STEP UP

TRAINER TOOLKIT AND WORKSHOP METHODOLOGY

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Credits

We would like to thank all the experts, professionals and citizens who kindly agreed to share their experiences with us and gave us information on measures and other practices.

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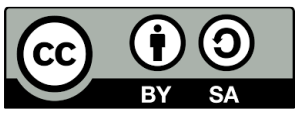

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1. Workshop methodology

1.1 Background

Since the first COVID-19 cases appeared, countries in Europe and all over the world have developed different strategies and responses to cope with the pandemic. Despite the sense of relief since the availability of vaccines, a collaborative leadership approach will be essential and working together as a collective, investing in a participatory citizenship, will be key. The frequency of new pandemic outbreaks has been increasing tremendously in the course of the last decades.

Apart from technical innovations and new ways of coping that are being developed, there is the need to prepare bottom-up initiatives that build-up the competences of social and health care professionals, community leaders, informal caregivers and volunteers so that they are prepared to deal with such emergency situations in the future.

The STEP_UP project has developed a supportive and innovative training programme for this purpose. It includes training materials, instructions for facilitators and especially an online game. The aim is to provide low-threshold access to target group-oriented guidelines and knowledge on early detection, preventive measures, health and social care interventions, policies and communication.

In order to carry out the training programme successfully, facilitators will be able to find methods and appropriate content in this toolkit. It contains suggestions for contents and methods to be selected according to the specific needs of the learners. The duration of the workshop varies between 2.5 hours and 2 days according to the number of selected topics and the design of the introductory and completing sessions.

The settings described in the following part form the basis of the STEP_UP curriculum.

1.2 Aims and target groups of STEP_UP workshops

The STEP_UP project addresses different target groups with the aim to build on competences and increase resilience to improve their communities in pandemic situations. Being acquainted with the characteristics of learners is important to prepare for a workshop.

STEP_UP addresses responsible persons in public health authorities, municipality officials as well as health and social care workers and volunteers in the local community. What distinguishes these target groups?

- Insight into professional processes of care and provision

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- Often in direct contact with clients
- In charge of decisions or recommendations with impacts on individual behaviour
- Having to deal directly with statements and attitudes of clients and react to them

As a rule, the above-mentioned target groups have sufficient basic information, but benefit from the opportunity of having an exchange about new insights and methods, as well as one's own working practice. It can also be inspiring for them to discuss political decisions that have an impact on care and community work.

STEP_UP also addresses all other citizens and may, for example, attract especially informal carers, members of senior associations and everybody else interested in dealing with crisis situations during a pandemic. This group of learners is very diverse, and it can be assumed that there is no direct specialist knowledge about the practice in social and health care. However, working with concrete practical examples can give all participants good insights. Having participants with very different backgrounds in a workshop, the challenge is to make sure that all attendants can follow. At the same time, this offers the opportunity for interdisciplinary exchange and becoming acquainted with contrasting perspectives.

Other factors that are relevant to the design of a workshop are the educational background of the participants, their personal motivation and interests as well as their opportunities to engage with learning content. With its focus on an online learning game, the STEP_UP workshop is an easily accessible, low-threshold educational offer. It explicitly reaches out to people who are not interested in conventional trainings and may have a low level of formal education. They are not considered a separate target group, but can also be found in some of the above-mentioned professional sectors.

The aim of the STEP_UP workshop is to encourage learners to better understand where to look for reliable information, learn how to deal with pandemic contexts like that of Covid-19, and better empathise with political decisions. Paid staff and volunteers in social and health care organisations as well as in associations and initiatives are shown opportunities and strategies to contribute to raising public awareness and acting appropriately in times of pandemics.

All target groups are thus equipped with strategies for intervention. By acting competently, they act as multipliers and pass on examples of good practice to other individuals and organisations. Learners with lower levels of education are encouraged to participate in a learning experience through the simple, low-threshold approach and the easy accessibility of the game scenarios.

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1.3 Training methods

The STEP_UP project and the learning offer are designed for adult education. This field of education is characterised by the assumption that participants already have qualifications gained by formal, non-formal or informal education or life experiences. Further education offers must respect these experiences. They are valuable resources if shared among participants. The approach of the workshop is action-oriented with a focus on providing participants with practical knowledge that they can apply in their everyday lives.

The STEP_UP project uses a multi-step methodological approach to the particular topics or issues covered in the course of the workshop. As a guiding principle, it intends to provide individual and practical access to measures that create inclusive environments. Schematically, it can be broken down into four points:

- Personal approach
- Analysis
- Dealing with conflicts
- Positive outcome

The idea behind a personal approach is to choose an entry point that has direct relevance to learners. It is important that participants are able to contribute their own knowledge and experience and that there is also enough space for them to share these experiences. The opposite approach is to start by dealing with theoretical texts and background knowledge. This is often the case in typical university seminars, but it is not suitable for the concept of this workshop. A personal approach is easily accessible, creates a space for exchanges among all participants and focuses on very concrete experiential knowledge. This can be particularly helpful for target groups with a low level of formal education.

The next step in the learning experience is the analysis of a given situation. This means dealing with the topic in more detail. Based on the knowledge gained from experience and the exchanges between learners, practical examples can be analysed to identify their positive and negative aspects. Analysis is also a useful step to look at and discuss the problem that has been identified on a structural level. This requires sound background knowledge on the facilitator' side to foster participants' ability to abstract.

During the analysis phase, conflicts will emerge. Conflicts can arise, for example, where personal interests and group interests collide. Conflicts can be used to vividly discuss the advantages and disadvantages of certain measures, decisions or laws. Different solutions or possible interventions can be considered and their advantages and disadvantages discussed. Dealing with conflicts is important for the workshops, as it can be used to work out solution strategies and practise tackling complex problems. Dealing with conflicts also necessitates a change of perspective, otherwise no satisfactory solutions can be found.

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Solutions to existing problems are an important element in the methodological structure of the workshops. The scenes of the learning game are used in this context to provide learners with very concrete experiences, especially in relation to the impacts of their decisions. Learners will walk in the shoes of a specific character. In addition to individual learning experiences, it is desirable that positive outcomes are also reached by all learners at the end of each topic.

The following steps build on each other and range from a simple exchange of knowledge to abstraction and the practical design of solution strategies. This learning process includes a variety of learning objectives, all based on Bloom's taxonomy (from bottom to top):

- Evaluation of results;
- Synthesis and creative combination of known information;
- Analysis of facts and problems to identify essential elements;
- Application of knowledge to previously unknown concrete tasks and problems;
- Understanding of connections, recognition of the meanings of partial information, recombination, making predictions;
- Knowledge of facts, methods and theories of the respective field of knowledge.

Important preconditions for learning are time and the opportunity to exchange experiences and insights. This is relevant when planning workshops. Prior assessment of the learning goals that can be achieved by the group and knowing what prior knowledge is available are important. Over- or under-challenging learners always has negative effects. The following examples can be used as guidance:

- Playing the game will provide new knowledge and insights. However, reaching a higher level of abstraction without further engagement with the content will not be possible.
- Combining the game with a one-day workshop can initiate further steps here. In group discussions, problems can be analysed in greater depth, connections can be recognised and solution strategies can be worked out. Even in short workshops, topics can be discussed in great detail and sometimes with a high degree of abstraction. This can be achieved by focusing on key topics. The results of a one-day workshop strongly depend on learners and their prior knowledge.
- Combining the game with a two-day workshop, with a gap in between, further enables the application of practical solution strategies between the two days and their evaluation. In addition, further thematic blocks can be dealt with based on these experiences.

In summary and with regard to adult education, it is important to always keep participants' experiential knowledge in mind. This should be an active part of the workshop. Here are some more things to keep in mind when giving a workshop:

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- Explain the benefits and goal of the workshop clearly;
- Avoid monotony;
- Be flexible and open;
- Be yourself;
- Communicate clearly and in a friendly manner;
- Do not overburden participants;
- Give space for conversations and do not talk too much.

1.4 Preparation

Basically, the tools for facilitators developed by the STEP_UP project are not only meant for specialised organisations in adult education but can also be used by staff and volunteers of social and health care organisations, associations and initiatives who are experienced in moderating groups.

As in all educational contexts, facilitators must consider the following key aspects when preparing their workshops:

- Why? Purpose of the training.
- For whom? Characteristics of the learners.
- What for? Participants' learning objectives.
- What? Contents and topics.
- How? Methods and organisation.
- Where? Learning environment.
- By what means? Media used in digital and analogue training.

The workshop curriculum contains suggestions and ideas to answer the above questions. Nevertheless, before each workshop, learners' backgrounds must be clarified as much as possible to decide the most suitable learning contents and methods. Preparation for individual needs is indispensable.

The decision on the complexity of the educational content is of the utmost importance. The principle of 'didactic reduction' aims to reduce facts and content in such a way that they are clear and understandable for learners. The reduction of content can relate to two aspects. On the one hand, it is possible to limit the scope of the content to be conveyed. On the other hand, didactic reduction is possible through a simplified representation of complex facts by reducing them to basic concepts, ideas and methods. However, their validity remains in full, even with a major simplification, when transiting from a strongly differentiated to a more general statement.

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For the approach presented here, the following points are important:

- It is aimed at realistic use and practical application.
- The workshop builds on existing knowledge.
- Participants' prior knowledge is an important part of the learning process.
- Participants' individual knowledge is taken into account.

For methods to identify prior learning of adult learners see the handbook of the IGCAL project (Improving Guidance and Counselling for Adult Learners): (https://www.afedemy.eu/IGCAL/IGCAL_Handbook_EN/IGCAL_Online_Handbook_EN.pdf). It will have elements and practices to map adult learners´ background learning parameters such as: recognition of prior learning, self-awareness as a learner, ability to make independent choices and evaluations, adult learners´ self-esteem, self-respect, and self-efficacy; meta-cognitive skills, motivation, and social economic background.

Another important factor when preparing the workshop is the number of participants. We recommend 8–12 participants as they can enrich their knowledge thanks to the inspiration they can draw from group discussions. At the same time, ensuring that each participant has enough opportunities to contribute is important. However, workshops can also be smaller or larger. Although the size of the workshop is not crucial for its success, the workshop itself should be methodically adapted to it. In large groups, for example, it is more difficult for participants to get to know each other and talk freely. In this case, use some supportive and ice-breaking method a couple of times to help participants to know each other.

When designing and implementing training events, it is advisable to structure them in three phases.

- In the initial phase, it is important that participants get to know each other and that the motivation to learn is awakened. In addition, participants receive an overview of the training, share their previous experiences on the subject and express their expectations.
- In the activity phase, the topics should build on each other logically and follow the group's previous knowledge. Here, different social forms and learning methods must be meaningfully linked with one another. During the activity phase, it is important to ensure that the content is practical thus offering participants the opportunity to relate what they have learned to their own field of work.
- In the final phase, a review of what has been learned is helpful in order to secure results and put them into practice. Concluding discussions and reflection questions are helpful methods. In addition, participants should be given the opportunity to assess the workshop in order to record the success of the training and learn about potential for improving future events.

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1.5 Learning environments

In a classical sense, how to design the learning environment is an issue that refers to the room, the working atmosphere or the position of tables and chairs. With the COVID-19 pandemic, another option has become more frequently used, namely the digital learning environment.

Conventionally, the design of the learning environment has to do with enabling learners to move freely around the room and being able to talk in small groups. In this case, chairs and tables should be moved to the walls to create space. Since scenes from the STEP_UP game are played during the workshop, electronic connections are essential and, perhaps, a central large screen on which a scene can be played by the participants who discuss the particular steps to be taken.

The learning environments should also relate to the number of participants. Small groups of up to 8 persons can work in plenary throughout the whole event or break out for short periods of time in even smaller circles by simply moving to different sides of the tables. For larger groups, break-out rooms to work in small groups is, however, advisable.

With regard to digital learning environments, there are at least as many possibilities. Usually, participants gather in a large room. With many online conference tools, however, the so-called breakout rooms in which participants can talk in small groups can be used. There are also many external tools that can be integrated, such as tools for surveys or video and presentation programmes.

However, in digital learning environments, as much, if not more, attention should be paid to sufficiently long breaks compared to analogue workshops. Working in front of a computer and listening for a long time is tiring. One possibility here is to use breakout rooms where participants can talk informally. In some cases, they can also offer activities involving physical exercises that participants can do on their own. For example, some adult education bodies offer back or yoga classes at lunchtime.

In addition to this, specific advice and guidance to adult educators on how to use digital learning tools with concrete instructions concerning the STEP_UP game are part of this manual.

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2. Curriculum

The following chapters provide facilitators with suggestions on how to design their workshops according to the specific learning needs of their participants. It specifies the aims of each particular learning unit, following the methodological scheme of: personal approach – analysis – dealing with conflicts – positive exit, estimating the timing, listing necessary equipment and providing recommendations alongside training materials. Different options are described from which facilitators can select the appropriate ones to design tailor-made workshops for their learners.

Framed by introductory and completing sessions, five learning units on measures can be applied independently from each other with the following topics:

- Early stage of the pandemic;
- Prevention by individual persons or entities during the pandemic;
- Health and social care interventions during the pandemic;
- Political interventions during the pandemic;
- Exit strategies.

Communication measures as a transversal theme are integrated in the above-mentioned units.

Each learning unit is a blend of information transfer, problem analysis and learning experiences by playing the game. Three scenes from the STEP_UP game have been selected for each learning unit from which one or more can be chosen according to the learning objectives of the participants. After playing, the different options in the game are discussed, and, if desired, the scene is played again through steps jointly selected by participants.

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2.1 Introductory session

Aims	Overall aims of the introductory session: • Introduction to the STEP_UP project • Introduction to workshop contents • Getting to know each other The introductory session is essential for the working atmosphere of the STEP_UP workshop. It ensures that all participants are aware of what to expect and that the facilitator understands the positions of his or her target groups. Getting acquainted with each other will be the better part of this session. With participants who are not familiar with each other, ice-breakers are good solutions to lighten up the atmosphere. Some humorous parts are usually welcomed and may energise participants. You can also combine two short Meet & Greet options.
Introduction to the STEP_UP project and workshop *[10-15 minutes]*	Input by facilitator: • Reference to Erasmus+ and the European context • Aims and outcomes of STEP_UP • Workshop objectives and agenda For the introduction to the STEP_UP project, a PowerPoint presentation is available to give brief background information. A Prezi video informs the participants on the making of the game. Both documents can be found in the trainer area of the STEP_UP learning platform. As the decision on how to put together the particular workshop elements is left to facilitators, it is their task to design the agenda for their workshops. A template that can be filled in can be downloaded, too, from the trainer area. The introduction to the STEP_UP project and workshop can be kept short since participants will usually have received information in advance of the event and have made an explicit decision to take part in it. Afterwards the facilitator applies the selected format for the introduction of the participants which should be adapted to the number of participants and their backgrounds.

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Meet & Greet option 1: Personal introduction *[3 minutes per participant]*	Despite the benefits of a playful approach in ensuring that participants become acquainted with one other, there may be good reasons to perform this part in a conventional way. In this case, participants are asked to: • Give basic information on their personal and/or professional background; • Shortly refer to their personal or professional experiences in pandemic situations; • Talk about their reasons and expectations in attending the workshop. Facilitators should encourage participants to keep this information precise and concise as there will be many opportunities during the workshop to talk about their backgrounds in greater depth.

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Meet & Greet option 2: Mutual introduction by participants *[10 minutes per participant]*	This option differs slightly from the first one: two participants sitting next each other are given the opportunity to answer questions concerning their backgrounds in pairs (one to one). Participants will be more relaxed to speak to only one person, and the presentation of information on each other will be much more to the point. After a defined length of time, learners introduce their neighbours in the plenary. Among the more serious background information, one question could refer to a fun aspect such as: • Basic information on their personal and/or professional background; • Personal or professional experiences in a pandemic situation; • One item that they would bring to a remote island where they would have to live alone. This option can also be performed online if using the technical functions for break-out groups but is easier if implemented on-site.

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Meet & Greet option 3: Thematic clustering of participants *[5 minutes per theme]*	For this option, the facilitator prepares a list with characteristics that are shared by a certain number of participants, for example professions, working areas or locations. In large groups, those participants who are correctly addressed can simply stand up from their seats and get to know others who share their own characteristics. In smaller groups, participants can gather at certain points in the room, talk within their small groups or elaborate on their positions in the plenary. This Meet & Greet option relaxes the atmosphere during on-site workshops as participants are on the move. In online meetings participants glue a stick note on their cameras and remove it if they are personally addressed. Their faces will then appear on the screen one after the other. Aspects to be asked in this context can refer to: • Professional sector: social area / health area / other area; • Function: paid staff / volunteer / informal carer / other function; • Experiences with Covid 19: Direct experience (own infection or that of a close person) / indirect experience. Further aspects should relate to the specific group of participants.

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Meet & Greet option 4: Two truths and one lie *[5 minutes per theme]*	This ice-breaker is a classic and is especially recommended for groups that already know each other quite well and for whom the other options bear little interest. It can be used in both online and analogue workshops. Participants are asked to write down two truths and a lie about themselves that the others hardly know. Participants then read out their sentences and the other members have to guess which statement is a lie.
Meet & Greet option 5: A or B *[5-10 minutes]*	Fun is key in this ice-breaker. Participants will get to know each other indirectly, postponing thematically-related personal and professional information to later sections of the workshop. The facilitator reads "either … or" questions to the participants who have to answer with cards in different colours on which A, B or a cross is noted. Alternatively, you can agree to stretch both arms upwards for A, cross them on the chest for B and, if participants cannot make up their mind, pass it on and make a wave movement with their hands. Often used A or B topics are: • Train or bike? • Yoga or jogging? • Sea or mountains? • Coffee or tea? • City or country? • Wine or beer? • Bacon or cauliflower? • Pasta or rice? • Bare feet or shoes?

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Equipment	• Laptop and projector • For online workshops: Conference software with gallery-view • Prezi or PowerPoint presentation on STEP_UP project (link) • STEP_UP flyer • Workshop agenda • Cards (if applicable) for option 4 • List of A and B topics for option 5
Recommendations for facilitators	The facilitator should be aware that his/her own presentation and that of the organisation running the workshop is important too. Be welcoming, smile and express openness with your gestures. Leaders with positive attitudes help participants to relax in this crucial part of the workshop. Ensure that getting acquainted with each other is as playful as possible. Communication among participants is further facilitated by name badges that they can wear or put in front of them on their tables. • If the composition of participants is multinational and multilingual, ask in advance for native and spoken languages spoken. Flags displayed for these languages indicate how conversations can take place during breaks or other opportunities outside the workshop.

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2.2 Learning units

2.2.1 Early stage of pandemic

Early detection plays a crucial role in all prevention and treatment strategies. Corresponding measures can be summarised in 5 categories:

Disease surveillance is an information-based activity involving the collection, analysis and interpretation of large volumes of data originating from a variety of sources. It is used to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of control and preventive health measures.
- Monitor changes in infectious agents e.g., trends in development of antimicrobial resistance.
- Support health planning and the allocation of appropriate resources within healthcare systems.
- Identify high risk populations or areas to target interventions.
- Provide a valuable archive of disease activity for future reference.

Digital surveillance seeks to gain knowledge of public health issues through the analysis of data in the digital domain (such as internet search metrics, Twitter posts, WhatsApp or online news stories), the distribution of these data, and patterns of access. The expected outcome of digital surveillance is to detect communicable and infectious diseases at an earlier stage than normal disease surveillance. However, collection of personal data from social media and other sources by governments and governmental agencies must be well safeguarded to avoid any issues of (unintended) misuse or breaches in confidentiality.

The application of *artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML)* in healthcare can detect even weak signals of infectious diseases and trends. They can also be applied to improve diagnosis and block transmission. At Singapore airport, for example, temperature checks are performed systematically using a thermal camera. Another approach is to classify patients by using vital signs, such as respiration rate, heart rate and facial temperature. Much is expected from artificial intelligence and machine learning toward early detection of infectious diseases. However, the use of AI and machine learning can severely impact human lives and privacy unless additional measures are taken.

Syndromic surveillance is the real-time (or near real-time) collection, analysis, interpretation and dissemination of health-related data enabling early identification of the impact (or absence of impact) of potential human public health threats that require effective action. The aim is early detection of infectious diseases in mass gatherings in public spaces, institutions or collective accommodation including hospitals and nursing homes.

Preventive testing is applied on people who have no symptoms but carry an infectious disease

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as opposed to diagnostic testing that is intended to identify a current infection in individuals. This type of testing is performed when someone has signs or symptoms consistent with an infection, or is asymptomatic, but has been recently exposed to an infection or is suspected to have been exposed to one. Preventive or screening tests are recommended for unvaccinated people to identify those who are asymptomatic and do not report known, suspected, or reported exposure. Screening helps to identify unknown cases so that measures can be taken to prevent further transmission. It includes:

- Testing employees in a workplace setting;
- Testing students, faculty members, and staff in a school or university setting;
- Testing a person before or after travelling;
- Testing someone who does not have any symptoms (yet).

For more information consult the chapters “Pandemic phases” and “Healthcare measures” in the STEP_UP Social and Policy Interventions Manual. You can also go to the STEP_UP library and select “Early detection/warning” in “Area of the measure”.

Aims of the learning unit	The aims of this learning unit are to acquaint participants of the workshop with typical issues in an early stage of a pandemic when knowledge is limited and the most basic needs must be met. They are supported in: • Knowing which strategies are suitable or not necessary to prevent the disease from spreading further; • Being aware of the importance of testing during pandemics; • Understanding the importance of acquiring and distributing protective materials and the need to establish disinfection points.

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Personal approach *[20 minutes]*	The learning unit starts with a group discussion focussing on participants' personal experiences. Statements of a more general nature can be saved on a flipchart or pin wall for later discussion. This part of the learning unit is aimed at collecting personal impressions. The discussion is led by the facilitator who can select from the following questions or add questions, if desired: • Can you remember the first time you had to deal with the Coronavirus? • What did you think its severity was going to be? • What were your first actions when you heard about the existence of the coronavirus? • Did you trust the government that solutions would be found soon? • Did you trust your health system to adequately deal with the coronavirus? • Did you experience situations in which you were insecure or scared? • All in all, what should the government have done at the early stage of the pandemic?
Analysis / Dealing with conflicts *[30 minutes]*	A handout is distributed or shared on the screen in an online workshop by the facilitator to perform a case study on early detection measures based on mass testing in Slovakia in 2020 as example (see handout for case study 1 in the area for trainers). The following aspects – and others chosen by the facilitator – are discussed in small groups and/or in the plenary: • Main strengths and limitations • Measures to reduce limitations and their costs • Connections between testing and drop of infection cases • Potential reasons for not repeating the testing. • Lessons learned

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Choosing the format for playing the scenes	The facilitator chooses one of the following options: • Some groups may prefer to play the scene together and discuss the different options and impacts before making a move. Please note, that this format does not save time as the participants may wish to explore alternative routes. • Other groups may like some competition. If the scene is played individually, the scores can be compared and hence indicate success. Again, a joint play will stimulate the discussion on what influences the decision for specific options while others are rejected.
Positive exit: Scene 2 – Isolation of patient zero *[30-40 minutes]* *Britta Johnson, Health Minister and Deputy Prime Minister*	Learning objectives for players: • Being able to analyse the pandemic situation. • Knowing different strategies to find the optimal solution to prevent the disease from spreading further. • Being aware of the impacts that isolation has on individuals and society. The gaming session is introduced by the facilitator: Patient zero is on the island! It is a 35-year-old woman who has returned to the island after a business trip 2 weeks ago. The challenge is to isolate patient zero.
Positive exit: Scene 3 – Provision of testing opportunities *[30-40 minutes]* *Francis Nelson, Public Health Epidemiologist*	Learning objectives for players: • Being aware of the importance of testing during pandemics. • Understanding the procedure and guidelines necessary to provide adequate testing. • Knowing the guidelines on testing and when they should be enforced. • Knowing the priority groups to test. The gaming session is introduced by the facilitator: in order to prevent the spreading of the virus, testing must be determined. Centres must be opened in all areas of the country. Personnel must be appointed. Guidelines on testing must be identified. Guidelines for taking samples must be produced. How can these measures be organised according to epidemiologic standards?

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Positive exit: Scene 4 – Help for nursing home staff *[30-40 minutes]* *Rosa Santos, Caregiver in a Nursing Home*	Learning objectives for players: • Understanding the functions and benefits of an outbreak team. • Being able to pay attention to rest times needed by employees in a nursing home. • Understanding the importance of acquiring and distributing protective materials and the need to instal disinfection points. • Understanding the importance of isolation areas and preparing spaces with safety distance. The gaming session is introduced by the facilitator: With a first case detected, in a few days 100 out of the 118 nursing home residents are positive. What kind of help is needed? An outbreak team arrives to support the nursing home staff.
Wrapping up *[5-10 minutes]*	To close the learning unit, the facilitator summarises the most important results achieved during the discussions. In case of controversial perspectives, there is no need to harmonise the results. Differing opinions are always possible. They should not be judged but can be weighted: "While the majority believes …, there were also people who thought that …" Participants are invited to add to the results, e.g., their most important learning experiences. For the wrapping up session of each learning unit, documentation is not obligatory. A systematic collection of learning experiences will be done in the closing session.
Equipment	• List with lead questions • Laptop and projector • Handout on case study • Internet access • Personal smartphones or tablets used by participants
Recommendations for facilitators	• Be prepared with facts and figures on medical aspects concerning the early stage of pandemics. • Be aware that discussions about personal experiences can take much longer than expected. Select questions according to priorities and end the discussion after the allotted amount of time. • Introduce controversial standpoints that cannot be mediated by: "We agree to disagree: …"

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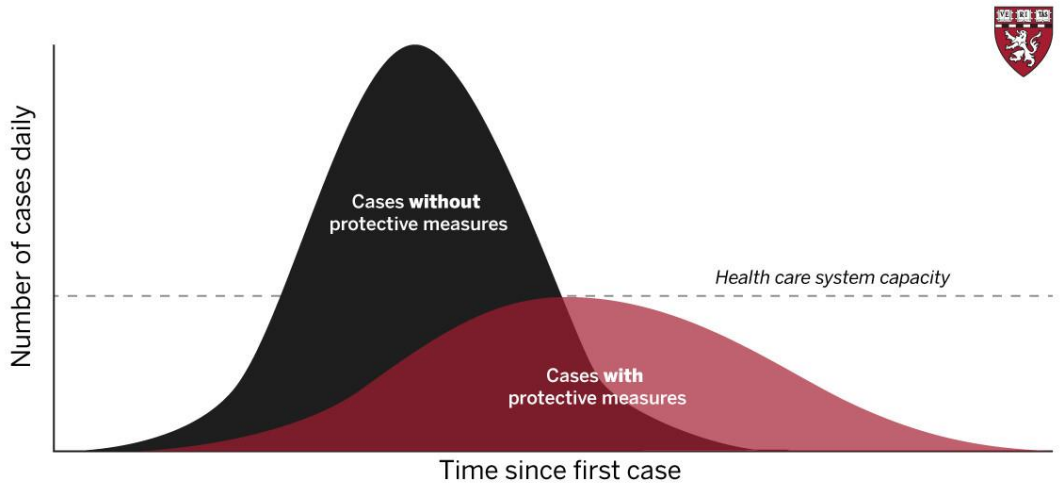
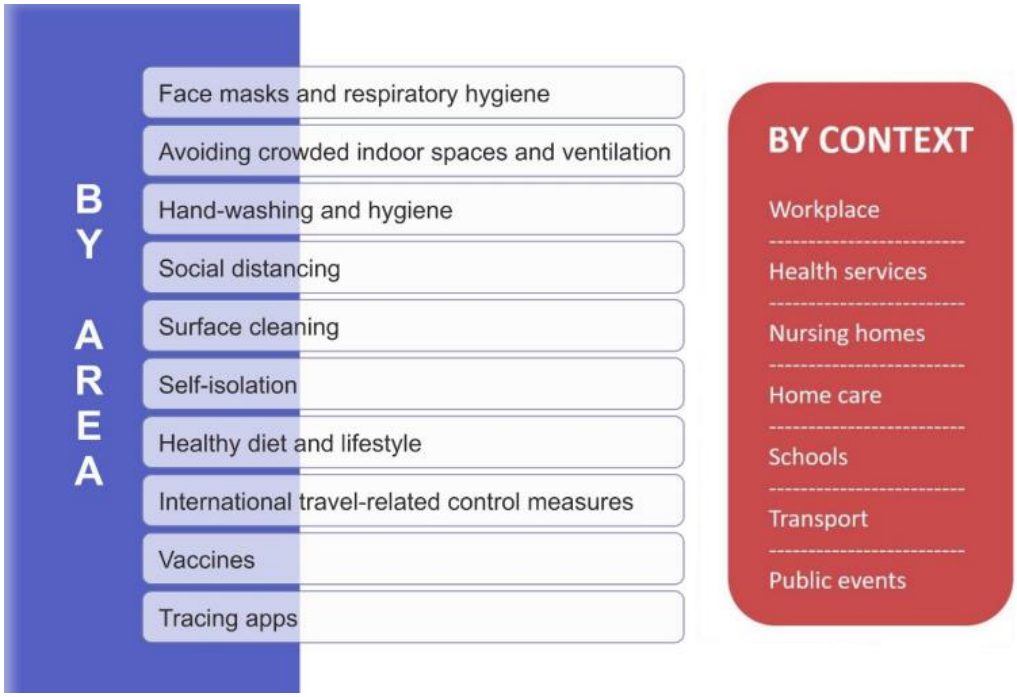
2.2.2 Prevention by individuals or entities during the pandemic

As estimated by the Control Disease Centre (CDC) in August 2021, preventive measures like using masks, social distancing, etc., influenced the evolution of cases, reflecting on occupancy rates in hospitals.



source: CDC

Preventive measures can be categorised by area, such as face masks and respiratory hygiene, or by context, e.g., workplace, schools or transport. They are taken by individuals and organisations for self-protection and the protection of others, usually implementing rules that were set at political level.



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For more information consult the chapter “Social measures” in the STEP_UP Social and Policy Interventions Manual. You can also go to the STEP_UP library and select “Prevention” in the “Area of the measure”.

Aims of the learning unit	This learning unit aims at discussing measures that can be taken by individuals or organisations when remedies and/or vaccines are still unknown or not yet fully effective and prevention is the only safe option. Workshop participants are supported in: • Being able to select the most important and correct information on sensible behaviour in a pandemic. • Being aware of the complexity of taking decisions across a heterogeneous society. • Understanding how to respond to urgently issued healthcare protocols.
Personal approach *[20 minutes]*	The learning unit starts with a group discussion focussing on participants’ personal experiences. Statements of a more general nature can be saved on a flipchart or pin wall for later. This part of the learning unit is aimed at collecting personal impressions. The discussion is led by the facilitator who can select from the following questions or add questions if desired: • What measures did you take to protect yourself from an infection? • Have you and people close to you successfully avoided an infection? • Did you run risks in not following the official rules or expose yourself to risky conditions? • Do you or did you work in environments where you could be a risk for other people or where others could be a risk to you? • Did you make use of testing opportunities when they were not yet compulsory? • What further preventive measures should the government have applied?

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Analysis / Dealing with conflicts *[30 minutes]*	A handout is distributed or shared on the screen in an online workshop by the facilitator to perform a case study on prevention measures based on tracing apps implemented in the EU used as example (see the handout for case study 2 in the area for trainers). The following aspects – and others chosen by the facilitator – are discussed in small groups and/or in the plenary: • Main strengths and weaknesses • Options to reduce weaknesses and their costs • Impacts on different social areas • Assessment of value of current tracing apps • Unintended side-effects • Lessons learned
Choosing the format for playing the scenes	The facilitator chooses one of the following options: • Some groups may prefer to play the scene together and discuss the different options and impacts before making a move. Please note, that this format does not save time as the participants may wish to explore alternative routes. • Other groups may like some competition. If the scene is played individually, the scores can be compared and hence indicate success. Again, a joint play will stimulate the discussion on what influences the decision for specific options while others are rejected.
Positive exit: Scene 7 – Information on preventive measures *[30-40 minutes]* *Katharina Fischer, Head of Neighbourhood Initiative*	Learning objectives for players: • Being able to select the most important and correct information on sensible behaviour in a pandemic. • Being aware of ways to also reach persons with little knowledge of language of their host countries. • Reflection on the most efficient way of disseminating information by means of a neighbourhood initiative The gaming session is introduced by the facilitator: People feel scared and are not sure what to do and what the right measures are. Are masks really necessary? How can we avoid to be contaminated? The scene provides information on appropriate measures and uncovers false myths.

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Positive exit: Scene 5 – Ensuring safe healthcare services *[30-40 minutes]* *Pedro Jimenez, Primary Care Centre Manager*	Learning objectives for players: • Being aware of different socio-economic backgrounds in society; • Being aware of the complexity of taking decisions across a heterogeneous society; • Understanding how to take action in urgent matters and with limited capacity of redistributive resources. The gaming session is introduced by the facilitator: an outbreak is detected in an area of the neighbourhood densely populated with people with socio-economic determinants and living in poor housing conditions. Try to control the number of unnecessary visits to the healthcare centre and prepare the healthcare centre spaces to receive people by ensuring safe spaces between them. Scheduling visits to the doctor and making appointments to avoid gatherings is mandatory.
Positive exit: Scene 8 – Information and training of healthcare staff *[30-40 minutes]* *Pedro Jimenez, Primary Care Centre Manager*	Learning objectives for players: • Understanding how to respond to urgently issued healthcare protocols; • Being aware the practical obstacles of suddenly introducing protocol changes in a functional organisation; • Being aware of the need for expert communication and swift management in order to inform patients and staff. The gaming session is introduced by the facilitator: infections are increasing exponentially, and the Government issues a protocol to adapt primary care services to the emergency situations. Training and information are delivered to all the HCPs working at the centre on the measures to protect the patients and themselves.

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Wrapping up *[5-10 minutes]*	To close the learning unit, the facilitator summarises the most important results achieved during the discussions. In case of controversial perspectives, there is no need to harmonise the results. Differing opinions are always possible. They should not be judged but can be weighted: "While the majority believes …, there were also people who thought that …" Participants are invited to add to the results, e.g., their most important learning experiences. For the wrapping up session of each learning unit, documentation is not obligatory. A systematic collection of learning experiences will be done in the closing session.
Equipment	• List with lead questions • Laptop and projector • Handout on case study • Internet access • Personal smartphones or tablets used by participants
Recommendations for facilitators	• Prepare yourself with background information on prevention measures. • Allow controversial opinions on the benefit of the measures. • Try to stick to your time frame.

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2.2.3 Health and social care interventions during the pandemic

Outbreaks of newly emerging or remerging infectious diseases present a unique challenge and a threat to healthcare providers and other frontline responders due to limited understanding of the emerging threat and reliance on infection prevention and control measures that may not consider all transmission dynamics of the emerging pathogens. It was one of the first times in recent history that healthcare professionals were faced with the emergence of a respiratory virus which could spread quickly and affected every country of the world. Researchers needed time to catch up with data and evidence which would help in combating the disease and helping control outbreaks while taking into account all other social, economic, psychological aspects which people may encounter. While the pandemic has placed unparalleled demands on healthcare systems, it has adjusted quickly and brought new innovations to help in maintaining care for populations.

One of the first crucial steps in managing the epidemic in each country was an effective and thorough way of identifying and confirming positive Sars-CoV-2 cases. Following positive identification of a case epidemiologic history is necessary to further isolate any close contacts and slow the potential spread of the disease. It is vital to the control of the spread of disease to quarantine positive patients and isolate their contacts.

Aside from the healthcare sector, another sector greatly affected by COVID-19 has been the social sector which had to make the most of its resources, coordinating between professionals from different municipalities or associative entities. Social services have innovated by launching social and emotional support telephone services. Like the healthcare sector, the social care sector had to adjust and change protocols and guidelines to keep one of the most at-risk populations safe and healthy.

Older adults living in congregate settings are at high risk of being affected by respiratory and other pathogens. A strong infection prevention and control programme is critical to protect both residents and healthcare workers. Care homes and other social services where we have populations at a greater risk must sustain core infection prevention and remain vigilant for infections among residents and staff. Social care during the COVID-19 crisis has faced one of the most challenging times to cover urgent social needs in an uncertain scenario.

For more information consult the chapter “Healthcare measures” in the STEP_UP Social and Policy Interventions Manual. You can also go to the STEP_UP library and select “Social and health care” in the “Area of the measure”.

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Aims of the learning unit	Health and social care institutions play a crucial role during pandemics. While ensuring as much disease prevention as possible, social wellbeing must equally be considered. Workshop participants are supported in: • Understanding the importance of communicating with both professional staff and citizens; • Being aware of the importance of remote visits to ensure the mental health of nursing home users; • Dealing with the limitations of online media for certain topics and target groups.
Personal approach *[20 minutes]*	The learning unit starts with a group discussion focussing on participants' personal experiences. Statements of a more general nature can be saved on a flipchart or pin wall for later discussion. This part of the learning unit is aimed at collecting personal impressions. The discussion is led by the facilitator who can select from the following questions or add own questions, if desired: • Are you or have you been active in healthcare as paid staff or volunteer? If yes, please elaborate on your work during the pandemic. • Are you or have you been active in social care as paid staff or volunteer? If yes, please elaborate on your work during the pandemic. • Do you or did you have family members or friends living in a care home? If yes: Have you been in touch with them during the pandemic? How did you cope? • Did you help frail old people in your neighbourhood? What did you do exactly? • What additional social or healthcare interventions should have been made by the government?

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Analysis / Dealing with conflicts *[30 minutes]*	A handout is distributed or shared on the screen in an online workshop by the facilitator to perform a case study based on regulations for the residents and staff of nursing homes used as example (see the handout for case study 3 in the area for trainers). The following aspects – and others chosen by the facilitator – are discussed in small groups and/or in the plenary: • Benefits for care home residents • Damaging effects • Measures to maintain contact to residents • Old people as priority group for vaccination • Vaccination of care home staff • Lessons learned
Choosing the format for playing the scenes	The facilitator chooses one of the following options: • Some groups may prefer to play the scene together and discuss the different options and impacts before making a move. Please note that this format does not save time as participants may wish to explore alternative routes. • Other groups may like some competition. If the scene is played individually, the scores can be compared and hence indicate success. Again, a joint play will stimulate the discussion on what influences the decision for specific options while others are rejected.

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Positive exit: Scene 9 – Implementing a testing campaign *[30-40 minutes]* *Pedro Jimenez, Primary Care Centre Manager*	Learning objectives for players: • Understanding how to increase resilience and preparedness of HCPs facing a health emergency; • Understanding the importance of communicating with both professional staff and general citizens; • Developing originality and creativity to develop innovative measures which may be required in extraordinary circumstances. The gaming session is introduced by the facilitator: the Primary Care Centre tries to implement a massive testing campaign in its neighbourhood. The main challenges are: a) the new requirement for additional resources (i.e., staff, doctors and/or health professionals) to carry out the campaign; and b) how to convince the population through an efficient communication campaign rather than with coercive measures.
Positive exit: Scene 12 – Dealing with the closure of care homes *[30-40 minutes]* *Rosa Santos, Caregiver in a Nursing Home*	Learning objectives for players: • Being able to understand the importance of remote visits to ensure the mental health of nursing home users; • Being knowledgeable about methods to conduct virtual visits through existing means; • Understanding the reasons why in-person visits are not possible, and being able to share this information sensitively with others who may be angry that they cannot see their relatives. The gaming session is introduced by the facilitator: infection rates are duplicating every couple of days and the Government has decreed the closure of care homes to all external visitors Red alert – there will be a closure of care homes to all external visitors.

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Positive exit: Scene 11 – Creation of communication opportunities for isolated persons *[30-40 minutes]* *Katharina Fischer, Head of Neighbourhood Initiative*	Learning objectives for players: • Understanding the importance of securing both internal and external communication channels; • Knowing the media that can replace conventional communication channels; • Being aware of the limitations of online media in relation to certain topics and target groups. The gaming session is introduced by the facilitator: a donation campaign has raised enough funds and devices and involved people who are willing to give their time to offer stable communication via safe and efficient means. Players are challenged to make sure that devices and communication channels being offered consider the personal conditions of the target groups.
Wrapping-up *(5 – 10 minutes)*	To close the learning unit, the facilitator summarises the most important results achieved during the discussions. In case of controversial perspectives, there is no need to harmonise the results. Differing opinions are always possible. They should not be judged but can be weighted: "While the majority believes …, there were also people who thought that …" Participants are invited to add to the results, e.g., their most important learning experiences. For the wrapping up session of each learning unit, documentation is not obligatory. A systematic collection of learning experiences will be done in the closing session.
Equipment	• List with lead questions • Laptop and projector • Handout on case study • Internet access • Personal smartphones or tablets used by participants

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Recommendations for facilitators	• Collect background information on the more detailed aspects of health and social care interventions, especially of those addressed in the game. • Target information to be conveyed to the group of participants and their backgrounds. Less can be more. • Be prepared to moderate controversies among participants. Don't take it personally if opposing perspectives cannot be mediated.

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2.2.4 Policy interventions during a pandemic

Unlike prevention measures at individual or community level, political interventions are determining the internal procedures and external relations for a whole country or at least parts of it. They have to flexibly cope with current situations and conditions from the outbreak of a pandemic until its end. Political interventions that come into force at different times of a pandemic can be categorised as follows:

- Declaration of emergency. Empowering a government to put through policies that it would normally not be permitted to do for the safety and protection of their citizens.
- Establishment of a task force. This is usually done in critical situations to concentrate expertise in one body to investigate the crisis and remedy its causes, take on the coordination in crisis management and communicate the developments.
- External border restrictions. Examples are the ordered completion of travel history forms, visa restrictions, the extension of visa validity, health screening, the showing of proof of health certificates.
- Internal border restrictions. May be imposed to regions within one country with an especially high prevalence of a disease.
- Quarantine. Self-quarantine at home, quarantine at a government facility, in a hotel or any other non-governmental facility.
- Lockdown. Being generally understood as stay-at-home orders with exceptions only in defined cases.
- Night-time curfew. A somewhat less restrictive measure in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic than complete lockdowns limiting mostly leisure and night-life.
- Hygiene. Decreeing measures including personal precautions like not touching one's face, keeping distance and wash hands as well as cleaning and disinfecting surfaces.
- Restrictions on mass gatherings. Taking, for example, the form of cancelling or postponing recurring or commercial events, or reducing the prison population through early release.
- Social distancing. Can be applied for public and private spaces, inside public or commercial buildings, health or social care centres, public transportation, etc. by limiting the number of persons, keeping a defined distance from each other, or applying other safety rules.
- Restriction and regulation of governmental functions and public services. This refers to issuing or processing documents, governmental meetings, or public services like libraries, museums, galleries, parks, campsites, beaches and waste management services.
- Closure and regulation of schools. Applied in preschool or childcare facilities (up to 5 years), primary schools (5 – 10 years), and secondary schools (10 – 18 years) through, among others, home schooling, alternating between online and on-site teaching or using

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equipment for air cleaning in classrooms.

- Restriction and regulation of businesses. Usually differentiating between essential and non-essential businesses, with those that remain open having to apply rules such as maximum number of clients, minimum distance between persons, providing disinfecting equipment and requiring customers to wear masks.
- Health monitoring. Regular collection of data on relevant components of health and its determinants in the population in general or specific sub-groups, aimed at informing the public health policy process.
- Promotion of health testing. Crucial in times of pandemics to avoid spreading pathogens and including availability and affordability of tests.
- Provision of health resources. May include masks, hand sanitisers, personal protective equipment, test kits, ventilators, medicines, vaccines, other health materials, hospitals, doctors, nurses, health volunteers, other health staff, health insurance, health research facilities, public testing facilities, temporary medical centres or other health infrastructure.
- Public awareness measures. Including gathering and disseminating of information that is reliable and factually accurate.
- Anti-disinformation measures. Aiming to counter conspiracy theories.

For more information consult the chapters “Political measures” and “Social measures” in the STEP_UP Social and Policy Interventions Manual. Moreover, you can go to the STEP_UP library and select “Political/policy” in the category “Area of the measure”.

Aims of the learning unit	Political measures in dealing with a pandemic must strike the difficult balance between restricting the spreading of the disease and catering to the interests of those who suffer from these restrictive measures. This learning unit raises awareness on the impacts of political measures. Workshop participants are supported in: • Understanding why precautious gathering restrictions are taken to prevent the disease from further spreading; • Becoming aware of the options for the practical support of children; • Being able the recognise myths and how to find credible sources and information.

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Personal approach *[20 minutes]*	The learning unit starts with a group discussion focussing on participants' personal experiences. Statements of a more general nature can be saved on a flipchart or pin wall for later discussion. This part of the learning unit aims at collecting personal impressions. The discussion is led by the facilitator who can select from the following questions or add own questions, if desired: • How did you experience the political measures – such as cancelled events, social distancing or lockdowns – during the Covid-19 pandemic? • Which measures were the hardest to bear? • Were there measures which you found inacceptable? Why? • Did you also benefit from these measures? In which way? • Do you think that the government did its utmost to protect you from the disease? • Or did you feel over-protected? • What additional political interventions should have been applied by the government?
Analysis / Dealing with conflicts *[30 minutes]*	A handout is distributed or shared on the screen in an online workshop by the facilitator to perform a case study on political measures based on the lockdown decreed by the Spanish government in 2020 as example (see the handout for case study 4 in the area for trainers). The following aspects – and others chosen by the facilitator – are discussed in small groups and/or in the plenary: • Main strengths and weaknesses • Impacts on the life of individuals, social contacts of people of different ages, economy of the country • Conflicting interests • Unfavourable side-effects • Favourable side-effects • Lessons learned

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Choosing the format for playing the scenes	The facilitator chooses one of the following options: • Some groups may prefer to play the scene together and discuss the different options and impacts before making a move. Please note that this format does not save time as participants may wish to explore alternative routes. • Other groups may like some competition. If the scene is played individually, the scores can be compared and hence indicate success. Again, a joint play will stimulate the discussion on what influences the decision for specific options while others are rejected.
Positive exit: Scene 13 – Dealing with the violation of rules *[30-40 minutes]* *Britta Johnson, Health Minister and Deputy Prime Minister*	Learning objectives for players: • Understanding the underlying dynamics of the situation. • Knowing precautionary measures to prevent the disease from spreading further. • Being able to choose the best strategy to put a stop to rules being breached. The gaming session is introduced by the facilitator. People are exhausted from the long-standing restrictions imposed on them. Last night, 200 people went to an illegal party with no masks. The scene is about restoring law and order.
Positive exit: Scene 20 – Practical support for kids and their families *[30-40 minutes]* *Katharina Fischer, Head of Neighbourhood Initiative*	Learning objectives for players: • Being aware of the need to equip poorer families with electronic devices. • Being aware of the different options for the practical support of children. • Being able to allocate responsibilities to support children and families according to the personal background of volunteers. The gaming session is introduced by the facilitator. Children are in home schooling and many families reach their limits in teaching and entertaining them. How can their practical support be organised?

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Positive exit: Scene 15 – Debunking myths *[30-40 minutes]* *Francis Nelson, Public Health Epidemiologist*	Learning objectives for players: • Better understanding of the implication of myths during a pandemic. • Being able the recognise myths and how to find credible sources and information. • Being aware of the negative consequences which may come with the spread of myths. The gaming session is introduced by the facilitator. Two months into the epidemic and media and prominent figures start questioning its handling by the Public Health Institute and the recommendation the Institute has been issuing. The challenge is to counter-argue myths and conspiracy theories.
Wrapping-up *(5 – 10 minutes)*	To close the learning unit, the facilitator summarises the most important results achieved during the discussions. In case of controversial perspectives, there is no need to harmonise the results. Differing opinions are always possible. They should not be judged but can be weighted: "While the majority believes …, there were also people who thought that …" Participants are invited to add to the results, e.g., their most important learning experiences. For the wrapping up session of each learning unit, documentation is not obligatory. A systematic collection of learning experiences will be done in the closing session.
Equipment	• List with lead questions • Laptop and projector • Handout on case study • Internet access • Personal smartphones or tablets used by participants
Recommendations for facilitators	• Select the most important questions for the personal approach, or prolong the duration of this part. • Obtain background information on the more detailed aspects of policy interventions, especially those addressed in the game. • If you do not know participants' backgrounds, avoid questions that might lead people to discuss 'deep state' theories.

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2.2.5 Learning unit: Exit strategies

The final pandemic phase occurs when a sustained decline in the number of infections is observed over a longer period. However, the question in this situation is how to get back to normal.

China, for example, used a technological solution and developed a colour-based mobile phone application to tell people their current status and rights. In the case of an infection, for example, a red light is given to prescribe 14 days of isolation. Through this technological solution, the unaffected part of the population could live normally, while the infected part was supposed to perform tests again after quarantine before returning to normality. The Spanish government used a different approach as of March 2022. In their exit strategy, they strived for the so-called "fluisation" of the virus, with Covid-19 being treated as a normal flu without specific conditions. Another order was used by the Netherlands where preventive measures against the Coronavirus ended as of March 2022, and focus was shifted on the observation of the virus.

The phase of an exit strategy and re-opening is strongly dependent on successful societal vaccination measures. These should be taken once injections have been proven safe and are ready for use. To implement a vaccination campaign successfully, it is essential to nurture trust in public health through communication measures. Together with an adjusted use of preventive measures and vaccination, increased risk perception and trust in healthcare can be considered key in preventing an ongoing spread of transmittable diseases.

For more information consult the chapters “Pandemic phases” and “Communication measures” in the STEP_UP Social and Policy Interventions Manual. Furthermore, you can go to the STEP_UP library and select “Communication” in the category “Area of the measure”.

Aims of the learning unit	The availability of a vaccine usually marks the turning point of a pandemic. This unit supports the player in: • Understanding the importance of vaccines to prevent diseases in older people and the population in general. • Being able to determine the benefits and costs of vaccination for individuals. • Being aware of the appropriate time to begin lifting specific measures.

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Personal approach *[20 minutes]*	The learning unit starts with a group discussion focussing on participants' personal experiences. Statements of a more general nature can be saved on a flipchart or pin wall for later discussion. This part of the learning unit aims at collecting personal impressions. The discussion is led by the facilitator who can select from the following questions or add own questions, if desired: • How did you feel about the priorities being given to different population groups? • Would you have favoured different priorities? • Are you positive about vaccinations? If yes: For which reasons? • Do you think that persons believing in conspiracies should be taken more seriously and believed at least partially? • What strategies should have been applied by the government at the end of the pandemic?
Analysis / Dealing with conflicts *[30 minutes]*	A handout is distributed or shared on the screen in an online workshop by the facilitator to perform a case study based on an example from the UK to counter disinformation on the vaccine as example (see the handout for case study 5 in the area for trainers). The following aspects – and others chosen by the facilitator – are discussed in small groups and/or in the plenary: • Reasons for disinformation campaigns and their success • Do's and don'ts for counter-arguments • Adequate messengers • Lessons to be learned in this context
Choosing the format for playing the scenes	The facilitator chooses one of the following options: • Some groups may prefer to play the scene together and discuss the different options and impacts before making a move. Please note, that this format does not save time as the participants may wish to explore alternative routes. • Other groups may like some competition. If the scene is played individually, the scores can be compared and hence indicate success. Again, a joint play will stimulate the discussion on what influences the decision for specific options while others are rejected.

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Positive exit: Scene 19 – Vaccination of care home residents *[30-40 minutes]* *Rosa Santos, Caregiver in a Nursing Home*	Learning objectives for players: • Being aware of the importance of vaccines to prevent diseases in older people. • Being aware of the importance of vaccines to prevent diseases in the general population. • Understanding that only through vaccination will it be possible to return to community life. The gaming session is introduced by the facilitator. The light at the end of the tunnel –massive vaccination campaigns start with the older ones, especially in care homes. Tasks include preparing the area for vaccination, purchasing the vaccines, and vaccinating as many older persons and staff as possible.
Positive exit: Scene 23 – Communication of vaccination benefits to the public *[30-40 minutes]* *Britta Johnson, Health Minister and Deputy Prime Minister*	Learning objectives for players: • Being able to determine the benefits and costs of vaccination for individuals. • Understanding the basic rules of how to organise a similar campaign. • Knowing how to use communication strategies with the general public. The gaming session is introduced by the facilitator. Vaccination has become broadly available. The inhabitants of the island do not trust the vaccine because it was developed too fast. Rumours spread on social media according to which, with the vaccine developed by the Russians, a chip is injected that can be followed by the secret service. The vaccine campaign must be properly communicated.
Positive exit: Scene 24 – Relaxation of measures *[30-40 minutes]* *Francis Nelson, Public Health Epidemiologist*	Learning objectives for players: • Better understanding of the measures recommended by designated authorities and how they contribute to slowing down the progress of the pandemic. • Being aware of the appropriate time to begin lifting specific measures. • Insights into the complexity of public health measures and the need for simultaneous implementation. The gaming session is introduced by the facilitator. With the reduction of active cases, measures can be softened. Players will contribute to official recommendations issued by experts and institutes concerning hygiene, physical distancing, masks and personal protective equipment.

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Wrapping-up *(5 – 10 minutes)*	To close the learning unit, the facilitator summarises the most important results achieved during the discussions. In case of controversial perspectives, there is no need to harmonise the results. Differing opinions are always possible. They should not be judged but can be weighted: "While the majority believes …, there were also people who thought that …" Participants are invited to add to the results, e.g., their most important learning experiences. For the wrapping up session of each learning unit, documentation is not obligatory. A systematic collection of learning experiences will be done in the closing session.
Equipment	• List with lead questions • Laptop and projector • Handout on case study • Internet access • Personal smartphones or tablets used by participants
Recommendations for facilitators	• Obtain background information on exit strategies dealt with in the game. • If there are conflicts with participants who are convinced of conspiracies in vaccination campaigns, back those with evidence-based facts and figures. Nevertheless, avoid becoming a party in these discussions, and refrain from noting different standpoints. • Focus on forward-looking elements of exit strategies as they will be key for dealing with future pandemics.

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2.3 Closing session

Aims	Overall aims of the closing session: • Debriefing participants • Assessing the workshop • Reflecting on one's own learning progress • Celebrating achievements The closing session is to summarise and assess the achievements of the workshop in a relaxed atmosphere. Participants recap the knowledge they have gained, facilitators receive feedback with tips on future improvements – to be understood as part of the quality management – and everybody has the opportunity to celebrate their achievements.
Debriefing of participants *[10 minutes]*	The session is opened by the facilitator who will explain its aims. S/he will refer to the learning objectives and will summarise the activities. This supports participants in putting the activities into perspective and gives them a basis for their assessments. The facilitator asks participants for honest feedback since it can help to improve future learning offers. Depending on the workshop context, participants' assessment can vary from a short and rather informal input to an in-depth analysis of specific aspects.

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Assessment option 1: Oral discussion *[3-5 minutes per question]*	Oral discussions led by facilitator with records preferably being taken by an assistant – or taken online – are apt to provide important insights in a conversational atmosphere by igniting mutual reflections. The following lead questions can be taken as a basis and complemented and adapted as desired. Assessing the workshop: • What did you especially like about the workshop? • On which topics too much time was spent? • On which topics too little time was spent? • What was missing completely? • What should be changed in future workshops? Assessing one's own learning progress: • Did you have particular learning experiences in unit 1, 2 …? • Which topics were especially relevant, interesting and motivating? • Did you perhaps gain any unexpected insights? • What are the personal benefits obtained from the workshop? • What are the professional benefits obtained from the workshop?

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Assessment option 2: Oral discussion with structured collection of assessments *[3-5 minutes per question]*	Unlike option 1, participants write their answers on cards which are posted on pin walls by the facilitator. This supports more introvert participants to express their opinions, and clustering all the answers provides a good overview on the topics. After their discussion and potential complementation by new arguments, the statements are documented with photos. With an appropriate software, this option can also be implemented in an online workshop. Free pin boards can be used here for example: https://miro.com; https://edu.google.com/intl/de_de/products/jamboard/; https://www.mural.co/.

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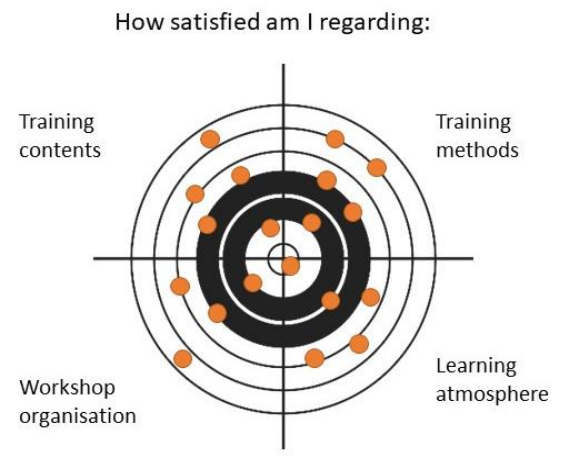
Assessment option 3: **Bull's eye** *[15 minutes]*	Participants are asked to give their opinions on the following (or different) items: • Workshop organisation • Training contents • Workshop organisation • Learning atmosphere Participants place stickers on a bull's eye and write remarks on sticky notes attached to a particular category. The results are analysed jointly with participants and documented with a photo. Online events can also be assessed by using, for example, https://www.oncoo.de/Zielscheibe/ 

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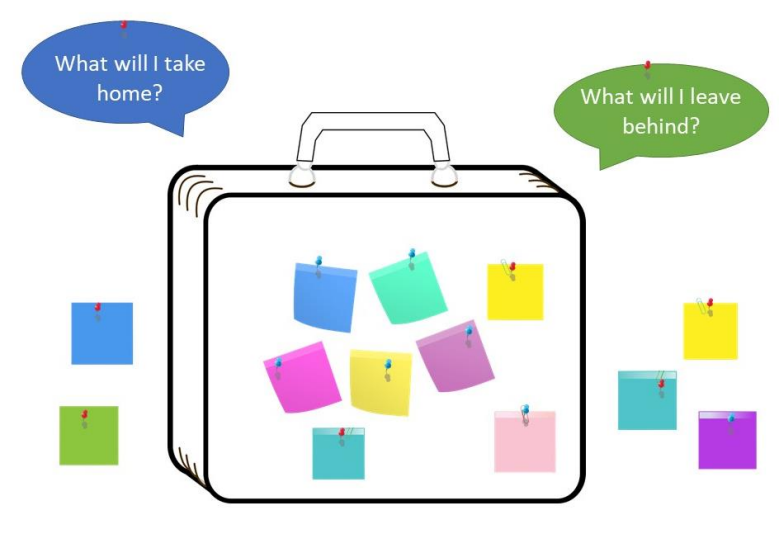
Assessment option 4: Packing a suitcase *[15 minutes]*	In on-site workshops, participants can be asked to write down their experiences on sticky notes. • Positive experiences: What will I take home? • Negative experience: What will I leave behind? Positive experiences are placed inside a suitcase and negative experiences outside it. The results are presented and discussed in the plenary. 

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Assessment option 5: Written survey *[5 minutes]*	A written survey on the crucial aspects determining the success of the workshop will be the least time-consuming activity for the closing session but needs thorough post-processing and analysis. In on-site workshops facilitators can hand out a paper questionnaire that participants have to fill in immediately. They can also provide a link to an online tool that will save inputting data. However, some participants will have soon forgotten that you have asked them for feedback. The response rate may be much lower. In the area for trainers you will find an assessment form focussing on the following themes: • Workshop organisation • Learning contents and methods • Working atmosphere • Personal and professional benefits Facilitators can copy this version of the questionnaire, but may wish to adapt it to specific themes and participants' characteristics. If anonymity is not ensured due a small number of participants, this part should be cut down or removed. Participants must know that it is their honest opinions that is being sought, and that their answers will not be traced to a specific person. The number and format of questions are in line with the free versions of online survey tools. They will analyse the results automatically and create graphs to present results.

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Celebration of achievements *[15-20 minutes without get-together]*	Celebrating achievements is an important part of the closing session and should be planned with care. It will contribute to the overall impression of a successful learning experience. Facilitators can choose from certificate templates that can be complemented by organisational and personal details and modified according to the thematic focusses of the workshop in the area for trainers of the STEP_UP learning platform. To use other tools, see chapter 5.2. 'Certification of informal and non-formal learning experiences'. Especially for on-site events, interest may be raised by circulating a press release. Journalists can be invited to the celebration and given the opportunity to interview facilitators and participants. A get-together with drinks and snacks provides adequate framework conditions for such an exchange but also for strengthening personal relations between participants. In any case, group photos and/or videos should be made that, if participants grant permission, can also be used for communication in social media. A statement by participants will also be of interest for audiences.
Equipment	• For online workshops: Conference software with galley-view • Option 1: List of lead questions • Option 2: List of lead questions, pin wall with a sufficient number of cards and pens for the participants • Option 3: Poster with bull's eye and thematic segments to be mounted at a wall, one sticker per theme for each participant, sufficient numbers of pens and sticky notes for participants • Option 4: Poster with suitcase and sufficient numbers of pens and sticky notes for participants • Option 5: Assesment form (template in area for trainers) • Certificate for each participant • Give-aways • Camera • Drinks and snacks

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Recommendations for facilitators 	If the budget allows, small give-aways can be handed out with the certificate; they will deepen the impacts. Oriented at the workshop theme, they could be for example pins showing a European logo, masks with the European stars or cups with motives from the STEP_UP game. Here you can select a picture for your printing order.

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3. Working with digital tools

This chapter will explain how facilitators can work with digital tools in the workshops. Digital tools are: the STEP_UP game, the STEP_UP library, the manual, and other internet sources.

3.1 Online learning

Preparing for the future of online learning and the use of online tools is essential as it is expected to become mainstream on a global level due to developments such as the new technologies and globalisation[1]. Educators will need to find ways to move past perceived barriers to create high quality online learning environments.

Online learning provides several advantages for both learners and instructors. Flexibility is often seen as one of its major advantages. Online learning often provides flexibility in terms of time and place because learners can attend workshops from any location of their choice. Additionally, online workshops can be recorded and shared, providing the opportunity to access the learning material at a time of choice. This can be especially beneficial for adult learners who often have several roles and responsibilities to juggle in their day-to-day life[2]. Another advantage could be affordability and efficiency as online education is often more affordable and time efficient than physical learning[3].

Both learners and instructors can experience different obstacles in online learning. People can experience online workshops to be more tiring than face-to-face workshops. Some factors could be of influence here: lack of personal contact, a more passive and inactive attitude can be provoked and it is easier to become distracted[2]. Online teaching also influences the relationships between instructors and learners, or among learners themselves, and learners can experience less support in an online setting. For instructors it can also be a challenge to fluidly adjust their teaching to individual learners and some instructors may miss the energy and excitement of being in face-to-face contact with a group. In addition, misinterpreting assignments can occur more easily in online workshops[4].

There are four important aspects to consider when working in an online environment:

1) Provide opportunities for people to connect with each other.

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1 Shailendra Palvia, Prageet Aeron, Parul Gupta, Diptiranjan Mahapatra, Ratri Parida, Rebecca Rosner & Sumita Sindhi (2018) Online Education: Worldwide Status, Challenges, Trends, and Implications, Journal of Global Information Technology Management, 21:4, 233-241, DOI: 10.1080/1097198X.2018.1542262

2 Sasja Dirkse, Angela Talen, Annemarieke van Rumpt, Lotte Bons, Het Groot Online Werkvormenboek; Dé inspiratiebron voor online vergaderingen, opleidingen en andere bijeenkomsten, 2020.

3 Gautam, P. (2020). Advantages and Disadvantages of Online Learning. eLearning Industry.

4 Nicole L. Davis, Mimi Gough, Lorraine L. Taylor, Online teaching: advantages, obstacles and tools for getting it right, Published 15 May 2019, Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism

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2) Give clear instructions.
3) Provide space for action and interaction.
4) Provide space for people to reflect by themselves and think about things.

Even more than physical meetings, online meetings require activating methods. There are a multitude of tools available to educators that can help keep learners engaged, and allow community-building during courses. In the following section, three tools that can easily be used in the workshops will be further explained.

3.2 Online Tools

When planning your workshop online, it is useful to work with a tool enabling participants to meet through video call in a large group and in subgroups. Zoom and Microsoft Teams will be discussed. In addition, a visual online tool can be used for learners to collaborate and brainstorm together and present findings. There are many online tools to facilitate this, such as Jamboard, Miro and Mural. Of these, Jamboard will be discussed. Interaction between learners and their reflection increase when you create small moments of reflection. Mentimeter is an online tool that can help create these small moments and will be discussed in the following sections.

Zoom and Microsoft Teams – Video meeting and discussing in small groups

Zoom and Microsoft Teams are free tools you can use to virtually meet with others on video. In Zoom and Teams, you can create Breakout Rooms and you can share screens and presentations. You can also split a large workshop in separate sessions thus allowing small groups of learners to discuss together.

In order to use Zoom, the instructor has to sign up through: Sign Up - Zoom. In order to use Microsoft Teams, the instructor has to download Teams through: Download Microsoft Teams Desktop and Mobile Apps | Microsoft Teams.

In Zoom and Teams, you can schedule a meeting to host your workshop and invite learners. Learners can participate without signing up after being invited by the instructor who makes both tools accessible and easy to use.

For further instructions on Zoom follow: Getting started guide for new users – Zoom Support
For further instructions on Teams follow: Sign in and get started with Teams (microsoft.com)

The whole curriculum as explained in chapter 2 can be performed through Zoom or Teams. Discussing in small groups more often and varying teaching methods are advisable inorder to make the workshop more engaging in an online environment. Optimum size for online groups would be 2 to 5 people.

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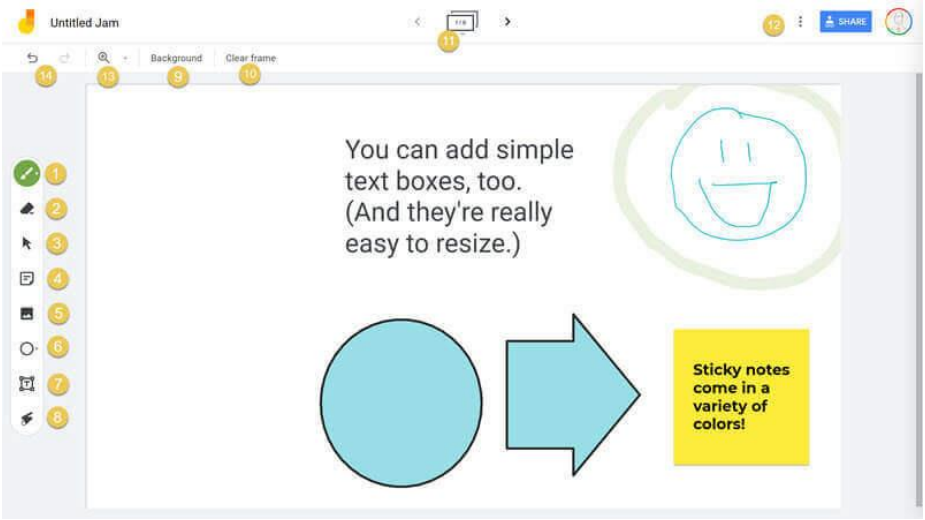
Analysis / Dealing with conflicts *[30 minutes]*	A handout is shared on the screen in an online workshop by the facilitator to perform a case study based on a typical problem of one of the characters. Aspects (as specified in Chapter 2 of the manual) are discussed in small break out groups of 2 to 5 learners. After discussing in small groups, participants come together in the plenary to report their results.

Jamboard – A visual tool

Jamboard is a free online tool for online collaboration. In Jamboard you can create whiteboards where everyone with a link can work together from their own computer and can edit the whiteboard they share. This can be used easily. You can find Jamboard by going to jamboard.google.com.

Learners and instructors can create boards and share them with the group. Click the "Share" button and share with individuals and groups or create a shareable link. If you want learners to be able to work with the board, select the option 'Anyone on the internet with this link can edit'.



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Instructions for Jamboard
1. Draw: use a pen, marker, highlighter or brush. You can draw from pre-determined colours. 2. Eraser: erase something you've drawn. 3. Select: choose and adjust a shape, sticky note, image, text box. 4. Sticky note: add a sticky note with text. You can choose from several colours. 5. Image: add an image from your device, image search, Google Drive or Photos. 6. Shapes: add a circle, square, triangle, diamond, rounded rectangle, half circle, bar or arrow; choose border colour and fill colour from the menu bar at the top of the jam. 7. Text box: add a box where you can type and format text. 8. Laser: use a pointer to emphasise and highlight certain items on the screen when presenting ideas to others. 9. Background: choose from dots, lines, graph, or dark colours. 10. Clear frame: wipe everything off your frame with one click; undo if it was a mistake! 11. Frame bar: see all of your frames in one place; add new frames, duplicate or delete. 12. Menu: you can rename your jam, download it as a PDF, save a frame as an image, remove, or make a copy of your jam. 13. Zoom: zoom in, zoom out, or fit to window. 14. Undo and redo: I'll bet you know all about this one already. Source: How to use Jamboard in the classroom: 20+ tips and ideas - Ditch That Textbook

You can use Jamboard like a shared whiteboard, and you can use it in a multitude of activating methods. For example, learners can brainstorm in small groups and create a shared board to share with the rest of the group later.

Jamboard can be used as a visual tool to help group discussions become more engaging in an online environment. It can be used in all group discussions as described in chapter 2.

Mentimeter - Creating small moments of reflection

Mentimeter is a free online tool. Through Mentimeter you can create a small poll or let learners create a simple word cloud together very quickly and easily with their computers or telephones. A word cloud lets participants draw a visual representation of words that they can enter through their devices. The results can be immediately seen on the shared and individual screens. Learners can see the word cloud as it grows and other participants enter words too. If a word is entered more than once, the word cloud becomes bigger.

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In order to use Mentimeter you are required to make an account on their site first. Visit www.mentimeter.com and click the 'Sign up' button on the top right.

In order to create a word cloud, you have to:

3. Choose word cloud from the question types.
4. Enter the question you want to ask.
5. Decide the maximum number of entries each participant may add to the word cloud (maximum of 10 words each person).
6. In order to add another question, click the button.
7. Press to start receiving responses from participants.

The learning units start with a group discussion focussing on participants' personal experiences and end with an evaluation of the learning experience. To stimulate active involvement and reflection in an online environment, a ord cloud can be made together and used in the discussions.

The following video shows how to create a word cloud: How To Create Word Clouds for Free - Live & Interactive - Mentimeter - YouTube.

Method: *Activate knowledge and former experiences and evaluate the learning experience*
Ask learners at the beginning of the workshop what they think of when thinking about the situation of one of the characters. Ask them to write all the keywords in Mentimeter. Look at and discuss the word cloud with the group. Ask the same question and do the same exercise at the end of the session to see and discuss how their perceptions have changed, and evaluate the learning experience.

When working with online tools there are a few practical things that should be considered.

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Before you start, it is important to make sure everyone has access to the applications. Check if people have a camera and microphone on their computers (as needed for tools such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams) and access to internet for the workshop. If the group is not used to working online, ask them to test their videos and sound. You could organise an extra meeting right before the workshop for people to test things out and come early if you believe this to be needed for the group. Run through the interactions on the tools you're planning to use in order to troubleshoot any logistical issues beforehand. Make sure you have a plan B. Technology can fail and it is wise to have fallback communication channels and alternatives.

At the beginning of the workshop, it might be useful to review the main tools and their functions with the whole group if it is not used to working online. Discuss how to interact with each other during the online workshop. Do you want participants to mute their microphones, and raise a hand when they want to say something? Think about using the video for non-verbal communication too, e.g., thumbs-up for an OK or hand raise to vote.

3.3 Energisers and ice-breakers

In an online environment it is important to keep learners motivated and active. Small energisers in between work methods and questions can help. Two examples are given below.

Method: *Scavenger Hunt*
Ask learners to get a specific object in their house within a specific amount of time (set a timer) and hold the object in front of the camera. For example: the object in their house they believe to be of great use for the character in the game, or a souvenir of their latest or favourite holiday. When the timer stops, you can make small talk about the items or ask people to say in the chat why they chose their items.

Method: *Count till 20*
Ask the group to count till 20 (or more, depending on the size of the group). Everyone has to turns in saying a number and only one learner can speak at the same time. When learners speak at the same time, the group has to start counting again from the beginning.

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4. Validation and certification

The meaningfulness of validating and certifying informal and non-formal learning is increasingly recognised. Summaries on the state of discussion and practice in the STEP_UP partner countries can be found in the area for trainers.

4.1 Validation of informal and non-formal learning experiences

Comparatively common validation methods and tools are performance or progress monitoring by facilitators or mentors, diaries (both in case of long-term educational methods), written tests, or group discussions on newly gained knowledge. Furthermore, for ex-ante and ex-post evaluations, questionnaires filled in before and after a training can indicate what and to what degree knowledge has been acquired and if expectations were met to a sufficient extent. A self-assessment form can also serve to reflect on competences that have been gained, and peers can be assessed as well with mutual endorsement of learning progress on specific topics. Sometimes it is advisable to let some time pass and let participants become aware of lasting effects.

A structured validation approach is the "Kompetenznachweis international" for young participants in international projects which systematically documents the skills acquired and demonstrated by individual participants; however, organisations running these projects need trained coaches before they can apply the system appropriately (https://ijab.de/en/resources-for-practitioners/nachweise-international-greater-visibility-for-community-engagement). Another approach with a focus on young volunteers in international workcamps, is the I'VE method and digital tool for the validation of competences that has been developed in the I'VE Erasmus+ project (http://www.ive-experienced.eu/the-system-outputs/). A couple of visionary, unconventional suggestions include role plays, online tools, the world café method, or videos. The benefits of recognising competences gained in an informal or non-formal learning process are seldom doubted. Certificates, diplomas, recommendations or assessment letters can provide advantages in applications for internships, scholarships and jobs, and can be strengthen participants' general self-esteem. In a survey among participants of educational measures, they also suggested actions on LinkedIn to ensure that competences are being endorsed. Videos, participant lists (of those who agree to be published) and articles about the educational measure would inform employers searching candidates for jobs on the internet (http://www.ive-experienced.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/IVE-Field-Research-Report-Output-2-LAST.pdf)

Many of the validation means mentioned above are not appropriate for a transfer to the STEP_UP project due to the workshop contents and formats as well as the composition of

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participants. The project is in need of a tailor-made approach that takes into account the fact that playing an online game is at the heart of the workshop.

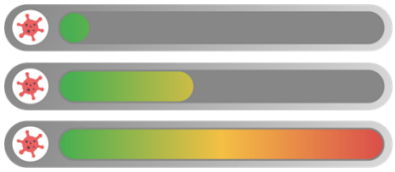
Validation of the learning experiences in STEP_UP workshops embraces two elements:

- The scoring system of the learning game
- The self-assessment of learning experiences by the workshop participants

As regards the game's scoring system, the objective of the STEP_UP game is to take the best decisions for specific events during a pandemic. The playerss performance will be visible on the screen through the "COVID-9 spread control bar" and the "Society wellbeing graph".

The "Society wellbeing graph" is a semicircle with a pointer that rotates from red to green, depending on the degree of social satisfaction with the measures taken as players go through the game. As this value increases, the heart in the centre becomes redder, meaning greater wellbeing.

The "COVID-19 spread control bar" ranges from green to red. The lowest value is in green, which indicates good virus control. The highest value will be in red, which means that the virus is spreading too much, thus indicating a negative situation.



These bars have three colours (red, yellow and green) so that players can visualise the level of social well-being and see if the island is free of the virus. The virus' spread bar will become greener when players earn more points in relation to controlling the pandemic. The bar will turn yellow halfway through, and red in situations where players earn no points and are in a critical situation.

In addition to the bars, rewards for the mini-games will be given in the shape of diamonds. These diamonds can be used to buy items every five scenes (chronological mode), or to buy items at the end of the game as awards for successful playing and tokens to motivate friends and colleagues to play too.

After five scenes players are taken to a frame that says: "You have been of great help so far! But is this enough to contain the virus' spread? Let´s see how many diamonds you have! If

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you have enough diamonds, you can pay for some extra measures to improve conditions in STEP_UP island."

After indicating the score, the player is asked: "Shall we go to the shop and see what you can buy?"

In the shop: "Here you can use diamonds to buy different measures that will help you improve the outcome. You have 2 options, one cheaper and one more expensive, depending on the diamonds you have." The choice of options is combined with background information on good practice. Detailed information on rewards when playing in chronological order can be found in the area for trainers.

In STEP-UP workshops, only selected scenes will usually be played so that the options for buying support measures will not be of immediate practical relevance. However, the typical game-based system of validation via rewards can be used by the facilitator to encourage participants to continue playing after the course.

Given the overall playful approach of the STEP_UP workshops, collecting individual learning experiences should also take place in a light and conversational context and not include e.g., written tests on knowledge gains. Chapter 2.3 "Closing session" suggests contents and ways for reflection and self-assessment of learning progress. Answers to the topics that have been dealt with also mirror the general success of the workshop. Quality-oriented facilitators will use these answers to draw conclusions for potential improvements of future workshops.

4.2 Certification of informal and non-formal learning experiences

The benefits of recognising competences gained in an informal or non-formal learning process are increasingly acknowledged too. Certificates, diplomas, recommendations or assessment letters can provide advantages in applications for internships, scholarships and jobs, and will increase participants' general self-esteem.

For this reason, STEP_UP will provide certification options in three complementary levels that will be adjusted to the framework of each partner country:

Individual players will be provided with the opportunity to print out their personal endorsement letter noting the topics on which they worked and gained knowledge in the form of a progress report. This will function as a self-declaration with the possibility to be added to a personal CV but also in the form of a visually appealing dashboard that can be shared by the player e.g. in social media to encourage friends, motivate healthy competition and disseminate the game.

For workshop participants a low-threshold way to verify the learning experiences is to issue a proof of participation for attendance of a STEP_UP workshop. This proof can be handed out

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to the learners by all adult education bodies with templates to be found in the area for trainers on the learning platform. They can be adapted to particular conditions, and learning achievements can be noted as they focus on the learning objectives of the particular units in chapter 2.2 and the scenes that have actually been worked on.

For formal training participants institutionalised adult education bodies can expand the value of a proof of participation, if they are formally accredited, adhering to an overarching framework for the recognition of competences, according to their own national rules and schemes. For these cases, if STEP_UP was integrated in a formal training course, we provide a template for a certificate that can be complemented by one of the most common and accepted tools in Europe which is the Europass.

Users can create a free profile with Europass and record all their skills, qualifications and experiences in one secure, online location. Users can record all their work, education and training experiences, language skills, digital skills, information on projects, volunteering experiences, and achievements. Hence, the Europass Certificate Supplement that can be added to a certificate is a considerable benefit for the recipient. More details and a link to official national templates can be found here. National templates for the Europass Certificate Supplement can also be found in the section for certificates on the STEP_UP learning platform.

Digital Credentials are one of the Europass tools. European Digital Credentials for learning are statements issued by an organisation to a learner and can include diplomas, transcripts of records, entitlements and a wide variety of other types of certificates of learning achievement. They are multilingual and signed with a unique electronic seal. This allows education and training institutions to easily authenticate, validate and recognise credentials of any size, shape or form. They are given to a person to certify the learning they have undertaken in the broadest sense of the word. They can be awarded for formal education, training, online courses, volunteering experiences and more.

Education and training providers can reduce their administrative burden and the costs for issuing credentials while also accelerating issuing procedures by going digital.

However, there are a number of preconditions to be fulfilled by the issuers of Europass Digital Credentials. In order to issue the credentials, the adult education body needs to obtain a qualified electronic seal. A tool provided by the European Commission will ensure that everything is set up properly. Subsequently, a tutorial gives information on how to prepare the data. Information in writing can also be found here. The Online Credential Builder enables data to be entered entirely

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via the browser. If all data on the credentials are prepared, the file is uploaded. Data is then reviewed and digitally sealed. Recipients are informed by email, and credentials are sent to their online wallet, if available.

Europass Digital Credentials use open standards and are fully aligned with familiar EU frameworks and instruments such as the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF), another Europass tool.

The European Qualifications Framework is outcome-based learning and covers all types and all levels of qualifications to clarify what a person knows, understands and is able to do. The level increases according to the level of proficiency. Level 1 is the lowest and 8 the highest level. By linking the EQF closely to national qualifications frameworks, a comprehensive map of all types and levels of qualifications in Europe can be provided.

The eight levels of the EQF define:

- Knowledge as theoretical and/or factual;
- Skills as cognitive skills (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) and practical skills (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments);
- Responsibility and autonomy as the ability of a learner to apply knowledge and skills autonomously and responsibly.

	Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility and autonomy
Level 1	Basic general knowledge	Basic skills required to carry out simple tasks	Work or study under direct supervision in a structured context
Level 2	Basic factual knowledge of a field of work or study	Basic cognitive and practical skills required to use relevant information in order to carry out tasks and to solve routine problems using simple rules and tools	Work or study under supervision with some autonomy
Level 3	Knowledge of facts, principles, processes and general concepts, in a field of work or study	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to accomplish tasks and solve problems by selecting and applying basic methods, tools, materials and information	Take responsibility for completion of tasks in work or study; adapt own behaviour to circumstances in solving problems
Level 4	Factual and theoretical knowledge in broad	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to generate solutions to	Exercise self-management within the guidelines of work or study contexts that are

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	contexts within a field of work or study	specific problems in a field of work or study	usually predictable, but are subject to change; supervise the routine work of others, taking some responsibility for the evaluation and improvement of work or study activities
Level 5	Comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge	A comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems	Exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change; review and develop performance of self and others
Level 6	Advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and principles	Advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialised field of work or study	Manage complex technical or professional activities or projects, taking responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable work or study contexts; take responsibility for managing professional development of individuals and groups
Level 7	Highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study, as the basis for original thinking and/or research; Critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields	Specialised problem-solving skills required in research and/or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields	Manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches; take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and/or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams
Level 8	Knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of work or study and at the interface between fields	The most advanced and specialised skills and techniques, including synthesis and evaluation, required to solve critical problems in research and/or innovation and to extend and redefine existing knowledge or professional practice	Demonstrate substantial authority, innovation, autonomy, scholarly and professional integrity and sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or processes at the forefront of work or study contexts including research

Source: https://europa.eu/europass/en/description-eight-eqf-levels

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Depending on the initial knowledge of the STEP_UP workshop participants, their learning outcomes will range between levels 1 and 3.

The EQF is linked to the National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs). If they are preferred as a reference framework by the organisation running the workshop, they can be found here.

Given their flexibility and adding to the already existing approaches, so-called "micro-credentials" are likely to increase their importance in the future. Micro-credentials, too, can be designed and delivered by a variety of providers in many different formal, non-formal and informal learning settings. In December 2020, the European Commission (Education, Youth, Sport and Culture) released the final report on a European approach to micro-credentials as proof of the learning outcomes that a learner has acquired following a short learning experience[5].

The development of micro-credentials has been further announced in the Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030), the European Skills Agenda and the Digital Education Action Plan (2021-2027).

[5] https://education.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document-library-docs/european-approach-micro-credentials-higher-education-consultation-group-output-final-report.pdf

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