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INVEST Toolkit



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Table of Contents

DOCUMENT CONTROL INFORMATION	1
Document History	1
ABOUT INVEST	4
PURPOSE OF THE TOOLKIT	4
HOW TO USE THE MATERIALS	5
STRUCTURE OF THE MODULES	5
LANGUAGES AND VERSIONS	5
METHODOLOGY AND IMPLEMENTATION	6
PROGRAM DESIGN	6
KEY METHODOLOGICAL FEATURES	7
IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS	7
FLEXIBILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY	7
LEARNING OBJECTIVES	8
ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION	8
TRAINER TIPS	9
GLOSSARY	9
IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST	11
INTRODUCTION TO THE MODULES	11

CONCLUSION	15
ANNEX 1: MODULE PROGRAM IN ENGLISH – CLICK HERE TO VIEW	16
ANNEX 2: MODULE PROGRAM IN ALBANIAN (FOR ALBANIA AND KOSOVO) – CLICK HERE TO VIEW	18
ANNEX 3: MODULE PROGRAM IN BOSNIAN (FOR BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA) – CLICK HERE TO VIEW	18
ANNEX 4: MODULE PROGRAM IN MONTENEGRIN – CLICK HERE TO VIEW	18

ABOUT INVEST

The economies of the Western Balkans are facing significant challenges in terms of employment and skills development. Despite the fundamental importance of skills for economic well-being, social cohesion and general well-being, there is still a marked gap between the educational provision of Vocational Education and Training (VET) in the Western Balkans and the needs of the labour market, especially concerning digital skills and those related to environmental sustainability.

The INVEST project aims to enhance the capacity of institutions in Vocational Training to provide skills adequately aligned with the needs of the ecological and digital transition in the Western Balkans region. Through the harmonization of digital literacy and sustainability-oriented skills with European and international standards, INVEST aims to strengthen the role of VET institutions in contributing to the acquisition of professional skills, promoting them as Continuing Professional Training centres for secondary VET schools in Albania, Montenegro, Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

PURPOSE OF THE TOOLKIT

The INVEST Training Toolkit has been developed to support trainers, educators, and practitioners in vocational education and training (VET) across the Western Balkans. Building on the INVEST Handbook for Trainers, it aims to provide in-depth knowledge of the INVEST Capacity Building Program and is addressed to VET trainers and experts willing to strengthen their digital and green competences. Its goal is to enhance trainers' capacity to transfer and foster these skills among VET students, promoting more sustainable consumption and production practices and lifestyles.

The Toolkit serves as both a comprehensive training resource and a practical guide, designed to be applied directly in classrooms, workshops, and professional development programs. It is conceived within the framework of the project's Work Package 3 (WP3) – INVEST Capacity Building Program for VET Trainers – which focuses on empowering trainers and educators with forward-looking green and digital skills, updated methodologies, pedagogical strategies, and resources to install sustainability-oriented values and mindsets in learners across Albania, Montenegro, Kosovo, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

By providing structured, modular content, the Toolkit helps trainers:

- Equip learners with competencies aligned with the green and digital economy.
- Apply innovative pedagogical approaches that encourage active learning and critical thinking.
- Promote sustainability principles and digital literacy in vocational education contexts.

HOW TO USE THE MATERIALS

The Toolkit is flexible and can be applied in different learning contexts:

- **Self-learning** – Individuals can navigate the modules independently, exploring theory, exercises, and references at their own pace. This is ideal for personal professional development or pre-training preparation.
- **Trainer-led sessions** – Trainers can follow step-by-step instructions in each module to deliver structured sessions to groups of learners. Guidance on timing, discussion prompts, and facilitation tips are included to ensure smooth delivery.
- **Group learning** – Modules are suitable for interactive workshops, encouraging peer-to-peer learning through discussions, role plays, simulations, and collaborative exercises.

Trainer Tips: Trainers are encouraged to adapt examples, exercises, and case studies to reflect local contexts, labour market needs, and cultural specificities, enhancing relevance, engagement, and impact.

STRUCTURE OF THE MODULES

The Toolkit consists of **eight thematic modules**; each divided into 5–6 learning units. Every module follows the same clear structure to ensure consistency and ease of use:

- **Theory** – Concise, accessible explanations of key concepts.
- **Case Studies** – Practical examples from the Western Balkans and the European Union.
- **Exercises** – Interactive activities for individual or group work, designed to apply theoretical concepts in practice.
- **Resources** – Additional references, templates, and digital tools to support extended learning and follow-up activities.

This modular approach allows trainers to deliver a **complete program** or select **specific units and activities** that meet the needs of their participants. The Toolkit also incorporates tips and strategies drawn from the implementation of the INVEST Capacity Building Program on the INCOMA training platform, including guidance for both in-person and online workshops.

LANGUAGES AND VERSIONS

To ensure inclusiveness and accessibility, the Toolkit is available in **English** and translated into the official languages of **Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Kosovo**.

All modules maintain the same structure across languages, enabling trainers to switch between versions if needed and ensuring participants can access content in their preferred language.

Note for Trainers: The Toolkit collects all training materials, instructions, tips, and implementation strategies developed within WP3, providing a complete, ready-to-use guide to support trainers in promoting sustainable green and digital competences among VET learners.

METHODOLOGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

The INVEST Capacity Building Program is a **50-hour training program** organized in **8 modules**, covering **42 learning activities**. It follows a structured, **competency-based approach** designed by the project Consortium to enhance vocational education by equipping trainers with essential green and digital skills. The program aligns with the **INVEST Framework** and European competence models (**GreenComp, DigComp, LifeComp**).

PROGRAM DESIGN

The eight modules target specific competencies related to:

- Sustainability
- Ethical consumption
- Circular economy
- Climate change awareness
- Financial literacy
- Digital literacy
- Problem-solving in digital environments

The methodology integrates a **blended learning approach**, combining:

- **Collaborative learning:** peer-to-peer exchange, group work, co-creation of teaching strategies
- **Project-based and problem-solving learning:** application of knowledge to real-world scenarios
- **Self-paced learning:** independent engagement with interactive tools, assessments, and exercises

KEY METHODOLOGICAL FEATURES

- **Modular structure:** Each module focuses on specific green or digital competencies, enabling flexible learning paths.
- **Blended learning:** Combines online and face-to-face delivery to promote inclusivity and accessibility.
- **Collaborative learning:** Emphasizes group work, discussion, and co-creation of teaching strategies.
- **Project-based & problem-solving learning:** Encourages practical application and critical thinking.
- **Self-paced activities & assessments:** Trainers can monitor progress, reflect on learning outcomes, and develop action plans.

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

Each module follows **interchangeable sequences** to ensure both theoretical understanding and practical application:

1. **Theoretical foundations:** Trainers are introduced to key concepts and principles via lectures, presentations, and guided discussions.
2. **Interactive and experiential learning:** Hands-on activities, case study analyses, workshops, and group exercises apply theory to real-world challenges.
3. **Self-paced and reflective learning:** Participants engage with online tools and assessments on the INCOMA Training Platform to track progress and reflect on learning.
4. **Collaborative & peer-learning approach:** Trainers work together to design lesson plans, teaching methodologies, and strategies for integrating sustainability and digital literacy into VET.
5. **Real-world application & capacity building:** Activities such as lesson plan development, case study reviews, and classroom simulation exercises enable trainers to adapt concepts to their specific vocational contexts.

FLEXIBILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

- Materials are available **online in English** and will be contextualized and translated for **Albania, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro** (WP4).
- The program allows **online and offline implementation, self-paced learning, and monitoring of learning progress** through self-assessment tools.
- **Reflective exercises, quizzes, and action plans** are integrated to ensure participants consolidate learning and can apply it effectively in their teaching environments.

The learning units within the INVEST Capacity Building Program are developed by the Consortium, incorporating feedback and tips from VET trainers and educators who participated in the INVEST Capacity Building Sessions. This ensures the Toolkit reflects **real-world trainer experience** and provides practical, implementable strategies.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Each module includes **specific learning objectives** that clearly define what participants should know, understand, and be able to do by the end of the module. These objectives are aligned with the **INVEST Framework** and European competence models (**GreenComp, DigComp, LifeComp**) to ensure relevance and applicability in VET contexts.

Example Objectives:

- **Identify sustainable production and consumption practices relevant to local vocational contexts:** Focus on understanding the principles of green economy and sustainable practices.
- **Apply digital tools to support collaborative and problem-solving activities:** Practical application of digital tools in work and learning environments.
- **Develop lesson plans integrating green and digital competences:** Creating concrete teaching plans and activities using acquired knowledge and skills.
- **Foster critical thinking, ethical decision-making, and sustainability-oriented mindsets among learners:** Developing value-based competencies and reflective skills so participants can apply learning in real-life contexts.

ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION

To support trainers in measuring participant progress and program effectiveness, the Toolkit provides:

- **Formative assessments:** Quizzes, reflective exercises, and practical tasks throughout modules.
- **Summative assessments:** Final exercises or project-based assignments demonstrating acquired competencies.
- **Self-assessment tools:** Checklists and guided reflections to help trainers and participants monitor learning outcomes.
- **Feedback forms:** Templates for participants to provide input on training effectiveness and trainer performance.

TRAINER TIPS

Practical guidance to enhance the delivery of modules:

- Adapt examples and exercises to the **local context** and participant experience.
- Encourage **peer-to-peer learning** through discussions, group work, and collaborative problem-solving.
- Use **active learning methods** such as role-plays, simulations, and project-based tasks.
- Maintain **flexibility** – adjust module timing and sequencing according to participants' needs.
- Manage group dynamics: ensure all participants are engaged, address shy or hesitant learners, and foster an inclusive learning environment.

GLOSSARY

Glossary / Key Terms

- **Blended Learning**

A methodology combining online and face-to-face learning, enabling flexibility, access to resources, and interactive activities in diverse settings.

- **Blended/Hybrid Delivery**

The combination of in-person and online learning activities to maximize engagement, accessibility, and learning effectiveness.

- **Circular Economy**

A production and consumption system that minimizes waste, increases resource efficiency, and promotes the reuse and recycling of materials throughout the product lifecycle.

- **Collaborative Learning**

Learning through group work, knowledge sharing, joint problem-solving, and co-creation of collective knowledge among participants.

- **Competence-Based Learning**

An educational approach focusing on acquiring practical skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to perform specific tasks or professional roles.

- **Competence Framework**

A structured model defining the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for effective performance in specific roles or domains, often used to design curricula, assessments, and professional development programs.

- **Digital Literacy**

The ability to use digital technologies and tools effectively, safely, and responsibly for work, learning, and communication, including online collaboration, problem-solving, and data protection.

- **Ethical Consumption**

Practicing conscious choices when buying products and services that are produced according to environmental, social, and economic standards.

- **Formative Assessment**

Ongoing evaluation methods during learning (quizzes, reflections, exercises) to monitor progress and provide feedback for improvement.

- **Green Skills**

Competences that enable individuals to apply environmentally sustainable practices in their work and daily life, including energy-efficient technologies, sustainable resource management, and environmentally friendly production and consumption methods.

- **GreenComp, DigComp, LifeComp**

European competence frameworks:

GreenComp – Green skills and sustainability competences.

DigComp – Digital competences for learning, work, and society.

LifeComp – Personal, social, and learning-to-learn competences supporting lifelong learning.

- **INCOMA Training Platform**

The online platform hosting the INVEST Capacity Building Program, providing access to interactive exercises, assessments, and resources for trainers and participants.

- **Learning Outcomes**

Specific, measurable statements describing what learners are expected to know, understand, or be able to do after completing a learning activity or module.

- **Pedagogical Strategies**

Methods and approaches used by educators to facilitate learning effectively, including collaborative, project-based, experiential, and problem-solving methods.

- **Problem-Solving Learning**

An approach encouraging learners to analyse problems, propose solutions, and apply them in practical situations, developing logical thinking and creativity.

- **Project-Based Learning**

A learning method where participants solve real-world problems and develop projects integrating theory and practice, strengthening critical thinking and practical competencies.

- **Reflective Learning**

A learning process through self-assessment, analysing one's experiences, and thinking about how to apply knowledge in practical contexts.

- **Self-Paced Learning**

Learning activities that participants can complete independently at their own speed, allowing flexibility and reflection.

- **Summative Assessment**

Evaluation conducted at the end of a learning module or program to measure the extent to which learning objectives and competencies have been achieved.

- **Sustainability Mindset**

Values, attitudes, and behaviours oriented toward environmental preservation, social responsibility, and long-term community development.

- **Sustainability-Oriented Values**

Attitudes and principles that prioritize long-term ecological balance, responsible consumption, social equity, and ethical decision-making.

- **VET (Vocational Education and Training)**

Education and training that equips learners with practical skills, knowledge, and competences required for specific trades, professions, or careers.

IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

A practical checklist helps trainers prepare and conduct the training effectively:

Before the training:

- Review modules and learning objectives.
- Prepare necessary materials, handouts, and digital resources.
- Familiarize with INCOMA platform tools and exercises.

During the training:

- Follow module sequence, adjusting timing as needed.
- Facilitate interactive activities and discussions.
- Monitor participant engagement and understanding.

After the training:

- Collect participant feedback and complete evaluation forms.
- Reflect on teaching practices and lessons learned.
- Share materials, follow-up exercises, and resources with participants.

INTRODUCTION TO THE MODULES

The INVEST Training Toolkit is organized into **eight thematic modules**, each designed to develop specific green and digital competencies for vocational education and training (VET) trainers and learners. Each module combines theoretical explanations, practical exercises, case studies, and resources, following a competence-based and learner-centred approach. The modules are designed to be flexible, allowing trainers to deliver the full program sequentially, or to select individual modules or learning units based on the specific needs of participants. This flexibility also enables trainers to adapt exercises, examples, and case studies to the local context, ensuring relevance and practical impact.

Each module follows a consistent structure to guide both trainers and learners. The theoretical sections provide concise and accessible explanations of key concepts and

principles. Case studies illustrate real-world applications from the Western Balkans and European Union, helping participants understand how the concepts can be applied in practice. Exercises are included in promoting individual and group learning, allowing learners to actively apply knowledge and develop practical skills. Additional resources, including references, templates, and digital tools, support further exploration and the application of learning in professional contexts.

Trainers are encouraged to integrate interactive teaching methods such as collaborative learning, problem-solving activities, and project-based approaches to foster active engagement and meaningful skill development. Modules also include self-assessment opportunities, enabling participants to reflect on their learning progress, consolidate knowledge, and identify areas for further development. This modular and practical design ensures that the INVEST Training Toolkit can be applied effectively across diverse VET settings, supporting both immediate learning outcomes and long-term professional capacity building.

Module 1: Teaching Consumer Rights and Ethical Consumption

Module 1 focuses on developing **green skills** related to consumer rights and ethical consumption. Trainers will explore the **INVEST Framework competence “Sustainability Values and Ethical Consumption”**, enabling them to understand and communicate key consumer rights and responsibilities at national, regional (Western Balkans), and EU levels. The module equips trainers with strategies to teach ethical consumption, highlighting its environmental and social impact, and designing classroom activities that engage students in consumer activism and sustainability topics.

Participants will engage in multiple learning activities, starting with a **presentation on consumer rights**, covering protection laws, refund and repair rights, and digital consumer rights in e-commerce. This is followed by a **workshop on ethical consumption**, where trainers learn to link personal and professional decision-making to sustainability, explore social and environmental impacts of consumption, and discuss ethical standards and certifications. Trainers also study **consumer activism**, analyze real-world case studies demonstrating consumer-driven policy change, and participate in **group work to develop practical strategies** for teaching consumer rights. The total duration of the module is **5.5 hours**.

Module 2: Circular Economy and Sustainable Practices

Module 2 is designed to strengthen **green skills** in understanding and teaching sustainability principles and circular economy practices. Focusing on the INVEST Framework competences **“Sustainability Values and Ethical Consumption”** and **“Understanding and Embracing Complexity in Sustainability”**, trainers will learn to explain sustainability and circular economy concepts, teach the benefits of product durability, repair, and reuse, and

guide students through Product Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) to identify opportunities for circular practices.

Activities include an **introduction to sustainability and circular economy**, a lecture on **product durability and the 5Rs (Reduce, Reuse, Repair, Recycle, Recover)**, case study analyses on circular economy practices, and **group work on conducting LCAs** of vocational products. Trainers also compare **greenwashing practices versus sustainable circular practices**, exploring real-world examples of successes and pitfalls. The total duration of Module 2 is **7 hours**, allowing trainers to develop practical strategies for integrating sustainability and circular economy thinking into vocational education.

Module 3: Climate Change and Carbon Footprint Awareness

Module 3 focuses on **green skills** in climate change understanding and carbon footprint reduction. Trainers will develop the INVEST Framework competence **“Practical Sustainability Action”**, enabling them to teach the scientific principles behind climate change, its causes and effects, and to apply carbon footprint measurement tools. Participants will learn strategies to integrate climate-conscious behaviours and low-carbon practices into vocational education, helping students create actionable plans to reduce the carbon footprint in their respective trades or projects.

Activities include an **introduction to climate change**, case study analyses on mitigation and adaptation, a **workshop on carbon footprint measurement**, and a **self-paced exercise using interactive tools**. Trainers will also explore strategies for low-carbon vocational practices and collaborate in **group work to design student activities for carbon reduction**. The total duration of this module is **7 hours**.

Module 4: Financial Literacy and Digital Consumption

Module 4 develops **green skills** in financial literacy and sustainable digital consumption. Trainers will work on the INVEST Framework competence **“Practical Sustainability Action”**, learning to teach students how to manage finances responsibly, make ethical digital consumption decisions, and integrate sustainable financial practices into vocational curricula.

Key activities include a **financial literacy introduction** focusing on sustainable budgeting and investment, lectures on **e-commerce and environmental sustainability**, and discussions on **digital ecology** including device lifecycles and digital carbon footprints. Trainers will also guide students through **self-paced financial literacy exercises** and develop an **action plan for integrating financial literacy** into vocational training. The total duration of Module 4 is **5.5 hours**.

Module 5: Digital Literacy and Consumer Protection

Module 5 aims to strengthen **digital skills** in online consumer protection and digital ethics. Trainers will develop the INVEST Framework competence **“Information and Data Literacy”**, equipping them to identify and teach students how to recognize digital dark patterns, hidden advertising, and algorithmic biases. They will also learn to explain ethical implications and consumer protection laws in e-commerce and create lesson plans and exercises to safeguard students’ online rights.

Activities include a **lecture on digital dark patterns and hidden advertising**, a **workshop on algorithmic discrimination and search engine bias**, case study analyses, and practical exercises in **digital literacy and consumer protection**. Trainers will be able to design classroom activities that teach students to evaluate online content critically, recognize deceptive practices, and apply ethical and legal principles. The total duration of this module is **6.5 hours**.

Module 6: Identifying and Combating Online Misinformation

Module 6 focuses on **digital skills** for media literacy and critical evaluation of online content. Trainers develop the INVEST Framework competence **“Digital Literacy in Identifying Misinformation and Dark Patterns”**, learning to equip students with fact-checking tools and techniques to verify online content, analyse manipulated media, and combat misinformation in vocational industries.

Activities include lectures on **spotting and verifying misinformation, digital visual literacy**, group work on analysing misrepresentations (including gender gaps and minority underrepresentation), and group assignments to develop lesson plans teaching misinformation detection and visual literacy in vocational contexts. The total duration of Module 6 is **5.5 hours**.

Module 7: Digital Content Creation and Collaboration

Module 7 builds **digital skills** in creating and managing digital content and promoting effective online communication. Trainers develop the INVEST Framework competence **“Communication and Collaboration”**, learning to teach students best practices in digital content creation, ethical considerations, and audience engagement. They will also guide students in collaborative online work and responsible content sharing.

Activities include lectures on **designing digital content**, workshops on **tools and platforms for content management**, lectures on **effective communication in digital environments**, group exercises in content creation, and ethical considerations including intellectual property. Case studies reinforce practical application. The total duration of this module is **6.5 hours**.

Module 8: Digital Safety, Problem Solving, and Critical Thinking

Module 8 focuses on **digital skills** for safety, problem-solving, and critical thinking. Trainers will develop the INVEST Framework competence **“Safety and Intellectual Property”** and **“Problem Solving and Critical Thinking”**, learning to teach students how to protect digital work, apply problem-solving strategies using digital tools, and promote ethical decision-making in vocational contexts.

Activities include lectures on **digital safety and security**, workshops on **digital problem-solving**, case study analyses on problem-solving and safety applications, lectures on **critical thinking and ethical decision-making**, understanding the **digital gender gap**, and group assignments developing exercises for problem-solving, digital safety, and ethical behaviours. The total duration of Module 8 is **6.5 hours**.

CONCLUSION

The INVEST Training Toolkit provides trainers with a comprehensive, practical, and flexible set of resources to strengthen green and digital competencies in vocational education and training. By combining theory, case studies, exercises, and resources, the Toolkit supports both knowledge acquisition and practical skill development, fostering sustainability-oriented values and mindsets among learners.

Trainers are encouraged to adapt the modules and learning activities to their local context, ensuring that the content is relevant and impactful for their participants. The materials can be used to deliver complete programs, individual modules, or selected exercises, providing flexibility to meet diverse training needs.

Continuous reflection, self-assessment, and feedback are central to the learning process. Trainers are invited to monitor learners' progress, encourage reflection on learning outcomes, and evaluate the effectiveness of the training in real-world contexts. This approach ensures not only immediate learning gains but also long-term capacity building and professional growth.

Finally, the Toolkit aims to foster collaboration and knowledge sharing. Trainers are encouraged to exchange experiences, good practices, and innovative approaches with colleagues and the wider VET community, contributing to a stronger network of educators capable of supporting sustainable and digitally competent learners across the region.

ANNEX 1: MODULE PROGRAM IN ENGLISH – [Click here to view](#)

The following annex presents the detailed structure of the INVEST Capacity Building Program modules. It serves as a reference for trainers to understand the scope, objectives, activities, and timing of each module.

A concise overview of all 8 modules is provided below:

Module	Skills Theme	INVEST Framework Competence(s)	Learning Outcomes	Key Activities	Duration (hours)
Module 1: Teaching Consumer Rights and Ethical Consumption	Green skills	Competence 1: Sustainability Values and Ethical Consumption	Understand key consumer rights and responsibilities; teach ethical consumption; design classroom activities on sustainability	Presentations, workshops, case studies, group work	5.5
Module 2: Circular Economy and Sustainable Practices	Green skills	Competence 1 & 2: Sustainability Values and Ethical Consumption; Understanding and Embracing Complexity in Sustainability	Explain circular economy; conduct LCA; develop sustainable business models	Lectures, case studies, group LCA, greenwashing analysis	7
Module 3: Climate Change and Carbon Footprint Awareness	Green skills	Competence 4: Practical Sustainability Action	Teach climate change principles; measure carbon footprint; integrate low-carbon practices	Lectures, workshops, self-paced exercises, group work	7
Module 4: Financial Literacy and	Green skills	Competence 4 & 5: Practical Sustainability Action; Consumer	Teach sustainable financial literacy; responsible	Lectures, workshops, self-paced exercises,	5.5

Module	Skills Theme	INVEST Framework Competence(s)	Learning Outcomes	Key Activities	Duration (hours)
Digital Consumption		Rights and Responsibilities in Sustainable Transition	digital consumption	action plan creation	
Module 5: Digital Literacy and Consumer Protection	Digital skills	Competence 6 & 12: Information and Data Literacy; Digital Ethics and Consumer Protection	Teach recognition of dark patterns; explain consumer protection laws; design exercises	Lectures, workshops, case studies, practical exercises	6.5
Module 6: Identifying and Combating Online Misinformation	Digital skills	Competence 8 & 13: Media Literacy; Digital Literacy in Identifying Misinformation	Equip students with fact-checking tools; teach digital visual literacy	Lectures, group work, assignments, lesson plan development	5.5
Module 7: Digital Content Creation and Collaboration	Digital skills	Competence 7 & 9: Communication and Collaboration; Digital Content Creation	Teach digital content creation; promote ethical and collaborative online work	Lectures, workshops, group exercises, case studies	6.5
Module 8: Digital Safety, Problem Solving, and Critical Thinking	Digital skills	Competence 10 & 11: Safety and Intellectual Property; Problem Solving and Critical Thinking	Teach digital safety, ethical problem-solving, critical thinking	Lectures, workshops, case studies, group assignments	6.5

ANNEX 2: MODULE PROGRAM IN ALBANIAN (for Albania and Kosovo) – [Click here to view](#)

ANNEX 3: MODULE PROGRAM IN BOSNIAN (for Bosnia and Herzegovina) – [Click here to view](#)

ANNEX 4: MODULE PROGRAM IN MONTENEGRIN – [Click here to view](#)