USE OF BADGES IN ADULT EDUCATION
CATALOG OF PRACTICES

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

www.open-badges.eu
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1. Introduction

In 2017 - 2018, with the support of the Erasmus+ programme, as part of the "Open Badges for Adult Education" project, the organisations:

- Folkuniversitet de Lund (in Sweden)
- Volkshochschule im Landkreis Cham e.V. (in Germany)
- Ljudska Univerza Ptuj (in Slovenia)
- Acción Laboral (in Spain)
- Greta du Velay (in France)

have created open badges to promote key competences and transversal competences, attitudes and behaviours sought by employers. They tested their use in their respective adult education settings. Some 100 badges have been created jointly and are therefore available in the five languages of the partnership. In addition to these, specific badges have been created separately by partners as an answer to specific needs.

In this document, we present use cases of badges with adults and young adults. In most cases, they follow courses to improve their social and professional situation.
2. Selection of badges for specific courses

2.1. Use of badges in foreign language courses

In Public university of Ptuj different foreign language courses are offered (mainly English and German languages):

- Initial and advanced courses
- Non-formal education programs for the unemployed
- Acquiring basic and professional qualifications for employed and 45+
- Multiple courses lasting from 50 to 60 pedagogical hours.

Participants in these courses receive the badges for five different skills. Educators introduce the badges that can be obtained during the courses and motivate candidates to gain all five badges. Badges are delivered for both the English and German language.

**Listening comprehension in foreign language**
Ability to understand audio texts, instructions in a foreign language.

**Criteria**
- Recognises that the text is in a foreign language
- Understands commonly used and gesture supported instructions
- Recognises communication situations and emotions of speakers.

**Reading comprehension of a short text in a foreign language**
Ability to read a short text, story, or article in a foreign language, by understanding words, sentences and global meaning.

**Criteria**
- Understands the text (words, sentences and global meaning)
- Is able to repeat in his/her own words what he/she has read
- Reads fluently in foreign language

**Short oral presentation in a foreign language**
Ability to perform a short speech in a foreign language in front of an audience.

**Criteria**
- Clear content of the presentation
- Rich vocabulary
- The language correctness
- Correct pronunciation
- Communication with the audience

Filling in a form in a **foreign language**

Ability to fill in simple forms (formal or non-formal) in a foreign language.

**Criteria**

- Understanding of instructions.
- Follow-up of instructions.
- Correct completion of the fields.

Writing a summary in **foreign language**

Ability to write a summary in a foreign language, with all the keywords and topics in the correct order.

**Criteria**

- Summarizes the essential elements of a text
- Respects the order of the content
- The summary is understandable
- Repetitions are avoided
- The grammar is correct

“We try to encourage learners in gaining the necessary knowledge through open badges achievements. Advantages are emphasized as well as implementation possibilities for portfolios, either work portfolio or learning portfolio.”

The younger, in particular, who are using Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn are encouraged to attach and present their badges on social media. Although employers are still not recognizing open badges in a way that could be meaningful and usable for them, it is up to educational organisations to disseminate and promote the usability of digital badges. Since Europass also opens the possibility to attach digital badges to CVs, it can now become a key dissemination tool, as it is widely recognised and used to apply for a job or to enrol in different educational programs.

### 2.2. Badges for basic computer courses

In the framework of public tenders, the Ministry of Education allocates funds for the education of employed persons with the aim to increase the involvement of adults in Lifelong Learning and to adapt
their skills to the needs of the labour market. It aims also to increase employability, mobility and personal development.

The most popular courses in this framework are computer courses for which Public University of Ptuj offers the possibility of obtaining digital badges. They are given as an addition to the certificate of completion of the training. Two computer and digital literacy courses are offered: 60 hours in formal program and 50 hours in non-formal program.

### Text formatting

**Ability to present and lay out a text using the MS Word text editor.**

**Criteria**

- Choose a word processing software.
- Text typing.
- Layout respecting aesthetic and formal criteria.

### Basic Excel

**Basic knowledge of using Excel**

**Criteria**

- Basic formatting of tables and data, and their input,
- Creation of numerical data (%, €, dates),
- Calculations using simple formulas,
- Using the SUM function and quick calculations in the status bar
- Basic sorting of data.

Awarding badges as the participants move along any type of curriculum seems more motivating than just receiving the piece of paper awarded at graduation. Learners can showcase how they got to that point and the skills gained along the way. Digital badges make it easier to make these competences visible and searchable by employers.

### 2.3. Increasing employability and strengthening the social capital of unemployed women

The Boudica I is a project developed by *Acción Laboral* based on motivation and guidance for unemployed women under 30 years and over 45 years to reach a profile of employability and empowerment as high as possible, with the objective of full insertion through work in the future.

It strengthens the social capital of women, since in Spain strategies based on the development of social contacts are a common procedure for insertion in the labour market. The objectives are:

- to develop social and labour integration
• to promote equal opportunities and to reduce double discrimination

• to establish an innovative and evidence-based evaluation system that can make the program a reliable and valid instrument.

There are evaluations of the participants regarding different areas: psychological, legal, orientation and information, insertion and labor orientation, acquisition of personal and social skills and for the improvement of employability.

In this last area, related to social and professional skills, the Open Badges are included as an innovative feature. When they start, the basic and vocational competences of each participant are evaluated. Then, a training course is provided through apprenticeship, and after, both are evaluated again. Badges can be awarded following the first evaluation or after the course. They allow to establish a system of incentives.

The main badges issued are:

1. The vision of the future. This badge attests to the ability to visualize environmental trends with a positive and optimistic attitude and to direct one's behaviour towards achieving objectives. This transversal competence is essential for the women participating in the project.

2. Commitment that shows that participants are able to achieve their goals.

3. Asking for help is one of the main badges included in the project. Participants very often had problems in their personal lives, or in the professional sphere, so they had to seek help to improve their employability situation. Just by registering for the project, educators have the opportunity to award this badge to all women who are actively participating in the Boudica I initiative.

These are some examples of badges used as part of an initiative that helps improve the employability of women with employment difficulties. Cross-disciplinary skills badges are particularly used, but key skills badges are also very important and must be taken into account.

3. Creating badges to valorise specific skills

3.1. Use of badges for social competences

Social competences are needed both in professional life and private life. But they can be understood differently according to the cultures. In Swede, for Folkuniversitetet from Lund: “What we think is a social competence can be seen as something else in another culture. Therefore, we have created Badges that valorise social skills so that people with different cultural backgrounds can understand what is meant by the social competences that are useful in Sweden. People from foreign origin searching for a job, in particular, can benefit from understanding what is the value of social skills and how they work. This can be an opening key to working life.”

Social Competence

Ability to handle social interactions effectively, getting along well with the
The employment service in Sweden would like jobseekers to be more active. When people are unemployed, there are routines for how the job seeker should look for a job: education and previous work must be collected in a CV, the person must then be actively searching for a job with visits to employers, but also through internet on sites where companies publish job offers. By acquiring extra qualifications or by having a badge with social skills in their backpack, they can then proceed to fill their backpack with other badges that can be useful in the CV.

So in programs for unemployed people and for migrants, badges for social skills are very useful, and can be a good complement provided by educational organisations. Teacher’s opinion is that this is an adapted tool to increase the self-esteem and to motivate the learners to go forward in the process of entering the labour market.

Feedback from unemployed workers

Unemployed young people have been enquired around the creation of badges to recognise social skills. They believe that it can help them gain more soft skills that will complement other skills and will increase their chances to get a job. And they agree that before, they had a different approach to values regarding hard skills compared to social skills. But now, in today's labour market, if formal qualifications are needed, they are the social skills that are one of the key to success, not only for the young people but for anybody looking for a job. They believe that badges can stimulate and reassure them in their job search.

4. Badges for language and integration courses

4.1. Badges in German Integration Courses: the language side

Finding new methods and techniques to motivate their learners poses always a serious challenge to the language trainers. In heterogeneous groups such as German Integration Courses it is even more difficult, as learners have different cultural and educational backgrounds. That is why badges can provide an important motivational support for trainers in order to mark their learners’ progress or stimulate their social involvement.

An integration course in Germany consists of a language course with 6 modules (600 hours in total) and an orientation course organised over 100 hours informing about the legal system, politics, the history, society and life in Germany.

The integration language course ends up for learners with a B1-level exam. However, not every
A participant is able to reach this level and pass the exam and there is no real exam before the B1 one. Thus, the learners do not have a real evidence of where they really are in terms of language acquisition after completing e.g. 200 or 400 hours. The level indicated in the course manuals does not always correspond to the real language skills and level of proficiency of an immigrant learner. Moreover, they have different learning styles, different educational backgrounds and very few of them can objectively evaluate themselves and their learning progress. That is why the implementation of “unofficial” testing by the trainer after 200 and 400 hours, consequently awarding a badge for A1 and A2 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages is very efficient to support the learners in their learning process and to certify their knowledge.

Moreover, very often, migrant learners at Volkschule Cham, migrate from one course to another, according to their new residence, their capacity to keep up with the language level and the integration in the new cultural and social environment. A slow learner backpack of badges from his previous course could provide valid information to the new trainer and it can make the process of transfer much easier. For instance, “Independent learner” (Selbständiges Lernen) or “Level A1” or “Level A2” badges in an e-portfolio provide valid information to facilitate the learners placement in a new module or course.

### Basic user: level A1 (CEFR)

**Criteria**

- Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic sentences aimed at the satisfaction of concrete needs.

- Can introduce themselves and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where they lives, people they know and belongings.

- Can interact in a simple way but communication is totally dependent on repetition at a slower rate of speech, rephrasing and corrections.

- Can ask and answer simple questions, initiate and respond to simple statements in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.

### Basic user: level A2 (CEFR)

**Criteria**

- Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. basic personal and family information,
shopping, local geography, employment)

- Can interact with reasonable ease in structured situations and short conversations, provided the other person helps if necessary
- Can manage simple, routine exchanges without undue effort
- Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters related with work and free time
- Can handle very short social exchange but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going of his/her own will.

4.2. Badges in German integration courses: the social side

The life as a newcomer in Germany and the integration in the new society is often perceived as difficult. In all language integration courses or other educational measures, apart from homework and some class exercises, there is not such a great demand of individual research and preoccupation for the private problems that the learners may have, such as job seeking, free time activities or appropriate school for their kids. In the course, these questions are briefly mentioned, but there is not enough time to deepen them. Learners rely mostly on what trainers says and do not show interest to search for more information. Most probably some of them will try after the language course to find a job, but they do not actually remember how or where to look properly for a job.

One volunteer worker initiated small projects, as How to find a job?, Types of schools in Germany, Where can I relax in my free time?, Interesting places to visit in Germany/Bavaria. These activities took place once a week after regular courses classes for twenty minutes. The trainer used Badges created within the Erasmus+ Project Open Badges in Adult Education to reward those who were able to briefly talk about their research in front of the class. The aim of this initiative was to encourage independent work and reward their efforts, training them at the same time for their future.

4.3. Badges in language courses of Swedish for foreigners

An integration course in Sweden consists of a language course with 365 hours at C and D level (corresponding to A1 and A2 in the European common framework for languages). Following the model of the badges developed by Volkshochschule Cham, Swedish trainers have created intermediate level badges, corresponding to A1.1 and A2.1 that make it possible to give a, intermediate non-official certification before the official one. They can also be used as final certification to those who do not reach the required level. This helps maintaining the motivation of learners during their 365-hour courses.

**Basic user of Swedish language**

**Criteria**

1. Make a simple presentation of oneself (name, age, address, origin...)
2. Complete simple courtesy phrases
5. Creating badges for specific training actions

5.1. Printed badges

Volkshochschule im Landkreis Cham e.V. provides a variety of courses in cooperation with the Jobcenter in the district of Cham. One of them is the educational program JUMP! Developing goals – Shaping the future. The targets are NEETS (young people not in education, employment or training) and young people with special needs or suffering from psychological problems. Learners receive social and emotional support. They are involved in motivational activities and basic skills training, and get intense one-to-one guidance and support to make a successful transition from school to the workplace. At the completion of the program, they get a competence-passport with Badges in printed form.

JUMP!

The project targets young people without school leaving certificates and support them in developing social and professional competences. Labour market training and individual coaching enhance their self-confidence, make them aware of their strengths and support their professional orientation. JUMP! provides young people with a new vision of their future and helps them to manage their everyday life.

Criteria

1. Solves individual problems
2. Is aware of own social competences
3. Is able to communicate appropriately in a professional environment
4. Is able to prepare job application documents

5.2. Badges in study circles

In study circles, the personal competences can be of importance to the group. Adaptability, consideration for others, forward thinking, positivity and humility are some of the features that can be helpful.
Adaptability

Can adapt to the group by positivity and humility.

Criteria

1. Know the mood of the group
2. Be helpful and responsive.
3. Show respect for the teacher and the students in the group.

Feedback

The teachers leading the *Folkuniversitetet Lund* study circles issue badges to highlight the main characteristics of the participants. They note that the overall functioning of the circle is improved because participants, knowing that badges can be issued for a particular attitude, make greater efforts to adapt their behaviour and thus contribute to the creation of a better learning environment for all.

**What is a study circle?**

_Folkbildning_ is the collective name for the activities conducted by the folk high schools and study associations in the form of courses, study circles and cultural activities. A study circle is a group organised by members to study something together. This might be for example, art, music, language or culture. _Folkbildning_ is part of the liberal non-formal educational system. Learning and social interaction go hand in hand with a first objective that is social. It is supposed to contribute to strengthening the civic society through close cooperation with volunteer organisations.

The study circle method makes an assumption that everybody has some knowledge and experience, that can be shared with others. It is usually a group of people who know each other and decide to learn something together. A circle requires a minimum of three and a maximum of twelve participants including the leader. The desire to learn together usually creates a good atmosphere. Learning has these main characteristics:

- It is always voluntary.
- The participants are active and seeking common knowledge.
- Everyone in the circle helps to achieve the objectives.
- Participants have great influence in the content.
- All circles have a leader, a plan for what is targeted and study material.
- The minimum duration are 9 study sessions of 45 minutes.

Every year, educational associations in Sweden organise about 300,000 study circles. They have over two millions participants.

**5.3. Badges in courses for disabled people**

A set of badges have been created by *Folkuniversitetet* Lund for the *Konsensus* courses provided to adults facing physical disabilities, with the objective to reinforce their self-esteem and self-confidence.

Among them:

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- A badge to certify basic knowledge of cooking
- A badge for appearance and presentation
- A badge for the ability to create goals for everyday planning

In many cases, persons who have physical disabilities have lived with their parents and have not acquired practical skills. As consequence, when they learn how to cook, they have difficulty to distinguishing between different units of measure.

### Basic knowledge in cooking and baking

**Criteria**

1. Can understand and visualise the difference between units of measurement used in cooking and baking (grams, teaspoons, tablespoon, decilitres and litres).
2. Is aware that the number of units is different according to the units.
3. Can answer questions about how to use units, how to write and read the abbreviations

### Appearance and presentation

**Criteria**

1. Respect body hygiene. Take care of hair.
2. Wears clothes that are adapted to the context and circumstances.
3. Keeping aids (such as wheelchair) clean.

This badge is an adaptation of the badge “Appearance” created in the project to take into account the assistance used by people with a physical disability.

### Create own goals for everyday planning

Ability to self-structure the day, being motivated to plan, to do the shopping, the laundry, to clean, alone or with an assistance. Ability to create good habits and set their own short-term and long-term goals in everyday life.

**Criteria**

1. Scheduling fixed routines
2. Making appointments for the laundry room, the doctor, the dentist, etc.
3. Setting goals for the coming week or the coming month.

### Feedback

“As a circle leader at Konsensus, I encourage participants to learn basic knowledge within e.g. cooking and baking with the help of a badge that can spur them when it comes to measuring and counting. The participants with physical disabilities often also have cognitive disabilities, which can make you miscalculate. When it comes to badges for hygiene and planning, they can be very helpful to
develop awareness on the need to structure the day. Many young people with disabilities should take responsibility for their day and be able to plan for washing and cleaning. But unfortunately, many of them have not learned this from the beginning. Konsensus participants have tested the badges and believe that they can be used to strengthen their awareness and self-confidence. Many of them were curious about other badges to put in their backpack. Although they are not employed, badges can be good to mention as merits even in social activities.”

6. Use of badges to support informal learning

6.1. Promoting active citizenship among migrant women

Group 39 is a daily activity organised in Folkuniversitetet Lund with women from different cultures and backgrounds. Together, they have craft courses where they work and learn to speak Swedish. They have a teacher who explains the different approaches for the various techniques that are taught: seaming, knitting, painting, jewellery making and so on. But also women teach their knowledge to each other, and this strengthens their self-confidence.

Badges have been adapted and created to illustrate and support the richness of this learning environment mixing technical, social and language skills: they show that these persons can be helpful and have a good leadership, that they have empathy, patience and can be a good listener when someone else explains how to do something.

**Knitting and sewing skills**

Ability to practice knitting and sewing using the adapted vocabulary.

Criteria

1. Understands the different words and techniques of sewing and knitting.
2. Supports other when they need.
3. Answers questions about how to use the different techniques and explain in simple terms how to do it.

**Patience**

Ability to help and understand other people in a pleasant and accommodating manner, giving feedback when necessary.

Criteria

1. Takes time to understand the need of others.
2. Explains as many times as necessary.
3. Shares the satisfaction of people who struggled to succeed.
**Empathy**

This badge is issued to a candidate when he or she acts in an understanding and positive manner that takes into account the needs and feelings of others.

**Criteria**

1. Showing compassion.
2. Caring for and supporting others.
3. Understanding the feelings of others.

**Active listener**

Ability to listen not only what the person is expressing directly, but also the feelings, ideas or thoughts that underlie what is being said.

**Criteria**

1. Understands communication from the point of view of the speaker.
2. Learns to listen between the "lines".
3. Does not adopt a hostile or emotional attitude while listening.

**Feedback from teachers**

The teacher in Group 39 underlines the support provided by the badges: “The badges that have been specifically built for this target group show the participants what is a badge and in which context badges can be awarded. They can then proceed with other types of badges and create a useful portfolio of badges for their future”. The involved women understand what is needed both in the practical and theoretical subjects they master to receive a badge, but also they understand that the track record can be expanded with badges.

**Feedback from participants**

The women who have no or little education have replied that they like to have their practical skills in crafts confirmed and materialized through a badge. They often have great knowledge in this area, but it has been difficult before to get it confirmed. They also believe that badges show that they are able to adopt the behaviours of their new country. For example, Sweden has strict ethical rules when it comes to being able to listen without interrupting. The women who came to Sweden with a work experience, believe that badges are great to gather in a portfolio to expand the qualifications from their CV.

**6.2. Fablab, Open Badges and vocational integration**

Greta du Velay is managing a Formalab that applies the concept of fabrication laboratories (Fablabs) to adult education. Formalab provides an innovative answer to the educational needs of young

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1 This badge is one of the badges created by the *Open Badges for Adult Education* partnership.
2 The *Listening Skills* badge given by the *Folkuniversitetet* from Lund is an adaptation of the Active Listening badge created by the *Open Badges for Adult Education* partnership.
unemployed adults by developing transversal skills and key competences that are needed for employment.

The learners involved in the Formalab are adults and young adults facing integration difficulties that can be social, cultural, behavioural, educational, cognitive or physical. They usually don't have any work experience and are often early school leavers.

A Fablab is a room with tools, such as milling machines, laser cutter, vinyl cutter machines, electronics workbench, computers and programming tools, supported by open source software. They allow the production of stand alone objects or small series.

Thus Formalab focuses on project-based learning and active learning that started in the United States in the beginning of the twentieth century when Dewey initiated the learning by doing method. In his school-laboratory, concrete activities were organised to answer the natural inclination of human beings to learn. He believed that education needs to be pragmatic, helping learners to think and to adapt to their environment, starting from their interests and developing their autonomy. He wanted to modify the traditional teaching approach by putting the experience at the centre of the learning process. Active learning methods include project-based learning, problem solving, case-studies based learning and design-based learning. Formalab can be placed at the confluence of project-based learning and design-based learning.

Formalab complies also with the project process as defined by Perrenoud (2002): it is a collective enterprise managed by the group, it is oriented towards a concrete production, it implies a set of tasks in which all learners can take an active part, it facilitates the learning of knowledge and know-how in project management (decision-making, planning, coordination) and at the same time, it allows identifiable learning outcomes (at least in retrospect) taken from various subject areas. Activities performed within the Formalab also develop communication skills, cooperation, creativity, problem solving, deep thinking, peer learning and many other competences that can be “badged”.

The main objectives that are targeted through the collective construction of objects are:

- Development of key competences (following the recommendation of the European Council of 22 May 2018 on key competences for lifelong learning)
- Development of transversal skills (considered as skills that are not specific for a job but needed to find a job, to perform a job and to change)
- Preparation to work.

The role of the trainer consists in:

- Searching for and choosing projects with the learners
- Preparing learners to use the tools
- Linking the activities performed to other educational processes (calculation, geometry, programming, searching for information, understanding of written English...)
- Orienting the tasks if necessary

• Evaluating the key competences and transversal skills through participatory observation
• Delivering badges after by a mutual evaluation under the request of the learner.

To valorise the skills used and developed, evaluation is performed on a bi-partite approach: trainer – learner. By doing so, learners are empowered regarding the learning processes and they become aware of their strengths and of what they need to improve. Then badges are attributed (or not) at the request of a learner after an exchange with the trainer.

Table of main badges awarded under the Formalab workshops

In addition, a meta-badge “Formalab” is awarded when 16 badges (on 20) have been awarded to a learner. This meta-badge is described with the following criteria:

- has actively participated in a group project to the realisation of a concrete product
- masters a minimum of 16 transversal skills that are particularly useful in a work environment.

In addition, specific badges for the work in the Formalab have been created such as this one for 3D printing assembling.

This badge is issued to a learner who has participated in the FormaLab workshop achieving the following tasks:

- Follow-up of assembly guidelines
- Wiring of electronic and electrical components
- Checking the process
- Fully assembled a 3D printer (Prusa i3 mk3, Dagoma Disco Ultimate models)

6.3. **Facilitating the work of volunteer trainers**

In Cham *Volkshochschule*, teams of volunteers work with adults, helping them either to do their homework properly or to cope with everyday life situations. Therefore their contribution is focused on daily routines such as a visit to the doctor, a conversation at the supermarket, at the job centre, in the administration office, etc. Thus the volunteer trainers support the improvement of the learners’ social skills, as in a normal course there is never enough time. Sometimes the learners are too hesitant, too embarrassed with their poor conversation skills or too nervous to speak. Due to a total lack of self-confidence in everyday situations they rather ask or bring some relative or a friend to act as their personal translator. Thus they try to remain in a sort of comfort zone. That is why motivating them to leave this comfort zone and making them regain their self-assurance are in such cases essential.

The badges developed within the Erasmus+ Project *Open Badges in Adult Education* are tools for regaining the learners’ self-confidence and self-esteem and encouraging them to successfully deal with everyday situations by themselves. The 50 Badges related to transversal competences have the advantage of motivating the learners permanently and reassure them on their progress and language
improvement. They facilitate the work of the volunteer trainers and are the ideal support for monitoring the learners’ progress in language acquisition and dealing and facing the everyday challenges. The badges allow also encouraging a kind of positive competition between the learners. For instance, the learners with many badges can become like assistants of the volunteer trainers and help them with less confident learners. Nevertheless the volunteers must have very strict rules about the ‘assistants’ who may try bossing around the weaker learners.
7. Empowering learners regarding their skills

7.1. Learners request their badges

Being aware of our own competences is key to describe our strengths in a CV, in an application letter or during a job interview. To empower learners regarding their skills, Greta du Velay has developed a tool to allow learners to request badges once they estimate they have proven to have the right attitude or to have shown the mastering of a specific skill. This tool is integrated into the open-badges.eu web site and links it on a seamless way to the badgr.com awarding platform.

This interface has two sides:

- a learner side to see all badges and to ask for them,
- a trainer side where they see learners' requests and can decide to award or not the badge.

7.1.1. Learner side

On the Open-badges.eu web site, the list of badges that can be obtained is visible for any user.

If a learner creates an account and then login to the web site, s/he will see the same list, but by clicking on a badge, s/he will not only have the description and the criteria related to this badge, s/he can see a button “Ask this badge”.

Copy of the main page gathering all badges that a learner can request

(The name of the badge appears in light blue when it has already been requested.)

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4 This feature is available on the Open Badge Passport, which works in conjunction with the Open Badge Factory, a badge management platform but was not available on the Badgr.com platform initially used by the Greta du Velay.
Copy of the screen where the learner can request for the badge “Respecting timetables”

7.1.2. Trainer side

When the trainer connects, s/he can visualize for all learners who have registered on the Open-badges web site, the badges that have been requested. Definition and criteria are displayed so that all information is available at a glance. It is also possible to display the badges that have been awarded.

Page for the trainer to manage the awarding of badges

List of badges that a learner requires when s/he estimates that s/he has proven to meet the criteria needed for each badge.
When the trainer decides to award badges, s/he is automatically redirected to the badgr.com web site that allows to issue the badges. S/he can import the csv file containing badges to award to learners (it is possible to include several badges and several learners). A confirmation screen allows to check if everything is fine. In case of mistake, it is still possible to revoke the badge.

Benefits

- Learners are more empowered regarding their competences.
- Awarding is done on a continuous flow. It is expected to maintain the motivation of learners who are also able to display their badges on a continuous base.
- Trainers can deliver several badges at the same time to several learners.

Limitations

- The workload of trainers is increased by the technical manipulations.
- Trainers need to organise, in particular when a team of trainers is involved.
- The process relies on a technical framework that is not stable. Sometimes the badgr.com platform is not accessible and some bugs can occur.

Note: Since June 2019, Greta du Velay has transferred the management of badges from badgr.com to openbadgefactory.com that offers learners this same possibility without any development.

7.2. Two manuals for self-assessment of competences

PIME Aragón Activa is a project focused on the employability and insertion improvement in Aragon in which Acción Laboral has adjusted the badges. Two manuals have been elaborated, one aimed at key competences and the other for transversal competences, in which each of the competences are identified and collected in tables. The objective of these manuals is to support the detection of competence gaps regarding the employment search and the professional profiles foreseen.

By going through the series of qualitative assessment criteria to achieve the badges, users proves that they have the competences required for the insertion itinerary. They can show that they become autonomous in techniques and skills for an active employment search. They include the digital badges in their online curriculum vitae and in the different social networks used to search for employment.
8. **Opportunity or circumstance Badges**

The project *Open Badges for Adult Education* project focuses on issuing badges to promote key competences, skills, attitudes or qualities that can be considered as transversal competences.

Being active in the field of vocational integration has driven Greta du Velay to consider other situations in which the allocation of badges seems useful and answers a certain number of needs: a badge can attest the attendance to a conference or a positive contribution to the realisation of a project.

The trace left by this event or project will thus be formalised in a homogeneous way for all participants, neat and easy to disseminate. Added to the electronic portfolio or included in the backpack, the badge will allow the subject to keep the memory of past events and actions. This will make it easier for the future employee to talk about it, for example during a job interview.

If the person wishes to share them with integration advisers, they can usefully use them to understand better the history, the path and therefore to better adapt the support that can be provided, maybe also to avoid repeating some actions.

We all have difficulties remembering the events we have attended, the projects we have participated in. Badges and associated data make it possible to have at the same time an overview and a detailed view, very easily (which day, to do what, with whom).

These badges can be named opportunity or circumstance badges. They are not pre-determined, they are not part of a catalogue of skills to which both the learner and the trainer can refer. They are created jointly with the organisation of the event or the realisation of the project.

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**Participation in the training day « Beliefs, social and professional life »**

Greta du Velay with the Second Chance School, in association with *Justice et Partage* and the Committee to Combat Racism and Anti-Semitism, have organised a training day on the factors influencing our beliefs and their consequences for our social and professional life.

**Date:** 27/02/2018

**Criteria:** This badge is issued to a candidate who has participated in the entire day of February 23, 2018.

**Number of recipients:** 9
Active participation to the barcamp “Manufacture of ideas”

This badge is issued as part of an experimental action, to a person who has actively participated in at least one « Manufacture of ideas » barcamp on the 3 dates proposed: – Yssingeaux (19 November 2018). – Puy en Velay (27 November 2018). – Brioude (3 December 2018).

Criteria: The participant has been involved in:
— A different way to learn and to provide support
— Identifying and developing skills,
— New places, new attitudes.
Number of recipients: 75

9. Badging the competence reference framework of Second Chance Schools

Second Chance Schools welcome young adults without qualification and at risk of exclusion. They do not deliver diplomas but accredit competences during a learning path aiming at acquiring basic knowledge together with social and vocational competences. Thus they have always paid a particular attention to the validation of competences supported by work-based learning, taking into account and valorising the experience of learners. At the end of each learning path, a Certificate of Competences Acquired is given to each participant. Registered in the code of Education, this certificate is a first recognition that facilitates access to employment or to a training course leading to a diploma. More broadly, it is part of a dynamic of awareness of one's achievements and self-esteem that structures the learning method implemented.

As a network, French Second Chance Schools have developed a competence reference framework adapted to their target group. The reference guide is a descriptive document, setting out the expectations in terms of skills throughout and at the end of a learning path. It is a common reference basis for setting objectives and evaluating them with the trainees. It serves as the basis to deliver the final Certificate of Competences Acquired.

As Second Chance Schools are following the recommendations of the European commission regarding the acquisition of key competences, the framework is partly derived from it. It is made of 9 areas of competences:

Area 1: Communicate (oral and written)

Area 2: Calculation and mathematical thinking

Area 3: Use of information and communication technologies
Area 4: Act in a group (team, association, project…)
Area 5: Prepare the professional future
Area 6: Lifelong learning
Area 7: Act in own environment and at work
Area 8: Opening up to cultural, social and civic life
Area 9: Communicate (oral and written) in a foreign language

The first 7 fields have also a direct link with “CLéA”, another reference framework that defines professional knowledge and skills needed to access training and work. “CLéA” has been elaborated by social partners at a cross sectorial level and is considered as the basic need of competences for workers in France.

In order to take into account the diversity of the learners' achievements and their projects, this reference framework also defines 4 levels of validation, thus offering a possibility of graduated recognition, more adapted to the career paths of the target group.

This competence based approach focused on the analysis of experience, including that acquired in companies, aims to offer young people the opportunity to develop new skills, but above all to be able to become aware of them and to value them.

As these principles are the key strength of Open Badges, it was a natural step for us to transfer this reference framework into badges.

Furthermore, experiments conducted in the French Second Chance School network have shown that the effective development of skills is strongly based on the possibility of associating a reflective thinking with the various activities offered during the learning path (in a training centre or in a working place). What underlies a competence based approach is the ability to combine various approaches in the same process: productive (what I am doing), constructive (what I am acquiring in the process) and reflective (what I am learning from what I have done and what I can transfer to another situation).

This empowerment approach is based on 5 principles:

- developing transversality in the implementation of training,
- better taking into account of real learning activities,
- integrating a reflexive tutoring,
- strengthening feedback periods,
- strengthening teamwork.

It is in particular to increase the importance of the feedbacks and to strengthen this phase that Greta du Velay has included the badges. Feedback allow learners to become aware of their achievements, to assimilate their knowledge and skills. They can think about the activities they have experienced, to share, and to formalize for themselves and others, what they have learned. It is the moment where badges can be awarded.
Each area of competences includes 3 to 5 sub-competences, for which badges have been created. So in total Greta du Velay as developed 35 badges specifically for the second chance school. The four levels of proficiency that are distinguished for each of the 35 sub-competences have not been taken into account in a first approach, not to overload the delivery procedure and to facilitate its legibility by the learners as well as by the employers. The team has chosen to award a badge when level 3 was achieved.

Example of a badge:

Identifying group regulation

Criteria:
— Identifying the explicit and implicit rules
— Understanding the documents defining the rights and duties
— Analysing the role of institutional documents (charter, charter,)

5. Since June 2019, we are delivering the badges following the 4 levels after transferring the management of our badges from badgr.com to openbadgefactory.com as this platform includes this feature.
Benefits

- In addition to the final Certificate of Competences Acquired, learners have a set of digital certificates that they can display on social networks.
- Awarding is done on a continuous flow, meaning that the learner doesn't have to wait until the end of the learning path to receive something. It is expected that it maintains the motivation.
- Learners have access to a page with all the available badges corresponding to the reference framework and they can request them when they feel they have acquired the skill.

Limitations

- The workload of trainers is increased.

10. Badges on e-learning platforms: the classical use

10.1. E-Academy for educators in Slovenia

Development and training centre Novo Mesto in Slovenia offers six e-learning courses for up-skilling the digital skills with a validation though open badges:

1. Online safety
2. Use of social media in education
3. Learning Management system
4. Graphic design
5. Web design
6. Interactive white board

There is an urgent need for adult educators in Slovenia to enhance uptake of ICT in teaching and learning, to promote stronger coherence between the needs of the labour market thus achieving a better skills match for their adults and bridging the gap between the education and the world of work. This course aims at providing attractive and effective training to adult educators to address their skills deficits and update their competences throughout their career.

10.2. MOOC for teachers in Spain

The Spanish institute for educational technologies and training of teachers (INTEF) has developed the educaLAB initiative that organises MOOC. EducaLAB includes individual backpacks to show the
competences acquired by teachers. The Badges acquired can be shared on other digital spaces.
11. **How to introduce Open Badges to a new audience?**

This 3-hour training session is aimed at presenting the concept of Open Badges to young adult learners. The objectives are the following:

- To help participants understanding the usefulness of digital badges for promoting know-how and interpersonal skills in companies.
- To become familiar with the use of digital badges.

The presentation includes:

- An introductory video
- A game with cards, structured in three phases, followed by an evaluation
- A presentation of badges

11.1. **Introductory video: job interviews (5 min.)**

In order to understand the context of the badges and to approach it in a fun way, it is suggested to show one or two short videos of job interviews before an exchange about them.

11.2. **Game: Recruiting with confidence (60 min.)**

The objective of this activity is to make participants aware that in order to present themselves effectively to an employer, they must:

- Know themselves
- Be aware of their skills
- Transmit reliable information

**Preparation of the game**

- Company cards with jobs (14 cards) (Cf. Annex)
- Competence cards (50 cards) (Cf. Annex)
- One “Evaluation” sheet per participant

**The teams**

For every 10 participants, the facilitator designates 2 or 3 employers and 7 or 8 job seekers. The distribution will be adapted according to the number of participants.

Ideally, each employer sits behind a desk far enough from the others to avoid disrupting exchanges. Job seekers remain standing.
Each employer draws a random company card. They will have to recruit for the company and job defined on the card. Their role remains the same during the three phases of the game, until the end of the game.

An evaluation sheet is distributed to each player, employer or job seeker.

**Start of the game**

The game takes place in 3 phases simulating a recruitment.

Each phase is different from the previous one.

**Phase 1**

Employers recruit job seekers of their choice without verbal interaction.

Once the recruitment is completed, each employer is invited to express his opinion regarding the criteria that motivated his choices.

At the end of this phase, all participants must complete Phase 1 of the evaluation sheet.

**Phase 2**

The cards showing skills are all placed face up on a table. Job seekers can consult them without taking them.

Once this observation phase is completed, job seekers must form pairs.

Each pair will then have to meet the employers and highlight the skills of their colleague for the job requested: Player A praises the skills of Player B then it is Player B's turn to praise Player A's skills.

Once all candidates have passed, employers choose the one they would like to hire. (They can take notes during phase 2).

Once the recruitment is completed, each employer is invited to express his opinion on the criteria that have motivated its choices.

At the end of this phase, all participants must complete Phase 2 of the evaluation sheet.

**Phase 3**

The pairs remain identical. In this phase, skills are assigned to each participant: Player A assigns 3 skills of his choice to player B and player B assigns 3 skills of his choice to player A.

Players should not see the skills assigned to them. They can be pinned on the backs or sticked on foreheads.

Once the skills are assigned to each job seeker, employers proceed with recruitment by taking into account the skills displayed in relation to the profile required to fill the position requested.

Once the recruitment is completed, each employer is invited to express his opinion on the criteria that have motivated his choices.

At the end of this phase, all participants must complete Phase 3 of the evaluation sheet.

**End of the game**

The facilitator organizes an exchange between the players so that they can express their opinions: In
their opinion, which recruitment seems to them to be the most effective? Why?

Possible interpretation: At the beginning the participants are identical CVs.

11.3. Suggestions for continuation

Presentation of badges. (Prezi, ppt……) (15 min.)

Employer's testimony (video 10 min.)

Creating an account on a platform managing badges. (45 min.)

Request and allocation of the first Badge. (30 min.)

Role-playing: Participants request the allocation of their first badge « Participation in the Open Badges training ». The badge must be issued directly by the trainer.

Concrete use of a Badge backpack (20 min.)

Trainees are invited to log on a platform allowing to manage Badges. Then they can post their badges on different social networks.

12. Use of badges for teachers, trainers and staff

12.1. Recognition of soft skills within Folkuniversitetet

The HR Department of Folkuniversitetet (Sweden) is looking for new ways to assess the skills of staff in order to have a better view of their qualifications. Soft skills are the most difficult to assess and the HR department is particularly interested in the following ones: problem solving, implementing a global strategy, supporting colleagues, being positive and seeking to maintain a good working environment. Folkuniversitetet from Lund has therefore created specific badges to recognize the existence of these skills among its employees. Badges are issued during the annual evaluation interviews. A certain number of people are employed on short contracts, depending on the projects, and their contracts are not intended to be permanent. The badges received may be useful to them when they have to look for a new job.

Problem solvers

Overall approach and good working ability in the working group

Criteria

1. Have an overall view of how the staff group works.
2. Feel the atmosphere and climate in the workplace.
3. Find solutions together with the staff for everyone's best.
**Supportive colleagues**

Aware of the potential generated by the working group, provides support to colleagues when necessary.

**Criteria**

1. Find solutions to everyday problems with colleagues.
2. Encourage and give good criticism.
3. Can resolve conflicts in the group in a good way without violating anyone's feeling

**Feedback and description**

The management team considers badges to be an excellent tool to support the assessment of the skills of their staff, and they appreciate their innovative nature. Thanks to the badges, employees who had not been able to obtain formal recognition of their skills now can have this opportunity. In addition, the badges reward employees who take great responsibility and ensure that everything works properly in the group.

### 12.2. Peer to peer awarding at VHS Cham

In an adult education institution a badge can have a twofold relevance. Not only that the trainer can be an issuer of badges, thus monitoring the learners’ progress and adapting the course to their needs, but s/he can be awarded badges as well. Once in a while the trainers do also need some motivational input, and a badge provides a positive feedback, being at the same time an indicator and an official recognition of trainer’s teaching/training skills, authority, experience or commitment. It also raises the trainer’s self-esteem to a certain degree. Badges awarded by peers or supervisors would thus underline the owner’s experience and competence. These badges can also pose a challenge, as long as the trainers compete for a badge.

The trainers at VHS Cham have access to badges created for them and they can award their peers, when work shadowing in a class, for their teaching methods, professional support or dedication at the class (3 Badges: Master of Creativity/Interculturality/Motivation). The trainer is challenged to get all of them, as all 3 badges qualify him/her for the „Expert Trainer“:

In integration courses at VHS Cham, for instance, other VHS’ trainers, future colleagues or officials from the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees often work shadow the trainers’ teaching methods and strategies at the class in order to improve themselves, exchange teaching strategies and ideas for a new career start or monitor the training process and progress in an integration course. The badges motivate the language trainers, as they also validate their teaching skills, improve and display their e-portfolio of badges on web.

The badges are basically created for the language department but they are adjustable to and available for other departments of the same educational institution as well. This would maintain the competitive spirit of trainers, who after years of working with the same teaching material may lack the necessary
motivation to enliven their teaching style or explore new teaching methods and strategies.

Moreover, a trainer who needs some helpful tips on motivating the learners could attend the class of a colleague with the Badge „Master of Motivation“, or a trainer who has no new creative ideas for „spicing‘ up a new lesson could learn from a „Master of Creativity“ colleague.

Furthermore, the trainers’ e-portfolio could also validate their professional profile, thus positively increasing their job prospects, once they decide to work for another educational institution.

**Badges**

**Master of Creativity**

Ability to spontaneously create and put into practice new teaching strategies, games or interactive and funny activities in the act of teaching.

Criteria

- Creating new teaching materials
- Challenging the learners though games and role-play strategies
- Attending workshops on creative teaching
- Experimenting and implementing new teaching methods and strategies
- Teaching grammar through games and contextualize it

**Master of Motivation**

Ability to motivate the learners by constantly challenging them, by creating relevant learning experiences based on the learners’ interests.

Criteria

- Facilitating exploration („learning by doing“)
- Integrating social media and valuing diversity in communication
- Focusing on learners’ needs and effective interaction in the learning process
- Challenging though games and case studies
- Encouraging and improving proofreading, editing and revising learners’ work
- Encouraging learners to look for and find new solutions to everyday problems
- Positive attitude towards cooperation in finding new solutions to solve
- Using learners’ feedback as a start point for new challenges

Master of Interculturality

Ability to bridge the cross-cultural gaps and be an effective mediator. Trainers who previously worked exclusively with homogenous groups may face a serious challenge when dealing with a heterogeneous group of learners with different cultural backgrounds.

Criteria

- Positive attitude towards cooperation and interaction of learners with different cultural backgrounds
- Open-minded towards different cultural behaviour and different cultural viewpoints
- Mediating intercultural clashes and gaps

12.3. Internal coaching sessions at Acción Laboral

The department of European projects of Acción Laboral has organised an internal coaching and motivation session to explain the Open Badges methodology and show the positive aspect both professionally and personally. All categories of staff members attended the session: trainers, technical and administrative staff and managers.

The 100 badges for key and transversal competences have been presented. It has been discussed how they can be used for job searching and curriculum improvement.

To focus in the motivating aspect, two groups have been made with the objective to discuss and debate the awarding of badges to the participants from the other group. Badges have been distributed on a printed format. Each group should decide all together who deserved more one badge than another (taking into account their personal skills and their work at the office) and explain why they decided to distribute them that way.

Conflict management badge was one of the badges awarded to all the participants. It is the competence to propose solutions and resolve differences of opinions of the parties, relying on sufficient authority and justice, focusing on common interests, negotiation skills, assertiveness, assessment of other needs and mediation.
Other badge used in this coaching session was Critical Capacity as the ability to evaluate data and lines of action, as well as to make logical decisions in an unbiased and rational way.

All participants saw it as a very positive activity since they had to collaborate and it enhanced their self-esteem and their self-image.

13. Conclusion

In the field of education and training, badges are most often used in higher education and integrated into e-learning platforms that allow them to be assigned automatically. Apart from the experiences conducted in the Open Badges for Adult Education project, we have only located a few ongoing experiments in France, including the one of the individualised learning workshops (APP) network, which is the closest to our concern to develop key and transversal competences among (young) adults, but none of them have been detected in Germany, Spain, Slovenia or Sweden.

Badges are used to highlight elements of competence, attitudes and behaviour that are not valued by existing qualifications. They make it possible to create milestones for learning paths, thus maintaining a certain level of motivation. As a reward, they build confidence and self-esteem. Finally, they contribute to professionalizing the digital identity of learners who will share them on their social networks.

We can only assume that new initiatives will develop, hoping that the practices described in this guide will inspire them.
14. List of contacts for the practices

For more information on the cases presented in this document, contact the following organizations.

- Practices proposed by the Greta du Velay in France: greta@velay.greta.fr
- Practices offered by Folkuniversitetet in Sweden: ingmarie.rohdin@folkuniversitetet.se
- Practices offered by Volkshochschule de Cham in Germany: obalan@vhs-cham.de
- Practices proposed by Ljudska univerza Ptuj in Slovenia: petja.janzekovic@lu-ptuj.si
- Practices proposed by Accion Laboral in Spain: mavicario.sc@accionlaboral.com
## 15. Annexes

### Company Cards – Jobs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seller in sports equipment</th>
<th>Home help</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delivery Driver (Courrier company)</td>
<td>Landscape worker (Landscape company)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail salesperson (Department Store)</td>
<td>Waiter/Waitress (Gastronomic restaurant)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plasterer-Painter (Small family business)</td>
<td>Care-giver Assistant (Nursing home)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Assistant (Social Security)</td>
<td>Cleaner (Cleaning company)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line operator (Agri-food company)</td>
<td>Machining technician (Automotive Subcontracting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automotive mechanic (Concessionnaire)</td>
<td>Cook (Collective catering)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florist (City store)</td>
<td>Warehouseman/woman (Logistics platform)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skills Cards 1/2</td>
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<td>------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Punctuality</strong></td>
<td><strong>Respect for the authority</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Curiosity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Adaptation to change</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Respecting engagements</strong></td>
<td><strong>Work in autonomy</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Efficacy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Respecting delays</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Privacy and confidentiality</strong></td>
<td><strong>Enthusiast</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Work in team</strong></td>
<td><strong>Motivation for learning</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Capacity to evaluate own work</strong></td>
<td><strong>Attention to details</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Empathy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Persuasion</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Personal control</strong></td>
<td><strong>Self-confidence</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Open-mindedness</strong></td>
<td><strong>Negociation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Understands English</td>
<td>Speaks Italian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good level of general education</td>
<td>Public speaking skill</td>
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<tr>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td>Sense of initiative</td>
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<td>Energy</td>
<td>Easy communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>Spatial orientation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-directed learning</td>
<td>Use of spreadsheet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge of local heritage</td>
<td>Active listening</td>
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<tr>
<td>Decision-making</td>
<td>Budget management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>Use of word processing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Searching information online</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phase</td>
<td>Difficulty</td>
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<td>Phase 1</td>
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