

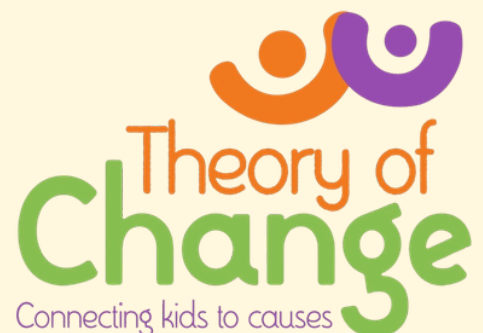


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# ATLAS.EDU TOOLKIT AND ATLAS.LAB GAME BANK IMPACT REPORT

FEBRUARY  
2026

Evaluation results and lessons learned from the implementation of the ATLAS.EDU Toolkit and ATLAS.LAB Game Bank developed under the “Theory of Change: The Use of the Art of Rhetoric Speech as an Innovative Tool” project.



# REPORT ON CAPACITY BUILDING OF PROFESSIONALS

## DELIVERABLE 3.5

Evaluation results and lessons learned from the implementation of the ATLAS.EDU Toolkit and ATLAS.LAB Game Bank developed under the “Theory of Change: The Use of the Art of Rhetoric Speech as an Innovative Tool” project.

Fondazione International Rescue Committee Italia ETS



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The **ATLAS.EDU Toolkit** and **ATLAS.LAB Game Bank** were developed by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) within the framework of the project “**Theory of Change: the use of the art of Rhetoric Speech as an innovative tool**” (ToC), co-funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) of the European Commission. The project addresses the educational and social integration challenges faced by migrant children and adolescents in host societies, with a specific focus on second language (L2) learning, empowerment, intercultural dialogue, and participation.

Implemented by a consortium of eight partner organisations across **Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Spain, and Sweden**, the initiative combines expertise in education, migration, child protection, and community-based learning. The ATLAS.EDU Toolkit and ATLAS.LAB Game Bank were developed as flexible, practice-based resources to equip educators and practitioners with tools to foster both the linguistic development and social inclusion of children and adolescents with a migration background. They are intended for L2 teachers, educators, and social workers operating in formal, non-formal, and informal learning environments. The materials primarily target learners aged 11–18, with particular attention to recently arrived students in host countries.

Dissemination followed a two-phase approach. First, the IRC delivered a Training of Trainers (ToT), reaching 59 professionals from partner organisations. Building on this foundation, partner organisations conducted 32 national-level training sessions across the five countries, reaching 287 professionals working directly with migrant children and adolescents.

Evaluation results demonstrate strong effectiveness and high participant satisfaction:

**88%** of respondents reported being **satisfied or very satisfied with the training experience.**

**92%** of respondents reported a **moderate to significant improvement in knowledge and skills related to language learning and inclusion.**

**92%** of respondents reported **improved capacity to promote interculturalism in their daily practice.**

Key lessons learned highlight that **effective implementation requires contextual adaptation, complementary training, strong local collaboration, and continuous feedback mechanisms.** One-size-fits-all approaches are insufficient when working with diverse migrant communities; educators must tailor materials dynamically to participants’ backgrounds and evolving circumstances. Moreover, training on the Toolkit and Game Bank is most impactful when complemented by broader capacity-building in intercultural approaches, inclusion, and child protection. Partnerships with local schools, universities, NGOs, and municipal authorities significantly enhance sustainability and reach. Finally, structured feedback loops enable continuous refinement and innovation.

Overall, the ATLAS approach demonstrates a **scalable and adaptable model for promoting linguistic development and social inclusion among migrant children.** The results suggest strong potential for replication and further expansion across additional educational contexts and geographic areas.

## 2. THE TOOLKIT AND THE GAME BANK

### 2.1 Purpose and target groups

The ATLAS.EDU Toolkit and ATLAS.LAB Game Bank were developed to support **second language (L2) learning** and to promote both the social and linguistic inclusion of children and adolescents with a migration background. These resources are designed for L2 teachers, educators, and social workers working across formal, non-formal, and informal educational settings, and they specifically target learners aged 11–18, with a particular focus on recently arrived students in the host country.

The design of the ATLAS.EDU Toolkit and ATLAS.LAB Game Bank was informed by research conducted at the start of the project across all implementation countries (Italy, Cyprus, Greece, Spain, and Sweden). These research activities were structured to collect insights from key stakeholders—including children, parents, educators, and guardians—allowing the project team to identify the most pressing needs and obstacles in the educational and social inclusion of migrant children. The resulting report provides a critical analysis of the challenges and opportunities in fostering both education and social integration, highlighting the specific context of each country. It also emphasizes the potential of innovative educational tools to address linguistic and social barriers, ensuring that materials are tailored to the needs of each partner and local context. The development of the tools also drew on the **Healing Classroom approach**, IRC’s flagship educational materials, and the expertise of **Valeria Tonioli**, professor at Ca’ Foscari University of Venice and specialist in Italian as a second language, linguistic and cultural mediation, and intercultural communication.

In order to structure and design the language activities and games in the Toolkit and Game bank, we decided to use the **CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) descriptors** as this is an international document that is recognized across Europe. This document, which is free, available online and constantly updated, provides detailed information about who language learners are, the stages of language acquisition and the different competences and skills a learner should have at the end of each language level. While the Toolkit focuses on CEFR level A1, supporting learners’ initial engagement with the target language, it also accounts for the diversity often present in L2 learning groups. Activities are therefore stratified and adaptable, with guidance provided for both lower-level learners (PRE-A1) and higher-level learners (A2). The resources are designed to be flexible, allowing educators to tailor activities to learners’ interests, needs, and backgrounds, as well as to the sociolinguistic and cultural context in which the learning takes place. Additional adaptations are suggested based on group composition, gender perspectives, and age, with specific guidance for younger (11–13) and older (14–18) learners where appropriate.

The Toolkit and Game Bank are currently available in **English, Italian, Spanish, Swedish, and Greek**, enabling broad accessibility and usability across diverse educational and cultural settings.

## 2.2 Nature and scope of the Toolkit and the Game Bank

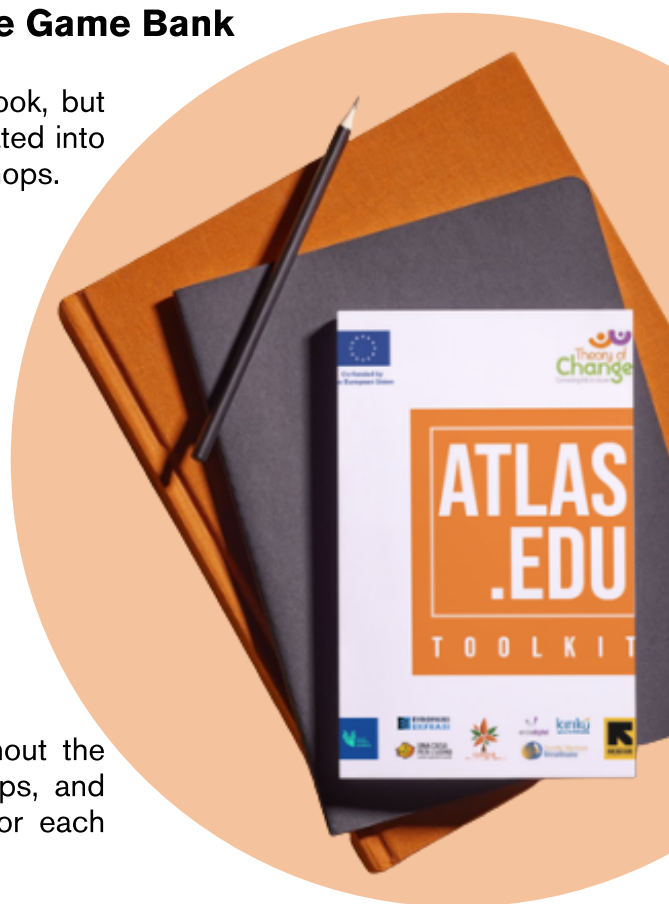
The **Toolkit** is not intended as a standalone L2 textbook, but as a complementary set of activities that can be integrated into existing language learning pathways, courses, or workshops. It is designed to enrich standard L2 teaching by offering flexible, adaptable activities that respond to different learning contexts, objectives, and learner profiles.

The Toolkit includes a theoretical and pedagogical framework and six thematic modules, each linked to a key linguistic domain:

- **Personal presentation**
- **School**
- **Food and drinks**
- **Clothes and main accessories**
- **Health and emotions**
- **City, neighbourhood, and leisure time.**

Visual symbols and guidance notes are used throughout the Toolkit to support navigation, highlight pedagogical tips, and clarify the materials, space, or preparation required for each activity.

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The **Game Bank** complements the Toolkit providing supplementary games aligned with CEFR level A1, with suggestions for adaptation to PRE-A1 or A2 where relevant. Games are also differentiated by age group (11–13 and 14–18).

The Game Bank is organised into three sections:

- **Socialisation and icebreaker games**, aimed at building trust and group cohesion
- **Intercultural games**, designed to value and activate learners' linguistic and cultural repertoires
- **Language games**, which extend and reinforce the Toolkit activities

## 2.3 Pedagogical Framework

According to the findings of the research, which recognized how learning environments heavily impact positive learning, the Toolkit and Game Bank are grounded in the **Healing Classrooms (HC) approach**, which emphasises the creation of safe, welcoming, and inclusive learning environments.

This approach is particularly relevant for children and adolescents with migratory backgrounds or in vulnerable situations. In this Toolkit the suggested methodologies provide practical ideas for integrating this approach into school activities, promoting teaching that considers not only academic content but also the emotional and social well-being of students. The intercultural approach, which characterizes the design of all activities, is an essential element of this methodology, ensuring the valuing of each participant's sensitivities and individuality. In this way, Healing classrooms not only promote a more inclusive and welcoming learning environment but also contribute to building a community that enriches the experiences and identities of each individual.

The Healing classrooms approach focuses on five key protective factors that are especially relevant for children and adolescents with migratory backgrounds and in vulnerable situations: sense of control, sense of belonging, sense of self-worth, positive relationships, and intellectual stimulation. These aspects are essential for creating an environment in which students feel valued, develop positive connections with others, and stimulate their intellectual development. Integrating these elements into daily activities helps build effective and inclusive learning environments, where each individual is respected and welcomed. A safe and supportive learning environment is particularly beneficial for vulnerable students, as it promotes their active participation and emotional well-being.

A core feature of the Toolkit and the Game Bank is the recognition and valorisation of learners' languages of origin and cultural backgrounds. Each learner is a multilingual speaker, following European guidelines that value the use of all languages known to a speaker, both in the acquisition of a second or foreign language and in communication in intercultural contexts. The plurilingual speaker is not seen as the sum of several monolingual speakers, but as an active agent who fluidly uses all the multilingual and intercultural repertoires at his disposal to perform actions with language in different social and cultural contexts.

In line with the European Framework for Plural Approaches (CARAP), activities aim to:

- **Promote plurilingual awareness**
- **Foster empathy, active listening, and critical thinking**
- **Encourage the recognition of diversity as a shared value**

To promote vocabulary acquisition and oral communication, the Toolkit adopts a playful, learner-centred methodology. Drawing on language acquisition theories, activities are designed to take place in motivating, emotionally engaging, and low-anxiety environments, where learners can actively participate and “forget” they are acquiring a new language while playing games. For adolescents in particular, relevance to everyday life and authentic tasks is key.

In line with learner-centred approaches, activities aim to:

- **Increase motivation and engagement**
- **Encourage critical and abstract thinking**
- **Foster meaningful interaction through realistic scenarios**

Games therefore serve multiple functions: supporting socialisation, enhancing intercultural awareness, and reinforcing language learning objectives in a motivating and inclusive way.

## 3. IMPLEMENTATION IN PARTNER COUNTRIES

Implementation of the Toolkit and Game Bank took place in two main phases: an initial Training of Trainers (ToT) delivered by IRC, followed by national-level training and rollout by project partners in their respective countries.

### 3.1 Phase 1: Training of Trainers (ToT)

In February 2025, during the Transnational Project Meeting in Milan, IRC delivered a Training of Trainers (ToT) to introduce partner organisations to the Toolkit and the Game Bank. The ToT aimed to build partners' capacity to independently implement and disseminate the project methodology within their local contexts.

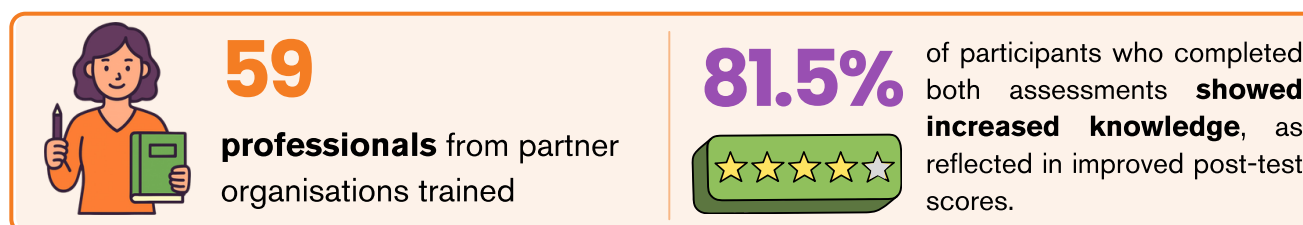
Following the in-person training, IRC delivered four additional online training sessions (two in English and two in Italian) to further support partner staff. These sessions focused on practical application, facilitation strategies, and adaptation of the Toolkit to different learning environments.

Overall, 59 professionals from partner organisations were trained under this phase. Of these, 39 participants completed both the pre- and post-training assessments (11 in person and 28 online). To ensure anonymity, participants were assigned unique identification codes. Due to minor differences between the in-person and online test formats, results were analysed separately and subsequently aggregated.

Results from the ToT phase indicate a strong learning impact:

81.5% of participants who completed both assessments showed increased knowledge, as reflected in improved post-test scores.

This phase successfully prepared partners to act as multipliers and ensured a shared understanding of the project's pedagogical framework and tools.



### 3.2 Phase 2: National-Level training and rollout

Building on the ToT, each partner organisation implemented training activities at national level, adapting the Toolkit and Game Bank to their local contexts and target audiences.

While a common framework guided all trainings, partners were encouraged to tailor content, examples, and delivery modalities to reflect local needs and institutional settings.

To ensure coherence and comparability across countries, the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) approach was standardised. Common monitoring tools, indicators, and feedback instruments were used by all partners, enabling consistent data collection and facilitating cross-country analysis of results. This harmonised framework ensured that outcomes could be meaningfully compared while still allowing flexibility in the delivery of training activities.

The trainings targeted a broad range of professionals working with children and adolescents with a migratory background, including:

- Formal educators (teachers and facilitators)
- Professionals in non-formal and informal learning settings (youth workers, social workers, volunteers)

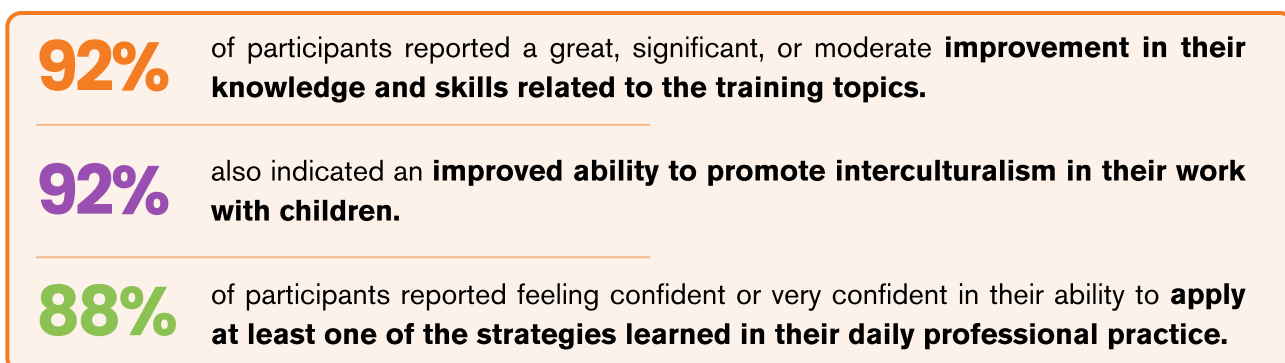
The primary objective was to equip participants with practical tools and strategies to support inclusive language learning, with particular emphasis on social-emotional learning, intercultural competence, and learner-centred approaches. Although in-person workshops were generally preferred, online sessions were also organised to increase accessibility and participation.

### 3.3 Training outcomes and results



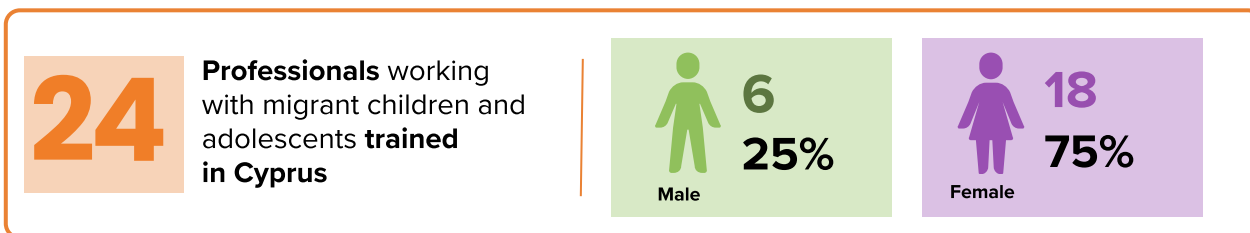
Across Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Spain, and Sweden, partner organisations delivered a total of **32 training sessions, reaching 287 professionals working with migrant children and adolescents.** This wide geographical coverage ensured that the Toolkit and Game Bank were tested and applied across diverse educational, cultural, and institutional contexts.

Overall, the training activities were evaluated very positively across all five countries. In particular:



## 4. COUNTRY SNAPSHOTS

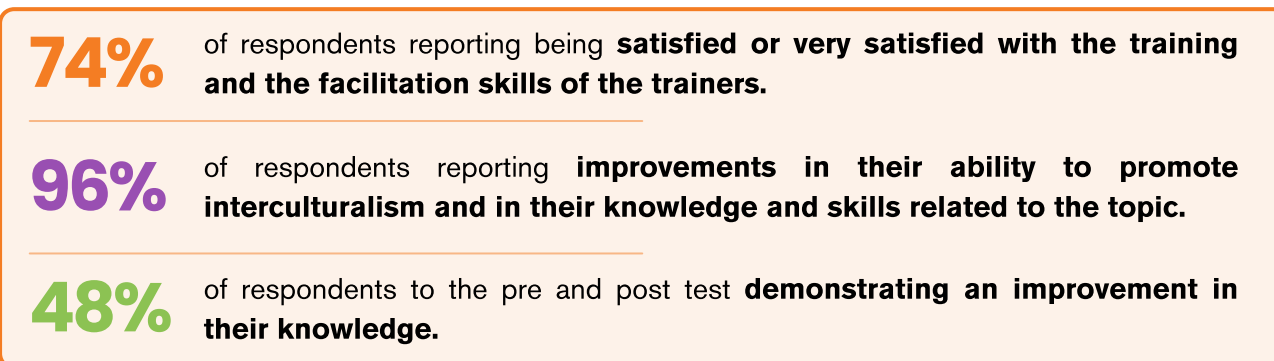
### 4.1 CYPRUS



In Cyprus, training activities were delivered by CODECA, reaching a total of 24 professionals (6 men and 18 women) working with migrant children and their families. Participants included educators, social advisors, caring personnel, social workers, and other professionals involved in educational, psychosocial, and reception-related services.

The selection of participants deliberately prioritized professionals actively engaged in reception and accommodation centres, as well as those providing recreational, educational, and psychosocial support. Social workers, caring personnel, social advisors, psychologists, and educators were identified as key target groups to ensure that the training content could be immediately and meaningfully applied within participants' daily professional environments. This strategic approach strengthened the relevance of the training and supported the practical use of the ATLAS.EDU Toolkit and ATLAS.LAB Game Bank in frontline service delivery.

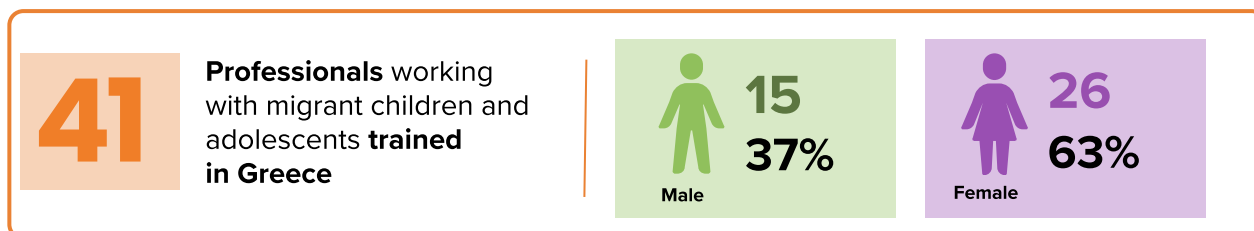
Following the trainings, participants were invited to complete an anonymous online survey. A total of 23 out of 24 participants responded:



Overall satisfaction was high, with 74% of respondents reporting being satisfied or very satisfied with the training and the facilitation skills of the trainers.

Most participants reported improvements in their ability to promote interculturalism (96%) and in their knowledge and skills related to the topic (96%). A total of 23 participants completed both the pre and post tests. Of those, 48% showed an improvement in their knowledge.

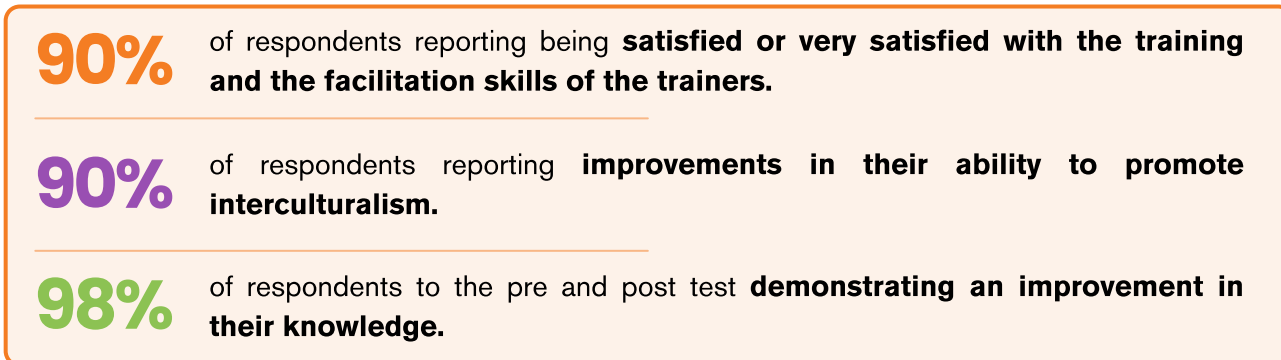
## 4.2 GREECE



In Greece, training activities were implemented by European Expression (Ευρωπαϊκή Έκφραση) and targeted professionals working with unaccompanied minors in Athens, specifically in the Kypseli and Inoi shelters and in the Keas semi-autonomous apartments. A total of 41 professionals (26 women and 15 men) participated, representing a range of frontline roles including social workers, psychologists, legal guardians, lawyers, and team coordinators.

Participants were selected based on their direct involvement in reception, protection, and educational support services for migrant children. All participants had relevant educational qualifications and substantial field experience, which contributed to active peer exchange and the practical grounding of the training. The sessions focused on strengthening intercultural competencies and on the practical use of the ATLAS.EDU Toolkit and ATLAS.LAB Game Bank in everyday professional contexts.

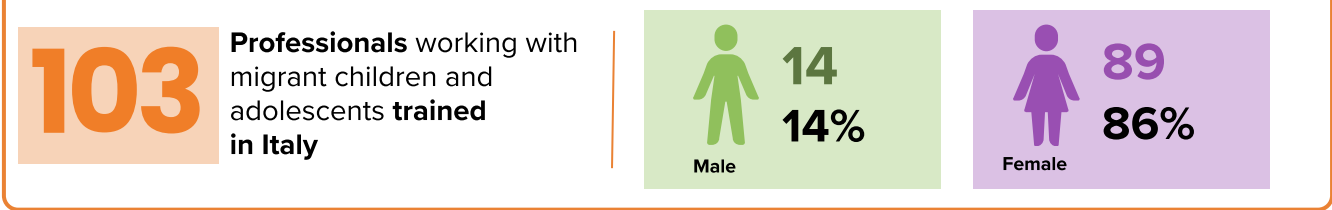
Following the trainings, participants were invited to complete an anonymous post-training satisfaction questionnaire. A total of 40 out of 41 participants responded:



Overall satisfaction was high, with 90% of respondents reporting being satisfied or very satisfied with the training and the facilitation skills of the trainers.

Most participants reported improvements in their ability to promote interculturalism (90%). Out of the 40 participants, 39 individuals (representing approximately 98%) demonstrated an improvement in their knowledge scores between the pre- and post-assessment.

## 4.3 ITALY



In Italy, training activities were implemented by **Fondazione International Rescue Committee Italia ETS** (IRC Italy), **Kirikù Cooperativa Sociale**, and **Una Casa per l’Uomo** (UCPU), focusing on two main geographical areas: Milan and the Venice area. The trainings engaged professionals and volunteers working with adolescents with migratory background in both formal and informal educational settings.

In Milan, IRC Italy reached 90 participants with diverse professional profiles, including teachers, educators, second-language instructors, volunteers, and project managers. The trainings targeted a wide range of contexts, from public schools to community-based organizations and local service providers. Four distinct groups were trained: staff from Fondazione Verga, an NGO providing Italian language classes to newcomers; middle school teachers from a comprehensive institute in Milan; professionals coordinated by the L2 Teaching Coordination Office of the Municipality of Milan; and members of Rete Scuole Senza Permesso, a network of schools active across the Milan area. Collaborating with these established networks allowed the training to reach a broad audience and address both institutional and community-based educational challenges. In the Venice area, IRC Italy partnered with Una Casa per l’Uomo and Kirikù to train 13 professionals and volunteers working with unaccompanied minors. The initiative built on the well-established local network of volunteer organizations coordinated by the Social Services Office of the Municipality of Venice. A dedicated training session was held in Mestre and was adapted to participants with limited formal training, placing strong emphasis on practical activities from the Game Bank to ensure relevance and immediate applicability.

Following the trainings, participants were invited to complete an anonymous online survey. A total of 58 out of 103 participants responded:



Overall satisfaction was high, with 90% of respondents reporting being satisfied or very satisfied with the training and the facilitation skills of the trainers. Most participants reported improvements in their ability to promote interculturalism (90%) and in their knowledge and skills related to the topic (93%). Pre- and post-tests completed by 45 participants showed a 64% increase in their knowledge.



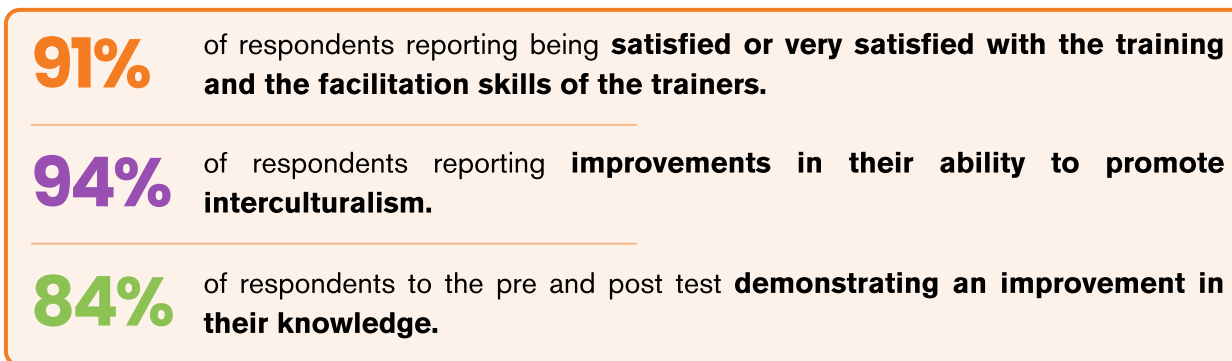
## 4.4 SPAIN



In Spain, training activities were implemented by **Inercia Digital**, combining online and in-person modalities to effectively reach participants located in different regions, including Huelva, Cádiz, and Jerez de la Frontera. An initial joint online session was organized to introduce the theoretical framework of the ATLAS.EDU Toolkit and the ATLAS.LAB Game Bank, followed by face-to-face sessions focused on practical application in each local context. This approach allowed for efficient coordination while ensuring hands-on engagement with the tools.

A total of 72 professionals participated in the training activities, exceeding the initial target. Participants primarily included social workers, teachers, and trainers working in educational institutions such as VET centres, schools, high schools, and universities, often serving student populations with high numbers of learners from Sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa. Notably, Inercia Digital also trained future teachers from the University of Huelva, delivering two in-person sessions on the same day that addressed both theoretical and practical aspects of teaching Italian or other languages as a second language to migrant learners.

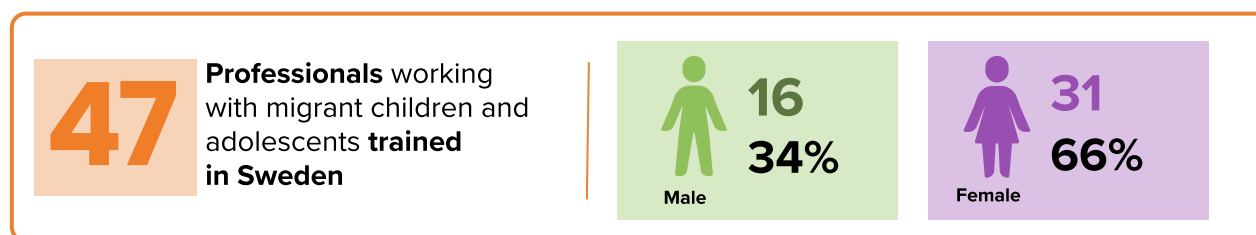
Following the trainings, participants were invited to complete an anonymous online survey. A total of 64 participants responded:



Overall satisfaction was high, with 91% of respondents reporting being satisfied or very satisfied with the training. Most participants reported improvements in their ability to promote interculturalism (94%) and in their knowledge and skills related to the training topics (98%). Pre- and post-tests were completed by 57 participants. Results showed strong learning outcomes, with 84% of participants demonstrating an improvement in knowledge. Overall, the results from Spain highlight the effectiveness of a blended training approach in strengthening intercultural competencies, practical skills, and confidence among both current and future education professionals working with migrant learners.

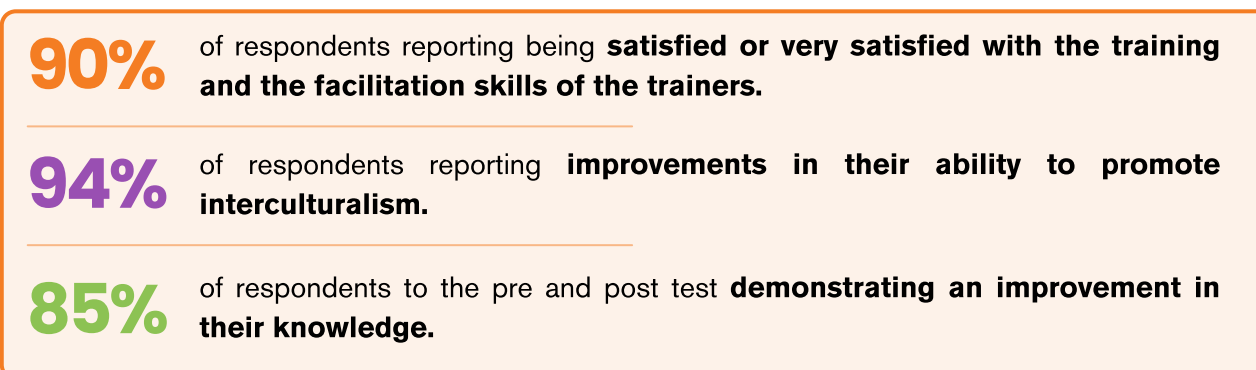


## 4.5 SWEDEN



In Sweden, training activities were implemented by the **Nordic Horizon** team, using a phased approach to ensure alignment and effective outreach. Internal staff were trained first to establish a shared understanding of the ATLAS.EDU Toolkit and ATLAS.LAB Game Bank. Subsequently, youth workers and educators were engaged through partnerships with community organizations and local educational institutions.

Following the trainings, feedback was collected through a combination of online and in-person surveys. A total of 30 participants provided feedback:



Overall satisfaction was high, with 90% of respondents reporting being satisfied or very satisfied with the training. Most participants reported improvements in their ability to promote interculturalism (94%). In addition, 100% of respondents indicated an increase in their knowledge and skills related to the training topics.

Pre- and post-tests were completed by 28 participants (pre-test) and 31 participants (post-test), with 20 matched responses analyzed using the Theory of Change framework. Results showed strong learning outcomes: 85% of participants demonstrated an improvement in knowledge related to rhetorical teaching methods, the Theory of Change approach, and the effective use of the Game Bank tools.



Overall, the results from Sweden confirm the effectiveness of a phased and partnership-based training approach in enhancing intercultural competencies, knowledge, and critical application skills among educators and youth workers operating in multicultural contexts.

## 5. CHALLENGES & LESSONS LEARNT

The first year of implementation of the ATLAS.EDU Toolkit and ATLAS.LAB Game Bank across Italy, Cyprus, Greece, Spain, and Sweden offered valuable insights into both the potential and the challenges of using these resources in diverse educational and social contexts. Several key lessons emerged:

**1. Adaptation of materials is essential:** One-size-fits-all approaches are ineffective when working with young people with migration backgrounds. While it may be tempting to consider “young people with a migrant background” as a homogeneous group, in reality each group brings its own experiences, resources, and challenges, influenced by factors such as country of origin, family circumstances, and current context. Educational activities therefore need to be adapted not only to each group but also to each session, taking into account the mood, energy levels, or any external events affecting the participants (e.g., local or global events, cultural or religious observances such as Ramadan). The ATLAS.EDU and ATLAS.LAB materials should be seen as flexible and open tools, which educators and practitioners must tailor based on their direct knowledge of the participants. Accordingly, a key component of training for educators should focus on practical application skills, including strategies for adapting content on the spot to maximize engagement and learning outcomes.

**2. Complementary training is necessary:** Training on the Toolkit and Game Bank alone is not sufficient. Educators and practitioners benefit from additional training in intercultural approaches, child protection, and inclusion practices. Ongoing coaching and mentorship, as well as hands-on support during actual implementation in local contexts, are crucial for consolidating these skills. This approach not only improves confidence and competence but also ensures that interventions are sensitive to participants’ needs and experiences.

**3. Strong local collaboration enhances impact:** The dissemination and uptake of the ATLAS materials relies heavily on collaboration with existing local networks. Partnerships with schools, universities, NGOs, and municipal offices have proven essential for participant recruitment, contextual adaptation, and embedding the trainings within local structures. This collaborative approach ensures that the interventions are relevant to local needs and supported by trusted institutions, increasing both accessibility and sustainability.

**4. Continuous feedback loops improve quality:** Collecting regular feedback from participants, educators, and partner organizations allowed teams to refine activities and identify both challenges and best practices in real time. Establishing mechanisms for reflection and knowledge sharing among educators supports ongoing improvement and encourages innovative use of the materials. Looking forward, we hope that the experiences and insights gained during this first year will inform future replication and scaling of the ATLAS.EDU Toolkit and ATLAS.LAB Game Bank, supporting educators in adapting materials to local contexts, strengthening partnerships with schools and community organizations, and reaching more young people with migration backgrounds across Europe.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS & NEXT STEPS

### 6.1 Recommendations

To ensure the sustainability and long-term impact of the ATLAS.EDU Toolkit and ATLAS.LAB Game Bank, it is recommended that the approach be progressively institutionalised within existing education and integration frameworks. Embedding the methodology into teacher training curricula, professional development programmes, and non-formal education structures would strengthen its reach and ensure continued application beyond the project lifecycle. Formal recognition by educational authorities and inclusion in national integration strategies would further enhance legitimacy and scalability.

In addition, future implementation should prioritise complementary capacity-building for educators and practitioners. While the Toolkit and Game Bank provide practical resources, their effectiveness is maximised when accompanied by training in intercultural communication, trauma-informed practice, child protection, and inclusive pedagogies. Structured follow-up support, including coaching, mentoring, and peer-learning opportunities, would reinforce confidence and competence among practitioners and promote consistent quality in delivery.

### 6.2 Next steps

In the short term, priority should be placed on consolidating and disseminating the lessons learned from the initial implementation phase. This includes refining and fine-tuning the materials developed to date, as well as producing complementary digital resources to facilitate wider dissemination and provide ongoing support to educators and teachers in their daily practice. Developing complementary digital training modules and integrating them into the Theory of Change platform could significantly enhance accessibility, ensure continuity of learning, and support the scalable and sustainable uptake of the ATLAS methodology across diverse educational contexts.

In the longer term, strategic advocacy efforts should aim to position the ATLAS methodology within national and European policy discussions on migrant education and integration. Expanding partnerships to additional countries and conducting longitudinal research on learner outcomes would provide stronger evidence of impact and sustainability. These steps would contribute to establishing the ATLAS approach as a replicable and scalable model for promoting linguistic development, empowerment, and social inclusion among migrant children and adolescents.