



## **Output 6.5:**

# **“INTERNISA SUSTAINABILITY PLAN”**

**in the framework of WP6: ‘Capitalization and Networking’ of the  
INTERNISA project**





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<b>Project Acronym:</b>	<b>INTERNISA</b>
<b>Project Full Title:</b>	Developing the INTERNISA network of synergies to increase the number of digitally skilled women employed in the ENI CBC MED territories via matching demand and supply in the labour market
<b>Thematic Objective:</b>	A.3 Promotion of social inclusion and the fight against poverty
<b>Priority:</b>	A.3.1 Provide young people, especially those belonging to the NEETS-Not in Employment, Education or Training and women, with marketable skills
<b>Countries:</b>	Greece, Jordan, Spain, Tunisia, Lebanon, Palestine, Italy
<b>Project Duration:</b>	37 months (5/10/2020 – 4/11/2023)



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## CHAPTER 1: GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERNISA PROJECT

### 1.1 Basic Objectives & Achievements of the INTERNISA project

INTERNISA is a project involving the following seven countries: Spain, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Tunisia, Lebanon and Palestine. The project has been designed to establish strategies and actions to address the digital divide between women by intervening in the labour supply and demand, and thereby reducing female unemployment in ENI countries.

It is common knowledge that the territories involved in the ENI CBC MED Programme suffer from high unemployment rate and low participation of women in the labour market. At the same time, job growth is hindered by the low penetration of digital innovation in Mediterranean territories which hampers the capacity of small enterprises to find access to know-how or venture capital for innovation.

The INTERNISA project addresses the double challenge of overcoming the low levels of participation of women in the labour market, as well as the low levels of digitisation of economies.

INTERNISA has been involved in 4 (four) basic economic sectors: agro-food, textiles, finance and tourism.

With the aim of providing training in digital skills to women and know-how about digitalization approaches to businesspeople, INTERNISA has combined training in the digital sector with professional development in the agro-food, textile, tourism and financial sectors. To reach its objective, the project has developed online and offline services addressed to women and employers providing training curricula and personal consulting. Project activities culminate with interventions related to match-making of labour demand and supply through an online platform and job fairs to foster contacts among job seekers and employers.

Throughout the duration of the project and after the end of it, the INTERNISA network fosters the hiring of women trained in digital skills through short-term crowdworking & traineeships and long-term full-time jobs.

The main INTERNISA's impact is to provide an inexpensive and sustainable mechanism to ensure that businesspeople, women and public authorities have access to training and know-how to develop their digital skills.



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There will also benefit women and NEETs with free access to training resources on digital skills, businesses operating in the agro-food, tourism, textile and financial sectors and public sector employees offering policy knowledge on digitalization and women's empowerment.

The achievements of the INTERNISA project so far can be summarized as follows:

- Women trained in digital skills hired
- Sets of online and offline training based on digital skills and innovations
- An online portal (INTERNISA Platform) including labour supply and demand match-making mechanism and a Mobile Application
- Formation of INTERNISA Offline Spots/Info points: at least 1 Offline Spot, per country, providing one-stop locations for the provision of offline advisory services to access offline advising.

Public authorities, through training packages and seminars, provide their members with know-how on how to apply good policies for promoting women's employment and digitalisation.

The development of online and offline training curricula and tools facilitates knowledge, skills development of public sector employees.

Finally, the INTERNISA project has developed a series of policy recommendations to foster professionalization of women through digital skills.



## 1.2 Structure of the INTERNISA project

INTERNISA is a European project having 6 (six) Work Packages (WPs) and 8 (eight) project partners, coordinated by the Lead Partner (LP).

The Region of Central Macedonia is the LP and has been acting as the Leader of the INTERNISA project. This Project has been implemented over a 37 (thirty seven) months period, starting date of the project: 5/10/2020 and official end date of the project: 4/11/2023.

The INTERNISA Partnership consists of:

- Lead Partner (LP): Region of Central Macedonia (Greece)
- Project Partner No1 (PP1): Al-Balqa Applied University-ABAU (Jordan)
- Project Partner No2 (PP2): Catalan Youth Agency, Department of Social Rights, Government of Catalonia (Spain)
- Project Partner No3 (PP3): Andalusian Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (Spain)
- Project Partner No4 (PP4): ActionAid Hellas Non-Profit Organisation (Greece)
- Project Partner No5 (PP5): SQLI Services (Tunisia)
- Project Partner No6 (PP6): Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Beirut and Mount Lebanon (Lebanon)
- Project Partner No7 (PP7): ActionAid Palestine (Palestine)
- Project Partner No8 (PP8): Arezzo Innovation (Italy)
- Associate Partner: Chamber of Commerce of Arezzo (Italy).

The governing culture of INTERNISA project is based on democracy, participation, co-determination and clear leadership. The defined Project management bodies, decision making process and the responsibilities are bindingly described in the Grant Contract of the project and its Annexes.



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The management structure and techniques of the project are tailored to the complex structure of the project.

The interactions, the responsibilities and decision-making power have been clearly split among the following 2 (two) established management bodies of the INTERNISA project:

### [THE MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING COMMITTEE \(M&MC\)](#)

The M&MC has been the highest decision-making body by delegates of all project partners (PPs), responsible to put in place all technical, financial, scientific, time scheduling issues as well as the contingency measures to mitigate potential risks during the project's lifetime.

It has been led by the LP, responsible for monitoring the proper implementation of the project. It has been met in person (or on-line), once per semester, to review the overall project progress, any kind of unexpected events or risks, and to propose short-term actions in order to reach the planned deliverables with quality and in time.

### [THE SCIENTIFIC REVIEW COMMITTEE \(SRC\)](#)

The SRC has been an advisory body of important stakeholders related with the project objectives, representing civil society, academia, technical community, government and the private sector. It has been met upon request of the LP.



## CHAPTER 2: SHORT OVERVIEW OF OUTPUT 6.5 – SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

<b>Output 6.5</b>
Title: <b>INTERNISA Sustainability Plan</b>
<p>This Output consists of a Plan outlining and describing a detailed strategy for sustaining the INTERNISA Network and labour supply and demand match-making mechanism beyond the end of the INTERNISA project in all Partners' territories.</p> <p>The main results &amp; conclusions delivered from this Output will be used from all INTERNISA project Partners.</p> <p>INTERNISA Partners and Members of the INTERNISA Network will carry out the suggestions of the Sustainability Plan in order to ensure the proliferation of INTERNISA services beyond the end of the project.</p>
<b>Activity 6.5.1</b>
Title: <b><i>Design and development of the INTERNISA sustainability plan</i></b>
<p>Partners will provide feedback about how to sustain the INTERNISA network and outputs on their own territory beyond the end of the project.</p> <p>Feedback will be provided to the Partner responsible for delivering Output 6.5 (LB-RCM), who will collect all relevant feedback &amp; prepare the Final Sustainability Plan of the INTERNISA project, considering that the strategy to be developed will have an impact in all territories.</p>
<b>Purpose of the Sustainability Plan</b>
<p>The sustainability plan's main objective is to establish the framework for maintaining the knowledge gained and the outcomes procured during the INTERNISA project, trying to ensure that the key results will be adopted and supported by relevant stakeholders.</p>



## CHAPTER 3: FUNDAMENTALS OF PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY

### 3.1 Introduction

Sustainable development is a systematic concept relating to the continuity of economic, social, institutional, and environmental aspects of human society as well as the non-human environment. It is characteristic of a process or state that a business can be maintained at a certain level indefinitely. The Brundtland Commission of the United Nations in 1987 defined sustainable development as *“development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”* But the definition of sustainability may vary depending on the area of studies or interaction or the context or situations over many scales of space and time from small ones to global balance of production and consumption.

Project sustainability is now a common approach related to the management of projects, programs, institutions, organizations, people and other entities requiring effective and efficient production, marketing, distribution and the delivery of products and services. In general, for projects to be sustained, certain metrics & standards need to be set from project identification through feasibility studies, formulation, design, appraisal, funding, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. It is a proven truism that most projects are failing because of the lack of an appropriate sustainability plan.

It is therefore very necessary for a comprehensive analysis of the social, economic, legal, cultural, educational and political environments for project implementation. The project philosophy, mission, vision, values, goals and objectives should be fully articulated and stated in the sustainability plan. The involvement of relevant stakeholders is of great importance since it facilitates some logistical preparation. Beneficiary assessment, legal and regulatory framework studies, marketing and competition analysis, partnership development and institutional analysis give room for effective and efficient implementation.

Sustainability analysis will determine project relevance, acceptability, political expediency, viability and adaptability of the project. Other factors such as financial analysis, risk analysis, communication and network determination, operational plan, training, human resources development and capacity building, environmental and community analysis all help to determine the sustainability of a project.



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Funding requirements have to be analyzed and evaluated in order to determine whether the project is a franchise, independent project, cooperative, joint venture, Non-Governmental or Governmental organization, etc. A project always describes the rationale, demand and supply basis, costs, anticipated outcomes and outputs and performance metrics which all need to be met for it to qualify for funding. Demographic studies analyses needs, income, interests, cultures, education, and other human, social and economic factors in order to determine affordability. The legal and regulatory framework deals with licenses and authorizations and various rules, regulations, by-laws and protocols required by law for the implementation of projects in that environment. Technically, the information, communication and technology (ICT) infrastructure required for the project should be properly assessed, especially access to modern technology and systems.

The philosophical and analytical framework of sustainability draws on and connects with many different disciplines and fields and has tended to be problem-driven and oriented towards guiding decision-making. The focus ranges from the total carrying capacity (sustainability) of planet Earth to the sustainability of economic and social sectors, ecosystems, countries, municipalities, neighborhoods, home gardens, individual lives, individual goods and services, occupations, lifestyles, behavior patterns, academic and research institutions, political institutions and business operations.

### Some Dimensions of Project Sustainability are:

1. Institutional stability
2. Continued operation and maintenance of project facilities
3. Continuous flow of net benefits
4. Equitable sharing and distribution of project benefits
5. Continued community participation.

### Some Elements of Sustainable Development are:

1. Education
2. Population stabilization
3. Social and cultural changes
4. Refining market economy
5. Reducing disparity in life cycle.



## 3.2 Characteristics of Project Sustainability

### **Adaptability**

In organizational management, adaptability is the ability to change something or oneself to fit in occurring changes and to cope with the unexpected disturbances in any environment. In a system, it is the ability to adapt itself to efficiently fast enough to changing circumstances. A sustainable project should therefore be open and able to fit in any changing environment or part of a system.

### **Audit Ability**

An audit is often an evaluation of a person, organization, system, process, enterprise or project. But this concept also applies to project management and to quality management. Audits are performed to ascertain the validity and reliability of information in order to express an opinion on something under evaluation and to provide a system of internal control. Because of increasing regulations and need for operational transparency, risk-based audits are being adopted by organizations/networks/projects, in order to cover multiple regulations and standards in order to ensure credibility, good governance and sustainability.

### **Implement Ability**

One fundamental principle in project management is that it should be realistic, feasible, attainable and, above all, implementable in order for it to be sustainable in the market place.

### **Scalability**

Scalability deals with the ability of a project to accommodate addition to its capacity or capabilities and expands its scope of operation. It also deals with its ability to increase in size, volume, quantity, or scope to accommodate unforeseen additional components or features of the project.



### **Extensibility**

This is the ability to extend the project through the addition of new functions or modification of existing functions to effect change while minimizing existing project functions.

### **Maintainability**

A project is sustainable when defects can be corrected, it is able to meet new requirements, future maintenance is made easier and it can cope with the changing environment.

### **Manageability**

A sustainable project should have an organizational structure specifying roles and responsibilities and duties. This will facilitate the management of the project and enhance its sustainability.



### 3.3 Measurement of Project Sustainability

Sustainability is an integrated process involving social, economic, cultural, legal, political, health, environmental, financial and a lot of other factors which can facilitate continuity and sustainability of an organization/system/structure/project/network.

Sustainability in project operations is measured by:

- Financial capital: these are total financial resources for the project
- Manufacturing capital: this comprises all equipment
- Natural capital: this refers to land and natural resources (if applicable)
- Human capital: all professional and experts employed
- Social desirability: needed by the society
- Cultural acceptability: it should not violate certain cultural values and norms
- Economic sustainability: able to withstand competition and exist for long
- Technical feasibility: able to be attained or implemented
- Political expediency: in compliance with government rules and regulations
- Operational viability: should be productive
- Environmentally rebus: positive impact on the environment.



### 3.4 Project Sustainability Management Plan

This is the process of developing specific strategies and action plan to ensure the long-term sustainability of a project. Consideration focuses on a number of resources and competencies (e.g. financial, political, administrative, managerial, educational, cultural, social and economic) needed for the realization of the project.

The SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely) technique may be used here to answer some fundamental questions in project design.

In general, questions such as:

- Who—who does what
- What—what tasks have to be accomplished
- Why—reasons or purpose for doing it
- When—establishment of a time frame of activity
- Which—identification of requirement and constraints
- Where—identification of location
- How—logistics, transportation, and communication issues.

All of these questions are answered to facilitate the evaluation of the goals and objectives of the project.

#### **Program Mission, Vision, Philosophy and Values**

- Define scope of activities and scale of operation
- Make sure of fit with community needs
- Define clear vision of what is to be achieved

#### **Identification of Stakeholders and Advocates**

- Develop a list of Network members and stakeholders with contact information



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- Develop a list of sponsors with contact information
- Develop a list of political leaders with contact information.
- Develop a list of community leaders and other resource persons.

### **Results Orientation**

- Adopt a result framework
- Develop data and use for improvement
- Communicate results to stakeholders
- Define success and failures
- Measure progress and share results
- Develop systems for collecting and analyzing data.

### **Financial Planning and Analysis**

- Determine resources needed for the project
- Determine the fiscal needs
- Make the best use of existing resources
- Create partnerships
- Explore national and international revenue sources.

### **Program adaptation to changes**

- Develop a program to respond to changes in funding and the environment
- Participate in collaborative advocacy to encourage change
- Monitor announced opportunities for funding
- Consider new ways of making improvement.



### **Management Structure**

- Recruit a multi-disciplinary team for the project
- Emphasis on professionals with experience
- Try to build a technocratic team
- Assign roles and responsibilities
- Delegate power and authority where and when need be.

### **Support Systems**

- Develop fiscal management, accounting, information and personnel systems
- Develop other support systems from the community.

### **Program Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Develop a check list of sustainability analysis.

### **Program Report Documentation**

- Document, save and file all project documents.



## CHAPTER 4: INTERNISA Sustainability Strategy

### 4.1 Sustainability Objectives

As already mentioned, the INTERNISA project, in line with the ENI CBC MED Programme guidelines, aims to achieve the long-term sustainability and impact of project results & outcomes.

To do so, INTERNISA project's sustainability activities need to accomplish the following objectives:

- Mutual trust, respect, honesty and commitment
- A balance of authority and knowledge sharing
- Clear, transparent and accessible communication
- Publicity
- Avoidance of conflict of interest
- Equal treatment
- Proportionality
- Non-discrimination
- Appropriateness of deadlines
- Roles, procedures and conventions to be agreed
- Project's mission, goals, objectives & outcomes to be articulated and agreed.



## 4.2 Potential Sustainability Barriers and Ways to Address them

This section presents the main barriers that could impede the progress of the INTERNISA project.

To ensure the sustainability of results, the present section also discusses ways to address these barriers.

The most important Barriers can be summarized as follows:

- **Funding Opportunities**

Funding from the ENI CBC MED Programme only covers the project's duration. It is therefore necessary for the existing financial resources to be used efficiently both during the duration of the project but also in the post-project period. Additionally, new funding schemes should be identified during the duration of the project and after the end of it as a way to further ensure project's sustainability.

- **Staff Allocation and Other Resources**

The Partners staff associated with INTERNISA specific activities are usually allocated to a different project or activities after the end of the project, meaning that the availability of staff is also limited. Available staff and resources should be strategically and efficiently used. This will ensure that the results of the INTERNISA project will be sustained both during and after the end of the INTERNISA project.

- **Organization and Communication**

Communication between INTERNISA partners and key stakeholders can easily be lost and often becomes less frequent after the project's completion. This is often the case since after the end of the funding period, all involved individuals have less & limited time to spend on activities related to the project since its foreseen activities have been completed. It is therefore important to create opportunities in order to continue the established relationships and to further expand them and share new ideas. Organisation and communication are therefore both important to the sustainability of the project results.



- **Time Management**

Limited time is a major issue since by the end of the project, the staff associated with INTERNISA particular activities are no longer available to spend time on associated tasks and are allocated to different project(s) or have other responsibilities. In the case that some Partner(s) do have the capacity to occur a certain number of hours for the INTERNISA project, the time available will be in any case limited and activities such as keeping the INTERNISA Platform and Mobile App updated may become a challenge. In the case that there is time for the activities, it is best to spend it on the activities which will provide the highest added value. From the stakeholders' perspective, time issues are also important in the sense that there may be limited possibilities to participate in the dissemination process outside the project's official scope and to contribute further to sustaining the results.

- **Interest and Motivation**

It is sometimes the case that the partners and the stakeholders may lose interest after the project's completion, particularly in the case that the immediate effects of the project have been achieved on a policy level. This is less likely to be the case if the project has developed high quality outputs and strong networks, thereby maintaining their interest and motivation to further disseminate project results. The formulation and continue of operation of the INTERNISA Network (through the signings of the INTERNISA Memorandum of Cooperation-MoC) is therefore of great importance.

- **Other Potential Difficulties**

Complex and time consuming administrative and bureaucratic procedures in certain Partners countries can also be a significant barrier to the implementation of the INTERNISA Sustainability Plan. This phenomenon is often more strongly present on a regional and peripheral level in the EU countries. Overcoming the above obstacles can be a challenging process particularly with the lack of financial resources, however it is essential that potential, negative effects are minimized in order to achieve the maximum results from the INTERNISA project in the long-run.



## CHAPTER 5: Sustainability Action Plan

### 5.1 INTERNISA project's platform and Mobile Application and Social Media Pages

The INTERNISA project's website (<https://enicbcmed.eu/projects/internisa>) is hosted on the ENI CBC MED Programme website, as is the case with all other participating projects in the Programme.

The ENI CBC MED Programme ensures that information about the INTERNISA project such as news and events update are disseminated widely, thus adding/contributing to the impact of the project's results. This guarantees that the website will be reliable, easily accessible and establishes an efficient interconnection between the project's activities and the programme.

Apart from the project's website, there have been developed other digital tools, such as social network accounts (Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn) as well as E-newsletters, with have been integrated with the predefined structure hosted by the Programme.

This facilitates and, at the same time, ensures the sustainability of INTERNISA results, enabling the project's news and events to be available to the general public.

### 5.2 Development and Maintenance of Online Portal Including Labor Supply and Demand Match-making Mechanism and Mobile Application (INTERNISA Platform and Mobile App)

To reach its objective, the INTERNISA project developed online and offline services addressed to women, employers and public officials providing training curricula and personal consulting.

INTERNISA project activities culminate with interventions related to match-making of labour demand and supply through an On-line Platform and Mobile Application ([www.internisa.eu](http://www.internisa.eu)) in order to foster contacts among job seekers and employers.

Both INTERNISA Platform and Mobil App are fully operational in 7 (seven) languages: English, Greek, French, Arabic, Italian, Spanish & Catalan. The INTERNISA Mobile App is available on iOS & Android.



## CHAPTER 6: INTERNISA Engagement

### 6.1 Partners' engagement

The INTERNISA Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) among the INTERNISA project Partners outlines a framework for the INTERNISA project partners in order to engage them in the most efficient way in the implementation of INTERNISA project objectives, both during the procedures for the successful implementation of the project results and after its completion.

During and beyond the INTERNISA project's duration, the partners' cooperation Network will play a critical role in reaching the project's objectives, developing a stakeholder collaboration Network and promoting women's entrepreneurship in the MED area.

For this reason, the signing of the MoC is essential, as it specifies the key principles of the INTERNISA Network's function, outlines a basic framework of Network objectives and key aspects of the actions to be accomplished and affirms the INTERNISA partners' commitment to expanding the Network to new ENI CBD MED territories and to other territories.

Further to the above, the INTERNISA partnership will attempt to ensure the continuity of the transnational & multi-stakeholder dynamic initiated by the project through the following ways, aiming also to attract interest/support and transfer project results beyond the partnership:

- Continue further dissemination (as described before) with E-newsletters and updates on the social media pages on new and existing stakeholders.
- Develop ideas for future cooperation with existing organizations and private industry initiatives.
- Contact policy-makers to track relevant changes on policy frameworks.
- Cooperate with public authorities, industry associations to further illustrate the value of the project's results.
- Continue to operate the INTERNISA Platform & Mobile App
- Provide and disseminate information for the INTERNISA project through e-mail campaigns to all interested parties
- Participate in related events
- Track academic research on the topic and contact researchers for consultation on future projects
- Continue to operate the Offline Spots.



## 6.2 Stakeholders Engagement

To achieve INTERNISA project's sustainability, it is necessary to involve all relevant groups of stakeholders in implementing the project results and sustain their willingness to stay involved beyond the project's duration.

The benefits of stakeholders' participation in project (sustainability) activities can be summarized as follows:

- ✓ Ensuring that the project's results are beneficial for the stakeholders as well as for the wider community
- ✓ Developing an environment of trust by enabling the voices of the stakeholders to be heard and their issues to be known.
- ✓ Making the project accountable to the stakeholders thus ensuring its efficiency
- ✓ Promoting transparency in the actions of the project and ensure that the project is held accountable for its actions
- ✓ Achieving in facilitating support and commitment to the project and ultimately increasing the chances for sustainability after the project completion.



## CHAPTER 7: Expanding the Participation of Policy Makers in INTERNISA

### 7.1 From the Project Proposal to the Implementation Phases

As stated in the project's proposal, ENI territories suffer from large unemployment and low participation of women in the labour market, as evidenced by the immense population of women NEETs in EUMCs and MPCs (Greece-24,2% compared to 15,4% of men, Italy-28,9% compared to 20,9% of men, urban Egypt-80% compared to 10% of men). At the same time, as per Joint Operational Programme data, job growth is hindered by the low penetration of digital innovations in ENI CBC MED territories, as can be seen by the low R&D rates therein (less than 2%) and the incapacity of MSMEs to find access to know-how or venture capital for innovation.

A double sided approach providing training in digital skills to women and know-how about digitalization approaches to businesspeople has the potential to contribute to the solution of these problems as long as it takes into account the economic and cultural/organisational factors that impeded the capacity of simple training projects for women to bridge the digital gender gap (see e.g. the recent increase in the difference between the rates of men and women who are employed in the EU digital sector - 9,5% in 2011 compared to 10,7% in 2015 – EC 2013). Economic factors include a) the large share of SMEs (40%) that find it difficult to invest in digital innovations compete in the globalized economy and increase profitability and job growth, and b) the relative lack of trade & integration between ENI CBC MED territories. Cultural/organisational factors include a) the absence of methodologies to ensure access to a large number of women, b) gender stereotyping that encourages employers to prefer men over women, c) the relative absence of soft skills such as leadership from women, and d) the fact that a lot of unemployed women choose to withdraw from the labour market (more than 85% of NEETs due to family responsibilities are female and in MPCs discouraged women not seeking employment constitute an immense share of the total unemployed population, i.e. 77,6% in Egypt; 67,9% in Tunisia –ILO 2016).

#### 1. Greece (Central Macedonia and Attica)

The Region of Central Macedonia and ActionAid Hellas collected the feedback and provided the information regarding the context. In Greece, a significant focus has been on promoting



gender equality and empowering women. Various laws and initiatives have been implemented to address gender-based discrimination and violence, enhance women's participation in decision-making, and ensure equal education and employment opportunities. However, despite the measures taken, there is still room for significant changes to be introduced. Regarding lifelong education, Greece recognizes the importance of continuous learning and skill development throughout one's life. Programs and initiatives are in place to promote adult education, vocational training, and retraining opportunities to support individuals in adapting to changing labour market demands and improving their employability.

## 2. Gender Equality and Labour Integration in Lebanon

Based on the information provided in the national policy makers' workshop report, Lebanese women face numerous challenges at the workplace though they can excel and reach their full potential within various work environments. Even though the recent years have witnessed a considerable progress in terms of gender disparities and biases in the workplace, they are still paid unequally and get limited opportunities for leadership roles mainly because many company owners are not aware of the existing Lebanese laws that call for equal rights among male and female employees. This job bias might also be attributed to the fact the most women are assumed not to possess the digital skills required in most sectors nowadays.

To achieve gender equality in the labor market, it is essential to promote equal access to education and training. According to a report by the United Nations Development Programme (2018), women in Lebanon have lower levels of education than men, which limits their access to high-paying jobs and leadership positions. To address this, the government should invest in education and training programs that target women and girls, particularly in STEM fields, which are critical for economic growth and innovation.

The Lebanese government has established the National Strategy for Women in Lebanon 2011-2021, which aims to promote gender equality and empower women in all areas of life, including the labor market. The strategy identifies several key priorities, including improving access to education and training for women, promoting women's participation in decision-making, and increasing their representation in the labor market (UN Women, 2021). The strategy serves as a roadmap for promoting gender equality and empowering women in Lebanon and reflects the government's commitment to advancing women's rights and opportunities.



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### 3. Women's Rights in Catalonia - Spain

Back in 2015, Catalonia passed the Law 17/2015, on effective equality between women and men. It incorporates the transversality of equality as a fundamental principle, therefore, it establishes a general framework for the adoption of positive actions in different areas of social reality. Furthermore, it defines the basic concepts and categories relating to equality, and it establishes the 8 principles that have governed all the policies and actions of the public authorities: Transversality of the gender perspective and equality policies, Balance between market work and domestic work and co-responsibility, Eradication of male violence, Empowerment of women, Participation women's groups and associations and equal democracy, Transversality of women's perspective, Redistribution of wealth, Non-sexist or stereotypical use of language.

The Gender Equality Observatory is an advisory body of the Government of the Generalitat (Government of Catalonia) attached to the Catalan Institute for Women. The objective of the Observatory is to work with the data, draw up statistics and carry out research on the inequalities between women and men and thus contribute to knowledge about the situation of women. This knowledge should improve decision-making, planning and evaluation of public policies from the perspective of gender and women.

The Observatory is made up of representatives of the Administration of the Generalitat, entities and bodies such as professional associations, local bodies, trade unions and business organizations, the National Women's Council of Catalonia and the National Commission for a Coordinated Intervention against Male Violence, as contained in Decree 52/2017, of June 6, of creation.

In 2021, the Government of Catalonia created the Ministry of Equality and Feminism.

### 4. Gender Equality and Women's Labour Integration in Andalusia - Spain

Andalusia in southern Spain, presents a complex landscape when it comes to women's participation in the labor market. Despite significant strides in gender equality over the past few decades, women in Andalusia continue to face challenges. As of 2023, the unemployment rate for women under 25 years is 39.6%, while for those over 24 years, it stands at 18.9%, significantly higher than the male unemployment rate for the same age group, which is 15.6%. Furthermore, 1,744,220 women were unemployed in Andalusia as of February 2023. The wage gap, although decreasing, still exists with men earning on average 4.1% more than women as of 2017.



However, public administrations are actively working to rectify this situation. They have implemented a range of measures aimed at promoting gender equality in the labor market, including legislation to combat wage discrimination, initiatives to support women's entrepreneurship, and programs to encourage the hiring of women in sectors traditionally dominated by men. These efforts reflect a growing recognition of the need to harness the full potential of women in the labor market to drive economic growth and social development in Andalusia. The effectiveness of these measures will be seen in the coming years as they continue to be implemented and adjusted based on the evolving labor market dynamics.

#### **5. The Italian Framework on Gender Equality and Labour Integration**

The modern legislation on equal opportunities is anticipated, in Italy, by the Constitution. The principles of equal opportunities defined in European legislation have been implemented in Italy by various legislative decrees and laws. The law also provides that the community funds - European Social Fund (ESF) and National Operational Program (PON) - are used first of all to increase female employment by ensuring that they support both training activities and those of accompaniment and inclusion in the world of work. The Department for Equal Opportunities is the support structure for the President of the Council of Ministers which operates in the functional area relating to the promotion and coordination of policies on personal rights, equal opportunities and equal treatment. In Italy, on 5 August 2021 the first national strategy for gender equality 2021-2026 was presented in the Council of Ministers, which outlines a system of integrated political actions in which concrete, defined and measurable initiatives will come to life.

The National Committee for the implementation of the principles of equal treatment and equality of opportunities between male and female workers is established at the Ministry of Labor and Social Policies. Italy has also introduced a lifelong learning strategy.

#### **6. Technological Development and Gender Equality in Palestine**

The internet and digital services are widely used by young women in Palestine and by Palestinian Community. According to the latest figures by Ministry of Information, Technology and Communication, 84% of Palestinian households in the West Bank have access to the internet, while 73% of households in Gaza do. Between men and women, there also still exists a discrepancy: while 79% of men have access to online services, only 71% of women do.



Despite the high percentage of female students enrolled in tech-based educational programs, their participation in the tech industry in Palestine is very low, as women account for only 20 percent of the workforce in the technology sector. Despite the growth of technology and the increasing number of job opportunities in the tech industry, women in technology (WIT) are significantly underrepresented. Women continue to face significant barriers to entry and advancement in technology and entrepreneurship, including bias and discrimination, lack of access to funding and mentorship, lack of confidence, and a lack of representation at the highest levels of leadership. (Mona Nabil Demaidi, 2023).

### **7. Gender Equality and Youth Employment Framework in Jordan**

In Jordan, women's participation in the labour market is lower compared to men's. The country is working closely with international organizations with the aim of reducing the labour gender gap, especially for young ages.

In 2022, a constitutional amendment aimed at enhancing the state's obligation to empower and support women to perform an effective role in society building, while ensuring equity of opportunity, and to protect them from all forms of violence and discrimination.

Furthermore, Jordan has a National Strategy for Women in Jordan (2020 - 2025), a Decent Work Country Programme that was concluded in 2022 (2018 - 2022) and social partners and NGOs networks who work in collaboration to achieve gender equality.

### **8. Women's Rights in Tunisia**

Tunisia has made significant strides in advancing women's rights over the years. The country has a relatively progressive legal framework compared to its regional neighbors, which promotes gender equality.

The Tunisian Constitution adopted in 2014, enshrines principles of gender equality and prohibits discrimination based on sex. This has resulted in improved access to education and healthcare for women and increased representation in political and economic spheres.

However, despite these advancements, challenges persist, such as deep-rooted cultural norms and practices that perpetuate gender stereotypes and violence against women. Activists and organizations continue to advocate for the enforcement of existing laws and the introduction of new measures to further enhance women's rights in Tunisia.



In terms of labor rights, Tunisia has a complex history of labor movements and trade unions. Following the 2011 revolution, workers' rights were recognized and protected, allowing for the establishment of independent trade unions. These unions have played a significant role in negotiating with the government and employers to secure better working conditions and fair wages for employees across various sectors.

Despite these achievements, the labor market still faces many challenges, including informal employment, particularly in rural areas, and issues related to job insecurity and low wages. The government and civil society are actively working to address these concerns and foster a more inclusive and equitable labor environment.

Regarding life-long education, Tunisia has emphasized the importance of continuous learning and skills development. The country has a well-established education system, and access to basic education is widely available.

Additionally, the Tunisian government has implemented various initiatives to promote adult education and vocational training, recognizing that continuous learning is essential to adapt to the demands of a rapidly changing economy and job market. The focus on life-long education aims to equip individuals with the necessary skills to enhance their employability and contribute to the country's economic growth. However, challenges remain in bridging the urban-rural education divide and ensuring equal opportunities for all citizens to access quality education and training throughout their lives. To address these issues, ongoing efforts are being made to expand educational opportunities and improve the overall quality of education in Tunisia.

## **7.2 Key Findings Following the Implementation of Policy Makers' Workshops**

It was a common finding that during the 9 (nine) Policy Makers' Workshops/Meetings that were implemented (one Workshop/Meeting per INTERNISA Partner), the participants were offered a space and opportunities to exchange ideas and express opinions on the topics under discussion. Agreement was reached in all the different contexts on the needs for proper budget allocation, increased awareness raising for women's skills and capacities, building of national networks for connecting relevant stakeholders to exchange ideas on developing digital skills of women. It is important to note that gender inequalities are persistent and present in all the implementation contexts with a different intensity and impact on women's everyday lives. The systemic nature of inequalities was highlighted by policy makers as well as the efforts that are made to address them.



### 7.3 Policy Recommendations

Based on the national reports developed after the conclusion of the policy makers' Workshops, competent policy makers and stakeholders in the INTERNISA implementing countries should:

#### 1. Greece

##### 1.1. Region of Central Macedonia

- 1.1.1. Encourage skills development by adopting relevant regulations.
- 1.1.2. Encourage the adoption of decision making and leadership roles by women.
- 1.1.3. Promote training initiatives for women employed in male-dominated specialties.
- 1.1.4. Implement activities to enhance the professional development of women (e.g. counseling support, mentoring, etc.) with the aim of upgrading skills and asserting yourself high positions of responsibility and authority.
- 1.1.5. Adopt measures to encourage working women to increase their participation in lifelong learning.
- 1.1.6. Create suitable jobs in sectors where women are underrepresented and parallel support for women to claim them.
- 1.1.7. Raise awareness of the importance of training and skills development in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) through various channels, including public and stakeholder organisations.
- 1.1.8. Encourage the promotion of skills upgrading in the workplace by employer networks and associations as well as the fostering of trust-based relationships between firms that support knowledge-sharing and pooled investments in training.
- 1.1.9. Encourage collaborations across firms can also foster innovation diffusion within regional supply chains, potentially integrating firms into global value chains, which also reduces regional vulnerability to automation.



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## 1.2. ActionAid Hellas

- 1.2.1. Establish strategies and action plans that aim at increasing women's participation in the labour market.
- 1.2.2. Establish participatory working groups (including representatives from public authorities, NGOs, employers', and employees' unions e.tc.) for co-designing national policies related to women's empowerment and equal participation in the labour market.
- 1.2.3. Ensure that the funding of public services for women's holistic support will be covered by the state's budget and not exclusively by EU funding sources.
- 1.2.4. Allocate adequate resources for childcare services.
- 1.2.5. Organize awareness and sensitization campaigns for combatting gender stereotypes.
- 1.2.6. Adopt a human rights-oriented approach in labour legislation and policies that will improve existing working conditions.
- 1.2.7. Improve the framework on work-life balance and ensure its implementation for all employees.
- 1.2.8. Improve the Vocational Education Training (VET) and adult education framework.
- 1.2.9. Conduct periodic research and data collection to inform policies while establishing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.
- 1.2.10. Conduct needs assessments and mapping exercises to identify groups of populations that are excluded from or have limited access to the labour market.
- 1.2.11. Update the country's digital transformation strategy with the aim of safeguarding opportunities for digital upskilling and education for vulnerable groups.
- 1.2.12. Build small and medium enterprises' internal capacity building for training employees by providing for specific incentives or/ and the use tools such as social corporate responsibility.
- 1.2.13. Build networks of synergies among public and private sector actors for facilitating information sharing.



## 2. Lebanon

- 2.1. Develop a policy framework to reduce the gender equality gap.
- 2.2. Enforce the enactment of the laws that prevent gender based discrimination by setting clear criteria and standards especially when it comes to equal pay and workplace equality (the law already exists, it was issued but it is not implemented).
- 2.3. Invest in education by considering labor rights.
- 2.4. Help women to create home – work balance
- 2.5. Address gender stereotypes and cultural barriers by asking policymakers to transform such stereotypes.
- 2.6. Provide gender responsive entrepreneurship support.
- 2.7. Encourage the designing mentorship programmes.
- 2.8. Protect women against workplace harassment.
- 2.9. Ensuring sustainability of policies adopted and activities implemented by having a clear vision communicated to the stakeholders involved.
- 2.10. Modify the books that are used in the training curricula.
- 2.11. Design a new curriculum framework
- 2.12. Conduct studies about the percentage of female dropouts in the labour market.
- 2.13. Encourage curriculum authors to attend gender workshops based on agreements (to highlight possible risks and previous development on the changing image of women).
- 2.14. Assign female book authors/ coordinators in the development of training material.
- 2.15. Include female poets and role models in texts
- 2.16. Encourage women to have their own businesses.
- 2.17. Encourage big companies to recruit women.



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- 2.18. Develop a national strategy to involve women in the army and provide them equal opportunities even to participate in field manoeuvres not just in office work.
- 2.19. Foster partnerships among all the groups, and even to engage women in solving the current crises; i.e. allowing them to participate in negotiation tables so as to contribute in solving the problems of the country.
- 2.20. Encourage the digital upskilling of women by raising awareness on its importance and benefits for women's development.
- 2.21. Provide trainings to women on digital skills and life skills.
- 2.22. Ensure the application of the legal framework on women's protection from discrimination and violence as well as the adoption and implementation of measures about supporting motherhood.
- 2.23. Provide incentives to women facing have financial issues to attend training programmes that focus on jobs related to women, fashion, crafts, dairy products, health assistance, and so on. Women should also be encouraged to try male dominated jobs such as mechanics, maintenance, farming, etc.
- 2.24. Prioritize the employment of women on the basis of social criteria.
- 2.25. Conduct studies that give special attention to women; taking into account their needs and qualifications, and encourage fairness especially when it comes to administrative jobs.
- 2.26. Assign a female chief officer; a representative who participates in all activities and follows up on women's affairs
- 2.27. Foster INTERNISA's goals by providing digital services that help women develop their CVs, fill application forms, and answer interview questions.



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## **3. Catalonia**

- 3.1. Increase training opportunities on digital skills, especially on the basic level.
- 3.2. Increase the access to digital equipment.
- 3.3. Develop policies for remote work. Remote work would reduce mobility issues & allow some flexibility. Women, especially women with children, are statistically more impacted by the day-to-day family responsibilities.
- 3.4. Become powerful facilitators. Policymakers can challenge the current policies and promote new solutions within their frame of action.
- 3.5. Develop greater understanding and awareness on the importance of empowering women at an institutional level.
- 3.6. Safeguard adequate financial support for employability activities.
- 3.7. Honor the commitment to offer support to everyone. Policies often define the target group that can benefit the support. The spectrum should be broadened to ensure that no one is left behind.
- 3.8. Adopt positive measures for SMEs in terms of more facilities to employ minority groups, more training opportunities for the staff, etc.
- 3.9. Promote policies that reduce the bureaucratic processes and allow SMEs to focus on other matters and indirectly promote their empowerment.
- 3.10. Research labour sectors with a gender lens. Researching what has been done and what is being done can surface the weaknesses of current policies. It will allow developing targeted solutions for such weaknesses and at the same time to ensure that resources are not being duplicated. Bringing a gender lens to the equation is an innovative way to find more inclusive solutions and promote gender equality opportunities in an otherwise masculine labor market.
- 3.11. Develop targeted and decentralized job fairs
- 3.12. Create a network of organizations focusing on the matching demand between supply and labor market, would allow to bridge the gap cross-sector and to increase the effectiveness of any taken action.
- 3.13. Develop collaborative programmes instead of competitive ones.



#### **4. Andalusia**

- 4.1. Disseminate the use of tools to self-analyse their digital skills. This measure would allow women to independently determine their level of digital literacy.
- 4.2. Create grants for the purchase of computer equipment, associated with training in digital literacy and/or focused on finding employment for women without resources. This measure aims to address the problems of digital accessibility faced by women with few economic resources.
- 4.3. Work on inserting digital training in a cross-cutting manner throughout each training itinerary.
- 4.4. Enhance visibility of female role models. These role models should be close to the people in order to offer tangible examples and reachable goals. This measure would be carried out in collaboration with the Womandigital programme (a project led by the Andalusian Digital Agency, dependent on the regional government of Andalusia, in order to increase participation of women in the technological professions so as to retain digital and innovative talent as a way to transform digital economy in the region).
- 4.5. Promote the training of women in digital tools, e.g. e-commerce and online sales, to enable them to start up or continue to develop their economic activity without having to leave their living places.
- 4.6. Strengthen and complete the network of Guadalinfo centers (public infrastructures endowed with digital technologies in order to reduce the digital gap affecting a great number of citizens in Andalusia) by increasing the number of training and information access points to facilitate the search for employment. These spaces must be accessible, close and with adapted opening hours. To facilitate their implementation, it is proposed to reuse public spaces and adapt them to the new demands of the labour market (e.g. civic centers, libraries, etc.). To achieve this goal, the collaboration of city councils, provincial councils and the Andalusian Digital Agency is required.
- 4.7. Disseminate compiled and updated information on digital contents and existing labour insertion platforms from existent at the level of the city councils and public employment services such as the SAE or SEPE.



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- 4.8. Create fixed budget allocations from the public administration for the maintenance and updating of software and computer equipment in order to ensure the permanence of digital projects for labour market integration.
- 4.9. Encourage the use and creation of digitally accessible job search platforms (accessibility of format and content) through bonuses for the companies that manage them.
- 4.10. Involve women in the design and testing of these tools.
- 4.11. Propose specific measures to encourage companies to use INTERNISA platforms, such as the recognition of their actions in favor of equal opportunities. To this end, the Andalusian Regional Government could encourage private and public companies to support the development of the platform (create a label, a bonus system, etc.).
- 4.12. Propose training cycles on gender equality among the agents of the different public administrations dealing with the digital transformation of SMEs such as: Andalucía Emprende, the Vuela device (before Guadalinfo), the ADA, etc.
- 4.13. Define a “Digital Maturity Model” that covers the most relevant areas that a company should consider to digitize its business. Each Model will take into account gender equality as a transversal issue.
- 4.14. Support to Andalusian companies run by women with a self-diagnosis tool for digital maturity: a simple test that allows companies to immediately know their state of digitalisation.
- 4.15. Participate in the promotion of aid programmes for the digital transformation of Andalusian SMEs, to support them in the implementation of actions for their business digitalisation.
- 4.16. Introduce gender equality as a cross-cutting theme in the training actions for professionals and management staff to provide SMEs with the necessary skills to successfully tackle the digital transformation.
- 4.17. Adapt the training cycle of the Vuela programme to the needs and realities of women entrepreneurs.
- 4.18. Introduce INTERNISA findings in the relevant in policy agendas, targeting to public sector’s involvement and contribution for bridging the gender gap and promoting gender-based opportunities in the labor market, collaborating with



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the “Women Institut of Andalucia”. The objective of the Employment and Companies Area of the Andalusian Women's Institute is to promote equality in the employment of women and to achieve their employability, removing the obstacles that limit or impede it, through policies for the promotion of employment, entrepreneurship, conciliation and equality plans in companies, which promote the presence of women and men in the labor market under equal conditions.

- 4.19. Reinforce the implementation of the dual strategy adopted for the design and programming of the actions and programmes, a dual strategy is adopted. On the one hand, the WIA develops positive actions to fight against gender gaps in the labor sphere and, on the other hand, it supports the development of gender mainstreaming, integrating equal opportunities policies into the sectoral policies of the Andalusian Regional Government, through collaborations and facilitating tools and resources to achieve full equality of opportunities between women and men in the labor market.

## **5. Italy**

- 5.1. Organize a series of meetings with the selected stakeholders (for the reasons above, small numbers are preferred) in order to describe the available services and resources.
- 5.2. Organize one or more cycles of seminars directly involving policy makers with the purpose of supporting INTERNISA in the valorization of resources.
- 5.3. Proceed in the development if comparative studies with the reference territory:  
a) dialogue with young girls and women (with different age levels and different ethnic backgrounds); b) dialogue with institutions (e.g. schools and universities, regarding the planning of orientation courses, planning of STEAM courses, etc.); c) dialogue with organizations (which skills are required, which technologies are used in the company). This dialogue must take place during the project design phase, in progress and post.
- 5.4. Promote women's education on digital instruments (with flexible time and adaptable to the different necessities) with the purpose of increasing the



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knowledge of digitization techniques (from basic IT technical knowledge to those defines as "hard").

- 5.5. Adopting measures to address the difficulties in communicating to the area the tender and the funding or educational opportunities for women.
- 5.6. Promote dialogue between the different areas of the public sector.
- 5.7. Involve the reference associations representing SMEs to identify the most promising cases in which to invest in terms of engagement and communication of the project's potential.
- 5.8. Organize communication meetings with some small groups of SMEs that have basic technological development needs.
- 5.9. Involve the reference associations representing SMEs to identify the most promising cases in which to invest in terms of engagement and communication of the project's potential.
- 5.10. Organize communication meetings with some small groups of SMEs that have basic technological development needs.
- 5.11. Increase their knowledge of the management and functioning of SMEs: a) governance; b) digitalisation, technologies in use, job profiles, required skills and introduce gender equality as a transversal theme in the training action for SMEs' professionals and managers. Support companies in adopting digital systems through subsidies.
- 5.12. Encourage collaboration between the public and private sectors to value diversity and close the gender gap. Support gender equality plans within companies. Support women in vocational training and in entering or re-entering the labor market through the construction of training courses that accompany them in transition situations. Encourage and support female entrepreneurship by providing bonuses for those who want to start or have a business.
- 5.13. Promote and coordinate the communication of information on resources (tenders and/or projects financed through the use of public channels).
- 5.14. Create a network involving the various local institutions and organizations so that good practices in the field of digital innovation are transferred.



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## 6. Palestine

- 6.1. Develop digital tools related to job search.
- 6.2. Spread digital literacy namely for women in marginalized areas.
- 6.3. Provide digital and technological equipment as necessary tools needed for developing digital skills.
- 6.4. Develop digital marketing for women and utilizing mobile applications and social media especially for entrepreneurs.
- 6.5. Support the fulfilment of cyber security.
- 6.6. Develop skills of freelancing.
- 6.7. Allocate funds for young women leading SMEs to support their digital transformation.
- 6.8. Build capacities and enhance digital skills of women leading startups and SMEs especially new applications.
- 6.9. Encourage women to lead startups and SMEs in marginalized areas with the proper technological infrastructure as well as with the availability of internet services.
- 6.10. Encourage the training of women leading SMEs on the use and access to digital markets and platforms.
- 6.11. Provide women with digital tools and devices such as smart phones and computers.
- 6.12. Deliver of vocational training for women, especially in the fields of digital literacy.
- 6.13. Design specialized training programs in the areas of digitization (digital marketing, information search, job search, digital content, data security, Office organization).
- 6.14. Develop access to the Internet through a better infrastructure for cellular and terrestrial communications, especially in marginalized areas.
- 6.15. Provide platforms and centers for digital use.



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- 6.16. Develop vocational and digital training, especially in terms of basic digital literacy skills.
- 6.17. Develop the personal skills of young women in the field of presenting themselves and their products and personal skills should be developed along with developing technical skills.
- 6.18. Raise awareness about freelancing and remote working.
- 6.19. Support women in marginalized areas by all means for technological empowerment for a better life in light of digitization.
- 6.20. Allocate budgets in organizations and companies of private sector for developing digital skills and programs.
- 6.21. Change the recruitment procedures with regard to digital skills by assessing and giving them a good rate with the aim of motivating young people to continue developing their skills.
- 6.22. Spread the importance of positive digitization in the community especially among school students to acquire digital skills.
- 6.23. Apply and adhere to public policies according to labor law namely in the field of equal pay
- 6.24. Develop professional training programs on digitalization by TVET organizations
- 6.25. Develop a system for selling points for improving marketing opportunities for women entrepreneurs and young businesswomen
- 6.26. Increase opportunities for incubating projects in this field.
- 6.27. Create different specialized online platforms for marketing products of different sectors as agriculture, textile and tourist.
- 6.28. Build national database for targeting women to be trained on digital skills.
- 6.29. Strengthen cooperation and networking between relevant ministries and educational institution for exchanging ideas and best practices in the field of enhancing digital skills of young women.
- 6.30. Increase awareness sessions among university and secondary students on the most required jobs in the labor market.



## **7. Jordan**

- 7.1. Develop proper understanding of the current status of women economic participation and assess women's capacities of digital skills. This study can support in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of women's digital skills and understand the main obstacles faced by women in labor market.
- 7.2. Identify the clear and specific objective of each institution regarding how to enhance women participation in labor market and ensure that these objectives are appropriate to the local context and current needs and priorities.
- 7.3. Engage all relevant stakeholders, including but not limited to local community, and private sector which play critical and significant role in planning and implementation of all INTERNISA's practices, tools, and methods. In addition to the need for the engagement of the civil society organizations and governmental sector.
- 7.4. Provide the training, and technical education: The need for providing the training opportunities and learning programs to the women to enhance their digital skills and enrich their knowledge. These training programs can be focused on information technology, communication, enhance the programming and MS programs.
- 7.5. Provide the financial support: To enhance women opportunities to participate in labour market to open and secure their own business and secure the sustainability of these business.
- 7.6. Raise the community's awareness including women of the importance of women participation in digital skills, through media campaigns, social media, public meetings and community activities.
- 7.7. Monitor and evaluate the implemented activities to assess the performance, identify the gaps and take the corrective and proper action in timely manner. By doing this all the activities can achieve the expected outcomes in effective manner.
- 7.8. Renew the current laws and legislations in order to identify the required amendment, updates and creation of the new legislation and polices regarding women empowerment and economic participation.



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- 7.9. Facilitate women access to labour market by expand the financial coverage of motherhood leaves and provide nursery and childcare services.
- 7.10. Build women's capacities in fund raising and feasibility studies.
- 7.11. Support all community groups including women with disabilities and build their capacity in digital skills.
- 7.12. Raise women's awareness of labour laws and social security legislations in Jordan.
- 7.13. Map and assess the situation of SMEs to identify the extent to which these SMEs are using the digital skills and IT, this can help in identifying the obstacles and opportunities to enhance the SMEs' capacities in digital methods and tools.
- 7.14. Create relevant policies which targeted the SMEs to enhancing their capacities towards the digital transformation, this can increase the number of SMEs that use IT and digital technology, enhance their competition capacities as well as increase the growth and entrepreneurial.
- 7.15. Improve the fund: Enhance the funding project of SMEs interventions to enhance their capacities toward the digital transformation. This also can support the SMEs' capacities in employing the new technology and provide the fund to implement and support digital transformative projects.
- 7.16. Improve the Digital infrastructure: The new and updated policies need to improve the infrastructure for the SMEs to support the digital transformation including the internet and other new technologies.
- 7.17. Build the capacities of the SMEs staff in the use to digital methods including data analysis, digital marketing, electronic trade, new applications, and digital protection.
- 7.18. Facilitate the access to digital market by supporting the online platforms and electronic markets and prompt the online marketing.
- 7.19. Networking and collaboration between all relevant stakeholders including small, micro and large SMEs.
- 7.20. Creation of an enabling environment at workplace and learning opportunities in digital marketing, and skills by the policy makers



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- 7.21. Mitigate the obstacles faced by women in access labour market and review the payment polices, in order to reduce the tax and other financial commitment that women own SMEs need to pay.
- 7.22. Encourage the equal hiring approach: this can be done by creating operational procedures to create equal opportunities of both men and women in term of hiring, benefits and enabling environment as well as promotion to decision making position.
- 7.23. Improve the networking, sharing lesson learnt and best practices among SMEs and under the umbrella of the governmental entities to institutionalize and sustain the networks. Also, this can be done by conference, meeting, workshop and platforms.
- 7.24. Raise awareness of the SMEs' staff and governmental entities staff in the importance of women's economic participation and digital transformation and promote the success stories of women and digital skills.
- 7.25. Create gender mainstreaming policies that integrate gender at organization and institution levels, and integrate women needs and enabling factors to enhance women's participation in the labour market. This can support the design of program that promotes gender mainstreaming.
- 7.26. Endorse the flexible learning approaches that can support women ability to access to the learning opportunities and commit to these learning opportunities effectively.
- 7.27. Consider the gender disaggregation of men, women, elderly and people with disabilities in data collection, analysis, and reporting process with reference to digital skills.
- 7.28. Establish a technical and support committees' governorate levels.
- 7.29. Establish database at the ministries and relevant stakeholders to follow up with the women who need to be trained about digital skills and methods.
- 7.30. Women led or own small and digital project need to be supported by ministry of tourism in Jordan.
- 7.31. Support women led project financially without tax.



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- 7.32. Establish partnership between the relevant ministries, local and national entities to exchange the learning and best practices.
- 7.33. Establish the database that can link between the required job opportunities and the digital skills.
- 7.34. Enhance women awareness of the labour market demands and the need for matching between their skills and the demands ones.
- 7.35. Conduct a market analysis studies to enhance the coordination between the employers and the job seekers.
- 7.36. Establish and online marketing centers to promote and market women's production and facilitate their ability to reach the consumer with limited cost.
- 7.37. Create new investment opportunities through the local and the national entities from private, governmental, and civil society sectors.
- 7.38. Improve the partnership and networking between private and public sector to enhance women access to labour market, reduce the cost, expand the targeting, and maximize the impact.
- 7.39. Activate the collaboration between the universities and other educational institutions to improve the training materials to enhance the digital capacities of SMEs and women.

## **8. Tunisia**

- 8.1. Allocate adequate financial resources to the INTERNISA project to ensure its sustainability and effectiveness. This includes investing in the development and maintenance of digital training infrastructure, counseling services, and the online platform for labor market matching.
- 8.2. Foster collaboration between relevant stakeholders, including governments, international organizations, private sector entities, and civil society organizations, to create a holistic ecosystem that supports women's digital upskilling and empowerment.



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- 8.3. Review existing policies and regulations to identify and address any barriers that hinder women's participation in the labor market and access to digital opportunities. Implement policy reforms that promote gender equality, women's rights, and digital inclusion.
- 8.4. Establish a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to track the progress and impact of the INTERNISA project. Regularly assess its effectiveness in empowering women, bridging the digital divide, and driving economic growth.
- 8.5. Encourage the scaling up and replication of successful aspects of the INTERNISA project in other regions facing similar challenges. This can be achieved through knowledge-sharing platforms and international cooperation.
- 8.6. Enforce policies related to women's empowerment and digital upskilling. They should work to develop and amend laws and policies that promote gender equality and women's rights. This includes creating supportive frameworks for digital skills training programs and ensuring that there are no discriminatory barriers preventing women from accessing education, training, and job opportunities in the digital sector.
- 8.7. Allocate funds to educational institutions, vocational training centers, and online learning platforms to enhance digital skills training opportunities for women. Provide financial incentives and support to educational institutions to develop tailored digital upskilling programs for women. Scholarships and grants can be made available to encourage female participation in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) fields and digital-related courses.
- 8.8. Facilitate collaboration between government agencies and the private sector by creating an enabling environment for PPPs by offering tax incentives, grants, or other forms of support to businesses that engage in initiatives promoting women's digital upskilling and employment. PPPs can also jointly develop mentorship programs, internships, and job placement services for women in the digital sector.
- 8.9. Raise awareness about the importance of women's empowerment in the labor market. Government officials, public figures, media organizations, and NGOs can collaborate on awareness campaigns. It is very important that policy makers promote positive narratives around women's contribution to the digital economy and encourage girls and women to pursue careers in digital fields. Engaging with social media and community outreach programs can effectively disseminate these messages.



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- 8.10. Enable equal access to digital education and creating policies that ensure equal access to digital education and upskilling programs for women.
- 8.11. Invest in data collection and research to identify gaps and barriers in women's participation in the labor market and the digital sector. This data-driven approach can help shape effective policies and targeted interventions.
- 8.12. Use existing platforms to raise awareness about the benefits of women's empowerment and digital upskilling. Through public campaigns and media outreach, they can change societal perceptions and encourage women to pursue digital careers.
- 8.13. Develop a dedicated policy framework that focuses on empowering SMEs through digitalization. This policy should address the specific needs and challenges faced by SMEs and women entrepreneurs in adopting digital technologies.
- 8.14. Conduct a thorough needs assessment to understand the digital readiness and challenges of SMEs and identify areas where digital transformation can create the most impact and explore the barriers hindering SMEs' access to digital technologies.
- 8.15. Develop tailored capacity-building programs and digital skills training for SMEs, with a focus on promoting digital literacy and adoption of technology solutions. Special emphasis should be given to empowering women entrepreneurs to participate actively in the digital economy.
- 8.16. Develop innovative financing solutions that facilitate SMEs' access to capital for digital transformation projects.
- 8.17. Create synergies and facilitate knowledge exchange.
- 8.18. Enable SMEs, including those in rural areas, to participate in the digital economy.
- 8.19. Create of digital marketplaces and e-commerce platforms where SMEs can showcase their products and services, reaching a wider customer base both locally and globally.
- 8.20. Enact and enforce equal pay policies to ensure that women receive equal pay for equal work. This will help reduce the gender wage gap and promote fair compensation practices.



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- 8.21. Advocate for the implementation of flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting and flexible working hours, to support work-life balance for both men and women. This will enable more women to remain in the labor market while fulfilling family responsibilities.
- 8.22. Invest in accessible and affordable childcare services to relieve the burden of caregiving responsibilities on women, enabling them to fully participate in the labor market.
- 8.23. Create programmes and initiatives that specifically support and promote women entrepreneurship. Policymakers can work with organizations and financial institutions to provide training, mentoring, and access to finance for women entrepreneurs.
- 8.24. Encourage the collection and analysis of gender-disaggregated data in the labor market to identify gender gaps and design targeted interventions effectively.
- 8.25. Collaborate with relevant stakeholders, including government agencies, educational institutions, women's organizations, and private companies to introduce INTERNISA in the relevant policy agendas. The policy agenda should emphasize on the need to provide digital skills training and professional development to women, particularly in sectors with high demand for digital skills. Creating partnerships and online platforms to connect digitally skilled women with employers can enhance the matching process and promote women's employment in the digital sector.
- 8.26. Take proactive steps to promote the development of a network of synergies for matching demand and supply in the labor market.
- 8.27. Initiate public-private partnerships to foster collaboration between employers and training providers.
- 8.28. Allocate resources to support initiatives that target the digital skills development of women, such as offering grants or incentives to companies that hire digitally skilled women.
- 8.29. Advocate for gender-responsive policies and encourage the integration of gender perspectives in the labor market to create a more inclusive and diverse workforce.



## CHAPTER 8: Expanding the Participation of VET Organizations in INTERNISA

### 8.1 Introduction

There are growing and increasing national interests and national wills among the governments through their relevant ministries in the targeted countries to develop TVET systems in Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan, Spain, Tunisia, Greece and Italy. However, there are many challenges facing the development of TVET system in those countries. There are many governmental efforts, policies and actions that are being taken in those countries to attract more young females and males to join this field and bridge the gap between supply and demand in labor market and introduce new training programs and increase awareness among community members, secondary students and policymakers about importance of choosing vocational pathways and improving TVET system as a mean for overcoming unemployment. Accreditation of the TVET schools and vocational centers and issuing certificates for graduates of those centers are one of the good practices that are used to attract more young men and women to join TVET schools and centers in the targeted countries as way for getting jobs and overcoming unemployment. Yet, there is a still a mismatch between the skills taught and those demanded by the labor market. However, there are many challenges that impede increasing the digitally skilled women in TVET systems and attracting more young females and males to vocational majors. Those challenges include the social and traditional norms that discourage young females to enroll in vocational trainings and programs that are promoted and represented as they can only be performed by men and represent vocational jobs as less prestigious than other traditional jobs. In addition, there is a lack of constructive communication and dialogue between private sectors, employers and stakeholders and actors of TVET organizations, universities, ministries of education, labor, and trade unions. Besides, there is no legal framework for regulating the work of TVET institution in some contexts although there are national strategies. Young women also need gender-responsive laws and plans to be implemented in workplace to encourage them to join and select vocational trainings. Raising awareness actions and polices for encouraging secondary students towards choosing vocational majors varies among the targeted counties and there is an emphasis on starting to raise awareness of students and children on vocational jobs from elementary classes and through different means. Not all of TVET centers and schools in the targeted countries build their vocational programs according updated and recent needs assessment of the digital and technological



needs of labor markets causing gender digital gap and mismatch between supply and demand in the labor market.

## 8.2 Approaches

The INTERNISA project Partners have used different approaches and methodologies for conducting the 2-days Workshops for policymakers on expanding the participation of VET organizations in INTERNISA.

They've utilized a multi-faceted approach that combined qualitative and quantitative research methods and participatory approach. These approaches were effective in taking insights, feedback and relevant data.

The Workshops targeted various stakeholders, including representatives from VET institutions, universities, VET experts, educators, trade and labour unions, relevant ministries, relevant donors, representatives from chambers of commerce and other relevant parties.

Most of the INTERNISA Partners utilized participatory approach for conducting the 2-days Workshops, which encouraged the participants to share their insights, concerns, understanding the perspectives of the key stakeholders of VET system and recommendations regarding the alignment of VET curricula with INTERNISA's goals in their countries. This approach has made the Workshops interactive as they included discussions and debates, as well as group work tasks and presentations.

The Tunisian Partner of INTERNISA project (SQLI Services-SQLI), in parallel with the Workshops, conducted an exhaustive review of secondary literature pertaining to VET systems in Tunisia and global best practices in VET integration. This literature review aimed to provide a broader context for the findings and to identify potential gaps and areas of improvement within Tunisia's VET landscape. It has also allowed benchmarking Tunisia's VET system against international standards.

## 8.3 Findings

The findings of the workshops conducted by the partners of the project include findings related to the context, capacities of VET educators and trainers, gender sensitive policies, social stereotypes towards vocational trainings and jobs and lack of communication between the VET stakeholders.



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There are some contextual challenges impeding the improvement of TVET systems in some countries as Palestine where the Palestinian economy is connected to the economy of Israel, occupation and there is a shortage of skilled laborers and graduates of vocational majors in the Palestinian local market since most of the skilled laborers go to work in construction fields inside Israel. The contextual challenges also include the absence of legislative bodies that could regulate the field of TVET by legislating new laws that could be reflected with implementation mechanisms in the national strategy for TVET as in the case of Palestine that lacks parliament.

Most of the partners share findings related to stereotypes of vocational education and jobs which underestimate the status of vocational jobs.

One of the findings that impeded adopting INTERNISA in the current TVET system in the targeted countries of the project is the need to build the capacities of TVET educators and trainers to build their skills set by INTERNISA. They also need to be trained in the use of the most recent apps and devices to keep up with all technological developments. There is also a need to develop the curricula that align with the needs of the labor market. Some of the findings pointed to the importance of improving and building the life skills of graduates of TVET. One of the findings here is a shortage of funds and budgets for improving the digital infrastructure and maintenance in TVET institutions which impedes the process of learning and training. It was also pointed to the lack of community awareness of the TVET and the importance of TVET outcomes in enhancing the development process. Moreover, there is a lack of counseling and coaching services with high quality and standard and can be accessible by all TVET students. TVET actors and students need a comprehensive database of TVET that offers them opportunities about job opportunities and training.

ActionAid Hellas (AAH), Chamber of Commerce, Industry & Agriculture of Beirut and Mount Lebanon (CCIBML) points to the lack of gender sensitive policies as one of the reasons for the gender gap in the labor market as they lack flexibility that takes into consideration the gender role of women and their family and social responsibilities particularly related to family care causing the gender gap in the labor market. This kind of challenges discourage women from going to vocational fields as workplaces do not consider women's roles and responsibilities in terms of working hours and leaves or support services for working mothers.

The findings of the workshops pointed to the lack of clear communication and constructive dialogue in the field of developing vocational training programs between TVET institutions and relevant ministries, private sectors, trade unions, chambers of commerce.



## 8.4 Conclusions

Due to contextual and financial challenges, and absence of gender sensitive policies and training programs on recent technological developments and poor digital infrastructure, many actions need to be taken on different levels to contributing to matching between supply and demand and bridging digital gender in gap in labour market.

The participants in those workshops drew conclusions on TVET sector and criticized wrong practices and provided new suggestions for improving the current policies by taking actions in the following areas:

- The alignment of the existing TVET curricula with the skill sets and digital competencies emphasized by INTERNISA. This alignment is essential to ensure that graduates are equipped with the skills demanded by the local labor market.
- TVET programs should be designed on studies, research alignment with the changing demands and evolution of the labor market.
- Lifelong training -actions need to be taken to ensure lifelong training.
- life skills of new graduates.
- Capacities of TVET trainers and educators whose skills on recent technologies need to be enhanced.
- Gender sensitive policies in the workplace.
- Innovative tools for raising awareness towards vocational jobs and majors.
- Laws related to vocational training.
- Budget for improving digital infrastructure.
- Quality Assurance system that includes designing quality standards and assessment criteria for TVET institutions, conducting regular evaluations for program quality as an opportunity for improvement.