

THE UPthEM PROJECT

NEWSLETTER 1



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THE PROJECT

Upskilling Pathways for Employability, project UPthEM, is an Erasmus + project purporting to introduce innovation for giving employment and entrepreneurship opportunities to adults from disadvantaged groups. This corresponds to the European Commission's objective of reaching the target 75% employment rate for the population aged 20 to 64. UPthEM focuses on people from disadvantaged groups, which is 28% of the entire population in the EU, introducing a path to successful careers as self-employed or entrepreneurs.

The project is implemented by a partnership of six organizations from five countries. Its duration is 18 months.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

The activities in the scope of the project are:

1. Elaboration of UPthEM training programme for disadvantaged learners.
2. Production of 40 videos in the participating countries with successful motivational stories of disadvantaged people.
3. Training of 25 (5 per country) adult educators to implement the programme.
4. Engagement of 50 adults (10 per country) from disadvantaged groups to explore the benefits of the programme through online dissemination activities and 5 multiplier events.

THE UPthEM TRAINING PROGRAMME

The innovative training programme will target disadvantaged people from four different groups: people facing socio-cultural (gender, ethnicity or religion related), economic (related to unemployment and poverty), geographical disadvantages (living in remote and rural areas with limited employment opportunities and higher, in relation to other regions, rate of long-term unemployment) and the group of people with disabilities. These four groups are often excluded from the opportunities for life-long training at central level.

The programme will combine entrepreneurship and employability training curricula with role-play simulation exercises on the process of looking for employability options or of starting a business.

The programme design entails four modules, considered key to a successful career based on the current and future labour market:

- Green Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Development; the EU actively promotes joint environmental policies and employment, and the so-called “green jobs” take up an important niche in the labour market in Europe;
- Social Empowerment; this module is considered to boost the participants’ change in life and to support social integration;
- Creative Thinking; the skills involved are key to the entrepreneurial world and thus the module will support the participants in discovering how they can use activities they like and specific skills and talents to make difference to the others;
- Building Self-Esteem; the module will support the participants from disadvantaged groups in overcoming disadvantages and accomplishing set goals.

The overall impact of the programme is related to extending and developing the competences of adult educators and fostering entrepreneurial mindset and confidence for success among disadvantaged learners.

THE INSPARATIONAL VIDEOS

40 short videos in the languages of the participants’ countries and English will capture the stories of disadvantaged people who had succeeded in their careers, overcoming all the difficulties they had on their path. These stories, told in first person, can be very motivational for every participant because they prove that similar difficult situation can be turned into a success story and that disadvantaged people can have a business and a job they enjoy and cherish.

TRAINING OF EDUCATORS

25 educators will be selected to implement the UPthEM programme. They will undergo a four-day training in Málaga (Spain) in September 2020. They will be given course in teaching the UPthEM models as well as the chance to exchange know-how and insights on the topic of providing adult learning services in different national contexts.

MULTIPLIER EVENTS

50 adults from the target groups in the five participating countries will be selected to experience the benefits from the project so the results of the project can be demonstrated. They will be participants in online dissemination and multiplier events.

PROJECT RESULTS

UPthEM project will offer strong evidence base for national and European policy makers, designing policy measures to alleviate the negative effects of social exclusion and to find sustainable solutions to unemployment for adults with disadvantaged backgrounds. The findings of UPthEM project can serve as policy guidelines and contribute to development of national employment programmes and add momentum to initiatives led by the European networks.

THE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE UPthEM PROJECT

Six organizations from five different countries implement the UPthEM project:

SDRUDZENIE ZNAM I MOGA (Know and Can Association)

The applicant organization for the UPthEM project, Know and Can Association, is an NGO from Sofia (Bulgaria), founded in 2007. The Association has huge experience in national, European and intercontinental projects on career counselling, personal and professional development, soft skills training, programs, courses and activities in the sphere of non-formal and formal education and training. They focus on elaboration and application of specialized programs aiming at developing social and civil skills of children, youths and adults; on modern methods and techniques in non-formal education; on training specialists in the sphere of non-formal education. It further works to stimulate and guarantee participation of people in national and international programs and projects. Know and Can Association are part of various networks and organizations in the sphere of education and trainings such as IVETA and L.E.M.O.N.



CWEP (Stowarzyszenie Centrum Wspierania Edukacji I Przedsiębiorczosci)

CWEP is a non-governmental and non-profit organization from Poland, with headquarters in Rzeszow. They support young people and adults with VET programmes and cooperate with businesses, universities, schools, enterprises and educational institutions in order to increase the education quality and to promote entrepreneurship, fostering integration of all the social groups.



STIMMULI FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

STIMMULI FOR SOCIAL CHANGE is an NGO from Thessaloniki (Greece), specialized in the field of social innovation and its application in different sectors such as education, migration, social inclusion, etc. Particularly, the organization supports community-driven experiments and socially conscious organizations and encourages citizen engagement in social change through a variety of educational, training and capacity building activities.



GROWTH (GROWTH COOP S.COO. AND.)

GROWTH is a non-profit cooperative, based in the city of Cadiz, Andalusia, that provides training in a range of management courses. It offers a qualified training consultant's team in different professional sectors. The members of the organization also provide consulting services.

The organization promotes social inclusion, working with people from different economic sectors and backgrounds.



ADES (Asociatia de Dezvoltare Economico-Sociala)

ADES is a Romanian NGO (from Curtea de Arges) since 1995. ADES mission is to create positive social and economic change in communities throughout the country in a professional, ethical and responsible manner. They have strong experience in national and international projects on improving the social and economic conditions of different target groups, on training entrepreneurial courses, including in sustainable development.



ADRM (Association of Danube River Municipalities “Danube”)

ADRM is an NGO located in Ruse (north of Bulgaria) and covers the whole Danube region in the country with 35 member municipalities and 800.000 inhabitants. Key objective of the Association is to work towards a common concept and strategy of regional development and joint implementation of socio-economic policies as well as cooperation with all the stakeholders in the sub-region in the priority areas of transport, ecological and energy infrastructure; social and economic development; science, technology and education; good governance; and security.



KICK-OFF MEETING

The kick-off meeting took place in Sofia (Bulgaria) the 7th November and was organised by Znam I Moga. Not all the organizations in the partnership could attend the meeting but STIMMULI were present via Skype connection.

It started with short presentations of the partner organizations and their activities and projects.

Partners discussed project activities, schedule, distribution of responsibilities, and outputs and results of UPthEM. Additionally, the Management Plan and Quality Assurance Programme were on the agenda.

A particular focus of the meeting was the UPthEM training programme, its modules. It was agreed that there will be four modules in the programme: on Social Empowerment, Green Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Development, Creative Thinking and Building Self-Esteem.

The procedure on videos' production, video design, content and structure were discussed.

Financial and administrative issues - budget, reporting rules and requirements, were also on the agenda. The schedule of the partner meetings was agreed by the partners.

