

MyHandScraft

Migrants' Hands & Skills to Create a Future Track

Digital Guide for Handcrafters



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

About the Digital Guide

The Digital Guide for Handcrafters is the 5th and final output of the project MyHandScraft – Migrants’ Hands and Skills to Create a Future Track, funded by the Erasmus + 2014-2020 programme, KA2 Strategic Partnerships in the field of Adult education. The guide was designed as a digital tool aimed at passing on to other handcrafters, or would-be handcrafters, the traditions and techniques shared during a series of 13 local workshops, addressed to 15 people per country (10 migrant and 5 local handcrafters), which were arranged in the framework of the MyHandScraft project based on one of its key outputs, the E-Educational Programme. It encompasses the cultural diversity brought by migrant participants and their cultural heritages, and routes it towards inter-cultural dialogue and cross-cultural learning with the host society. In this tool migrants become educators through their direct testimony, stimulating and inspiring others to exploit their skills or to develop new ones.

The guide was created through the innovative methodology of digital storytelling: migrant and local adult handcrafters who participated in the local workshops were encouraged to share their stories throughout the project activities. These testimonies were collected and digitalized in video interviews and tutorials of handicraft products. The result is a digital tool that combines text, images and videos telling the personal stories of local and migrant participants through the handicraft history of the cultures they represent.

The guide is structured in four core parts:

1. **My Story:** providing an overview of migrant learners’ stories of their affiliation with the cultural heritage and of their integration difficulties in a new context;
2. **My Skills:** a review of the learning path completed, from the self-recognition of the skills already owned to the acquisitions of new ones;
3. **My Hands:** a selection of video-tutorials of the handicraft products created together with local handcrafters, with a step-by-step showcase of the process, thus allowing for an easy replication;
4. **My Future Track:** a summary of some of the future plans made by the involved handcrafters on how to exploit their newly-discovered skills and potential, and the entrepreneurial ideas emerged throughout the process.

The testimonies included in this guide were collected in all partner countries: Italy, UK, Cyprus, Greece and Lithuania.

National Context

The five partner countries of the MyHandScraft project, Italy, Greece, Cyprus, Lithuania and the UK are home to very different ancient handicraft traditions. Over the past years, these traditions have often encountered, merged and created synergies with new experiences brought by the arrival of newcomers from different parts of the world. The many new, innovative ideas that result from this mutual sharing and exchange are proof that the valorisation of cultural heritage and the horizontal exchange of knowledge and skills is a privileged means to foster successful intercultural encounters.

Italy

The local handicraft context in Palermo is very vibrant. Ancient local handicraft traditions have survived in the city center, while at the same time the arrival of newcomers has allowed many other traditions from different parts of the world to merge into the local context. This encounter often gave birth to innovative handicraft entrepreneurial projects, creating work opportunities and giving security to many local and migrant families. ALAB, for example, is a diffused microeconomy network that has requalified the historical centre through the opening of small independent handicraft shops. They aim to promote creative handicraft as a tool for cultural innovation and a fundamental economic and productive resource for the territory, also using the growth in the tourism sector as leverage to relaunch an industry that is more and more oppressed in many urban areas of the world. Many other realities in Palermo share this vision and promote the rebuilding of the handicraft sector from the bottom, in inclusive and innovative ways.

UK

The United Kingdom is an island country located off the North-western coast of mainland Europe. The United Kingdom comprises of four geographic and historical parts- England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland- and is home to nearly 64 million people. The UK has an incredibly diverse population, so British traditions have been enriched by the people who settled in or visited the country. Traditional British crafts include pottery, glass and jewellery making, calligraphy, embroidery, basketmaking, blacksmithing and more. Some traditional crafts are disappearing, whilst some are making a comeback. The techniques, designs and materials are slightly changing, as is the population and demographic of the British Isles.

Cyprus

Cyprus is an island in the eastern Mediterranean Sea with a population of 1.1 million people. The country hosts a large number of foreigners. Due to its position located some 170 km off the Lebanese coast and 70 km off the Turkish coast, Cyprus has become an increasingly popular entry point for migrants trying to reach the EU.

The country has a long history in tradition, often influenced by the people who passed through the country over the years. The main handicraft traditions of Cyprus are: embroidery; weaving; woodwork; pottery; metalwork; general handicrafts; leatherwork; costume making and lefkaritiko lace making. The country has developed a systematic revival of traditional folk art on the basis of modern handicrafts, through experimental workshops in the aforementioned handicraft fields. Locals, tourists, foreigners and migrants have the opportunity to explore and experience those handicraft traditions, and contribute in keeping the Cypriot heritage alive.

The Cypriot tradition is strengthened and enriched by foreigners living in the island from countries such as Syria, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nigeria, Nepal and Egypt. Those countries have a lot of similarities with Cyprus, related to the culture, customs, habits, food etc.

Greece

The recent financial crisis and socio-economic changes of the last ten years that have been taking place in the country, have led to an enhanced stability of the handcraft field. Handcrafters have only recently gained back their professional status. To overcome the financial downturn, many people (especially women) have turned to the handicraft sector with more entrepreneurial attitude. This allowed many locals to overcome unemployment while making the economy thrive. As the handicraft sector is a huge cultural heritage for the country, the plethora of different handicraft activities allowed individuals to acquire new skills and learn new techniques. Third-country nationals, especially women, bring a variety of sewing, knitting and embroidery skills from their homelands and can combine modern designs with traditions from their countries. There are a lot of immigrant and refugee women who work in the fashion industry in Greece especially on embroidery techniques.

Lithuania

Officially called the Republic of Lithuania, it is a state in the central part of Europe, on the south-eastern shore of the Baltic Sea. At the beginning of 2020, 2.79 million people lived in Lithuania. The largest nation in Lithuania is Lithuanians, they make up more than 86% of the total population. Lithuanians make up the majority of the population in all municipalities, except Vilnius district and Šalčininkai district. The largest national minority in Lithuania is Polish.

In Lithuania, handicrafts have become very popular, as they can be accessed on the Internet, social networks, various fairs and events. The Internet makes it easier for handicraft sellers to find buyers and promote various types of handicrafts.

The most popular handicrafts practiced in the country (either by Lithuanians or by foreigners from countries such as Belarus, Ukraine, Russia and Poland) include: knitting, origami, carvings, scraping, decoupage, mosaics, ceramics, painting, soap making, embroidery, crochet, beading and jewellery making.



My story



My story

Participants from each partner country have their own stories to tell, and each of them speaks about different places and cultures: their country of origin, the place they have settled in now, and the other cultures they met along the way. Handcrafts can play an important role in integrating into a new setting as they are an immediate means to share the cultural heritage they carried with them along this journey. The participants have an extremely varied background in handcrafts with influences from across the world. Meet them!

Europe

Rosy



Watch the interview



"I am a tailor and fashion designer from Sicily. I started as a little girl when I created dresses for dolls. At 18 I realized this could be the job of my life and I started studying. I have worked as a tailor since then. Now I also teach tailoring, from the design of the dress to the final product. This course allowed me to meet very different realities. I was the only Italian person and this was really good for me. It was a path of growth in my job thanks to the fact that I met very creative people. Each of us have an infinity of ideas inside and create things that are really beautiful. This encounter helped me find a new originality in my work. Also learning to create a portfolio/CV was very useful for me because it's something that I hadn't paid much attention to."

Joanna



Watch the interview



"I come from Poland and I took part in the first series of local workshops in March 2020. I have been crafting for a while and my favourite crafts are textiles and knitting. I have re-designed and altered many pieces of clothing, knitted scarves, gloves, and headbands. I have also attempted more difficult designs. After the workshops I decided to explore selling my products online, via online stores like Etsy."

Phivi



Watch the interview



"My name is Phivi Antoniou. Both my professional life, as well as leisure activities, revolves around learning, creating and exploring. I am an elementary school teacher, an artist and a researcher. I love motivating myself and my students to keep evolving, setting higher goals and working towards their realisation. Creativity and critical thinking are key skills that I always do my best to apply in everything I do."

Ramune



Watch the interview



"I played sports all my life, taught children to swim, and also had to occupy them with handicrafts. There were no materials in Soviet times, so we started cutting snowflakes, angels from scrap paper. We started making postcards from used materials. I like to share my ideas with others, and especially like to create handicrafts from used materials, to resurrect to a second life."

Sigita



Watch the interview



"I started knitting at the age of 6. I really like drawing, gluing, cutting, as well as baking cakes. I plan to share my knitting work through Facebook and the local community, to help the Samaritans."

Aiste



Watch the interview



"I was interested in handicrafts all the time. I like to knit, crochet and I am interested in decoupage. I like to try new handicrafts such as decoupage of glassware, making beetles from glass beads and leather. I have a lot of experience in making handicrafts, I could pass it on to others, through the local community, associations for the disabled and the Samaritans."

Regina



Watch the interview



"I come from a Polish family, married to a Tatar man. I inherited a lot of culinary heritage from my husband. Tartar dishes are very popular in Lithuania, such as kibinas and cabbage buns. Now I can pass on this experience to others. I like to learn knitting, simple knits like socks, brooches, hats and so on. I am happy to join the activities of the Samaritans and help the seniors."

Danute



Watch the interview



"I am Danute from Poland. I have always known how to knit because my mother taught me, but now I don't have time to do it anymore."

Ailda



"My name is Ailda and I come from Albania. I am an amateur crafter and for now I treat crafting as a hobby. I enjoy painting Kindness Rocks with acrylic paints, but I am always happy to try other crafts. I enjoy challenging myself."

Popi



"Hello, my name is Popi Anthrakopoulou. I am from Cyprus and I have learnt making jewellery on my own!"

Lina



"I've always been interested in handicrafts, but I didn't always have the time. Now that I have a disability I can devote more time to needlework."

Natalja



"My grandmother taught me handicraft-knitting. Grandma and mom tried to knit for the whole family to make us look exceptional, and it was cheaper than buying knitwear. Grandma taught me to knit traditional Russian knitwear with ornaments. Now I knit for my family, kids, granddaughter and friends."

Middle East

Shapoor



Watch the interview



"I come from Afghanistan and work as a cook, but I also have my handicraft shop. I create things with lots of different materials: wood, iron, cotton, paper, beans, even toothpicks, and I also started working with bones. When I travelled to Turkey, I collected many ideas and materials to bring to Europe. In my shop I create things but I also repair damaged objects and give new life to things that people throw away. I started making crafts during a time when I was unemployed because I don't like free time, I always need to do stuff. I work with lots of different materials, basically everything I come across. People bring their stuff to my shop, and I use my creativity to give them a new life. I like to get ideas from other people, including those who bring their stuff to my shop. This is what this course was for me: I learned from other people and they also learned from me. When you build things together, they have more value."

Sara



Watch the interview



"My name is Sara and I'm from Iran. I make jewellery and also work with leather to make bags and wallets. Here for the first time I am doing lefkaritiko."

M.E.



Watch the interview



M.E. from Syria is always fascinated by discovering new things and this is actually the reason she decided to attend the courses. As she has highlighted, the MyHandCraft learning path was more useful to her than attending school as it equips her with practical

experience. She was always on time for the workshop and participated in all activities. Her willingness to learn was such that she was taking notes while local handcrafters were delivering the techniques, and then she completed her product autonomously.

A.T.  → 

A.T. coming from Afghanistan wishes to learn sewing clothes since she likes the process and wants to learn sewing her own clothes. She is not attending school, neither does she do any extracurricular activity. Additionally, she has no experience in the handicraft sector. She has basic knowledge of English and Greek. She really enjoyed the MyHandScraft E-Educational programme and wishes to continue as she learnt a lot, especially on sewing. Definitely she is ready to start creating extraordinary things.

F.A.  → 

F.A. from Afghanistan enrolled the workshop out of curiosity as she had a lot of spare time. She did not expect to find it that interesting and to learn so many new things. It is difficult for her to try new things, but this time she was really happy she did it. She is excited for the upcoming creations. As she mentioned, these workshops introduced her to a whole new world and helped her discover things for herself and skills she could never imagine she had.

M.A.  → 

M.A. coming from Afghanistan enjoys her time working with handicraft creations especially now that she is not working or attending school. She understands basic terms in both Greek and English. After she completed the workshops, she mentioned that she really enjoyed the activities and will definitely continue taking part in the following courses. Additionally, as she highlighted, she acquired skills and techniques that will help her in the future to work in the handicraft sector. She underscored the fact that she gets bored easily when doing an activity but on this particular handicraft course she really counted the days for the next one to come.

M.Y.  → 

M.Y. from Iraq had some experience with handicraft, as she was working for a textile company back in Iraq. She believes practicing what she already knows and acquiring new skills will be useful for her in her later life. She aims to create her own clothes to help people in need. She participated in all activities and enjoyed especially the jewellery workshops, as she learned techniques she had no idea of. Additionally, through this project, she managed to get to know the rest of the girls and socialize.

Sayed  → 

"My name is Sayed and I come from Afghanistan. I came to the UK to look for a quiet and easier life. In Afghanistan I had most experience with paper craft. I was making 3D models. I enjoy working with paper for model making and Origami."

Sub-Saharan Africa

Peace  → 

[Watch the interview](#)



"I am from Nigeria, Edo state. Ever since I was in Nigeria, I did handicrafts to save money. I grew up in an environment where there is a lot of craftsmanship. I used to watch other artisans and then try to replicate things at home. Here in Italy, I work in agriculture but I also make handicrafts to express myself. I do things for myself as an opportunity to express what I have inside. I had very basic knowledge of handicrafts before I started this course. I never had the opportunity to study and grow. I know how to do graphic design but when I came to the first meeting, I didn't know what I was going to create. I was inspired by the materials I saw and I did something that I had never done before: a purse made from a recycled tin. I never thought that I could do something like this."

Omar  → 

[Watch the interview](#)



"I come from Gambia and I am 22 years old. In my country I was a carpenter. Ever since I came here, I started doing art like painting and drawing. I also attended a mechanical school where I learned to do technical design. Here in Italy, I also learned to be a tailor as part of a group named Giocherenda. The first time I went there I started using scraps of fabric and putting together Italian and African fabric to create backpacks and accessories. I am very curious and I always like to try new materials. Before I started this course, I was already part of a group of tailors, Giocherenda. In the course I learned how other people do things. I was very curious about the things that others do, everything they do is beautiful and I wanted to learn a lot from them. If we put our things together, we can create something very beautiful."

Alima  → 

[Watch the interview](#)



"I come from Burkina Faso. I was born in Ghana and my family is from there but I also lived in Cote D'Ivoire. The work of my family is tailoring. This was always our job and I did it ever since I was a child. I brought to Italy a lot of things from my history. I like to teach people my traditions and learn from them as well. Here I learned many things and changed my ideas. My customs and traditions are different from Italian customs, and if I put some of that knowledge in my work, I can create something new."

Souleymane  → 

[Watch the interview](#)



"I come from Cote d'Ivoire. I am a tailor but I didn't want to do this job. I wanted to study electronics, but my family didn't have the money to pay for the school. I was born in a family of tailors, so I learned in the shop of a family friend. In Italy I started working as a caregiver for the elderly to save some money, and this is how I opened my own shop here in Palermo. I worked from home fixing and creating clothes for a while, and then I opened my shop as part of ALAB, an association of artisans in Palermo. At first, I didn't have the criteria to be part of the association, but then I managed to have them and now I am part of this network. This course opened my mind. There were a lot of things that I didn't know or didn't like. I learned a lot from my peers. Now these guys walk by my shop and we have a relationship."



Osman

Watch the interview



"My name is Osman Conteh. I live in Larnaca, and I come from Sierra Leone, west Africa. I'm easy to work with and easy to understand and live in any environment but above all I'm a team worker. My slogan is 'Knowledge is light'. In the past, I used to work in my native country, Africa to be precise."



Kelvin

Watch the interview



"My name is Kelvin. I make sandals and I had never known how to do lefkaritiko. After this training I'll be able to teach it to other people and also take it back to my country, Nigeria."



E.E.

Watch the interview



E. from Congo started the course without any previous knowledge of handicrafts. Here she learned how to sew masks, bags and purses, and she also learned how to use the sewing machine to make clothes. Now she wants to open a tailoring shop together with other people where she can continue making her creations and also help other people.



I.A.

Watch the interview



I.A. from Somalia aims to learn how to make clothes either by using the sewing or the knitting technique. She attends school but she tried to make time for both activities. Having a basic knowledge in both English and Greek, it was easy for her to understand some things trainers explained faster than the rest of the group. She is excited to continue learning about both techniques and create her own outfits. In the future she sees the prospect of working on these techniques professionally.



Cecylia

"In Gambia I had little experience in crafting, but I joined the workshops to learn something

new and meet people. I enjoyed pebble painting and macramé sessions. Workshops gave me something to do and helped me feel better about myself."

Memory



"I come from Africa and this is reflected in the colours and materials I use. I love yellow, red and orange tones because they remind me of home. In Africa we do not waste anything! We reuse and give everyday items a new lease of life by upcycling and repurposing. I always look forward to learning new upcycling methods."

P.N.



P.N. from Congo started the course with no high expectations, yet during the workshops her mindset shifted completely. Although she could not communicate neither in Greek nor in English, she took valuable things from the workshops and feels fully confident to use them at a professional level. As she mentions, not only did she acquire new skills, but developed strong bonds with other attendees of the project that she lives with. It is important to her that she stepped out of her comfort zone both in professional and psychological terms.

North Africa

Mustafa



Watch the interview



"I come from Egypt where my first experience of craft was in childhood. Every year we used to make the Ramadan lanterns called Fanous. Although this is a very traditional craft, you could let your imagination run wild with materials, colours and design. We used coloured sheets of plastic, plastic bags, wood and paint to create the lanterns. I would like to learn more crafts so I can pass the skills to my future children and to create nice things for my family."

Latin America

Mauge



Watch the interview



"My name is Maria Eugenia but people in Chile call me Mauge and I really like this name. I come from Chile and I grew up in Santiago, near the Andes. I'm a psychologist and I have a passion for crochet but I can also knit. I started when I was very young thanks to my grandmother, who used to make little crochet objects, and to my mom who taught me to knit. Later I studied with a teacher who taught me many new techniques, and I was also part of a group of women for three years that allowed me to learn a lot. Creating things helps me concentrate. I have been doing crochet and knitting for a very long time. In this course I learned that everyone has their creativity. Interculturality enriches what you do and I think that something really good can come from the encounter of many different cultures: African, South American, Sicilian."

South East Asia

Benigno



Watch the interview



"My name is Benigno and I'm from the Philippines. It's really good to learn something that is from here. In the future I want to focus on recycled materials and also teach to other people how to recycle."

Hazel



Watch the interview



"My name is Hazel and I'm from the Philippines. I usually do sewing and I make things like patchwork. I am very interested in Cypriot traditional handicraft and in the future maybe I can do it as a business."

Armelita



Watch the interview



"My name is Armelita and I'm from the Philippines. We are sharing some paper folding techniques from the Philippines, which are useful to recycle paper waste and can also become a business."

My skills



My Skills

The local workshops saw the participation of local crafters, refugees and migrants. A very wide range of crafts and techniques were explored. The conversations, inspired by intercultural dialogue, were focused on exchanging expertise and knowledge, exploring the traditional material, learning the historical heritage of the crafts and hearing one's personal story and culture. Finally, participants were encouraged to understand and learn how to plan the development of an entrepreneurial project with the support from the course tutors and mentors. This is a small summary of how each local workshop was implemented: the handicraft techniques explored, the group dynamics and some other highlights from each local context.

Italy

During the workshops held in Palermo, Italy, the participants shared their personal stories and stories related to their cultural heritage developing intercultural competences that will be useful for them to feel more included in the Italian society and more welcoming towards diversity in the future. Most of them were professional handcrafters, and all of them had some knowledge of handicrafts. This allowed for a very fruitful exchange of technical knowledge between them. Most of the participants were already experimenting with intercultural features in their work, for example by mixing traditionally Italian and African designs and materials. The expertise of participants was mainly in techniques such as crochet, tailoring, graphic design, visual art, handcrafting with recycling material and with miscellaneous material such as bones, wood, iron, etc. The workshops allowed them to improve both their technical skills and their creativity thanks to mutual sharing of their ideas and creative processes. Also, in terms of future plans and entrepreneurship, participants shared very creative and feasible entrepreneurial ideas and had the opportunity to develop action plans to further elaborate on them and start planning their implementation. This, together with the creation of participants' personal portfolios, allowed them to improve their entrepreneurial skills needed to better navigate the work environment in the future. The greatest impact of the local workshops was nonetheless the networking opportunity,

as most participants were looking for connections within their work environment at the local level. A small group of participants even expressed the desire to form an intercultural collective of handcrafters to strengthen their skills, improve their ability to reach their clientele, and raise awareness on environmental issues through the use of recycled material.



UK

The majority of migrant crafters attending the local workshops in the UK came from Afghanistan, Russia, Albania, Gambia, Nigeria and Egypt. Most of them were treating craft as a hobby, but some have decided to explore it as a business option once they are able to work in the UK. The most popular crafts among the group were upcycling, paper craft, jewellery making, macramé and origami, so during the workshops the crafters created Origami butterflies, paper gift boxes, macramé plant hangers and Kindness Rocks.

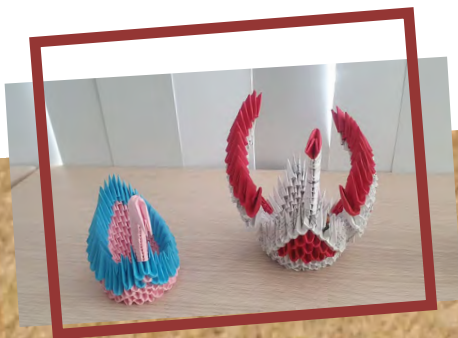
The participants had a chance to learn from each other and help their peers master the crafts presented during the project. During the training, the participants also shared stories about their cultural heritage, experiences and crafts practiced in their countries. All migrant crafters from the last cohort came to the UK in 2020 as asylum seekers in search of a better life. Some of them are skilled workers, whilst some had a very basic education. However, they all found it hard to integrate with locals because of Covid restrictions and the type of accommodation they were staying in. Nevertheless, some local residents were interested in attending the last session to celebrate their achievements and the artefacts produced during the local workshops. Additionally, participating in the local workshops made them all feel better about themselves and helped to improve their mental wellbeing in the midst of the global pandemic.



Cyprus

The local workshops held in Cyprus involved migrant handcrafters (mainly from the Philippines, Iran, Africa and Nigeria) and Cypriots. All of the participants love to practice handicrafts, some of them as a hobby and some of them as a paid job. The main handicrafts that the participants practise are embroidery, weaving, leatherwork, jewellery making, paper craft, origami, etc. Most of the participants came to Cyprus from their countries of origin, in order to live and work here, and the majority of them would like to open their own business making their handicraft work. During the local workshops, the participants; migrants and locals, and the instructors, shared their stories and their experiences related to the cultural heritage of their countries as well as their difficulties integrating in the new context. Some of them had no job in their countries, and some of them did not have a high level of education, hence the workshops conducted by GrantXpert Consulting offered an added value to all the participants, migrants and locals, since the locals were also practising their handicrafts as a hobby or as new entrepreneurs.

During the workshops in Cyprus, the participants practised two different handicraft fields; lefkaritiko lace and origami. Two experienced handcrafters showed to the participants how to practice those handicrafts, explained what materials are used and the techniques. The participants were taught how to make a bookmark from lefkaritiko lace, how to make an origami swan from the recyclable materials.



Greece

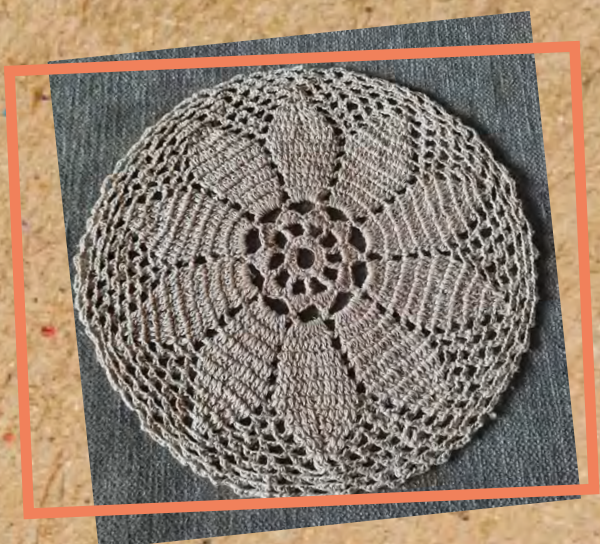
During the local workshops in Greece, local and migrant participants from countries such as Afghanistan, Somalia, Syria, Iraq, and Congo attended. Most of the attendants had no experience in handicrafts; only the participant from Iraq had previous experience in sewing because she was working in a textile company back in her country. However, all of them were more than willing to try out new things and test their skills. As they stated, they enrolled in the workshops out of curiosity, as they had a lot of spare time since they are not currently working. The main handicrafts that the participants practiced were sewing and creating pieces of jewellery. All of the participants fled from their countries as refugees and they landed in Greece looking for a new place to live and work. The majority of them found the workshops really fascinating and interesting, thus they think of establishing the newly acquired skills as their future work in order to boost their career prospect possibilities. During the local workshops, the participants had the opportunity to meet new people and get in touch with them. They stated that they enjoyed socializing and exchanging their ideas or past experiences with the other attendants. At this point, we should point out that participants had very low knowledge of the Greek or the English language. However, they felt motivated and found themselves having a great time, so they were perfectly communicating with each other.

To sum up, the positive outcomes of this workshop were that all the migrant participants revealed that they liked and are ready to start creating more and more extraordinary things and they wish to develop this craft activity professionally in the near future.



Lithuania

During the local workshops in Lithuania, migrants from Armenia, Lebanon, Russia, Ukraine, Poland and Russia, and locals belonging to national minorities were involved. During the training, participants shared their stories and experiences related to the cultural heritage of their countries. Most of the participants have been living in Lithuania for many years and they have already become accustomed to local people and traditions. Also, the cultural heritage of some countries does not differ much from Lithuania, so it was not difficult for people to adapt in Lithuania. Most of the participants had already tried handicrafts, especially knitting and crocheting. Other participants had not practiced their handicraft skills (e.g. carving or design of postcards) for a very long time. These handicraft products can be made from sheets of paper, remnants of decorative ribbons, they do not require expensive materials. During the workshops, participants exchanged knitting experiences, made cut-outs and used them on windows or decorated postcards, and prepared Christmas cards.



My hands



My Hands

The creation of handicrafts during the local workshops was paired with digital storytelling activities on the creation processes. As a part of the learning path, each country produced a video tutorial for at least one craft created during the local workshops in order for the knowledge shared in the workshop to be further disseminated beyond the project itself. Each tutorial contains a list of materials used and shows in detail how to produce the craft. Producing the tutorials helped the crafters to enhance their digital storytelling skills, and prepared them to advertise their products and potential workshops in the future.



Contribution from CESIE, Italy

Placemat (Tumbula - Bedo)



Materials/Tools

Fabric, light rope, glue, cotton.

Technique/Stages

1. Cut the rope (according to how big you want your placemat to be).
2. Cut the fabric (twice as long as the rope).
3. Wrap the fabric around the rope for the entire length of the rope.
4. Start rolling the coated rope on itself to create a round table mat.
5. Sew the end of the rope.

The Crafter

Alima Dicko

"This is a Tumbula. This is an object used to put hot things on the table. I made this because it's used in Africa and in Italy as well: many things are similar and people here can find it useful. It is very unique for me because you can't find something like this in the market. It tells the story of my personality and history. This is really special to me."

The Video Tutorial

Click here to watch



Contribution from CESIE, Italy

Waterproof Dress



Materials/Tools

Plastic, fabric, cotton, zipper, thread, needle.

Techniques/Stages

1. Take measurements on your model.
2. Draw the shape with a pen on the fabric
3. cut the fabric and the plastic.
4. Sew the fabric and the plastic together with the plastic outside and folding the fabric onto the plastic.
5. New the zipper.

The Crafter

Souleymane

I have learned my profession in my family's tailoring shop. I have been in Italy since 2015 and three years ago I opened my own tailoring shop in Palermo as part of the ALAB network of artisans in Palermo. I use African material to create European-style clothes.

The Video Tutorial

Click here to watch



Origami butterflies



Materials /Tools

Paper, colored magazines

Technique/Stages

1. Fold paper diagonally both ways and open it up.
2. Turn over the paper and fold it horizontally and vertically.
3. Fold inwards along one of the horizontal lines to form a triangle
4. Take the bottom corner of one of the flaps and fold it slightly upwards.
5. Repeat it for the other flap.
6. Taking the bottom tip of the butterfly, fold it back and up so that the tip of the piece can be folded over the front.
7. Fold inwards along the centre line to hold in place.

The Crafters

Sayed

"I enjoy working with paper for model making and Origami"

The Video Tutorial

Click here to watch



Macrame plant hangers

Materials/Tools

Cords (made of cotton, linen, hemp, jute, leather or other material)

Technique/Stages

1. Prepare the materials: two pieces of 335cm, four pieces of 240 and a wooden ring.
2. Hang the ring at the eye height and thread the four shorter ropes making sure they are even on both sides
3. Thread two longer ropes the on the sides so the front rope is even with other ropes, and the back ropes are longer.
4. Starting from the longer back rope make twisted knots to the length of 15cm.
5. Divide the ropes in 3 groups of 4.
6. Go 30cm down and make 2 flat (square) knots on each group of ropes making sure they are exactly at the same height.
7. Go 15cm down and take two ropes from one group and two nearest from another and join them with 2 flat knots, repeat the same process with two other groups.
8. Measure and cut additional, finishing 30cm rope, fold it and keep in one hand.
9. Gather macrame 15cm below the last knot, add the finishing rope and wrap it around macrame as many times as requires, thread through the finishing rope and pull to disguise the knot.
10. Cut all ropes to desired length.



The Crafters

Cecylia

"I enjoyed macramé sessions. Workshops gave me something to do and helped me feel better"

Paper Gift Box



Materials/Tools

Paper

Technique/Stages

1. Prepare a 27.5cm x 15cm piece of coloured or ornamental paper (no thinner than 100gsm).
2. Create the grid where you have 18 rectangles of 5cm x 4.4cm. There will be some leftover at the end of the paper.
3. Draw two arches per rectangle in the top row using a roll of sellotape.
4. Score all lines with a scoring tool or dried out pen and fold along all lines,
5. Make incisions in the bottom row of rectangles and on the side (leftover paper) cutting out the bottom left rectangle completely.
6. Apply PVA glue on other two leftover triangles and let it dry.
7. Fold the lowest rectangles to form the boxes bottom and glue them all together.
8. Punch the holes in the top folds, thread the ribbon or a sting and gather all sides together. You can tie a small bell or a name tag on the gathering string.

The Crafters

Aneta

"All participants found this craft difficult as it requires a lot of precision and measuring. Some participants had to re-do their boxes a few times. We all had a lot of laugh when things were not going as planned! It was a great way of checking everyone's manual abilities so I could adjust the difficulty level of crafts planned for future sessions."

Contribution by CAD, UK

Kindness rocks



Materials/Tools

Pebble, acrylic paint, dotting tools, bamboo skewer.

Technique/Stages

1. Clean and dry the pebble you are going to use, once it is dry apply the acrylic base coat.
2. When the base is dry, apply the chosen design. This design was painted using dotting tools made from the bamboo skewer and a toothpick.
3. Seal with the topcoat and wait until it dries before leaving in the park or in the garden.

The Crafters

Ailda

"I enjoy painting kindness rocks with acrylic paints, but I am always happy to try other crafts. I enjoy challenging myself"

Contribution by GrantExpert, Cyprus

Origami swans (materials from recyclable material)

Material/Tools

Paper

Techniques/Stages

Origami



The Crafters

Foivi Antoniou

We are learning how to do origami, which is a traditional Asian technique. It is very interesting, and I have never done it before. I am very interested to see how my work will evolve.

Armelita V. Sunga

We wish to share our part from Philippines There are a lot of products from recyclable materials, from waste ,from your garbage! We are turning those into a useful product!

The Video Tutorial

Click here to watch



Contribution by GrantExpert, Cyprus

Lefkaritiko Lace Bookmarks



Materials/Tools

Needle, thread, linen, pillow, scissors.

Technique/Stages

Gazi Venetiko ("Venice" gauze):

1. Cut 8-10 vertical threads of linen.
2. Use a needle to pull out the cut threads. When you reach the desired length, cut with scissors.
3. Fix the thread on the upper side of the cut (2-3 horizontal threads above the cut ones).
4. Make an arch with spiral sewing. Start from the inside of the arch, pass the needle under the linen, puncture from bottom up and repeat towards the end or the arch.
5. Pass the needle under 4 horizontal threads of linen.
6. Make a loop around them. Repeat and fix the thread on the verge of the cloth.
7. Repeat step 6 with 4 horizontal threads each time, until you reach the bottom of the cut.
8. Make another arch at the bottom of the cut, following step 4. Then, follow steps 5-7 to join the opposite side of the horizontal threads.
9. Pass the sow inside the spiral of the arch. Push the sow by pulling the thread with fingers. When through, cut the thread with scissors.

The Crafters

Benigno B. Cruz, Jr.

"It is really nice to learn something which is originally from Cyprus. You need to be focussed on the product, because it is not easy to do it"

Sara Afkhami

"This is my first time doing Lefkaritiko. It is a wonderful experience! You should all try it because it is very entertaining!"

Foivi Antoniou

"I am interesting to laces, and the past years I am learning how to do the Lefkara lace"

The Video Tutorial

Click here to watch



Contribution from ACP, Greece

Sewing (using sewing machine)



Materials/Tools

Sewing machine, tape, seam ripper, pins, scissors, fabric marking pens, hand sewing needles, needles, thimbles, tracking wheel, thread snips, marking paper or pattern paper, sewing machine bobbins, sew thread (polyester or cotton), fabrics, zippers, elastic spools, heat sealing fabric.

Technique/Stages

1. First, connect the foot controller plug to the machine and connect the power supply plug to a wall outlet.
2. Choose the best foot presser and needle needed according to the fabric.
3. Pull up the spool pin and put a spool of thread on this pin. Then carefully follow the instructions, and thread the upper thread. Draw up the upper thread as well.
4. While lightly holding the end of the upper thread, slowly turn the handwheel toward you (counter clockwise) by hand to lower and then raise the needle.
5. Pull on the upper thread to draw up the lower thread. Pull out about 10 cm (4 inches) of both threads and put them toward the back of the machine under the presser foot.
6. Turn on the machine.
7. Place the fabric under the presser foot, pass the thread under the presser foot, and then pull out about 5 cm (2 inches) of thread toward the rear of the machine. Slowly press down on the foot controller.

The Video Tutorial

Click here to watch



Contribution from Active Citizens Partnership, Greece

Jewellery Making



Materials/Tools

Plastic, fabric, cotton, zipper, thread, needle.

Techniques/Stages

The process of creating jewellery is simple. According to what you wish to create you need a guide (your finger if it is a ring, your wrist etc.) in order to make it to the right size. The most important part is to have a sharp pair of scissors (specifically made to cut wires) so to gently cut any edges. Then feel free to add any kind of jewellery or any other ornament. Jewelleries can be a great gift too and always have your signature.

Basic twisting: swirled ring (or a bracelet):

1. Measure lengths of wire
2. Clean wire with sandpaper
3. Cut sandpaper block for raw edges
4. Twist the edges to make a swirl (you may need to practice this)
5. Decorate the swirled ring with beads

Beehive necklace / earrings:

1. Preparations: - cut practice pieces of wire (small 15 cm, big 30cm)
2. Clean wire with sandpaper
3. Cut sandpaper block for raw edges
4. Twist the edges to finish
5. Then add a stone/pearl and cord

Remember to: bring materials e.g. raw stones, seashell etc.), encourage people to use imagination of things to put inside (Legos, stones, any colourful items, paper balls)

Leaf shape earrings:

1. Clean wire with sandpaper
2. Cut sandpaper block for raw edges
3. Shape the wire by twisting and hammering
4. Add beads and ear hooks to the wired earrings
5. Create big or small leaf shaped jewellery, with optional hammered textures and patina

The Video Tutorial

Click here to watch



Contribution from Active Citizens Partnership, Greece

Knitting (Bags)



Materials

Knitting needles, Multiple coloured threads, Bag handles, Bag frames, Metal elements, Fasteners, Chains and straps, Insoles, Zippers, any kind of decorating item according to taste.

Technique

Basis Knots:

1. The knitted fabric begins by placing a slipknot in the loop of the crochet hook (although other methods, such as a magic ring or simply twisting the yarn can be used) and pulling another loop into the first loop.
2. Repeat this process until a chain of appropriate length is created.
3. You either turn the chain and work in rows, or you connect it to its beginning with a dumb carousel (sliding stitch) and it works in rounds.
4. Rounds can also be created by working multiple stitches (carousels) on a loop. Carousels are made by pulling one or more loops through each loop of the chain.
5. At any time, at the end of a carousel, there is only one loop left on the crochet hook.
6. Like needlework, crochet can be done either flat or in a circle.

Knitted bags

1. Take one wallet clasp and create a basis along with the thread on the clasp.
2. Pass the needle through the thread and create six knots. Continue this process according to the shape you want your wallet to have.
3. After completing the main part of the wallet, the wallet clasp needs to be added
4. Apply the bag clasp to the sewed material.
5. Using a thin needle, start sewing the bag clasp with the knitted part.
6. Cut any excess threads and the wallet is ready.

The Video Tutorial

Click here to watch



Knitting (Scarf)



Materials

2 needles, wool thick thread about 300 - 500g

Technique

1. When knitting a scarf, put on 80 stitches and knit with good stitches in each row.
2. The length of the scarf depends on how it is to be worn: whether just around the neck or thrown over the shoulders. In the first case, the length of the knit should be about 1 m, in the second case at least 1.5 m.
3. After knitting to the desired length, it is necessary to “lower” it nicely, i.e. complete the eyes and hide the ends of the thread so that they are not visible.

The Crafters

Aiste Povilauskiene

“I willingly shared my work and advice”

The Video Tutorial

Click here to watch



Knitting (Slippers)



Materials

2 needles, wool thick thread about 100g.

Technique

1. Measure the length of the foot in centimetres and calculate how many “eyes” will be needed to be placed on the needles.
2. Knit a square up to a foot long, you can knit a single-color or multi-coloured knit.
3. Knit the whole knit until you get a square.
4. After folding the knit, sew over the foot to keep the seam at the bottom, folding the top edge.

The Crafters

Sigita Ryzėniniene

“It was fun to remember knitting and exchange experiences, knitting patterns. It’s fun to see a quick result of your work, although a lot of diligence is required”

The Video Tutorial

[Click here to watch](#)



Contribution from Social Innovation Fund, Lithuania

Cut -Outs: Angels, Christmas Trees and Snowflakes



Materials

White paper, coloured paper, pencil, paper clips, sharp scissors, frames for framing work.

Technique

Angels, Christmas trees:

1. Choose a stencil;
2. Stack several sheets and staple them together; cut several pictures at the same time;
3. We cut the image according to the selected stencil;
4. Cut-outs can be glued to the window with adhesive tape or placed on Christmas cards.

Snowflakes:

1. Choose a stencil;
2. Fold a white sheet of paper into 4 or 6 parts;
3. Bend the quadrilateral sheet 2 more times to get a triangle;
4. Align/ round the edges;
5. Cut out ornaments of the snowflakes with sharp scissors, the finer you cut it, the better the snowflake will look.
6. Each snowflake is cut differently; no two snowflakes are the same.
7. A cut-out snowflake can be used to decorate a window, prepare a Christmas card or as a Christmas decoration or it can be just put in a frame and it will be like a picture.

The Crafters

Ramune Ivanauskaite

"I've always been interested in making cuts and postcards. Very good start before the holidays"

Danute Gelaziene

"I used to see how other people make paper decorations, it is beautiful on windows but I never tried it myself. It relaxes very well"

The Video Tutorial

Click here to watch



Christmas Cards



Materials

White paper, coloured paper, pencil, sharp scissors, decorative ribbon.

Technique

1. Fold the coloured paper into 2 or 4 parts, depending on the size of the card;
2. The edges of the card can be trimmed with a zigzag scissors;
3. The card can be tied with a decorative ribbon;
4. Glue a snowflake or decorative ribbon on the cover of the card;
5. Glue a leaflet with wishes inside the postcard.

The Crafters

Regina Zainetdinoviene

"I learned new handicrafts; I will try to do it myself. There will be good and interesting gifts for Christmas"

The Video Tutorial

[Click here to watch](#)



My future track



My future track

During the entire duration of the workshops, participants were encouraged to reflect on the future and explore ideas around how they could use their skills and crafting talents to develop a business idea or a career. Providing opportunities to look forward in a positive way and share people's vision can enable a sense of pride and achievement, and be inspirational to other participants too.

During the last part of the local workshops, the participants, supported by each partner's facilitator, created together some Action Plans (either individually or in small groups) for the development of innovative entrepreneurial ideas. Creating Action Plans helped the participants to think about crafting as a business and inspired some less confident crafters to consider craft more than just a hobby. Each Action Plan included: title of the idea, core message/value, the needs addressed by the idea, the strengths and talents possessed by the members of the group that can make the idea successful, the innovative character of the idea, the way in which the idea combines techniques and traditions from different cultures. Through the action plans, the participants were invited to describe their idea, the communication channels to make it visible, and to reflect on technical issues such as the financial sustainability of their project, and the indicators for the evaluation of the project's success.

The result was very different across the involved countries, but also from one participant to another: some of the action plans were more structured, reflecting a more complex idea based on the cooperation with other people in the group, other plans were developed in a more informal way, as a personal "declaration of intent" of how to continue to use the newly-acquired skills for entrepreneurial purposes.

Here are some of the most significant examples:

Participants in Italy

Shapoor

"I want to keep working on new things and keep working with people: teach them to fix something and give new life to their stuff. I am looking for a name and I like Art Safari because it reminds me of travellers. I also want to work with the tailors that I met here."



Peace

"The workshops made me want to do more handicraft but I don't want to become a professional, I want to keep doing it for myself. I don't want to become an entrepreneur in this field or do this for money, but just to help people because I am also a pastor. My job is in agriculture."

Mauge

"Even before I came here, I already had the idea to collect pieces of handicrafts that are really old and were made by elderly people. I want to revive traditional techniques to also create something innovative. I am also an activist for women's rights and I would like to have a project for the economic independence of women. Finally, I hope that this encounter can lead to the founding of a collective of intercultural artisans that can make different and innovative things together. I think this group can create fruitful exchanges that can bring something unique, something that doesn't exist yet. It's important to go beyond doing things in standard forms."

Omar

"I have a lot of plans for the future but I still have doubts on what I want to become. My dream is to become an engineer because I am studying in a mechanics school and I also invented an engine. I might also open a store for handicrafts that makes many different things with Italian and African fabrics."

Rosy

"I am always on the look for new ideas to make original things. My dream was always to work for a big fashion firm. I hope I can get there some day. Never say never."

Alima

"I would like to create a place where I can teach my traditional techniques and also learn from other people."

Souleymane

"I would like to open a social tailoring shop to help people (mostly elderly people) be part of a little community and have something to do by learning to create little things. My other dream is to create a mobile tailoring shop to go around and repair things. In Africa there are mobile tailoring shops that go to different neighbourhoods and markets on different days of the week, and people know they can bring their clothes to fix on that day. I would also like to work with Omar on some designs and with Jesica because she makes really nice dresses for women."



Group entrepreneurial ideas developed in Italy

“OmArte”

E-commerce of backpacks and accessories, also offering training on tailoring and handicrafts, based on Omar’s handicrafts abilities and creativity. It’s innovative because it mixes different kinds of fabrics from Italy and Africa. He will partner with other local crafters and will promote his ideas through Social Media. Revenue will come from selling the products and delivering the training (which will also at times be delivered for free).

“Toclou Toclou”

Walking tailoring shop. Created to offer tailoring services in markets and on the streets. It’s based on Souleymane and Alima’s tailoring abilities. It’s innovative because it would be the first walking tailoring shop in Italy. It is based on interculturality because it is a widespread service in Africa but it doesn’t exist in Italy. It will partner with fabric and clothes sellers. The target will be the people that buy clothes in markets and/or that don’t have time to go to the tailor. The project will be promoted through the radio and social media and it will generate revenues from the tailoring services.

“Il Collettivo”

An intercultural network of artisans that promotes the use of natural materials, sustainability and recycling. It’s based on different creative skills that can produce

something unique, original and special through the use of multiple techniques (wood, recycling, crochet, tailoring, natural materials etc.). It is innovative because it's based on intercultural collaboration, an international encounter of ideas and techniques. The partners would be local associations like ALAB, CESIE, Giocherenda, Moltivolti, the Social Tailoring shop. The main clients will be local and tourist women that are passionate about local unique handicraft. The project will be promoted through the help of partners and social media. Revenue will come from selling products and the organization of workshops.

Participants in UK

Ailda

"I learned about other places where my products could be sold. I can use technology to build a business and sell my items online and in person. I am going to contact the local college and get support in setting up my own Etsy shop selling my crafts online. I want to target my local Community café and will use social media to promote my business because I am good at using technology. I will be happy if I can share my heritage, meet new people and become closer to my community."

Cecylia

"I would like to check the local market and see how others sell their crafts. Talking to people about my products is as important as selling. I want to contact my community centre to get help selling my products at the local market. I will make crafts by re-using old materials. I want to make something pretty out of nothing. I will be successful if I can have little waste and make lots of things out of the same, local materials."





Memory

"Crafts I chose to do involve upcycling; this means that I can create things using existing materials. It is cheaper, helps the environment and keeps a healthy profit margin. I want to lead workshops to teach people how to make new things out of old materials. Then we can make things together. I hope to teach others about sustainability."

Mustafa

"In my case, the crafting and products I create are for my family. I would like to become an interior designer in the future. I want to share my heritage and cultural traditions. I think it would be good if I can use social media to promote my business and teach local people about crafts from my country like Ramadan lanterns called Fanous. Maybe this will lead to selling my services online. I will judge my success on how it makes me and my community feel and if I can teach my children the techniques."

Joanna

"I will explore setting up an online shop on ETSY. I will start by selling small things like gloves and headbands as they are more affordable. Then perhaps I will try to sell more expensive, larger knits like a jumper or cardigan."

Sayed

"I want to sell my paper crafts to my Mosque group and maybe through Ebay. I will make some fliers to hand out at my Mosque so people know about my business. My aim is to make new friends, learn from others and inspire other people to join me in making Origami and selling other crafts."

Kloberta

"I want to share my culture through art and teach people about other cultures' art I learnt about at the workshops. I will try to sell my art at the local market and I will make a poster to put up around the area. I hope people will come to learn about my art and heritage and if I can earn some money, I will be happy."

Shoxhan

"I am going to lead workshops to teach other women and children how to make traditional crafts. I will hand out fliers outside of schools and I'd like to work with community leaders to make partnerships. I want to teach others and learn from them. It would be good if I can inspire other people in my area."



Participants in Cyprus

Phivi

"The materiality of objects fascinates me. My practice allows me to investigate form, volume and texture, and to discover the properties, the capacities and limits of matter. It is an ongoing attempt to experience the world, to tame it, to submerge in it. I work with a variety of media, such as metal, glass, plastic, sand, fabric and paper. Most of them are hard and processed. I am particularly enraptured by industrial objects. They are the outcome of humanity's attempt to define its place in the natural world. I respect and preserve all signs of human intervention on them, the construction process and the technique applied, as they are the indicators of the evolution and transformation they have gone through.

What I would like to create:

- *Several kinds of handicraft, such as lace, jewellery, pottery.*
- *3-dimensional artwork (sculpture and installation)*
- *My key creations are my sculpture and installations. I prefer to work with industrial materials, such as metal, glass and plastic.*
- *Large-scale creations, characterized by minimalism, clear lines and sharp angles. At the same time, elegance and balance are very important in my creations."*

Elena

"As a handcrafter, I would like to offer personalized crochet necklaces with variations of colour, size, type of yarn, extra features. I would like to work from home and enjoy every minute of crocheting. I would like to promote my products through my social interactions."

Anna

"I want to start making clothes and accessories from recycled materials and sell them. I get inspired from science, for example, equations in a funny way and nature, flowers."

Osman

"I would like to practice entrepreneurship and start my own business. I will open my own business and I will use my experience and knowledge."

Popi

"I already have my own business and I would like to expand it. I am making jewellery such as earrings, rings, necklaces and bracelets."

Participants in Greece

P.N.

P started the course with no high expectations but she made great progress. She wants to engage in vocational training after COVID-19 and start her own small business. She believes that it would be good if three or four girls get together and work cooperatively.

"I always thought it was impossible for me to learn knitting. To the contrary, G. showed me step by step the process. I am glad I had the opportunity to participate and learn this technique. I am ready to start sewing great things, P. taught me all the steps of sewing."

M.Y.

M was the only one amongst the participants that actually had some experience. She is ambitious and she is dreaming of a career in the fashion industry, she wants to be a designer for big fashion labels. M can combine modern design with traditional forms from her country. She is interested to continue with a designing course and to work as an apprentice with a famous Greek designer who she is inspired by, and she wants to create a line of clothes for poor people that will be ecological and fair trade.

"This training was exactly what I needed! I let my creativity finally shine!"



M.E.

M is always fascinated by discovering new things and had very good results. She learned to perform a number of tasks in sewing and knitting and gained experience in working with different fabrics and textiles, she would like to work in a small company or work from home.

"I discovered a new inclination and who knows? I may become a successful designer in the long run."

Participants in Lithuania

Natalja

"I will be able to sell my handicrafts during fairs like Kaunas City Days, I will be able to pass on my knowledge to other Samaritans."

Lina

"I can share my experience in the community, at a third-century university. I will give my handicrafts and scarves to the seniors at Christmas."

Sigita

"The main idea is to bring unemployed women together in a club where they can improve and realize themselves."

Regina

"I am interested in the production of candles. I think I could distribute through Carito or Samaritan organizations, National Minority Centers."





myhandcraft.eu

f @myhandcraft.project



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.