**Provide a clear outline of your research question and your theoretical framework. Bear in mind that the European/international dimension is vital to the success of your submission**.

The present research aims at investigating an effect of a specific online course on students’ achievement. Our research question is “How an online course on critical thinking changes the level of critical thinking of learners”?. It feeds into a narrative about the most effective ways, methods and techniques of adult online learning.

The course was designed for the Russian one of the biggest online EdTech company “Yandex.Practicum”, which mostly focuses on online training of adults for IT-skills. Our course on critical thinking was based on the “Universal Competencies and New Literacies” framework, which was developed by the Higher School of Economics (1). According to this framework Critical Thinking is a universal competence, which includes specific knowledge (criteria of reliability of sources, laws of logic, cognitive biases, rules of argumentation etc.), skills (analysis of information and data, reasoning, argumentation etc.), and dispositions (curiosity, skepticism, open mindedness etc.). For developing such a course a framework of 4 stages of problem-solving was used as it reflects most of the components of critical thinking. These stages are definition of a problem, generation of possible solutions, selection of the best solution and presentation of the solution chosen.

The two-month course was designed specifically for adults working in various professions. It consisted of 4 modules and included an interactive online textbook with exercises and about 40 hours of online workshops. Each module aims at fostering skills and dispositions that are needed for structured problem-solving: definition of a problem, generation of possible solutions, selection of the best solution and presentation of the solution chosen.

We are still collecting the data (every student must take test before start and after finish of the course). Although, according to preliminary measurements, we can see that most of the course-takers increased their results after the course had finished.

**Methodology or Methods/ Research Instruments or Sources Used**

To assess learners' progress in developing critical thinking skills, the new specific pre- and post-tests were designed. The test has a strong reliability and validity (n=117, average age=38, 67% female, 67% with degree).

**Conclusions, Expected Outcomes or Findings**

After the measurements are being taken we have come to a conclusion that online adult learning should consist of both synchronous and asynchronous learning, which gives a possibility to train the skills more effectively. Moreover, a very rigorous backward design was used that included a specific matrix of the expected educational achievements for all parts of the competence (knowledge, skill, dispositions). It ensured a thorough progression from task to task. All in all, we can conclude that adults’ training for structured problem-solving can be effective to foster critical thinking skills in such a way.