# National Piloting Experience Report

## « Italy »

**Authoring partner: Smart Revolution**

SMERALD

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## Introduction

- **Background:** *A brief summary of the context for your pilots (in relation to Digital Data and Artificial Intelligence competences in the context of SMEs/VET providers in your country)*

The pilot was run internally at Smart Revolution s.r.l., a small company based in Italy and active in the field of business and strategic consultancy and European project management. The initial level of competences related to Digital and AI was very unbalanced among the staff members, even among members with similar tasks. The previous knowledge was purely based on personal interest towards the topic, not on the need or utility of such competences in their daily work. In general, in Italy, it is possible to find several courses on AI and digital data but none of it was specifically targeted to the professional context of a SME or the field of project management.

- **The Purpose and Objectives of the Pilots:** *why you did it – the reasons for piloting and what you set out to test*

Internally, we identified several areas of our daily work where we thought that AI could play a role in improving and accelerating our processes. To validate these assumptions, we initiated a pilot project to test various tools and assess their effectiveness.

- **The Target Groups: Pilot Participants and Beneficiaries**: *who was involved in the piloting - information about them: how many, their occupation, gender, age range, SMEs managers/employees or VET professionals etc)*

9 staff members of Smart Revolution participated in the pilot. More specifically: 3 SME managers, 3 senior level employees and 1 junior level employees and 2 interns. There were 3 males and 6 females, ranging from 26 to 46 years old.

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## Section 1: Methodology of the pilot(s)

*Describe how the piloting was carried out, what the format was and what activities it involved. How many pilots did you organise and why did you do it this way?*

### *Pilot 1*

- *Description of the pilot ie.* ***why****,* ***where, when*** *(the timeline),* ***by whom*** *(the facilitator/s)****, to whom*** *(the beneficiaries) and numbers involved*
- *Process/ methods used ie* ***how*** *it was conducted and* ***what*** *did you do? (eg learning projects (no.), face-to-face sessions, cascading the learning through the full blended learning course etc?)*

*The pilot had the aim of testing AI tools on selected areas of work as identified by the staff members of Smart Revolution to assess if they could enhance and fasten the processes. The identified areas where*:

1. *Proposal writing*
2. *External communication and marketing (social media posts, weekly newsletter)*
3. *Presentations (training sector)*

*The pilot was run internally at Smart Revolution in both its offices, in Turin (Piedmont) and in Massa (Tuscany), for a period of two and a half months, from February to mid-April 2025. Two of the three trainers that participated in the CPD in Palermo acted as facilitators: one of them design the pilot structure and methodology and monitored it gathering feedback from all participants, the other facilitator developed the material (ppt presentation and guidelines) and delivered a synchronous training session. All 9 staff members participated in the pilot.*

*The following learning pathway was developed*:

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| Step No. | Title | Content | Learning objective | Method<br>Activity | Media | time | Competence column |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Introductory workshop “AI tools and how to consciously use them” | • Introduction of the SMERALD project<br>• What is GenAI<br>• AI tools and how to use it in our professional context | • Having a basic knowledge of the aims of the project<br>• Knowing AI tools that can be used in their work and knowing how to select and apply them according to the need<br>• Being curious about AI tools that can support work tasks | • Synchronic presentation<br>• Hands-on exercises | • Videoconference (Zoom)<br>• AI tools | • 2h | • Knowledge (medium)<br>• Skills (basic)<br>• Attitude (basic) |
| 2 | Self-learning | • “GenAI tools in the dataflow”<br>• “Mastering prompt engineering for LLM” | • Deepen the knowledge on genAI for the workflow and prompt engineering<br>• Try out selected tools and prompts | • Self-pace learning, asynchronous | • Ppt presentations<br>• Guide (pdf) | • 1h | • Knowledge (medium)<br>• Skills (basic) |

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| Step No. | Title | Content | Learning objective | Method<br>Activity | Media | time | Competence column |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | • Vademecum for AI | | | | | |
| 3 | Practical phase | • AI tools | • Knowing the main functionalities of a variety of AI tools useful for work tasks<br>• Being able to select and apply the known AI tools<br>• Discover and apply new tools or functionalities<br>• Becoming confident and conscious in the use of Ai tools at work | • Challenge: **apply at least 3 new tools** in the work tasks, **include a new one in the work flow** | • AI tools<br>• Learning journal | • 2 months | • Skills (medium)<br>• Knowledge (medium)<br>• Attitude (high) |
| 4 | Feedback and validation | Feedback on practical phase | • Becoming aware of the learning process | • Report<br>• Competence spider | • Word doc<br>• Competence spider | • 40 min | • Attitude (high) |

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*The learning material developed for the pilot were*:

- *Ppt presentation "AI Introduction", delivered online, synchronously, to all staff members. Registration available.*
- *Document "Vademecum on the use of AI Tools"*
- *Shared Learning diary*

*Participants could also access the SMERALD online modules and presentations, especially "Mastering Prompt Engineering for LLM" and "GenAI Tools in Data Workflow".*

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## *Micro-Credentials in the Pilot*

*How were participants evaluated and guided through Micro-Credentials? Explain how learners were evaluated with technologies such as Competence Spider and LEVEL5. What strategies were implemented to monitor progress and validate competencies? How does tailoring the learning experience and dividing the course into micro-modules affect learners' progress and engagement?*

*How did breaking down the entire course into micro-modules and tailoring teaching to individual requirements affect the overall learning experience?*

*All participants were already familiar with both the competence spiders and the LEVEL5 approach. For the SMERALD pilot we opted for the competence spider because it requires less time. To monitor the progress and to make the learning development more conscious, we created a shared learning diary, where participants could take notes of their results and reflections, each on their individual page, but could also read what the others had been noting and reflecting on.*

*Tailoring the learning experience to the needs of the group, especially for what time is concerned, was paramount for the success of the pilot project. They could access and work on it at their own pace and, most importantly, when it was meaningful to do it, for example when they were actually working on a task where an AI tool could be tested.*

## *Pilot 2*

- *Description of the pilot ie.* ***why****,* ***where, when*** *(the timeline),* ***by whom*** *(the facilitator/s****), to whom*** *(the beneficiaries) and numbers involved*
- *Process/ methods used ie* ***how*** *it was conducted and* ***what*** *did you do? (eg learning projects (no.), face-to-face sessions, cascading the learning through the full blended learning course etc?)*

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## Section 2: Results of the pilot(s)

*Describe the outcomes/results achieved (quantitative and qualitatitve)*

### 2.1 Pilot 1 – AI for Project Management

- *Achievements and successes*
  - *All 9 participants successfully concluded the pilot*
  - *All 9 participants tested at least 3 new AI tools and included at least 1 new tool in their daily work*
  - *10 different AI tools tested: Notebook, Napkin, Claude AI, Gamma, Chatgpt, AI embedded in Canva, Notion, Gemini, CoPilot, Consensus*
  - *All 3 identified areas tested, 4 more were added during the practical phase: Project revision, reporting, translation, brainstorming.*
  - *All participants expressed high interest and usefulness in the learning offer and pilot idea*
  - *All participants were highly satisfied by the results.*
  - *The materials developed were used to train 2 new staff members and 2 new interns. The SMERALD pilot learning package has now become part of the onboarding process.*
- *Challenges*
  - *Since everyone was always very busy, it was necessary to remind them to keep track of the results in the learning diary, therefore bi-weekly staff meeting were used to make such reminder and have a quick feedback round. Those moments were important as well to share positive as well as negative results on the tools tested.*
- *Identification of any refinements/improvements needed in the SMERALD methodology*
  - *Being up-to-date regarding the available tools is very important and this may be a challenge to discuss within the partnership*

### 2.2 Pilot 2 – xxx

- *Achievements and successes*
- *Challenges*
- *Refinements needed*

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## Section 3: Conclusions

*What key findings/conclusions can you draw from the the piloting process? Please identify the highlights with regard to the SMERALD approach.*

The piloting process conducted by Smart Revolution within the SMERALD project has demonstrated the significant potential of integrating AI tools into the daily workflows of SMEs, particularly in the context of project management and strategic consultancy. The following highlights with regard to the SMERALD approach can be identified:

- It can be highly contextualised and taiolored to the actual needs of the target group. The modular structure of the learning offer—combining synchronous training, self-paced learning, and hands-on experimentation—proved effective in fostering both competence development and confidence in using AI tools. The use of micro-modules and tailored content allowed participants to engage at their own pace and according to their immediate work needs.
- It was perceived as highly relevant by all staff members
- It can be easily replicated, indeed after the pilot, the learning package was used again for all new employees and interns. This indicates the scalability and sustainability of the SMERALD approach. This suggests as well that the pilot model can be replicated in similar SME contexts with minimal adaptation.

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## Section 4: Recommendations

*Taking into account your conclusions, what needs to be done to improve/adapt the SMERALD methodology and approach.*

The SMERALD methodology, with its emphasis on contextualized, flexible, and competence-based learning, aligns well with the needs of SMEs. It empowers staff to explore and adopt AI tools in a conscious and strategic manner, fostering a culture of innovation and continuous improvement.

In summary, the pilot at Smart Revolution validated the SMERALD approach as a practical and impactful framework for enhancing digital and AI competences in SMEs. It highlighted the importance of adaptability, peer learning, and real-world application in driving meaningful learning outcomes.

One aspect that shall be carefully noted: time constraints and the fast-evolving nature of AI tools were identified as key challenges. Regular updates to training materials will be very important to maintaining momentum and relevance.

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## Section 5: Pilot snapshots

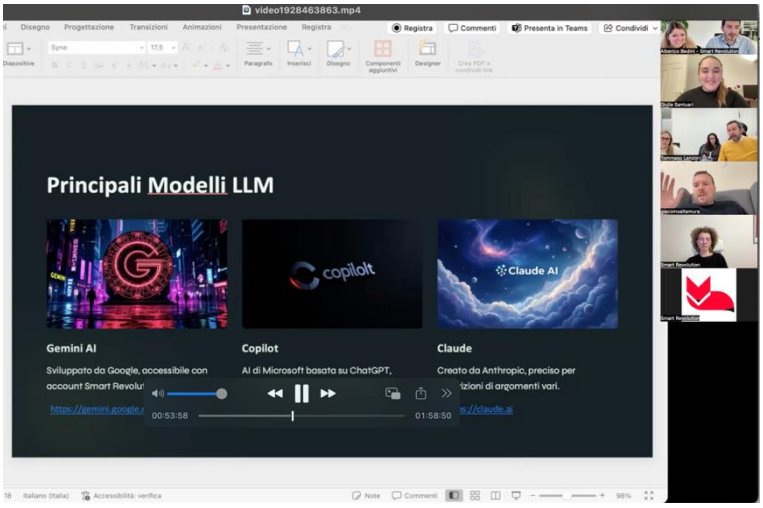
*What is your biggest highlight from the piloting phase? It can be a good practice, interesting case study, positive success story or a touching quote/feedback you received from your learners. It can be in the form of a text or video or photo collage etc. Be creative, so we can use it for a post in the project social media.*

*Quote*

"It turned out to be a good source of support for rephrasing the text and identifying the key elements of the call for proposals. It quickly analyzed the attached documents, producing a fairly accurate and clear text."

Good practice

The material produced (Vademecum on the use of AI tools, pptx presentation on AI and Project Management), in connection to the SMERALD modules, have become a learning package included in the onboarding processes of new employees and interns.

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