

Fund for Youth Employment

# ACTIVE YOUTH ANNUAL THEMATIC SEMINAR | 26 NOV | 2019 |

## CHALLENGES for EUROPEAN YOUTH PANEL



Credits: Maria Foulquie

# Youth Employment Magazine

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## Editorial

Dear readers,

Here we go with the third issue of our Magazine! Step by step our family is increasing and demonstrating with concrete examples what our projects are doing on the ground.

This time I feel the necessity to present you this issue by summarising the main achievement of these past two months: the construction of the Baseline Study and the Active Youth Annual Seminar, for which we have just returned from Brussels.



The seminar has been an occasion to see again the faces of our projects, a concrete possibility to interact with them (and for them to exchange knowledge about their goals and activities).

Let me spend some words to thank Grethe Haugøy (Senior Sector Officer for Regional Funds and Global Fund for Social Dialogue and Decent Work – FMO), who welcomed our guests remembering the importance of Annual Thematic Seminar, on the agenda since the beginning of the preparatory works for the Fund for youth Employment: “We thought it would have been a very good idea for you to come together and to create some synergies, some shared arena, because all of you started your projects more or less at the same time, you are all working on youth employment; there are different



methods, topics and approaches, but you are all working on the same overall topic.” As Grethe confirmed, those occasions are tools to learn something across the projects, in order to have a network to lean on, especially towards the young people we are working for and with.



“I’m reading the Youth Employment Magazine, which was a brilliant idea from the Fund Operator, I’m so happy you are so active in the Magazine, because it gives me so much information on what you do”. Beyond the challenges, “I expect you to strengthen

your bond, because we are in this together, for me we are one group, my Youth Employment Group!”.

During these two half days, the seminar has been organised through 3 panels:

- *“Vulnerable Groups and Competence Development”;*
- *“ICT/Digital, Social Economy and Entrepreneurship”;*
- *“Challenges for European youth – working together towards a more inclusive and cohesive society in rural, coastal and island communities”.*

In addition, Iván Martín, our Spanish Youth Employment Expert, had the occasion to meet in person the people behind the contributions received for the Baseline Study, the “voluntary” contributors, reunited into a specific group for a separate initial session: *“Base-line Study about Youth Employment in 15+3 EU beneficiary countries of the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment”.*

Firstly, let me thank all the participants! And especially the panelists of our projects, in order of name and not of importance: Georgios Avgoustides , Kaja Cunk , Costas Economopoulos, Petru-Vasile Gafiuc, Marievi Grets, Stefano Guardati, Erdmuthe Klaer-Morselli, Maria Metodieva, Mark Proctor, Rafael Rodriguez, Mary-Ann Rukavina, Morana Starcevic, Katarzyna Udala, Savvas Vlachos, but also Giulia Parola and Stelios Gialis – the rapporteurs, for Ivan, during the panel on the Baseline Study. All of them had the occasion to discuss important topics thanks to the Moderators Agata Maksimowska, Darya Maroz and Małgorzata Nowak (from the FO).

Thanks also to all the volunteers that contributed to the Baseline Study’s creation, and to the future colleagues that will decide to further contribute to its development, in order to give birth to a Tool for all the Fund’s projects and the overall YE Programme, allowing to better coordinate ideas and definitions.

There has been some key words and main issues we have been repeating during those two days of full immersion in youth (un)employment related “inspiring practices”: outreach to NEETs (how to find them?), motivation and engagement, workplace learning, skills development, and a lot more.

We learnt that it is more useful, and innovative, to talk about “inspiring practices” rather than “best practices”: we already have “best” practices, but we need to find “inspiring” practices and examples able to brand the YE Programme and to be a source of inspiration.

With Iván, the Baseline's contributors had the occasion to find and collect other important topics for discussion:



important topics for discussion: common challenges for the majority of European countries, the problems for young generations aged 25-29, part-time works incapable of solving unemployment, job creation, entrepreneurship, and many others.

Our Małgorzata Nowak, active part of the FO behind the organisation of the Seminar,

will tell us more about the results of those two days we spent together, while our friend Iván will go more deeply into the main concerns and topics emergend during the meetings with our Baseline's protagonists.

Let me conclude in thanking also the Info-Comm Team, which is always trying to stimulate you all in trying to profit as much as possible of our Magazine (and related social media) as a tool, a platform for further dissemination of inspiring practices, to promote your ideas and main results, meanwhile promoting the overall Fund for Youth Employment. The Editorial Team, supported by Raquel – FMO Communication Officer – is waiting for your success stories, discussion articles and any other YE related work!

For my part, I just feel the need to state that clearly we started to enter into the heart of the burning question for Europe: in 2018 approximately 15 million young people aged 24-34 were neither in employment, nor in education and training (NEET) in the EU.

We want to change this trend! Indeed, it is clearer that we are all engaged, and ready, to find innovative solutions to common challenges.

I leave you all to the next contributions of Malgorzata and Iván, followed by our guests' presentation - Alessandro Chiozza and Benedetta Torchia – which, stressing the importance of non-formal and informal learning, lifelong learning and training systems, are providing a professional point of view on the issues here above mentioned, before entering more deeply into the show reel of our projects' activities and success stories.

Gian Luca Bombarda



## Special: The Active Youth Annual Thematic Seminar

### First annual seminar of Active Youth projects

The joint seminars were proposed by the Financial Mechanism Office during the development of the Fund for Youth Employment framework and are considered an important component of the Fund's setup. We held our first annual seminar on 25-26 November 2019 in Brussels with 55 representatives of lead, beneficiary and expertise partners of all 26 projects implemented under the Active Youth call for proposal present.

The seminar was an opportunity to discuss the common challenges, share best practices, exchange experience in three thematic sessions covering topics that are important to all project promoters. We had an opportunity to discuss issues related to outreach, inclusion of vulnerable groups, competence and skills development, job creation, entrepreneurship, inclusion of the social economy in workplace learning, working with stakeholders... And many more. We shared success stories and failures (after all, we learn from our mistakes) that motivated us to change the approach and try once more. We gathered also the volunteer contributors to Baseline Study, who had the unique opportunity to first discuss the approach and preliminary results and then share them with other seminar participants.

But the seminar's goal was also to strengthen the sense of community of Active Youth projects. Being part of this huge, Europe-wide team, means we are not alone when facing difficulties, we can count on each other's advice and support and we have lots of people around to celebrate our achievements. We strongly believe that creating a space for information exchange stimulates synergies between projects, inspires collaboration and encourages networking within and beyond the contractual partnerships and project activities.

For me it is especially important that the seminar was shaped by its participants and I would like to take this opportunity to thank our speakers once again for sharing their thoughts with our audience and engaging us all in inspiring discussions that continued throughout the breaks. So, what would you like to discuss next year?

Małgorzata Nowak



# Perspectives on Youth Employment in Europe (n. 1)

## STRUGGLING WITH THE YOUTH GUARANTEE

Since its adoption in 2013, the European Youth Guarantee (YG) and the Youth Employment Initiative and European Social Fund resources it has mobilized (€9 billion over the 2014-2020 period) has clearly become the central tool to cope with youth unemployment challenges all throughout Europe. The contributions to the *Baseline Study on Youth Employment in the 15+3 beneficiary countries of the Youth Employment Fund (YEF)* that we are preparing make it clear. To this extent, the way the YG is working is of crucial importance for European societies, for their present and their future. Discussions held in the thematic seminar held in Brussels on the 25-26 November revealed that civil society organizations active in the field of youth employment have a deep knowledge of the Youth Guarantee and highlighted some dysfunctions in what is largely considered as a very good idea: nothing less than “a commitment by all Member States to ensure that all young people under the age of 25 years receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship or traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education”.

The European Commission<sup>1</sup> duly reports on problems of implementation in the different countries such as the tracking and counting system of potential beneficiaries, capacity of public employment services, the degree of coverage (share of registered potential beneficiaries taken in charge by the Youth Guarantee), the effectiveness (share of beneficiaries who get an employment or training offer within four months) and short-term impact (percentage of beneficiaries which are in a positive situation after six months of leaving the scheme), as well as issues of coordination among institutions and fragmentation of actions. They are even ready to admit the insufficiency of allocated budgetary resources (and have increased significantly budget appropriations over the period of implementation of the YG).

But discussions in the YEF thematic seminar in Brussels echoed the need for a more structural discussion and a more articulate involvement of civil society in the implementation of the Youth Guarantee. These are some of the points raised by participants:

- **Uniformity.** As clearly emerging from the national contributions to the Baseline Study, the YEG is being implemented in very much the same way throughout all the European countries. To this extent, it lacks the sensitiveness and flexibility needed to respond to the specific challenges encountered in different countries and regions or in relation to different target groups.
- **Scope.** The Youth Guarantee basically targets registered unemployed young people. However, the main groups of youth neither in employment nor in education are either inactive (in particular young women) or discouraged (as it is often the case for youth minorities, in particular if difficult youth employment

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<sup>1</sup> See *The Youth Guarantee country by country*,  
<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1161&langId=en>.



situation combines with social discrimination, as it is the case for Roma or young immigrants), and they are not reached by YG actions.

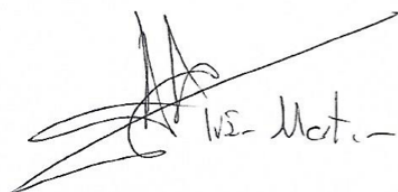
- **Short-term actions, long-term vulnerabilities.** The YG is conceived as a “rapid intervention” programme. This is of course appreciated, but has some unintended consequences: for groups of youth unemployed which need a long-term commitment, for instance young persons with disabilities, the short-term actions provided for in the YG do not offer a real path for stable employment over time. The same happens, actually, for many of the beneficiaries of the YG overall: they tend to chain training courses with short lapses of employment (often even informal), subsidized work for some weeks or months, unemployment periods again, other trainings....This contributes to improve youth employment statistics, but not necessarily long-term employment and life prospects of the beneficiaries.
- **Crowding out.** YG actions are basically implemented through State and local authorities institutions. Even if they often capitalize on pilots and experiences from civil society organizations, the massive resources mobilized translates into a kind of unfair competition for the latter, who sometimes have even difficulties to compete with the incentives offered by the YEG and to find beneficiaries of their programmes.

The thematic seminar in Brussels and the discussion of the Baseline Study revealed two things:

- Six years into implementation, a thorough public debate is due, at European and at national level, to assess how the Youth Guarantee is working and how it could be improved for the new 2021-2027 to better tackle the specific needs and challenges of youth employment and remedy its shortcomings and dysfunctions in each local context in Europe.
- Civil society organizations, practitioners of youth employment promotion at local level, have to be more systematically associated to this debate, but also to the implementation of the Youth Guarantee. The 200+ partners in the Youth Employment Fund projects have a hands-on, on-the-ground knowledge and expertise that cannot be ignored when we deal with the main youth employment promotion policy tool we have today in Europe.

Iván MARTÍN

Our Spanish Youth Employment Expert

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Iván Martín', with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

## Guests' Editorial

### **Towards work. Professional biographies and combinations of learning**

by Alessandro Chiozza and Benedetta Torchia<sup>2</sup>

The recent consultation promoted by the European Commission on the validation of non-formal and informal learning offers a new opportunity for reflecting on a particularly important issue, that of the construction of a personal baggage of skills to ensure more effective introduction to the labour market. This issue clearly has both a collective and social dimension when tackling the questions relating to overcoming unemployment, personal growth and the growth of local communities, as well as the construction of increasingly better living conditions with a view to widespread well-being.

The contribution offered here is inspired by the relative Council Recommendation of 20 December 2012, referring not so much to the establishment of a validation system but rather focusing on some issues linked on one hand to the development of a lifelong learning and training system and, on the other, the recognition of a – more or less shared – space in which this learning can take shape.

The reflection therefore looks mainly, though not necessarily exclusively, to the younger generations, building on some of the issues and suggestions raised precisely in the introduction to the Recommendation.

First of all, the driving role that validation can play *in increasing motivation to lifelong learning, particularly among the socially and economically disadvantaged*.

Then, precisely in an era marked by demographic ageing processes, the consideration of having to tackle unemployment, particularly among young people. This question, unfortunately still valid several years after the Recommendation, is linked to the contribution that validation can offer *to improving the labour market, fostering mobility and strengthening competitive performance and economic growth*.

Finally, as an introduction to the reflection, it should be remembered that the reference to the strategies and initiatives already being implemented within Europe underline *the need for more flexible learning paths which can improve entry to and progress within the labour market, and facilitate the transitions between work and learning phases*.

The context is that of a Europe with significant variability of values and inclusion rates (youth unemployment rates in the EU vary greatly) and where the unemployment rate has recorded an only slightly positive variation. At the same time, if we observe the methods used over the past few years to establish paths for entering the labour market and reaching stable employment that offer autonomy and self-determination, we are faced with risks and criticalities which are also partly referred to in the Conclusions of the Conference on young people and the job market of the future.

Specifically, here it is interesting to refer to the issue of the increasing flexibilisation of the labour market, which makes professional pathways, the dynamics of accessing the market and the possibility to maintain employment less linear. In this respect, the Conclusions also state that *if on one hand these forms of labour tend to attract young people, above all those with fewer possibilities, there is also a greater risk of being trapped in low-paid temporary work, with poor insurance and social security and few career opportunities*.

From this point of view, the data is certainly not comforting. Part-time work is slowly but surely on the increase, and is often not a voluntary choice. Precarious employment also affects a

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<sup>2</sup> ANPAL, Technical and scientific research and consulting agency IV – Analysis of the employment context. The opinions expressed in this work are the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Agency.

significant number of people, above all women, who in both cases are more penalised than men.

And then there is the question of the professions, with an important divide between the non-qualified and the hyper-specialised, and problems linked to the fact that *while employers already find it hard to cover top and middle positions, on the other hand the work force has three times more poorly qualified people than the number of non-qualified positions available*. In January 2016 the World Economic Forum Future of Jobs report estimated that 5 million jobs would be lost in the 15 most developed economies between 2015 and 2020, due to the destruction of skills accelerated by innovation and by replacement following automation and digitisation processes.

What is certain is that these transformations have had a widespread, far-reaching impact on the paths, progress and length of professional lives, and underline the centrality of continuous learning, producing a new demand for training which is sustainable not only in terms of costs but also versatile and multi-faceted, and which can be rapidly implemented to meet the equally rapidly changing market. All in all, those characteristics which, in a logic of transforming know-how, can help people to increase and maintain their own employability.

We should also not forget that the sequence that marked stable employment, accompanying the construction of a social even before a professional identity, has been continuously eroded, along with the fragmentation of the incremental and increasing trajectory of continued employment, and is more and more often replaced – also in current narrations – by a succession of individual events. A sequence that has also brought with it, among other effects, a growing difficulty in re-establishing a unified set of contents for professional histories even among adult workers. Careers themselves – understood as the set of events characterised by a substantial cumulative logic (income, experience, positions) – have changed, in favour of a working identity made of a multitude of contracts and processes alternating different employment statuses and different elements identifying each employment relationship (place, contract, employer, profession, etc.).

As careers – as we knew them – progressively lose their ability to provide even some information on professional pathways, in fact the transformations described above demand us to consider the combination of events that are not always expected, not always codified, not always planned, as an element shared by an increasingly large number of paths of individuals who are expected to be able to change their knowledge and their role in the different (life and work) contexts they come across.

Increasingly more biographies, increasingly less careers, therefore, which, even more so than in the past, for careers guidance and training policies today become the axis around which meaning must be given to this diluted experience because, in reality, the first question we have to think about is the ontological value of training in relation to the multitude of jobs and professions each person experiments.

The reconstruction of prior experience, also anticipating the production of new demand, dialogues on one hand with the combinatory aspect of different ways of entering the labour market but on the other represents an action that facilitates individual reflection on the trajectory of their own professional biography.

Within this path, users' sharing and adhesion become a priority, within participatory logics that are able to enhance the assessments of operators and experts as well as the self-perception of the individuals throughout their own professional history and throughout their lives. The transformative function historically attributed to training is combined with the continuously changing processes and contexts individuals meet while entering and exiting training, jobs and new jobs, experiences and stimuli that constitute highly significant sources of learning.

We may think only of the participatory dimension of young EU citizens reported on in the Young Europeans survey. 53% stated that in the last 12 months they were **involved** in activities in a group or organisation; participation in voluntary activities has increased to almost one third of those interviewed; 14% of interviewees stated that they had participated in

activities or projects fostering cooperation with young people in other countries. This data confirms how people, and in this case young people, develop competences beyond formal contexts, and reminds us that if there are no opportunities to spend these competences, there is a risk of dispersion, causing damage not only for the persons themselves, the holders of such competences, but also the territories they live in, the communities they interact with, and the potential innovations that are not produced.

In this wide, shared space for building learning, which must consider the transformative dimension of knowledge and the discontinuity of events, those preliminary conditions for interpreting the skills required to facilitate full employability, the specific nature of each person's professional history and biography represents the guiding lines for overcoming the "quicksand" Bauman referred to in portraying the continuous back-and-forth of learning and unlearning. If it is true, as it is true, that the learning process is potentially inherent in any activity performed, it is equally true that, for example, the system of the professions is not crossed by the same richness in the same way and with the same intensity. A context in which different competences are called into play will be even more necessarily formative in a context with fewer criticalities. Therefore, validation alone does not automatically ensure that inequality can be fought, but it will when it is possible to bind it to a job-supporting process that is able to respond to the symbolic and imaginative scope of the worker. Or, again, when the scope of competences constitutes a tangible credit within professional recognition and remuneration systems. A process that seems to be blocked, precisely at a time in which the fragmentary nature of events has overshadowed the paradigm of the quality of work and the ability to product quality work. A process therefore which needs a strong work culture able to recover and assure the right value also for the life project dimension, above all for those, the younger generations, who are approaching the world of employment.

Alessandro Chiozza e Benedetta Torchia

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The signature on the left is more fluid and cursive, while the one on the right is more structured and angular.



# Events

## DECEMBER 2019

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3 Training session with NEETs, Milan	4 Training session with NEETs, Milan	5	6	7	8 NEETs Prevention Teacher Training, Sofia
9 NEETs Prevention Teacher Training, Sofia ----- Training session with NEETs, Milan	10 Training session with NEETs, Milan ----- Training session with NEETs, Madrid	11 Training session with NEETs, Milan ----- Training session with NEETs, Madrid	12 Training session with NEETs, Madrid	13 Training session with NEETs, Madrid	14 Training session with NEETs, Madrid	15
16	17 Training session with NEETs, Milan	18 Training session with NEETs, Milan	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

**JANUARY 2020**

<b>MON</b>	<b>TUE</b>	<b>WED</b>	<b>THU</b>	<b>FRI</b>	<b>SAT</b>	<b>SUN</b>
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 Training session with NEETs, Genoa	14 Training session with NEETs, Genoa	15 Training session with NEETs, Genoa	16 Training session with NEETs, Genoa	17 Training session with NEETs, Genoa	18 Training session with NEETs, Genoa	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

**FEBRUARY 2020**

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13 Workshop on Labour Market Policies and Dynamics	14 Workshop on Labour Market Policies and Dynamics	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	

## Success story

### Project LEAD (2019), Project number - 2017-1-455

Marina was one of the first project participants in Lithuania. Marina has a hearing disability; her parents applied for employment a year ago.

Marina has secondary education diploma from a Russian General Gymnasium. After she finished her parents took her to one of the countries of the EU.

Both abroad and in Lithuania, Marina attended drawing classes, beadwork and more. Marina was always interested in jewellery production, and has learned to work with precious metals.

Marina refused to live with her parents abroad and wanted to be independent from her parents in Lithuania. In order for this to happen, they realized they needed to work. There was a need for employment. With a disability, finding a livelihood without help is not easy.

In the Lead Project, Marina found help. She was provided with employment inclusion services, and had the opportunity to go and meet the company "Ūlos juvelyrinė studija" ("Ulla Jewellery Studio"), where disabled people work. There she could practice work tasks, try individual operations, test her own abilities, in order to evaluate whether this kind of work would suit her.

After her experience at a jewellery company, Marina finally decided to work in this place. Marina is Russian, she has difficulty writing in Lithuanian. The participant was assisted in preparing the CV and a motivation letter. With good drawing skills and sufficient ability to work on fine metal products, Marina showed great motivation to work. The workplace and job requirements were evaluated. Marina was hired by the "Ulla Jewelry Studio" after agreeing working conditions with the company's managers. She has a fixed-term employment contract of 6 months.

After employment on-the-job support services were provided. During this period contact was maintained with Marina, remotely with her parents, and her employer. The current work situation was clarified, the tasks needed to be done, any unexpected problems from the employer and Marina's side, and action was taken. The interviews were conducted individually: with the participant individually, with the managers at the company and by phone.

The manager noted the information provided by the project recruitment specialist on Marina's social situation and advice on how to improve working conditions due to Marina's comorbidities (allergy to certain dyes) so she could continue working in the company. Marina received timely personalized advice from a recruitment specialist who acted as an intermediary between her and her employer on how to work harder and more efficiently at the company, he showed initiative, didn't talk with friends on the phone or browse the Internet, and instead focused on her work. Marina's contract of employment became permanent.

Marina's parents continue to take care of their daughter remotely through Skype in the evenings. They have been in contact so far.

Marina has achieved one goal in life – that of living independently. And this is enjoyed not only by herself but also by her relatives.



## The Projects

### 455 - Labour market Employment for young Adults with a Disability – LEAD

The project partners will transfer know-how and best practice on employment initiatives for young adults with a disability across European countries. They will develop and improve the framework of knowledge and actively promote successful measures for young adults with a disability to increase their access to the open labour market. A guide on best practice in employing young adults with a disability will be developed, as well as national networks. By involving the young adults in supported employment programmes, volunteering, educational activities and organising meetings between the participants and employers, they will be able to develop their personal and professional skills to get suitable jobs. By training employers and specialists in employment, they will be able to better understand the needs of the disabled. By elaborating and delivering a training package for family members of young adults with a disability, they will be able to better support the young adults' efforts to access the open labour market.

#### Target groups:

- Young adults with a disability, age 15- 29, and their family members
- Employers, specialists, public and private organisations involved in delivery of employment services

#### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution	Type of institution	City
Romania	Lead partner	Health Action Overseas Foundation	NGO	Bucharest
Lithuania	Beneficiary partner	Valakupiai Rehabilitation Centre	Public	Vilnius
Portugal	Beneficiary partner	Consultis – Business Consulting Ltd.	Private	Vila Nova de Gaia
United Kingdom	Expertise partner	Status Employment	NGO	Croydon

## **The LEAD project– challenges and results**

In the opening of the first issue of our newsletter, I was saying that the implementation of the project "Labour market Employment for young Adults with a Disability - LEAD", co-funded by the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment, is a challenge for us, not in terms of the indicators we have assumed, but with regard to what we want to change in the communities which we are addressing to.

Now, six months after, I am pleased to say that our efforts, as leading partner, and of the other two beneficiary partners, Valakupiai Rehabilitation Center (Lithuania) and Consultis - Consultoria Empresarial, Unipessoal Lda. (Portugal) are beginning to bear fruit.

We went down the road knowing that it will be difficult to change conceptions, perceptions and habits overnight. Yet we strongly believe in the power of small and steady steps, and in the power of example.

Today, the young adults with disabilities from Romania, Lithuania and Portugal who want to find a suitable job and keep it for a long term can contact the teams of specialists in psychology, education sciences, socio-psycho-pedagogy and other related fields which work in the Services Centers for Supported Employment opened by us, within the LEAD project.

Young adults with disabilities and their families will discover that we approach the employment process in a different, innovative way. We give time and attention to identify the skills and professional objectives of the young adults, then we prepare them for a job according to their professional training and interests, we help them develop their working skills, attitudes, behaviors and functional abilities to successfully achieve their goals regarding employment. After their employment, we monitor and provide in-work and outside work support. It is a model that has proven its viability in the UK and we are proud to implement it in our countries with the help of the team of experts from Status Employment (UK).

During these months, we had the joy to bring the light into the lives of some young adults who smile happily today, thanks to our colleagues, and to some entrepreneurs and human resources specialists who gave them a chance. They have received the young adults in their teams and they have worked shoulder to shoulder with us to successfully integrate them.

It is a matter of pride for us that most of the entrepreneurs which have worked with us have not stopped at a single young adult with disabilities integrated into their teams. We have companies in the portfolio that have employed 3-4 young adults and they are still working with our specialists. But we are realistic and we know that we have much more to do to overcome the reluctance of companies to hire people with disabilities. Because of that, in these period we have organized seminars with the representatives of the employers to openly discuss about the challenges, benefits and advantages of working with young adults with disabilities and how the opportunities offered through the LEAD project can be used by them.

Starting from the idea that we can overcome the reluctance of the managers to integrate young adults with disabilities by providing quality information and developing a honest dialogue with them, we have organized experience exchanges between

employers and young adults with disabilities. These changes at the micro-level are important, but they are not enough, so we have not stopped here!

The National Report regarding the employment situation of young adults with disabilities in Romania, elaborated by us earlier this year within the LEAD project, highlighted that the low number of supported services for young adults with disabilities and the quality of these services are important causes which maintain a low employment rate among them.

Moreover, there is no data base of supported employment service providers, so far. Although they face the same problems and pursue the same goals, there are only local partnerships. The situation is similar in Lithuania and Portugal.

Because of these reasons, we have started in our countries campaigns to organize National Networks of Supported Employment Services Providers. Each Network will bring together public and private providers of supported employment services which will benefit from the opportunity to collaborate, dialogue and act together to solve their problems, and to achieve their goals, including the recognition of the supported employment service as a new type of service, by law.

Furthermore, through the Resources Centers for Supported Employment opened by us within the LEAD project, we provide materials (for example, good practice guides) to supported employment specialists, in order to help them in their daily work.

We believe that this approach will help us really contribute to the changing of the paradigm. The potential of young adults with disabilities can be harnessed, with immediate benefits for them, for the employer and for society, by applying the supported employment model. Therefore, we work: to provide complex and personalized services to young adults, to impose a quality standard in the supported employment and to build a united community of services providers in this field. Last but not least, we work alongside members of the business community to develop and apply strategies which will allow better inclusion of young adults with disabilities.

The beginning is promising, so I invite you to learn more about the results of our work by reading our newsletter and, if I have convinced you, I am waiting for you alongside us!

Mr. Nicolae Dobrescu,  
Project Manager- LEAD  
Executive Director of  
Health Action Overseas Foundation

## **Supported employment through the LEAD project, benefits for the employer and for the employee**

*"Statistics shows that in the last 10 years, the total population of Romania has decreased by 4.8 per cent, while labour resources have decreased by 9 per cent, one of the highest rates in the European Union. We are witnessing an aging population, concomitant with a strong migration of young people, especially aged 20 to 39, to Western states. More and more companies face difficulties in hiring and retaining personnel. The crisis within the labour market is a real issue in areas such as: construction, retail, tourism, services, and the productive sector. However, there is a segment of the active population not taken into account by employers: people with disabilities who are able to work ", pointed out Ms. Alina Dobrescu, Coordinator of the*

Supported Employment Program at the Health Action Overseas Romania Foundation (HAO), at the press conference "The Labour Market. Problems and solutions. Cases of Good Practice".

Journalists, alongside young adults with disabilities and representatives of: companies, the General Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection – Constanta, the Traian Placement Center, the Center for Inclusion "Albatros", and other non-governmental organizations participated at the event, which was organized in Constanta, in the first part of May.

The main topics approached by the HAO team were: companies' focus on young adults with disabilities – a potential solution to solve, in part, the labour shortage issue; what does the supported employment process mean, and what are their advantages for the employer and for the employee; the opportunities offered within the LEAD project to employers which integrate young adults with disabilities; the tax incentives offered by state to the employers who hire people with disabilities; the practical ways of accessing the subsidy of 2,250 lei granted to employers for each person with disabilities hired.

*"In the County of Constanta, there are about 10,000 people with disabilities and only 10 per cent of them work. Why? Companies are still reluctant to engage in the supported employment process and hesitate to integrate people with disabilities. In addition, there are few organizations which provide support services for young adults with disabilities and the quality of these services is not always high",* said Ms. Alina Dobrescu.

*"What do we do in the LEAD project? We have assumed the role of facilitator in the communication process between the potential employee coming from this socially vulnerable segment and the employer. The LEAD project is focused on the transfer of know-how and a good practice model in supported employment that has proven its viability in the UK. The supported employment model differs from ordinary models of placement because it supports both the candidate and the employer",* pointed out Mr. Nicolae Dobrescu, Executive Director of the Health Action Overseas Foundation (HAO), and the Manager of the LEAD project.

*"Concerning the candidate, we offer services in fields like: vocational profiling, counseling for the growth self-confidence, skills development and training for employment, in-work and outside work support. Also, recruitment, pre-screening, training and support services at the workplace are provided free of charge for the business people which use our supported employment program. Moreover, we keep a permanent relationship with the employer in order to identify the problems which appear during the integration process and to solve them and we also work with the team members of whom the beneficiaries are part, in order to help them communicate constructively with them. Last but not least, we provide to representatives of the companies comprehensive information on: eligibility, rules and procedures to get the financial benefits offered to employers who integrate young adults with disabilities, as well as support in order to actually benefit by these advantages",* explained Ms. Alina Dobrescu.



The participants at the event had the opportunity to find out from Ms. Elisabeta Novac, the representative of the Pizza San Marco from Constanța, how the supported employment process is perceived by an employer who has benefited by these kinds of services within the LEAD project.

### **Experience exchanges employers – young adults with disabilities**

In the last six months, Health Action Overseas Romania Foundation (HAO) has continued the series of meetings between young adults with disabilities looking for a job and potential employers.

Thus, at the end of March, at the headquarters of the Constanta Services Center for Supported Employment, 7 young adults with disabilities aged 15 to 29 benefited from the opportunity to talk with the representative of PINOS TRADE 2001 SRL, a local firm that operates a chain of stores and a warehouse.

The meeting was organized as a group interview, in order to develop to the young adults the skills necessary to go through the stages preceding the employment. In the first part of the event, the representative of PINOS TRADE 2001 SRL made a presentation of the company and its perspectives, emphasizing the interest for hiring three commercial workers, in the dairy, and sausage departments and, respectively, at the cash register. In this context, he talked about the skills needed and about the tasks of each job and pointed out that his company has already hired two young adults with disabilities, through the LEAD project.

In the second part of the event, the young adults presented their CV, talked about what they know to do, what they like to do, about the motivation to find and keep a job, and asked the employer questions regarding: its expectations, the chances of advancement, the possibilities of having a program adapted to their needs (some of the young adults continue their studies).

This meeting proved to be extremely useful for the young participants. Since then, all of them have hired, with the help of the HAO team.

The young adults with disabilities have to discover their abilities and interests, and to carry out activities which they like. Starting from this point of view, the team of the Constanta Services Center for Supported Employment organized, in the second part of May and July, two experience exchanges at the SC Elion Import Export (ice cream producer) and the Pizza San Marco.

16 young adults who learn at the School Center for Inclusive Education "Albatros", enrolled in the program developed within the LEAD project, were participated at this events. During these two sessions, the representatives of the mentioned companies presented to the young adults the spaces of production, explained the manufacturing process, and talked about: the technological flow, the tasks that the employees have at different workplaces, and about the opportunities of the employment during the summer.

The visit was an excellent opportunity for young adults to understand the complexity of the activities, and for the HAO specialists to observe the interest of the young adults and the desire to get involved in such work. Following these events, some of the young adults were hired during the summer.

During the three years in which the LEAD project is carried out, 27 such experience exchanges will take place, 12 of them coordinated by HAO (Romania), 9 by Valakupiai Rehabilitation Center (Lithuania) and 6 by Consultis - Business Consulting, Unipessoal Lda. (Portugal).

## **Seminar for employers: "The Labour Market. Problems and solutions. Cases of Good Practice "**

In the first part of May, the Health Action Overseas Romania Foundation (HAO) organized at the Constanta Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Navigation and Agriculture (the Council Hall), the seminar „Labour Market. Problems and Solutions. Good Practice Cases".

The participants benefited from the expertise and the experience of Ms. Alina Dobrescu, Coordinator of the Supported Employment Program at the Health Action Overseas Romania Foundation. The event was addressed to the representatives of the companies from different areas of activity that are facing difficulties in hiring qualified and involved staff.

The main objectives of the seminar were: providing a labour market (at the Constanta county level) analysis; highlighting the most important trends and challenges in the field of human resources; providing viable solutions to solve the shortage of the labour force, including hiring people with disabilities; presenting the legal framework in the field and the tax incentives offered by state to the employers who hire people with disabilities, successful cases and good practice examples.

The event was organized within the LEAD project, in the context in which more and more intelligent companies consider the inclusive employment practices an opportunity to meet their business needs.

The seminar was interactive, the participants – representatives of companies from various fields of activity (light industry, services, trade), and of associations of people with disabilities – having the opportunity to: start a dialogue with the trainer, present their opinions and talk about their experience in employing people with disabilities. Also, we were glad to have alongside representatives of companies that have not worked with persons with disabilities, but who were interested in obtaining information regarding the stages of integration of young adults with disabilities, using the supported employment services provided by HAO through the LEAD project.

Up to the end of the LEAD project, 480 employers and human resources specialists from Romania, Lithuania and Portugal will have benefited from such services provided by HAO, Valakupiai Rehabilitation Center and Consultis - Consultoria Empresarial, Unipessoal Lda, within 24 training sessions.

## **The supported employment model presented by HAO at the seminar "Equality on the labour market"**

In mid-June, at the headquarters of the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Child Protection Sector 1 Bucharest took place the seminar "Equality on the labour market", organized within the project of the same name. People from vulnerable social categories, including young adults with disabilities, representatives of public authorities and civil society involved in the process of integrating of these categories of people participated at this event.

The seminar was interactive; each person from the vulnerable groups had the opportunity to present their personal experience, and the representatives of public

authorities and civil society could talk about the activity of their organization, highlighting the points of interest and opportunities for collaboration.

On this occasion, Cristina Șerbănescu, communication manager within the LEAD project, gave a brief presentation of the LEAD project, focusing on the supported employment model and the advantages offered by it to both the employee and the employer, and talked about the National Network of Supported Employment Services Providers created within the mentioned project.

In her opinion, participating on this event was a good opportunity to: exchange information, acquire new information, and interact with local stakeholders, including: young adults with disabilities, potential beneficiaries of the project; representatives of some companies, interested in the supported employment program; potential members of the Network, from the public and private area.

### **Training and consultancy session for HAO employees, delivered by Robert Elston, from Status Employment**

In mid-July, Mr. Robert Elston, the Chief Executive of the Status Employment – the LEAD Expert Partner – visited the Services Center for Supported Employment opened by HAO in Constanta and provided a training and consultancy session to the HAO team involved in implementation of the mentioned project.

Robert, who has over 30 years of experience in supported employment of the people with disabilities, spoke to our colleagues about this model; he went through how to compile a detailed Job Analysis and how to work with employers when candidates get a job. Robert explained: “Job Support is a pivotal part of supported employment and good quality support will ensure good job retention”. He went through the techniques of systematic instruction, a form of training that is used widely in the UK to help people with learning disabilities achieve high quality jobs.

Robert's visit was an excellent opportunity for our colleagues to: share success stories, talk about issues they face locally and nationally (labour law, the rights of people with disabilities, and so on), ask questions and obtain valuable information about the steps to be taken for a successful supported employment process.

In the afternoon, Robert and the HAO team visited Pizzeria San Marco, a local company where three young adults with disabilities, beneficiaries of the LEAD project, already work. Robert had the opportunity to talk to the manager and two of the young adults hired with HAO support, which were on duty that day. Robert was very impressed by the employer, who showed the real value of employing people with disabilities. He also saw the satisfaction of the HAO beneficiaries when they were talking about their work. The manager said that the three young adults are now valued team members and emphasized the constant and professional support provided by the HAO team in their integration process.

Robert was very impressed by the HAO team and their values. “It’s nice to see staff who not only share those vital values that believe disabled people can work but are also keen to learn how to improve their professional activity”.

Our team from Constanta greatly appreciated the opportunity to participate on this training session. Ms. Alina Dobrescu, Coordinator of the Supported Employment Program: “Robert is a very nice person with an impressive experience and it was a privilege to discuss supported employment with him.”

## The LEAD project presented by Consultis at Ignite Moita

In the mid-July, António Silva Dias, LEAD project manager from Consultis – Consultoria Empresarial, Unipessoal Lda., the Portuguese partner, presented the project, its activities in general, and the Services Center for Supported Employment in particular, in *Ignite Moita - Projetos que Inspiram* (“Ignite Moita – Inspiring Projects”), organized in the municipality of Moita by Ignite Portugal and CLDS Moita.

Ignite Portugal is a set of events that uses the power of short-form storytelling to grow a thriving community centered on the exchange of diverse stories and challenging ideas and projects.

Each speaker gets 20 slides, for 15 seconds each (for a total of 5 minutes) to share its idea or project and inspire civil society.

António Silva Dias: “This was a moment of exchanging, obtaining and generating new knowledge between Consultis and local stakeholders, including the final beneficiaries, with the aim to promote the Supported Employment paradigm and local services, and to promote cooperation networks, between public and private organizations as a fundamental strategy towards mainstreaming more efficient procedures of social and professional inclusion of the target group.”

### ***The burning question for Europe***

According to recent data shown in the [Eurostat database](#), approximately 15 million young people aged 20-34 were neither in employment, nor in education and training (NEET) in the EU-28 in 2018. In Italy and Greece, with the highest youth unemployment rate, more than a quarter of young people were out of the labour market. To promote sustainable and quality youth employment in Europe, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway [launched in 2017 the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment amounting to 60 million euros](#).

The 26 large-scale projects selected to receive funding are now implementing their initiatives that aim to help around 25 000 young people find a job or create new ones.

*“Vulnerable youth often fall outside the formal education and training systems as well as the ordinary labour market, and there is a great need for innovative solutions, transfer of good practice and impact studies on which interventions work and which do not. The 26 projects will develop, pilot or adopt almost 100 new approaches, methods and practices, underlining the innovative nature of the Fund for Youth Employment,”* said Mrs Grethe Haugøy, Senior Sector Officer for Regional Funds and Global Fund for Social Dialogue and Decent Work at the Financial Mechanism Office, the Secretariat of the EEA and Norway Grants.

### ***One platform beyond borders***

Compared to other initiatives of the EEA and Norway Grants, the added value of the Fund for Youth Employment is its transnational focus. This is in line with the Europe 2020 strategy and the EU cohesion policy that takes account of the crucial role regions and cross-border cooperation play for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Although the range of the Fund is enormous (project consortia bring together 195 entities from various sectors covering their activities in 26 countries), disseminating results at the level of countries where projects are implemented and the flow of information beyond borders faces significant challenges. This is the main reason why

a common communication platform in the form of an online magazine is created. It is not accidental that the official launch of the “Youth Employment Magazine” falls on the UN International Day of Friendship, since consortia implementing projects remains in harmonious, constant relations with each other, sharing good practices and exchanging experiences.

***Local activities, global information***

The newly created magazine will aggregate content prepared by all projects: not only news about current achievements and information on their progress, but also longer substantive articles and various multimedia. Furthermore, the constantly updated calendar will allow the audience to follow all events organized by projects across Europe and the Donor States.

*“The online magazine will serve as a platform to inspire, connect and raise awareness among young people in Europe and will become an online hub for all the entities involved in the Fund,”* said Raquel Torres Prol, Communication Officer for the Fund for Youth Employment at the Financial Mechanism Office, the Secretariat of the EEA and Norway Grants.

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**“The LEAD project– an opportunity to maximize our work in the community”**

*Interview with António Silva Dias, LEAD project manager from Consultis – Consultoria Empresarial, Unipessoal Lda. (Portugal)*

**Reporter: Consultis – Consultoria Empresarial, Unipessoal Lda. is partner within the framework of the LEAD project. Could you talk about your activity?**

Consultis is a private limited company, founded in 2005, in Vila Nova de Gaia. Consultis’ original mission was to understand the business or individual specificity and needs of its clients and to offer solutions that promote the qualification of the human resources and the efficiency of the processes. Consultis’s mission and practice areas rapidly evolved to entrepreneurship consultancy, innovation and specialized research, education and training activities, employment solutions. For the fulfillment of this expanded mission, Consultis works naturally among the educational actors – schools, training centers, higher education institutions – and within the companies, professional organizations, youth organizations, non-profit organizations, NGO’s, research institutions, public bodies and local authorities and their agencies. Most recently, since 2015, Consultis works as well – and more specifically – in the field of social inclusion and integration of people with disabilities, aiming at increasing the access to the labour market – in particular to the open labour market – of people with disabilities, generalizing and prioritizing the Supported Employment model. Therefore, the LEAD project is an opportunity to maximize our work in the community and with the stakeholders, bridging the gap between the different systems/sectors and directly impacting peoples’ lives.

**Reporter: Why did you decide to join the LEAD project team?**

Consultis was invited to join the project by Mr. Nicolae Dobrescu, Executive Director of HAO. Our institutions have never worked together before this project, but we had some common contacts in the field of Supported Employment. In fact, the LEAD project is our third transnational project within the Supported Employment topic, after

“TOOLS4SE – Designing Quality and Training Tools for Competence Profile of Supported Employment Specialists”, and “JOBCIRCUIT – JobCircuit Innovative Holistic Guidance Model for Integration of People with Disabilities on the European Labour Market”. In this context, Nicolae presented me this socially relevant project and we decided to capitalize on the experience acquired since 2015, trying to connect, interact and impact the community, particularly the disabled young people.

**Reporter: What is the situation of the people with disabilities in Portugal?**

People with disabilities are protected by law against discrimination in: employment, education, access to health care, or the provision of other state services, and the government effectively enforces the law. However, the employment of people with disabilities in Portugal is still very far from being representative and it does not reflect the quality and advantages that these workers can bring to organizations.

According to the Disability and Human Rights Observatory's report titled "People with Disabilities in Portugal – Human Rights Indicators", in 2018, only 11 per cent of unemployed persons with disabilities registered at the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training were placed in employment.

The registered unemployment decreased 34.5 per cent between 2011 and 2017 for the general population, but it increased 24 per cent among unemployed people with disabilities. During the same period, there was a 58 per cent increase in long-term unemployment among persons with disabilities, while the short-term unemployment among the same social segment decreased 7 per cent.

Unfortunately, people with disabilities which work in private companies with more than 10 workers represent less than 0.51 per cent of the total number of employees. In the public sector, things are a little better, 2.42 per cent of the total number of employees have a disability.

Therefore, the figures show that we have much work to do, and through the implementation of the LEAD project we can improve the lives of people with disabilities.

**Reporter: How will the implementation of this project influence the social and economic life of the community?**

The implementation of the LEAD project will impact the life of the different beneficiaries.

First, it will sensitize and raise the employers' awareness on the Supported Employment model applied to people in disadvantaged situation in general and to disabled people in particular.

Through the activity carried out within the project, we raise the awareness of employers regarding: the difficulties and obstacles faced by people with disabilities who want to get a job, the assistive technologies, empowerment and capacity building for disabled people, the rights of people with disabilities, the benefits granted by the state to companies that employ young people with disabilities, the advantages of integrating people from this social category.

Secondly, the implementation of the LEAD project will raise awareness, train and qualify of the professionals and institutions working with people with disabilities on the Supported Employment model. This model is not spread among employment services and professionals, and therefore it will change or try to change their approach to employment, namely to the employment of young people with a disability in the open labour market. The National Network of Supported Employment Services Providers will work as well as a catalyst for the integration of the Supported Employment model

in the daily working life of professionals and institutions, increasing the capacity of service providers to achieve higher rates of success, and influence public policies towards employment inclusion.

Thirdly, this project will raise awareness and prepare the family members making employment more attainable and smoothing the transition of young adults with disabilities from school to labour market.

Finally, it will impact the final beneficiaries of the project, i.e. the young adults with disabilities who will benefit from the services offered by us and from those belonging to the National Network. These young adults will have real chances of being hired and socially integrated. Considering that in Portugal the highest level of unemployment is among people with disabilities over 25 years old (86.8 per cent of these people do not work), the services provided by us will be extremely important to the community, helping to reduce the disparities between different social segments.

**Reporter: What have you done so far within the LEAD project?**

The project was launched in Porto, in November 2018, through a conference addressed the stakeholders interested in the supported employment process. Representatives of companies, human resources specialists, supported employment specialists, social workers, HEI teachers, VET and CVET trainers, project managers among others participated at this event. I am pleased to mention that guests from educational institutions from Italy, Spain and Turkey participated, also, at the launch conference. The event was an opportunity to present the project to the stakeholders and laying the ground for the future activity, including the important networking and collaborative partnerships upon which the Support Employment is based.

Subsequently, we focused our efforts on establish the Services Center for Supported Employment, a rather difficult task, because it was supposed to work in a different region of the country. The first attempt failed due to the difficulties encountered in creating the necessary networking with the local stakeholders in order to assure the sustainability of the project in terms of Supported Employment model implementation beyond the duration of the project. So, we had to reorient our efforts to a different location with better regional conditions to sustain the project in the future. We chose Moita, where all the conditions are gathered to promote and apply Supported Employment model, in order to help as many young people with disabilities to get a job and keep it.

Another direction of our activity has concerned the opening of the Resources Center for Supported Employment, in Porto. It aims to collect, develop and disseminate: good practices, guides, regulations, statistics, information and educational materials to: young adults with disabilities, employers, human resources specialists, and other stakeholders. Networking and the first step towards a lasting partnership begins here!

**Reporter: What has been your biggest challenge so far? But the biggest success?**

The most difficult challenge for us was the set-up of the Services Center for Supported Employment. So far, the most successful activities have been the work done alongside employers and the establishment and expansion of the National Network of Supported Employment Services Providers. We hope that these achievements will be used by the young adults with disabilities, beneficiaries of the LEAD project, who will thus, with our help, be able to integrate more easily into the labour market.

**Reporter: Thank you and we wish you success!**



## Change your life! We show that it is possible!

Young adults with disabilities from Romania, Lithuania and Portugal who have enrolled as beneficiaries in the LEAD project make day-to-day progress, with help from the LEAD team, by benefiting from collaborative and partnership relationships developed by the organizations which run this project, and accessing the lifelong learning and personal development programs available in the mentioned countries.

Up to the end of the LEAD project, 450 young adults with disabilities (180 from Romania, 150 from Lithuania and 120 from Portugal) will benefit from equal opportunities for social and professional integration. Also, supported employment services will be provided by Health Action Overseas Romania Foundation (HAO), Valakupiai Rehabilitation Center and Consultis - Consultoria Empresarial, Unipessoal Lda for 165 young adults with disabilities (60 from Romania, 60 from Lithuania and 45 from Portugal).

We want to share with other young adults the experiences of those who are already working with our team, talk about difficulties, but especially about the will and the perseverance of overcoming them and about the constant steps made by them for a better life. We continue this series with the stories of two young adults from Constanta (Romania).

### **P.I. – worker at the furniture factory LOGI Bic**

P.I. is a 21-year-old young man who lives in the “Traian” Placement Center in Constanța. He comes from a disorganized family, with many brothers, brought into the world only because their allowance was a source of income for their family. He was constantly and violently abused by his step father. Subsequently, he entered into the child protection system. He was enrolled in school at the age of 16.

The young man is currently suffering from mental retardation and mild behavior disorders. He studies at the School Center for Inclusive Education "Albatros" (the profession of technician in gastronomy).

P.I. was included in our database because he wanted to find a job for the summer vacation. Our colleagues from the Constanta Services Center for Supported Employment made his vocational profile, and discovered his personality, abilities, ideals and aspirations.

The young man is not passionate about the gastronomy, but during the secondary school he learned to polish the wood and to make various objects from this material. Our team discovered that he was interested in developing their skills and knowledge in the technical field and getting a job, in order to be able to maintain himself after leaving the placement center.

Based on this information, HAO has contacted the company LOGI Bic, which needed unskilled personnel in the field of furniture production. Our colleagues have facilitated the meeting with the employer. The furniture factory, the working conditions, the advantages which he could have if will choose the career of carpenter/upholsterer/MDF painter were presented to the young man, during this meeting.

P.I. was hired and he has worked during the summer in the upholstery department, where he has learned to upholster various products.

The young man is delighted with the experience gained and he would like to continue working in the same field. On the other hand, the employer was very satisfied with the

young man, he has observed his desire to learn permanently, and the respect with which the young man has treated his colleagues and he is interested in keeping him in the team.

### **C.B. – waiter assistant at the Elion terrace in the Mamaia Holiday Village**

Our colleagues met C: B., aged 20, at the "Traian" Placement Center in Constanța, in the spring of 2019, a year in which many changes have taken place in her life. In February she met her natural mother, in June she finished high school (she failed to graduate the baccalaureate exam) and left the Center, entering into her mother's family.

C: B. enrolled in the LEAD project and has begun to think seriously about her career, her life as an adult interested to become independent. C.B.'s dream, when she left the center, was to become physiotherapist assistant.

Our colleague, Alina, made the vocational profile of C.B., and after that, she and the young woman decided that C.B. to work seasonally during the summer, and in the autumn to volunteer or take a first aid course at the Red Cross.

Alina identified for C.B. a job at the Elion terrace in the Mamaia Holiday Village, where the young woman had one month of adaptation, both with the tasks at workplace and with learning the route from home to work. In this period, Alina involved the family of the young woman to provide the necessary support so that she can optimally integrate. The manager has helped and has encouraged her, giving her simple tasks at the beginning, and increasing gradually the complexity. After about a month and a half, the young woman has begun to take orders from the clients and she has even easily accustomed with the work at the cash register.

At the end of this summer season, C.B. has new career perspectives. She has crystallized her options and she has decided to develop her career in the services field, so she will start a course to become a waiter, in October. She began take lessons to mathematics, in order to prepare for the baccalaureate exam. HAO has identified jobs in line with the young woman's aspirations.

## **“We want and can contribute to the improvement of the situation of young adults with disabilities”**

*Interview with Ms. Alina Dobrescu, Coordinator of the Supported Employment Program at the Health Action Overseas Romania Foundation*

**Reporter: HAO started the campaign to organize the National Network of Supported Employment Services Providers (LEADNET\_RO), in March this year, within the LEAD project. Why is such a Network needed?**

In the last decades, in Romania, important steps have been taken to stimulate the participation in the labour market of people with disabilities and, nevertheless, the employment opportunities of people with disabilities are much lower compared to the rest of the population. According to available statistical data, only 8.2 per cent of adults with disabilities aged 18 to 64 (33.8 thousand people) work.

We want and we can contribute to the improvement of this situation! For significant results, we need two things. On one hand, a win-win approach of the relationship between the employer and the potential employee is needed. I am pleased to tell you

that this is what we do in the LEAD project, by implementing the supported employment model. On the other hand, the teamwork is needed.

Although we, the employment services providers, share the same concerns and face the same difficulties, unfortunately, we have realized that we often fail to work together, especially at national level. This is the main reason why we started the development of this network, which will provide public and private providers of supported employment services an informal framework for collaboration and joint action at national level in the field of labour market inclusion of people with disabilities, respecting the principles and methodology of the supported employment process.

Together we can increase the quality of employment services and we can influence, with arguments, data and facts, the public policies especially in the field of inclusion of young adults with disabilities in the labour market.

**Reporter: What are the main objectives of the Network?**

The promotion of the supported employment as an individual and permanent support program, both for young adults with disabilities looking for a job and for companies/institutions wanting to hire people from this vulnerable social segment is an important objective for us.

We also pursue the development of the supported employment services through the exchange of information and expertise between network members, and through the promotion and implementation of quality standards in the supply of supported employment services. Moreover, we want to develop the skills of the employees of the Network' members regarding the good practice cases in the supported employment, in order to improve the quality and efficiency of the services provided by them.

An important sector of our activity aims to use the public-private partnership as a fundamental strategy for large-scale extension of the application of the supported employment process. In addition, we want to develop close cooperative relationships with public employment services in order to encourage people with disabilities to get a job and to improve their life's quality.

In terms of the relationship with the employers, we want to rise their awareness and understanding of the different aspects of the disability, the benefits of employing and long-term maintaining in their teams of the people with disabilities. Moreover, we aim to develop, in collaboration with the representatives of the business community, strategies which will facilitate the inclusion of this social category on the labour market.

**Reporter: Who do you collaborate with?**

Public and private employment services providers from: Arges, Bucharest, Brasov, Dolj, Harghita, Iasi, Mures, foundations, associations, and two directorates of social assistance and child protection joined us until the end of the August. There is a promising beginning!

**Reporter: What activities are you going to do at the network level?**

First, we are going to map the organizations which provide supported employment services (contact details and information about the services provided) and we are going to promote them online and offline.

Secondly, we are going to set up online discussion groups where LEADNET\_RO members and other stakeholders will be able to interact by initiating and / or participating in discussions on relevant topics about the employment of the young adults with disabilities.

Thirdly, we are going to organize a national forum, in order to increase the awareness of the supported employment services provided. Moreover, we are going to organize

two round tables, with the ambitious aim of influencing employment policies for the people with disabilities. We want to put on the public agenda an important issue: the recognition, by law, of the supported employment service as a new type of service.

**Reporter: How can an employment services provider become a member of the Network?**

Now, LEADNET\_RO is in the development phase. The public and private employment services providers interested in being part of the National Network of Supported Employment Services Providers are welcomed to join us by signing a declaration, which can be obtained from the Resources Center for Supported Employment (email: office@hao.org.ro). The participation at the Network activities is free of charge.

**Reporter: Thank you and we wish you success!**

**“Young adults with disabilities deserve a chance!”**

*Interview with Ms. Elisabeta NOVAC, manager, Pizza San Marco, Constanța*

**Reporter: Your Company has hired three young adults with disabilities, beneficiaries of the LEAD project. Why did you make this decision?**

We believe that the purpose of any company should not be just to make a profit. It is important, but it is not everything! We believe that thriving businesses lead to the development of the local communities, and a strong community is more generous and able to work for social good. This is the reason behind our decision to integrate people from vulnerable social groups. We were working with young adults coming from the placement centers before we started the collaboration with the HAO team, so we were opened to join the supported employment program ran by HAO within the LEAD project.

**Reporter: The three young people's entry into your team took place with the support of specialists of the Constanta Services Center for Supported Employment. How did our team work?**

I met Alina Sachelaru (our colleague from the Constanta Services Center for Supported Employment) at the Constanta County Recruitment and Employment Agency, a few months ago, when we wanted to hire some people. We talked about the vacant jobs, and about the profiles of the employees we wanted.

Alina initially has proposed to us two young adults with mental disabilities, whom I have hired, as kitchen assistants. Recently, we have hired another young man with a motor disability, also with Alina's support. He helps our colleagues who work at the ovens (removes pizzas from the oven, cuts them and packs them). Also, we have tried the integration of a young woman, but with all our and Alina's efforts, she failed to adapt and she stopped working with us.

We work very well with Alina, who has kept in touch with us and the three young adults. We monitor together the progress made by the three young men; we discuss the inherent problems in the process of team integration, and about the most appropriate ways to overcome them. I am glad to observe that the supported employment model is very efficient!

**Reporter: How have the three young adults integrated into your team?**

They were very well received by my colleagues, who have helped them until they were able to carry out their tasks alone. Today, they are valued members of our team. They respect the work schedule; they are conscientious, serious and have common sense.

**Reporter: Do you recommend to other entrepreneurs to employ people with disabilities? Why?**

Yes, of course. I have observed that these young people want to work and to keep their jobs. In addition, the careful monitoring after the employment and the specialized support given to young adults when they face difficulties in the integration process contribute substantially to increasing their chances of integration.

**Reporter: Thank you for your kindness to have us interview you and we wish you good luck in business!**

**Seminar: Supported Employment – the key to overcome barriers to employment for Young Adults with Disabilities**

The event was organised by the Health Action Overseas Romania Foundation, and was addressed to the representatives of companies, governmental and non-governmental institutions / organisations which support social and professional inclusion of young adults with disabilities.

Our specialists have approached, in an interactive way, the issues of Supported Employment and the impact and benefits of the European model of Supported Employment to both the disabled young adults and employers.

The second part of the event was dedicated to presenting success stories of young adults with disabilities from Constanta, who have been employed using the Supported Employment process. We have also offered our guests the opportunity to discuss with the trainer and with the other participants during the two networking sessions.

The event took place on the 25th of October within the project „Labour market Employment for young Adults with a Disability – LEAD”, co-funded by the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment.

## 415 - Youth Impact

The project partners will build a transnational research network and support NGOs, public and private institutions that carry out initiatives on youth employment and entrepreneurship, to increase their capacity to do impact studies. The results of the project will be knowledge of the effects of employment initiatives targeting young people, increased capacity of research institutions to evaluate the effects of such employment initiatives, and increased transnational cooperation on labour market issues.

### Target groups:

- NGOs, public and private institutions that carry out youth employment and entrepreneurship support actions towards 25-29 years olds
- Organisations devoted to or interested in impact studies

### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution	Type of institution	City
Czech Republic	Lead partner	Channel Crossings	Private	Prague
Poland	Beneficiary partner	Foundation in Support of Local Democracy	NGO	Warsaw
Slovakia	Beneficiary partner	PEDAL Consulting	Private	Martin
Germany	Expertise partner	FIAP e.V. – Institute for innovative and preventive job design	Non-profit	Gelsenkirchen

## 414 - CODE – Competence Opportunities for Digital Employment

The project partners will develop and run an innovative training programme for specialised digital competences such as digital design and skills, graphics, 3D animation, game design etc. for young people that otherwise cannot afford to obtain a hi-tech education due to poverty. The programme will be created together with business supporting organisations with focus on the creative industries, organisations for psychological and/or social help and youth organisations.

### Target groups:

- Vulnerable young people at poverty risk, orphans that are out of social protection, and children of working poor people
- Young people in rural areas, young single parents, and young graduates at poverty risk
- Young people in rural areas, young single parents, and young graduates at poverty risk

### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution	Type of institution	City
Bulgaria	Lead partner	Human Resources Development Agency	Public	Ruse
Bulgaria	Beneficiary partner	Solutions Brief Therapy and Counselling Centre Rousse	NGO	Ruse
Estonia	Beneficiary partner	Tartu Art School	Public	Tartu
Bulgaria	Beneficiary partner	FPC ltd	Private	Sofia
Italy	Beneficiary partner	Social silos Cooperative ALTERNATA	NGO	Guidonia Montecelio
Italy	Beneficiary partner	Municipality of Corsi	Public	Corsi

Latvia	Beneficiary partner	Palidzesim.lv	NGO	Riga
Romania	Beneficiary partner	Save the Children Association Iasi	NGO	Iasi
Greece	Beneficiary partner	Euroteam Center S.A.	Vocational Training	



## European Vocational Skills Week 2019



Credits: CODE

As part of European Vocational Skills Week 2019, organisations from around the EU are hosting events and activities, emphasising the benefits of vocational education and training. Project partners of CODE project have taken the opportunity to present the project among relevant stakeholders.

On 17 October 2019, the Human Resources Development Agency, the Lead partner of CODE project, took part in a forum-exposition “Vocational skills, internships and continuing education”, which was held in Ruse University ‘Angel Kanchev’. It was organized by Ruse Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Ruse University and was attended by local businesses, vocational high schools, continuing vocational training centers, citizens and other stakeholders.

The statistic shows that Bulgaria is third place in Europe on the NEETs unemployment, the participants shared their experience with young people. The working group discussed suggestions for improving NEETs awareness of the possibilities for continuing education or involving them in the workforce, as well as on encouraging the role and the contribution of the non-governmental sector to the NEETs activation policies.

The lecturers presented results from surveys, synthesized in six main recommendations, some of which listed below:

1. Development of the opportunities and simplicity in the procedures for accessibility and speed validation of the knowledge and abilities, achieved in informal way.
2. Encouraging the self-employment through creating and developing social enterprises NEETs2 NEETs type.
3. Introducing of an obligatory pre-phase access to social services and support for evaluation of working skills and potential for professional realization (examples with good practices: JobSpeed Date- Italy, CH-Q- Netherlands)

All efforts focused on joint action plan for promoting employment through social enterprises, technology opportunities and implementation of new alternatives for qualification improvement. Similar workshops are still to take place in 5 different cities in Bulgaria, and all discussions and suggestions will be listed as a base to work on in future.

Representatives of the NGO sector and other institutions presented the benefits and outputs of projects striving to increase the NEETs possibilities for work and training. HRDA presented project CODE, which benefits from a 2 300 000 € grant from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants and its objective is to provide opportunities for a quality employment to vulnerable young people at risk of poverty and to develop and implement a training programme for specialized digital competences such as digital design, graphics, 3D animation, and game design. Project's main result will be a developed and a piloted training programme to boost target groups' access to acquiring specialized competences for employability and self-esteem, as well as providing a new perspective to learning interactions and problem-solving, and thus, contributing to increasing the NEETs possibilities.

At the same time in Estonia, 17 October 2019, during the Skills Night, different vocational schools all over Estonia have invited people to take part in lectures and workshops of all kind. Tartu Art School, another project partner in CODE project, participated in that event, with a stencil workshop.

Stencils are frequently used by official organizations, including the military, utility companies, and governments, to quickly and clearly label objects, vehicles, and locations. Stencils for an official application can be customized, or purchased as individual letters, numbers, and symbols. This allows the user to arrange words, phrases and other labels from one set of templates, unique to the item being labeled. When objects are labeled using a single template alphabet, it makes it easier to identify their affiliation or source. Photoshop tutorial in the link: <https://sites.google.com/view/stencil-lesson/photoshop-tutorial>  
Stencil workshop was available for everybody regardless of their previous experience.

The workshop gave an overview of the stencil technique and what tools can be used. Participants themselves prepared stencils on their own, as well. Stencil technique will be taught in Tartu Art School during the new digital design course, which starts in January 2020 as an outcome of project CODE activities. The workshop gave a good glimpse of what will the participants learn when the course commences.



Credits: CODE

## Casa Giusta – Project CODE



Credits: CODE

Casa Giusta is pleased to support an interesting international project, in the area of youth employment, which has been presented publicly on Friday 15 November at 4.30 pm to local services, associations, projects and youth groups to openly share needs training.

The CODE project is carried out under the Youth Employment Fund, with 7 partners from Bulgaria, Latvia, Romania, Italy, Estonia, including the Coop. Alternata Silos coop soc which operates in the La Casa Giusta of the Municipality of Formia.

At the end of the presentation a pleasant aperitif with musical accompaniment followed.

Intense day of work with

- monitoring of reporting and cost supervision processes with forecasted expenses;
- sharing of the teaching platform and teaching methods for the Web Design and 3D Animation courses (480 hours per course to be held at La Casa Giusta Formia and local areas);
- definition of course accreditation processes (qualified training with qualified staff);
- public presentation with a group of young people possible recipients and beneficiaries of the courses;



Thanks to all for participating.

A special thanks goes to the teachers Francesco and Antonio De Lorenzo, to the representatives of the association Kappa O and to Guido and Giulia Crastolla.

Follow the CODE project page and the Alternata Silos or La Casa Giusta page to stay updated on the progress of the project and to get info on the courses ... totally free.

## CODE Project press conference and briefing @ Tartu Art School



Credits: CODE

On 14<sup>th</sup> November we held two PR events at Tartu Art School regarding CODE project. We started the day with press conference and later that day we held a briefing.

For the press conference, we invited local and national media partners and interest groups such as youth organizations and organizations that deal with unemployment in Estonia. The director of Tartu Art School, Kadi Kreis and communication specialist, Ragne Toompere introduced the CODE project itself - the nature and aim of this project, partners from other countries, how TAS supports and is included in the project. Other emphasis was on the curriculum that is developed as a fruit of CODE project. We introduced the curriculum - subjects, evaluation system, target group, terms and outcome. As there were a lot of youth workers in the audience, the target group conflict was discussed thoroughly. On one hand TAS gave out information that organizations can spread, but on the other hands received valuable information as well on how to communicate this project out to people that are in the target group or know someone

from that target group. For example going to a conference held especially for organizations that deal with youth, career-planning and unemployment. Also we were given tips about other interest groups that can find this information essential.

Later we held briefing for target group itself - potential students, but also mentors, teachers, parents, youth workers etc were welcome. As we have been campaigning for few weeks now, we thought that briefing is necessary for the target group but for us as well. It is important to us to gather information, whether people have understood our agenda, what the curriculum is about and who's it for. We introduced the CODE project similarly to press conference, but focused more on the curriculum and information flow of it. We learned that a lot participants obtained the information through a friend or acquaintance, who also heard it from social media or read about it on leaflets. Which brings us back to the conflict of target group as it is hard to reach them directly. One way is to do it through school - we can go to youth centres and schools directly and talk, but that requires time and resources. On the other hand, we can try to send the message out as much as possible, so that friends, family, teachers, youth workers etc can bring the information to the target group as messengers.

In conclusion, these two events were very significant and necessary. We got to spread the message of this project and opportunities for NEET-youth, but we gained essential information on how to communicate this project out to interest groups and target groups.

## Network meeting - Tartu Art School



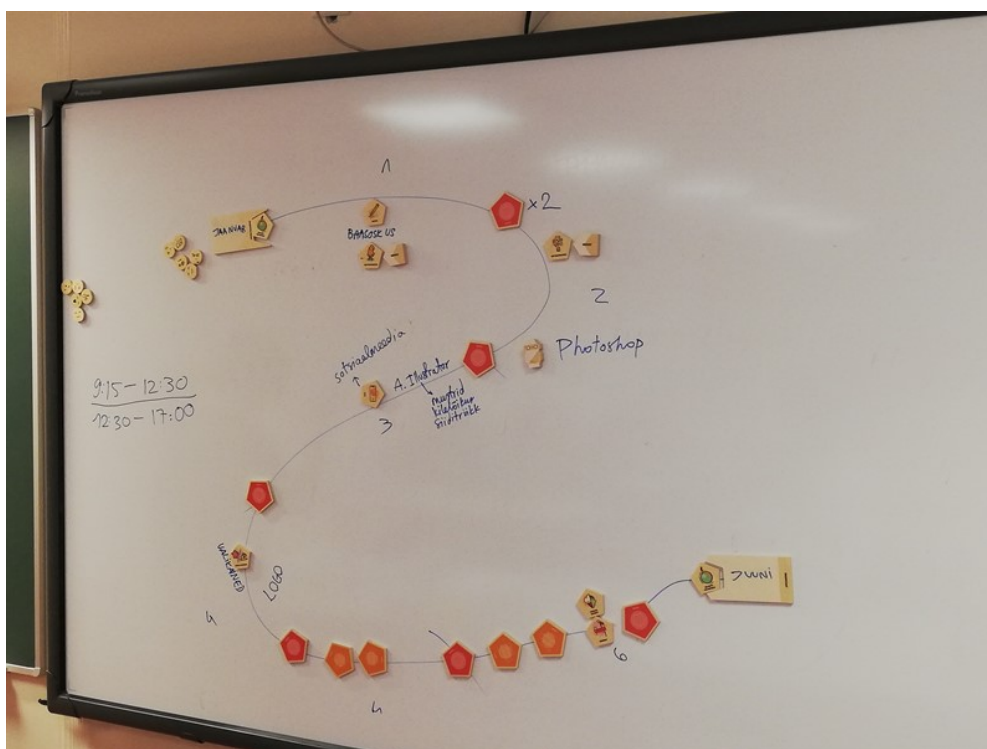
Credits: CODE

On 21th November we participated in network meeting that is initiated by the City Council and included career-planning specialists, school workers and youth specialists in Tartu City area. These network meetings take place in every two or three months and concentrate on working with troubled youth in school system and working out different methods on how to blend them effectively into school life.

We introduced the CODE project and then moved along to more thorough introduction of the curriculum. Our curriculum coordinator gave a visual overlook on how the study session will look like on the course of six months. The TOY-method was discussed as well as it holds a significant role in the curriculum and helps to deal with troubled youth one-on-one.

This meeting proved to be very helpful and educational, since other specialists provided necessary questions and observations they made based on our presentation. This time, the observations were emphasised more on approaching the youth whether it's during the interviews or when the study sessions have begun.





Credits: CODE

Next network meeting will be held in Tartu Art School in February, when the first course has already begun their study journey and we can reflect and analyze first observations. Since this type of curriculum and approach is quite unusual in current school system, it will be an interesting case-study for TAS and other schools and organisations in addition.

## 351 - SOCIALNEET\_From civil society organizations to social entrepreneurship. Combating youth unemployment and addressing the needs of NEETs

The project partners will establish a transnational expert cooperation network in seven countries and prepare young people for jobs within social enterprises, by offering training and capacity building services to civil society organisations and businesses belonging to the social economy. The following sectors will be targeted: culture and tourism, health care, agriculture, IT and Open Source software and alternative energy sources. The project will result in increased awareness of the impact and the function that social innovation and entrepreneurship can have in tackling youth unemployment.

### Target groups:

- Young unemployed people between 18-29, with an emphasis on the 25-29 years olds; The social economy and civil society organisations

### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution	Type of institution	City
Greece	Lead partner	Institute of Social Economy Studies	NGO	Athens
Greece	Beneficiary partner	Institute of Industrial and Business Education & Training	Public	Athens
Italy	Beneficiary partner	Craftsmen Association of Terni	Private	Terni
Latvia	Beneficiary partner	Rezekne Academy of Technologies	Public	Rēzekne
Poland	Beneficiary partner	Janusz Korczak Pedagogical University	Non-public higher education institution	Warsaw
Portugal	Beneficiary partner	Development Association of Alto Tamega's Region	NGO	Chaves

Slovenia	Beneficiary partner	University of Primorska	Public	Koper
Spain	Beneficiary partner	Municipality of Mataro	Public	Mataro
Belgium	Expertise partner	European Network of Cities and Regions for the Social Economy	NGO	Brussels

## 345 - A Place for Youth in Mediterranean EEA: Resilient and Sharing Economies for NEETs

The project partners will create a transnational research network and an employment centre to train young people for jobs in the food production and waste management sectors. The project entails on-the-job training courses in social enterprises and mentoring of former NEETs in setting up new social enterprises.

### Target groups:

- Inactive low-skilled women and migrants from local reception centres
- Non-traditional regional actors supporting youth employability

### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution	Type of institution	City
Greece	Lead partner	University of the Aegean	Public	Mytilene
Cyprus	Beneficiary partner	Cyprus Authority for Cooperative Societies	Public	Nicosia
Cyprus	Beneficiary partner	Neapolis University Pafos	Private	Paphos
Cyprus	Beneficiary partner	Centre for the Advancement of Research and Development in Educational Technology LTD	Private	Nicosia
Greece	Beneficiary partner	Network for Employment and Social Care	Private non-profit	Piraeus
Greece	Beneficiary partner	Social Cooperatives' Network of Central Macedonia	CSO	Thessaloniki
Italy	Beneficiary partner	Territorial Association Comunità Montana Alto Bassento	Public	Potenza
Italy	Beneficiary partner	GAL La Cittadella del Sapere srl	Public/private	Latronico

Italy	Beneficiary partner	Sistema Turismo srl	Private	Potenza
Spain	Beneficiary partner	Educational association for integration and equality	NGO	Murcia
Spain	Beneficiary partner	Catholic University of Murcia	Private non-profit	Murcia
Norway	Expertise partner	Fafo, Institute for Labour and Social Research	Non-profit	Oslo

## 315 - eNEET Rural: Facilitating entrepreneurship and improving skills of NEETs living in rural areas

The project partners will offer training and preparation for two distinct groups: those with a secondary school diploma will receive entrepreneurship training, while those without a diploma will receive training that prepares them for jobs. The project will focus on innovation and technology in the agricultural sector and create a toolkit that will include various forms of training, a competition, staff exchange and mentoring.

### Target groups:

- Low-skilled young people not in employment, education or training living in rural areas and registered with the public employment services, who face multiple barriers in entering the labour market.

### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution	Type of institution	City
Bulgaria	Lead partner	Union of Bulgarian Black Sea Local Authorities	NGO	Varna
Hungary	Beneficiary partner	Fruto Consulting Ltd.	Private	Budapest
Italy	Beneficiary partner	Mantuan Oltrepò Consortium	Public	Mantova
Romania	Beneficiary partner	Center for the Development of the Structural Funds	NGO	Slatina
Slovenia	Beneficiary partner	STYRIAN TECHNOLOGY PARK	Public	Pesnica pri Mariboru
Spain	Beneficiary partner	Business National Agrofood Research Technological Association Center, Extremadura	NGO	Villafranco del Guadiana
Norway	Expertise partner	Inclusion AS	Private	Asker

## eNEET Rural partners, stakeholders and young NEETs meet in Ljubljana for the 1st Annual Event



Credits: eNEET Rural

The 3rd eNEET Rural transnational project meeting took place on October 24th, 2019 in Ljubljana, Slovenia, followed on the next day by the much anticipated 1st Annual Seminar and Brokerage event.

On the 1st day, the partners discussed all of the major operative steps and issues in order to prepare the upcoming capacity building activities, which will focus on training 1.200 young NEETs across the Consortium countries and beyond to those countries involved in bilateral cooperation.

On the 2nd day, partners, their stakeholders and NEETs, were kindly invited to take part to the 1st Annual Seminar and Brokerage event, which took place at Ljubljana Exhibition and Convention Centre. The occasion was excellent, as the 50th Jubilee Fair Nature-Health took place on that exact day.

The Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Food of Slovenia opened the event with a speech addressing the importance of the agricultural sector and the involvement of young people in the area. It was followed by Rok Damjan, president of Zveza slovenske podeželske mladine (Association of Slovenian Rural Youth) / ZSPM.

Following the opening speeches, hosting partner STYRIAN TECHNOLOGY PARK presented the eNEET Rural objectives and aims, while focusing on the so far achieved project results:



- The training materials, so called »**Soft-Skills**« and »**Agro-Professional**«, developed by all project partners based on their expertise and tailored to the demands and the needs of young people in Consortium countries, based on the local demand research pursued by each partner.
- The **eNEET Rural eLearning & Collaborative Platform**, built on Moodle, involving previous successful methodologies for capacity building activities. It will offer online training and support to NEETs with 5 different training courses, containing educational material, quizzes, assignments, with personal certificate issued to each NEET completing a course.

Finally, successful case examples related to the agricultural field were presented, in order to exchange practices with stakeholders, but also to empower the attending young people.

The second half of the day was dedicated to the IMK (Young innovative farmer) workshop, organised alongside with ZSPM. Each young competing person presented their farming ideas and projects for the future. In order to break the ice, the rest of attendants provided feedback, alongside some interesting exchange of ideas and useful suggestions for all parties.

The brokerage / networking part of the event followed the discussion, which allowed primarily stakeholders and NEETs to get to know each other better and get deeper into the discussion for a fruitful cooperation in the future eNEET Rural capacity building activities.



Credits: eNEET Rural

The event concluded with great enthusiasm of young NEETs, satisfaction of stakeholders and project partners, who are looking forward to strengthening the eNEET Rural network in the upcoming months.

## Bulgarian stakeholders speak about their impressions during the Ljubljana events

*Mrs. Georgieva and Mr. Tonev, as very experience trainers, you were kindly invited by UBBSLA to attend the Annual Seminar& Brokerage event in Ljubljana in the frame of eNEET Rural project, related to youth unemployment in rural areas. What was the reason for your interest to attend?*



Credits: eNEET Rural

**Elena Georgieva:** The North Eastern region where a bigger part of the activities of my organization are located is a predominantly rural region where the agriculture is assigning branch. That's why it was very interesting for me to attend such event and to understand more about the Slovenian experience presented as an excellent example, to meet other colleagues working in the field. My expectations were related with also gaining new methods and approaches towards young unemployed by learning the practice and knowledge of the represented countries and organizations.

**Todor Tonev:** The problems that NEETs in Bulgaria meet are most probably the same as for the rest of the EU countries, but Slovenia is very similar to our country and also it's very experience in solving the changes. Slovenia is also a largely agricultural country, which means that they will pay special attention to rural unemployment. It was very interesting for me to get closer with the approach for solving problem with unemployment among young rural people in Slovenia.



Credits: eNEET Rural

*What is your profile, what are the linking points with eNEET?*

**Elena Georgieva:** My entire professional experience is related to organizing and conducting trainings, activities and initiatives for various target groups. Graduated economics, my expertize is closely related to management and entrepreneurship. So, I am definitely interested in the eNEET Soft-skills training materials developed by your consortium. Recently, my work has focused on young people with no vocational orientation for starting a job, those without education and job motivation, as well as enterprising young people who want to participate in local planning and to support

local authorities in specific areas.

**Todor Tonev:** I am educated engineer, but I have a degree in agricultural economics and business in the University of Economics – Varna. My scientific knowledge in the agricultural field, as well as my recent “bad” experience in looking for young workers in rural areas (moreover, I am wine production owner recently) forced my interested in unemployed youths and how I can motivate them to work in this sector. Representing the company “Team experts” Ltd. on the Annual Seminar& Brokerage event in Ljubljana, I’m more that interested on the elaborated eNEET training materials “Agro-professional skills”, to train NEETs in Bulgaria, to promote, distribute the module, etc.

*How did you like the event? What is your take-away message?*

**Elena Georgieva:** The event was organized in a wise-oriented and professional manner where different stakeholders and especially decision makers at national were involved to participate and contribute. This mainly refers to the Ministry of agriculture, forestry and food and the policy realized for activating young people and the financial tools provided to them. A significant strength can be considered the practical showcases demonstrated by actors and farmers devoted to enhancement rural actions, e.g. production, offer and supply. A consequent message captured to me is that the: “Efficient and valuable results are achieved by personal perception and motivation for things to be happened”.

**Todor Tonev:** The event was organized at a very high level taking in mind the inspiring speech of the Slovenian Minister of Agriculture. An interesting fact is that, along with the event, there was an exhibition of local farmers. Slovenia has been working integrated to solve problems from the ministry to the detached producer, was felt they was agreed to promote local products while protecting the environment. I was impressed that local production was strongly encouraged, and producers also assisted or working in collaboration. The message I would convey is – let us produce local and eco-friendly products in the best possible way!

*Is there any future collaboration with the project?*

**Elena Georgieva:** My personal interest to be involved in the whole training process for capacity building through soft skills delivery as the young people are considered as leading force towards future innovations, capitalization and progress making. My efforts will be targeted towards marching the interests of the youth with business opportunities, entities, etc. in the North Eastern region based on the specific project topics and all of this is to be after the training completion, so that we will have skilled and qualified and most of all, motivated young people.

**Todor Tonev:** I look forward to starting the training at the local level, because in addition to transferring the experience and knowledge gained, I will better understand the needs of the local NEETs, which is the source of new ideas.

## National Youth Council of Slovenia - Stakeholder Interview (M12 Event)



Credits: eNEET Rural

*Fortuna, as the President of the National Youth Council of Slovenia, you were kindly invited to take part to the eNEET Rural 1st Annual Seminar & Brokerage Event in Ljubljana, Slovenia, on October 25th. What was the reason of your interest to attend?*

I was invited to attend by our member organization Slovenian Rural Youth Association. Young NEETs, especially the ones in rural areas are not often talked about. I want to bring this topic on the national agenda so the attendance on the event was a must.

*eNEET Rural project aims at fostering entrepreneurship and improving skills of young unemployed people in rural areas. Tell us a bit about your association: what are, in your opinion, the linking points between eNEET Rural and your activities?*

The topics of our work are access to quality employment and public services first, including better infrastructure, good public transport as well as more available housing, mental health. These are common issues that are facing all young people, especially rural youth. All our activities are primarily focused on addressing these issues. We are carrying out different local events where all groups of young people can express their

opinion. We also consult with young people within the formal educational institutions especially in the areas outside of Ljubljana and Maribor.

*During the event we presented the first project results (training materials and eLearning platform), alongside several case examples and good practices applied in the agricultural sector. As a stakeholder, what is your first impression and your take-away message?*

First impression is that there are some amazing things already happening in rural areas. My take-away message is that if we invest in this area even more resources (financial and nonfinancial) great things can be done. I really believe that there is potential in rural people and in rural areas. We only need to see it and start investing in it.

*Your association draws the attention on life, educational and work problems, which young people are facing in a variety of fields. As eNEET Rural focuses on employment, what are in your expertise opinion the main issues for young Slovenians when attempting to enter the job market?*

Lack of quality places of work, as well as fair working conditions for the youth.

- Young people are treated unequally vis-à-vis other job seekers and they do not have any established conditions for the integration into the labour market.
- The young workers are often exploited and underpaid which makes them incapable of having real independence or quality life.
- The most considerable problem are precarious work forms, which force the youth to work as sole proprietors or use other irregular forms of employment.
- Labour market does not offer space to young people to capitalize on all their skills and knowledge
- The problem of centralization - quality employment is available mostly in the capitals, while the outskirts and the rural areas face a lack of proper employment.

*Do you see potential for future collaboration between your organization and the project?*

Yes we see it. Because we see the importance of working with both NEET group and rural youth. We are members of the working group Youth Guarantee that links stakeholders on the labor market from governmental and nongovernmental side. We are main advocates for rights of all young people so I would say that we also have a lot of political "recognition" that can only be beneficial for the project and with that for young people in rural areas.

We are leading the national working group on youth dialogue. On the European level will next year, with Croatian presidency to the Council of EU, the priority will be creating opportunities for young people in rural area.



## 314 - Scaling trust-based partnership models to recharge youth entrepreneurship: Supporting underserved communities with innovative entrepreneurship support instruments (TPM-RYE)

The project partners will test a trust-based partnership model and provide direct business development services to young people in the four beneficiary countries. After testing, the model will be improved, and external funding will be applied to scale it up. The project partners will write and publish a research report with data and evidence and prepare a transnational methodology guide.

### Target groups:

- Youth (25-30) who will benefit from dedicated, highly specialised financial and non-financial business development services
- Organisations who will use the knowledge base of what works, where and why

### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution	Type of institution	City
Greece	Lead partner	Agricultural University of Athens – Research Committee	Public	Athens
Greece	Beneficiary partner	Development Agency of Karditsa S.A Anka Anaptyxia-ki Karditsas Anaptyxiaki Anonimi Etairia O.T.A	Public	Karditsa
Italy	Beneficiary partner	Microfinanza S.R.L.	Limited Liability Co	Vicenza
Poland	Beneficiary partner	Foundation Technologic Incubator – YBP	Foundation	Warsaw
Spain	Beneficiary partner	Autoocupació	Foundation	Barcelona
Germany	Expertise partner	Munich Business School	Private	Munich

Germany	Expertise partner	KIZ SINNOVA Company for Social Innovation gGmbH	Limited Liability Co	Offenbach am Main
United Kingdom	Expertise partner	Youth Business International – YBI	Charity	London

## Thematic workshop in the framework of project Young Entrepreneurs Succeed!



Credits: TPM-RYE

The partners of the transnational **“SCALING TRUST-BASED PARTNERSHIP MODELS TO RECHARGE YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP: SUPPORTING UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES WITH INNOVATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUPPORT INSTRUMENTS (TPM-RYE) PROJECT”** in collaboration with the Cooperative Bank of Chania organized a thematic workshop on providing business development services to youth who are Not in Education, Employment, or Training (**NEETs**). The thematic workshop held in Chania from **September 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> 2019** was attended by the partners of the project, members of the Cooperative Bank of Chania and local business development service providers.

The **integrated methodology** for supporting young entrepreneurs implemented by the Youth Business International (YBI) network in 51 countries around the world and **KIZ**, an expert in self-employment and professional reorientation, was presented during the workshop. In particular, the process of preparing and supporting a young entrepreneur during the business planning period as well as during its initial development phase was thoroughly discussed and analyzed.

Attendees, representing their stakeholders, agreed that a combination of financial and non-financial services is needed to increase the chances of viability of businesses set up by NEETs. Regarding financial services, the key point was the recruitment of appropriate business development agents, who will **help NEETs'** businesses to be ready to receive funding from banking institutions to implement their business plans. Concerning non-financial services, the parties agreed that the support process should not be limited to prepare business plans and theoretical assessments but extended to



entrepreneurs' psychological preparation and linking financial predictions with real market research data.

The “Scaling trust-based partnership models to recharge youth entrepreneurship: Supporting underserved communities with innovative entrepreneurship support instruments (TPM-RYE) project”, **benefits from €2,3M grant from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment**. The aim of the program is to help unemployed youth access the labor market and promote entrepreneurship.

## 294 - Direction Employment

By uniting partners from different sectors – NGOs, universities, companies – from the participating countries, who have a proven track-record of working for the social and labour market inclusion of young people from highly marginalised minorities, the project will create and test an educational model with an experimental and innovative curriculum, establish a mobile classroom model to train trainers at regional level and apply assessment tools that will demonstrate the impact of the methodology on the participants as well as on their close environment (extended family, peer group, etc.) and on employers.

### Target groups:

- Young people not in employment, education or training, suffering from multiple discrimination; Employers

### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution	Type of institution	City
Bulgaria	Lead partner	Workshop for Civic Initiatives Foundation – WCIF	NGO	Sofia
	Beneficiary partner	SKUC Association	Public	
Ireland	Beneficiary partner	DMC-Metrix	Private	Dublin
Italy	Beneficiary partner	Lai-momo soc. coop. soc.	Social Coop.	Sasso Marconi
Lithuania	Beneficiary partner	Lithuanian Gay League	NGO	Vilnius
Portugal	Beneficiary partner	Porto Accounting and Business School	Public	São Mamede de Infesta
Slovenia	Beneficiary partner	Andragoski zavod Ljudska univerza Velenje	Public	Velenje

## 285 - NEETs' Empowerment for Sustainable Employment in the Tourism sector (NESET)

By working together on a large-scale transnational basis, through innovative and experimental activities, the project partners will create better conditions for young people's employment in alternative tourism. The youths will receive training in tourism-related and social skills through an e-Support platform and job placements across the project countries. The result of the project will be increased opportunities for successful start-ups in the (alternative) tourism sector.

### Target groups:

- 25-29-year-old people not in employment, education or training in the 7 beneficiary countries (incl. long-term unemployed, low-skilled and discouraged young people)
- End beneficiaries include all unemployed young people in the 7 beneficiary countries, who are planning a sustainable career in tourism.

### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution	Type of institution	City
Bulgaria	Lead partner	Varna Chamber of Commerce and Industry	NGO	Varna
Bulgaria	Beneficiary partner	Cluster for IT Support to the Black Sea Touristic Business	NGO	Burgas
Bulgaria	Beneficiary partner	Tora Consult Ltd.	Private	Sofia
Croatia	Beneficiary partner	NGO ECHO	NGO	Zagreb
Croatia	Beneficiary partner	Local Development Agency of the city of Velika Gorica – VE-GO-RA	Public	Velika Gorica
Cyprus	Beneficiary partner	Enoros Consulting Ltd	Private	Nicosia

Greece	Beneficiary partner	SARONIS S.A. – Former Vocational Training Center Attiki S.A.	Private	Salamina
Italy	Beneficiary partner	TUCEP – Tiber Umbria Comett Education Programme	NGO	Perugia
Italy	Beneficiary partner	Umbria Legislative Assembly	Public	Perugia
Portugal (2)	Beneficiary partner	APSU – Portuguese Association of Start-ups and Dialogue Diversity	NGO private and	Aspinho and Oliveirinha
Romania	Beneficiary partner	Geo Club Association	NGO	Corbeanca
Iceland	Expertise partner	Einurd Ltd.	Private	Reykjavik
Portugal	Beneficiary partner	Dialogue Diversity	Private	Oliveirinha

## Info Day – NEETs’ Empowerment for Sustainable Employment in the Tourism Sector (NESET)



Credits: NESET

The Info Day for project NESET: “NEETS’ EMPOWERMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT IN THE TOURISM SECTOR” was held on 25.09.2019 under the assistance and supervision of Enoros Consulting Ltd. The Info Day lasted two hours at CENTER POINT TOWER in Nicosia, addressing the objectives and goals of the NESET Project as well as describing all the activities developed until today.

Generally, among the participants were representatives from Tourism and Educational sectors such Universities, Institutions, NGOs, as well as social welfare and individual volunteers working in the field of youth. The attendees had the opportunity to get informed about the project’s purpose and relevant activities.

Overall, the participants were satisfied by the gained information and knowledge and they showed interest in promoting further the NESET project!

## NESET Stakeholder Conference in Bulgaria



Credits: NESET

On September 27-28, 2019, the Tourism days in Bulgaria, the Cluster for IT support to the Black Sea touristic business, partner in the project “NEETs’ Empowerment for Sustainable Employment in the Tourism Sector” (NESET), organized a national information event. The NESET project benefits from a € 1 124 551 grant from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment. The aim of the project is to support on a large-scale transnational basis the sustainability of youth integration in the tourism industry, by creating conditions for NEETs’ employment and entrepreneurship in various forms of tourism.

The conference took place in the beautiful town of Sozopol, near Burgas, and was focused on three main topics:

- Presentation of the results of the surveys among young people and employers in the Tourism Industry in Bulgaria on the Skills Mismatches and Workforce Shortages of Young People in the sector.
- Introducing participants to good practices of young entrepreneurs in tourism.
- Presenting new software products for overall hotels and restaurants management.

The second day of the conference was dedicated to face-to-face meetings between young people – NEETs, students in tourism colleges and young employees and would-be entrepreneurs with employers and members of the tourist association in the region.

The second day of the conference was dedicated to face-to-face meetings between young people – mostly NEETs, but also students at and alumni of the tourism

department of “Asen Zlatarov University” in Burgas, tourism managers, would-be entrepreneurs and young employees on one side and employers and members of tourist association in the region on the other.

The conference was honoured by representatives of the two biggest and most influential tourism chambers in the region – in Varna and Burgas, the teaching body and the management the tourism department the tourism department of “Asen Zlatarov University” in Burgas, different NGOs and employers.

## 277 - Mommypreneurs

This project will empower 1050 young mothers by training them in eCommerce and web design to make them more attractive in the labour market or supporting their entrepreneurship skills to make them able to start their own businesses. As young mothers' employment is a culturally sensitive topic, transnational cooperation is essential to develop a well-rounded universal solution that can be tried out in different national contexts.

### Target groups:

- 1050 young mothers in 7 countries

### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution	Type of institution	City
Lithuania	Lead partner	Startup Division	NGO	Vilnius
Cyprus	Beneficiary partner	Kalys Solutions LTD	Private	Nicosia
Italy	Beneficiary partner	PoliHub, Startup District and Incubator	Private	Milan
Poland	Beneficiary partner	University of Łódź	Public	Łódź
Portugal	Beneficiary partner	Madan Parqu	NGO	Caparcia
Romania	Beneficiary partner	University Stefan cel Mare of Suceava	Public	Suceava
Spain	Beneficiary partner	Technical University of Cartagena – Cloud Incubator HUB – UPCT	Public	Cartagena
Spain	Beneficiary partner	Independent Local Agency for the Economic Development of Talavera de la Reina – IPETA	Public	Talavera de la Reina



Spain	Beneficiary partner	Independent Local Agency for the Economic Development of Talavera de la Reina (IPETA)	Public	Castilla La Mancha
Poland	Beneficiary partner	LODZKIE REGION	Public	Lodz

## Mommypreneurs lectures

Mommypreneurs courses have already started. The following partners have started the trainings:

- Lithuania
- Poland
- Spain (Talavera)
- Cyprus
- Spain (Cartagena)

Below are some pictures from the lectures.

### Poland

*1<sup>st</sup> day of Entrepreneurship course in Poland*



Credits: Mommypreneurs



Credits: Mommypreneurs



Credits: Mommypreneurs





Credits: Mommypreneurs



Credits: Mommypreneurs



Credits: Mommypreneurs

## Lithuania

Lithuania started entrepreneurship and digital skills courses on the 17<sup>th</sup> of September.

*Entrepreneurship skills training 1<sup>st</sup> day*



Credits: Mommypreneurs





Credits: Mommypreneurs

Vytautas Černiauskas, 'Civitta' expert and former Uber operations manager, was one of the lecturers at Mommypreneurs, Lithuania. He presented Customer Persona topic in entrepreneurship course.



Credits: Mommypreneurs

Indrė Kulikauskaitė presented the main tools and apps that mothers could use to manage their businesses.



Credits: Mommypreneurs

Skaidrė Vainikauskaitė-Tomaševičienė introduced her presentation on how to start a business.



Credits: Mommypreneurs



## Spain (Talavera)

*1<sup>st</sup> day of courses in Talavera*



Credits: Mommypreneurs



Credits: Mommypreneurs



**Spain (Cartagena)**  
*1<sup>st</sup> day of lectures in Cartagena*



Credits: Mommypreneurs



Credits: Mommypreneurs

## 263 - Blue Generation Project

The project partners would like to inspire and engage youth between 15 and 29 to pursue a career in the Blue Economy. This will be done by bringing together experts from the Blue Economy and youth organisations to share knowledge about training opportunities and vacant jobs. A training programme will be developed for young mentors who will promote the sector to 39,000 young people in schools, adult education centres, NGOs, unemployment services and local associations across five countries. At least 2,000 young people will get access to training and mentoring. The project partners will also create a Blue Economy guide and a job platform.

### Target groups:

- Young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs)
- Youth at risk of becoming NEETs

### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution	Type of institution	City
Greece	Lead partner	Militos Consulting SA	Private	Athens
Bulgaria	Beneficiary partner	Active Bulgarian Society	NGO	Blagoevgrad
Poland	Beneficiary partner	Enterprising Society Development Foundation	NGO	Wola
Portugal	Beneficiary partner	European Intercultural Club	NGO	Amadora
Portugal	Beneficiary partner	CONTEXOS	NGO	Faro
Spain	Beneficiary partner	Sea Teach	Private	Cala D'or

Belgium	Expertise partner	Sea Europe		NGO	Brussels
Belgium	Expertise partner	European Boating Industry		NGO	Brussels
Germany	Expertise partner	SubMariner Network		Non-profit	Berlin
Iceland	Expertise partner	Iceland Association	Aquaculture	NGO	Reykjavik
Norway	Expertise partner	Norwea		NGO	Oslo

## Blue economy job opportunities motivate youngsters to pursue new career paths



Credits: Blue Generation Project

Clube Intercultural Europeu (PP Blue Generation project) was invited to participate in a Bootcamp about employment for young people, specifically to present the Blue Generation Project. This Bootcamp was organized by the Education Department of the Town Hall of Lisbon.

They discussed the different sectors and opportunities on the blue economy in an interactive and participatory way.

## **ABS (PP Blue Generation project) presented the Blue Generation project in Bulgaria**



Credits: Blue Generation Project

On June 20 and 21, Active Bulgarian Society team together with its mentors and volunteers organised 4 local presentations at Language high school "Akademik Lyudmil Stoyanov" Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria. During the presentations, the students were introduced to the Blue Generation Project and the Blue Economy job opportunities that exist in Bulgaria and not only.

Some of the students expressed their interest and motivation to continue further their career development path in the Blue Economy sector.



## **FRSP (PP Blue Generation project) presented the Blue Generation project in Poland**



Credits: Blue Generation Project

Fundacja Rozwoju had 2 promotional meetings in Labour Office in Rybnik, Silesia Region, South Poland, one on 18th of September and second on 27th of September. Participants (secondary school graduates) were familiarized with the objectives of the BGP as well as subsectors of Blue Economy. Contact with Blue Generation Poland and create for yourself an ocean of working opportunities!

## Another promotional visit in Poland within the frame of Blue Generation project



Credits: Blue Generation Project

Another promotional meeting, which took place in PUP Rybnik within the framework of the Blue Generation project on behalf of the Polish partner Fundacja Rozwoju. The October meeting brought the graduates closer to the idea of the project and invited them to further participation.



## 150 young people informed about the career opportunities in Blue Economy



Credits: Blue Generation Project

On October 15th, Contextos (PP Portugal) presented the Blue Generation project in front of 150 young people at Tomás Cabreira Secondary School with the aim of "attracting, engaging and converting" them to the vast opportunities of the Blue Economy labor market.

## Sea Teach (PP Blue Generation project) presented the Blue Generation project in Palma de Mallorca

On the 05/11/2019, the 17-18 year old students of the secondary school IES Capdepera assisted to a presentation about career opportunities in the Blue Economy, including all the activities and opportunities related to seas and oceans. It has been an interactive and participative presentation, where the students could participate with their mobile phones on some of the interactive activities.

## 218 - Social Innovators

The project partners will focus on the non-governmental sector as an attractive working and learning environment for young people. In NGOs, young people will gather work experience and become involved in some of the most relevant initiatives and programmes dealing with social challenges in Europe today. As a result, the participants will be supported to create their own jobs within the social sector, where their educational background is essential for further development.

### Target groups:

- Young people graduated from social studies and the humanities who are not in employment, education or training

### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution	Type of institution	City
Slovenia	Lead partner	Association for Culture and Education PiNA	NGO	Koper
Bulgaria	Beneficiary partner	National Management School	NGO	Sofia
Croatia	Beneficiary partner	Youth Initiative for Human Rights	NGO	Zagreb
Norway	Expertise partner	Østfold University College	Public	Halden

## 203 - Yenesys – YOUTH EMPLOYMENT NETWORK FOR ENERGY SUSTAINABILITY IN ISLANDS

The project partners will cooperate and share information on how to create green jobs within the energy sector, renewables, mobility, and tourism. Young people will be supported and prepared for employment in these green jobs via training, business development, mentoring and work exchanges. Participants will get experience with internships in local projects.

### Target groups:

- Young professionals age 25- 29 who are not in employment, education or training
- Human resource development agencies, productivity centres, business support organisations and education- al institutions

### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution	Type of institution	City
Cyprus	Lead partner	Cyprus Energy Agency	NGO	Nicosia
Croatia	Beneficiary partner	The International Centre for Sustainable Development of Energy, Water and Environment Systems – SDEWES	NGO	Zagreb
Cyprus	Beneficiary partner	Frederick University	Private	Nicosia
Cyprus	Beneficiary partner	Chrysalis LEAP Limited	Private	Nicosia
Estonia	Beneficiary partner	Stockholm Environment Institute Tallinn Centre	NGO	Tallinn
Greece	Beneficiary partner	Network of Sustainable Greek Islands – DAFNI Network	NGO	Athens

Italy	Beneficiary partner	Sapienza University of Rome - Department of Astronautical, Electrical and Energy Engineering	Public	Rome
Portugal	Beneficiary partner	Regional Agency for Energy and Environment of the Autonomous Region of Madeira	NGO	Funchal
Spain	Beneficiary partner	Canary Islands Institute of Technology	Private	Las Palmas de Gran Canaria
Norway	Expertise partner	Møre and Romsdal County Authority	Public	Molde

## **YENESIS Online platform**

The YENESIS good practises platform is now online. The goal of the platform is to promote innovative practices for employment to the interested parties in order to adopt similar actions to help reduce youth unemployment.

The platform will be open to both young NEETs and, also, investors and other stakeholders. Participants will have the opportunity to share business opportunities, find partners, pitch their ideas, and collaborate. The platform will ensure the lasting effect of the project, attracting young professionals and entrepreneurs with similar interests and entrepreneurial ventures.

You can visit the platform [here](#).

## **YENESIS guide on sustainability competences for green jobs to be disseminated in secondary schools**

The aim of this guide on sustainability competences for green jobs is to help secondary school students who will be deciding on their education and career path. It is to provide fundamental information to secondary school students who are in the process of deciding or have already decided that they will follow a green career path. This guide explains what exactly a green job is and how this type of employment can prevent them from becoming young people neither in employment nor in education and training (NEETs) and can secure their future as active members of their society. Furthermore, the horizontal skills that are necessary for a green worker are presented.

This guide also aims to present to students potential job positions that they can pursue in the fields of Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency, Sustainable Tourism and Sustainable Mobility. The importance of each field and its contribution to the development of the green market is also explained.

Finally, some links for green job hunting are provided to the students, as well as some personal stories of people who have successfully established themselves as green workers for drawing inspiration

The guide will be disseminated to secondary schools for students to use when deciding their career path.

You can read the guide [here](#)

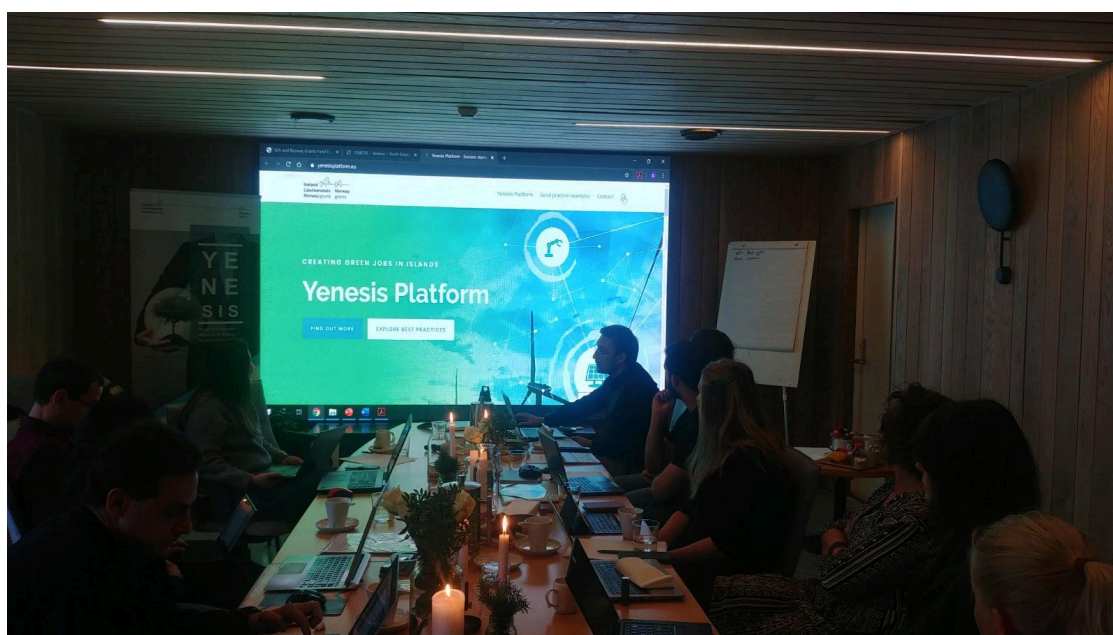
## **3rd Partner meeting**

On the 12th & 13th of November the Møre and Romsdal County Authority (MRCA) organised and hosted the 3rd Biannual partners meeting in Andalsnes, Norway. During the meeting, the partners discussed the progress of the project, the completed outcomes so far and the upcoming activities.





Credits: YENESIS



Credits: YENESIS

## YENESIS Project Recruitment Phase

The application period for the YENESIS project has been completed. From October 9<sup>th</sup> – November 20<sup>th</sup> more than 200 interested young professionals from all participating countries applied to be part of the YENESIS project.

The applicants will have to go through an interview process and from there the 12 participants of each country will be selected.

The participants will have the opportunity to participate in a week-long educational course on four areas of sustainability and on business innovation, a 3-day showcasing

trip in Norway on the selected area of interest, a month-long apprenticeship in one of the other participating locations, and a 6-month local placement.

## **YENESIS at the first annual thematic seminar of Active Youth projects**



Credits: YENESIS

The YENESIS project was present at the first thematic seminar of Active Youth projects. YENESIS was presented in front of the Financial Mechanism Office (FMO) representing the Donor countries and representatives of the 25 other projects benefiting from the Fund for Youth Employment.

Two members of the YENESIS consortium took part in the panel discussion on challenges for Youth in rural and island communities.

### **Partner Communication Events:**

#### **Estonia: YENESIS at the SEI Science Forum in Nairobi, Kenya**

The YENESIS project was presented at the annual SEI Science Forum in Nairobi, Kenya between October 14-17. The theme of this year's annual SEI Science Forum was environmental governance and diplomacy in the post-globalization era.

Our Estonian partner, the SEI Tallinn, presented the Yenesis project within the session: Energy, Climate Change, and Air Quality - experience from LED-P(on Low Emission Development Pathways) initiative and going forward.

The name of the presentation was: Addressing the challenge of youth unemployment through sustainable development with the help of YENESIS project.



## 192 - From Outdoors to Labour Market

The project will examine the University of Edinburgh's "Model for social and personal growth through Outdoor Learning" and test whether it will help young people in Warmia-Masuria (Poland), Cantabria (Spain) and the Mid-West Region (Ireland) to engage in society, become active citizens and acquire professional skills. Expertise partners from the UK will be involved to train the trainers of outdoor learning. The model will help participants recognise their own strengths and talents, build self-esteem, provide career advice and prepare for job-seeking. Job matching with employers and mentoring will also be offered.

### Target groups:

- Young people not in employment, education or training in Warmia-Masuria (Poland), Cantabria (Spain) and the Mid West Region (Ireland)

### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution	Type of institution	City
Poland	Lead partner	Center for Innovative Education	NGO	Warsaw
Ireland	Beneficiary partner	Limerick Institute of Technology	Public	Limerick
Poland	Beneficiary partner	Food Bank in Olsztyn	Non-profit	Olsztyn
Spain	Beneficiary partner	General Directorate for Youth and International Co- operation – Council for Education, Culture and Sport – Autonomous Government of Cantabria	Public	Santander
Spain	Beneficiary partner	Femxa Group	Private	Pontevedra

UK	Expertise partner	Outdoor & Environmental Education Moray House School of Education University of Edinburgh	NGO	Edinburgh
UK	Expertise partner	The Venture Trust	NGO	Edinburgh
Ireland	Beneficiary partner	ULS Universal Learning Systems	Private	Dublin

## What do participants in Poland say about FOLM?

**Ola Sinkiewicz** found out about FOLM project from a friend. “We had a variety of group and individual exercises every day. They ranged from learning how to ignite the fire, use the map and the compass and find yourself in the field, to exercises that helped us with teamwork abilities. It helped me to look at my life from different perspective and made me realize that in spite of what I am thinking about myself, it is not so bad. I recommend participation in FOLM project to everyone. All you need to experience something new is the right mindset and you will not be disappointed. However, you need to embrace the climate and open yourself for the dialog because it is really worth it!”



Credits: FOLM

**Kajetan Kaperzyński** felt that this is a wonderful occasion to change something in his life, work on himself and get to know interesting people. “Activities that I liked the most were those where I could take the responsibility and be in charge of the group. Of course, those were just exercises and nobody was held accountable for the errors because during the project we have the right to make them. I think that such experiences help us with believing in ourselves and taking responsibility for our actions. I became more brave, confident and open towards other people. I recommend the participation in the project to young people who want to change something in their lives, become more competent and develop themselves internally”



Credits: FOLM



## **FOLM project at the 18th conference of the European Institute for Outdoor Adventure Education and Experiential Learning**

At the 18th conference of the European Institute for Outdoor Adventure Education and Experiential Learning (EOE 2019) in Tralee, Ireland, Jule Hildmann (The University of Edinburgh, UK) and Andy Hardie (Venture Trust, UK) presented on how a 'safe space' can be created in group settings to enable participants to fully participate and grow from their outdoor experience - a crucial success factor in the Edinburgh Model that is being transferred and implemented in the FOLM project.

Also, Marie Taylor (Limerick Institute of Technology, Ireland) and Jule Hildmann (UoE, UK) presented findings from FOLM's pilot phase to an audience of international experts in outdoor education. The conference theme was 'Diversity and Inclusion in Outdoor & Experiential Learning', to which the FOLM project is making a noteworthy contribution.



Credits: FOLM

## FOLM @ Maflow Spain Automotive

The participants of the third group of project FOLM in Spain, have visited the facilities of the company Maflow Spain Automotive, <https://www.maflow.es/>, a world leader in the manufacture of Air Conditioning Piping, hoses for Systems of Assisted Management and distribution of Liquid products for the Automotive sector, which is part of the Maflow-Boryszew

International Group. The young participants have enjoyed the whole day, checking first-hand how is the labour market in this sector. We want to thank the Director of Human Resources, Teresa Iglesias Martínez, who has acted as a mentor for these young Cantabrians who are in the process of finding a job and has helped us make this day of coaching motivating and practical.



Credits: FOLM

## 186 - Migrant Talent Garden

The project partners will study what is being done on entrepreneurship support in Europe today and create a business support network and training programme. In addition, they will set up an online platform and local centres to support and train young entrepreneurs with migrant background. This will help migrants develop their own business ideas and create new jobs.

### Target groups:

- Young entrepreneurs of migrant background; Asylum-seekers

### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution		Type of institution	City
Lithuania	Lead partner	Active Youth Association		NGO	Kaunas
Bulgaria	Beneficiary partner	Hemus Technologies		Private	Sofia
Croatia	Beneficiary partner	Zagreb Incubator	Entrepreneurship	NGO	Zagreb
Greece	Beneficiary partner	European Institute for Local Development		Private	Thessaloniki
Latvia	Beneficiary partner	Shelter Safe House		NGO	Riga
Iceland	Expertise partner	Reykjavik Red Cross		NGO	Reykjavik
Norway	Expertise partner	Caritas Norway		NGO	Oslo
Latvia	Beneficiary partner	Baltic Arab Chamber of Commerce		NGO	Riga



## 152 - Individual Placement and Support for NEETs through Education Youth Technology Platform (EYTP)

The project partners will improve the counselling competence in their countries through combining a two-step model consisting of the Maturing Model (MM) and Individual Placement and Support (IPS) from Norway. In combination with an Education Youth Technology Platform (EYTP), young people will get support towards vocational education or a permanent job. MM consist of an individual coaching period, which will be used for motivation and preparation for the more formal counselling work using the systematic IPS model.

### Target groups:

- Coaches providing counselling
- Young people not in employment, education or training

### Project Partners:

Country	Project status	partner	Institution	Type institution	of	City
Slovenia	Lead partner		Public University of Ptuj	Public		Ptuj
Hungary	Beneficiary partner		Interregio Association	Forum	NGO	Budapest
Romania	Beneficiary partner		Asociatia EIVA		NGO	Arad
Spain	Beneficiary partner		Tesla Technologies & Software S.L		Private	Santiago de Compostela
Norway	Expertise partner		Fønix AS		Non-profit	Sandefjord

## 134 - DARE – Day One Alliance for Employment

The Partners from Poland, Lithuania and Austria will share their work on these topics and support the establishment of Job Labs and Entrepreneurship Labs that will help 1400 young people into education or a job. The project will also establish systems for validation of non-formal learning. The aim is to draw experience from the Youthpass certificate but extend its impact in terms of target groups, scope, and level of innovation.

### Target groups:

- Young people not in employment, education or training in Greece, Italy, Portugal and Cyprus
- Employers who would like to test a system for validation of non-formal learning

### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution	Type of institution	City
Cyprus	Lead partner	SEAL CYPRUS – Cyprus Organisation for Sustainable Education & Active Learning	NGO	Nicosia
Greece	Beneficiary partner	N.G.O. CIVIS PLUS	NGO	Athens
Greece	Beneficiary partner	PRAKSIS – Programs of Development, Social Support and Medical Cooperation	NGO	Athens
Italy	Beneficiary partner	Craftsmanship & SMEs Association / Confartigianato Imprese Salerno	NGO	Salerno
Lithuania	Beneficiary partner	Lithuanian Association of Non-formal Education	NGO	Vilnius

Lithuania	Beneficiary partner	Youth Career and Advising Center	NGO	Kaunas
Poland	Beneficiary partner	Lodz Chamber of Industry and Commerce	Chamber of commerce	Lodz
Portugal	Beneficiary partner	Ha Moment, CRL	NGO	Lisbon
Austria	Expertise partner	IFTE Initiative for Teaching Entrepreneurship	NGO	Vienna
Austria	Expertise partner	Austrian Federal Economic Chamber	Public	Vienna
Portugal	Beneficiary partner	PAR – Respostas Sociais	NGO	Lisbon

## 101 - European Digital Bootcamps (EDIBO)

The project partners will develop and test a model to strengthen the ICT skills of young people under 30 who are not in employment, education or training. The model is inspired by the new “Rapid Technology Skills Training” developed by the World Bank and includes close cooperation with employers. Every partner of the project will organise “European digital training labs”, with ten weeks of intensive ICT training combined with other types of training like English language courses. After the training phase, participants will have the opportunity to get an apprenticeship.

### Target groups:

- Young people under the age of 30 who are not studying or working, with a special focus on those aged 25-29 from disadvantaged groups (low-income, women, migrants, youngsters from rural areas)

### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution	Type of institution	City
Greece	Lead partner	THREE THIRDS SOCIETY NPO	NGO	Athens
Bulgaria	Beneficiary partner	Institute for Youth Initiatives and Innovations	NGO	Varna
Italy	Beneficiary partner	National Craftsmen Confederation Lecce – CNA Lecce	NGO	Lecce
Italy	Beneficiary partner	FORMA.LAB SRL	Private	Milan
Latvia	Beneficiary partner	Foundation for Society	NGO	Riga
Lithuania	Beneficiary partner	Integration Centre	NGO	Pilviškiai
Spain	Beneficiary partner	Polytechnic University of Valencia	Public	Valencia

## 094 - Young-ICT Women: Innovative solutions to increase the numbers of EU vulnerable girls and young women into the digital agenda

The project partners will motivate young women in seven European countries to improve their digital competence and choose a career within ICT. They will investigate the ICT skills of 1000 women and train 700 of them together with employers. The women will develop a 'learning to learn' attitude, a sense of initiative, and the social skills necessary to find a job.

### Target groups:

- Unemployed young women
- Women without targeted education of profession
- Women in/after maternity leave
- Women in rural disadvantaged areas, coming from low income/disadvantaged families

### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution	Type of institution	City
Latvia	Lead partner	Latvian Information and Communication Technology association	NGO	Riga
Greece	Beneficiary partner	Creative Thinking Development – CRETHIDEV	NGO	Rafina
Ireland	Beneficiary partner	ECDL Ireland Ltd.	Private	Dublin
Lithuania	Beneficiary partner	Baltic Education Technology Institute	Private	Vilnius
Malta	Beneficiary partner	Malta Communications Authority	Public	Floriana

Romania	Beneficiary partner	Educating for an Open Society	Private non-profit	Timisoara
Spain	Beneficiary partner	FUNDACIÓN INTERNACIONAL	PLAN NGO	Madrid
Belgium	Expertise partner	DIGITALEUROPE aisbl	NGO	Brussels
Norway	Expertise partner	European Centre for Women and Technology – ECWT	NGO	Drammen

## 086 - L.I.K.E. – Life Investment is the Key to Employment

The project partners will do a study on young people with mental health problems and develop new methods to help this group get an education and a job. The project partners will work together with their families, employers and mental health institutions. They will establish youth houses called 'Hidden Likes' in which the youngsters will experience a supportive environment. By overcoming isolation and increase their motivation, they will get a mentor to help them in their training for local jobs.

### Target groups:

- Long-term unemployed young people aged 25-29 with mental health problems
- Roma and other minority groups
- Relatives and families of young people with mental health problems
- Local employers
- Mental health specialists

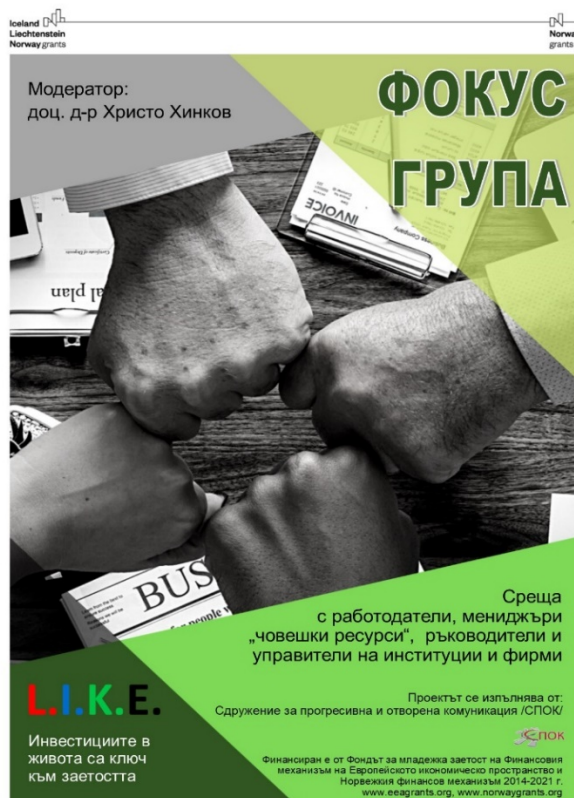
### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution	Type of institution	City
Bulgaria	Lead partner	Association "Sustainability and of progressive communication"	NGO	Sofia
Hungary	Beneficiary partner	Salva Vita Foundation	NGO	Budapest
Italy	Beneficiary partner	Codici Social Cooperative	Social Cooperative	Milan
Latvia	Beneficiary partner	Association PINS	NGO	Riga
Iceland	Expertise partner	Inspiring NGO (Hbetjandi NGO) HRIS	NGO	Garðabær



Norway	Expertise partner	Norwegian National Advisory Unit on Concurrent Sub-stance Abuse and Mental Health Disorders	Public	Brumundal
Hungary	Beneficiary partner	JOB Ltd.	Private	Budapest

## The first focus group took place with employers, part of the research phase of the L.I.K.E. project



Credits: LIKE

The meeting was moderated by psychiatrist Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hristo Hinkov - project expert. Representatives from different business sectors - services, medicine, manufacturing, human resource managers, representatives of Confederation Syndicate European Trade Union joined the meeting.

The main problems highlighted by the employers during the focus group were the following:

- There is a confusion in the professional identity among young people;
- There is uncertainty about the quality of education they received and desire for self-assertion is missing;
- They would not hire young people with mental health problems because they are not informed and trained how to deal with them in a work environment.

Employers' attitudes and their resistance to hiring the NEET's target group as employees underpin the development of a methodology to support young people, which includes all sides of interest in the process - young people themselves, their relatives and the employers. The project's research activities make possible the introduction of an evidence-based employment program.

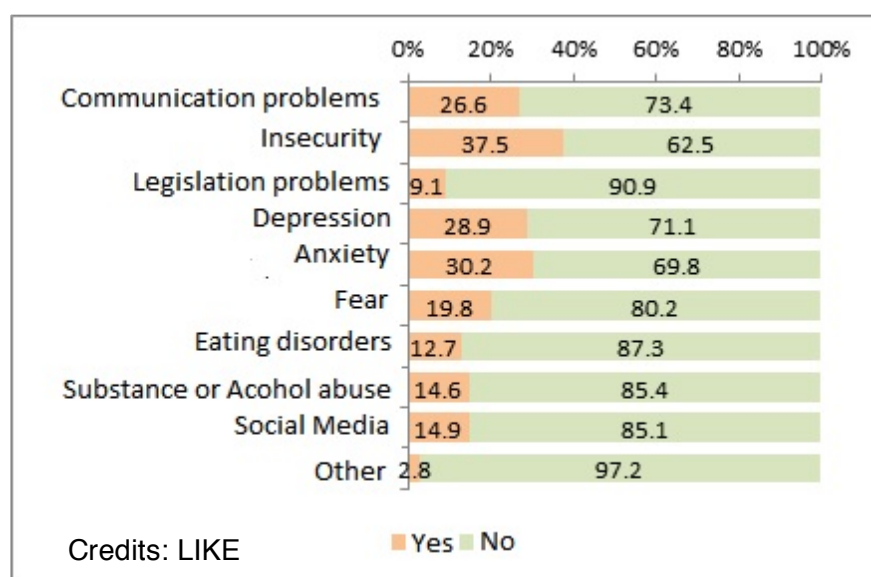


Credits: LIKE

## The initial data from the large-scale Project L.I.K.E. survey have been processed

The survey is conducted simultaneously in Bulgaria, Hungary, Latvia and Ireland. In Bulgaria 726 NEETs from the capital Sofia and the rest of the country were interviewed, of which 20% of Roma origin. The aim is to identify the causes of unemployment and the low activity on the labor market through analyzing the quality of life, health status, satisfaction, interests, desires, anxieties and attitudes of young people in the society (aged 15-29), with a representative sample of 25-29 year olds. In addition, the survey is trying to find out how far the “modern” mental issues of today, such as depression, anxiety, eating disorders, addictions affect the employability of young NEETs.

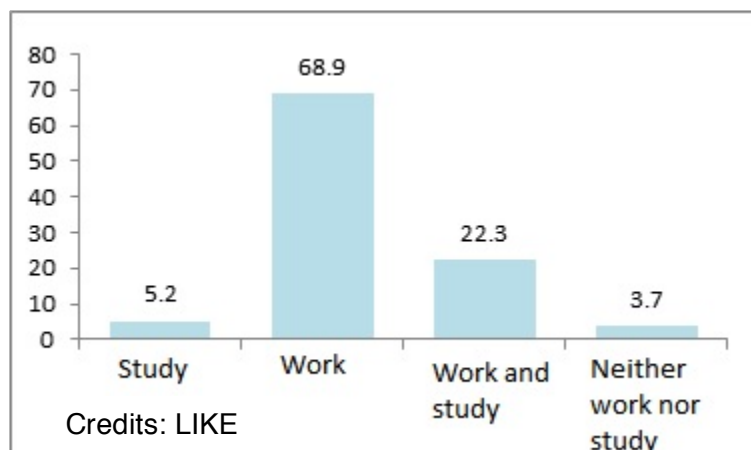
The first data obtained so far reveal interesting correlations between the various factors at play. Out of all unemployed young people in Bulgaria who are not enrolled in any form of education, almost 40% suffer from insecurity, and 30% from depression. The share of NEETs with anxiety and fears is similar, and almost 20% experience eating disorders or various addictions such as social networks, drugs or alcohol abuse.



Even at this early stage it is obvious that the approach towards motivating the target group to become more active on the labor market cannot be a direct one, but rather based on an understanding of the problems of young people, and on investing and providing support to overcome the

difficulties resulting from their mental issues and barriers in the first place.

Half of the of young people between 15 and 29, or 49% of respondents, live with their parents. The lack of sufficient financial resources to meet their daily needs forces young people to delay separation from their parents. As other research indicates, poverty among children and young people is directly correlated to their parents' poverty - the so-called 'intergeneration poverty' or 'inherited intergeneration poverty'. Living with parents (and here Bulgaria has one of the highest rates in the EU) is also a major obstacle to motivating young people and encouraging them to be more active in social and work-related activities.



A high share of respondents say that “work” is what interests them most - about 80% in Bulgaria. And to the question “How do you imagine your future in 5 years?”, more than 2/3 (68.9%) have responded that they will be working, while 22,3% have said that they will be studying and working simultaneously.

Among activities that young

people are willing to engage in to improve their lives and health, they are mostly interested in those which they feel they might be competent in. 64% of them have responded that they would be willing to engage in such activities. The focus which young people place on competences means that future work on this project should also embrace a competence-based approach.

Jacques Delors defines fundamental global competences as follows: “Learn to know, learn to do, learn to live together, learn to live.” Project L.I.K.E. – Life Investment is the Key to Employment” will do its best to help NEETs in partner countries - and by spreading the model also across the rest of Europe - find personal and professional accomplishment through understanding and support.

## 083 - NEETs in entrepreneurship

The project partners from Romania, Bulgaria, Italy and Spain will reach out to young people that are not enrolled in education, do not have a job and do not take part in society. They will support and train them in small family businesses, so they can be motivated to create their own jobs in the local community. The project partners will use their own experiences at the local level and a methodological approach to business developed by the Junior Achievement across Europe.

### Target groups:

- The hard-to-reach
- The low-skilled
- The long-term unemployed
- National authorities
- The Junior Achievement network in 35 countries

### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution	Type of institution	City
Romania	Lead partner	Junior Achievement Romania	NGO	Bucharest
Bulgaria	Beneficiary partner	Junior Achievement Bulgaria	NGO	Sofia
Italy	Beneficiary partner	Junior Achievement Italy – Young Enterprise	Non-profit	Sesto San Giovanni
Spain	Beneficiary partner	Junior Achievement Spain	NGO	Madrid
Belgium	Beneficiary partner	Junior Achievement Europe	NGO	Brussels
Norway	Expertise partner	Junior Achievement Norway	NGO	Oslo
Norway	Expertise partner	Lyk-z & daughters AS	Social entrepreneur	Skien



## Junior Achievement Romania's NEETs in Entrepreneurship trainings have started

- 12 young people aged 18-29 took part in the first NEETs in Entrepreneurship training course.
- By 2021, 400 young people will benefit from free personal development and entrepreneurship training and guidance.
- **NEETs in Entrepreneurship** is a transnational project that facilitates the employability of young people in Bulgaria, Italy, Romania and Spain.

Earlier this month, Junior Achievement (JA) Romania launched an entrepreneurial hub and kicked off the first series of courses for youth employment in the labor market. 12 young people from Bucharest and Ilfov took part in a one week personal development training session designed to increase their motivation and self-leadership skills.

The activities were adapted from the FROG working method, developed by the Norwegian Lyk-z & døtre to give young people a better understanding of their own aspirations, resources, skills and values and train them to be the future professionals and entrepreneurs.

*"When I started the course, I had mixed feelings. I thought I knew exactly what I was capable of, what my values were and I didn't feel it would be very helpful. With each exercise that we did, I became increasingly excited and pleasantly surprised by the quality of the program. I established connections with my trainers and peers and we got to know each other really well. I realized that I have all the qualities I need to succeed, no matter what my goals are, and I learned to never get discouraged. I recommend the program to all young people! They will rediscover themselves, exchange experiences and learn from each other."* – Adrian Tudorache, 27 years old, from Bucharest

Besides this course, the project will also include several job shadowing, training, consulting and financing opportunities for starting a business aimed at young people aged ≤29 who do not have a job and do not attend any form of education or professional training (NEETs). By 2021, the project will reach 400 NEETs and 1,000 high school students enrolled in vocational and technical education schools.

**The NEETs in Entrepreneurship** project is funded by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment and it's implemented by 6 Junior Achievement member organizations. By the end of the project, 1,600 NEETs in Bulgaria, Italy, Romania and Spain will receive training and acquire the skills needed to find a job or start their own business.

### About JA Romania

Junior Achievement (JA) Romania is a not-for-profit organization focused on implementing JA's entrepreneurial, economic, financial, career guidance, health, active life and life skills education international programs. JA's programs are delivered to 40 countries in Europe and 100+ countries around the world. JA Romania reaches more than 200,000 students in 1,700 Romanian public schools annually. The

programs are developed in partnership with the Ministry of Education and with the financial support of the business community. In 2019, Junior Achievement celebrates its centennial.

For more information, please visit our website, [www.jaromania.org](http://www.jaromania.org), and our Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/JuniorAchievementRO](https://www.facebook.com/JuniorAchievementRO).

## 058 - Supporting Employment Platform through Apprenticeship Learning – SEPAL

The project partners will make apprenticeships and training opportunities that are better suited to the specific needs of young people who fall outside the ordinary education systems. They will train the youngsters in social enterprises, which are businesses that are more concerned with social changes than with making a profit. The model used is called WISE (Work Integration Social Enterprise), which includes a set of guidance tools. The project will also work together with local institutions and private companies which will offer internships.

### Target groups:

- Young people not in employment, education or training, aged 24-29
- Young people with disabilities
- Migrants
- The low-skilled
- Drop-outs
- Teachers and mentors; Local stakeholder committees (LSCs)

### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution	Type of institution	City
Romania	Lead partner	Bucovina Institute for Social Partnership	NGO	Suceava
Greece	Beneficiary partner	Koispe Diadromes – 10th sector at Attica Prefecture	Social Cooperative	Athens
Lithuania	Beneficiary partner	ZIPB Human Resources Monitoring and Development Bureau	NGO	Siauliai
Poland	Beneficiary partner	Szczecin Higher School Collegium Balticum	Non-public higher education institution	Szczecin
Spain	Beneficiary partner	Pere Closa Private Foundation	NGO	Barcelona

## **SEPAL – training and workshops**

On 2-4 October 2019 the SEPAL delegates with 25 LSC representatives coming from Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Spain and Greece, were talking in Athens about the role of public-private partnership supporting learning on the job for NEETs within social enterprises.

The agenda of the training included workshops and discussions about NEETs in Europe; the importance of apprenticeship; challenges in Social Entrepreneurship to integrate NEETs; the contribution of LSC experts into the apprenticeship and internship stages.

### **Challenges and opportunities in developing supported employment services within social enterprises for NEETs in North East Romania**

#### **Background**

Work is valued and needed by all the citizens as employment represents the golden path towards social inclusion [1] and wellbeing. The benefits of being employed include increasing one's financial resources, gaining dignity, personal validation and satisfaction for being productive, reducing stigma and negative attitudes, increasing one's self confidence, self-esteem, empowerment, autonomy and hope for the future, better psychological health and quality of life [2] an opportunity for socializing, meeting other people and structuring one's time [3]. It provides a meaning in life, it offers a purpose and adds value to one's participation. Being employed also reduces the incidence of problematic or risk behaviors, such as alcohol or substance abuse, antisocial acts or engaging in against the law activities. At the macro level work brings an important contribution to promoting social and economic development by increasing community cohesion and safety, enhancing civic participation and reducing public spending on welfare benefits.

There are many reasons that explain the European Union's (EU) concern with taking action on increasing youth employment: the youth unemployment rate has doubled as compared to the adult one (21.2 % against 9.8% in January 2015); more than one in five young Europeans on the labour market cannot find a job (in Greece and Spain it is one in two); even when young people do work, their jobs tend to be less stable and less paid; early leavers from education and training are a high-risk group; resignation rate also tends to increase among this group.

An indicator that tries to capture young people's participation in the labour market is the one known as "NEET (not in employment, education or training)". The overall NEET category comprises of young people aged between 15 and 34 years old, regardless of the level of education that are not employed and don't follow any educational program. It is considered that NEETs are being exposed to a higher risk of social exclusion and labour market exclusion.

At EU level, NEETs are considered one of the most problematic groups in the context of youth unemployment, experiencing difficulties associated with poverty, discrimination and social exclusion. According to Eurostat, 16,5% of the young people aged 20-34 were NEETs in 2018 representing around 15 million people [4]. In 2017, the percentage of Romanian young people (aged 20-34) neither in employment nor in education was among the highest in the EU, at 21.4 percent, compared to the EU

average of 17.2 per cent [5]. The number of NEETs grows continuously due to the lack of adequate training during school, low level of practical skills and of work experience, poor implementation of dual system and insufficient development of support or coaching services for youngsters. Additionally, the rigidity of the labor office system and lack of support services in accessing the first job also increase the NEETs number.

From an economic perspective, the costs incurred by NEETs status are extremely high. Based on an estimation made by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions in 2011, the cost of the NEET population was around 153 billion Euro, representing more than 1.2% of GDP at European level. If we are to consider additional costs related to health, criminal justice, unpaid taxes applied to lost earnings, poor living conditions and lack of housing, then the real costs generated by NEETs would be much higher. According to European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, the reintegration on the labour market of only 10% of NEET would generate an annual savings of more than 10 billion Euro and this amount would increase to 21 billion euro if the labour market could absorb 20% of the NEET category [6].

Supported employment was developed in the United States at the beginning of the 1980s with the aim to provide practical, on the job training to people with intellectual disabilities, based on their individual needs. The systematic training and support provided enabled people with disabilities, that were formerly seen as “unable to perform real work”, to build their skills, enter the labour market and succeed in the open employment. Since then, the model of supported employment was successfully replicated in many parts of the world and, it was also extended to other categories of vulnerable people. Supported Employment is completely consistent with the concepts of social inclusion, empowerment, dignity and respect for individuals. Three characteristics are considered essential: paid work (similar to that of other same level workers), open labour market and ongoing support, based on both employee and employer’s needs [7].

The present research regards the implementation of the project ***Supporting Employment Platform through Apprenticeship Learning—SEPAL*** by Bucovina Institute for Social Partnership, together with partners from Spain, Lithuania, Greece and Poland. The **SEPAL project is financed by** Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment. The main objective of SEPAL is to create a model for job insertion of at least 300 NEETs aged 24 - 29 years old, coming from various vulnerable groups through developing Work Integration Social Enterprise (WISE) model by offering apprenticeship training and supported employment services to access the open labor market. As SEPAL is at its early stages of development, the impact cannot be assessed so far, yet it is important to explore how the idea of apprenticeship learning and inclusion of vulnerable groups is perceived by the local community and stakeholders.

**Objective:** To identify the main challenges or barriers that limit the access of NEETs on the labour market.

**Method:** Focus group with employers and stakeholders from Suceava County.

The questions addressed the following issues:

1. What are the main challenges and opportunities regarding the inclusion of youth from vulnerable groups on the labour market?
2. How willing are the employers to include youth from vulnerable groups?

Participants: 12 employers and stakeholders participated at the focus group.

- 9 males and 3 females;
- Age group: males 23-51; females 35-45
- Education: 75% - college degree or above (ISCED 6); 25% - high-school diploma (ISCED 3), post-secondary education (ISCED 4)

### Results:

The main themes that have emerged at the focus groups were: employment barriers, causes of reduced job tenure, willingness to hire people from vulnerable groups, employment opportunities, best practices and solutions and success at the workplace. For each of them, other subthemes were identified and coded. The number of times that each subtheme is mentioned in the participants' discourse was counted (in brackets).

Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individual characteristics: unrealistic expectations (14), reduced motivation (16), lack of discipline (10), lack of awareness (6), shame (7), addiction (11), lack of skills (11), fear of failure (3)</li> <li>- Social: bad parenting (26), lack of a national strategy for inclusion (4), marginalisation (7),</li> <li>- System level – poor education system (49), illness benefits and social subsidies (5), legislation (8), lack of vocational counselling services (5)</li> <li>- Organisational – employer expectancies/attitudes (14), inflexible work schedule (5), task difficulty (4)</li> <li>- Cultural – beliefs about work (4), low entry jobs are shameful (7), Mentality, Prejudices and stereotypes (13)</li> <li>- Employer can't manage – “too much responsibility” (8)</li> <li>- Employer not knowing how to handle the employee with MH (3)</li> </ul>
Causes of reduced job tenure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Low of job satisfaction (3)</li> <li>- Education (school and parenting styles - permissive) (5)</li> <li>- Employer's behaviour – narcissistic (6), bad management (4); lack of collaboration (5); lack of vision (2); payment inequities (4); lack of respect/demeaning attitude (3); lack of investment (2)</li> <li>- Co-worker behaviour: demeaning attitude (3), superiority (2)</li> <li>- Lack of vocational orientation services (2)</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Being unprepared/ unrealistic expectancies (2)</li> <li>- Low salary -5</li> </ul>
Willingness to hire people from vulnerable groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on work skills (6), motivation (4), loyalty (2), performance at the interview (6), employer's instinct/guts (5); job requirements (3), experience (3)</li> <li>• Most important quality of candidates: being reliable (4), Loyalty (3), Communication skills (2), Easygoing/likable (3), Experience (3), Work history (3), References (3), Work Motivation (6), Willingness to integrate in the team (2), Punctuality (2), Work skills (6), Obedience to rules (1)</li> <li>• Preference for physical disabilities (4)</li> <li>• People with MH problems described as "being hard-working <u>but</u> having a cracking point", 'crossing the limit' (3), violent (7) - 4; unreliable – 4 moody (4)</li> <li>• Previous experiences with employees with MH – hard working (2), ok (1), unreliable (3), overly sensitive (3)</li> <li>• Roma youth described as thieves (4), having very low education level/ illiterate (8), lacking motivation (4), marginalized (5)</li> </ul>
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subsidies for hiring NEETs (7)</li> <li>• Free courses for individuals with low income or no income (4)</li> <li>• Training Courses provided by other organization, existence of expert trainers (2)</li> <li>• Partnership between employers and vocational schools (6)</li> <li>• Work place as motivation enhancer (4)</li> <li>• Increased number of available jobs (4)</li> <li>• Reduced unemployment rate at national and regional level (2)</li> <li>• Existence of jobs for people with physical disabilities (2)</li> <li>• Marketing of jobs for people with physical disabilities (3)</li> <li>• Existence of apprenticeship and internship programs (1)</li> <li>• Developing supported employment programs (2)</li> </ul>
Best practices and solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment and selection: recruit while still in high-school and internship (1), Hiring trained staff to do the selection (2)</li> <li>• Psychological support, mentoring services (2)</li> <li>• Partnership: Good collaboration with school, partnership (2)</li> <li>• Employers' strategy: increasing salaries to maintain workforce (6), allow an adjust period/probation and get to know employee before hiring (2), patience (3), create a recreation space (1), oral health insurance (1), restaurant tickets (1), allow expression of opinion and feedback from employee (5), respectful attitude, less criticism (10), provide equipment (1), facilitate transportation to and from workplace (1), work environment (lockers, dining</li> </ul>

	<p>area, clean spaces) (1), Employers should respect work schedule/no extra hours without consent/holiday schedule (1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership skills of supervisors (3)</li> <li>• Training: Provide adequate training at the workplace (5), hire expert trainers (2), Hiring trained staff to do the selection (2), Courses to train language skills (for Roma) – for the first time -2</li> <li>• Support services for employers (25)</li> <li>• Tax deduction and subsidies (24)</li> </ul>
Success at the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work quality/work skills (3)</li> <li>• Teamwork (7)</li> <li>• Good match between skills and interests and job requirements/liking the job – (8)</li> <li>• Willingness to learn – (6)</li> <li>• Work motivation (8)</li> <li>• Involvement (4)</li> <li>• Punctuality (4)</li> <li>• Resilience, ability to tolerate difficult feelings (3)</li> </ul>

Lack of adequate policies, inadequate training, lack of support for employers and employees and stigma at the workplace have emerged as central issues related to low employability of NEETS. NEETs with mental health problems have been described as moody, aggressive (“If he is violent we could hire him as a bodyguard”), unstable and unreliable (“You can’t scream at him because he leaves, he doesn’t come for a few days and then his parents need to convince him to return to work”). Employers have openly expressed their reluctance to hire Roma or NEETs with mental health problems and yet they stressed the need for support services at workplace: “[when hiring a person with mental health problems] you take an extra responsibility”; “Roma are thieves, if we hire him [Roma] he will steal from the company”: „I would not hire a Roma as doorkeeper because I would be afraid he steals from me”; “As a Roma manager, I would hire a person belonging to majority ethnicity to represent me in business relationships, in order to avoid labelling. Still, some participants expressed more favorable attitudes towards Roma group “As a manager of a media station (TV) I think having a Roma in my team would be a big advantage”, “I know Roma who are very efficient at work”. Just one participant expressed favorable attitude towards employing a person with mental health problems, “if only that employee would be willing to go home when somebody is visiting the company or when there is an important meeting”. The same participant complained that one of his employees who has a mental health problem “is being annoyed if told to go to the other room, when an important meeting takes place”.

In conclusion, the role of the worker is an important way of normalizing the life of people in vulnerable groups and promoting social inclusion. Having appropriate vocational support in accordance with own preferences, strengths, needs and limitations is the main key to pursuing a career, a working life. Stigma surrounding mental health problems and Roma ethnicity is one of the main barriers accountable

for reduced employability. Aided by appropriate work incentives and equal opportunity legislation, with adequate measures available, more NEETs will find the door open to employment and increase their chances to obtain and maintain “real jobs” in the competitive marketplace.

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## 053 - Rural Action for Innovative and Sustainable Entrepreneurship for Youth (RAISE Youth)

The project partners will make a network to work together and share their experiences and views on how young people can create their own local jobs. The partners will establish local training and production centres and use a new model called RAISE to help young people use the resources of the countryside and find new ways of working together in the local community. Older people will be called on to mentor the young, but new technology will also be used. The local communities will use the internet to sell their products and attract investment.

### Target groups:

- 2000 primarily rural 25-29 year olds not in employment, education or training; Women and Roma; Non-traditional employers and sectors

### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution	Type of institution	City
Croatia	Lead partner	GTF-Initiative for Sustainable Growth	NGO	Zagreb
Bulgaria	Beneficiary partner	Gender Project for Bulgaria Foundation	NGO	Sofia
Romania	Beneficiary partner	AUR - the National Association of Human Resources Specialists	NGO	Bucharest
Spain	Beneficiary partner	Casarrubuelos City Council	Public	Casarrubuelos
Spain	Beneficiary partner	FUNDECYT Science and Technological Park of Extremadura	Private	Badajoz
Austria	Expertise partner	Goodworks Innovation Agency EWIV	Private	Eschenau
Croatia	Beneficiary partner	City of Gospic	Local Government	Gospic

## RAISE Youth Project Debut at “Autumn in Lika” Fair in Gospić, Croatia

The **RAISE Youth** Project Croatian team of GTF-ISG and the City of Gospić organized the debut of the **RAISE** project during a popular local manifestation ‘*Autumn in Lika*’ that took place from October 4-6th in Gospić, birthplace of innovator Nikola Tesla and capital of the Croatian Region of Lika. Lika owes its international fame to the Plitvice Lakes National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The annual event ‘*Autumn in Lika*’ is the most popular Croatian Autumn Fair, gathering 100+ exhibitors from the whole of Croatia, organized yearly by Lika-Senj County since 2007 to promote local crafts, businesses, and culture. This year Gospić was also the co-organizer of the fair.

The **RAISE** Team presented the project at the fair to the wider local population and numerous visitors including a Croatian Government delegation led by Prime Minister Andrej Plenković accompanied by Minister of Regional Development and EU Funds Marko Pavić. The RAISE Team also reached out to dozens of young people who showed interest in participation in the **RAISE** Project. This was also a unique opportunity for the **RAISE** Team to learn more about socio-economic circumstances in Lika and strengthen ties to local and national stakeholders.

The **RAISE** Project is based on enabling rural NEETS to reach their fullest potential through social innovation. Lika has amongst the highest proportionate NEET rates in Croatia and is facing extreme depopulation.



RAISE Youth team talking to local NEETS. Credits: RAISE Youth





Croatian Prime Minister Andrej Plenković at “Autumn in Lika” Fair in Gospić, Croatia. Credits: RAISE Youth



Credits: RAISE Youth





Credits: RAISE Youth

## 041 - Active Youth Entrepreneurship Network

The project partners will make a network to work together and share their experiences and views on how young people can create their own jobs. The partners will help young people get in contact with local entrepreneurs and assist them in creating their own business ideas. The youth involved in the projects will get an experienced mentor and will be trained to become entrepreneurs. The project will also have positive effects on the local economy in the participating regions.

### Target groups:

- Young people not in employment, education or training, aged 25-2
- Entrepreneurial support communities
- Experienced mentors

### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution	Type of institution	City
Greece	Lead partner	Hellenic Management Association	Private non-profit	Athens
Bulgaria	Beneficiary partner	Regional Agency for Entrepreneurship and Innovations Varna	NGO	Varna
Croatia	Beneficiary partner	Cluster for Eco-Social Innovation and Development	NGO	Split
Italy	Beneficiary partner	Tecnopolis Science and Technology Park	NGO	Valenzano
Romania	Beneficiary partner	IPA-Research and Development, Engineering and Manufacturing for Automation Equipment and Systems	Private	Craiova
Norway	Expertise partner	International Development Norway	Private	Trondheim

## 027 - Find your way to the world of work

The project partners will learn from each other how to improve the chances of disadvantaged youth to get an education and a job. The aim is to increase the skills of participants through various personal services. Employers will be assisted to strengthen their motivation to hire a more diverse workforce.

### Target groups:

- 15-29 years old disadvantaged youth, with completed primary education
- Roma
- Employers who want to diversify their workforce
- Schools that will introduce new pedagogical tools and attitudes towards disadvantaged and Roma youth

### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution	Type of institution	City
Hungary	Lead partner	Autonomia Foundation	NGO	Budapest
Bulgaria	Beneficiary partner	Trust for Social Achievement Foundation	NGO	Sofia
Bulgaria	Beneficiary partner	Arete Youth Foundation	NGO	Sofia
Romania	Beneficiary partner	Association 'Caritas-Social Assistance' Branch of Caritas Alba Iulia Organisation	NGO	Târgu Mureș
Spain	Beneficiary partner	Foundation Secretaria do Gitano	NGO	Madrid

## 008 - Youth employment partnership – evaluation studies in Spain, Hungary, Italy and Poland

The project partners aim to cooperate in the evaluation of two different forms of employment initiatives targeting youth in Spain, Hungary, Italy and Poland, support other researchers in doing such evaluation studies, and promote the use of such studies to policy-makers. As a result, youth employment policies can become more effective.

### Target groups:

- Researchers evaluating public policy with administrative data
- NGOs working with youth
- Policy-makers implementing youth policies
- Young people who would benefit from improved youth policies

### Project Partners:

Country	Project partner status	Institution	Type of institution	City
Poland	Lead partner	IBS- Institute for Structural Research	NGO	Warsaw
Hungary	Beneficiary partner	Budapest Institute for Policy Analysis	Private	Budapest
Italy	Beneficiary partner	Collegio Carlo Alberto	NGO	Turin
Italy	Beneficiary partner	The National Institute for the Analysis of Public Policies – INAPP	Public	Rome
Spain	Beneficiary partner	Foundation for Applied Economics Studies – FEDEA	NGO	Madrid

Spain	Beneficiary partner	The University of the Basque Country	Public	Leioa
France	Expertise partner	Paris School of Economics	Public	Paris
Norway	Expertise partner	NHH Norwegian School of Economics	Public	Oslo
International Organisation	Expertise partner	World Bank	International Organisation	Washington DC

## Polish researchers tap administrative data for better policymaking

Government bodies should explore ways to use anonymised administrative data to increase the effectiveness of policymaking, a group of officials and academic experts said at a seminar organised by Poland's Institute for Structural Research (IBS). As part of the "Youth employment partnerSHIP" project, the IBS organized a seminar in Warsaw on the use of data on 4 October. The project seeks to increase employment of young people, so called NEETs (not in employment, education or training) in Hungary, Italy, Poland and Spain.

Poland's government has hundreds of data sets, but they're poorly integrated and thus only rarely used; better management of this resource could help replace surveys, which cost more and are often less reliable, conference participants from academia and government said. The Ministry of Digital Affairs and other public bodies are working on the Integrated Analytical Platform, which will centralize and standardize data held by the public administration.

"Advanced data analytics is all the rage in business, and now it's time for public institutions to realize they're also sitting on a gold mine," said IBS Vice President Iga Magda, lead researcher for the youth employment project. "If you're going to offer your citizens services that match their actual needs, you need to leverage the knowledge that's available in these data sets."

Speakers at the seminar provided several concrete examples of how data can help improve decision-making and evaluation of policies:

\* **Agnieszka Chłoń-Domińczak** of the Warsaw School of Economics and the National Information Processing Institute described the Integrated Analytical Platform project, which is building a set of legal, technical and organisational solutions to make data from public administration available to researchers while ensuring proper data protection. Chłoń-Domińczak also demonstrated a practical use of administrative data in the Economic Outcomes for Graduates (ELA) programme, which combines data from institutions of higher education with those of Poland's ZUS social welfare fund, allowing accurate, low-cost monitoring of where a university's graduates end up.

\* **Marta Palczyńska** of the IBS and Tomasz Gajderowicz from the University of Warsaw presented their experience in using data from unemployment registries to evaluate the effectiveness of active labour market policies in employment offices.

\* **Michał Myck** of the Centre for Economic Analysis gave a comparative analysis of surveys versus administrative data in evaluating tax and benefit policies.



\* **Paweł Chrostek** of the Finance Ministry discussed the advantages of using combined data from the tax and social insurance registries to assess social and economic policy.

Other institutions represented at the seminar included the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy and the Ministry of Development.

“Poland needs to adopt best practices from other countries and start making decisions based on accurate analysis of data, which will help cut the number of poorly targeted rules and programmes, reducing costs to the budget,” said Magda.

## **Poland should tap labour-market potential of 750,000 youth, IBS says**

Poland could ease the strain on its labour market by finding ways to support the roughly 750,000 people aged 15 to 29 who aren't working or studying, the Institute for Structural Research (IBS) found.

As part of the Youth Employment PartnerSHIP programme, the IBS is conducting research on the 12% of people in this age group classified as NEETs (Not in Employment, Education or Training). The project seeks to identify why young people aren't working, test various schemes for getting them to start and propose solutions that would help them enter the labour market.

“It's a paradox that employers are having trouble finding workers, and at the same time there's such a large group of young people who can't find work or aren't even looking,” said IBS vice president Iga Magda, a professor at the Warsaw School of Economics. “With support from the government, these people could find work in services, trade or tourism. The problem is that neither decisionmakers nor businesspeople can reach them.”

Unemployment in the Central European country of 38 million people was 3.3% in September, the third-lowest in the EU, according to data from Eurostat. Employers are complaining of a shortage of workers, with migrants from neighbouring Ukraine helping to relieve the pressure in many industries.

As in other countries in the region, the majority of Poland's NEETs (about 500,000) are women, who are shouldered with most of the responsibility for caring for children.

“We need to look at the effectiveness of programmes to bring young mothers back to the labour market,” says Magda. “Experience in countries such as Germany, France and Sweden shows that women's labour-force participation increases when they can find part-time work and there's widespread access to high-quality nurseries and preschools.”

Elsewhere in the EU, 25% of Italians aged 15-29 are NEETs, as are 12.5% of their Hungarian peers. To combat social exclusion, the European Commission in 2013

launched its Youth Guarantee programme, financing efforts to keep young people working or studying. In Poland the funds are administered mainly by county (*powiat*) labour offices, but almost 70% of young people don't officially register as unemployed, severely limiting their access to the programme.

## Conclusion: “the best of” this issue

### Local Stakeholders Committee Training in Athens/Greece Supporting Employment Platform through Apprenticeship Learning – SEPAL (058)



Credits: SEPAL

During the period **2-4 October 2019** the training meeting for local stakeholders (LSCs) involved in the SEPAL project was held in Athens/Greece. It was attended by representatives from the partner countries involved in the implementation of the SEPAL Project: Romania, Spain, Lithuania, Greece and Poland, as well as their local stakeholders from each country. The three-day training was conducted in a room that was kindly made available to us by the Serafeion Foundation of the Municipality of Athens.



Credits: SEPAL

During the first day the event was opened by Greek SEPAL project manager, Christos Makliri, and all were welcomed by Myrto Mirialli, president of KOISPE Diadromes, Greece.

We had the opportunity to get to know each other in a playful way and then a more formal presentation of each SEPAL project partner: Bucovina Institute (Romania), Fundacio Privada Pere Closa (Spain), ZISPB (Lithuania), KOISPE DIADROMES (Greece), Collegium Balticum (Poland) took place.

Then the **local stakeholders of each country** introduced their work, as follows:

#### **1. ROMANIA: BUCOVINA INSTITUTE**

- FONSS - National Federation of Social Services Providers
- SUCEAVA LABOUR OFFICE, AJOFM - Apprenticeship, accreditation of social enterprise
- HUMAN CATALYST – National Roma Association focused on advocacy
- SUCEAVA OMBUDSMAN OFFICE- conflict mediation, human rights
- SUCEAVA PREFECTURE - governmental body of the county, supervising policy implementation on a national level

#### **2. SPAIN: FUNDACIO PRIVADA PERE CLOSA**

- BARCELONA CITY HALL – community projects manager
- SOM ESQUEIX - social economy, employability improvement through work in eco-agriculture
- GATS - Cooperative association advice and organization of music events
- ASSICIATIO JOVES ATANOS DE GRACIA - Supports young people by creating events for the Roma community
- PLA DE BARRIS - strengthen neighborhoods in Roma areas through education and sport

#### **3. LITHUANIA: ZISPB**

- SIAULIAI YOUTH CENTRE – governmental organization of youth services
- JONISKIS MUNICIPALITY – social services provision department
- SIAULIAI MUNICIPALITY – social services provision department
- EMPLOYMENT OFFICE – employment service Siauliai department
- SIAULIAI CENTER OF SOCIAL SERVICES – social services provision

#### **4. GREECE: KOISPE DIADROMES**

- STEPS - street work, one stop shop for people in need/the streets (homeless, people with substance dependence, migrants)
- KOISPE FLORI, EPSYME - addressed to citizens of Piraeus and surrounding suburbs, affected by mental disabilities, psychiatric problems and autistic spectrum disorders, targeted to avoid their social exclusion, works toward prevention, internal training and social care
- ASTROLAB, ODYSEA - vocational training for vulnerable people
- PEPSAEE - social integration of people with psychological difficulties
- SOCIETY OF SOCIAL PSYCHIATRY AND MENTAL HEALTH - provides comprehensive psycho-social services to adults, adolescents and children

through the operation of Mental health units, residential homes, semi-autonomous protected apartments and day centers, implementing programmes for their vocational and social integration

##### 5. POLAND: SSW COLLEGIUM BALTICUM

- FOUNDATION “TULPAN” - Works with ex-offenders and prisoners to support them to find a professional path
- YOUTH CAREER CENTRE - Helps young people create a professional career and find employment
- POLISH FOUNDATION TO PREVENT ADDICTION - Works with youths in the field of addiction prevention
- CENTRE OF SOCIAL ECONOMY SUPPORT - Coordination of social enterprise work in the region of West Pomerania
- MUNICIPAL CENTRE OF SOCIAL NEED - Working with youths that have difficulties



Credits: SEPAL

The second day started with a presentation on: *NEETs in Europe. Statistics, profiles and analysis. Developing Emotional and Community Skills as Guarantees of Success in the Labor Market*. We identified that across countries the profiles vary somewhat but mostly have similar traits. Ages in studies center from age 15 to 29 mostly while gender numbers tend to be equal in most countries. Low self-esteem, a difficult job market and low income families tended to be part of the NEET profile in most countries. We had the opportunity to develop slogans, to have a photo shoot and video recording to promote SEPAL and access NEETs from all countries. This allowed for creativity and fun moments to emerge.

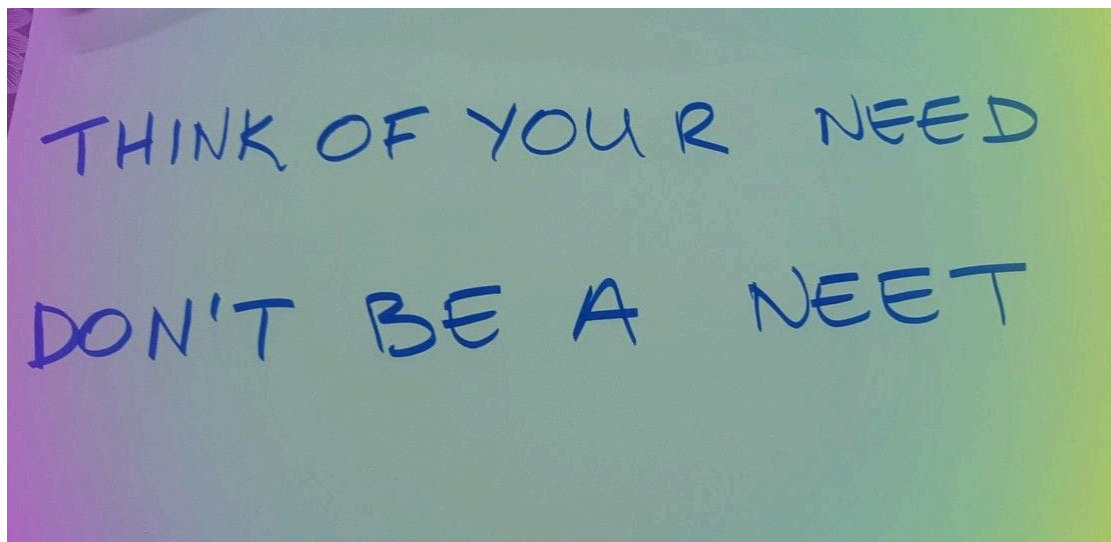
A presentation and workshop on *Challenges in Social Entrepreneurship to integrate NEETs*, allowed us to think of different parameters that come into play when considering how to create job opportunities for vulnerable people.

The workshop facilitated by the SEPAL WISE expert from Fundacio Privada Pere Closa from Spain, on *Vulnerability in the workplace. The Importance for Employers to Recognize vulnerability*, helped us think of difficulties around retaining NEETs in a training/work environment and consider possible solutions.

During the last day of the training there was organized the workshop on *Supported employment workshop in working with vulnerable groups and solutions. Relationship and cooperation with employers*, facilitated by the SEPAL WISE expert from Lithuania, which led to discussions on work demands and how to support NEETs to fulfill them.

Following this, there was a presentation and workshop on the *Importance of apprenticeship. Benefits of Business Apprenticeship Programmes* and a presentation and workshop on *The contribution of LSCs to the apprenticeship and internship stages*, facilitated by the SEPAL WISE expert from Greece. These workshops focused on the benefits of apprenticeship from different points of view and encouraged thinking around possible problems and solutions as well as creating services that can aid this process.

The event was successful and enjoyable during our work and all other activities. The meeting allowed for an extremely productive process to unfold. The interaction of all parties involved was necessary and useful for the implementation of the SEPAL project and we look forward to more opportunities to exchange ideas and plan our work together with all of our partners.



Credits: SEPAL



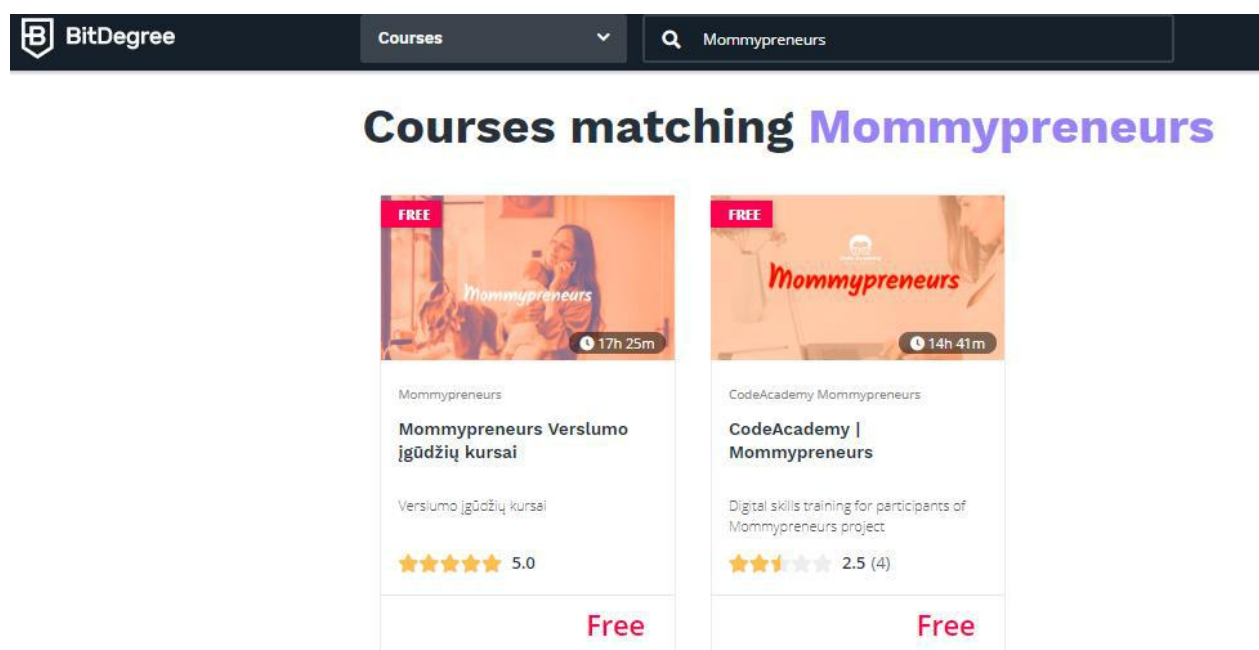
## Mommypreneurs promotion activities (277)

The Mommypreneurs team actively promoted the project, attending and organizing various events, launching Social Media campaigns etc.:

- The Mommypreneurs team in Lithuania attended the first summer festival for mothers.
- In collaboration with 'CodeAcademy' (programming school) and 'Daugiau nei mama' project (a project that unites active mothers) the Lithuanian team organized a careers workshop, providing mothers with tips and tricks on creating CVs, LinkedIn profiles and more.
- The festival of ideas 'Laisves piknikas' – a very popular event in Lithuania, where various projects and initiatives are presented, was attended.
- A very successful t-shirt campaign on Social Media in Lithuania was launched, involving famous influencers. The Mommypreneurs team created a slogan t-shirt 'I'm a mother, what's your superpower' and asked famous mothers to share their stories.



Media article about Mommypreneurs T-shirt campaign with famous influencers  
Credits: Mommypreneurs



Mommypreneurs online courses  
Credits: Mommypreneurs

## Testimonials from the participants

### Gintare Janaviciene, Entrepreneurship course

I am extremely happy that projects like this exist. The question of what I was going to do after maternity leave was constantly on my mind, I decided to take part in the Mommypreneurs project and this gave me a perfect opportunity to decide what I was going to do next.

It was a difficult decision to choose between digital skills and entrepreneurship skills courses as both of the programmes seemed to be really interesting and useful, however I made up my mind to join the entrepreneurship course as I soon realized that having my own business was always on my mind. This course gave me knowledge and skills to develop my idea and understand my ambitions better.

### Monika Sakauskaite, Entrepreneurship course

Before becoming a mother, I always had various business ideas, however I also lacked the skills to develop them. I was a perfectionist and I was always trying to achieve the best results, however that often led to my main objectives failing.

The amount of ideas I had in my mind doubled when I became a mother – yes, I must admit most of them revolve around children – naturally new responsibilities came with new challenges and ideas on how to solve them. The Mommypreneurs project helps

me understand my ideas better and develop them – your mind can be full of ideas but it's crucial to understand which ones can become something more and I believe I am able to distinguish it now. This project gave me the motivation I always needed to work towards my goals, even if 10 p.m. is the only time I can do it.

**Ramune Dziugiene, Digital Skills course**

I applied to the Mommypreneurs course because I've always wanted to learn something new and this project gave me the perfect conditions to do that. I chose the digital skills course because the IT industry was always an interest of mine. IT skills are crucial nowadays and I'm glad this project offered a course to gain them.

**Gintare Lauce, Digital Skills course**

I've got my own business that I'd like to develop and I joined Mommypreneurs because I believe I can get useful IT skills that would help me achieve my goal. I can already feel the benefits of this programme – I've already put into practice the knowledge I've gained.

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born with the intention of sharing the results and updates  
of the projects participating to the Fund to showcase the  
main achievements of implemented activities.

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