

2020-1-DE02-KA227-ADU-008006



Co-funded by  
the European Union

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Creative tools for exploration of creativity  
and personal affirmation

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# Introduction

Creative FEM-Power project was created with the goal to help migrant women tap into their creativity and inner strength so they can better deal with the two main challenges of their integration process – learning the host country language and finding employment. We see these two qualities as essential for success.

Creativity is a universal source of inspiration and invention that can transform even the biggest obstacles into manageable challenges or even opportunities, a personal Philosopher’s stone for turning “lead into gold”. Inner strength or power helps a person persevere and channel their creativity and work towards achieving their goal.

To achieve this, the project aims to intensify the dialogue with female migrants through creative methods. With this in mind, we created **four separate yet connected learning workshops curriculums**.

The main two **“Creative tools for language learning”** and **“Creative tools for job-seeking”** are dedicated to boosting language learning and job-seeking abilities and motivation while the other two are focused on exploring the dormant creativity of the migrant women and affirming their ability and self-worth needed to face the challenges of integration and life in a foreign country in general. The other two are named **“Creative tools for exploration of personal creativity”** and **“Creative tools for personal affirmation”**, or explorative workshop and affirmative workshop for short.

While Creative tools for language learning and Creative tools for job-seeking are described in-depth in two separate documents, explorative and affirmative workshop are described here together as they form a cohesive unit supporting the two main workshops.

The description focuses mainly on the desired effects of the workshops on the participants and how they fit into the framework of the Creative FEM-power project while the curriculum of workshop activities is included in a shorter summarized form.

A more detailed description of the creative methods used in the explorative and affirmative workshop can be found in the **Compendium of Creative Methods** which is a part of the handbook we created as a separate document and a result of the Creative FEM-Power project.

This document contains the following parts:

1. The description of the explorative workshop and its aims;
  - 1.1 Explorative workshop schedule
  - 1.2 The learning outcomes to be achieved in explorative workshop
2. The description of the affirmative workshop and its aims;
  - 2.1. The learning outcomes to be achieved in affirmative workshop;
  - 2.2 Affirmative workshop schedule
3. A brief presentation of participants’ prerequisites;

# Description and aims of the explorative workshop

The workshop “Creative tools for exploration of personal creativity” is a **25-hour course**, structured in **33 didactic units**, lasting **45 minutes each**. The target audience of this workshop are migrant women, more specifically migrant women in working-age, with a sufficient knowledge of the language of the country in which the workshop is held (for more details, see the section about the prerequisites).

The optimal location to develop the workshop is a room or a classroom, providing furniture to sit down together, one table or more, as well as some additional empty space to do standing-up activities or divide in groups. Eventually, it may also require equipment to show a presentation, such as a projector, speakers, and sockets. The materials necessary for the workshop are sheets of paper, pencils/pens, a camera to record videos, and a computer.

The optimal number of participants is 10-12 women. To be able to conduct the workshop, trainers should divide the participants in small groups, as homogeneous as possible for what concerns the knowledge of the language of the host country.

**This workshop is intended to be carried out as the first in the series of four workshops** created in the framework of the Creative FEM-Power project, followed by Creative skills for language learning, Creative skills for job-seeking and Creative tools for personal affirmation, respectively.

As the first in the series, the workshop has two important main goals. The first, as the name implies, is exploration of the creative potential each of us possesses in some shape or form. This is especially important for migrant women who often come from societies that don't encourage or even actively prevent females to develop and express their creativity.

The second goal is preparing the female participants for taking part in all four workshops by getting in touch with their inner-self and by establishing a sense of mental and physical self-awareness and autonomy. This is equally important as daily life challenges that migrant women face as wives, mothers and strangers in a strange land can overwhelm their sense of self and make them feel like they are no longer in control of their lives.

The activities are carried out partly as a group and partly individually. They are focused on building group atmosphere and personal connections between the participants, on developing awareness of internal and external personal space that can simultaneously be intimate and guarded as well as welcoming and shared with others. In this way the participants develop a strong sense of individual autonomy and learn that they have agency to actively influence and shape their lives and the lives of people around them.

Creativity is represented directly and indirectly in all activities as a medium for expression and interpretation of visual, auditory and sensory information. The other underlying principles of the workshop are having fun and feeling safe to express yourself freely.

# Workshop schedule

	<b>Contents</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>didactic units</b>
1. Introduction to the workshop and group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Group and the project</li> <li>- Common rules and boundaries</li> <li>- Expected results</li> <li>- Expectation of the participants</li> <li>- Discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introducing ourselves</li> <li>- Introducing the work environment</li> <li>- Project presentation</li> <li>- Drama contract=safe space</li> <li>- Making rules of the group together activity</li> <li>- Expectations of participants and discussion</li> </ul>	3
2. Getting together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opening our mind and body for communication</li> <li>-Getting to know others</li> <li>-Understanding obstacles between communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Magic soap</li> <li>- Name game: name and movement</li> <li>- Positive look at others</li> </ul>	
3. Sensing and listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Learning to listen to yourself and the space around you</li> <li>-Learning to listen to others and looking for a common rhythm and atmosphere for the group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Walking and without words: forming different kind of shapes together</li> <li>- Walking: listening, sensing and finding a common rhythm. Joint stopping, turning, and jumping</li> </ul>	2
4. Statue-technique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Practicing how to shape their bodies to represent their thinking and understanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Photographer, pair exercise</li> <li>-Frozen/still and moving "statues" that represent a person, feeling or idea.</li> </ul>	2
5. "Something about me" and joint performances with statue-technique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The lifeline exercise, my life before (Italy)</li> <li>-Sharing information/story about yourself to others</li> <li>-Others share their own interpretation for the teller</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Biographic work</li> <li>- Telling the story about yourself through chosen pictures and objects</li> <li>-Frozen/still and moving "statues" that represent a person, story, feeling or idea</li> </ul>	4

6. Improvisation games, warming ups and having fun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Having fun, letting go of self-control and learning that there are no mistakes, only happy accidents with drama games</li> <li>-Find the word (Germany)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Circulating clapping</li> <li>-Look left change place</li> <li>-Kani kani kani (bunny)</li> <li>-5 hands, 4 feet, 3 heads</li> <li>-Storytelling, word association</li> </ul>	3
7. Encountering and accepting others. Giving and receiving gifts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Approving, not rejecting others and ideas. How do they affect us?</li> <li>- How to influence each other in a positive way</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Suggestion and answer “no-because” (rejection)</li> <li>-Suggestion and answer “yes-and” (approving)</li> <li>-Mimic definition exercises</li> <li>-Giving and receiving mimic gifts</li> <li>-Doing something together with mimic gifts</li> </ul>	3
8. Calming down, empowering ourselves and sharing a personal beautiful view.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-How do you want to be seen and treated</li> <li>- Encouraging to share and understand your own needs.</li> <li>- Learning to trust someone else</li> <li>-Understanding your strength and searching for techniques that empower us</li> <li>-Relaxation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Exploring your personal needs for communication and writing them down</li> <li>-Trusting exercises e.g. blind walking with a pair</li> <li>-Searching (image) your own personal power place/beautiful place and sharing it to with your pair</li> <li>-The wall of “How do you want to be seen and treated”</li> </ul>	3
9. Setting your boundaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Setting healthy boundaries for personal time, friends etc.</li> <li>-How to give but also take space and share it with other people</li> <li>-Saying no without feeling quilt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Own personal space</li> <li>-Saying “NO” in different ways</li> </ul>	3
10. Courage circle and meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Non-verbal expression</li> <li>- What are we like in different situations and at different stages of life? What roles do we have?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Walking in a space with different emotions</li> <li>-Courage circle, numbers 1-5. Non-verbal expression.</li> </ul>	3

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How can we become aware of them and use them.</li> <li>-How our own “status/being present” affects other people</li> </ul>	-Playing with meetings between different kinds of caricature characters	
11. Knot and spider web	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Empower the group</li> <li>-We can solve problems and create energy together.</li> <li>-We are all connected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Knot: Problem solving together</li> <li>-Spider web: Creating a support network of ball of wool. Strings in every hands and testing the strength.</li> </ul>	2
12. Closing and feedback	Participants reflect and give feedback	-Grid or line to collect and investigate emotions and learning results.	2
TOTAL units			33

# Learning outcomes

The objective of this workshop is to allow the participants to explore their personal creativity and to strengthen their sense of mental and physical self-awareness and autonomy. Indeed, the course aims at generating different **learning outcomes**, which are:

- ✓ Getting to know the basic information about the workshop and other Creative FEM-Power project workshops
- ✓ Having a stronger sense of belonging and stronger skills for listening and communicating
- ✓ Having a better understanding of non-verbal communication and how to interpret it
- ✓ Stronger self-esteem and sense of personal identity in relation to other people
- ✓ Stronger ability to improvise, be creative and see mistakes as opportunities
- ✓ Better interaction skills and ability to accept approval and rejection
- ✓ Awareness and understanding that their personal needs are important
- ✓ Have a clearer understanding of personal space and boundaries and tools to uphold them
- ✓ Sense of accomplishment while working together
- ✓ More courage to voice their opinion



# Description and aims of the affirmative workshop

The workshop “Creative tools for personal affirmation” is a **15-hour course**, structured in **20 didactic units**, lasting **45 minutes each**. The target audience of this workshop are migrant women, more specifically migrant women in working-age, with a sufficient knowledge of the language of the country in which the workshop is held (for more details, see the section about the prerequisites).

The optimal location to develop the workshop is a room or a classroom, providing furniture to sit down together, one table or more, as well as some additional empty space to do standing-up activities or divide in groups. Eventually, it may also require equipment to show a presentation, such as a projector, speakers, and sockets. The materials necessary for the workshop are sheets of paper, pencils/pens, a camera to record videos, and a computer.

The optimal number of participants is 10-12 women. To be able to conduct the workshop, trainers should divide the participants in small groups, as homogeneous as possible for what concerns the knowledge of the language of the host country.

**This workshop is intended to be carried out as the last in the series of four workshops** created in the framework of the Creative FEM-Power project.

As the last in the series, the workshop has several important goals.

First, to further affirm the participant’s abilities to deal with the challenges of integration and life in a host-country society. This is done by various creative activities aimed at capturing real-life challenges of migrant women and facing them in a safe and forgiving realm of creativity.

Second, to further improve the participant’s self-esteem and faith in their own abilities through creative expression. This is done through a series of activities like poetry, photography, cooking and knitting that allow everyone to be creative in their own way.

Third, to help the participants take the first steps towards achieving their goal of integration by envisioning concrete and realistic life-goals using simple techniques of self-affirmation and creative visualization.

As a whole the workshop tries to bring together all the themes and goals of the first three Workshops and provide additional support, motivation and resources that migrant women can use on their path to integration. At the same time the workshops promote creativity and feminine strength, two concepts at the core of the Creative FEM-Power project.

# Workshop schedule

	<b>Contents</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Units (45 min)</b>
1. Introduction to the affirmative workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- activities</li> <li>- expected results</li> <li>- expectations of the participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- presentation with Q&amp;A</li> <li>- discussion</li> </ul>	1
2. Self-affirmations and Creative visualization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- identification of negative characteristics, life situations</li> <li>- reworking negatives into (realistic) positives</li> <li>- finding motivation and grounding oneself by setting life goals</li> <li>- Affirming oneself</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- self-reflection and realistic assessment of one's situation</li> <li>- creating positive statements based on the negatives</li> <li>- repeating positive statements alone or with a partner</li> <li>- creating visual images of realistic and positive life-goals</li> <li>- sharing, discussion</li> </ul>	2
3. Simply poetic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- choosing of themes, ideas</li> <li>- turning ideas into verses – affirming oneself through creative process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- reflection, thinking and preparation process</li> <li>- Writing of the poem(s)</li> <li>- Reading, sharing, interpretation, explanation</li> </ul>	2
4. Every picture tells a story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- taking affirmative pictures with a camera/making a short inspirational affirmative video</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- preparation, finding a theme for the photography or video</li> <li>- taking photos/recording a video (potentially editing the video)</li> <li>- sharing the results, presenting, interpreting, discussion</li> </ul>	3
5. Building inner strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- identification of negative characteristics, life situations</li> <li>- reworking negatives into (realistic) positives</li> <li>-Affirming oneself through repetition of the affirmations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- self-reflection and realistic assessment of one's situation</li> <li>- creating positive statements based on the negatives</li> <li>- repeating positive statements alone or with a partner</li> </ul>	3

		- sharing, discussion	
6. Culinary self-expression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- developing creativity through inventing or reimagining a recipe with a personal note</li> <li>- affirming and expressing oneself by executing the recipe</li> <li>- building up personal creativity by arranging and naming the food</li> <li>- practicing improvisational and presenting skills by presenting and explaining the culinary creations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- choosing or creating a recipe</li> <li>- preparing the food in line with the recipe</li> <li>- arranging and naming the food</li> <li>- sharing and explaining the food</li> </ul>	4
7. Adventures in Knitting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- using creativity to design a pattern or product for knitting</li> <li>- developing practical and manual skills by knitting</li> <li>- affirming oneself by developing/improving a demanding skill</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- learning about the basics of knitting by observing others live or on video</li> <li>- choosing a pattern or product to knit</li> <li>- knitting</li> <li>- resenting and explaining your creation</li> </ul>	3
8. Self-affirmations and Creative visualization + feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- identification of negative characteristics, life situations</li> <li>- reworking negatives into (realistic) positives</li> <li>- finding motivation and grounding oneself bsetting life goals</li> <li>- Affirming oneself</li> <li>- Reflecting on the Creative Fem Power experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- self-reflection and realistic assessment of one's situation</li> <li>- creating positive statements based on the negatives</li> <li>- repeating positive statements alone or with a partner</li> <li>- creating visual images of realistic and positive life goals</li> <li>- Evaluating Creative Fem Power activities from personal perspective</li> <li>- sharing, discussion</li> </ul>	2
			8 units/ 20 hours

# Learning outcomes

The objectives of this workshop are to affirm the faith of the participants in their abilities to face the challenges of integration, to improve their creativity and to help them envision realistic life goals they can pursue. Indeed, the course aims at generating different **learning outcomes**, which are:

- ✓ Better understanding of the power of self-affirmation
- ✓ Stronger self-reflection skills, ability to face personal fears and negative self-image
- ✓ Stronger ability to formulate goals, wishes and desires
- ✓ Stronger creative thinking ability, general creativity and improvisation skills
- ✓ Better understanding of own agency to change personal circumstances
- ✓ stronger sense of self-worth and motivation
- ✓ Stronger resilience in face of diversity
- ✓ More courage to act and try new things

# Participant prerequisites

In accordance with the themes and objectives of the project in which this workshop was developed (intensifying the dialogue with female migrants through creative methods), the participants should possess **three main prerequisites** to be able to take part in the activities:

- 1- They should be women.
- 2- They should have a migration background.
- 3- They should have a knowledge of the country language (depending on where the course is held) reaching minimum a B1 level (CEFR levels, see below).

According to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for Languages, a person reaching the B1 level of language knowledge can:

- understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc.
- deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken.
- produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest.
- describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes, and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.

The characteristics of the CEFR levels can be consulted at:

<https://www.eui.eu/documents/servicesadmin/languagecentre/cef.pdf>

Having said that, it is important to mention that this curriculum can be adapted to different groups of participants. Indeed, the activities can be proposed to all adults and young adults, regardless of their gender. They do not necessarily need to be women. Moreover, the parts of the course referring specifically to migration experiences can be changed and adapted to the characteristics of the participants. For example, if the group members have a common background of another kind, the parts of the curriculum that deal with the elaboration of the past can be modified and adapted to be more compliant with their personal experiences.

## Tips for the trainers

As a trainer, if you notice that the language knowledge of the participants is lower than requested or expected, you can find alternative strategies and means to facilitate communication and learning. For instance, nonverbal communication, such as communication through images, videos, and sounds, is notably a powerful and universal tool to understand each other when verbal communication encounters obstacles or is insufficient to convey a message. It is always possible to support the various parts of your course with slides or visual contents to enable all participants to gather the main points, even if they do not understand the verbal explanation completely.