The article below summarizes the methodology and the main outcomes obtained after the Pilot phase of the training course developed in the framework of the Erasmus + Project DITRAMA, with the participation of students and young workers from 17 different EU Countries.

DITRAMA – Article #6

EUROPEAN STUDENTS AND YOUNG WORKERS RESPOND ENTHUSIASTICALLY TO THE CHALLENGE OF THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE FURNITURE SECTOR

"Ditrama" (www.ditrama.eu) is a project *c*o-funded *by* the European Union's Erasmus + Programme to train the **Digital Transformation Manager** for furniture manufacturing companies.

INTRODUCTION

The multimedia training course DITRAMA - Digital Transformation Manager for the furniture sector has passed the pilot test phase, arousing interest, curiosity and attention among its learners.

"The course has been a great source of information and inspiration, with the opportunity to learn new topics about the furniture sector, ICT and enterprises, allowing to broaden my field of knowledge and maybe to redirect and focus future training or employment search."

This citation, expressed by one of the participants of the final quality survey of DITRAMA Pilot test, summarizes in few words the shared experience of most of the learners and the opportunity opened by DITRAMA to approach in a new way the challenges of the digital transition in a traditional sector, which is the furniture sector. In the meanwhile, it attests the need of innovative ways of learning from the students' and young workers' point of view. The final outcomes with more than 475 learners preregistered to the training course, 116 participants that took an active participation in the course, and the wide engagement of VET/HE students demonstrate that the digital transition can become a primary leverage for the attractiveness of the sector.

The following remarks aim to summarize the methodology and the process implemented by the DITRAMA Consortium for testing the online training course and its related main outcomes.

1. Implementation of the Pilot action

The pilot action, led by CETEM, the Technological Centre of Furniture and Wood of the Murcia Region (Spain) focussed on the delivery of the online Pilot Course and has served to field-test the compliance of the defined training paths for the target groups and the effectiveness of learning materials.

The **objectives** of the pilot course were:

1. **Identify and select the participants** to the project Pilot Course
2. Implement the Training Pilot Course and **support the learners** in the process.
3. Develop a **validation report** of the training materials based on learners' feedbacks and **identify the improvements** in relation to the training course content, methodology and platform functioning.

The selection of participants started with the identification of the potential learners. Several databases, distribution lists, specific email campaigns, etc… were carried out by the partners of the Consortium in order to cover as widely as possible the different **target groups** (**VET/HE students**, young **workers from sectoral companies**, workers coming from different sectors with **IT/Technology specialisation**, **start-up representatives**, **researchers**).

The potential learners applied their manifestation of interest with an e-form, specifying the chosen language of the training course (available in seven languages).

With the official start of the Pilot Course – on May the 10th 2021 – **435 participants** were pre-registered to the Course:

	English	Spanish	Portuguese	Polish	French	Romanian	Italian
Pre-registrations	184	50	51	8	1	135	46

For each idiom, the Consortium has identified at least one **tutor**, to communicate and support the learners in their own language, using the integrated communication tools of the DITRAMA platform (forum, direct emails, discussion box).

A **technical Guide for the use of the platform** was available, in pdf format, to support the the training process within the DITRAMA platform. Each learner could attend the course according to his/her own rhythm and re-watch each pill at any time, or jump from one pill to another.

Furthermore, each learner could choose the EQF level of the course, based upon their profile and interests: full version of the course, corresponding to **EQF 5** or the version **EQF 4**, with a reduction of the number of the training pills.
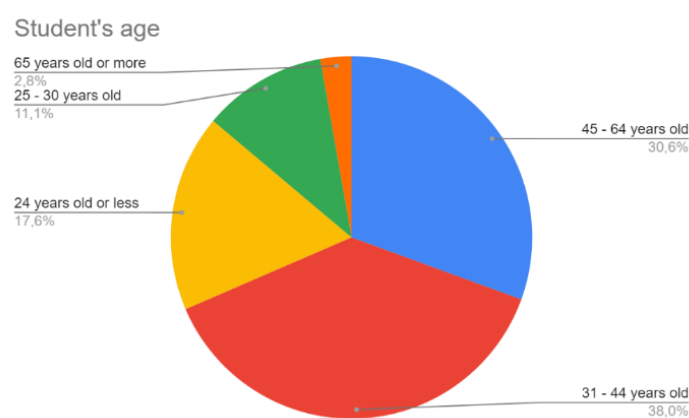
Simultaneously with the beginning of the course, all the actual participants completed a **first socio-demographic survey**. The main insights are the following:

a. Age of the learners
38% of the learners are between 30 and 44 years old.
Almost 30% are younger than 30 years.
33% of the learners are 45 years old or older.

b. Educational profile (according to the ISCED classification)
The educational profile range of DITRAMA learners is very broad: from secondary education to Ph.D. with the highest representation of Master Degree students (36%).
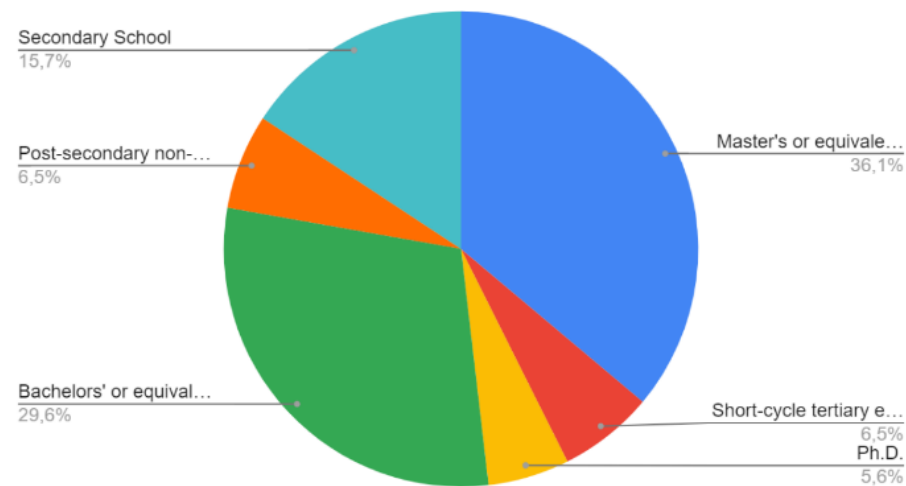
DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION MANAGER

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

Education level (ISCED classification)

Secondary School
15,7%

Post-secondary non-...
6,5%

Master's or equivale...
36,1%

Bachelors' or equival...
29,6%

Short-cycle tertiary e...
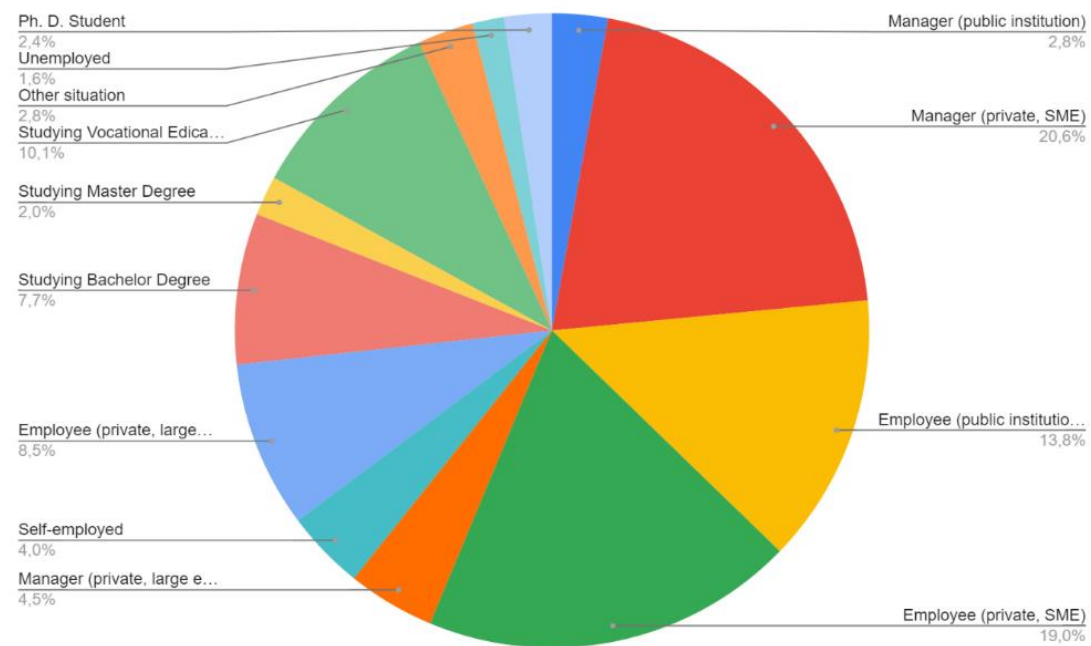6,5%
Ph.D.
5,6%

c. Professional Profile

Analysing the academic or professional occupation of DITRAMA Learners, it emerges that 28% of them are students, while almost 70% are currently workers from different types of organisations: private SME (19%), private large companies (8,5%), public enterprises (13,8%). Within this group there was a **high representation of managers**. The main field of expertise (both for students and workers) is **Design and Production** (47%), with a significant representation of business managers (15,8%), sales and marketing experts (10,5%), ICT (6,1%) and R&D (5,3%).

The second part of the survey investigated the level of **technical and non-technical previous knowledge** of the learners. Most of them started with **null or basic knowledge** of the technical and non-technical DITRAMA topics (see the DITRAMA Curriculum for the details). Otherwise, all of them declared **the necessity to enhance their knowledge of the new technologies for digitization** as well as their transversal competences (communication, people management, quality and risk management).

The expectations have been satisfied, as declared within the **final survey**, completed by more than **40 respondents**.

The questionnaire was focused on the **time needed to complete the course**, **the number of pills** as well as **the methodology** to learn the different concepts proposed. There were also some questions about the **e-learning platform** and finally we requested **an overall evaluation** of the course.

The learners appreciated **the length of the Course**, the **number of Pills** for both the EQF levels, the **quality and clarity of the contents** and the **general structure** of the topics. The **platform** has been evaluated as **innovative** and **user-friendly**. 62% of the responders ranked the **quality of the pills** as very good, 29% as good and 9% as average. No one ranked the pills quality as poor.

The last section of the survey aimed to compare the perception of the students on the complexity of technical topics and how they perceived the **improvement about their level of knowledge** on that topic.

The **videos** were the **favourite type of content**, followed by the PDF documents.

After the training course, each learner is free to complete an **additional guided case-study**, in which he/she should apply the lessons learnt. The student should work on proposing:

- an analysis of the company's digital maturity status and a hypothetical diagnosis.
- one or several technology solutions that allow digitisation of a manufacturing process and other business stages as marketing, purchasing, HR, etc…
- a series of next steps that deepens the company's shift towards a digital mindset: internal/external communication, leadership management, sustainability, etc…

Conclusion

After the Pilot phase, the online platform has been improved according to the suggestions and remarks reported by the participants of the Pilot test. The new and final version is from now on available here www.aula.ditrama.eu It is free for all students, workers and interested people that want to improve their knowledge and competences about Digital Transformation in the furniture sector.

The DITRAMA experience still continues!

Project leader:

CENFIM – Centre de Difusiò Tecnologica de la Fusta i del Moble de Catalunya (La Sénia – Spain)

Project Consortium

Aarhus Universitet (Aarhus – Denmark)

Woodwize (Brussel – Belgium)

CETEM – Centro Tecnologico del Mueble y la Madeira de la Region de Murcia (Murcia – Spain)

U.E.A. – European Furniture Manufacturers Federation based in Prague (Czech Republic)

AMIC – Associacio Agrupacio Moble Innovador de Catalunya (Barcelona – Spain)

CFPIMM – Centro de Formação Profissional das Indústrias da Madeira e Mobiliário (Lordelo – Portugal)

FederlegnoArredo – Federazione Italiana delle industrie del legno, del sughero, del mobile, dell'illuminazione, dell'arredamento (Milano – Italy)

OIGPM – Ogolnopolska Izba Gospodarcza Producentow Mebli (Warsaw – Poland)

Método Estudio Consultores – (Vigo – Spain)

HOGENT – (Gent – Belgium)

Universitatea Transilvania din Brasov (Brasov – Romania)

For more information:

http://ditrama.eu/
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