult learning and education (ALE), as well as your insights on the implementation of Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs) in your country.

The interview is expected to last for no more than < Insert number of minutes > minutes. We will take written notes and we will be making a sound recording of the interview.

Please adapt the following text to accurately depict the type of personal data to be collected.

To effectively conduct this interview, we need to process some of your personal data:

- Your contact details (full name, email, phone number);
- Some basic demographics (age, gender);
- Your professional info (organization, job position, field of expertise);
- Your opinions on the subject matter.

Why do we need your data & what will we do with them?

We need your data to contact you in order to plan and carry out the aforementioned interview and to resolve any ambiguities, questions and other issues that may arise after and as a result of the interview. We also need to record your data to keep track of the interview process. The project's deliverables that will be derived by the interview will not include your personal data or any other information that could identify you. Your personal data will remain on our written notes (interview's transcript) and the sound recording we will make during the interview.

We will share your data with a few other RALExILA project partners that are also involved in this task and will participate in the drafting of the relevant deliverables. We are also obliged to grant access to your data to:

- EU officials such as our Project Officer for purposes related to project's evaluation;
- EU agencies and other authorities for project's auditing purposes.

We would also be very happy if you gave us your consent to contact you in the future to ask you to participate in other project's activities (e.g., surveys, interviews, RALExILA Advisory Board, etc.) and also to inform you about the project's progress (e.g., by sending you a newsletter or similar messages).

How can you withdraw your consent?

You should know that you can withdraw your consent at any time by communicating either on the phone or by email with the responsible persons listed in the previous page. With regards to the informational messages and newsletters you can always opt out by simply clicking the link "Unsubscribe" or something similar included at the end of all the relevant messages.

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I hereby give my consent to the processing of my personal data needed for:

*(Please, tick the boxes below to confirm that you give us your consent for the respective subject. Any boxes left unticked mean that **you do not consent to the relevant subject**.)*

#	Consent Subject	Tick box
1	My participation in an interview that will be carried out by RALExILA to < insert key objective of the interview >	
2	My participation in future activities of RALExILA	
3	Receiving newsletters and messages regarding RALExILA activities	

_____ _____ _____

Name of participant Date Sigrature

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RESEARCH – SURVEYS QUESTIONNAIRES

Employers

1. Country where you currently work (drop-down menu)
2. Number of employees in your company (drop-down menu)
3. Industry sector in which your company operates (drop-down menu)
4. Since when does your company exist (drop-down menu)
5. How important is personal and professional development of the employees for your company (Likert scale)
6. If you think that personal and professional development of your employees is important, please explain why (drop-down menu + other)
7. How much in total does your company invest in personal and professional development of your employees (drop-down menu + don't know)
8. Do you offer any in-house adult education for your employees (yes-no)
9. If you do offer in-house education, which topics do you cover (drop-down menu)
10. If you do offer in-house education, is participation in your educational programmes compulsory for your employees (yes-no)
11. If you do not offer in-house education, what are the reasons for that (drop-down menu)
12. Do you have contracts with professional adult education providers (yes-no)
13. If yes, how did you choose the education provider(s) (drop-down menu)
14. How would you describe your previous experience with adult education providers (Likert scale)
15. Please explain the reasons for your answer in question 13 (drop-down menu)
16. According to your knowledge, is there a data base in your country (or region), where all different educational programmes intended for adult learners are listed (yes-no)
17. If there is such a data base, have you used it (yes-no)
18. If you have used it, what information did you seek in the data base (drop-down menu)

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19. If you have used it, were you able to find the information you sought quickly (yes-no)
20. If you have used it, were you satisfied with the information provided in the data base (yes-no)
21. If you were satisfied with the information provided, can you explain why (drop-down menu)
22. If you were not happy with the information provided, can you explain why (drop-down menu)
23. Was your decision to choose a particular adult education programme for your employees influenced by the information provided in the data base (yes-no)
24. Are you familiar with the concept of Individual Learning Accounts (yes-no)
25. If you are familiar, do you see any benefits for your company in this concept (Likert scale)
26. If you see any benefits for your company, please explain which (drop-down menu)

Learners

1. Country of residence (drop-down menu)
2. Gender (drop-down menu)
3. Age group (drop-down menu)
4. Max level of education achieved (drop-down menu)
5. Current industry sector (drop-down menu)
6. Personal development interests (drop-down menu)
7. Years of work experience (drop-down menu)
8. How important is adult education to you (Likert scale)
9. What motivates you in your pursuit of adult education (drop-down menu)
10. How would you describe your previous experience with adult education (Likert scale)
11. Do you pursue adult education:
    a) for personal development
    b) for professional development
    c) for both
12. Who were providers of adult education programmes you attended (drop-down menu, multiple choice)

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13. How did you choose adult education programmes you attended (drop-down menu, multiple choice)
14. When two education providers offer two seemingly similar education programmes, what criteria would you use to choose among them (drop-down menu)
15. How satisfied were you with the quality of the majority adult education programmes you attended (Likert scale)
16. What was the immediate impact of the adult education programmes you attended (drop-down menu, multiple choice possible)
17. What was the medium-term effect of the adult education programmes you attended (drop-down menu, multiple choice possible)
18. According to your knowledge, is there a data base, where all different educational programmes intended for adult learners in your country or region are listed (yes-no)
19. If there is such a data base, have you used it (yes-no)
20. If you have used it, what information did you seek in the data base (drop-down menu)
21. If you have used it, were you able to find the information you sought quickly (yes-no)
22. If you have used it, were you satisfied with the information provided in the data base (yes-no)
23. If you were happy with the information provided, can you explain why (drop-down menu)
24. If you were not happy with the information provided, can you explain why (drop-down menu)
25. If you are aware of such a data base existing, please describe the trust you have in the data base regarding the information on education offers (Likert scale).
26. Was your decision to choose a particular adult education programme influenced by the information provided in the data base (yes-no)
27. Are you familiar with the concept of Individual Learning Accounts (yes-no)
28. If you are familiar, do you see any benefits for yourself in this concept (yes-no)
29. If you see any benefits for yourself, please explain which (drop-down menu)

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RESEARCH - INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Objective:

To gather detailed insights on existing national registries, governance frameworks, quality assurance mechanisms, and ILA implementation from key informants

Participants:

The target groups participating in the interviews are national or international experts on the topic of our research (adult learning and education registries and individual learning accounts).

Procedure:

Below is the detailed procedure for conducting the interviews:

1. **Preparation:**

- Research participant backgrounds to tailor questions appropriately.
- Ensure recording equipment is set up and tested (with consent from participants).
- Prepare consent forms and information sheets for distribution.

2. **Introduction:**

- Welcome the participant and provide a brief overview of the study.
- Explain the interview process and objectives.
- Review and sign the consent form.
- Start the recording (with participant's consent).

3. **Possible Questions:**

Governance and Quality Assurance:

- Can you describe the current governance frameworks for adult learning in your country?
- How are quality assurance mechanisms structured and implemented?
- How do you perceive the effectiveness of these governance frameworks in ensuring quality adult learning programs?
- What role do stakeholders (e.g., government, training providers, employers) play in the governance and quality assurance processes?
- Are there any recent changes or reforms in the governance or quality assurance frameworks? If so, what prompted these changes?

Existing Systems and Databases:

- What systems and databases are currently in place for adult learning and education?

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- How effective are these systems in meeting the needs of adult learners and educators?
- How accessible and user-friendly are these databases for different stakeholders?
- Are there any gaps or limitations in the current systems and databases that need addressing?
- How are data privacy and security managed within these systems?

Needs and Contexts:

- What are the primary needs and challenges faced by stakeholders in implementing ILAs?
- How do different contexts (geographical, socio-economic) influence the deployment of ILAs?
- What specific needs do adult learners have that ILAs can address? How do cultural factors impact the acceptance and effectiveness of ILAs in different regions?
- What support mechanisms are necessary to ensure the successful implementation of ILAs in various contexts?

Motivational Aspects and Drivers:

- What motivates stakeholders to participate in or support ILA systems?
- What are the main implementation drivers and barriers for ILAs?
- How do personal and professional development goals influence engagement with ILAs?
- What incentives or benefits do stakeholders see in participating in ILA programs?
- How do stakeholders perceive the long-term impact of ILAs on adult learning and career development?

Impact and Outcomes:

- What measurable outcomes have been observed from the implementation of ILAs?
- How do ILAs influence adult learners' participation and completion rates in educational programs?
- What impact do ILAs have on the employability and career progression of adult learners?
- How do ILAs contribute to addressing skill gaps in the workforce?
- Are there any notable success stories or case studies that highlight the benefits of ILAs?

Future Directions and Recommendations:

- What are the future directions for the development and implementation of ILAs in your country?
- What recommendations do you have for improving the governance, quality assurance, and effectiveness of ILAs?
- How can technological advancements be leveraged to enhance ILA systems?
- What policy changes or initiatives could support the broader adoption of ILAs?

Personal Experiences and Perspectives:

- Can you share any personal experiences or observations regarding the implementation of ILAs?
- What have been the most rewarding aspects of working with ILAs for you?
- What challenges have you personally faced in relation to ILAs, and how have you addressed them?
- How do you see your role evolving with the continued development of ILAs?
- What additional support or resources would help you in your work with ILAs?

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4. Closing:

- Summarize key points discussed.
- Thank the participant for their time and insights.
- Inform them about the next steps and how their data will be used.

5. Follow-Up:

- Transcribe the interview.
- Analyse and synthesise data for reporting.

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RESEARCH - WORKSHOP PROTOCOL

Objective:

The workshops are structured to provide a comprehensive approach to achieving the objectives of the RALExILA project. The workshops are divided into three different types, each with specific objectives to progressively deepen understanding and refine focus:

- **Discover** Workshops: Aimed at understanding the broader context of the problem, identifying challenges and opportunities
- **Empathise** Workshops: Focus on gaining a deep empathetic understanding of the needs and experiences of the target groups
- **Define** Workshops: Involve synthesising the information gathered to define clear problem statements for ideation

Participants:

The target groups participating in the workshops are adult learners, educators, policy makers and employers.

Procedure[1]:

Below is the detailed procedure for conducting the workshops:

Preparation:

- Take into consideration the profile of your participants to adjust the sessions and the group organisation. The group should consist of at least 2 representatives from each target group (at least 8 people).
- An introduction to the approach and an introduction to the context/situation/environment to explore.

[1] The procedure can be modified and adapted according to the needs of the project partner, the pace of work of the group and other factors that may influence the quality of the results obtained during the workshop.

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Discover workshop

1. Introduction (15 minutes):

Objective: Set the stage for the workshop, introduce participants, and explain the goals and agenda.

Activities:

- Welcome and introduction by the facilitator.
- Brief overview of the project and its objectives.
- Introduction of participants (name, role, and interest in adult learning and ILAs).
- Outline the workshop structure and expected outcomes.

2. Setting the context (30 minutes):

Objective: Provide background information and current state of adult learning and ILAs.

Activities:

- Presentation on the current state of adult learning and ILAs.
- Highlight key statistics, existing policies, and frameworks.
- Open floor for initial questions and comments.

3. Broad context exploration (45 minutes):

Objective: Understand the broader context, including societal, economic, and policy influences on adult learning and ILAs.

Activities:

- Discussion Questions:
    1) What are the current trends and developments in adult learning and education in your country?
    2) How do societal and economic factors influence adult learning in your country?
    3) What are the existing policies and governance frameworks for adult learning and ILAs?
    4) What opportunities do you see for improving adult learning systems in your country?

4. Identifying challenges and opportunities (45 minutes):

Objective: Identify the main challenges and opportunities in the current adult learning and ILA systems.

Activities:

- Discussion Questions:
    1) What are the main barriers to accessing adult learning opportunities in your country?
    2) What challenges do educators face in delivering adult learning programmes?
    3) How effective are current policies and governance structures in supporting adult learning?
    4) What opportunities exist for integrating ILAs into the adult learning system.

5. Break (15 minutes)

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6. Stakeholder perspectives (60 minutes):

Objective: Gain insights from different stakeholders on their experiences and perspectives.

Activities:

- Group Activity: Break into smaller groups based on stakeholder types (adult learners, educators, policy makers, employers).
- Discussion questions for each group:
  - For adult learners:
    1) What are your experiences with adult learning programmes?
    2) What improvements would you like to see?
  - For educators:
    1) What support do you need to effectively deliver adult learning?
    2) What are your views on the current system?
  - For policy makers:
    1) What are the policy priorities for adult learning?
    2) How can policies better support ILAs?
  - For Employers:
    1) How do adult learning programs impact your workforce?
    2) What would encourage more investment in employee learning.

7. Group presentations and synthesis (45 minutes):

Objective: Share insights from the smaller groups and synthesise the information.

Activities:

- Each group presents their key findings and insights. Facilitator synthesizes the information into broader themes and key points. Open discussion to refine and validate the synthesized points.

8. Conclusion and next steps (15 minutes):

Objective: Summarise the key takeaways from the workshop and outline the next steps.

Activities:

- Recap of the main points discussed. Outline the next steps in the research process.
- Q&A session to address any remaining questions.
- Thank participants and provide information on how they can stay involved.

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Empathise workshop

1. **Recap and objectives (15 minutes):**

Objective: Briefly recap the previous workshop and set the objectives for the Empathise Workshop.

Activities:

- Quick review of key insights from the Discover Workshop.
- Outline the goals for the Empathise Workshop: understanding the experiences and needs of target groups.

2. **Persona development (45 minutes):**

Objective: Create empathy maps for each persona to delve deeper into their experiences and emotions.

Activities:

- Group activity: Split participants into smaller groups, each focusing on a different stakeholder (adult learners, educators, policymakers, employers).
- Questions for Persona development:
    1) What are the demographics and backgrounds of the persona?
    2) What are their primary goals and motivations regarding adult learning and ILAs?
    3) What challenges and pain points do they experience?
    4) What are their attitudes towards current adult learning systems and ILAs?
- Highlight key statistics, existing policies, and frameworks.
- Open floor for initial questions and comments.

3. **Empathy mapping (60 minutes):**

Objective: Provide background information and current state of adult learning and ILAs.

Activities:

- Empathy map components:
    1) Says: What does the persona say about their experiences with adult learning and ILAs?
    2) Thinks: What are their thoughts and concerns?
    3) Does: What actions do they take related to adult learning?
    4) Feels: What emotions do they experience in relation to their learning journey?
- Group activity: Groups create empathy maps for their assigned personas and then present their findings to the larger group.

4. **Journey mapping (60 minutes):**

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Objective: Map out the journey of each persona through the adult learning and ILA processes to identify key touchpoints and pain points.

Activities:

- Steps in Journey mapping:
    1) Identify the stages of the journey (e.g., awareness, enrollment, learning, application).
    2) Highlight key touchpoints and interactions at each stage.
    3) Identify pain points and challenges at each touchpoint.
    4) Note positive experiences and opportunities for improvement.
- Group activity: Groups create journey maps for their personas and then present their findings to the larger group.

5. Storytelling (45 minutes):

Objective: Use storytelling techniques to convey the experiences of the personas in a compelling way.

Activities:

- Group activity: Groups develop and share stories based on their empathy maps and journey maps.
- Each story should highlight key insights and emotional experiences of the personas.
- Discussion: Reflect on the stories and discuss common themes and unique insights.

6. Conclusion and next steps (15 minutes):

Objective: Summarise key insights from the Empathise Workshop and outline the next steps.

Activities:

- Recap main points discussed.
- Outline the goals and structure of the upcoming Define Workshop.
- Q&A session to address any remaining questions.

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RALExILA

NATIONAL REGISTERS OF ADULT LEARNING TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ACCOUNTS

Define workshop

1. Recap and objectives (15 minutes):

Objective: Briefly recap the key insights from the Discover and Empathise Workshops and set the objectives for the Define Workshop.

Activities:

- Quick review of key findings from the previous workshops.
- Outline the goals for the Define Workshop: to define clear problem statements based on the synthesised information.

2. Synthesis of Insights (45 minutes):

Objective: Synthesise the key insights and themes identified in the previous workshops to form a comprehensive understanding.

Activities:

- Group activity: Groups discuss and list the key insights from the empathy maps, journey maps, and stories developed in the Empathise Workshop.
- Discussion questions:
    1) What are the recurring themes and patterns?
    2) What are the most significant challenges identified?
    3) What are the critical needs and expectations of the different personas.

3. Defining Problem Statements (60 minutes):

Objective: Develop clear and concise problem statements that address the main challenges and needs identified.

Activities:

- Problem statement framework:
    1) Who is affected by the problem?
    2) What is the nature of the problem?
    3) Why is it important to solve this problem?
    4) How does the problem impact the personas and their experiences?
- Group activity: Each group formulates problem statements based on their synthesized insights.
- Presentation: Groups present their problem statements to the larger group for feedback and refinement.

4. Break (15 minutes)

5. Prioritisation and alignment (60 minutes):

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Objective: Prioritise the problem statements and ensure alignment with the project goals.

Activities:

- Criteria for prioritisation: Impact on personas, feasibility, alignment with project objectives, and potential for innovation.
- Group activity: Groups rank their problem statements based on the prioritization criteria.
- Discussion: Reach a consensus on the top problem statements to focus on for ideation and solution development.

6. Ideation preparation (45 minutes):

Objective: Prepare for the ideation phase by outlining key focus areas and brainstorming initial ideas.

Activities:

- Group brainstorming: Generate initial ideas and potential solutions for the top problem statements.
- Discussion questions:
    1) What are some innovative approaches to addressing these problems?
    2) What resources and support would be needed to implement these solutions?
    3) How can these solutions be integrated into the current systems and practices?
- Idea presentation: Groups present their initial ideas to the larger group for feedback and further development.

7. Conclusion and Next Steps (15 minutes):

Objective: Summarise the key outcomes of the Define Workshop and outline the next steps.

Activities:

- Recap main points discussed.
- Outline the goals and structure of the upcoming ideation and solution development phases.
- Q&A session to address any remaining questions.

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RALExILA

Desk Research - Country Report

Work package 2

Deliverable D2.1

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RALExILA Country Report - Desk Research

[country name]

1 GOVERNANCE AND POLICY LANDSCAPE OF NATIONAL ALE SYSTEMS
1.1 Overview of national policies and strategies related to ALE
1.2 National ALE governance structure
1.3 ALE funding
2 QUALITY ASSURANCE IN NATIONAL ALE SYSTEMS
2.1 Quality assurance systems in ALE
2.2 Quality indicators and evaluation methods
3 NATIONAL ALE REGISTRIES AND INFORMATION MODELS
3.1 Available registries
3.2 Adult education registry characteristics
3.3 Additional - Qualifications Frameworks and validation
4 ILA PROGRAMMES
5 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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National Registries of Adult Learning and Education to support the deployment of Individual Learning Accounts – RALExILA

Project Ref: 101132300

RALExILA

NATIONAL REGISTERS OF ADULT LEARNING
TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ACCOUNTS

Ideate and prototype

Introduction to co-design with Design Thinking approaches

Methodology – Design Thinking

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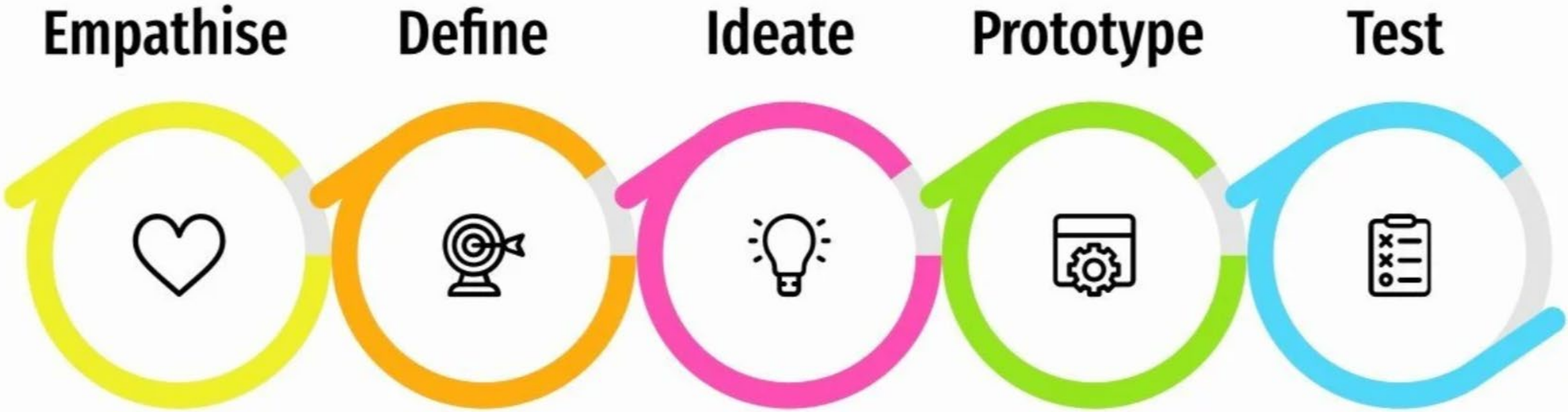

1. Emphasise

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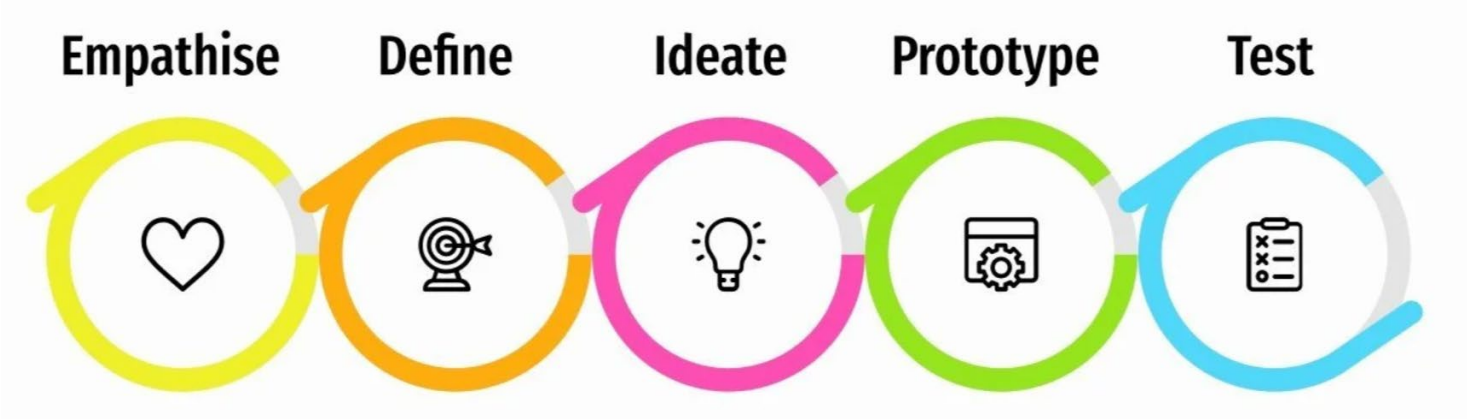
Goal: Understand the users' needs, behaviours, and pain points.

Activities: Conduct interviews, observations, and surveys.

Outcome: Gain deep empathy to view the problem from the user's perspective.



2. Define

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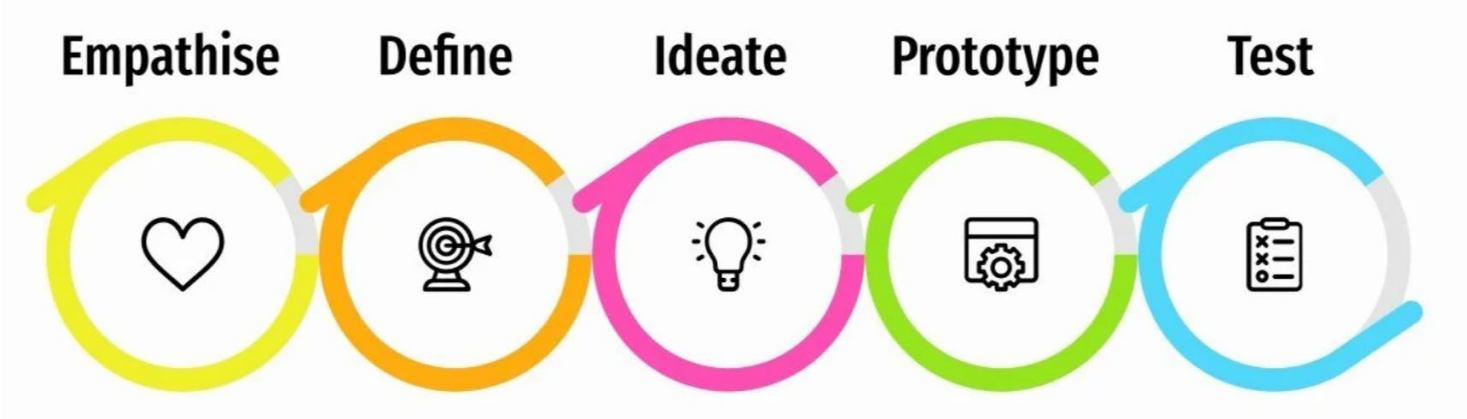
TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ACCOUNTS

Goal: Clearly articulate the problem based on the insights gathered during the empathy stage.

Activities: Organise and synthesise information to form a clear problem statement.

Outcome: A well-defined problem that focuses the design challenge on user needs.



3. Ideate

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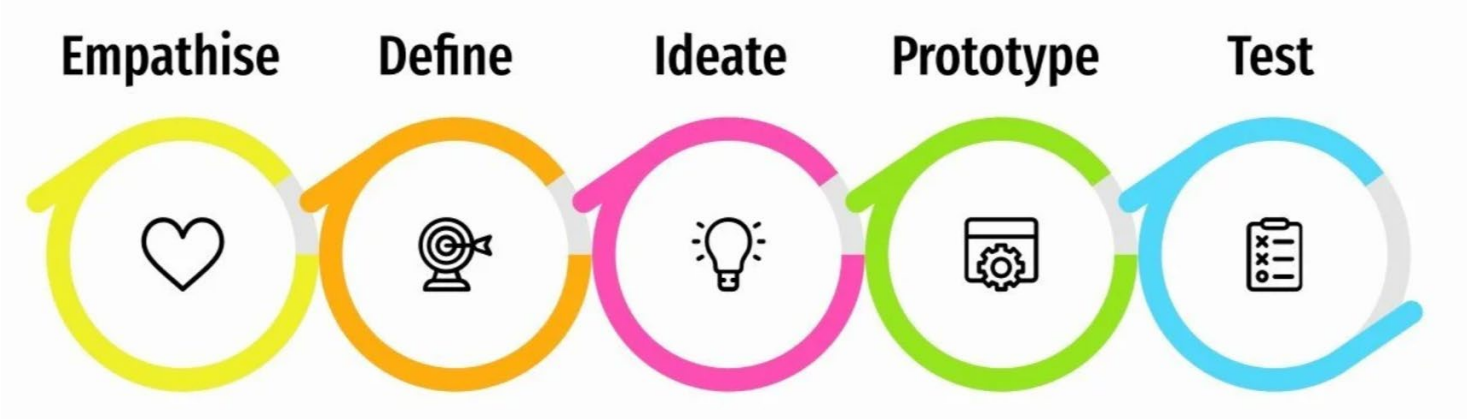
Goal: Generate as many creative solutions as possible.

Activities: Brainstorming, sketching, mind mapping, and other ideation techniques.

Outcome: A wide range of potential solutions to the defined problem.



4. Prototype

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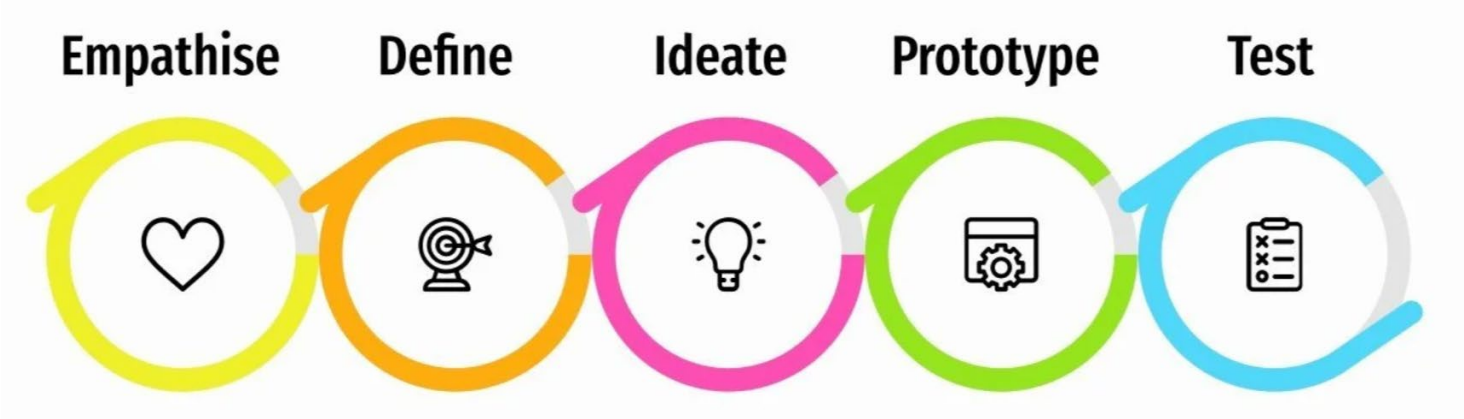
TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ACCOUNTS

Goal: Create simple, tangible representations of your ideas.

Activities: Develop low-fidelity prototypes that users can interact with.

Outcome: A physical or digital model of your solution that can be tested and refined.



5. Test

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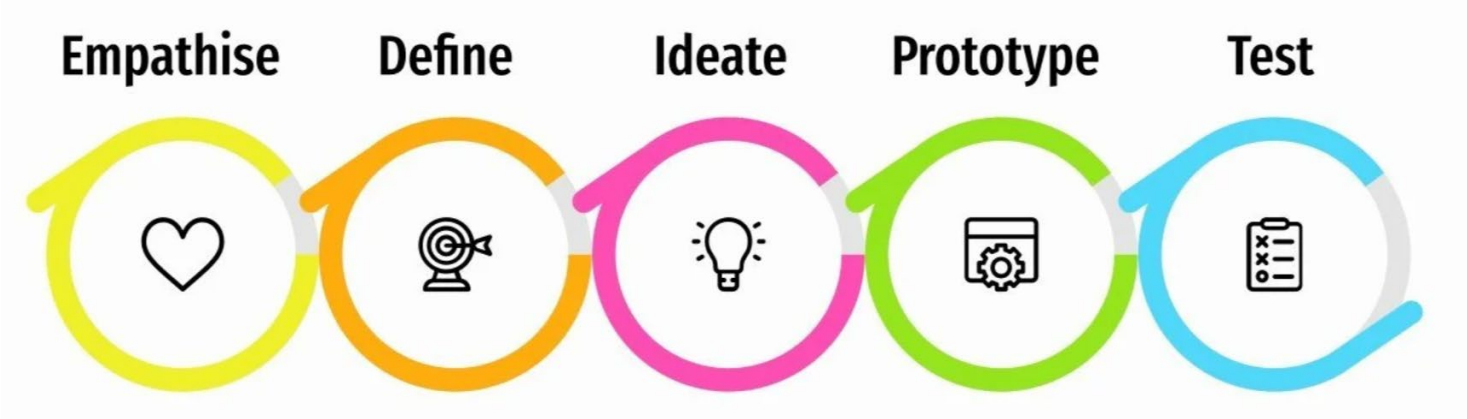
Goal: Gather feedback on the prototypes to refine solutions.

Activities: Conduct user testing and collect feedback.

Outcome: Learn what works and what doesn't, and iterate to improve the solution.



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Ideate and prototype

Main User Flow → Define - Articulate Problem

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Purpose and structure of this session

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TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION
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Main objectives

- Look at how users interacts with ALE registries from different perspectives
- Identification of main challenges and main enabling factors related to general user-flow (gaps, critical phases, prioritisation)

Main steps

- Introduction to user flow core aspects – 20‘
- Practice 1 - Core challenges for providers and searchers for main flow/case – 30’
- Practice 2 – Enabling factors for registries/user flows – 30‘

Result

Main challenges, enabling factors and good practice per each use case (providers and searchers)

> We will deepen these aspect further tomorrow in the User engagement session

External and transversal aspects

User flow: the path a user will take in an application to complete a task

Independent from user

Ownership and governance

- of the registry
- of the information
- of the processes

Modality of use

- Fully independent
- Assisted
- Integrated in other services
- Hybrid

Related to user

Competence of users

- Digital competence (use of tools)
- Theoretical competence (here: education)
- Conceptualization (process)

Purpose and context of use

- General to specific
- Clarity of intent (i.e. search etc.)

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Which are our users?

Main persona

- Adopters/owners
- **Providers > example of flow**
- Searchers

Who are the providers?

- Curricula designers
- Educators
- Administrators
- Data entry clerks
- Information scientists

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Which are our users?

Main persona

- Adopters/owners
- Providers
- **Searchers > example of flow**

Who are the searchers?

- **Learners > for themselves**
- Employers > for others
- Counsellors > for/with others
- Funders > for planning

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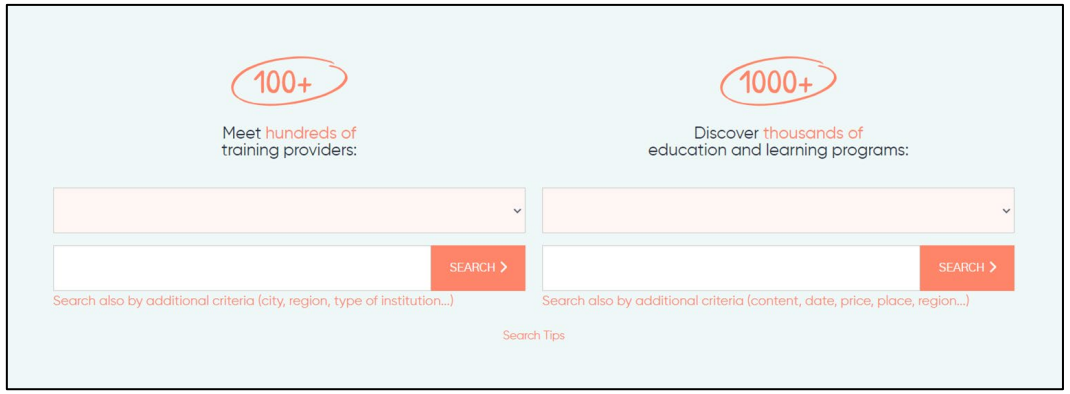
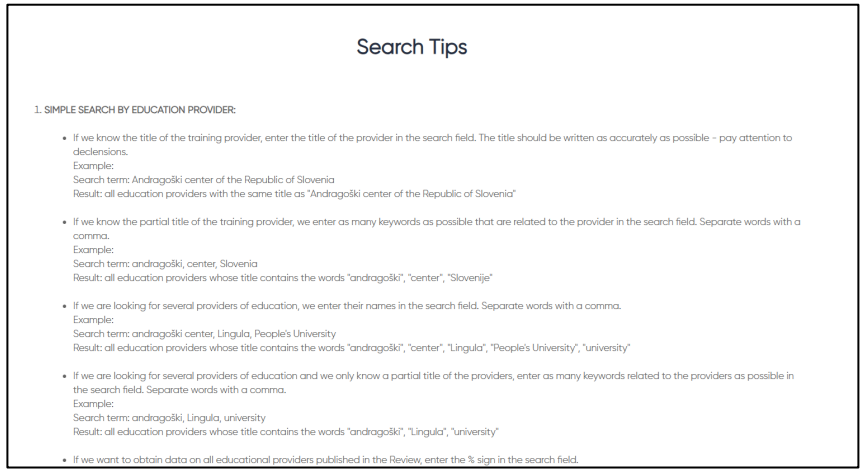
Searcher - Example of existing registries by process

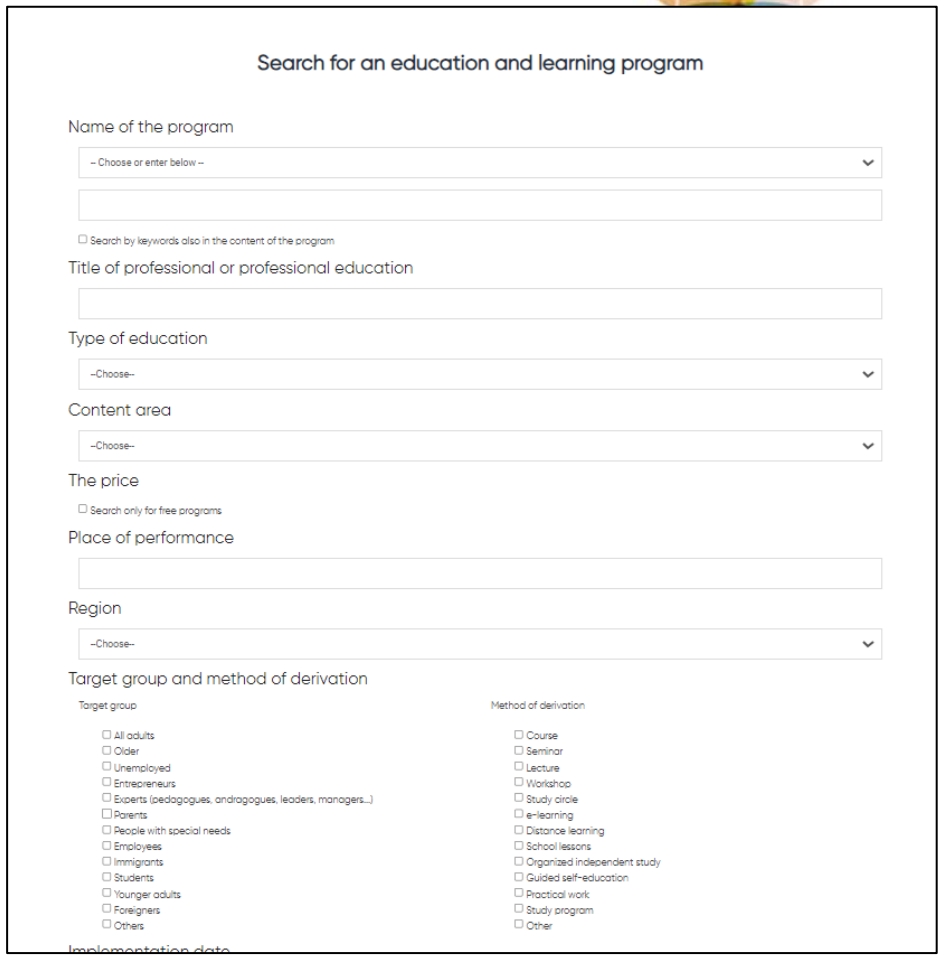
Search

- **Simple**
- **Filtered**
- Assisted (AI)

Kam Po Znanje (SI)
Simple and filtered search
https://kampoznanje.si/







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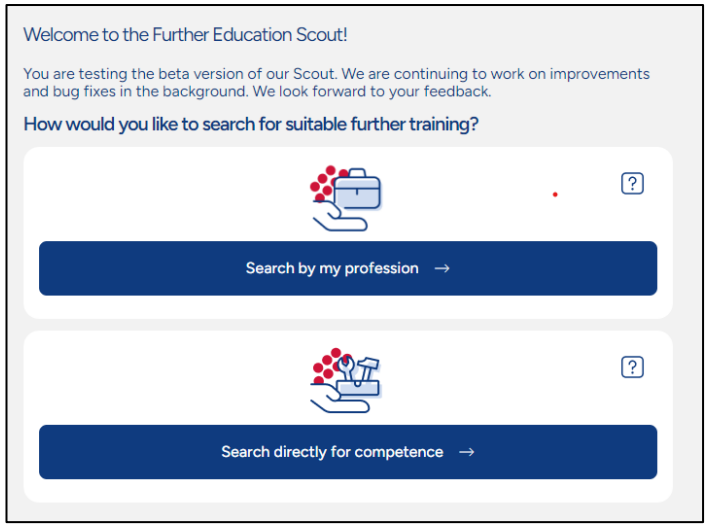
Searcher - Example of existing registries by process

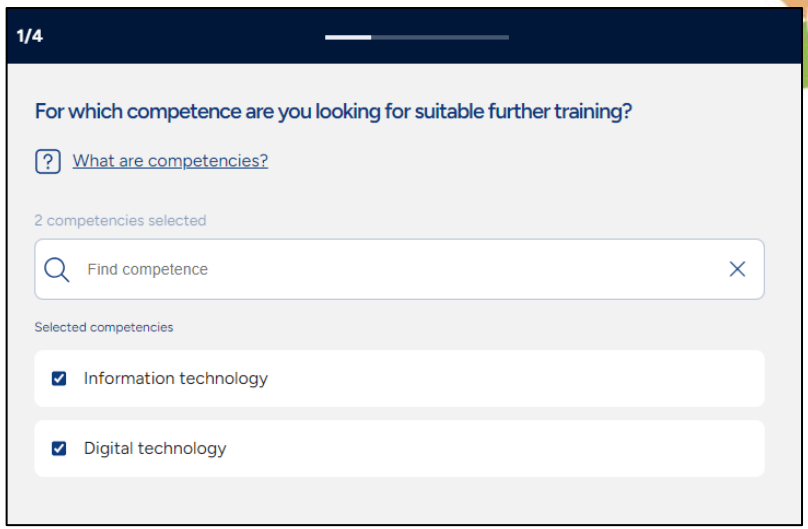
Search/selection

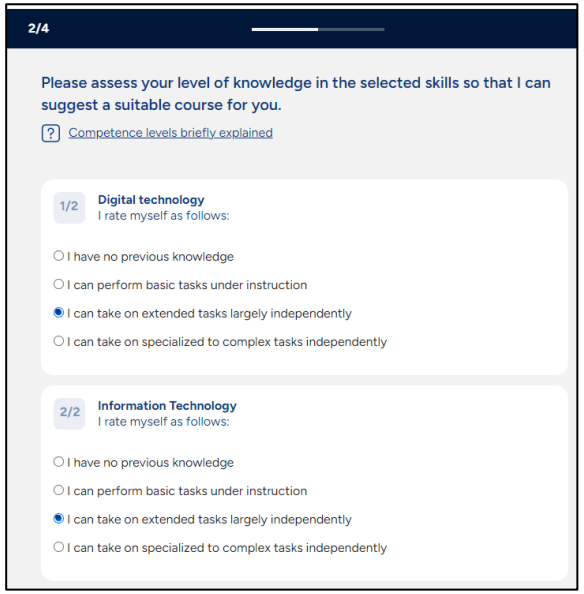
- Simple > key word
- Filtered
- **Assisted**

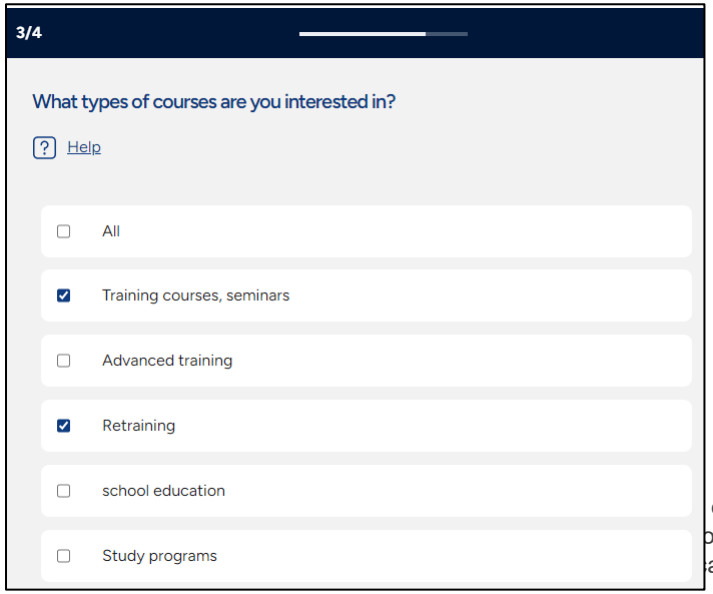
The Hessian Further Education Database (DE)
AI assisted search
https://www.bildungsportal-hessen.de/g800207

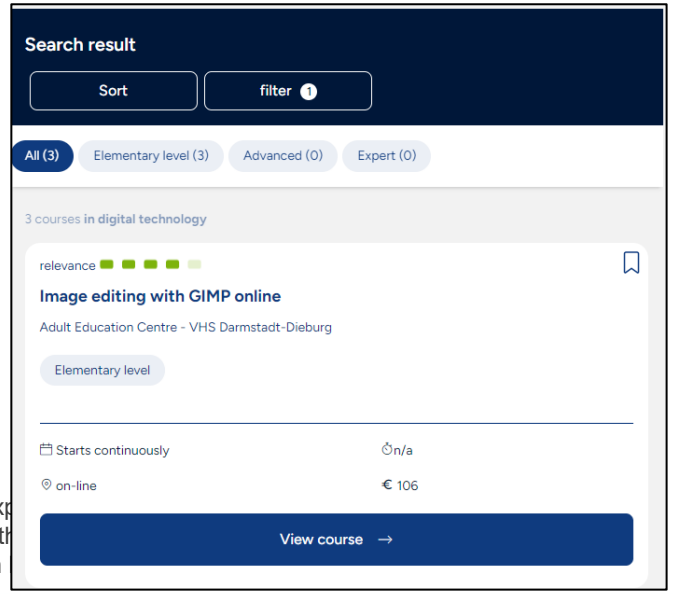
Mystudyinfo (FI)
Assisted search path
https://opintopolku.fi/konfo/en/











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Searcher - Example of existing registries by process

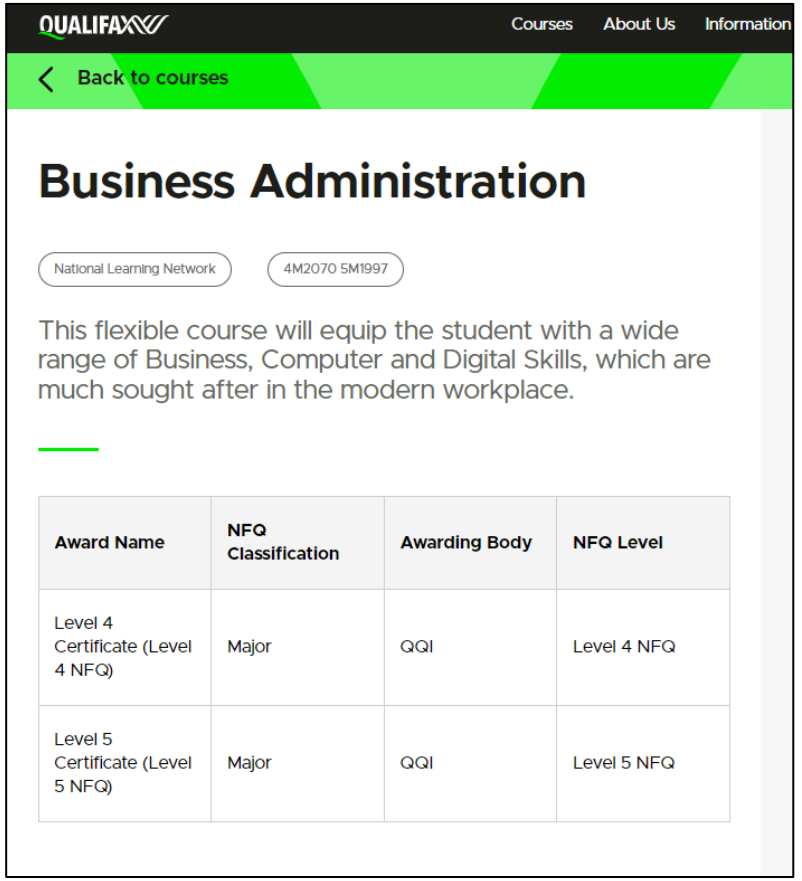
Information fruition

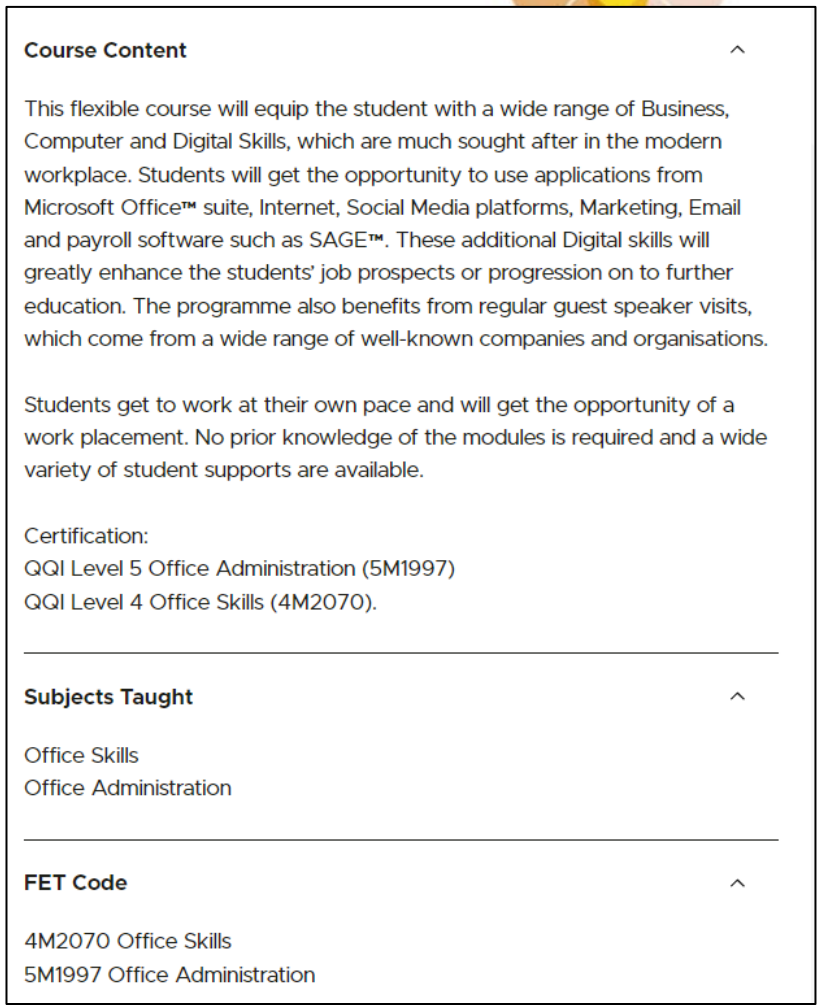
- In registry/external

Focus on two main type of metadata

- Training content information
- **Quality assurance information (external and internal)**

Qualifax (IE) – Link NQF - QQI
https://www.qualifax.ie





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Searcher - Example of existing registries by process

Information fruition

- In registry/external

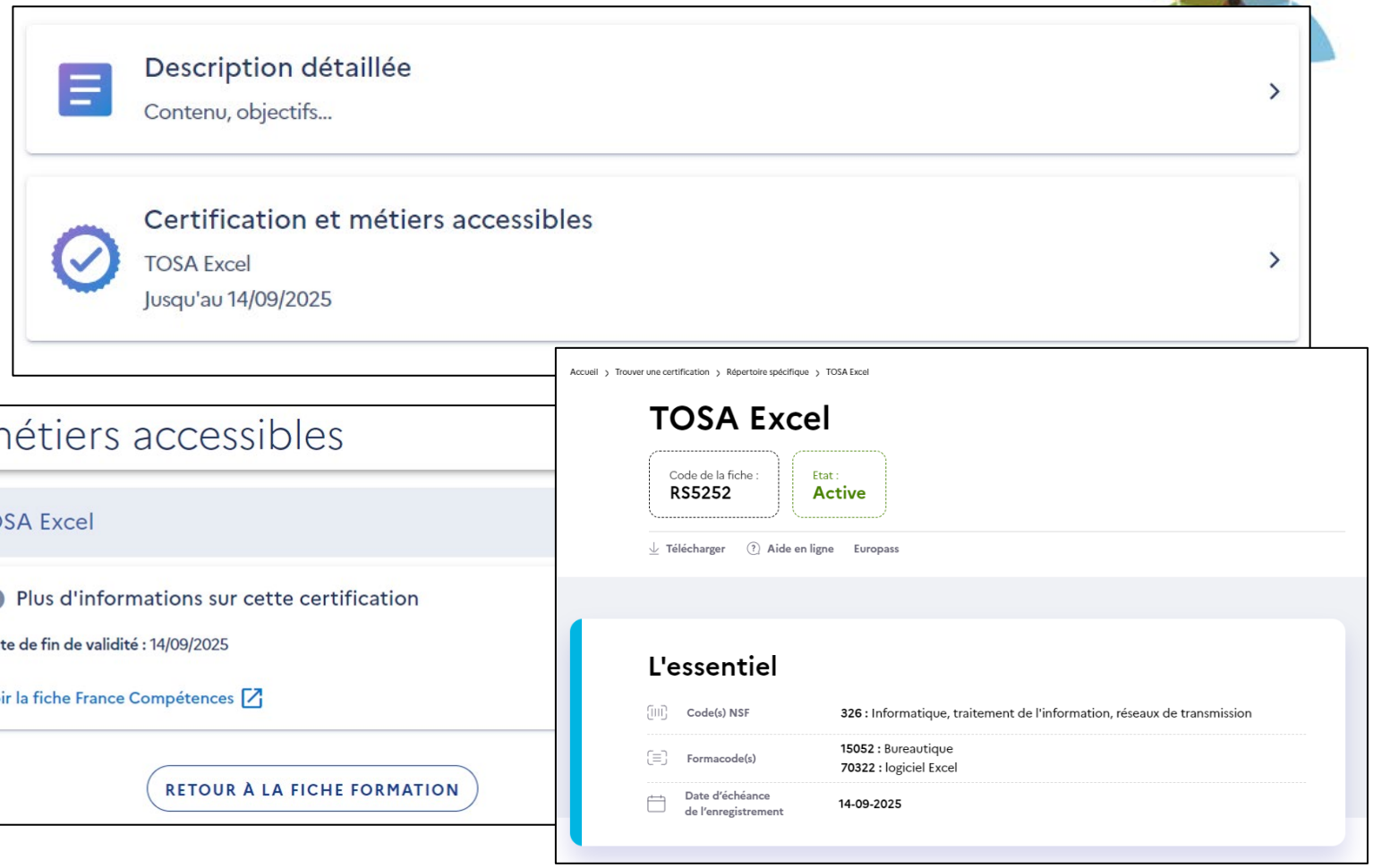
Focus on two type of metadata

- Training content information
- **Quality assurance**

(external and internal)

Mon Compte Formation (FR)
QA information external and related to accreditation process
https://www.moncompteformation.gouv.fr/

Certification:
https://www.francecompetences.fr/recherche/rs/5252/



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Searcher - Example of existing registries by process

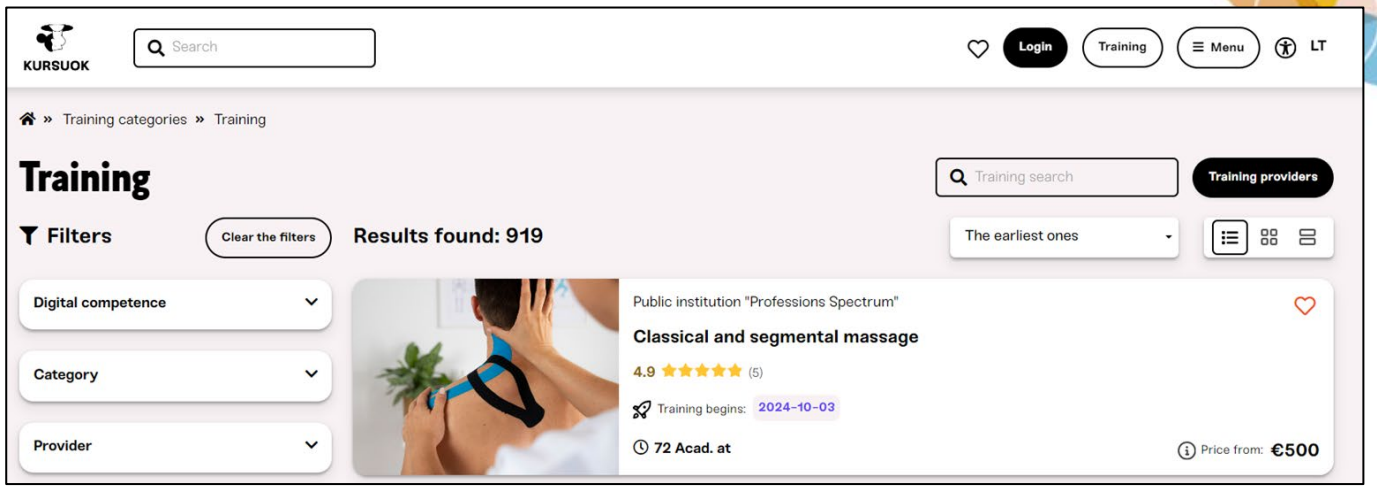
Other interactions

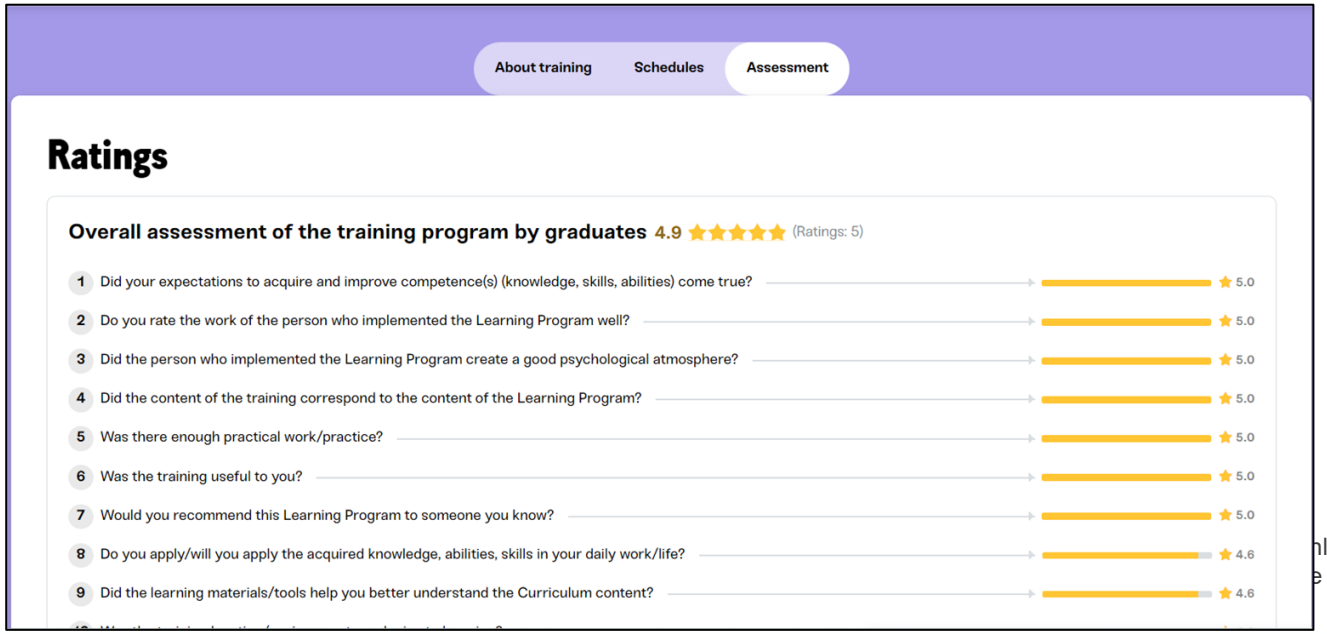
- Internal functionalities
- Suggested/external

Focus on two main type

- **Learner feedback (QA)**
- Support for further action (funding, other/higher qualification, career, other services etc.)

Kursuok (LT)
Registry for ILA and Learners feedback (scoring)
https://www.kursuok.lt
Example:
https://www.kursuok.lt/mokymai/list/view/klasikinio-ir-segmentinio-masazo-atlikimas





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Practice 1
Core challenges for main flow/case – 30‘

Please, add 2 or 3 challenges for providers and 2 or 3 challenges for searchers – 10‘

- [Miro User flow Challenges and Enablers]

Prioritize the most important challenges for both users, using a green dot for the most relevant and a red dot for the least relevant (one dot per participant) **– 5‘**

Brief plenary recap of main challenges identified and discussion to select 2 to 4 challenges (facilitator mark on board) **– 15‘**

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Practice 2
Enabling factors for registries/user flows – 30‘

Please, add enabling factors and good practices you know about for each enabling factor, for the challenges selected before – 10’

- Please consider both internal and external factors
- Good practices could specific registries or specific functions, other processes, other online tools, related services etc.
- [Miro User flow Challenges and Enablers: now use the section enabling factors and good practices]

Brief plenary recap and discussion of main enabling factors – 20‘

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NATIONAL REGISTERS OF ADULT LEARNING TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ACCOUNTS

Ideate and prototype

User engagement and accessibility

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Purpose and structure of this session

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Main objectives

- Identify problem statements for user engagement scenarios, including accessibility and usability aspects
- Strategies for engaging users
- Good practices for user engagement

Focus of this session is on Searcher

We consider register structure, metadata (data model) and portal functionalities

We consider a gap analysis approach

Main steps

- Introduction to user engagement aspects and recap of challenges – 20‘
- Practice 1 – Problem statements definition 1 (current state) – 30’
- Practice 2 – Problem statements definition 2 (future state) – 40‘

Result

Problem statements with Problem, Current state, Future/desirable state

> We will refine the Problem Statements and share for final feedback after the WS

External and transversal aspects - recap

User engagement: a metric that measures how much users interact with a product, service, or content

Independent from user

Ownership and governance

- of the registry
- of the information
- of the processes

Modality of use

- Fully independent
- Assisted
- Integrated in other services
- Hybrid

Related to user

Competence of users

- Digital competence (use of tools)
- Theoretical competence (here: education)
- Conceptualization (process)

Purpose and context of use

- General to specific
- Clarity of intent (i.e. search etc.)

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Core aspect for registries development

Usable, useful and used for both provider and searcher

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Accessibility and usability

Functionalities

- Is the design clear and WCAG compliant?
- Are the functionalities clear and easy to use?
- Is navigation organised at different levels?
- Are user interactions clear and sufficiently guided/supported?

Information

- Are metadata structure clear?
- Are labels clear?
- Are explanations provided for main concepts?
- Is the language understandable?

Usefulness

Can the registry be used to achieve a particular objective?

- Is the registry flexible enough for different modalities (independent/facilitated search)?
- Are different (owner/user) purposes considered?
- Are legal and ethical aspects considered?
- Are different level of competence (technical, theoretical, conceptual) considered?
- Are different level of motivation and effort considered?

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Recap of challenges and enablers – Day 1

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Quality and assessment of programmes (QA)

- Lack of quality assurance systems that are based on the perspective of learners
- User feedback
- Reliable and authentic feedback and/or rating from others
- Evaluating the value and assessing the relevancy of the programme
- Understand the quality and the usefulness of the education when not knowing the context (either in your own country or even more difficult: in another country).
- Time pressure

Functionalities (portal)

- User friendly interface
- Understanding of search tool (digital competence)
- Accessibility issue - registry available only online
- Create personal learning plans, linked to career goals
- Account connected to other already used app - LinkedIn, Europass etc

Structure and quality of information (data)

- User friendly information and structured (including terminology/taxonomy) and wording
- Disconnect between "terminology" used by administrators and searchers.
- Result: Taxonomy almost impossible to understand for searchers
- Linking to external sites/portals for additional information
- Being sure that information is up-to-date
- Understanding meaning and status of information

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Scope and objective of this session

What is a Problem Statement?

Core components

- Problem
- Background
- Current state
- Objectives
- Future state
- Gaps

How to formulate a problem statement

- Identify the problem
- Contextualize it
- Identify the core needs
- Identify potential solutions
- Formulate the desirable/future state

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Practice 1
Problem statements definition 1 (current state) – 30‘

Please, add main needs/problems for searchers (only) – 10‘

- [Miro board Problems/Enabling strategy - grid with 3 columns problem, enabling strategy, good practice]

Prioritize the most important problems, using a green dot for the most relevant and a red dot for the least relevant (one dot for each participant) **– 5‘**

Definition of main problem statements draft for searchers (current states) – 15‘

- [Miro board Problems Statements - templates]

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Practice 2
Problem statements definition 2 (future state) – 40‘

Please, add at least 1 enabling strategy (general) and 1 good practice (specific service/functionality) for each problem/need selected before, both for providers and for searchers – 10‘

- [Miro board Problems/Enabling strategy, now use the columns enablers and GP]

Plenary discussion of main strategies and integration of problem statements draft [future/desire states, gaps] – 30‘

- [Miro board Problems Statements - templates]

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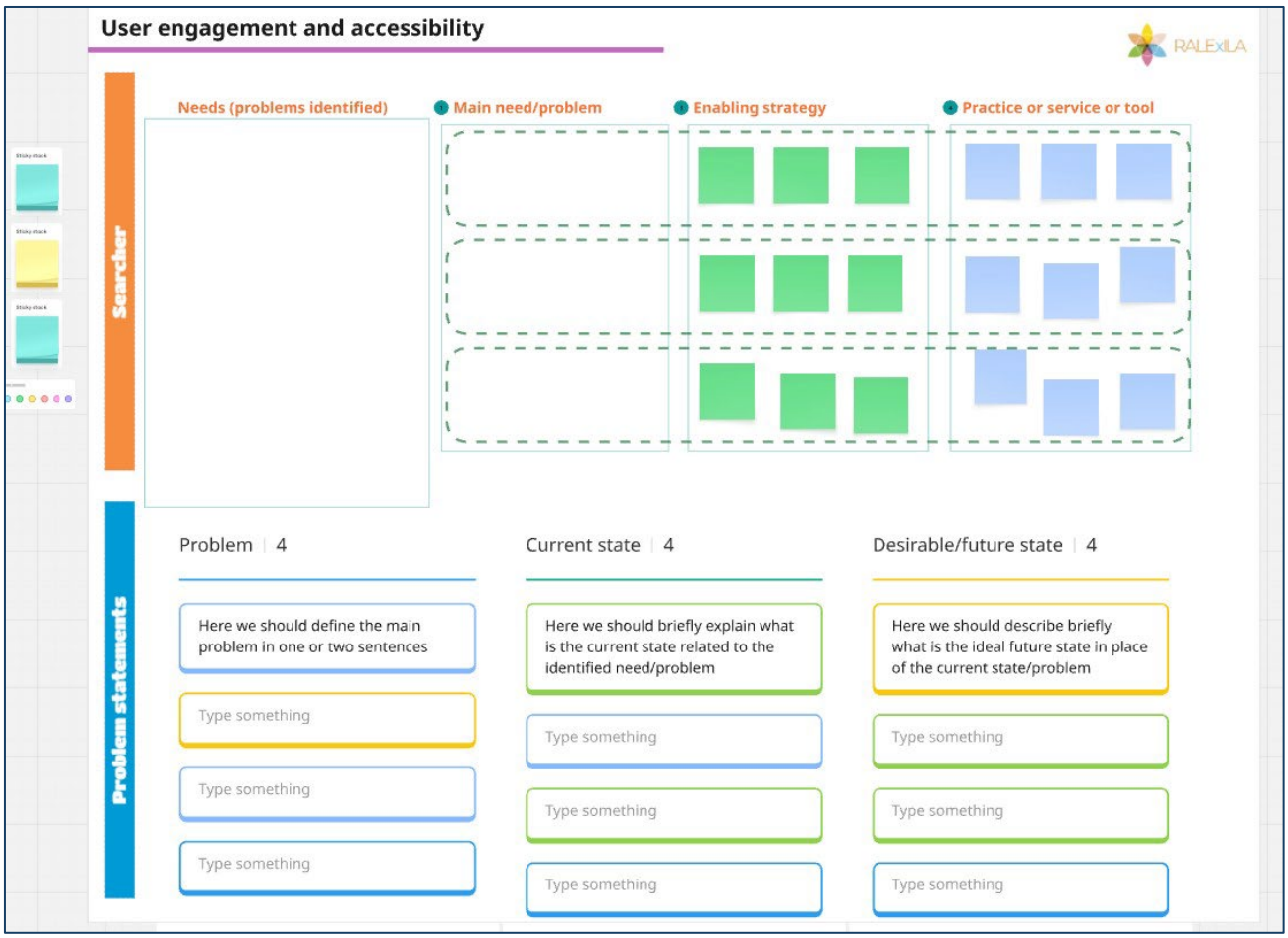
IDEATE AND PROTOTYPE - PRACTICES AND TEMPLATES

1.1 User engagement and accessibility

This user engagement and accessibility practice aims at defining the main problem statements from the perspective of a first persona for the system, the final user (in our example called ''Searcher'').

The problem statements definition is organised in 2 main steps: identify the main needs and problem for searchers and formulate the problem and current state; identify enabling strategies for each problem statement and formulate the future/desirable state (objective).



1.2 Personas and user flows definition

This part of the development consists in 3 main steps.

- Identifying the core problem statements for the main identified personas, for example Searcher and Provider
- Organise the problem statements by clear categories. Examples of categories are available in the template below.
- Finally, for each of the main steps in a user flow template, identify the main potential gaps, for both personas.

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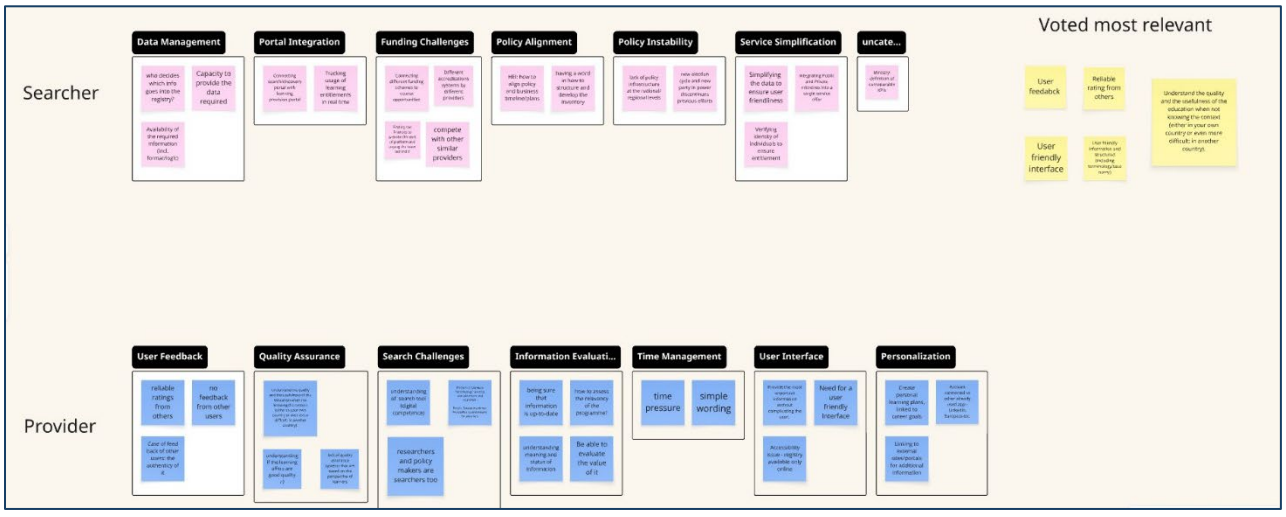

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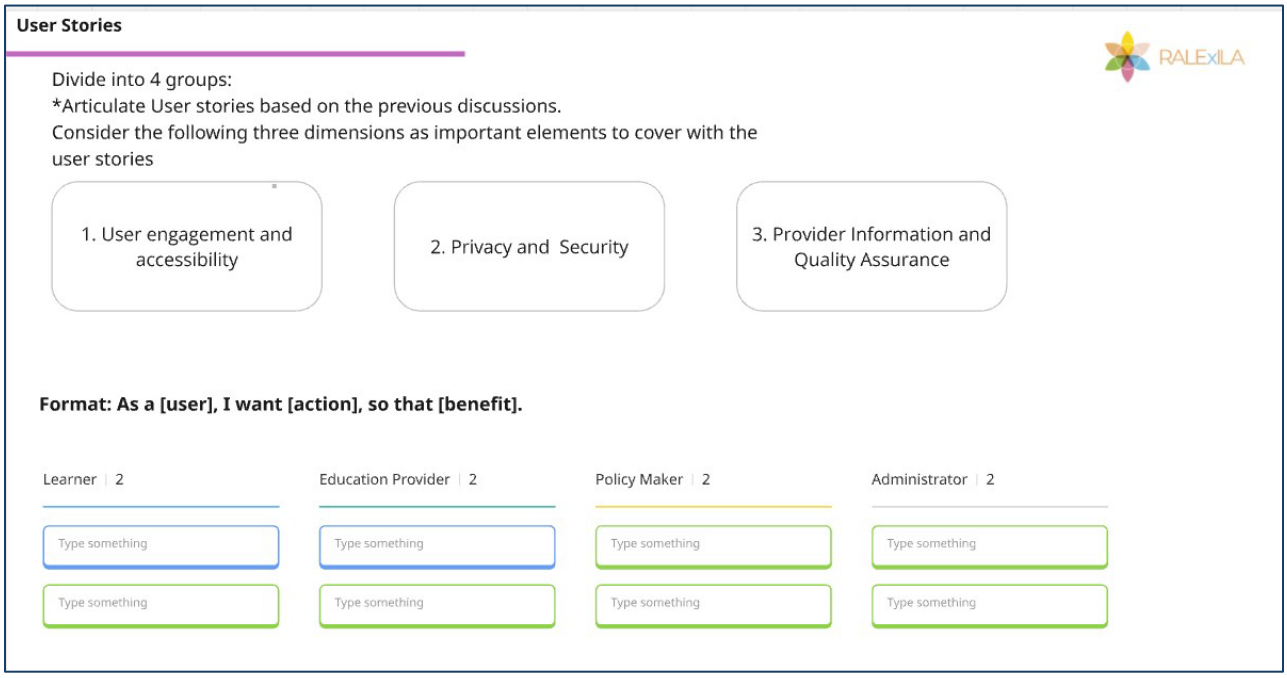
1.3 User stories definition

Based on the personas and user flows practices results, this practice prompt the definition of more specific and detailed user stories, which are formulate in the form of first-person statements.

In our example, we have also added a further step of definition and segmented the potential system users in 4: Learner, Education Provider, Policy maker and Administrator.



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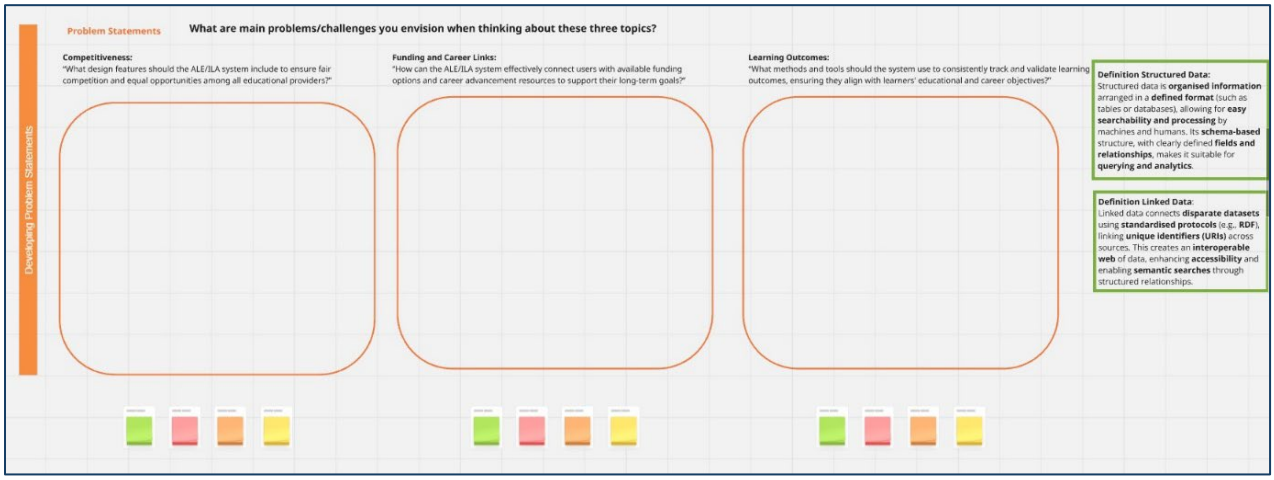
1.4 Main challenges definition

This practice aims at assessing and identifying the main challenges that are more transversal to the systems development. The challenges area should be identified before the practice with stakeholders and indicated already in the practice template, as shown in the template below.

In our example, the challenges area were identified in the discussion in previous workshops and were competitiveness, funding and career links, learning outcomes.



1.5 Capabilities mapping and definition

The last round of practices focus on mapping more specifically and then selecting the functionalities of the systems, which we define as ''capabilities''.

The core set of capabilities (categories) should be defined before the practice with stakeholders (they can be refined after then) and some examples of features for each group should be provided.

The capabilities and features of our example are presented in the following.

1.5.1 FUNCTIONALITIES AND FEATURES

1.5.1.1 Course and Provider Discovery

Function: Enable learners to search for and compare learning programs, view provider ratings, access feedback from other learners, and find trustworthy providers.

Features

- Search and filter options based on course type, quality ratings, career relevance, etc.
- Display of verified provider profiles and user ratings.
- Recommendation engine for personalized course suggestions.
- Integration of trust indicators and feedback mechanisms from other learners.

1.5.1.2 Feedback and Quality Assurance

Function: Allow all user types to provide, view, and act on feedback to maintain quality standards and encourage improvement in educational offerings.

Features

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- Feedback submission for completed courses.
- Quality rating system for providers and courses.
- Dashboard for providers and administrators to view feedback trends.
- Tools for policy makers to conduct audits, track quality metrics, and ensure standards.

1.5.1.3 Individual Learning Account (ILA) Management

Function: Manage ILA entitlements, allowing learners to track, allocate, and use funds; enable providers and administrators to integrate ILA data for monitoring and reporting.

Features:

- ILA account overview showing balance, usage history, and eligible courses.
- Payment integration for courses using ILA funds.
- Reporting tools for funders to monitor ILA utilization and effectiveness.
- Automated notifications for learners on remaining funds and eligible courses.
- Learner Application and Verification - Online application and eligibility verification for learners to enrol in learning opportunities.

1.5.1.4 Data and Interoperability Management

Function: Ensure the system can connect and share data seamlessly with other databases, especially in compliance with European frameworks like Europass, ESCO, and GDPR requirements.

Features:

- API integration with Europass and ESCO to allow cross-border data portability.
- Automated data validation and synchronization between registries and other educational systems.
- Data governance tools to ensure compliance with GDPR and other regulations.
- Single-entry data updates for providers to push data across multiple platforms.

1.5.1.5 User Experience and Accessibility

Function: Provide a consistent, accessible, and user-friendly experience across the system, catering to all user types, including those with limited digital access or specific needs.

Features:

- Mobile-friendly and accessible interface (WCAG compliance) for all users.
- Consistent layout and user journey across provider pages to avoid experience bias.
- Alternative access options (e.g., offline support, assisted access for low-skilled users).
- Unified access point for ALE and ILA registries for a seamless user experience.

1.5.1.6 Analytics and Reporting

Function: Enable policy makers, funders, and administrators to access comprehensive data analytics and reporting on system performance, user trends, and ILA effectiveness.

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Features:

- Analytics dashboard showing user engagement, course popularity, and feedback summaries.
- Real-time performance tracking and comparison with projections for policy makers.
- Reports on ILA usage, success rates, and distribution patterns.
- Customizable reporting tools to analyse data for policy adjustments and improvements.

1.5.1.7 Registry Management and Compliance

Function: Provide policy makers, administrators, and providers with tools to manage registry data, enforce compliance, and support oversight.

Features:

- Provider Eligibility Management - Verify and approve providers to publish courses e.g. via integration from external database
- Compliance checks and audit logs to track adherence to standards.
- Tagging and data entry guidelines for administrators to maintain data quality.
- Registry oversight tools for policy makers to monitor provider compliance and track updates.
- Role-based access controls to protect sensitive information and limit unauthorized modifications.

1.5.2 BUILDING THE CAPABILITIES MAP

This practice aims at identifying the capabilities that should be included in the system and organised them in functional and non-functional capabilities.

Guiding Questions

- Who benefits most from this functionality, and are there any underserved user groups?
- What additional features would make this functionality more effective?
- What challenges might arise in implementing this functionality?
- Is this functionality essential, nice-to-have, or lower priority?

Here below the template provided with examples of results (working version).

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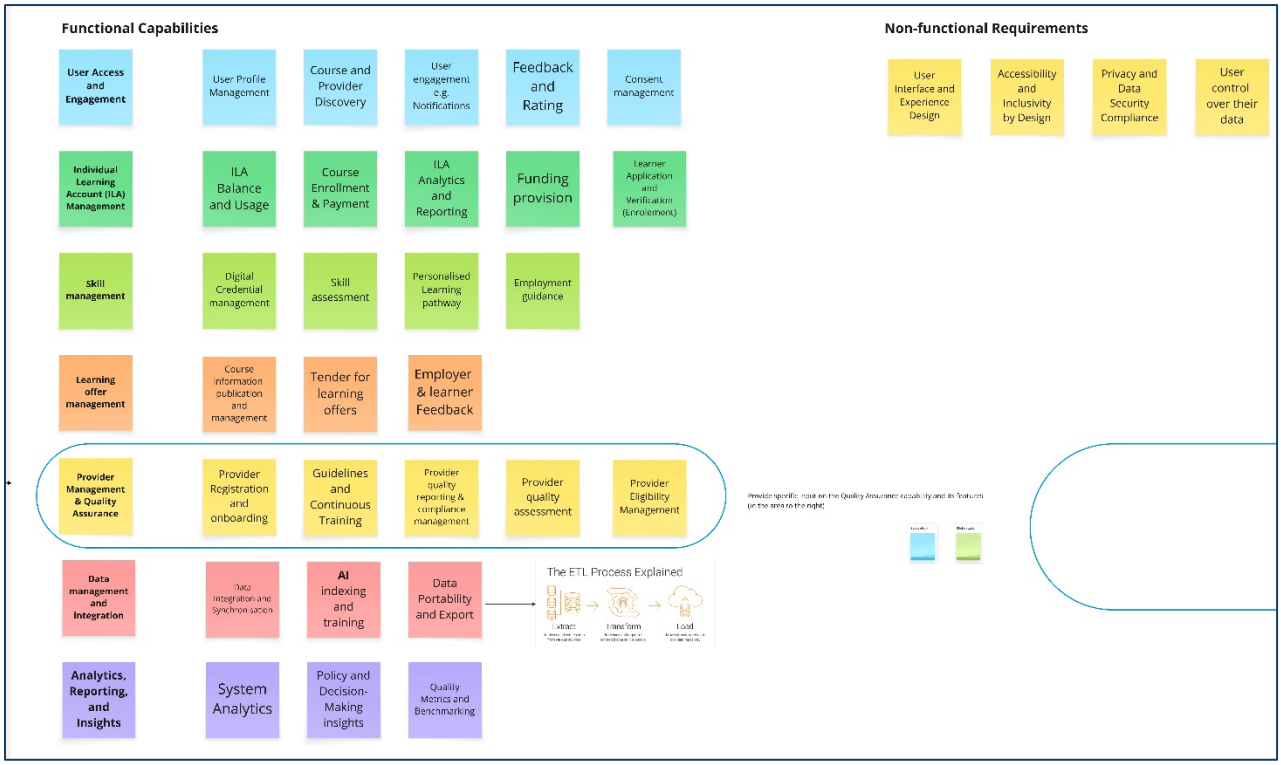

1.5.3 DEFINING THE CORE CAPABILITIES OF THE SYSTEM

The final step is then to organise the functional capabilities in various levels of relevance for the system to work as expected, based on the user stories.

- Foundational capabilities – Essential for ALE/ILA systems, ensuring core functionality and system reliability
- Operational capabilities – Key for efficient system performance, supporting smooth interactions and data-driven decisions.
- Advanced capabilities – Enhancing user experience and system effectiveness through advanced features and personalised support.

Here below the template provided for the workshop with an example of results (filled in capability map).

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Foundational Capabilities

Essential for all ALE/ILA systems, ensuring core functionality and system reliability.

Discovery

- Search & Filtering
- Course Display
- Course Comparison
- Provider Directory
- Quality Assurance or Accreditation information

Provider Management

- Provider Account Management
- Course Management
- Provider Registration
- Provider Eligibility and Compliance
- Provider onboarding

User account & ILA Essentials

- User Account management
- ILA Balance Tracking
- Course Enrolment
- ILA Application & Verification
- Payment Processing

Operational Capabilities

Key for efficient system performance, supporting smooth interactions and data-driven decisions.

User Engagement and Communication

- Notifications and Alerts
- User feedback and support
- Personalised Learning Pathways

Provider Quality Assurance (QA) and Compliance

- Course Ratings and Reviews
- Compliance checks
- Performance Metrics

ILA Management and Analytics

- ILA Usage tracking and reporting
- Fund utilisation analytics

Skills and Credentials Management

- Digital Credential Issuance and Management
- Skills/Competence management
- Skills Self-Assessment
- Skills Tracking
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

System Governance

- Role-Based Access Controls

Advanced Capabilities

Enhancing user experience and system effectiveness through advanced features and personalised support.

System Insights and Analytics

- User Engagement Analytics
- Learning Outcomes Benchmarking
- Regulatory Compliance Analytics
- Policy and Decision-Making Insights

Career support

- Skills gap analysis
- Personalised Guidance
- Employment Guidance
- Job matching

AI features

- AI-driven learning/course recommendations
- Automated data validation
- Predictive analytics

Non-Functional Capabilities

Ensuring system usability, security, and accessibility, critical for user trust and compliance.

User experience & Accessibility

- Mobile-friendly
- Unified access ALE/ILA
- Alternative access option (e.g. offline)
- Compliance with EU Web Accessibility Directive
- Multi-language support

System Integrity & Security

- Privacy and Data Security Compliance (GDPR)
- Access Controls and User Authentication
- Data Integrity
- Audit Logs
- Data Interoperability

References and contacts

Project Acronym	RALExILA
Project Title	National Registries of Adult Learning and Education to support the deployment of Individual Learning Accounts
Project Grant Number	101132300
Project Coordinator	EAEA – European Association for the Education of Adults www.eaea.org
Partners	Knowledge Innovation Center https://knowledgeinnovation.eu/ ALGEBRA BERNAYS University https://www.algebra.hr/sveuciliste/en/ Asociácia inštitúcií vzdelávania dospelých: AIVD https://aivd.sk/ CARDET - Center for the Advancement of Research and Development in Educational Technology https://cardet.org/
Project Duration	27 months
Period	January 2024 – March 2026
Website	www.ralexila.eu
Main contacts	viola.pinzi@eaea.org stefan.jahnke@knowledgeinnovation.eu maja.brkljacic@algebra.hr

Consortium Partners

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RALExILA

NATIONAL REGISTERS OF ADULT LEARNING
TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ACCOUNTS

INVITATION LETTER FOR PARTICIPANTS – PILOTING WORKSHOPS

Subject: Invitation to Participate in the Prototyping and Piloting Activities of the RALExILA Framework

Dear [Participant Name],

We are excited to invite you to participate in the piloting phase of the RALExILA framework, conducted as part of the project "RALExILA – National Registries of Adult Learning and Education to support the deployment of Individual Learning Accounts," co-financed by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union. The project aims to enhance adult learning through the development of National Adult Learning and Education (ALE) Registries and Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs).

The goal of this phase is to test, evaluate, and refine the prototypes and models developed in earlier stages of the project, focusing on workflows, feasibility, usability, and accessibility for key stakeholders. Your participation will directly support the development of the RALExILA proof of concept and contribute to the finalisation of the Handbook for National Registries for ALE.

This piloting activity will involve exploring your experiences and perspectives on governance frameworks, quality assurance mechanisms, existing systems and databases, stakeholder needs and challenges, motivational aspects, and the impact and outcomes of ILAs. Your insights will help identify gaps and assess the effectiveness of current systems while also exploring innovative solutions and approaches to system design, governance, and quality assurance in adult learning.

The pilot workshop will last approximately [insert number of hours] hours and will be conducted [in-person/online]

Your participation in the workshop is highly valued. All responses will be kept confidential and processed in accordance with the GDPR directive 2016/679. Data collected will be securely stored by [insert your organisation name] nd used in scientific publications and educational materials. All data will be fully anonymized to protect your privacy.

Please confirm your availability by [date] by responding to this email or contacting us at [contact information]. Please find attached an information sheet and a consent form for your review.

We look forward to your valuable contribution to this important initiative, which will shape the future of adult learning systems across Europe.

Warm regards,

[Your Name]

[Your Title]

[Contact Information]

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The current state of ALE registries

Examples from the RALExILA research

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Countries

Croatia*

France
Netherlands
Portugal

* RALExILA Partner country

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OF INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ACCOUNTS

Researchers (AU)

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Maja Brkljačić PhD
Leo Mršić PhD

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Croatia

Structure of the ALE registries

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Croatia has introduced a **system of vouchers** for adult education, which can be examined as a **type of ALE registry**.

- Programme category
- Admission criteria
- County
- Provider
- Employment status
- Industry
- City
- Online / Onsite

Structure of the ALE registries

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The voucher registry contains the following information about the programmes:

Program title →

Category →

Certificate name upon completion

Education provider →

Contact email →

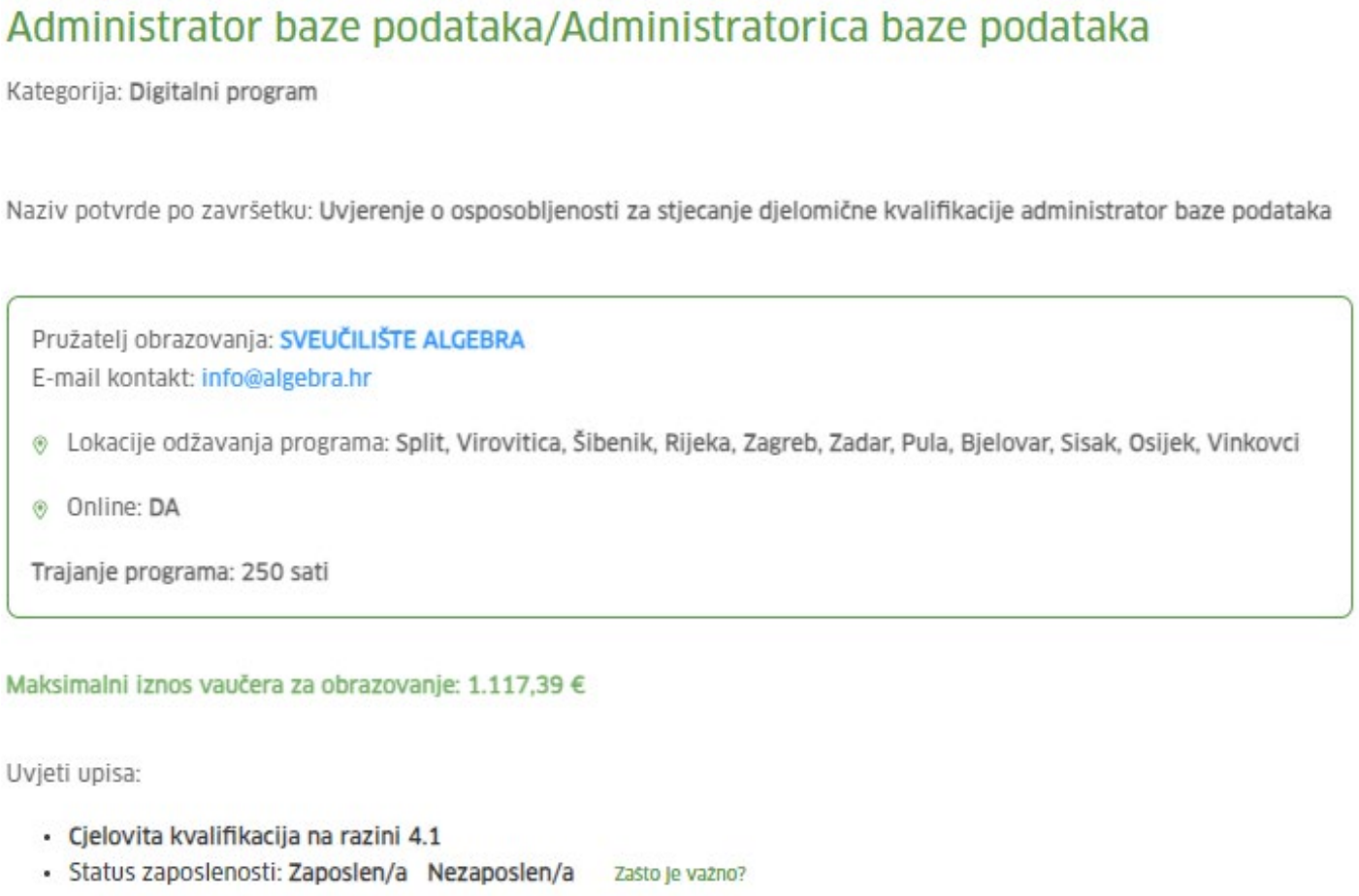
Programme locations →

Online availability →

Programme duration →

Maximum voucher amount →

Entry requirements →



Governance of ALE registries

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1. Ministry of Labor, Pension System, Family, and Social Policy
2. Croatian Employment Service
3. Educational Providers
4. Users of Vouchers

Users of the ALE registries and their feedback (if any)

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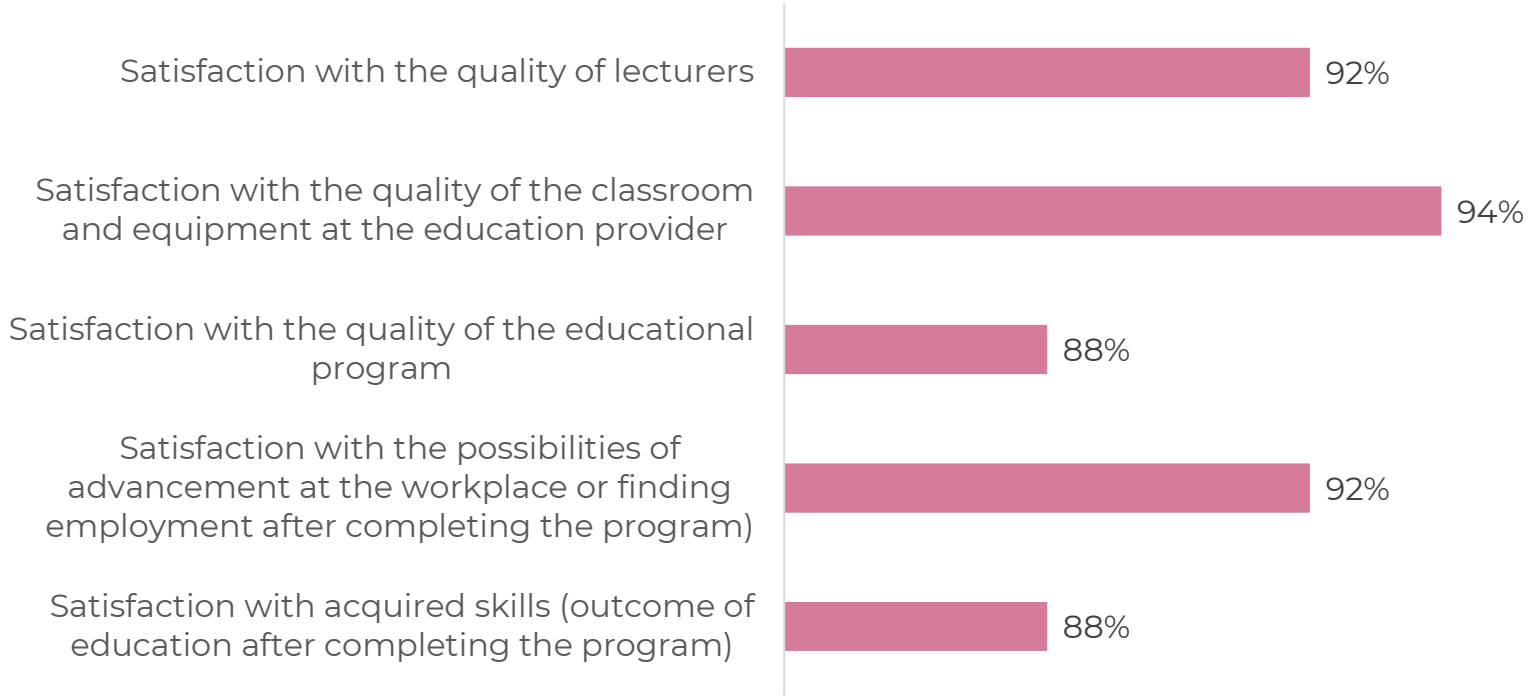
User satisfaction with vouchers **92%** expressed in % of the maximum possible satisfaction of 100%. Average grade 4.62.



Users of the ALE registries and their feedback (if any)

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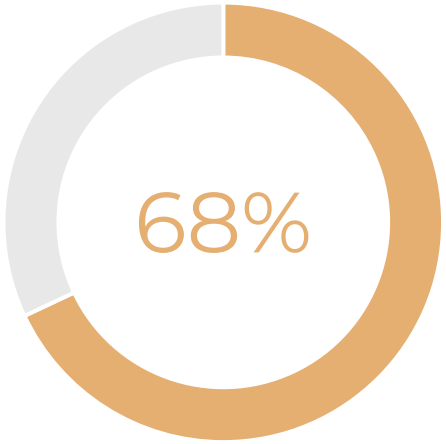
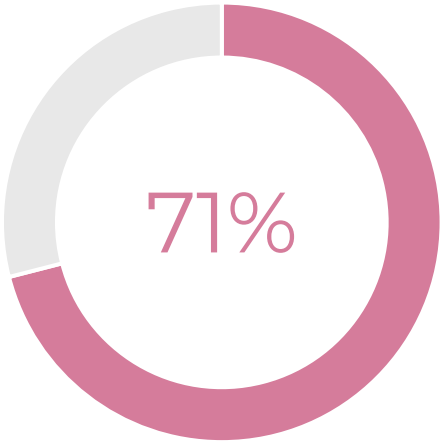
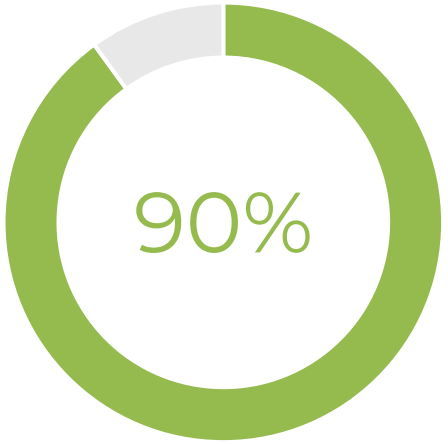
In April 2022, Algebra University conducted a comprehensive survey in April among its participants (sample of 1,269 respondents).



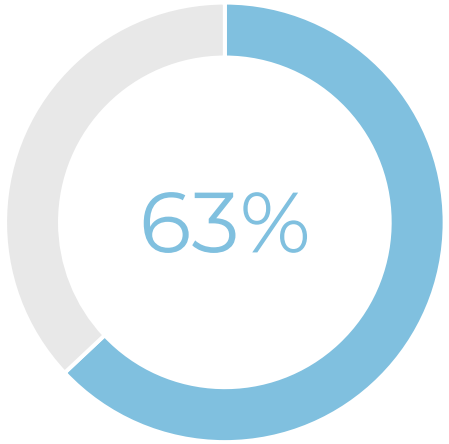
participants aged 25-39 years



were employed during the programme



felt the program met market demands



believed it significantly impacted their career development or change

Support by ALE registries for ILA

RALExILA
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Croatia participates in capacity-building events/workshops and develops strategic implementation plans. Six Member States **(BG, FR, HR, IT, PL, RO)** are participating in capacity-building events/workshops and developing strategic implementation roadmaps in 2023.

Croatia and Poland are part of the mutual learning programme. As a temporary measure, a voucher system was implemented in Croatia in April 2022.

The next step is to switch to Individual Learning Accounts.

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France

Structure of the ALE registries

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The National Directory of Professional Certifications (RNCP) is a central registry that lists all state-recognized vocational qualifications in France. **The Répertoire Spécifique (RS)** is a registry for certifications and qualifications that are not part of the formal education system but have professional value. Both registries can be searched by these criteria:

- Activity of Certification
- Certifier
- Sheet code
- Qualification level
- Public Diploma Abstract
- NSF Code(s)
- ROME Code(s)
- Formcacode(s)

Structure of the ALE registries

RALExILA
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OF INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ACCOUNTS

Both RNCP and RS containthe following information about the programmes:

- **Title**
- The **body responsible** for the qualification (e.g. a school, an institute, etc.)
- **Level and field of activity**
- An **outline of job description** and **skills acquired**
- The **sectors of activity** and **types of jobs accessible** to the person holding the qualification, professional certification or diploma
- The **ROME code** (Répertoire Opérationnel des Métiers & Emplois – Operational Directory of Trades and Jobs): important for finding out about job opportunities related to the qualification, professional certification or diploma
- **Terms for obtaining the certification** (description of the certification elements and skill sets)
- **Terms governing eligibility for the certification** (after a continuing education course, as part of a professional training contract, validation of learning/skills, etc.)
- **Legal framework:** reference number of Decrees and Orders published in the Official Journal

Governance of ALE registries

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1. Ministry of National Education and Youth
2. France Compétences
3. Regional Academic Delegations for Youth, Engagement, and Sports
4. Regional Public Training and Employment Services (Pôle emploi)
5. Sectoral Training Bodies
6. Learners and Community Stakeholders

Users of the ALE registries and their feedback (if any)

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Participation Rates: According to government reports, more than 4 million CPF accounts were activated by 2021, with a significant increase in the number of people using their CPF credits to enroll in training programs. The CPF system has been successful in reaching a broad spectrum of workers, including employees, jobseekers, and self-employed individuals.

Individual Learners' Feedback | positive: flexibility and autonomy, access to a wide range of training programs (more than 300,000), digital accessibility; constructive: complex navigation of the platform, adequacy of funding to cover all training costs

Employer feedback | positive: alignment with workforce needs, collaboration with training providers (over 65% of employers found that CPF-trained employees showed increased productivity and adaptability, particularly in technology and digital skills sectors); constructive: concerns about the retention of employees after training, lack of alignment between specific in-house skills needs

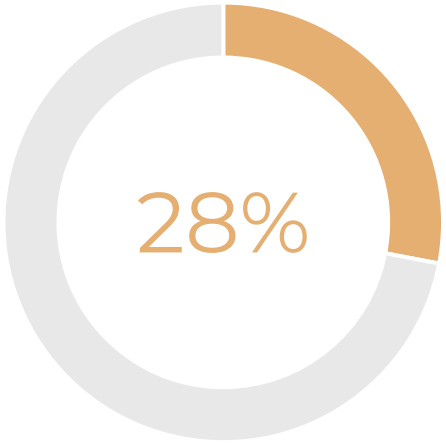
Training providers' feedback | positive: increased demand for certified training, training providers experienced increased trust and credibility after certification, enhanced the reputation of certified institutions, access to public funding; constructive: administrative complexity and high maintenance cost

Policy and government feedback | positive: increased access to lifelong learning, reduction in skills gaps, achievement of lifelong learning objectives; constructive: regional disparities in accessing training opportunities (distribution of vocational training resources, especially in rural areas)

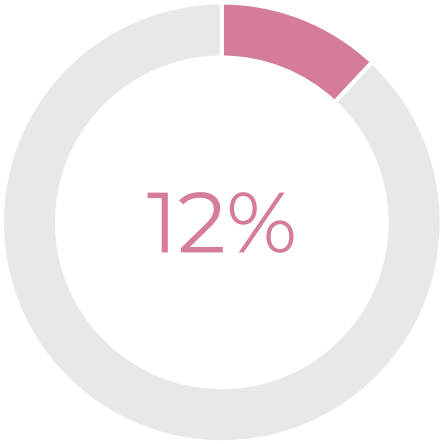
Support by ALE registries for ILA

RALExILA
NATIONAL REGISTERS OF ADULT LEARNING TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ACCOUNTS

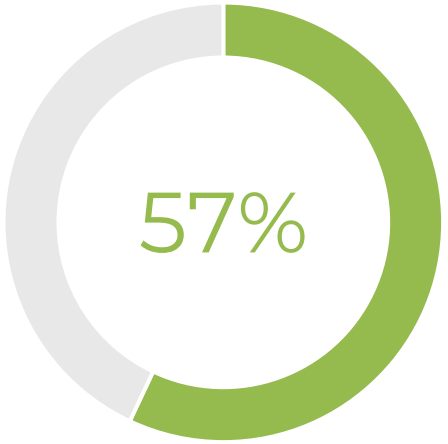
In France, the ***Compte Personnel de Formation*** **(CPF), or Personal Training Account**, serves as the primary tool for individual learning accounts (ILAs). Introduced as part of the Law on the Freedom to Choose One's Professional Future in 2018, the CPF aims to enhance lifelong learning opportunities and empower individuals to take charge of their professional development.



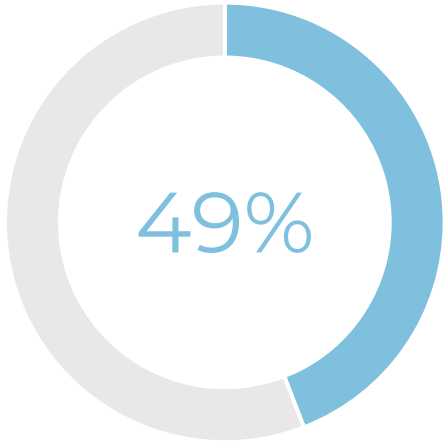
decrease in training entries in 2023 compared to 2022



of CPF users in 2023 participated in at least two training sessions



of users were under 40 years old



of CPF users are women

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Netherlands

Structure of the ALE registries

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The **National Qualifications Framework** (NLQF) is the Dutch framework for qualifications. It categorizes qualifications based on levels of knowledge, skills, and competencies, aligning with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The **NLQF database** is accessible to the public, providing detailed information about the qualifications and the criteria they meet.

- EQF level
- NLQF level
- Sector Database
- Education Sector
- Owner
- Diploma provider
- SBU
- ECTS

Structure of the ALE registries

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NLQF offers the following information:

- **Title of the Qualification**: Name of the training program or qualification.
- **EQF Level**: European Qualifications Framework level, indicating the qualification's complexity and learning outcomes.
- **NLQF Level**: National Qualifications Framework level, aligning with the EQF.
- **Education Sector**: Type of education or training sector the qualification belongs to (e.g., formal education, vocational training).
- **Learning Outcomes**: Specific skills, knowledge, and competencies that participants are expected to acquire upon completion.
- **Description**: Overview of the job roles and responsibilities associated with the qualification.
- **Admission Requirements**: Prerequisites for enrolling in the training program (e.g., prior qualifications or experience).
- **Types of Jobs Accessible**: Sectors and job types that graduates can pursue with the qualification.
- **Qualification Owner**: Organization or body responsible for the qualification.
- **Register Information**: Details like CREBO code, recording date, and any modification dates.
- **Supplementary Resources**: Links to additional information or resources related to the qualification.

Governance of ALE registries

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1. Ministry of National Education and Youth
2. France Compétences
3. Regional Academic Delegations for Youth, Engagement, and Sports
4. Regional Public Training and Employment Services (Pôle emploi)
5. Sectoral Training Bodies
6. Learners and Community Stakeholders

Users of the ALE registries and their feedback (if any)

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User feedback on ALE registries in the Netherlands, particularly with regard to the STAP Budget system and the Blik op Werk accreditation process, reflects a **mostly positive** reception.

Individual learners' feedback | positive: flexibility in learning, wide range of course options, digital accessibility; constructive: complexity of applying for financial aid, particularly among older learners, struggle with navigating digital learning platforms, especially older adults and those with lower levels of digital literacy

Employer feedback | positive: encourage employees to pursue further education which in turn increases productivity and innovation, alignment with industry needs, addressing skills shortages in key industries like technology/healthcare/sustainability; constructive: while general upskilling programs are widely available, more sector-specific and niche programs are needed to meet the unique needs of certain industries

Training providers' feedback | positive: qualifications are recognized across borders which increases the credibility of training providers, increased demand indicates that training providers have expanded their offerings in response to the rising demand for vocational training; constructive: small/medium training providers have expressed concerns about the complexity of meeting certification standards, difficult to fully integrate digital learning tools into their offerings

Policy and government feedback | positive: improved accessibility to information on education and financial options, successful addressing gaps in employment and providing necessary skill-building for marginalized groups; constructive: level of access to training programs as urban centers indicating a need for more geographically balanced resources, need to streamline access to complete information on all available learning programs

Support by ALE registries for ILA

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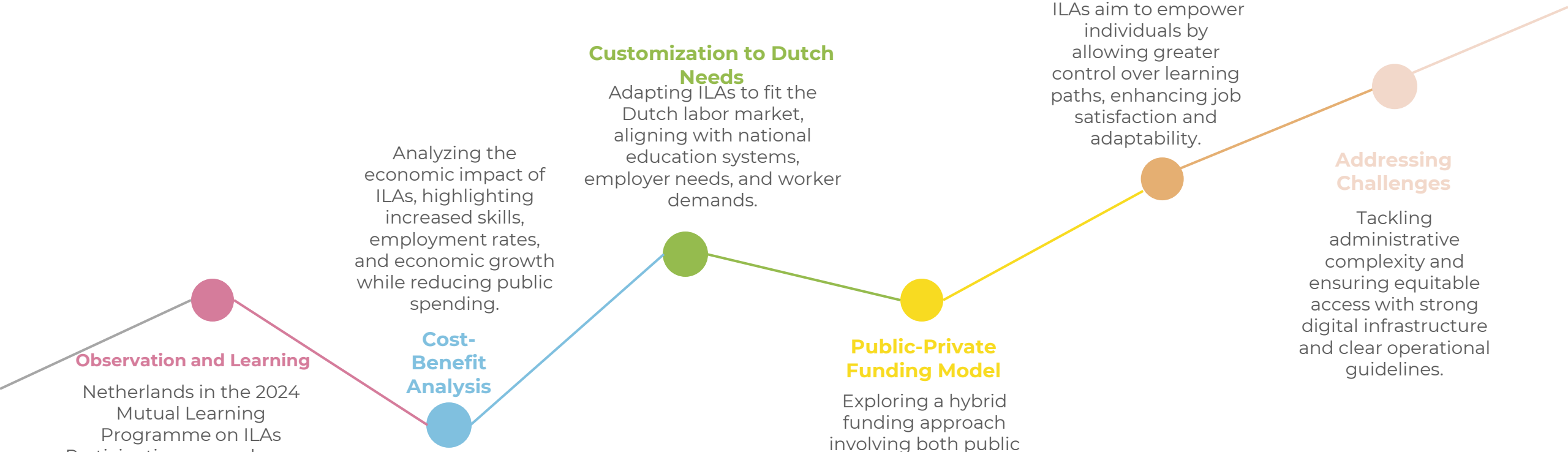

Observation and Learning

Netherlands in the 2024 Mutual Learning Programme on ILAs Participating as an observer alongside Germany, Shows growing interest in adopting and refining Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs)

Cost-Benefit Analysis

Analyzing the economic impact of ILAs, highlighting increased skills, employment rates, and economic growth while reducing public spending.

Customization to Dutch Needs

Adapting ILAs to fit the Dutch labor market, aligning with national education systems, employer needs, and worker demands.

Public-Private Funding Model

Exploring a hybrid funding approach involving both public and private sectors to ensure sustainability and reduce the financial burden on public resources.

Empowerment and Flexibility

ILAs aim to empower individuals by allowing greater control over learning paths, enhancing job satisfaction and adaptability.

Addressing Challenges

Tackling administrative complexity and ensuring equitable access with strong digital infrastructure and clear operational guidelines.

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Portugal

Structure of the ALE registries

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The **National Qualifications Catalogue (Catálogo Nacional de Qualificações - CNQ)** is a key tool for standardizing qualifications in Portugal.

- EQF level
- NQF level
- Areas of Education and Training
- Sectoral Councils for Qualification

Structure of the ALE registries

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The **Training Offer Portal (Portal da Oferta Formativa)** is a national technological platform in Portugal designed to consolidate and provide comprehensive information about the educational and training opportunities available within the Portuguese education and training system.

Education level	**Modality or Cycle of Studies**	**Study Area**	**Education and Training Area**
CNQ Qualification	**NQF Level**	**Region**	**CIM**
Entity	**Nature of the Entity**	**Entity Typology**	**Operating Regime**
Duration	**Dates**	**Level of Education**	**Financing System**

Structure of the ALE registries

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CNQ offers the following information:

- **NQF/EQF Level**: The level of the qualification within the National Qualifications Framework and European Qualifications Framework
- **Qualification Code**: A unique identifier for the qualification
- **Posting and Update Dates**: Information on when the qualification was posted and when it was last updated
- **Education and Training Area**: The sector or field of education and training
- **Credit Points**: The amount of credit points associated with the qualification
- **Qualification Description**: A summary of what the qualification entails
- **Professional Profile**: Details on what the qualification prepares the individual to do professionally, including:
  - **Job Role**: What the individual does in the professional field.
  - **Skills**: The competencies and skills acquired through the qualification.
- **Access to Qualification**: Information on how to access the qualification, including various routes such as:
  - **Training Programs**: Professional courses, apprenticeship courses, modular training, etc.
  - **Recognition of Competencies**: Pathways for recognition, validation, and certification of prior competencies (RVCC).
- **Access Routes**: Separate routes for young people, adults, and adult learners, highlighting the different courses or recognition programs available.
- **Dual Certification**: Whether the qualification provides both educational and professional certification.
- **Change History**: A log of changes made to the qualification over time.

Structure of the ALE registries

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Oferta Formativa offers the following information:

- **Course Title**: The name of the offered program.
- **Institution**: The organization or school providing the course.
- **Course Schedule**: The start and end dates of the program.
- **Entity Type**: The classification of the entity offering the course (e.g., public or private).
- **Region and Location**: Information on the geographical area and specific location where the course is provided.
- **Course Typology**: The level or type of the course.
- **Vacancies**: The number of available spots for participants.
- **Course Code**: A unique identifier associated with the course.
- **Course Description**: A brief summary outlining the program's objectives and content.
- **Target Audience**: The demographic or group for which the course is intended.
- **Mode of Instruction**: Whether the program is full-time, part-time, online, or face-to-face.
- **Financing System**: The funding mechanism supporting the program.
- **Attendance Regime**: Details on how the course is attended, such as full-time or nocturnal.

Governance of ALE registries

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1. Ministry of Education
2. National Agency for Qualification and Vocational Education and Training (ANQEP)
3. Sectoral Councils for Qualifications (CSQ)
4. Directorate-General for Statistics of Education and Science (DGEEC)
5. Directorate-General for Employment and Labour Relations (DGERT)
6. Qualifica Centers

Users of the ALE registries and their feedback (if any)

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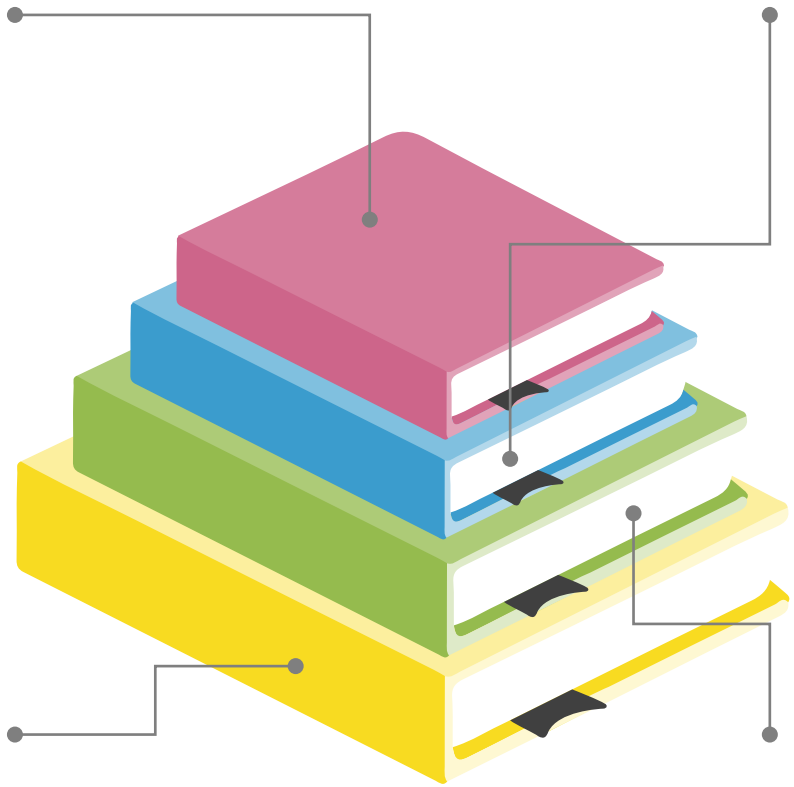
The Qualifica Programme is a key initiative in Portugal designed to enhance the educational and professional qualifications of adults.

Created in **2017,** the program has raised the level of academic or professional qualifications of **more than 106,000 adults.**



Central to the Qualifica Programme are the **Qualifica Centers**, which serve as hubs for adult education and training, offering personalized guidance and support for individuals seeking to improve their qualifications

The Qualifica Program already has more than **780,000 registered participants** and around **960,000 certifications** (full and partial).

Users of the ALE registries and their feedback (if any)

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Overall, the feedback on Portugal's ALE registries, particularly through the Qualifica Program and the Recognition of Prior Learning (RVCC) system, has been **largely positive**.

Individual learners' feedback | positive: access to lifelong learning initiatives, recognition of prior learning (RVCC), is highly appreciated as it allows learners to convert informal experiences into formal qualifications; constructive: challenges in navigating the different learning pathways and accessing clear information, complexity and navigation, many adults (especially older ones) struggle with digital literacy

Employer feedback | positive: alignment with labor market needs, program has improved the skills of the workforce particularly in sectors requiring formal qualifications, relevant and practical for job readiness; constructive: more niche/sector-specific training would be beneficial, training offered is not always specialized enough to meet industry-specific demands

Training providers' feedback | positive: significantly increased the demand for training with providers expanding their offerings to meet the needs of adult learners; constructive: mmaintaining certification is viewed as administratively heavy especially for smaller training providers

Policy and government feedback | positive: widely regarded as effective tools for making adult education opportunities transparent, iindividuals who complete formal qualifications via the program are more likely to secure employment than those without formal certification; constructive: concerns about regional disparities in access to ALE programs, eed for better coordination between different platforms

Support by ALE registries for ILA

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Portugal has implemented the **Qualifica Passport**, which is a significant tool in the realm of ALE.

Although it is not an ILA in the traditional sense, the Qualifica Passport shares several characteristics with ILAs and serves as a personalized digital tool for tracking and planning educational and training pathways for adults.

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Providing an Efficient Model for Adult Learning and Education Registries

https://ralexila.eu/

EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF ADULTS

Knowledge INNOVATION Centre

ALGEBRA UNIVERSITY

ASOCIÁCIA INŠTITÚCIÍ VZDELÁVANIA DOSPELÝCH

CARDET

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Building ALE registries and ILA platforms

RALExILA Roadmap and Primer to develop the systems

[name of representative, organization]

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General objectives

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To **improve access to training opportunities for adults** to support them in their skilling, reskilling and upskilling pathways, there is an increasing need to improve:

- the quality of ALE (Adult Learning and Education) systems (in terms of provisions and methods)
- the efficiency and equity of the access systems (including transparency and clarity of information and learners understanding of the opportunities, in terms of training and funding and links with career developmentand guidance services)
- supporting a stronger level of attractiveness for any learner toward the perspective of lifelong learning.

These core needs are **not** yet matched by **information systems offering training opportunities:**

- sufficient, accessible and integrated
- with comprehensive and trustworthy information
- connected and interoperable
- and allowing potential integration across various competences frameworks

System Modelling and Implementation Framework

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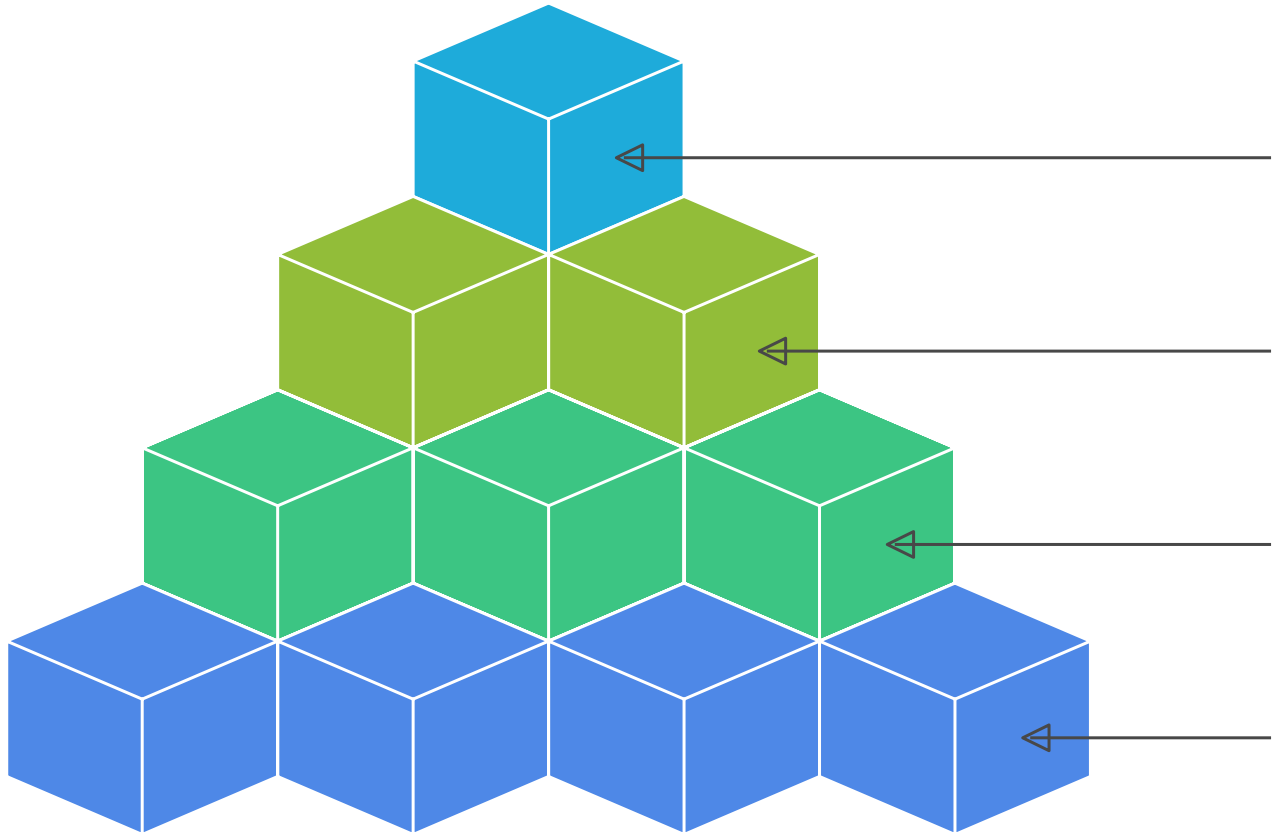

Model Implementation

Structured approach to ALE registry design

Design Thinking

Iterative problem-solving for model refinement

User-Centred Workshops

Collaborative exploration of stakeholder needs

Needs analysis

Real world insights from ten countries reflecting diverse national approaches and challenges

Design Thinking Process for ALE/ILA Implementation

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Understanding challenges and defining problem statements

Identifying key issues in ALE/ILA

Defining user groups and personas

Developing stakeholder personas

Creating user stories and mapping use cases

Outlining specific interactions and expectations

Developing system capabilities and functionalities

Translating user stories into core system features

Key Findings from Research & Workshops

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Fragmented Registries & Limited Interoperability	Need for a More Accessible and User-Centric System	Quality Assurance Gaps in Non-formal learning	Complexity in Funding & ILA Management	Need for Policy Support & Data Driven Decision Making
Standardised course discovery	Simplified user interfaces	Validation mechanisms for providers	Real-time balance tracking	Interactive analytics dashboards
Standardised provider validation	Personalised learning pathways	ALE registry data model for micro-credentials	Automated eligibility verification	Skills gap assessments
Structured data	Integrated learner feedback tools	Integration of RPL features	Fraud prevention tools	Labour market alignment reports
Open data formats	EU Web Accessibility Directive compliance	Course ratings and learner feedback	Transparent reporting features	Benchmarking tools

Core features recommended

RALExILA research for future ALE & ILA Systems

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Integrated National ALE Registries

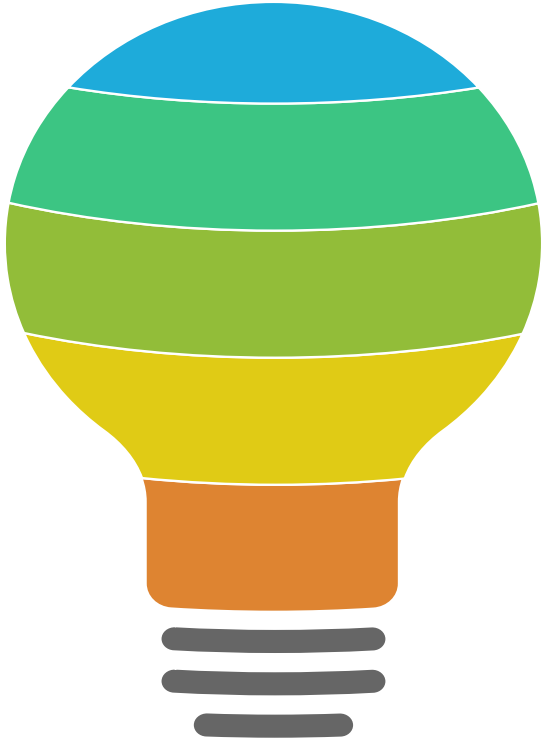
Centralized digital registries for adult learning

Quality Assurance and Accreditation

Mechanisms for ensuring trust in learning systems

Secure, User-Centred and Data-Driven Design

Systems prioritizing security and user experience



Modular and Adaptive ILAs

Flexible accounts for managing learning entitlements

Public-Private Partnerships

Collaborative funding models for sustainability

Why implement Adult Registries and ILAs?

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Workforce Development

Align education with labour market needs

Targeted Funding

ILAs empower individual learning choices

Data-Driven Policy

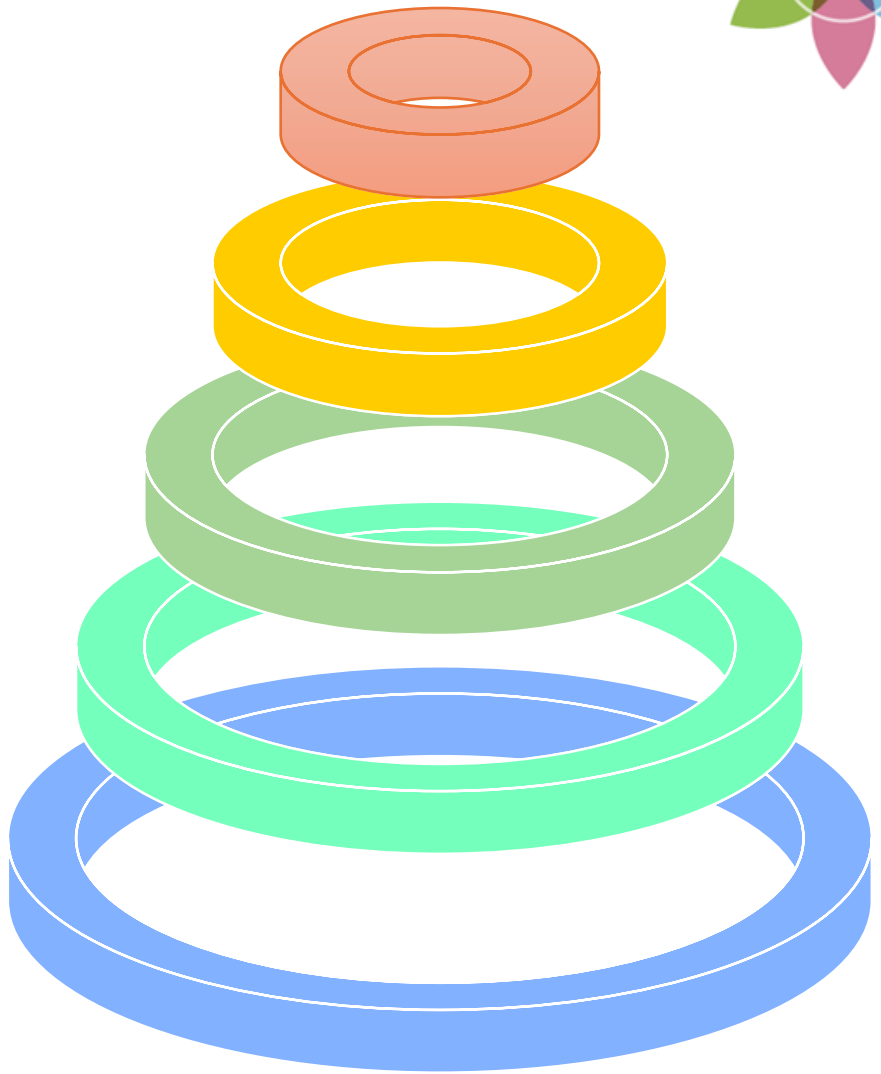
Policymaking based on participation trends

Quality Assurance

Transparent accreditation and evaluation mechanisms

Accessibility

Unified platform for learning opportunities



Core Components of an Integrated ALE/ILA System

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Individual Learning Account Component

Financial mechanisms empowering learners to access training.

Adult Learning Registry

Centralized database of learning opportunities with structured information.

Data Infrastructure and Interoperability

Ensures efficient and secure system operation with standardized data.

Core Components of an Integrated ALE/ILA System

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Adult Learning Registry

The ALE registry forms the backbone of the system, functioning as a centralised database of learning opportunities. It should contain:

- Structured information on accredited and non-accredited courses
- Details about training providers and their quality assurance status
- Learning outcomes, assessment methods, and certification pathways
- User interfaces for learners, providers, and administrators

Core Components of an Integrated ALE/ILA System

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Individual Learning Account Component

The ILA component enables financial mechanisms that empower learners to access training. Key features include:

- Personal accounts for tracking entitlements and funding history
- Eligibility verification systems for different funding sources
- Payment processing capabilities for course enrolment
- Transparent reporting on fund utilisation

Core Components of an Integrated ALE/ILA System

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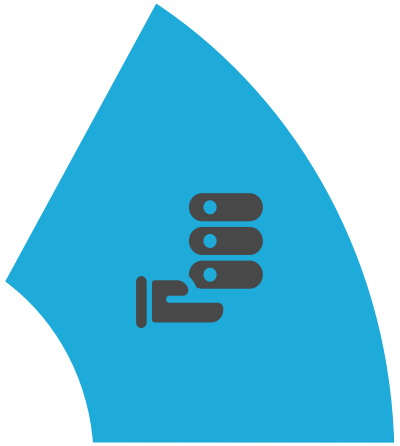

Data Infrastructure and Interoperability

A solid data infrastructure ensures that the system operates efficiently and securely:

- Standardised data formats aligned with European frameworks (ELM, ESCO)
- APIs for integration with employment services and education platforms
- GDPR-compliant security measures for personal data protection
- Analytics capabilities for monitoring system performance

Implementing a Modular Approach

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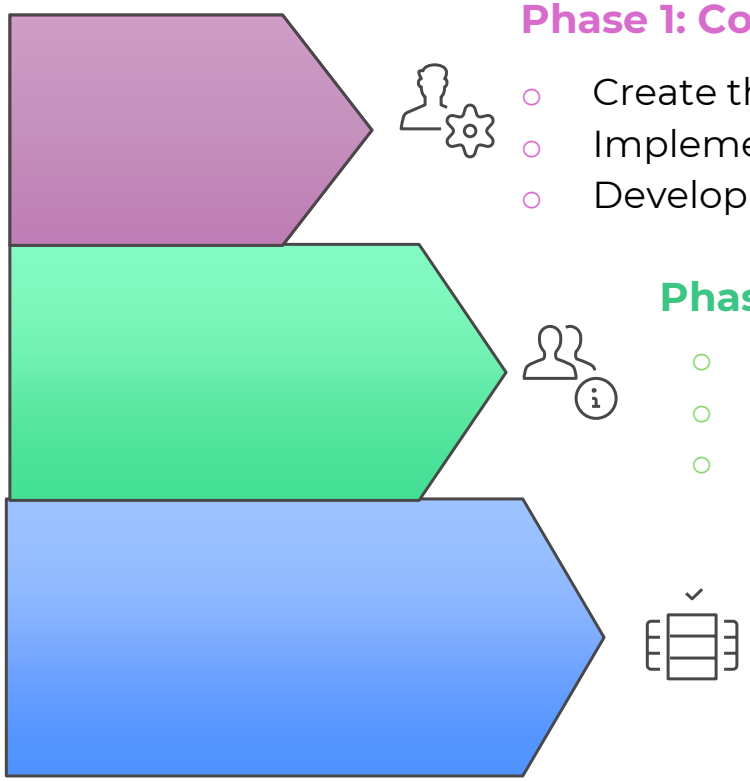

Phase 1: Core Registry Establishment

- Create the basic ALE registry database and provider management system
- Implement quality assurance mechanisms for learning opportunities
- Develop user-friendly interfaces for course discovery

Phase 2: ILA Integration

- Introduce individual user accounts and entitlement tracking
- Establish funding eligibility verification processes
- Implement payment mechanisms for approved courses

Phase 3: Advanced Features

- Add personalisation and career guidance tools
- Integrate skills recognition and validation features
- Implement advanced analytics for policy support

Governance Models and Quality Assurance

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The choice of governance model significantly impacts the operation and effectiveness of ALE/ILA systems. Each model offers different advantages:

Governance Model	Characteristics	Best For
Centralised	National oversight with standardised processes	Countries with strong central governance
Decentralised	Regional authority with local adaptation	Diverse regions with varying needs
Hybrid	National frameworks with regional implementation	Balancing consistency with flexibility

Governance Models and Quality Assurance

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Regardless of the governance model chosen, robust quality assurance mechanisms are essential:

- ✓ Clear accreditation procedures for training providers
- ✓ Standardised evaluation criteria for learning programmes
- ✓ Continuous monitoring and feedback collection
- ✓ Regular audits and system performance reviews

Core Features

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Operational Capabilities

Key for efficient system performance, supporting smooth interactions and data-driven decisions.

User Engagement and Communication

- Notifications and Alerts
- User feedback and support
- Personalised Learning Pathways

Provider Quality Assurance (QA) and Compliance

- Course Ratings and Reviews
- Compliance checks
- Performance Metrics

ILA Management and Analytics

- ILA Usage tracking and reporting
- Fund utilisation analytics

System Governance

- Role-Based Access Controls

Skills and Credentials Management

- Digital Credential Issuance and Management
- Skills / Competence management
- Skills Self-Assessment
- Skills Tracking
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Non-Functional Capabilities

Ensuring system usability, security, and accessibility, critical for user trust and compliance.

User experience & Accessibility

- Mobile-friendly
- Unified access ALE/ILA
- Alternative access option (e.g. offline)
- Compliance with EU Web Accessibility Directive
- Multi-language support

System Integrity & Security

- Privacy and Data Security Compliance (GDPR)
- Access Controls and User Authentication
- Data Integrity
- Audit Logs
- Data Interoperability

Foundational Capabilities

Essential for all ALE/ILA systems, ensuring core functionality and system reliability.

Discovery

- Search & Filtering
- Course Display
- Course Comparison
- Provider Directory
- Quality Assurance or Accreditation information

Provider Management

- Provider Account Management
- Course Management
- Provider Registration
- Provider Eligibility and Compliance
- Provider onboarding

User account & ILA Essentials

- User Account management
- ILA Balance Tracking
- Course Enrolment
- ILA Application & Verification
- Payment Processing

Advanced Capabilities

Enhancing user experience and system effectiveness through advanced features and personalised support.

System Insights and Analytics

- User Engagement Analytics
- Learning Outcomes Benchmarking
- Regulatory Compliance Analytics
- Policy and Decision-Making Insights

Career support

- Skills gap analysis
- Personalised Guidance
- Employment Guidance
- Job matching

AI features

- AI-driven learning/course recommendations
- Automated data validation
- Predictive analytics

Technical Considerations for Prototyping

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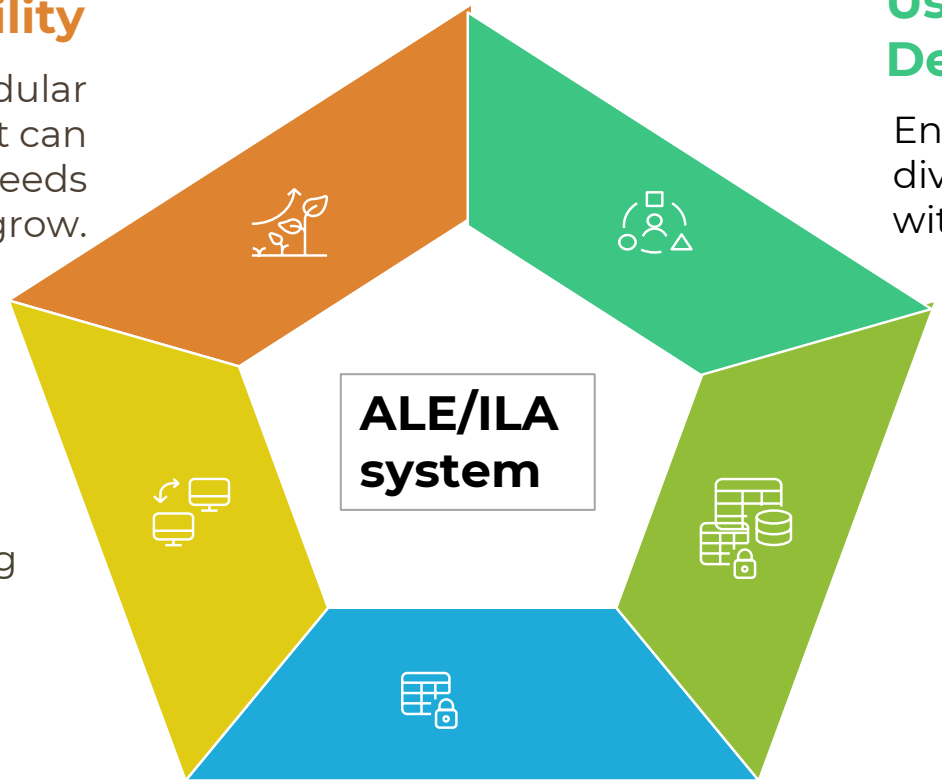
Scalability

Builds a modular infrastructure that can expand as system needs grow.

User-Centred Design

Ensure intuitive interfaces for diverse users, including those with low digital literacy



Interoperability

Designs APIs for integration with existing education and employment systems.

Data Architecture

Structures data to align with the European Learning Model for future interoperability

Security Framework

Implements robust authentication and authorization controls.

Key success Factors

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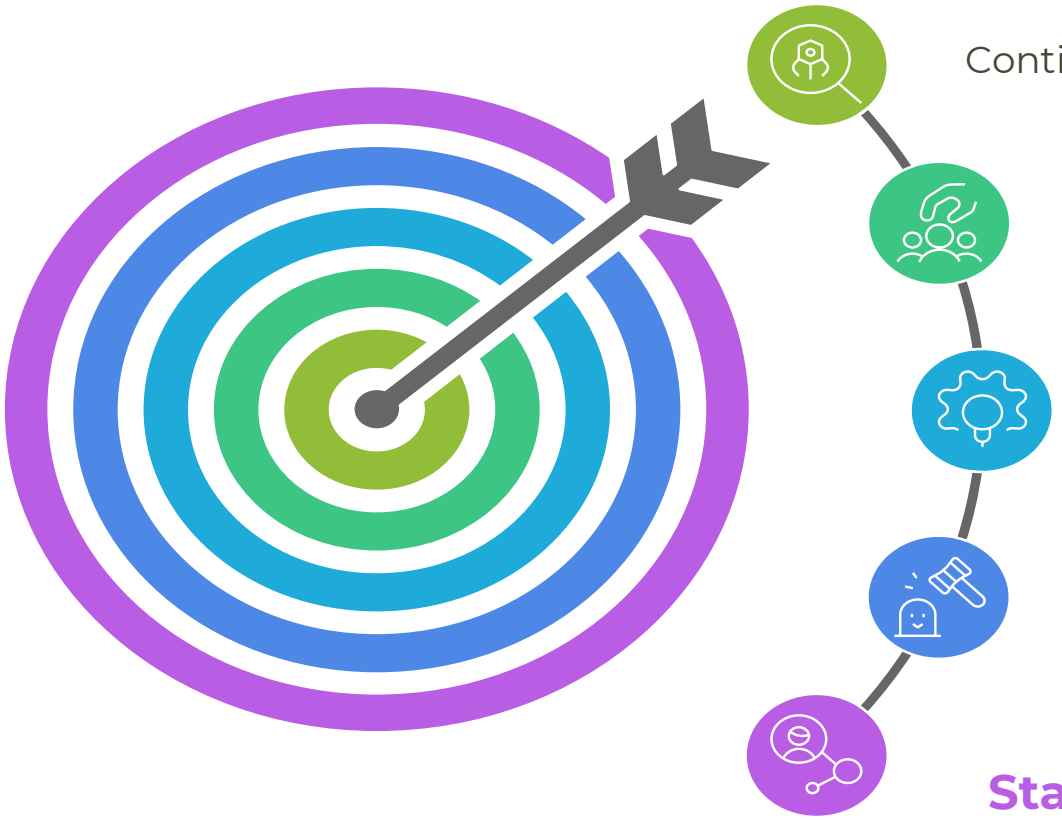

Data-Driven Refinement

Continuous evaluation and improvement

Inclusivity

Features for underserved populations and regions

Labour Market Alignment

Learning opportunities that address current and emerging skills

Transparent Governance

Define roles, responsibilities and decision- making processes

Stakeholder Collaboration

Involve learners, providers, employers, and policymakers in system design

System Model Feedback

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- Does the prototype reflect your country's ALE priorities and realities?
- What gaps or overlaps exist compared to current national systems?
- How could this prototype be better aligned with local policies and practices?
- Does the modular approach provide sufficient flexibility?
- Are there missing functionalities or technical challenges not covered?

Getting Started: A Roadmap for Prototyping

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1. Assess Starting Point

- Map existing ALE infrastructure and stakeholders
- Identify policy priorities and resource constraints
- Review legal frameworks for data sharing and funding

3. Develop a Phased Implementation Plan

- Start with high-priority capabilities from the **RALExILA capability map**
- Establish clear milestones and success metrics
- Create feedback mechanisms for continuous improvement

5. Sustainability

Ensure long-term viability and improvement

2. Define System Architecture

- Select appropriate governance model
- Determine core technical components
- Plan for interoperability with existing systems

4. Build Stakeholder Engagement

- Form advisory committees with diverse representation
- Conduct user testing throughout development
- Establish communication channels for ongoing input

Getting Started: A Roadmap for Prototyping

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OF INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ACCOUNTS

1. Assess Starting Point

- What systems are already in place?
- How do learners and providers currently interact with the system?
- What are the policy and regulatory constraints?

2. Define System Architecture

- Who will oversee and manage the system?
- How will funding be structured?
- What mechanisms ensure transparency and accountability?

3. Develop a Phased Implementation Plan

- What data infrastructure is needed?
- How do different systems communicate?
- How will users interact with the system?
- What reporting and analytics tools are needed?

4. Build Stakeholder Engagement

- Form advisory committees with diverse representation
- Conduct user testing throughout development
- Establish communication channels for ongoing input

5. Sustainability

- How will the system be evaluated and improved?
- What mechanisms will ensure financial sustainability?
- How will digital and policy advancements be incorporated?

Case Studies

Key Relationships Between ALE and ILA Components

Case Study:
Governance and Integration Model – France (Compte Personnel de Formation - CPF)

A well-governed, centralised ALE and ILA system ensures quality control, transparency, and seamless integration of funding mechanisms. France's Compte Personnel de Formation (CPF) serves as a strong example of a nationally managed, centralised ILA system that is fully integrated with a national ALE registry.

France – Compte Personnel de Formation (CPF)
France's CPF system enables individuals to accumulate training credits throughout their working lives, which they can use to enrol in accredited courses. The CPF is managed through Mon Compte Formation, a single national platform that serves as the official ALE registry, listing only approved training providers.

The platform is directly linked to national funding mechanisms, allowing users to search for courses, check their available funding balance, and register online without additional administrative steps. This fully centralised model ensures that all training providers undergo strict accreditation, reducing risks of low-quality offerings and misuse of public funds.

- Key Challenge: Creating a learner-friendly, digital-first ILA system while maintaining rigorous quality assurance and financial accountability.
- Solution Implemented: A nationally regulated digital platform that integrates course listings, funding eligibility, and enrolment into a single system, removing bureaucratic barriers for learners.
- Lessons Learned: A centralised approach enhances transparency, funding efficiency, and quality control, but requires strong governance and policy coordination.

Key Takeaways for Practitioners

- A single national platform reduces fragmentation, ensuring a coherent, user-friendly system.
- Direct funding integration simplifies enrolment and reduces administrative burdens for learners.
- Strict provider accreditation guarantees course quality and financial accountability.
- Digital automation enhances user experience, tracking, and fraud prevention.

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Discussion Questions

- If your country already has an ALE registry, what additional data structures are needed to integrate ILA funding and learner accounts?
- What mechanisms are required for secure data exchange between funding bodies, providers, and national authorities?
- How can a single sign-on system (SSO) or digital identity framework help unify access to ALE and ILA services?

Case Studies

Implementation of a Modular System

Case Study:
Implementation of Modular System Features – Ireland and Portugal

A modular approach to ALE and ILA systems allows for scalability, flexibility, and phased implementation. Ireland and Portugal have successfully developed national ALE registries that integrate course catalogues, funding mechanisms, and skills validation while allowing for future expansion.

Ireland – FETCH & Qualifax Databases
Ireland operates two complementary platforms for adult learning and training:

- FETCH (Further Education & Training Course Hub) – A centralised directory listing government-funded FET programmes.
- Qualifax – A national database covering all education and training options, including higher education, apprenticeships, and further education.

These platforms interact with Ireland's National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and European education databases.

Key Challenge: Ensuring comprehensive course information while integrating funding mechanisms.
Solution: A phased rollout, first establishing a national course catalogue (Qualifax), followed by integrating funding eligibility and provider management (FETCH).
Lessons Learned: Incremental system development reduces complexity while aligning with policy priorities.

Portugal – Qualifica Portal
Portugal's Qualifica Portal is a national ALE registry that integrates career guidance, skills validation, and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). Unlike traditional course catalogues, it allows learners to:

- Explore accredited training programmes aligned with employment goals.
- Validate prior learning and experience through RPL.
- Receive personalised recommendations for further education.

The portal is linked to Portugal's National Qualifications System (SNQ) and public employment services for better labour market alignment.

Key Challenge: Developing a learner-centred ALE registry that goes beyond course listings.
Solution: A holistic platform combining course discovery, career guidance, and RPL validation while remaining scalable.
Lessons Learned: Integrating skills validation and guidance tools can enhance learner engagement and employability.

Key Takeaways for Practitioners
For national policymakers and system developers, these examples show that modularity supports sustainable ALE and ILA system development.

- Ireland's modular approach separates course listings from funding management, enabling gradual system enhancement.
- Portugal's Qualifica model extends beyond course catalogues to support career transitions and personalised learning pathways.
- Both cases highlight the benefits of phased implementation, ensuring core functionalities are built first, with room for scalability.

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Discussion Questions

1. What lessons can we draw from Ireland's phased implementation of FETCH and Qualifax when designing nationa ALE registry—especially in balancing course catalogue development with funding integration?
2. Portugal's Qualifica Portal combines course discovery with career guidance and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). How feasible is it to integrate such holistic, learner-centred features into our national prototype? What would be the biggest challenges?
3. Considering the modular systems in both countries, which components (e.g., course catalogue, skills validation, funding mechanisms) should we prioritise first in our national context, and why?

Case Studies

Different starting points in implementing ALE and ILA systems

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Case Study:
ALE System Maturity – Slovenia and Malta

Countries implement ALE and ILA systems at different levels of maturity. Slovenia and Malta illustrate how systems can evolve from basic registries to fully integrated funding mechanisms.

Slovenia – National ALE Registry Evolution
Slovenia's ALE registry started as a basic course database but has progressively integrated quality assurance, learner tracking, and funding mechanisms. The system now supports provider accreditation and automated funding allocation for ILAs.

Key Challenge: Transitioning from a data collection platform to an active funding and learning management system.
Solution: Gradual system upgrades, introducing accreditation, funding integration, and data-driven policy tools.
Lessons Learned: A phased approach allows for scalability without overwhelming system administrators or users.

Malta – JobPlus Platform
Malta's JobPlus platform is a government-led system that verifies training providers, aligns courses with labour market needs, and connects learners with funding options. It functions as both an ALE registry and an ILA management tool, streamlining enrolment, tracking, and funding approval.

Key Challenge: Ensuring public oversight of course quality while facilitating employer-supported learning.
Solution: Centralised provider verification, funding alignment with workforce demands, and automated learner tracking.
Lessons Learned: Tight integration between ALE registries and funding mechanisms improves transparency and accessibility.

Key Takeaways for Practitioners

- Slovenia demonstrates how a basic registry can evolve into a full-service ALE/ILA platform.
- Malta highlights the benefits of a government-driven system that links training quality with funding eligibility.
- Both cases show the value of phased system expansion, ensuring smooth adoption and long-term sustainability.

Discussion Questions

1. Slovenia successfully evolved its ALE registry from a basic database into a system supporting accreditation and automated funding. What key upgrades or capabilities should we prioritise first to begin a similar transition, considering our current system maturity?
2. Malta's JobPlus platform tightly integrates provider verification, funding, and learner tracking. What governance or technical challenges might we face in adopting a similar centralised model, and how could we address them?
3. Both countries followed a phased expansion strategy. What risks or trade-offs should we be aware of when scaling up from a simple registry to a full ALE/ILA platform in our national context?

Case Studies

Funding Transparency and Policy Decision-Making

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Case Study:
Funding Transparency and Policy Decision-Making – Finland and Croatia

Effective ALE and ILA systems require transparent funding and data-driven oversight. Finland and Croatia offer strong models for real-time tracking and structured funding allocation.

Finland – KOSKI Registry for Real-Time Learner Data Tracking
Finland's KOSKI Registry is a national digital database that centralises learner records, enrolments, and funding allocation. It enables policymakers to track participation and adjust funding based on skill demand.

Key Challenge: Aligning funding with workforce needs while reducing administrative complexity.
Solution: A national digital database that integrates learner records, funding disbursement, and policy monitoring tools.
Lessons Learned: Real-time data enables responsive policymaking, ensuring funds are directed where they are most effective.

Croatia – Voucher-Based ALE System
Croatia operates a voucher-based ALE funding model where learners receive government-issued training vouchers to enrol in approved courses. This system is co-financed by public and private stakeholders, ensuring shared responsibility for workforce upskilling.

Key Challenge: Balancing learner choice with financial oversight to prevent funding misuse.
Solution: A voucher system linked to accredited training providers, with strict reporting requirements for fund utilisation.
Lessons Learned: Public-private funding models can increase accessibility and employer engagement while maintaining financial transparency.

Key Takeaways for Practitioners

- Finland demonstrates the power of real-time learner tracking to optimise funding allocation and skills development strategies.
- Croatia's voucher system showcases how structured funding models can enhance learner choice while maintaining financial oversight.
- Both cases highlight the importance of integrating funding mechanisms with data-driven policymaking for sustainable ALE systems.

Discussion Questions

1. How can real-time learner data, as seen in Finland's KOSKI system, improve the responsiveness of funding allocation and policy decisions in your national context?
2. What safeguards and monitoring tools are necessary to balance learner choice and financial transparency in voucher-based systems like Croatia's?
3. In your country, what steps would be needed to implement or enhance a data-driven funding model for ALE that aligns with both public accountability and labour market needs?

Capability Maturity Model for ALE/ILA Systems

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Maturity Level	Characteristics	Key Next Steps
Basic (ALE Registry Only)	A central registry exists but lacks ILA integration. No automated funding or quality assurance.	Strengthen data governance, ensure interoperability, integrate funding eligibility tracking.
Intermediate (ALE + ILA Integrated)	Learners can access ILAs and funding, but quality assurance and analytics are still underdeveloped.	Introduce provider accreditation frameworks, integrate micro-credentials, improve reporting and analytics.
Advanced (Fully Digital & Interoperable)	AI-driven learning pathways, real-time data analytics, automated funding, and compliance monitoring.	Enhance cross-border interoperability, optimise AI-driven learning recommendations, explore new funding models.

Discussion Questions

- What level of infrastructure and governance does our national system currently have?
- What capabilities are essential for the next phase of implementation?
- How do we ensure alignment with European frameworks as we advance system maturity?

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Building ALE and ILA systems
User Needs Assessment

[name of representative, organization]

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User Groups and Their Importance

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- Research conducted across ten European helped us identify the main user groups and is the basis for articulating the user-stories that plays a key role in establishing a system model.
- user groups were segmented based on their **roles, interactions, and needs** within the learning ecosystem.

User Segmentation Benefits

Policy and Governance Alignment

Policy alignment ensures governance effectiveness despite low tailoring.

Effective System Design

Tailored solutions enhance system design for policy alignment.

Basic Functionality

Basic functionality lacks both tailored solutions and policy alignment.

Tailored Solutions

Tailored solutions address specific needs without policy alignment.

User Groups and their importance

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1. Adult Learners

Learning Opportunities

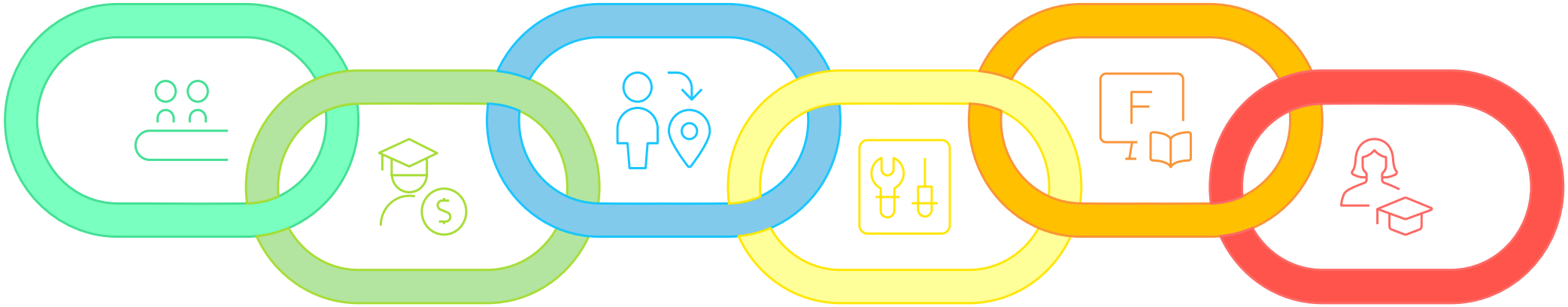
Provided with easy access to diverse educational resources.

Personalised Guidance

Need tailored advice and support for individual learning paths.

Formal and Non-Formal Education

Facilitation both structured and informal learning experiences.



Funding Options

Offered various financial aids to support learners.

User-Friendly Tools

Simplified course search, comparison, and progress tracking.

Career Guidance

Assists learners in making informed career decisions.

User Groups and their importance

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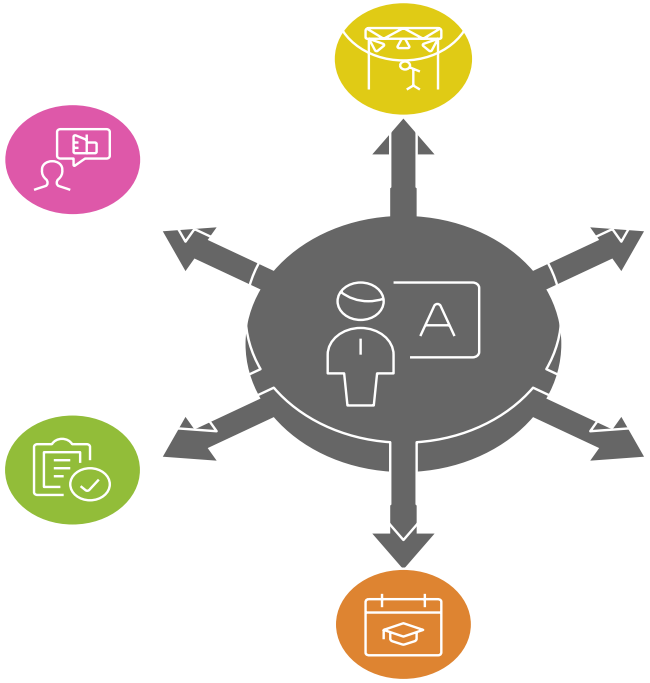
2. Training Providers

Enhanced Visibility

Increased exposure to potential learners through structured listings

Feedback Access

Insights from learners to refine training programs



Accreditation Support

Assistance in meeting quality assurance standards

Interoperability

Adherence to national and European frameworks

Streamlined Engagement

Improved interaction with learners through efficient systems

Course Management

Simplified listing and organization of course offerings

User Groups and their importance

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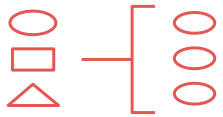
3. Administrators

Technical and Operational Management

Overseeing system's technical aspects and operations

Fraud Prevention, Quality Assurance, and System Optimisation

Preventing fraud, ensuring quality, and optimising system



Automated Workflows

Supporting automated workflows for key tasks

User Groups and their importance

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4. Policy Makers

Gather Real-Time Data
Collect current educational metrics

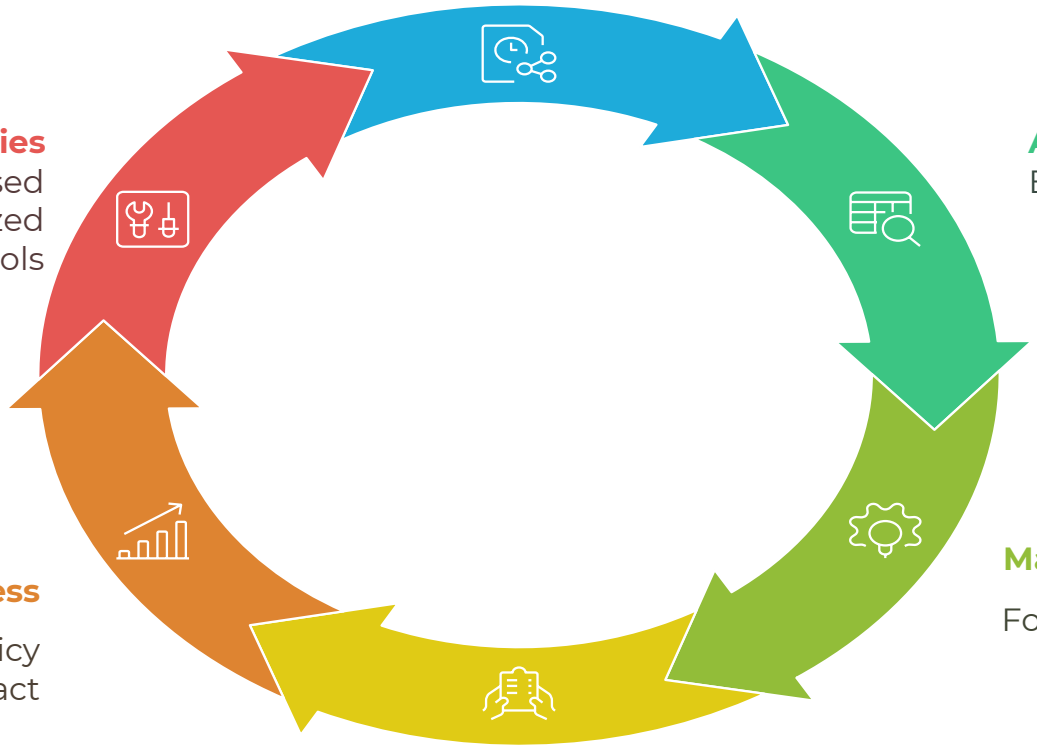
Analyze Insights
Evaluate data for trends and gaps

Make Evidence-Based Decisions
Formulate policies based on analysis

Implement Policies
Put decisions into action

Evaluate Effectiveness
Assess policy outcomes and impact

Adjust Policies
Refine policies based on evaluation and customized reporting tools



User Groups and their importance

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5. Funders

Visibility	**Use, training effectiveness funding gaps**
Tracking	**Fund disbursement, learner participation**
Impact Assessment	**Return on investment in skills development**
Compliance	**Audit-ready records, automated reporting, fraud detection**

User Stories by Group

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Learners

- As a learner, I want to **access information** about **learning programmes** so that I can make informed choices.
- I want to know the **feedback of other learners** regarding the education they attended so that I can learn from their experiences.
- I want to use the **ILA entitlements for both professional and personal development** so that I can grow holistically.
- I want **comparable credentials from all providers** so that they are transparent and easily usable.
- I want **control over my private data**, deciding what information is shared publicly.
- I want to **use my ILA and access learning opportunities** without too limiting technical prerequisites (e.g., smartphones, high-speed internet).
- I want **my feedback to have consequences** so that the system is truly adjusted for my needs.
- I want to **share feedback about educational programmes** that are not currently offered so that I can suggest future courses.
- I want to know **which providers I can trust** so that I feel confident using my ILA entitlements.
- I want **a single-entry point for ILA and ALE registries** so that I can see the entire range of educational services.

User Stories by Group

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Training Providers

- As a provider, I want to **reach new customers** so that I can gain visibility in the education market.
- I want to use the registry to **identify my position in the education market** and foster collaboration with other providers.
- I want my learning opportunities linked **to career guidance and the job market** to better market my courses.
- I want to use the registry to **network with others**, including stakeholders outside my national context.
- I want **a single data entry form** that can be used across different platforms to reduce administrative burden.
- I want to be **included in the registry** to gain the prestige and quality assurance it provides.
- I want to **receive feedback** to improve the quality of the programmes we offer.
- I want the registry to function as **a regulator** to ensure quality and prevent scams.
- I want a **clear value proposition** for joining the registry that aligns with my business needs.

User Stories by Group

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Administrators

- As an administrator, I want **an easy-to-use interface for data entry** to save time and ensure accuracy.
- I want **assisted data entry functionality** to improve the coherence of the information.
- I want **tagging guidelines and training** to improve the accuracy of the registry's data.
- I want **supervision and peer support** over time to ensure continuous improvement in registry management.
- I want to **access learner feedback and statistics** to refine the registry and improve user experience.
- I want a **strategy to validate data accuracy** and fill information gaps.

User Stories by Group

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Policy-Makers

- As a policy-maker, I want **an integrated register** that provides an overview of educational offerings to address specific needs and groups.
- I want **adult education registries** linked with awareness campaigns, guidance programmes, and quality assurance mechanisms for coherent policymaking.
- I want **real-time data comparison** with projections to make proactive adjustments to the system.
- I want the **system designed modularly** to allow individual adjustments without disrupting the entire framework.
- I want insights into **the business motivations** of training providers to engage all types effectively.
- I want a **quality assurance system** with audits and regular updates to ensure high standards.

User Stories by Group

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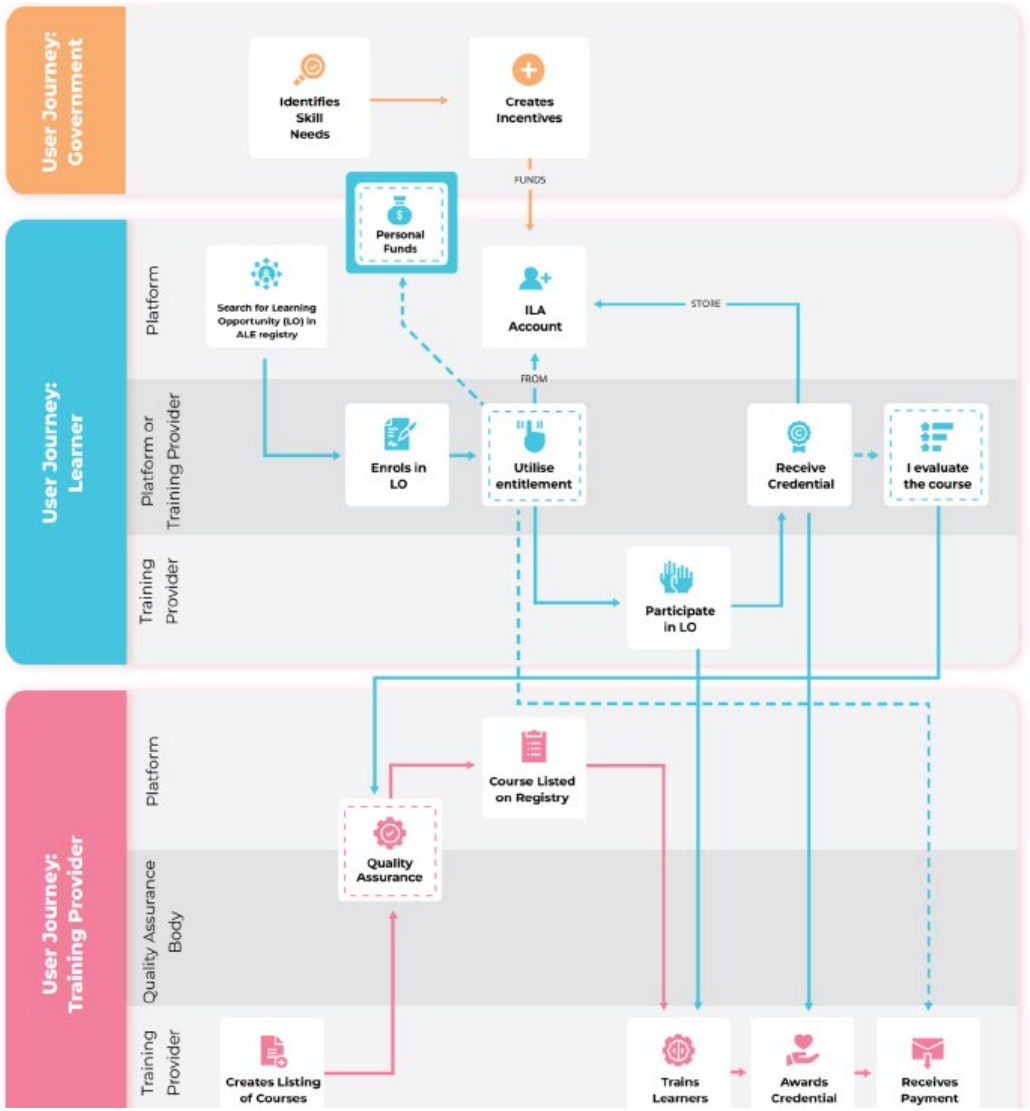
Funders

- As a funder, I want to **track ILA performance metrics** (e.g., distribution, success) to allocate resources effectively.
- I want the system to align with **funding regulations** to ensure transparency and compliance.

User Journey



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Discussion Questions

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1. Do the use cases reflect the roles and processes of ALE in your country? Should additional scenarios be added?
2. Are the data flows logical and feasible to implement nationally?
3. Which user roles (e.g., learners, providers, policymakers) are best served by the current interface design?
4. What would be essential to include in the user experience to encourage widespread adoption?

Discussion Questions per User Group

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Adult Learners

- What are the most common barriers learners face when accessing or using ALE and ILA systems in your context?
- How could the system better support learners with low digital literacy or limited access to technology?
- What mechanisms could ensure learner feedback genuinely influences course offerings and system improvements?
- Are learners in your country aware of their ILA entitlements? How can awareness and uptake be improved?
- What would build learner trust in the platform (e.g., provider ratings, transparency of credentials, feedback tools)?

Training Providers

- What incentives would encourage more providers to join and actively contribute to the ALE/ILA registry?
- How should quality assurance processes be handled—centrally, nationally, or by sectoral bodies?
- How can the platform support providers in aligning their offerings with labour market trends?
- What are the biggest administrative or technical challenges training providers might face with the platform?
- How can feedback from learners be used constructively by providers without risking reputational harm?

Discussion Questions per User Group

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System Administrators

- What functionalities would make the system most efficient and sustainable from an administrative perspective?
- How can administrators ensure that the registry data remains accurate and up to date?
- What support (e.g., guidelines, peer communities, technical tools) do administrators need to manage the platform long term?
- How can the system detect and prevent misuse or fraud without creating excessive bureaucracy?

Policy Makers

- How can real-time data from the ALE/ILA system be made meaningful for policy decisions?
- What data or indicators should be prioritised for monitoring skills gaps and funding effectiveness?
- How can the system balance flexibility for learners and providers with the need for oversight and accountability?
- To what extent should the ALE/ILA platform integrate with other national or EU education and employment systems?
- How should the system be modular to allow for country-specific policy differences?

Funders

- What would funders need to see in order to feel confident that their investments are producing meaningful outcomes?
- How can the system help identify underfunded areas or gaps in provision?
- What mechanisms can ensure transparency and compliance without overburdening training providers or administrators?
- How can the system demonstrate return on investment in terms of employability, upskilling, or economic impact?

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Building ALE and ILA systems

Governance and Sustainability of the ALE/ILA System

[name of representative, organization]

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Governance and Sustainability of the ALE/ILA System

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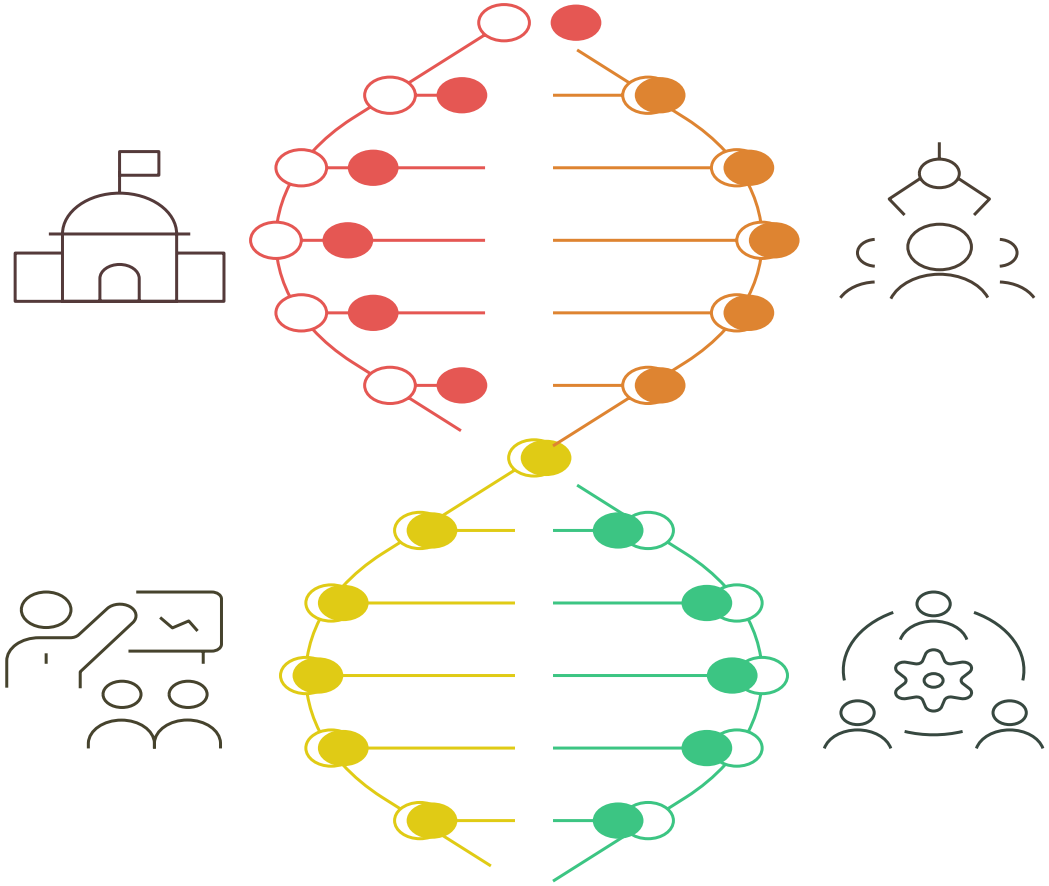
Key governance roles

National Authorities

Oversee policy alignment, regulatory compliance, and long-term funding sustainability.



System Operators

Manage technical infrastructure, provider accreditation, and learner support services.

Training Providers and Employers

Ensure course quality, learner engagement, and alignment with labour market needs.

Learners and Social Partners

Participate in system evaluation, feedback mechanisms, and quality assurance processes.

Governance Structure and Responsibilities

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While national structures vary, key governance roles typically include:

- National Authorities (Ministries of Education, Labour, and Finance): Oversee policy alignment, regulatory compliance, and long-term funding sustainability.
- System Operators (Public Agencies or Designated Entities): Manage technical infrastructure, provider accreditation, and learner support services.
- Training Providers and Employers: Ensure course quality, learner engagement, and alignment with labour market needs.
- Learners and Social Partners: Participate in system evaluation, feedback mechanisms, and quality assurance processes.

Funding and Financial Sustainability

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Funding Approaches

Co-Financing Models

Employer-matched contributions or sectoral funding schemes

.

Centralized

Decentralized

Publicly Funded ILAs

State-managed entitlements with targeted allocations

Voucher-Based Systems

Learner-directed funding with accredited provider participation

Ensuring System Adaptability and Policy Evolution

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When governments implement digital platforms or new funding schemes such as ILAs, long-term planning for policy evolution and system development is often overlooked.

!Need for: adjusting priorities, refining funding mechanisms, and expanding system capabilities

Key mechanisms to support long-term system adaptability include:

- ✓ Regular Policy Reviews
- ✓ Data-Driven Decision-Making by design - leveraging learning analytics and labour market insights.
- ✓ Interoperability Standards, integrating the system with European reference models such as the ELM (which uses ESCO, Europass and micro-credential considerations)

Data Governance and Management

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Why Data Governance Matters

To ensure a cohesive and well-regulated system, national authorities should establish a clear data governance structure that defines:

- ❑ What data is collected (content and structure)
- ❑ How data is stored and maintained (security, access, and quality control).
- ❑ Who owns, accesses, and updates the data (roles and responsibilities).
- ❑ How data is shared across systems (interoperability and integration)

Data Governance and Management

Why Data Governance Matters – The RALExILA System Model

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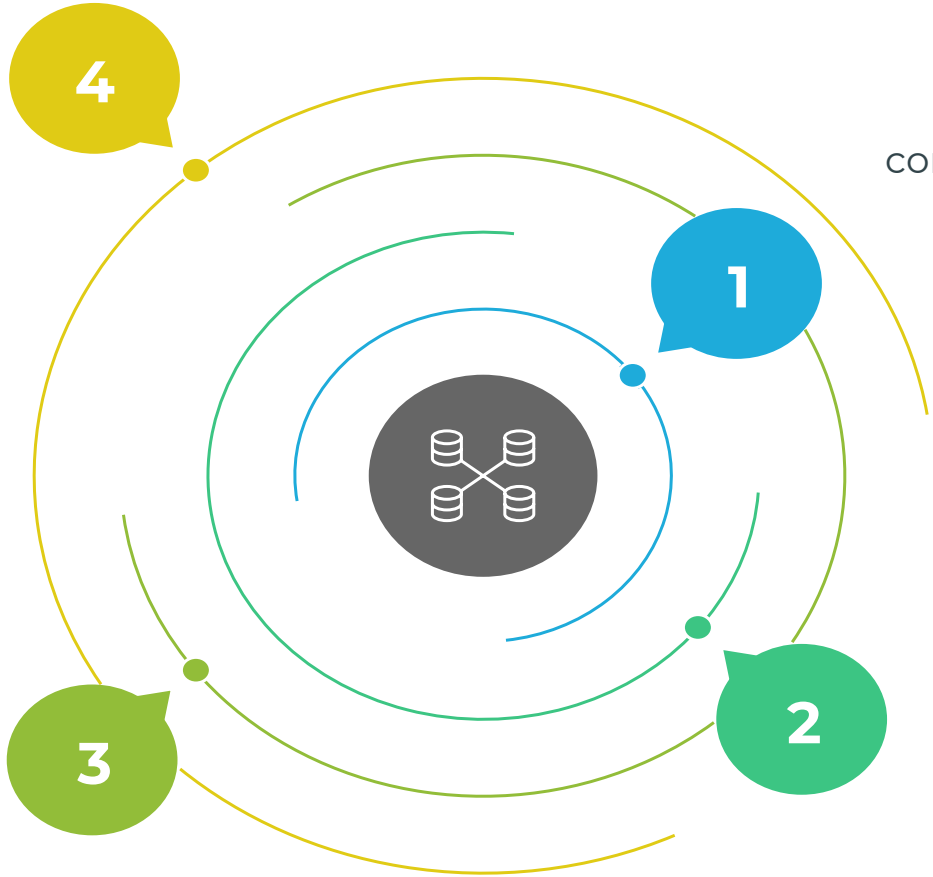
Data Sharing

Ensures interoperability and integration across systems

Data Collection

Focuses on the content and structure of data gathered



Data Ownership

Defines roles and responsibilities for data management

Data Storage

Addresses security, access, and quality control measures

Data Governance and Management

Step 1: Data Collection: Defining and Standardising ALE/ILA Data

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1. Adult Learning and Education (ALE) Registry Data Model

Covers courses, providers, accreditation, and quality assurance data.

2. Individual Learning Account (ILA) Data Model

Includes learner entitlements, funding transactions, and account status.

3. Complementary Data for an Integrated ALE/ILA System

- Encompasses additional contextual data that enhances system functionality, such as labour market insights and user engagement metrics.

Data Governance and Management

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Step 1: Data Collection: Defining and Standardising ALE/ILA Data

Best Practices for Data Collection:

- Use structured, standardised data formats (e.g., JSON-LD, XML, or RDF for interoperability).
- Leverage controlled vocabularies e.g. alignment of Skills and Competence data with ESCO (European Skills, Competences, and Occupations framework).
- Ensure real-time validation (technical feature) to prevent duplicate or incorrect entries.
- Adopt automated data collection methods (e.g., API-driven data submission by providers) or alternatively consider bulk-import or expert of data to avoid lengthy and error-prone manual data entries.

Reference Frameworks:

- ISO/IEC 11179 – Metadata Registry Standard (Ensures consistent data structuring).
- FAIR Data Principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable).

Data Governance and Management

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Step 2: Data Storage & Security: Safeguarding System Integrity

Once data is collected, it must be securely stored and efficiently managed.
A centralised or federated database model can be used depending on governance preferences.

Key Considerations for Data Storage

- Scalability: Ensure that storage infrastructure can handle future data expansion.
- Security: Implement role-based access control (RBAC) to limit data access.
- Encryption & Compliance: Use AES-256 encryption for sensitive learner data and ensure GDPR compliance.
- Backup & Disaster Recovery: Establish redundant storage solutions and automated backup procedures.

Data Governance and Management

Step 2: Data Storage & Security: Safeguarding System Integrity

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Common Data Storage Models

Model	Description	Best Used For
Centralised Database	A single national database stores all ALE/ILA data	Countries with a strong governance authority overseeing the system
Federated Model	Data remains with institutions but is accessible via a common API gateway	Systems requiring decentralised management (e.g., multi-agency oversight)
Blockchain-Based Model	Transactions are logged securely in a distributed ledger	Ensuring tamper-proof funding transactions and learner record tracking

Reference Frameworks:

- ISO/IEC 27001 – Information Security Management.6
- GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) Compliance Guidelines.

Data Governance and Management

Step 3: Data Interoperability & Integration: Ensuring Seamless Data Exchange

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- ALE/ILA system must be designed with **interoperability at its core**.
- Beyond technical integration, interoperability also plays a crucial role in **ensuring a collective understanding** of data, facilitating seamless collaboration not only between systems but also among stakeholders.

Integration with National & International Frameworks:

- Align with national education and workforce databases (labour market monitoring tools, social security records).
- Enable cross-border recognition via Europass & ELM (European Learning Model).
- Use Open API Standards (e.g., RESTful APIs for secure data exchange).

Data Governance and Management

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Step 3: Data Interoperability & Integration: Ensuring Seamless Data Exchange

Some relevant Interoperability Standards

Standard	Purpose
European Learning Model (ELM)	Ensures compatibility of learning related data with EU education frameworks
xAPI (Experience API / Tin Can API)	Standard for seamless integration of online learning platforms and tools with ALE/ILA systems.
HR-Open Standards (HR-XML	Used for aligning ALE/ILA system data with employer training and HR systems, enabling skills-based hiring and workforce planning.
Dublin Core Metadata Initiative (DCMI)	A framework for standardised metadata tagging, ensuring that course and provider data are discoverable and structured

Reference Frameworks:

- ISO/IEC 19788 – Learning Metadata Standards.
- W3C Linked Data Principles (for open data exchange).

Discussion Questions

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- Are the roles of national authorities, system operators, providers, and learners clearly defined and well-coordinated (in national contexts)?
- What improvements could be made to increase accountability and operational efficiency in you ALE/ILA system?
- How is funding currently allocated and monitored? Are there gaps in transparency or efficiency?
- How adaptable is your current ALE/ILA system to new technologies or shifting labour market needs?
- How is data quality ensured, and how is it used for decision-making?
- How can your system improve interoperability with European data standards (e.g., ESCO, ELM, Europass)?

Theme 1 – Governance and Policy Fit

Context: Discuss how national and regional governance supports or hinders the implementation of the RALExILA model

Discussion Questions

- How does the proposed governance model align with existing ALE structures in your country?
- Who should lead or own the ILA system nationally or regionally?
- What kinds of policy changes would be required to implement this model effectively?

📝 Notes:

Theme 2 – Barriers and Solutions

Context: Identify major obstacles to the RALExILA system and explore potential solutions.

Discussion Questions

- What are the biggest challenges (technical, legal, political) to developing this system?
- Which aspects of the system might face resistance or misunderstanding?
- Can you suggest practical ways to address these barriers?

📝 Notes:

Theme 3 – Scalability and Adaptability

Context: Examine whether the RALExILA system can scale and adapt across different contexts.

Discussion Questions

- Is the system flexible enough to accommodate diverse learners and providers?
- How might you adapt this system for rural areas or underserved populations?
- What infrastructure or capacity would be needed for scale-up?

📝 Notes:

Theme 4 – Integration and Interoperability

Context: Focus on how the system interacts with existing tools and services.

Discussion Questions

- What data systems must the ILA connect with in your country?
- Are there existing registries or learning platforms it could use?
- What are the technical or legal requirements for such integration?

📝 Notes:

Theme 5 – User Stories and Interfaces

Context: Evaluate user journeys, roles, and the clarity of the system's interface.

Discussion Questions

- Do the use cases reflect the roles and processes of ALE in your country?
- Are the data flows logical and feasible to implement nationally?
- Which user roles are best served by the current interface design?
- What would be essential to include in the user experience to encourage widespread adoption?

📝 Notes:

Theme 6 – Sustainability and Long-Term Operation

Context: Discuss how to sustain the system technically, financially, and politically.

Discussion Questions

- What long-term funding models are possible in your context?
- Which public or private entities could take responsibility for maintaining the system?
- How can we ensure continuous updating and relevance of the system?

📝 Notes:

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RALExILA PILOTING WORKSHOPS PROTOCOL

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS BY THEME

Prototype Alignment and National Relevance

(from National Prototype Workshop – Exploring the Primer)

1. Does the prototype reflect your country's ALE priorities and realities?
2. What gaps or overlaps exist compared to current national systems?
3. How could this prototype be better aligned with local policies and practices?
4. Does the modular approach provide sufficient flexibility?
5. Are there missing functionalities or technical challenges not covered?

Challenges and Opportunities

(from National Prototype Workshop – Identifying challenges and opportunities)

1. What are the main barriers to utilising the RALExILA approach for expanding and improving the existing systems and platforms?
2. Which are the benefits of the RALExILA approach?
3. Is it feasible to be implemented? How? Which barriers you may face?

Stakeholder Perspectives

(from National Prototype Workshop – Stakeholder perspectives)

1. How would you use this prototype?
2. What would make it more relevant or usable in your context?

System Functionality and Technical Implementation

(from Evaluate Workshop – Exploring Functionality and Data Models)

1. How intuitive is the proposed design and functionality? (user centredness, simple course registration, administrative tools, digital inclusivity)
2. What features do you find most useful or promising? (look at primer core components)
3. What technical or administrative barriers might arise during implementation?

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Case Studies: France – CPF

(from Evaluate Workshop – Case Study 1)

1. If your country already has an ALE registry, what additional data structures are needed to integrate ILA funding and learner accounts?
2. What mechanisms are required for secure data exchange between funding bodies, providers, and national authorities?
3. How can a single sign-on system (SSO) or digital identity framework help unify access to ALE and ILA services?

Case Studies: Ireland & Portugal – Modular Systems

(from Evaluate Workshop – Case Study 2)

1. What lessons can we draw from Ireland's phased implementation of FETCH and Qualifax when designing national ALE registry—especially in balancing course catalogue development with funding integration?
2. Portugal's Qualifica Portal combines course discovery with career guidance and RPL. How feasible is it to integrate such holistic, learner-centred features into our national prototype? What would be the biggest challenges?
3. Considering the modular systems in both countries, which components (e.g., course catalogue, skills validation, funding mechanisms) should we prioritise first in our national context, and why?

Case Studies: Slovenia & Malta – Different Starting Points

(from Evaluate Workshop – Case Study 3)

1. Slovenia successfully evolved its ALE registry from a basic database into a system supporting accreditation and automated funding. What key upgrades or capabilities should we prioritise first to begin a similar transition, considering our current system maturity?
2. Malta's JobPlus platform tightly integrates provider verification, funding, and learner tracking. What governance or technical challenges might we face in adopting a similar centralised model, and how could we address them?

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3. Both countries followed a phased expansion strategy. What risks or trade-offs should we be aware of when scaling up from a simple registry to a full ALE/ILA platform in our national context?

User Stories and Interfaces

(from Evaluate Workshop – User Stories and Interfaces)

1. Do the use cases reflect the roles and processes of ALE in your country?
2. Are the data flows logical and feasible to implement nationally?
3. Which user roles (e.g., learners, providers, policymakers) are best served by the current interface design?
4. What would be essential to include in the user experience to encourage widespread adoption?

Discussion Questions per User Group

Adult Learners:

1. What are the most common barriers learners face when accessing or using ALE and ILA systems in your context?
2. How could the system better support learners with low digital literacy or limited access to technology?
3. What mechanisms could ensure learner feedback genuinely influences course offerings and system improvements?
4. Are learners in your country aware of their ILA entitlements? How can awareness and uptake be improved?
5. What would build learner trust in the platform (e.g., provider ratings, transparency of credentials, feedback tools)?

Training Providers:

1. What incentives would encourage more providers to join and actively contribute to the ALE/ILA registry?
2. How should quality assurance processes be handled—centrally, nationally, or by sectoral bodies?
3. How can the platform support providers in aligning their offerings with labour market trends?

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4. What are the biggest administrative or technical challenges training providers might face with the platform?
5. How can feedback from learners be used constructively by providers without risking reputational harm?

System Administrators:

1. What functionalities would make the system most efficient and sustainable from an administrative perspective?
2. How can administrators ensure that the registry data remains accurate and up to date?
3. What support (e.g., guidelines, peer communities, technical tools) do administrators need to manage the platform long term?
4. How can the system detect and prevent misuse or fraud without creating excessive bureaucracy?

Policy Makers:

1. How can real-time data from the ALE/ILA system be made meaningful for policy decisions?
2. What data or indicators should be prioritised for monitoring skills gaps and funding effectiveness?
3. How can the system balance flexibility for learners and providers with the need for oversight and accountability?
4. To what extent should the ALE/ILA platform integrate with other national or EU education and employment systems?
5. How should the system be modular to allow for country-specific policy differences?

Funders:

1. What would funders need to see in order to feel confident that their investments are producing meaningful outcomes?
2. How can the system help identify underfunded areas or gaps in provision?
3. What mechanisms can ensure transparency and compliance without overburdening training providers or administrators?
4. How can the system demonstrate return on investment in terms of employability, upskilling, or economic impact?

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Governance and Interoperability

(from Evaluate Workshop – ALE registry and ILA platforms governance)

1. Are the roles of national authorities, system operators, providers, and learners clearly defined and well-coordinated (in national contexts)?
2. What improvements could be made to increase accountability and operational efficiency in your ALE/ILA system?
3. How is funding currently allocated and monitored? Are there gaps in transparency or efficiency?
4. How adaptable is your current ALE/ILA system to new technologies or shifting labour market needs?
5. How is data quality ensured, and how is it used for decision-making?
6. How can your system improve interoperability with European data standards (e.g., ESCO, ELM, Europass)?

Validation of Changes

(from Refine Workshop – Validation)

1. Do the proposed changes address initial concerns?
2. What additional refinements are still needed?
3. Are stakeholders ready to utilize and adapt the RALExILA model in their national setting?

Barriers and Solutions for Implementation

(from Refine Workshop – Final barriers and solutions)

Topics to address:

- Governance
- Technical components
- User engagement

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Long-term Sustainability

(from Refine Workshop – Long-term sustainability)

1. How will the system be evaluated and improved?
2. What mechanisms will ensure financial sustainability?
3. How will digital and policy advancements be incorporated?

Implementation Strategy and Next Steps

(from Refine Workshop – Conclusion and wrap-up)

1. How can these insights inform the implementation strategy of national contexts?
2. Recap main points discussed.
3. Q&A session to address any remaining questions.

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WP4 – Workshop Piloting protocol - Evaluation

Approach

The Evaluation activities for the national pilots are organised in two levels: internal evaluation (partner, facilitators) and with participants.

Two levels: participants and partners/facilitators

- For partners/facilitators, the suggestion is to use observation and to organise at least one internal evaluation meeting among core organisers and facilitators.
- For participants, the suggestion is to organise at least one short focus group between 30' to 1 hour (qualitative aspects) and a short questionnaire (quantitative aspects). In alternative, questionnaires can be used for both the qualitative and quantitative aspects, possibly to be done face to face, can be used as well.

The focus of the Pilots evaluation is on qualitative aspects and focusing on the process (design thinking, co-design) and the experience of participants. Basic questions on the organisation of the workshops are also included, in a quantitative manner, to support the overall evaluation of the quality of the pilots.

The results of the evaluation activities and the feedback from organisers and participants will be then embedded in the final pilot report together with the general findings of pilot activities the pilot materials (D4.1 Pilots evaluation report). The final Pilot report will be composed by each National/partner pilot reports (including the evaluation aspects) and the cross-analysis report.

Finally, the activities proposed and the content of the evaluation are in the line with the Evaluation Strategy and related tools, including the specific qualitative indicators defined for WP4.

The **pilot report template** is also adapted to include these macro-areas for the evaluation.

Internal evaluation partner and facilitators

Method 1: observations of main partner staff and workshops facilitators before, during and after the workshops

Method 2: short meeting (at least 30', suggested 1 hour) to be organised at the end of the whole process

Aspects to evaluate

The following aspects are in line/matching the Evaluation strategy indicators for WP4.

- Level of involvement of groups of participants, also in relation to their engagement in the full process from the beginning
- Involvement of representatives from the different types of actors and contexts in which the Register model must adapt, in terms of representation and level of engagement
- Level of understanding of the process and of the models proposed
- Quality of feedback and outcomes from participants
- Quality improvements for final outputs and results
- Identification of needs and potentials areas of improvement of the models/prototypes (level of and quality)
- Update of scaling up strategies (customer satisfaction, learning outcomes, balanced scorecard, …)
- Identification of potential organisations that would adopt (build, develop) and use (as users) the approach/model to build/implement in their countries/context.

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EVALUATION WITH PARTICIPANTS

Short questionnaire (quantitative)

Method: printed or online questionnaire to be distributed just after each workshop/event, mandatory for the face-to-face workshops and workshop longer than 2 hours

Questions

1. **Overall, how satisfied were you with the design thinking workshop? *Mark only one.***
   Very satisfied, Satisfied, Dissatisfied, Very Dissatisfied

2. **Please, rate the following aspects regarding the preparations to the workshop. *Mark only one per row***

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Distributing agenda and information on the workshop sufficiently in advance				
Sending sufficient information about meeting location and time and workshop objectives and sessions				
General organisation of the event				
Quality of communication and exchange before the event				

3. **Please, rate the following aspects of the workshop. *Mark only one per row***

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Venue				
Technical aspects and tools				
Timing				
Workshop programme				
Quality of communication during the event				
Quality of exchange of information and knowledge				
Participation level in the group work and discussions				
Quality and clarity of facilitators/speakers				
Social programme, if relevant				

4. **Please, rate the session of the workshop. *Mark only one per row***

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Each partner to add here the sessions of each workshop				

5. **What worked well and what can be improved in next/future workshops?**

6. **Do you have any final comment or suggestion for the organiser?**

Short focus group or qualitative questionnaire

Method 1: short focus group (at least 30', suggested 1 hour) to be organised at the end of face-to-face workshops.

Method 2: printed or online questionnaire to be distributed after each workshop longer than 2 hours

Suggested questions

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What were your expectations in participating in this process and in the workshops?

Did the process/workshops match your initial expectations? Could you please elaborate on this?

Did the workshop support your understanding of the core topics (ALE, ILA, registries and ILA platforms, RALExILA proposed approach)? Could you please elaborate on this?

How would you assess your level of involvement and engagement in the process/workshop?

What is your perception of the overall level of involvement and engagement in the workshop/s of the whole group of participants, also in terms of contribution in the discussions and in the co-design process?

What your perception of the overall quality of feedback and outcomes from the whole group of participants, also in terms of identifying needs and potentials areas of improvement of the models/prototypes (level of and quality)?

Would you adopt (build, develop) and/or use (as users) the approach/model to build/implement in your countries and contexts?

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References and contacts

Project Acronym	RALExILA
Project Title	National Registries of Adult Learning and Education to support the deployment of Individual Learning Accounts
Project Grant Number	101132300
Project Coordinator	EAEA – European Association for the Education of Adults www.eaea.org
Partners	Knowledge Innovation Center https://knowledgeinnovation.eu/ ALGEBRA BERNAYS University https://www.algebra.hr/sveuciliste/en/ Asociácia inštitúcií vzdelávania dospelých: AIVD https://aivd.sk/ CARDET - Center for the Advancement of Research and Development in Educational Technology https://cardet.org/
Project Duration	27 months
Period	January 2024 – March 2026
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Consortium Partners

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Workshop: Prototyping with the RALExILA approach — Establishing National Adult Learning Registries for Individual Learning Accounts

Duration: 1h15m

Goal: Familiarise pax with the RALExILA approach by working on ALE-ILA scenarios

Structure Overview

Segment	Duration	Purpose
1. Setting the scene	10 - 15 min	Introduce participants in RALExILA's logic and today's task
2. Group work: Identify essential Year-1 capabilities	25 min	Decide what the system *must* deliver first
3. Group work: Decide who decides	25 min	Explore the key governance and policy choices
4. Group summary & synthesis	15 min	Short reporting back and common reflection

1. Setting the scene (10 min)

Facilitator gives a **short, story-based intro**:

- What is the RALExILA *approach*, existing material iE Handbook, System Model, Methodology for the development of *adult learning registries* (data backbone) and *individual learning accounts* (funding mechanism).
- How does it work? → Start small, focus on clear user value, build in phases → Countries have very different realities and starting points and their approaches depend on those
- Key concept: *Capabilities before complexity*.
  Show one slide illustrating 3 examples of national starting points
  - Strong ALE/No ILA,

- Decentralised ALE/Simple ILA,
- No system yet

Prompt:

"In the next hour, we'll imagine we're designing our own Year-1 version of an integrated ALE/ILA system, what it can do, and which stakeholders need to be involved in the decision making process to make it a reality."

2. Group work — Year-1 Capabilities (25 min)

- Participants will work in mixed groups based on the
- **Give each group one scenario card** (as above).
- Each group has a **simple worksheet with three columns**:
  a. *User need / problem*
  b. *Core capability to address it (Year 1)*
  c. *Why this is essential / what depends on it*

Encourage them to focus on **5–7 must-have capabilities** (e.g. learner registration, provider listing, course search, financial management, reporting dashboard, etc.)

Prompt questions (Displayed on big screen):

- "What must be operational in Year 1 for learners and providers to benefit?"
- "Chose 5-7 capabilities from the capability matrix that you think would be the most important to develop or refine"
- "Which existing systems could feed or benefit from this?"

Facilitator circulates, helping link their ideas to the RALExILA *system model* and *phased development logic*.

3. Group work — Who decides what (25 min)

Each group now reflects on **the decision-making dimension** for their scenario.

PAX are handed a **simple canvas** with three rows:

1. *Key decision to be taken in Year 1*
2. *Who should take it (lead & consulted)*

3. *Risks if delayed or unclear*

Prompt and example questions (displayed on the big screen):

"You will now be handed a **decision-making canvas** and based on the capabilities you have identified we would like you to think about some of the key decisions that need to be taken within the first year and who should be involved."

Sample questions

- Who approves providers to be listed?
- Who governs data quality and privacy?
- Who defines what training counts for ILA funding?

4. **Group summary & plenary synthesis (15 min)**

Each group briefly reports:

- ✓ **What was their scenario**
- ✓ **Top 2-3 capabilities and decisions (do not share all of them)**
- ✓ **Main point of contention or difficulty**

Facilitator or rapporteur writes these on flip-chart columns labelled:

- ✧ "Capabilities"
- ✧ "Decisions / Governance"
- ✧ "Main challenges identified"

Debrief/Reflection for the Facilitator:

"What patterns do we see across groups?

"Which areas seem to require most cross-ministerial collaboration?"

Final conclusion:
"This summary naturally sets the stage for the **next workshops after the lunch**"

- WS1 can build on how QA links to capabilities chosen.

- WS2 focuses on how ALE/ILA systems support policy decisions
- WS3 can expand on decision ownership and multi-stakeholder governance.

Preparation Material to be provided/printed

1. Scenario Cards (A3)
2. Stakeholder Overview (A3)
3. Capability Matrix (A3)
4. Decision-making Canvas (A2)

Scenario A – Strong, centralised Adult Learning system, but no ILA

- The Ministry of Education centrally coordinates adult learning offers through a national registry or portal.
- Providers are accredited, data quality is good, but *funding and incentives for learners are weak*.
- There is no personal learning account or voucher mechanism.
- **Challenge:** Integrate a learner-centred funding layer (ILA) with minimal disruption to the existing ALE infrastructure.

Scenario B – Decentralised ALE, simple ILA outside the system

- Adult learning opportunities are managed regionally or by networks; there is no unified registry.
- A *voucher-style ILA* exists, but it operates separately from training databases or QA mechanisms.
- Data is fragmented across providers and funding agencies.
- **Challenge:** Build interoperability between the ILA system and learning registries; create shared standards.

Scenario C – No coherent ALE or ILA system

- Adult learning offers are diverse and mostly informal, managed by multiple small actors.
- There is *no central database*, and funding for individuals is sporadic or project-based.
- Public policy aims to build a modern system, but capacity and coordination are limited.
- **Challenge:** Start from zero — design a realistic, phased roadmap that delivers visible value quickly.

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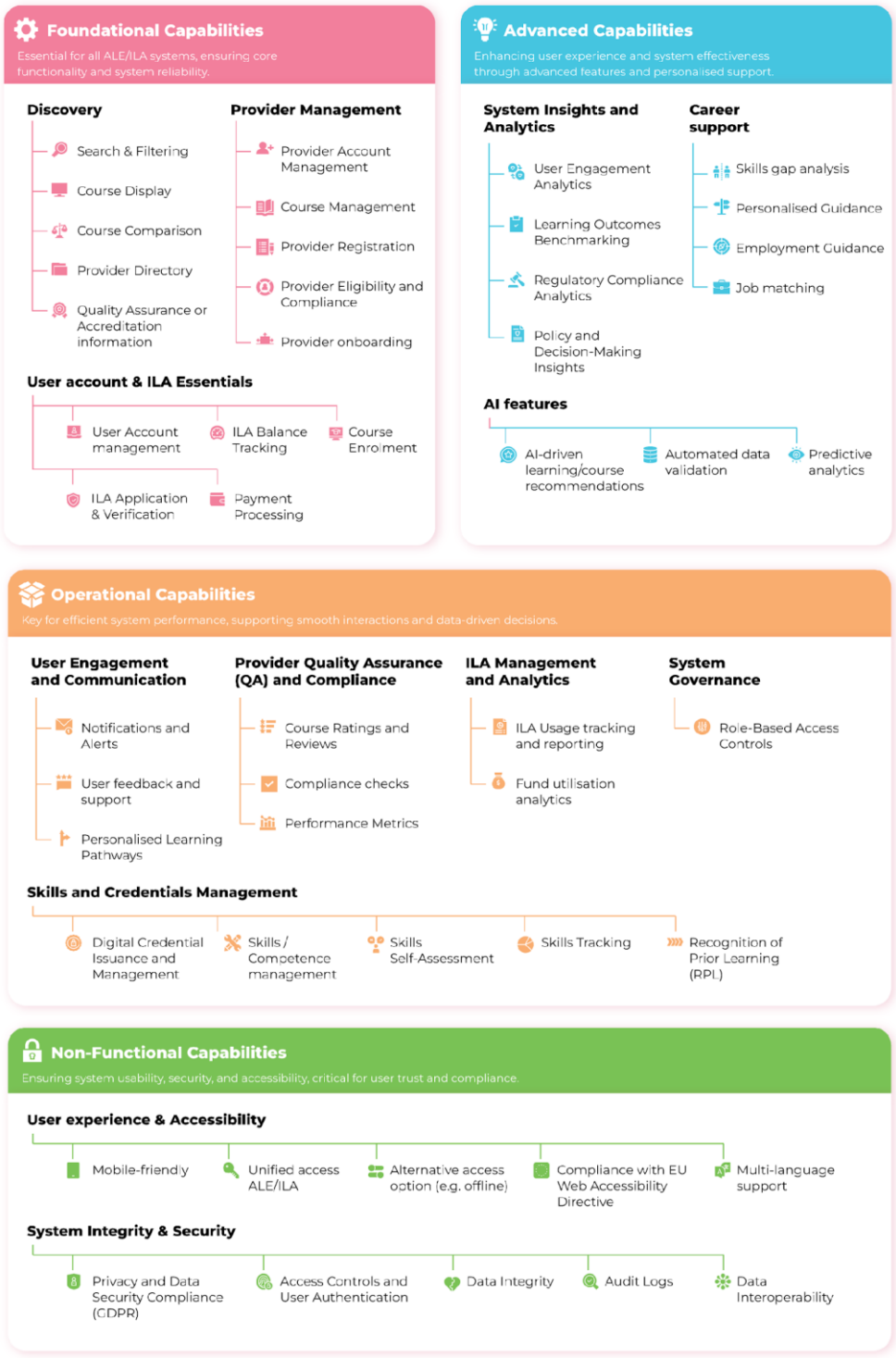
ALE/ILA system capabilities map



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Stakeholder	**Typical Role / Responsibility**	**Key Interests & Concerns**
Learners / Citizens	Register, access, and fund learning via the ILA; own personal data and records.	Simple access; recognition of learning; fair funding; privacy and transparency.
Training Providers	Offer programmes; maintain course and outcome data; ensure QA compliance.	Visibility; easy data submission; fair access to ILA funding; reduced admin load.
Quality Assurance (QA) Bodies	Define and monitor quality criteria; validate providers and programmes.	Reliable data for evaluation; consistency between formal and non-formal systems; avoiding overload.
Policy-makers / Ministries	Set national priorities, funding rules, and legal frameworks; ensure inclusion.	Policy alignment; control of costs; data for decision-making and reporting.
IT / Registry Operators	Manage system architecture, standards, and interoperability with other systems.	Stability, data integrity, interoperability (ELM, Europass), security.
Funding / Labour Market Agencies	Channel funds via ILAs; link learning with employability and social inclusion goals.	Accountability, fraud prevention, measurable outcomes.
Social Partners / Stakeholder Networks	Represent employers, employees, or communities; co-design and monitor policies.	Transparency, participation in decision-making, ensuring relevance of learning offers.

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Year-1 Decision Canvas: Who Decides What?

Use this canvas to capture the most critical decisions your group believes must be taken in the first year to make the ALE–ILA system functional and trusted.

Key Decision (What?)	Lead Decision-maker	Who to Involve / Consult?	Why It Matters Now (Impact if delayed)
Example: Define which training providers qualify for ILA funding	Ministry of Education	QA agency, social partners, regional authorities	Determines eligibility, prevents misuse, ensures equity

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Building ALE Registries and ILAs
Prototyping workshop

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Adult Learning Registry

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A **trusted database** of learning opportunities for adults

The registry provides:

- Information on courses
- Details on training provider
- Information on learning outcomes & certification
- Search tool(s)

Individual Learning Accounts

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Personal, portable funding mechanism for adult learning:

- Deliver training entitlements in one place
- Allow individuals to accumulate and manage learning funds
- Empower people to invest in their skills → when, where, and how it suits them

Key benefit: ILAs simplify access to learning by consolidating fragmented schemes into one system

ILAs: Behavioural Economics & Value Proposition

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ILAs apply lessons from behavioural economics:

- Ownership mindset: "This money is yours - use it“
- Simpler, more urgent value proposition than traditional subsidies

Current System

- Complex & fragmented entitlements
- Difficult to navigate for users and providers
- Limited visibility of total support

Individual Learning Accounts

- Central, user-friendly platform
- Immediate, transparent access to available learning funds
- Supports both formal and non-formal learning

Gaps Across Europe

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Fragmented course information

Inconsistent quality assurance

Complex funding processes

Limited learner-centred design

General objectives

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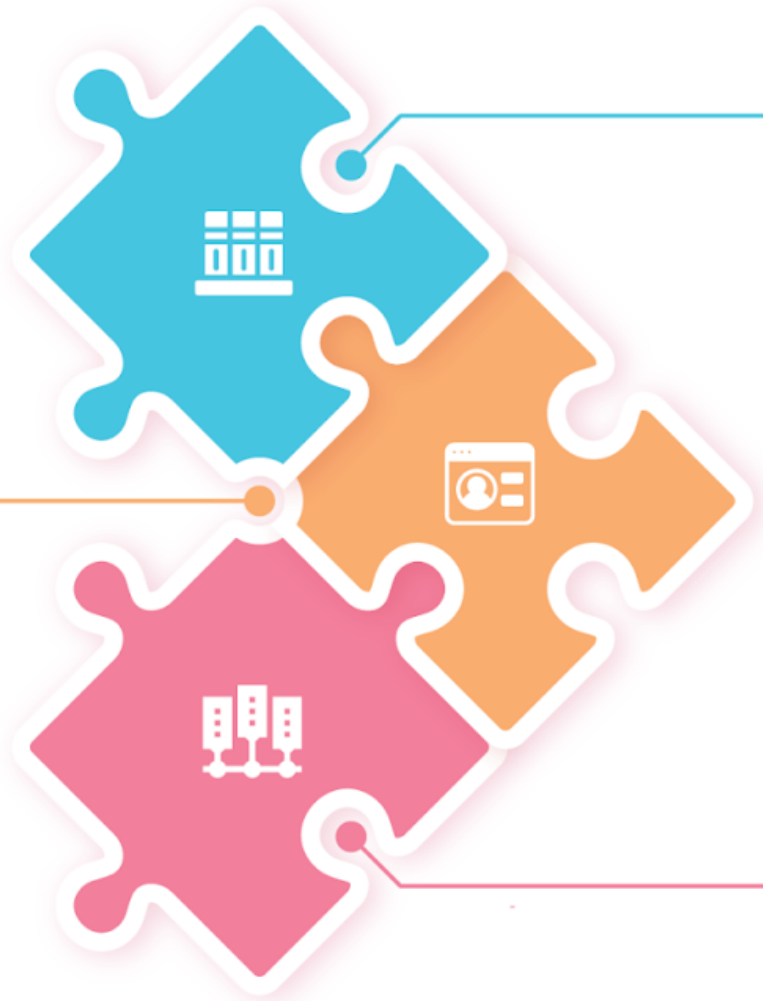
Improve access to training opportunities for adults	Create high-quality, interoperable **national registries** for adult learning opportunities
	Co-design **Individual Learning Account** systems with learners, providers, and policymakers
	Strengthen trust, transparency, and accessibility in adult learning through comprehensive governance and quality assurance

Modular approach to the ALE/ILA system



Adult Learning Registry

Centralized database of learning opportunities with structured information.

Individual Learning Account Component

Financial mechanisms empowering learners to access training.

Data Infrastructure and Interoperability

Ensures efficient and secure system operation with standardized data.

Getting Started: A Roadmap for Prototyping

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1. Assess Starting Point

- What systems are already in place?
- How do learners and providers currently interact with the system?
- What are the policy and regulatory constraints?

2. Define System Architecture

- Who will oversee and manage the system?
- How will funding be structured?
- What mechanisms ensure transparency and accountability?

3. Develop a Phased Implementation Plan

- What data infrastructure is needed?
- How do different systems communicate?
- How will users interact with the system?
- What reporting and analytics tools are needed?

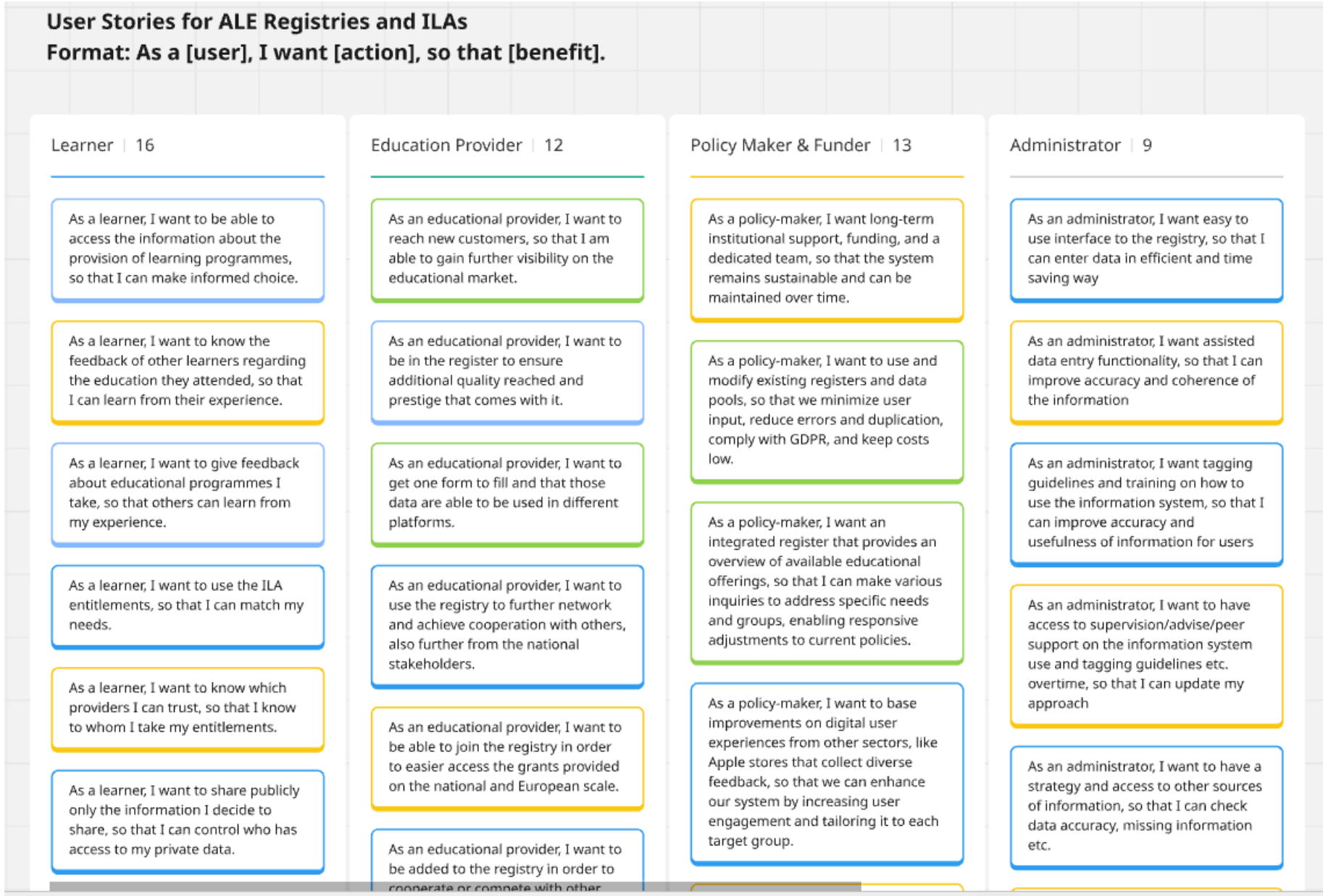
4. Stakeholder Engagement

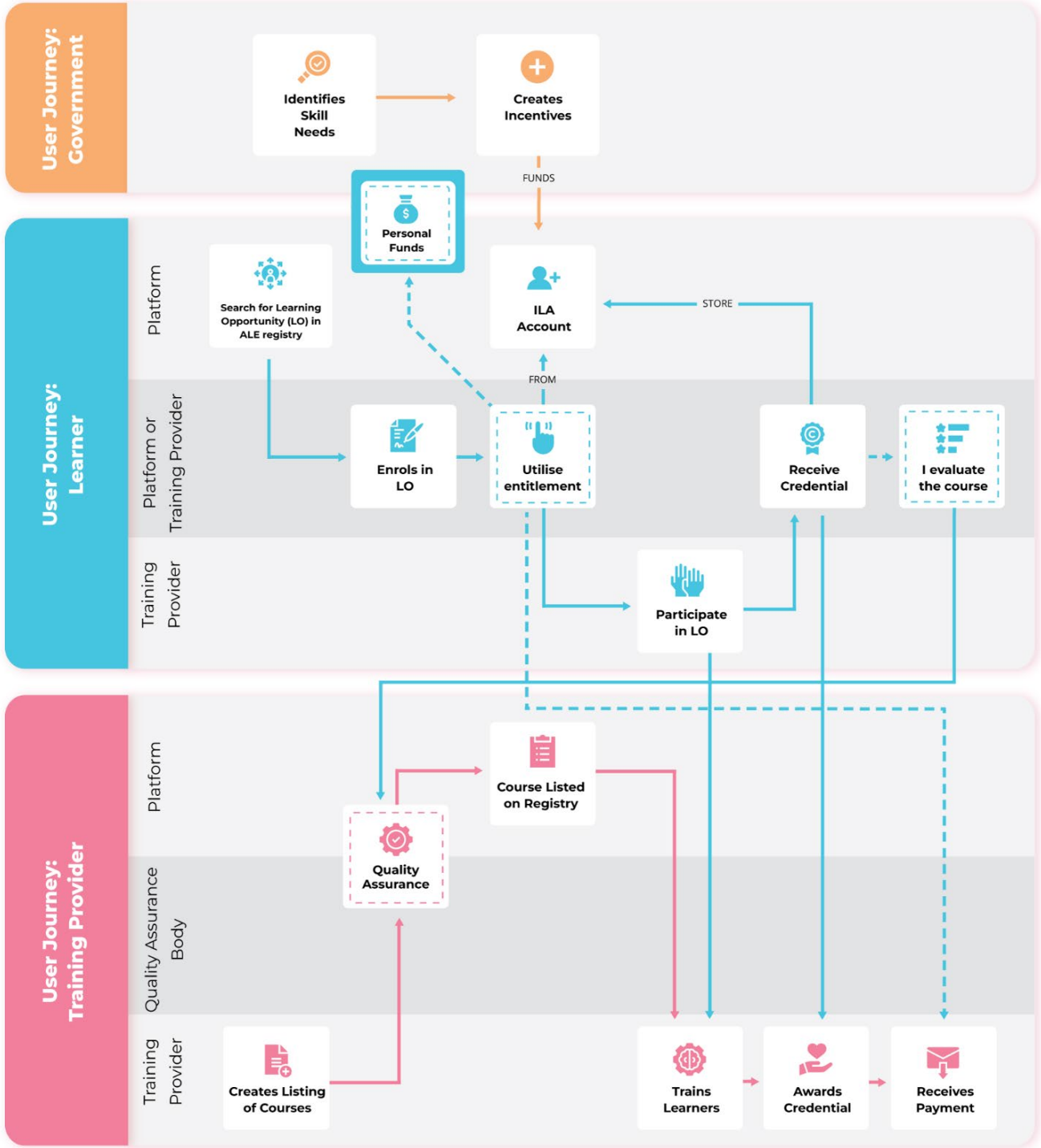
- Who to involve in advisory role?
- Who will conduct testing?
- What communication channels will you use?

5. Sustainability

- How will the system be evaluated and improved?
- What mechanisms will ensure financial sustainability?
- How will digital and policy advancements be incorporated?

Identify users' groups and user stories





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Design users' journeys

Based on user stories

Identify main capabilities
For ALE registry and ILA platform

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Foundational Capabilities

Essential for all ALE/ILA systems, ensuring core functionality and system reliability.

Advanced Capabilities

Enhancing user experience and system effectiveness through advanced features and personalised support.

Operational Capabilities

Key for efficient system performance, supporting smooth interactions and data-driven decisions.

Non-Functional Capabilities

Ensuring system usability, security, and accessibility, critical for user trust and compliance.

Foundational Capabilities

Essential for all ALE/ILA systems, ensuring core functionality and system reliability.

Discovery

- Search & Filtering
- Course Display
- Course Comparison
- Provider Directory
- Quality Assurance or Accreditation information

Provider Management

- Provider Account Management
- Course Management
- Provider Registration
- Provider Eligibility and Compliance
- Provider onboarding

User account & ILA Essentials

- User Account management
- ILA Balance Tracking
- Course Enrolment
- ILA Application & Verification
- Payment Processing

Advanced Capabilities

Enhancing user experience and system effectiveness through advanced features and personalised support.

System Insights and Analytics

- User Engagement Analytics
- Learning Outcomes Benchmarking
- Regulatory Compliance Analytics
- Policy and Decision-Making Insights

Career support

- Skills gap analysis
- Personalised Guidance
- Employment Guidance
- Job matching

AI features

- AI-driven learning/course recommendations
- Automated data validation
- Predictive analytics

Operational Capabilities

Key for efficient system performance, supporting smooth interactions and data-driven decisions.

User Engagement and Communication

- Notifications and Alerts
- User feedback and support
- Personalised Learning Pathways

Provider Quality Assurance (QA) and Compliance

- Course Ratings and Reviews
- Compliance checks
- Performance Metrics

ILA Management and Analytics

- ILA Usage tracking and reporting
- Fund utilisation analytics

System Governance

- Role-Based Access Controls

Skills and Credentials Management

- Digital Credential Issuance and Management
- Skills / Competence management
- Skills Self-Assessment
- Skills Tracking
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Non-Functional Capabilities

Ensuring system usability, security, and accessibility, critical for user trust and compliance.

User experience & Accessibility

- Mobile-friendly
- Unified access ALE/ILA
- Alternative access option (e.g. offline)
- Compliance with EU Web Accessibility Directive
- Multi-language support

System Integrity & Security

- Privacy and Data Security Compliance (GDPR)
- Access Controls and User Authentication
- Data Integrity
- Audit Logs
- Data Interoperability

Scenario A

Strong, centralised Adult Learning System, but no Individual Learning Accounts

- The Ministry of Education centrally coordinates adult learning offers through a national registry or portal.
- Providers are accredited, data quality is good, but funding and incentives for learners are weak.
- There is no personal learning account or voucher mechanism (no entitlements).

Scenario B

Decentralised ALE, simple ILA outside the system

- Adult learning opportunities are managed regionally or by networks; there is no unified registry.
- A voucher-style ILA exists, but it operates separately from training databases or QA mechanisms.
- Data is fragmented across providers and funding agencies.

Scenario C

No coherent ALE or ILA system

- Adult learning offers are diverse and mostly informal, managed by multiple small actors.
- There is no central database, and funding for individuals is sporadic or project-based.
- Public policy aims to build a modern system, but capacity and coordination are limited.

ALE/ILA system capabilities map

Foundational Capabilities

Essential for all ALE/ILA systems, ensuring core functionality and system reliability.

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RALExILA stakeholder overview

Stakeholder	Typical Role / Responsibility	Key Interests & Concerns
Learners / Citizens	Register, access, and fund learning via the ILA; own personal data and records.	Simple access; recognition of learning; fair funding; privacy and transparency.
Training Providers	Offer programmes; maintain course and outcome data; ensure QA compliance.	Visibility; easy data submission; fair access to ILA funding; reduced admin load.
Quality Assurance (QA) Bodies	Define and monitor quality criteria; validate providers and programmes.	Reliable data for evaluation; consistency between formal and non-formal systems; avoiding overload.
Policy-makers / Ministries	Set national priorities, funding rules, and legal frameworks; ensure inclusion.	Policy alignment; control of costs; data for decision-making and reporting.
IT / Registry Operators	Manage system architecture, standards, and interoperability with other systems.	Stability, data integrity, interoperability (ELM, Europass), security.
Funding / Labour Market Agencies	Channel funds via ILAs; link learning with employability and social inclusion goals.	Accountability, fraud prevention, measurable outcomes.
Social Partners / Stakeholder Networks	Represent employers, employees, or communities; co-design and monitor policies.	Transparency, participation in decision-making, ensuring relevance of learning offers.

Year-1 Decision Canvas: Who Decides What?

Use this canvas to capture the most critical decisions your group believes must be taken in the first year to make the ALE–ILA system functional and trusted.

Key Decision (What?)	Lead Decision-maker	Who to Involve / Consult?	Why It Matters Now (Impact if delayed)
Example: Define which training providers qualify for ILA funding	Ministry of Education	QA agency, social partners, regional authorities	Determines eligibility, prevents misuse, ensures equity

National Registries of Adult Learning and Education to support the deployment of Individual Learning Accounts – RALExILA

Project number
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