



## PRESS RELEASE

### The VoWoCo Erasmus+ Project Unveils Evidence-Based Skill Matrix for Women Entrepreneurs Across Four Countries

**Women entrepreneurs do not just need generic business advice — they need support that reflects the real skills, challenges, and opportunities shaping their daily work. The VoWoCo project has now turned that insight into action with the development of an evidence-based Skill Matrix that identifies the most important entrepreneurial competencies for women in Hungary, Italy, Portugal, and Türkiye.**

The Skill Matrix was not created in theory alone. It emerged from a rigorous research process that combined **focus group discussions** with women entrepreneurs and women in career transitions, **labor market analysis**, and **validation by 22 international experts** from academia, business, civil society, and public institutions. Across the four countries, the research produced 65 first-order skills, 17 second-order themes, and four overarching skill dimensions, creating a robust picture of the capabilities women entrepreneurs rely on in different contexts.

The findings show that entrepreneurial success is shaped by much more than financial literacy or traditional growth metrics. **The strongest pillar in the matrix is relational and social skills**, followed by **management and operations, personal and behavioral skills**, and **cognitive and strategic skills**. Experts especially highlighted **networking and social capital**, opportunity recognition, self-regulation, strategic planning, and adaptive leadership as the most important themes. In other words, the matrix reflects how women entrepreneurs really build and sustain businesses: by navigating relationships, institutions, uncertainty, and changing life circumstances.

This is exactly what makes the Skill Matrix so useful. It provides a practical, evidence-based foundation for targeted training, mentoring, and self-reflection tools that respond to real needs rather than assumptions. On this basis, **VoWoCo is also developing an online learning module that will be available free of charge, helping women entrepreneurs strengthen the skills** that matter most in practice. The matrix can therefore serve not only researchers and policymakers, but also trainers, mentors, support organisations, and women who want a clearer picture of where they stand and where they can grow.





Country results also reveal striking differences:

- In Hungary, the strongest profile is psychologically intensive: women entrepreneurs often rely on self-awareness, identity adjustment, and career transitioning in response to lower levels of social capital.
- Italy stands out for its relationally embedded profile, where community networking and relational empathy are especially important, reflecting the power of social ties in business life.
- Portugal shows an institutionally structured profile with strong strategic mapping, uncertainty management, and a need for practical tools that support decision-making in constrained environments.
- Türkiye presents an opportunity-driven profile, with strong market awareness, high risk-taking, and emerging digital strengths such as data visualization and prompt engineering.

These **country-specific findings** matter because they show that support for women entrepreneurs should not be one-size-fits-all. The **same skills do not carry the same weight** in every national context, and effective training must reflect local realities, sectoral differences, and stage-specific business needs. That is why the Skill Matrix is designed as both a shared European framework and a flexible tool that can be adapted for country-level use.

VoWoCo is a transnational project dedicated to better understanding and supporting women entrepreneurs across Europe through research-based tools, practical learning resources, and cross-country collaboration. By combining evidence, expert validation, and a clear focus on usability, the project aims to help women entrepreneurs strengthen their businesses, make informed choices, and access support that truly fits their needs. The Skill Matrix is a key step in that direction: a practical bridge between research and action.

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**Attachment:**

[Infographics](#)

[Executive Report](#)

