

Good Practice: GR GP6

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"Empowering NEETs"

Main features of the GP programme:

Type of programme	Type of organisation	Field of practice for organisation	Programme scope	Programme duration	Programme occurrence/frequency	Type of funding for GP
Non-formal adult education, VET	Non-profit, NGO	Vocational Education and training	Regional	160 hours of training, and participation in two youth work camps with volunteers from all over the world	Started in October 2015 and was completed in January 2018	This project is funded by an EEA Grants Programme

Adult Education as a Means to Active Participatory Citizenship (EduMAP) is a Horizon 2020 research project focusing on adult education among young adults at risk of social exclusion. Particular attention is paid to educational policies and practices needed to foster active citizenship among vulnerable young people.

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1. What – Focus (theme, orientation)

The programme responds to the needs of NEETs, working with the principles of empowerment and strengthening, promoting and encouraging the expression, externalizing feelings, build relationships and form identity. An important output of this programme is the elaboration of an automated tool/guide with integrated methodological designs for social activities with young populations; with this tool, the diffusion of acquired knowledge and experience regarding youth is pursued and it aspires to become the foundation for the operation of such structures.

2. For whom – Target group(s)

The programme essentially aims to strengthen civil society and enhance the contribution of NEETs to social justice, democracy, and sustainable development.

3. Requirements and access

Young low skilled (ISCED 2) unemployed and out of education aged between 18-25 are only considered. First come first served policy applies.

4. Elements of good practice

An important output of this project was the elaboration of an Automated tool/Guide. Participants, however, claimed that the tool was not as helpful for them as it was for their teachers. The educators further suggested that critical thinking was the one element they most cherish about the programme. They all agreed that it is a complex and under-explored area of vocational pedagogy. Yet, they agreed on the point that to promote critical thinking the trainees needed to learn to teach themselves to reflect and refine the strategies, to develop their metacognitive knowledge and skills (e.g. weigh evidence, look for interrelatedness or interrelationships, and develop stable hypotheses). This was rather demanding for them and perhaps this is the reason why the automated tool is not much appreciated by them.

The most important element in the programme is the use of the project method. The educators claimed that this method essentially begins with finding and receiving an obvious set problem concerning the participants. In a second step, the problem is located and stated more precisely. A general instruction goal in form of a problem is given. Instruction relevance of the action is partly given in form of a problem, a plan, and an experiment. The third phase is characterised by drawing up action and solution bases. By making a plan to solve the problems, the aim is stated more precisely. The simulation phase is to help to test the worked out solution possibilities intellectually and to check them for the implementation of the plan. In the end, the experimental check is the implementation of the worked out project plan. Carrying out the plan as a problem solution or implementing the product, if required balanced realisation under the principle of job-sharing. For some learners the project method was very demanding and took much of their time completing certain tasks.

They do appreciate however, the fact that it helped them to occupy themselves with more than the vocational programme and to make progress in transforming knowledge into practice.

In terms of gender diversity, the educators suggested that the majority of participants were men but women consisted more than 30% of the total participants. Some of them admitted that the programme needed to be more attractive for women, they did mention though that much of the trainees decision to participate was made by their parents; claiming that families affected the decision of young women to participate to the programme.

The programme was assessed externally. Data was collected from trainees and educators. The objectives of the assessment were the following:

- Objective 1: the theoretical robustness of the current training model.
- Objective 2: identify the assumptions made by the developers of the training model during its development.
- Objective 3: investigate how the model is used in practice in influencing the delivery of the programme.
- Objective 4: evaluate trainees' satisfaction with the outcomes of programme.
- Objective 5: compare the training model with other models used in the VET sector.
- Objective 6: appraise the congruence of the model with possible accreditation and registration requirements.
- Objective 7: investigate how other models are used in practice in influencing the delivery of this programme at other VET providers.

5. Perceived challenges

Providing the right mix of skills for the local labour market; reform career guidance to deliver effective advice for all the participants; to ensure trainers were well-prepared with industry experience, to make full use of workplace learning, and to develop tools to engage stakeholders and promote transparency. According to one of the educators the major challenges were the weakness of student profile, the lack of counselling that results from the basic education, domestic pressure in the education choice of the trainees, lack of self-confidence, the negative view on blue-collar workers, the low socio-economic family structure, and low level of students' success coming from basic education. Some programme challenges related more to the ability to allocate time, develop and prioritize goals, trainees' ability to participate as members of a team, and communicate with other trainees, and know how social, organizational and technological systems work and how to operate them.



6. Testimonials

According to some VYAs decision-making was probably the most important competence they achieved. Some VYAs claimed that acquiring decision-making competence included activities, in which they, individually or in groups, became involved in a process of inquiry and knowledge production relating to a specific problem and learned through inquiry rather than through simple transmission of knowledge from the teacher.

For a small number of VYAs the biggest challenge was the methods used in the programme, which required from them to take responsibility for their own learning. Not all of them were likely to work well as they suggested because the activities occasionally demanded practising many things at the same time for instance feedback, helping others, real-world problem solving, enquiry, learning on the fly, being coached and various kinds of simulation and role playing.

7. More Information

EduMAP project's publications:

[Books and articles](#)

Academic publications that address key themes of the EduMAP project

[Deliverables and reports](#)

EduMAP's official deliverables, related reports and publications

[Good practice cases](#)

Key features from 40 'good practice' cases from 20 countries

[Working papers](#)

A selection of findings from desk and field research in 20 European countries

[Other resources](#)

Other types of resources made for the project (illustrations, comics etc.)