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The Urban Lab of Europe !

The MILMA Project Journal N° 2

Project led by the City of Fuenlabrada



**INTEGRATION OF
MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES**



The MILMA project

As one of the key challenges faced by the City of Fuenlabrada is the integration of immigrants, the MILMA Project seeks to increase migrants' integration perspectives through access to employment, with the creation of practical experiences specifically targeted at market niches with present and future potential to create employment opportunities.

The City of Fuenlabrada formed a strong private-public partnership to test an experimental formative process, directly connected to the development of products and services demanded on the market. This is made possible through the identification of "Business Challenges" (BCs), created in 7 specific areas identified as potential generators of employment. Local social enterprises and companies will be engaged to lead and co-manage, together with the Fuenlabrada Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, the seven BCs.

The challenge-driven training program will help participants to consolidate their connection with the network of local companies engaged in the Labs, by solving their needs and pushing the adoption of new innovative products/services.

In parallel, integration will be fostered through collaborative work between locals and migrants, gathered together into "Experimental Teams of Employment and Integration" (ETEIs) within BCs Labs. ETEIs will favor an effective process of integration, facilitating migrants' social and economic integration.

This acculturation process, combined with the training program, will facilitate migrants' employability and skills acquisition in relevant market areas and promote mutual understanding and strengthen social cohesion.

Partnership:

- Municipality of Fuenlabrada
- CIFE- Fuenlabrada Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation - Public agency
- Santa María la Real Foundation - NGO
- ASALMA - NGO
- CESAL - NGO
- Islamic Culture Centre of Fuenlabrada - NGO

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1 Executive Summary

This journal highlights the progress of the MILMA Project in Fuenlabrada in the last month. It focuses on its innovative approach towards improving integration of immigrants, as well as employability and entrepreneurial skills of youth and unemployed people.

The journal starts by presenting the methodology used to design BC Labs, and focuses on the transversal training part, called ETEIs.

MILMA is developing an innovative approach, focused on one hand on stimulating integration of migrants, by creating heterogeneous groups of individuals (mixing both locals and migrants), and on the other hand on empowering unemployed people, by connecting them with local enterprises, with the dual goal of offering a qualified sectorial training and of exposing participants to entrepreneurial challenges.

Stimulating successful business creation across all sections of society is an important requirement for achieving smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and responding to economic and social challenges in European Union countries. Entrepreneurship can respond to high rates of unemployment and low levels of labour market participation which are often concentrated in particular sections of society by enabling people to create their own jobs and jobs for others.

It is fundamental to the emergence of a more entrepreneurial economy in which new firms offer new solutions to social, economic and environmental challenges.

However, many people face barriers to entrepreneurship. They include access to finance, lack of appropriate skills, and lack of business networks. These obstacles are often more important for people from groups that are disadvantaged and under-represented in entrepreneurship, who often face additional barriers related to attitudes, motivations and welfare systems that discriminate against entrepreneurship.

Thus, in this journal, we explain the progress made to remove these barriers, as well as the operational implementation of activities foreseen by the project, and the potential for replicability in other cities and regions.

Entrepreneurship skills are a combination of technical skills, business management skills and personal skills required for starting and operating in business and self-employment. They include, for example, opportunity recognition, team building, negotiation, strategy development, risk management, financial planning, and marketing. Supporting the acquisition of entrepreneurship skills is important for not only increasing start-up rates but also improving the quality of business start-ups.

2 Training methodology

BC Labs consist of a capacity building program for unemployed people (both migrants and locals) looking to improve their employability and ability to enter the labour market.

BC Labs involve a diverse team of unemployed people who freely and voluntarily join this initiative to strengthen their skills, become visible and move forward together to find a job.

Participants have the support of their peers, with a whole range of employment histories, and of a professional coach. Their knowledge and experiences are enriched and complement each other, increasing their motivation and changing their attitude.

Participants meet daily and operate like a company. They allocate their tasks by department, and under a collaborative culture make their job search better organized, coordinated, evaluated and efficient.

The overall objective of this scheme and the related capacity building is to fulfil five main objectives:

- To integrate migrants into the local community and the work-force
- To improve the employability of young people
- To increase the quality and stability of youth employment
- To promote equal opportunities for access to the labour market
- To foster entrepreneurship

The capacity building includes two different modules: a technical training (including both a theoretical and a practical part), led by a local company, and designed around one or more business challenges, and a transversal training (ETEIs) aimed at fostering non-technical skills, according to the following model:

<p>PARTICIPANTS</p> <p>Diverse team of young people and migrants who are unemployed.</p>	<p>THEY ARE NO LONGER ALONE</p> <p>Participants have a coordinator who guides them in a job search cycle: self -knowledge -planning -action.</p>
<p>THEY HAVE A GOAL</p> <p>To increase their chances of finding a job or developing an entrepreneurial project.</p>	<p>AND A METHODOLOGY</p> <p>Operating like a company, arranged by departments, under a collaborative culture.</p>
<p>THEY TRAIN</p> <p>Cross-cutting skills and competences: autonomy, teamwork, networking, time management and organization.</p>	<p>AND THEY GET RESULTS</p> <p>Participants improve their attitude, motivation and employment capability, as well as their possibilities of entering the job market</p>

Within BC Labs, Experimental Teams of Employment and Integration (ETEIs) have been set-up and conceived in **four phases**:

1. The first phase is one of “**diagnosis**”, where participants identify and express their emotions linked to unemployment, understand changes in the labour market, and get to know each other in order to build the foundations of a team.
2. In the second phase specific **action plans** are designed, both at the personal and team level. Participants start working on key competencies needed to start a business or find employment, and start analysing the environment and generating business ideas while participating in training sessions.
3. The third phase is aimed at **supporting interaction** with the external environment. Participants participate in networking events and visit firms and entrepreneurs to test and develop the ideas that were developed in the second phase. Participants also work on their business plan in this phase.

4. The fourth phase is focused on **implementing individual and group plans**. Individuals focus on starting their business activities and the groups support each other and make plans for how the network will continue after the course has ended.

The transversal training developed within ETEIs aims to stimulate effects in diverse areas:

1. **Personal and professional project**: definition of professional project, satisfaction with personal project, job situation and life in general.
2. **Standard of living**: Satisfaction with standard of living and that of his or her family, possibility to be self-sufficient in the medium term.
3. **Attitudes that affect employability**: probability of finding a job, access to the labour market, real chances of getting a job.
4. **Employability-related aptitudes**: effectiveness of effort and preparation for job search, time management, skills matching the labour market.

3 Setting up Experimental Teams of Employment and Integration (ETEIs)

As said, Experimental Teams of Employment and Integration (ETEIs), are the transversal training part where locals and immigrants carry-out a learning process to improve their access to the job market (through the improvement of their employability and technical capacity development practices).

ETEIs objectives, at a glance, are:

1. **To improve and enhance the employability of participants** through skills diagnosis and analysis and the establishment of a development plan tailored to the needs of each participant.
2. **To restore or strengthen self-esteem**, through mutual support that allows for the development of emotional intelligence. This is done with a focus on teamwork, one of the most demanded meta-competencies in the labour market and an important basis for personal growth.
3. **To develop a network of contacts** to support business creation and seek opportunities.
4. **To develop the entrepreneurial skills** so that participants can develop their own projects. The aim is to encourage them to consider the possibility of becoming entrepreneurs as well as apply creativity and entrepreneurial thinking as employees.
5. To strengthen linkages between business development support providers. Business professionals and entrepreneurs can contribute by sharing their knowledge and participating in the scheme's events.

At the same time, they revolve around the **following principles**:

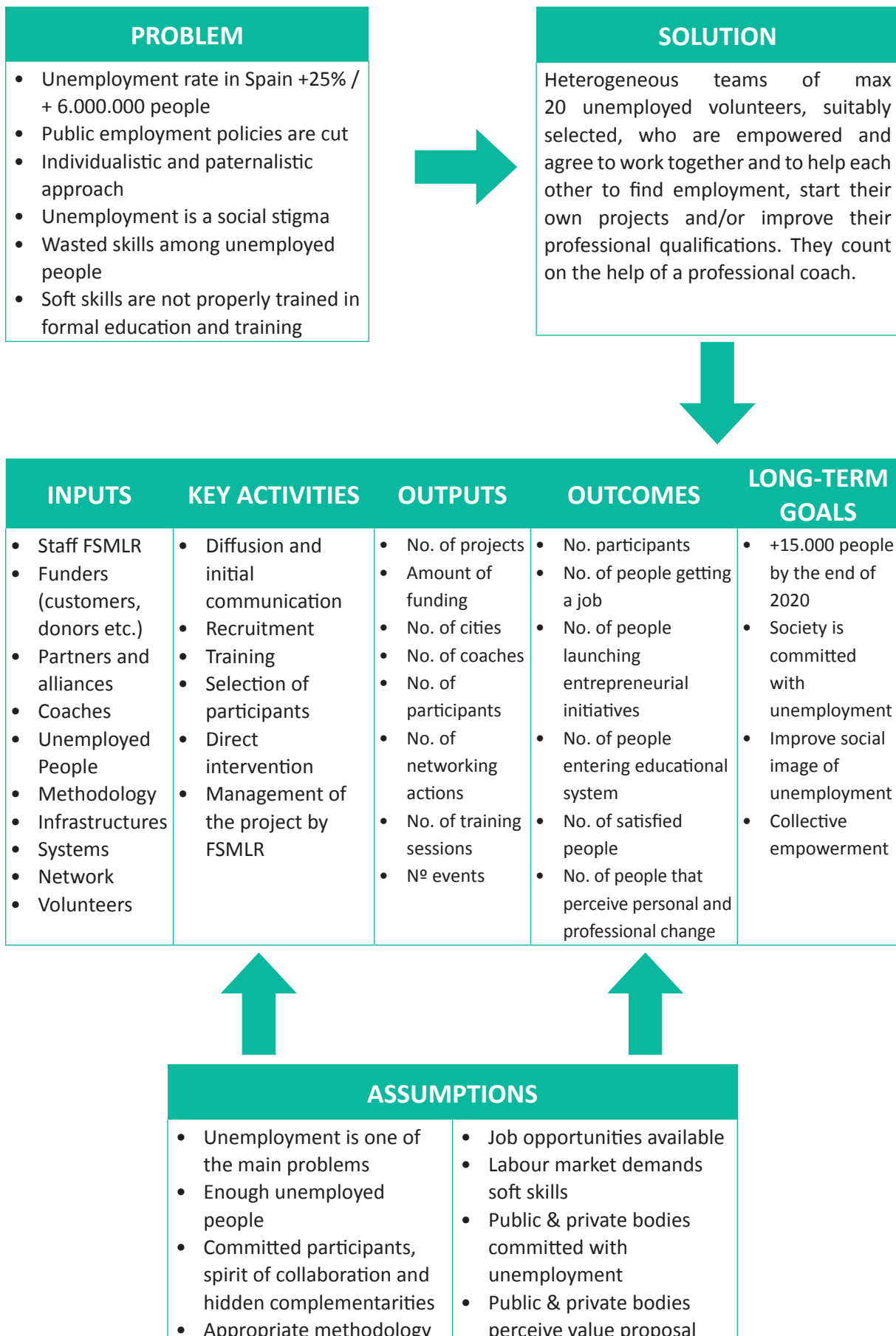
- 1) Unemployment (and even more youth unemployment) is a problem that harms the future development of any society and must be addressed with participation and commitment.
- 2) Co-responsibility of the different social agents involved in the process of social change.
- 3) Public-private network participation, i.e., articulating cooperation between all public and private social and institutional agents.
- 4) Alignment and coordination with public policies. Any social action developed must be supported by and contribute to public policies.

There is an emerging need to refocus employment policies to be more in line with the current economic scenario, the profile of the unemployed and the needs of companies. This explains how ETEIs have been designed, to bring new alternatives to deal with the scourge of unemployment, which includes eliminating derogative labels associated with unemployment and putting the spotlight on the people to restore their confidence, self-esteem and motivation, to make them visible and turn them into the protagonists of a new strategy that calls for more commitment, proactivity and solidarity.

ETEIs have been designed ad-hoc to suit the needs of the beneficiaries identified by the MILMA project, and builds on the previous experience of the vocational training programme called *“Lanzaderas de Empleo y Emprendimiento*

Solidario”, carried on by one of the consortium partners: Fundacion Santa Maria la Real. Find

below a representation of the approach pursued by FSMLR.



ETEs have been designed also having in mind all existing barriers to entrepreneurship for youth, unemployed and migrants. In general, all of them face barriers to entrepreneurship in the areas of social attitudes, lack of skills, inadequate entrepreneurship education, lack of work experience, under-capitalisation, lack of networks, and market barriers:

- **Role models:** Young people are influenced by important role models such as their parents and teachers, but often they are not very aware of the requirements and opportunities of entrepreneurship. This lack of awareness among role models results in a lack of encouragement and support for entrepreneurship. A negative attitude exhibited by an important role model, or even negative social attitudes, can act as an obstacle to youth entrepreneurship.
- **Lack of skills:** Education and training programmes often do not do enough to nurture entrepreneurial attitudes and skills; instead they aim to prepare students for a career in employment.
- **Lack of experience:** A major determinant of business start-up and entrepreneurship performance for youth is prior work experience. However, youth typically lack the necessary human, financial and social capital

to successfully start and run a new business. Moreover, relative to older people, youth are much less likely to have managerial or specialised industrial knowledge that would help them in self-employment.

- **Under-capitalisation:** Youth tend to have low levels of personal savings and have more difficulty than adults in obtaining external finance. Banks and other financiers typically consider credit history, past business performance and collateral when evaluating potential loans. Youth-owned firms are less likely to score well according to such measures.
- **Lack of developed networks:** Due to a lack of experience in the workplace and in entrepreneurship, youth people are likely to have limited business networks and business-related social capital. As a result, they may not be able to access a wide pool of resources and ideas. It will also be more difficult for them to build “legitimacy” amongst key stakeholders (e.g. financiers, customers, suppliers).
- **Market barriers:** Youth entrepreneurs may face “discrimination” from customers who are skeptical about the reliability or quality of their products or services. Similarly, youth entrepreneurs are more likely to enter industries where barriers to entry are low, but competition is very strong.

4 Implementation of BC Labs

During the application process, opened on 15th January 2019, a total of 400 people signed up to participate into the selection process and more than 300 individual interviews have been conducted.

The selection process has been carried out in parallel for the creation of all BC Labs (and the related ETEIs).

The selection process consisted on three different admission tests:

- IoT, Front End Web Development and Drones and Robotics shared the same test which was focused on logical reasoning, maths and a high level of Spanish language.
- Catering, Green Production and Urban Creation and Recycling BC Labs shared the same test based on basic level of Spanish language and maths.
- BC Lab Care of dependent persons had a dedicated test due to the need to comply with national regulation and to ensure that all potential participants willing to access this Lab were well prepared to work with dependent persons.

All the three tests were composed by 10 multi-choice questions and 3 essay questions related to migration, teamwork and motivation.

Individual interviews have then been organized for all applicants who successfully passed the tests. Nearly 300 applicants have been interviewed, from which a total of 140 participants have been selected. During the interviews, topics like engagement, motivation and teamwork have

been evaluated, as well as the applicants' positions about migration and integration of different cultures.

The selection process for all BC Labs has been completed in mid-March, allowing to kick-off all working groups by the end of the month.

All ETEIs, designed as an introductory module of any BC Labs, started between March and April 2019:

- BC Lab Green Production started on 19th March 2019, and a total of 66 hours of ETEIs are planned.
- BC Lab Catering BC Lab started on 22nd March 2019, and a total of 35 hours of ETEIs are planned.
- BC Lab Care for dependent persons started on 25th March 2019, and a total of 40 hours of ETEIs are planned.
- BC Lab Internet of Things started on 26th March 2019, and a total of 150 hours of ETEIs are planned.
- BC Lab Front End Web Development started on 26th March 2019, and a total of 115 hours of ETEIs are planned.
- BC Lab Drones and Robotics started on 1st April 2019, and a total of 56 hours of ETEIs are planned.
- BC Lab Urban Creation and Recycling started on 3rd April 2019, and a total of 71 hours of ETEIs are planned.

Let's now analyse more in detail how all BC Labs have been implemented:

BC Lab Catering:

The content of the theoretical training of this BC Lab has been created with specialized professionals who have previously carried out several trainings in the same field. The teaching consists of a theoretical and a practical part: having the kitchen next to the classroom allows trainers to combine the two parts simultaneously. The lead trainer is a seasoned and professional chef, in charge to teach new culinary techniques.

Business challenges foreseen for the Lab have been modified since the catering part could not be developed due to the lack of facilities. Two companies are collaborating in this laboratory

BC Lab Internet of Things:

MHS, a company focused on installation and maintenance of IoT devices, is responsible of designing and imparting the main contents of the Lab. Telefonica Foundation is backing up the contents with their IoT department. This Lab will provide a service to the City Council by installing and monitoring devices in CIFE Building which will provide energetic efficiency reports.

For this Lab, interviews have been held in groups of 2 to 4 people, where topics as motivation, engagement and attitude towards teamwork were measured through a questionnaire and a group discussion. The company leading the

BC Lab Front-End Web Development:

After surveying several tech companies on the most requested skills to provide services as a Front-End Web Developer, the following programming languages and competences have been identified: HTML5, CSS3, JavaScript, Scrum, UX and basic graphic design contents. Local small and medium companies will provide Business Challenges related to web pages construction for this Lab:

offering workshops and non-work-related practices for participants, focusing on the kitchen part.

This BC Lab started on March 22 and will end on June 11. Participants will have technical training from Monday to Thursday from 09:30 to 13:30, for an overall total of 200 hours. Fridays are instead dedicated to ETEIs, for an overall total of 44 hours. In June, participants will also have the opportunity to benefit from 80 hours of practical training.

Dates: from 22nd March 2019 to 11th June 2019

Total hours: 224 hours (+80)

Training Leader: CESAL (www.cesal.org)

training designed a specific competence test in order to survey capacities of participants.

Technical training, mainly concentrated at the beginning of the week, will last for an overall 155 hours, while ETEIs, mainly concentrated at the end of the week, will last for an overall 150 hours.

Dates: from 26th March 2019 to 28th June 2019

Total hours: 305 hours

Training Leader: Fundacion Telefonica (<https://www.fundaciontelefonica.com/>)

- Chocolate Comunicación: Master class in basic graphic design
- La Manada Comunicación: Master class in Service Design
- Nestrategia: Master class in WordPress
- Calibre 360: Master class in Scrum
- Aeioros: Business challenges and venture set-up

- Flexbot: Business challenges and venture set-up
- FontVenta: Business challenges and venture set-up

For this lab, interviews have been held in groups of 6 to 8 people, where topics as motivation, engagement and attitude towards teamwork were measured through a questionnaire and a group discussion. Further specific programming tests for applicants were also scheduled to do at home in a week time in order to prove self-

BC Lab Care for dependent persons:

Since this BC Lab is a training regulated by national law (and granting a recognized certification), there is limited room for innovative technical and practical training. However, many companies are collaborating on different workshops as well as to receive students visits at their facilities. Some companies have also agreed to give workshops related to the following niche topics: family mediation and conciliation. These topics have been selected due to the uprising market demand. Moreover, many companies are interested in providing “no labour practices” in order to test the competences and capacities acquired by the participants. Due to the need to

BC Lab Green Production:

For the creation of the content related to the theoretical training of this BC Lab, several companies within the network of consortium partners have been contacted, although none of them has been able to accept to be in the charge of the delivery of the training; thus, CIFE directly hired a lead trainer for the overall management and monitoring of the Lab. Companies contacted will still carry out specific vertical workshops, and will also welcome participants for “no-labour

learning attitude (a necessary skill to take advantage of the technical contents of this Lab).

Participants will have technical training from Monday to Thursday from 09:30 to 13:30, for an overall total of 250 hours. Fridays (and the entire two last weeks of the course) are instead dedicated to ETEIs, for an overall total of 115 hours.

Dates: from 26th March 2019 to 12th July 2019

Total hours: 365 hours

comply with the national regulation, ETEIs have been concentrated in the first three weeks of the course, for a total of 40 hours. Technical training then started from 17th April, following an intense from Monday to Friday from 09.00 am to 02.00 pm. formula, for a total of 330 hours. During the first two weeks of September participants will also have the opportunity to get 50 hours of practical training.

Dates: from 25th March 2019 to 5th August 2019

Total hours: 370 hours (+50 hours).

Training Leader: AMAVIR (<https://www.amavir.es>) and ARQUISOCIAL (<https://www.arquisocial.es/>)

practices” in which they will practice the techniques and skills learned during the training. This BC Lab foresees a total of 66 hours of ETEIs training. Technical training, from Monday to Friday from 09.00 am to 02.00 pm., will last for an overall 250 hours. In July, participants will also benefit from 80 hours of practical training.

Dates: from 19th March 2019 to 25th June 2019

Total hours: 316 hours (+80)

Urban Creation and Recycling BC Lab:

ECOEMBES is the company co-managing this Laboratory and leading the training. They have designed all the theoretical contents of the capacity building program. The course consists of:

- 100 hours technical training
- 71 hours soft skills.
- 100 hours practical training in companies associated to ECOEMBES.

ECOEMBES is a national company founded in 1996 in anticipation of the national Law 11/97 on Packaging and Packaging Waste. Law 11/97 sets out obligations intended to aid in the recovery of packaging waste and in its subsequent processing and recycling. ECOEMBES has relations with all subjects involved in the packaging recycling process:

- companies that market packaged products;
- users who buy them and, after consuming them, deposit them into proper containers;

Drones and Robotics BC Lab:

Sector Dron is the co-manager company which is leading the training of this BC Lab.

This company has designed the entire capacity building process, and will be involved in both the technical and the practical training. The company has identified the following business challenges:

- construction of custom circuits for racing drones,
- design and customization of unique pieces manufactured through 3d printing, plotter and CNC machine.

- government agencies that handle the pick-up;
- recyclers who process them and make it possible for them to be converted into new products

ECOEMBES, and the City Council Department of Environment have already identified a new market niche and are working together to develop a future service for plastic waste recuperation for the second edition of this BC Lab.

ETEIs will last for a total of 71 hours, while training activities will last for a total of 100 hours. Participants will benefit also from 100 hours of practical training, in between May and June 2019.

Dates: from 3rd April 2019 to 10th July 2019

Total hours: 271 hours (+100 hours).

Training Leader: ECOEMBES
(<https://www.ecoembes.com/es>)

Moreover, different companies will also collaborate for the delivery of vertical workshops and professional forums. The Lab will include a total of 250 hours of theoretical training, and a total of 56 hours of ETEIs.

Dates: from 1st April 2019 to 5th July 2019

Total hours: 306 hours

Training Leader: SECTOR DRON
(<https://sectordron.es>)

5 Analysis of the Challenges

On one hand, BCLABs + ETEIs registered a growing interest from participants and local businesses, showing that the need for improvement of employment rates in the local community was high and that topics selected for BC LABs were compelling.

On the other hand, complexity is still given by delays in the process towards the full renovation of local buildings for carrying on the next round of the capacity building program.

MAPPING MILMA PROJECT AGAINST THE ESTABLISHED UIA CHALLENGES

Challenge	Level	Observations
1. Leadership for implementation	Low	<p>Consortium members showed up to date commitment to reach the goals, and complementarity in the skills needed for the effective implementation of project’s activities.</p> <p>The City Hall led the process, designing the strategy, and other partners brought to the table their respective expertise and network. This especially proved to be essential for the recruitment of both individual participants and companies willing to join BC LABs.</p>
2. Public procurement	High	<p>The overall public procurement process, foreseen for the selection of providers to renovate CIFE centers (both main site and secondary “Los Arcos” site), has been consistently slowed with respect to the original timeline.</p> <p>The City Hall is working to reduce the delay as much as possible, and to deliver a first part of the renovation works on time for the second batch of the capacity building program.</p>
3. Integrated cross-departmental working	Medium	<p>Activities are running in parallel, following the original plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC Labs have been set up, according to niches identified, and recruitment process underwent with no significant problems • Companies to lead BC Labs have been engaged, and where needed the partnership took the lead • The experimental training process is currently on going, and first results will be released after summer • Network of local/regional businesses for launching new challenges for the second edition of the program is constantly expanding.

Challenge	Level	Observations
4. Adopting a participative approach	Low	<p>All partners participated in the planning of activities, and in the implementation of the first edition of the program.</p> <p>The current design of BC Labs + ETEIs fully covers all aspects related to integration, social inclusion, economic development, training, access to employment opportunities, at a local level, and introduce also innovative elements with respect to previous activities implemented in the region.</p> <p>The project is shaping all its activities accordingly to the original proposal, and taking into consideration the socio-cultural dimension (integration of immigrants into collaborative work), the environmental dimension (promotion of sustainable economy) and the economic dimension (improving employability and technical capacities oriented to the market).</p>
5. Monitoring and evaluation	Medium	<p>Monitoring is on-going for the evaluation of activities already implemented, related to BC Labs and ETEIs.</p> <p>Individual participants to the training programme are monitored and evaluated. At the same time, also companies involved on BC Lab are monitored and evaluated.</p> <p>At the end of first cycle of activities, when results will be available, partners will evaluate eventual adjustments for the second cycle.</p>
6. Financial Sustainability	High	<p>The biggest issue is whether the programme will be successful enough to pave the way for a bigger and permanent engagement of local SMEs into BC Labs, making the scheme financially sustainable.</p> <p>To this end the role of CIFE is key for the whole action. CIFE has already take the lead when needed, when for local SMEs the effort to lead a BC Lab was not sustainable, to sustain the training programme on one hand, and to establish work placements in synergy with SMEs on the other hand.</p>
7. Communicating with target beneficiaries	Low	<p>The project managed to widely promote the opportunity offered to the local community, highlighting the benefits of the participation in the training programme.</p> <p>Early results show interest from both the local immigrants' community, and from young job seekers willing access to the jobs market.</p> <p>Also, communication with SMEs has been quite efficient, being able to reach a good number of local companies.</p>
8. Upscaling	Medium	<p>MILMA project is piloting a new model for local public employment centres. The model could be, if successful easily replicated in the same region, and in other municipalities in Spain or Europe.</p> <p>Results from the first cycle of training are expected to provide early validation of the services tested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhancement of participants' employability through the establishment of a development plan tailored to their specific needs; • huge focus on teamwork and related meta-competencies; • push to develop autonomously a network of contacts and seek opportunities; • development of entrepreneurial skills; • support to develop individual projects and to consider the possibility of becoming entrepreneurs; • connection with business professionals and entrepreneurs to contribute by sharing their knowledge and participating in the scheme's events.

6 Conclusions and next steps

In the previous sections we discussed how the MILMA project is tackling the challenges of integrating migrants into the active workforce, to reduce youth unemployment and to foster entrepreneurship.

The BC Labs + ETEIs scheme is a promising way to tackle these challenges in an effective way and has also the potential to be easily transferred to different regions and cities.

One of the strengths of this scheme is its quick and cost-effective scalability. Key conditions for an effective transfer to other contexts include:

1. **A philosophy of empowerment.** The scheme views the unemployed as valuable human capital rather than as a burden or a liability for society. The scheme's pedagogical model emphasises the importance of educating people to develop their ability to help themselves. Participants are not seen as victims of an unemployment crisis but as active participants in shaping their own destiny. The core design decisions of the model are built around the ideas of empowerment as a mechanism of engagement, self-organisation as the structure, and entrepreneurship as a mind-set.
2. **Develop a strong network structure.** The scheme's organisational model operates following a co-operative society model in which participants self-organise under the guidance of the coach and collaborate to undertake themselves the activities of the course. Further, the engagement of a diverse range of stakeholders who

contribute pro-bono enhances cost-effectiveness of the scheme.

3. **Definition of bottom-up business challenges.** Active involvement of companies is needed to identify the latest market trends, and to craft business challenges responding to the needs of the majority of SMEs active in a given sector.
4. **Participant selection.** Given the importance of participant empowerment and capacity for self-organisation, the appropriate selection of individuals is crucial. A minimum level of competence and personal drive should be assessed as a condition for entry.
5. **Leverage partnerships with experts.** The scheme builds on the strengths and previous experiences of partners, with several years of experience in organizing vocational workshops with disadvantaged and unemployed people. Partners can also count on a very strong network of partnerships with public and private institutions. Partnering with a strong organisation provides credibility to the project, both in the eyes of potential participants and potential partners (e.g. public institutions, funders)

One of the key challenges in the project, recognized by consortium partners, is to address and convince local companies to take part into the scheme. SMEs and startups in particular can be easily convinced about the innovativeness of the scheme, but in many cases, given to their lean and small structure, it could be hard for them to dedicate efforts and human resources to any activity beyond their core business.

Urban Innovative Actions (UIA) is an Initiative of the European Union that provides urban areas throughout Europe with resources to test new and unproven solutions to address urban challenges. Based on article 8 of ERDF, the Initiative has a total ERDF budget of EUR 372 million for 2014-2020.

UIA projects will produce a wealth of knowledge stemming from the implementation of the innovative solutions for sustainable urban development that are of interest for city practitioners and stakeholders across the EU. This journal is a paper written by a UIA Expert that captures and disseminates the lessons learnt from the project implementation and the good practices identified. The journals will be structured around the main challenges of implementation identified and faced at local level by UIA projects. They will be published on a regular basis on the UIA website.



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