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# EDUCATION IN SQUARE MARGINALITY

## Handbook



Agreement No 2018-1-IT02-KA204-048285



# Handbook of Community Learning

## EDUCATION IN SQUARE MARGINALITY



EDUCATION  
IN SQUARE  
MARGINALITY

*Prepared by the Education in Square Marginality (EM2) project consortium*

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# Table of Contents

## Summary

|                                          |     |
|------------------------------------------|-----|
| 1. INTRODUCTION .....                    | 5   |
| 2. PROJECT FRAMEWORK .....               | 7   |
| 2.1 Background .....                     | 7   |
| 2.2 Why EM2 .....                        | 7   |
| 2.3 Objectives .....                     | 8   |
| 3. HANDBOOK OF COMMUNITY LEARNING .....  | 10  |
| 3.1 Objectives and target groups .....   | 10  |
| 3.2 How to use the handbook? .....       | 10  |
| 4. PROCESS .....                         | 12  |
| 4.1 How to involve communities .....     | 14  |
| 4.2 How to involve companies .....       | 22  |
| 4.3 How to involve beneficiaries .....   | 28  |
| 4.5 Visit to companies .....             | 42  |
| 4.6 Learning pacts and trainings .....   | 48  |
| 5. TRANSFERABILITY, SUSTAINABILITY ..... | 56  |
| 6. CONCLUSIONS .....                     | 60  |
| 7. CASE STUDIES .....                    | 63  |
| 9.1 Italian case study .....             | 63  |
| 9.2 Slovenian case study .....           | 73  |
| 9.3 Latvian case study .....             | 81  |
| 9.4 Hungarian case study .....           | 89  |
| 8. List of tables: .....                 | 100 |



# INTRODUCTION

## 1. INTRODUCTION

EM2 aims to contribute to the strengthening of motivation and the improvement of job opportunities for low-skilled or low-qualified adults and young people living in marginal context, through a balance of competences and self-awareness, in a co-responsibility approach that involves local community, enterprises and educational centres. The project refers to the condition of double marginality implying that some people live in the peripheral territories: a condition of personal marginality, dictated by difficulties in employment, physical and psychological disadvantages and a geographical marginality, due to a location far from urban centres and dynamic contexts, with difficulties of an economic and demographic nature.

The EM2 project also aims to enhance general social awareness about the usefulness for job orientation within a community network established to support the beneficiaries. The project offers an effective outreach and guidance to the project beneficiaries and detects their attitudes using a number of tools, which would serve as a basis to define their Individual Learning Path, that, in the project contexts will be formally subscribed as the "Individual Learning Pact".

To attain the project objective a carefully built-up procedure is necessary to respond to the various demands and needs of the project target group, to address and involve employers, to use community help and to find and exploit the educational possibilities corresponding to the required area of employment. Together with the Guidelines (Common Community Learning Pact Guidelines) this Handbook offers a step-by-step guide on how to build up and manage a procedure leading to the reintegration of marginalised people into employment and education.



# PROJECT FRAMEWORK

## 2. PROJECT FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 Background

About half of the territory of the EU consists of marginal rural areas. 23% of the population lives in these areas, and another 35% lives in "intermediate", i.e., not predominantly urban areas. In these marginal territories, there are low rates of employability and high percentages of unemployment, including significant high rates of young people that are neither in employment nor in education and training (NEET). Compared to urban settings, most of these areas lack economic growth and offer fewer opportunities for learning and work, which have an effect on lower rates of employability, decrease in quality of life, and a tendency of social problems.

There is a strong need in these territories to implement new training methods to create job opportunities for marginalised people either low-skilled, low qualified or in any other social, economic, or geographic disadvantage for finding an adequate job.

Historically in these marginal areas, mostly in remote countrysides or mountains, the person in difficulty could count on a community care which in a way or another guaranteed direct and indirect support for the individuals' lives; now this support has faded in many parts of Europe and leaves a gap in the lives of especially those persons who are considered to be disadvantaged.

EM2 project aims at reactivating this community care, revitalising the path of responsibility of the community with respect to the possibilities of supporting its members. With the help of the community the marginalised people are to re-enter the labour market and get reintegrated more to society.

### 2.2 Why EM2

EM2 wants to contribute to the strengthening of motivation and the improvement of job opportunities for low-skilled or low-qualified adults and NEET in marginal context, through a balance of competences and self-awareness, in a co-responsibility approach that involves local community, enterprises, educational centres by

- ❖ Improving learning community networks based on general community agreements, with the close cooperation of educational institutions, associations, municipalities and companies to train people in difficulty with the aim to involve and integrate the target people
- ❖ Upgrading skills of low-skilled or low-qualified adults through formal and non-formal education with the help of a common community agreement
- ❖ Offering companies an insight into how they can more effectively target, select, train and maintain workforce in rural areas
- ❖ Enhancing general social awareness about the usefulness of the community agreement and its job orienteering efficacy.

## 2.3 Objectives

Partners of the project were selected to create a well-balanced and strong consortium based on double partnerships with 8 partner organisations from 4 countries: Italy, Slovenia, Latvia and Hungary. The educational sphere is represented by the four educational institutions in the four countries (Dobele, Cramars, LUK, Trebag,) and the world of work is represented by the four chambers in Italy, Slovenia, Latvia and Hungary.

The partners in the project are:

- ❖ Cramars Social Cooperative (Italy)
- ❖ “Union of Craftsmen and Small and Medium Enterprises” in Udine (Italy)
- ❖ Dobele Training Centre (Latvia)
- ❖ Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Latvia)
- ❖ Adult Education Centre (Slovenia)
- ❖ Regional Chamber of Craft and Small Business of Kranj (Slovenia)
- ❖ Trebag Intellectual Property and Project Manager Ltd (Hungary)
- ❖ Hungarian Chamber of Professionals and Doctors of Plant Protection (Hungary)





# EM2 HANDBOOK

## 3. HANDBOOK OF COMMUNITY LEARNING

### 3.1 Objectives and target groups

The main objective of the handbook is to make available to the wider public and to other training institutions or communities wishing to work for the training and education of their weakest subjects, a methodology coming from our project direct experience, in order to allow a wide replicability of the initiative financed with funds from the European Community.

The idea in this handbook is to explain the method and describe the process developed by the project to involve local actors in the signing of the community pact, to inform the beneficiaries of the initiative and to develop with them a path of awareness followed by a training programme (training pact), to design the relationships with companies willing to host the beneficiaries by transforming themselves, even if only for a one-day visit, into school companies.

### 3.2 How to use the handbook?

The Handbook (Handbook on Community Learning) accompanied by the Guidelines on Learning Pact (Common Community Learning Pact Guidelines) offers a step-by-step guide on how to build up and manage a procedure leading to the reintegration of marginalised people into employment and education. In the Guidelines on Learning Pact the main steps are described briefly, each step containing the main elements one would need to accomplish the given step. In the Handbook, these elements are complemented with examples and experiences partners gained through the implementation of the procedure in real life.

At the beginning of each step of the process main actors on that phase (Who), the ways of implementation (How) and the main actions (What) together with the challenges are summed up in a form of an infographic.

This ensures a quick overview of the chapter content and helps decide whether the required further information is in that chapter. Within the chapters, the steps are enriched by the experiences and challenges the project partners implemented during the whole process in the participating four countries: Italy, Slovenia, Latvia and Hungary. The chapters follow the main construction of the Guidelines on Learning Pact so that the reader can connect the two contents. The steps are subdivided into a WHO/HOW/WHAT section detailing the main characteristics belonging to these topics.

In the chapter can also be found sections on

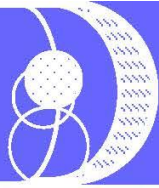
- ❖ Challenges – partners encountered and could be useful to foresee for new users
- ❖ Conclusions/recommendations - tips and recommendations given for preparing the candidate implementors of possible obstacles in the hope of smooth implementation.
- ❖ Self-assessment questions – for the users to test how prepared they are for implementing the phase



# PROCESS

## 4. PROCESS

The Handbook accompanied by the Guidelines (Common Community Learning Pact Guidelines) offers a step-by-step guide on how to build up and manage a procedure leading to the reintegration of marginalised people into employment and education. In the Guidelines the main steps are described briefly, each step containing the main elements one would need to accomplish the given step. In the Handbook, these elements are not repeated but summed up in a form of an infographic. The steps are enriched by the experiences and challenges of the authors of the present book, the project partners, who implemented the whole process in the participating four countries: Italy, Slovenia, Latvia and Hungary. The chapters follow the main construction of the Guidelines on Community Pact so that the reader can connect the two contents. The steps are subdivided into a WHO/HOW/WHAT section detailing the main characteristics belonging to these topics. In the chapter the most important challenges are also gathered so that new users can prepare themselves for any of them. In the Conclusions/recommendation part, there are tips and recommendations given for preparing the candidate implementors of possible obstacles in the hope of smooth implementation.



# Involvement of Communities – signature of the Community Pact

## WHO

Potential stakeholders:

- municipalities,
- community activists,
- companies,
- associations,
- employment services

❓ *Who would you invite in your community for cooperation?*

## HOW

- Addressing stakeholders
- Involving them in the project and process
- Mapping needs
- Identifying institutions, companies willing to sign the pact
- Identifying beneficiaries through the involvement of the community
- Define the pact content
- Organize the event for the signature of the Community Pact

❓ *Who would you invite in your community for cooperation?*

## WHAT

- Mapping communities
- Inform and capture the interest of the public/stakeholders
- Define direct or indirect benefits for participants
- Signature of the Community Pact
- Organizing events, meetings etc.

## EXPERIENCES

The first phase of the project is to map and address communities which could be contributors in community building, taking social responsibility and assessing in finding contributing participants and companies. Partners used various strategies to get this objective depending on their contacts, resources, networks and potentials. The main closing stage in this phase was the signing of the community pact. The below chapter gathers all the main information related to this part. It includes the description of potential contributors as well as the methodology to find and involve them. Challenges and recommendations are also involved.

## CHALLENGES

- ✓ Motivate stakeholders for contribution
- ✓ Timing
- ✓ Finding adequate participants
- ✓ Finding resources



For more details on this phase, please refer to the Guidelines on Community Pact

## 4.1 How to involve communities

### INTRODUCTION

---

The first phase of the project is to map and address communities which could be contributors in community building, taking social responsibility and assisting in finding contributing participants and companies. There are various strategies to reach this objective depending on possible contacts, resources, networks and potentials. The main closing stage in this phase is the signing of the community pact. The below chapter gathers all the main information related to this part with examples of how it was implemented in four countries. It includes the description of potential contributors as well as the methodology to find and involve them. Challenges and recommendations are also involved.

### WHO

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#### What types of stakeholders to address?

The involvement of the community, which took place during the first phase of the project had the purpose of involving a group of subjects who know the territory, its main actors and its needs based on formal and informal relationships, to implement joint actions and improve the quality of life and social practices of the given region. This phase included the very first steps with mapping potential stakeholders and informing them about the project as well as building up together a strategy for implementation and signing a Community Pact as a kind of commitment and written agreement of signatories.

Based on needs and possibilities partners have addressed the following target group stakeholders.

- ❖ Municipalities
- ❖ Associations of communities
- ❖ NGOs
- ❖ Social contacts
- ❖ Companies
- ❖ Local communities (e.g., clubs, parishes),
- ❖ social services,
- ❖ educational institutions,
- ❖ Local activists
- ❖ Associations of companies or companies' representatives
- ❖ Local employment centres

The number of addressed stakeholders were very different depending on partner. Ranging from getting in contact with 29 municipalities and various other associations to only a few stakeholders depended on the network of the partners and also on how easily they found positive responses.

### HOW

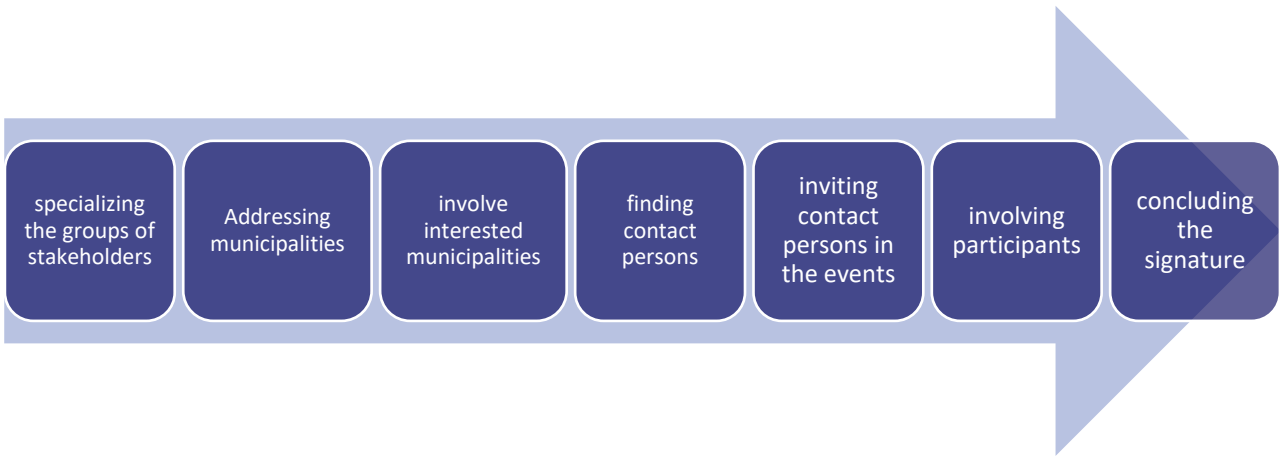
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#### Ways to address and cooperate with communities

There are various ways on how you can start and then proceed with addressing communities. In the charts below you can find the most common methodologies applied

*Model Italy*

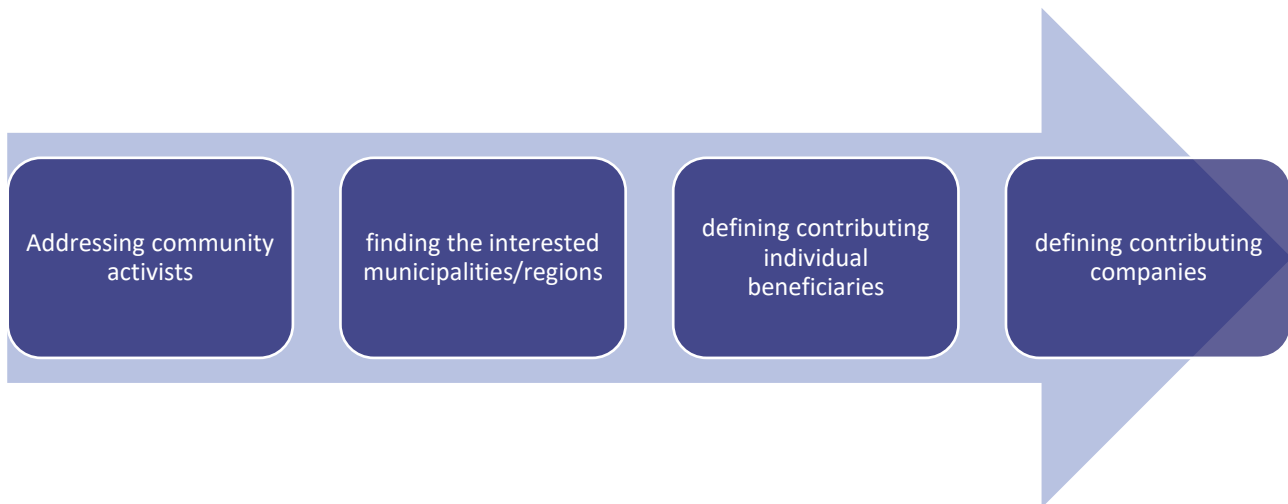


*Model Slovenia*



*Model Latvia*





## WHAT



### Information and cooperation

To address the relevant stakeholders, it is essential to prepare adequate information packages. The programme highlights elements which all the stakeholders can see as benefits:

- ❖ Employment opportunities
- ❖ Adult Education opportunities
- ❖ Community building and engagement
- ❖ Local development
- ❖ Social innovation

Harmonized with local conditions and addressees, partners have focused on the above elements with different highlights. Some took as priority what companies in the region needed and adjusted the selection of communities and beneficiaries around them. Others took the needs of the people living in the region as the main focus point and tried to find solutions. Some highlighted the importance of education, others the contribution to community building, others economic priorities in their communication. Depending on whether the needs derive more from being economically, socially or educationally marginalised or the combination of these, and also what possibilities the contributing stakeholders might have (e.g., corresponding programmes, financial contributions etc), there could be various ways to pick focuses.

## COMMUNITY PACT

*To agree with the community to act towards the goals of helping beneficiaries get reintegrated to the labour market with the contribution of educational partners, and companies, a community pact is advised to be formed.*

The community pact fitting our objectives had to be designed and composed by the project partners. Although there exist various community pacts which were made with different purposes for various target groups, the consortium decided to create a new one serving the project special purposes. To do so we have



- ❖ mapped existing community pacts
- ❖ picked elements that we could use
- ❖ changed and combined elements to our needs
- ❖ constructed a new pact model
- ❖ revised it via various assessment channels
- ❖ created final format and content

The challenges in this phase were manifold: the number of those community pacts which are available online are very limited. These pacts are normally made between one or more parties based on their agreement and signed in a paper format. Normally there are no reasons to publish them. We mainly found models where these community agreements either formed part of a strategy, where elements of the strategy were listed, or were parts of projects where publishing the agreement was a compulsory action as part of dissemination. Also, pacts normally included political directions, which were either not made public or were putting the focus elsewhere than what we needed.

We would have been glad to see descriptions of methodologies on how to reach the agreement. However, these were rare indeed. That is why we think that the model we provide here (see annex), and the adjoining methodology are filling in a hiatus at this field and could be used by many stakeholders around Europe who would like to help people and employers in marginalised areas.

#### Signing the pacts:

*To sign the pact, we advise to be well prepared with invitees, and make a little ceremony to highlight importance. Please refer to the sections below for examples.*

#### **Italy**

We contacted the list of people willing to sign the pact to participate to the signature event that, due to Covid- 19 limitation, took place at evenings in open air places. Cramars organized together with participating municipalities an aperitif/buffet then again defined the principles and the objectives of the project, read the document of community pact, answer to possible questions of the public, and at the end signed the pact. We then invited all participants to be present to the final event that will take place in Italy to get information related to the results of the project.

#### **Slovenia**

We first addressed the companies in the region, local organizations, municipalities and other interested organizations that we have in our database and presented the project to them. We then invited them to express their support to the project by signing the community pact. We prepared an event for the signing of the community pact, to which we invited all the previously mentioned organizations. We also used personal connections and the connections that OOZ Kranj has with companies and organizations in the region.

#### **Latvia**

Of the approximately 30 potential beneficiaries surveyed, only 1/3 (10 beneficiaries) were able to find a common solution that satisfied all 3 parties: the beneficiary, the entrepreneur and the educational institution. Of the 10 beneficiaries, 4 were care workers and 6 customer service workers. Entrepreneurs wanted more employees, but the number of beneficiaries willing to train was relatively smaller. First, the agreement was signed after negotiations between all three parties (beneficiary, educational institution and company), in which the needs and interests of each party were discussed. Agreement was signed with the educational institution. During the training, the requirements of the companies were harmonized so that the on-the-job training could continue immediately.

## Hungary

The Hungarian partners, especially the Chamber had an extensive network in primarily the agricultural sector consisting of stakeholders of companies, associations, municipalities. We had several get-togethers to clarify aims and target groups and brainstorm about possible involvement of the area's resources. We addressed the Municipality of Kunbaracs where we had contacts and knew they apply programmes for disadvantaged citizens. They became our main cooperation partners, and this is why the Community Pact was signed at their premises.

## CHALLENGES

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Partners found hard to:

- ❖ motivate stakeholders for contribution.
- ❖ timing
- ❖ finding adequate participants
- ❖ finding resources

## Italy

The main challenge was the involvement of the municipalities and consequently the associations and companies. The collaboration, more than through the project, was possible because of the data shared during the events concerning the current communities and trends of the future. The participants of the events through this data understood that, without community involvement, these marginal areas will die and that it is time to take action to make them survive. Also, for organizing the event, we had to overcome the challenges of the coinciding elections.

## Slovenia

The biggest challenge was to explain to community representatives why signing a community pact. We overcame this challenge by explaining them the role of the community in the project, in education and also the role of the individual or organization in the project.

## Latvia

Given the development of production in these regions and the shortage of labour, it was a greater challenge to find learners with the right skills and motivation to work. Social workers in the municipalities were very responsive and often helped to achieve a common goal: to motivate the learner and his / her family members by offering free training opportunities.

## Hungary

A challenge we had to face was the local government elections in Hungary which fell on the given period. As we had local stakeholders from the political sphere, we focused on the point that the elections would affect the events and the programme to the least possible extent and to be able to give disadvantaged people the highest benefits possibly helped also by timing.



### Italy

- ❖ Who and how to involve the public is to be well considered before starting the involvement process, to not waste time, make a list of possibilities and share it with your working group;
- ❖ By starting the involvement process with stakeholders, it is useful to get indications on whom to contact and practical suggestions;
- ❖ With stakeholders and main contacts, define a method and actions to be taken to identify the public and beneficiaries;
- ❖ By involving the public, it is recommended to know very well the territory and numbers, and use the "public" to confront the common problems, so they can feel more active during the information events and meetings;
- ❖ Use sentinels of the territory (young people who are active and know the territory and its inhabitants) to involve participants;
- ❖ Bringing, during the dissemination events, data from the area that highlighted the problems associated with the difficulty of placing people in a marginal situation, and proposed a number of solutions made available by the Community;
- ❖ Use a collection sheet document in which participants can share their internal information and give a first feedback related to the adhesion to the community.

### Slovenia

By involving the community it helps when engaging main stakeholders and decision-makers in the region to lead the example. It is also important to address the needs of the region and of all involved stakeholders and offering them a possible solution to their problems.

Tips for possible users:

- ❖ Address stakeholders directly.
- ❖ Explain them their role in the community
- ❖ Show them the benefits of community involvement into education and employment.

### Latvia

- ❖ There must be a person who promotes active cooperation between various actors in society (municipalities, associations, NGOs, social contacts, companies, etc.). It would be best to delegate this task to one of the municipal staff who knows the area and its needs, in order to implement joint activities and improve the quality of life and social practices.
- ❖ the municipality is a successful mediator in the overall development of the county, including the development of enterprises.
- ❖ A social service that monitors the needs of marginalized groups would be a very important player in this situation. Social workers, together with local community activists, are by nature the biggest motivators of such people.
- ❖ The managers and planners in adult education organizations have to re-focus their organizational structures and their course programs, in order to recognize and include marginal groups as a regular target group of their educational activities.

## Hungary

As a recommendation we would highlight here as well

- ❖ the power of social contacts and network
- ❖ the building of mutual trust via the community leaders
- ❖ investigating into the lifestyles, capacities and needs of our beneficiaries in a personal contact will improve effectiveness.

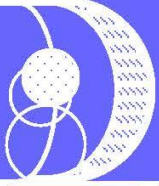
## SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS



Here you can find self-assessment questions which help you decide how prepared you are regarding various points of the procedure. These could be seen as guidelines for your path throughout the process. Questions correspond to each of the above parts of the description.

### Example for questions:

| 1 <sup>st</sup> part (WHO)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 2 <sup>nd</sup> part (HOW)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 3 <sup>rd</sup> part (WHAT)                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ How big is the region you would like to cover?</li><li>✓ Who are the main actors in the region? (financial, social economic impact)</li><li>✓ What contacts do you already have?</li><li>✓ Who can be mediators?</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ What is the order you would like to address stakeholders?</li><li>✓ What are the means you would like to use?</li><li>✓ How many meetings can you foresee/finance/afford?</li><li>✓ What are the most effective communication channels?</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Have you made up your mind about your objectives?</li><li>✓ What could be the motivation on the side of the stakeholder you'd like to address?</li><li>✓ What would you highlight as benefits?</li></ul> |



# Involvement of companies

## WHO

- Trade agencies/chambers – to involve companies
- Educational Centres – the guidance counsellor – collecting results to define the job profile needed
- Companies – to complete the profiles needed

## HOW

### Addressing companies

- *Organizing info days*
- *Visiting companies, meeting stakeholders*
- *Telephone calls*
- *Online space*
- *Contacting via networks*

Making the required job profiles by questionnaires

❓ *What ways would you use to recruit and address companies?*

## WHAT

- Addressing companies
- Making the required job profiles
- Using information packages
- See the info used in real life examples in the module

## EXPERIENCES

The involvement of the companies was a crucial point in the project. Addressing smaller and bigger companies, and making them motivated to host beneficiaries (people in unemployment looking for jobs, placements or just for experience). The below chapter is about the phase of the project about the initial steps of addressing and involving companies, its challenges, solutions, possibilities and the ways how participating partners did it. At a later chapter more could be read about matching the needs of the companies and potential employees, the visits and onsite trainings.

## CHALLENGES

- ✓ motivating companies
- ✓ legal restrictions
- ✓ finding resources
- ✓ finding mentors with companies



For reference at this stage see the Guidelines chapter 3.1 The needs of the job profile

## 4.2 How to involve companies

### INTRODUCTION

---

The involvement of the companies is a crucial point in the project. Addressing smaller and bigger companies and making them motivated to host beneficiaries (unemployed people looking for jobs, placements or just for experience) is key to the success of this phase. The below chapter is about the phase of the project describing the initial steps of addressing and involving companies, its challenges, solutions, possibilities and the ways how it was implemented in the four countries. At a later chapter, more could be read about matching the needs of the companies and potential employees, the visits and onsite trainings.

### WHO

---



#### What types of companies were addressed?

The main actors in this phase are:

- ❖ Trade unions or chambers
- ❖ Educational institutions
- ❖ Companies

Chambers are mediators to address employers and prepare the necessary engagements and tools. Educational institutions can provide the necessary guidance and educational links. Companies, as key actors, are the future hosts of the beneficiaries. At this stage they are to fill in the job profiles and state under which conditions they could employ or train the future candidates.

Addressing the companies in the region took place at the very first phase of the project. Partners could decide whether to start with addressing the companies first, informing them and mapping their needs or vice versa. This approach required the matching of the beneficiaries to the companies. The other approach started with the beneficiaries and when addressed and informed them, they were to be matched with the companies. Both ways had its advantages and disadvantages. Based on the contacts, databases, networks and profile of the partners, some decided to do one way or the other. In the double partnership the chambers had more contacts to companies, while educational centres were closer to the beneficiaries and the communities, so normally both ways were implemented. As mostly the project is about marginal territories, primarily in rural areas, where mostly small companies are present, the involvement of bigger companies was less frequent than that of smaller companies.

Number of companies involved in the process.

|                   | Companies involved as direct or indirect contact | Companies signing Community Pact |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| HUNGARY           | 16                                               | 3                                |
| ITALY             | 31                                               | 26                               |
| LATVIA            | 22                                               | 10                               |
| SLOVENIA          | 19                                               | 32                               |
| <b>Altogether</b> | <b>88</b>                                        | <b>71</b>                        |

---





### Ways to address and cooperate with companies

As stated above, there are two main ways to address companies in relation to communities and beneficiaries. If companies are addressed first, their needs could be put more in focus and they might be more motivated to host people in hope to fill in their vacancies. If unemployed people are addressed first, their needs are in focus, and then facilitators need to find them adequate companies. In this case there is a risk that it is not easy to find companies with scopes of the desired job or that companies might be reluctant to host chosen candidates. As the partnership was diverse, we can find an example for both methods. Typical phases and steps that facilitators make when involving companies:

#### *1, Organizing info days*

Besides giving information for more representatives at the same time, it is also a great opportunity for networks and focus group talks, which might give inspiration, motivation and also new ideas to the case

#### *2, Visiting companies, meeting stakeholders*

Due to the pandemic, bilateral meetings were more feasible than group gatherings. It could reach deeper insights, but it is much more time-consuming. The advantage is that we can map the future workplace for our beneficiaries and know what to communicate to them about it.

#### *3, Telephone calls*

In the pandemic era, face2face meetings were mostly impossible in some countries and thus telephone calls or skype interviews were preferred. In case the head of the company is not available, with larger organizations it can be useful to call the HR manager.

#### *4, Online space*

Besides contacting representatives via online calling channels, social media and own websites were also used to advertise our programme and call attention to the possibility of joining it.

#### *5, Contacting via networks*

Our partnership included chambers who have a large contact list of their members and they also know most of the companies by profile as well as by relevant people to address there. Educational partners also had some contacts, but they rather concentrated on the needs of their beneficiaries and counted on the contacts of the chambers.



### Information and cooperation

Companies were sought either directly or indirectly depending on the type of previous contact. The way of addressing the company and the information package depended on this above way of bond. But in general partners prepared information material which included:

- ❖ General information about the project
- ❖ Main aims and actors
- ❖ Potential benefits for involved companies
- ❖ Social contribution, the power of communities

- ❖ Expectations and help

## CHALLENGES

---



Partners found it hard

- ❖ to motivate companies for contribution.
- ❖ legal restrictions
- ❖ finding resources
- ❖ finding mentors with companies

### Italy

The major challenges were not so much about the motivation of companies to host or share their expertise with the beneficiaries as about having the legal ability to host them. In fact, in marginal areas operate mainly small or very small companies, also and above all individual companies as farms or working in subjects such as crafts, food and agricultural production and construction.

From a legal point of view, these small companies for safety reasons cannot host trainees, so their availability could be limited to give guidance to the beneficiaries and share their skills during the courses.

In a second phase, after March 2020, some companies that initially gave their availability somehow have withdrawn their application for obvious security reasons.

Often the matching between companies and beneficiaries was difficult to implement, and even for the companies, once they knew the subjects, it was difficult to give a judgement or indications on the best training to be undertaken by the beneficiary to carry out the chosen job.

### Slovenia

The companies that did not cooperate gave various reasons (they do not accept foreigners into the company, they do not employ, the beneficiaries do not have adequate education, they need an immediate solution, and they don't have the time to educate new workers, legal reservations, from experience they do not believe that it is possible to work with this target group, ...). The biggest challenge was to convince bigger companies to participate in the project. To find the right reason for them to invest their time and money. It was easier to convince companies and organizations that lack labour - especially in the service area (retirement home, cleaning services, production workers, ...). The most part of the companies at the end decided to participate after we introduced them to their contribution to the local community.

### Latvia

Although entrepreneurs are very interested in attracting employees, at the same time they have a disbelief that the potential workers we offer will be a long-term support for the company. There is not always a bond of trust between companies and educational institutions. Several companies refused training despite staff shortages, due to previous failures in working with a public employment agency. Very often the so-called long-term unemployed (who have not worked for more than 1 year) have not successfully returned to the labour market. Lack of responsibility and motivation are most often the main obstacles at work. There were a number of cases where the company was unable to provide the trainee with a placement supervisor for a variety of reasons: mainly a lack of funds and human resources.



## Hungary

Main challenges were to convince companies about the benefits to deal with our beneficiaries who were mainly unqualified and for a certain time unemployed in majority. Company leaders might have suspicions to unqualified workforce coming from out of their contacts. The prospective to offer beneficiaries long-term employment contract were not really the focus as it was easier to make an agreement on the first step: to offer visiting and orienteering possibilities to the target group. We hoped that in the long run if personal contacts have been established, that could open up ways for longer time cooperation and even employment contracts.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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### Italy

- ❖ By involving companies, we have to take into account that these are private entities, with the main aim of making money and with little time available;
- ❖ When involving companies, it is necessary to explain what contributions the company can obtain from this involvement, or give to the society as a whole.

### Slovenia:

To involve companies in the project, it was certainly useful to work together with the regional chambers of commerce and industry, which have a strong connection in the business world. It is also helpful to know the needs of the region and to involve companies that are looking for workers and are willing to host beneficiaries to support them in the learning phase, contributing to it, and maybe to employ them.

Tips for possible users:

- ❖ Work hand in hand with local chambers of commerce and industry and use their connection and knowledge.
- ❖ Address the companies directly.
- ❖ Explain them their role in the education process.
- ❖ Show them the benefits of becoming a school company.

### Latvia:

- ❖ You don't have to be a big company with huge resources to support on-the-job training. The key is the company's management policy, regardless of whether it is focused on human resource development and what its action plans are.
- ❖ Companies should establish a regular exchange of information and cooperation with the local government and the educational institution, in order to discuss the needs of the company and the supply balance.

### Hungary

- ❖ As companies are profit-oriented organizations, time and efficiency are very important for them.
- ❖ Give them a motivation to see the benefits of hosting unemployed people.
- ❖ Have all steps well-prepared in advance so that companies can only concentrate on the hosting period and do not have to deal with marginal administrative and other burdens.

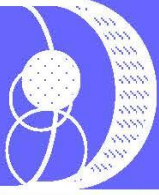
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Here you can find self-assessment questions which help you decide how prepared you are regarding various points of the procedure. These could be seen as guidelines for your path throughout the process. Questions correspond to each of the above parts of the description.

### Example for questions:

| 1 <sup>st</sup> part (WHO)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 2 <sup>nd</sup> part (HOW)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 3 <sup>rd</sup> part (WHAT)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ What profile of companies would you like to involve?</li><li>✓ What would be the main conditions companies would have to meet?</li><li>✓ What are the legal possibilities/restrictions?</li><li>✓ Do you have databases, contacts, mediators to reach companies?</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ How would you motivate companies to be involved?</li><li>✓ How would you organize info days?</li><li>✓ What other methods do you have to address companies?</li><li>✓ How many meetings can you foresee/finance/afford?</li><li>✓ What are the most effective communication channels?</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ What would you require from companies?</li><li>✓ What would you highlight as benefit?</li><li>✓ What templates or documents would you use to map the needs of companies?</li><li>✓ What templates would you use to describe expected job profiles?</li></ul> |



# Involvement of Beneficiaries

## WHO

- The community/stakeholders/ associations/– to reported and direct possible beneficiaries
- Educational Centers – to inform and be in contact with potential beneficiaries
- Potential beneficiaries – to actively take part in the project



## HOW

Addressing and involving beneficiaries

- Organizing information and dissemination events
- Involving the Community to the project
- Direct contacts following indications from stakeholders
- Word of mouth
- Information through radio channels, social media, newspaper articles

🗣️ *Do you have other ideas for involving this target group?*



## WHAT

Information and cooperation

- Giving information about the benefits coming from the project
- Cooperate with members of the Community
- Identifying with specific stakeholders potential beneficiaries
- Motivate participation



## EXPERIENCES

The main target group, the one for which the project was written, included beneficiaries with double marginalization, in a situation of personal disadvantage and due to their place of residence.

The experience of their involvement represented a challenge. In this chapter we present the way in which these beneficiaries were addressed and involved and what were the main difficulties that the partners had to face during the process.

The content is a description of the work done and the results obtained. Recommendations are then added to improve the implementation.



## CHALLENGES

- ✓ Involvement in the info event
- ✓ Engagement
- ✓ Motivate beneficiaries
- ✓ Keep involvement



For more details on this phase, please refer to the Guidelines on Learning Pact:  
3.2 Involvement of beneficiaries to the project

## 4.3 How to involve beneficiaries

### INTRODUCTION

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The project was born from the need to reintegrate marginalised people into the labour market with help from their communities. The project has been experimental in the way to address and involve communities, companies, and beneficiaries, and collect the experiences gained to put it them into a form where it becomes transferable to similar environments and conditions throughout Europe. The key actors in the process were the beneficiaries, people living in marginal areas with no proper access to employment. Normally, these people are harder to reach, lack certain skills and often motivation to get involved. Therefore, project partners had to carefully plan their activities with that target group to reach success and help them re-enter the labour market.

### WHO

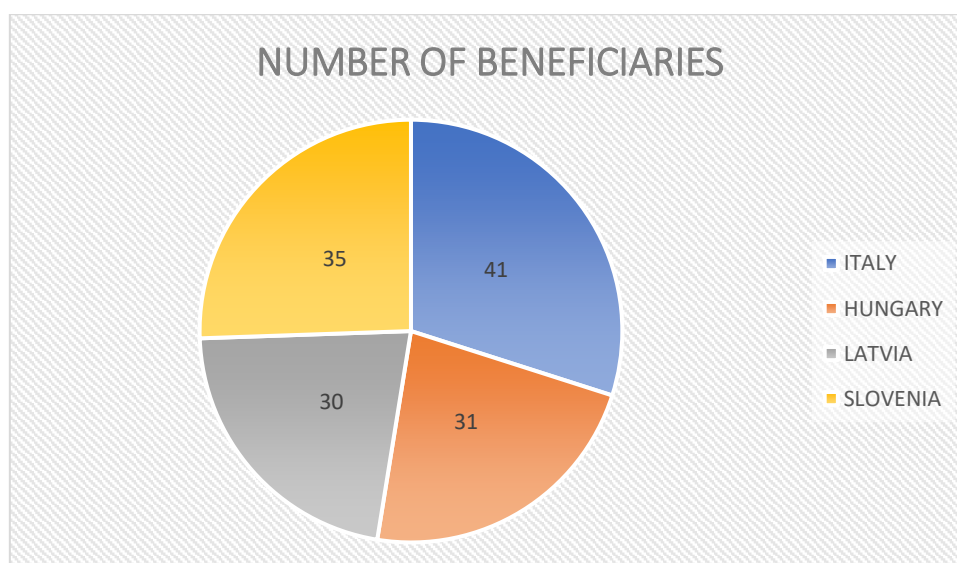
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#### Who were addressed?

The target group of the project was quite wide, mainly people in need of education or training or experience or just help to get back to the labour market, regardless of sex or age or sector etc. There was a special focus put on youngsters especially those of NEET, but all ages were represented.

The beneficiaries in the participating countries were altogether 137 people. Some of their data could be seen in the following charts.



*Chart1 - Number of beneficiaries*

The beneficiaries belonged to various age groups. Most of them were between 30 and 40 years old, and the least were under 20 or over 60 years old.

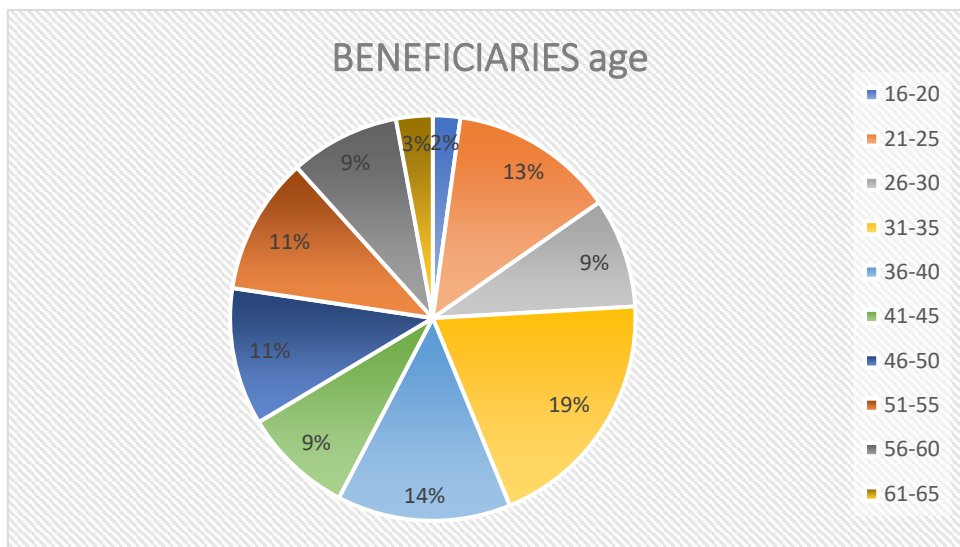


Chart2 - The age of beneficiaries

As for their gender, there were altogether more than four times more women than men.

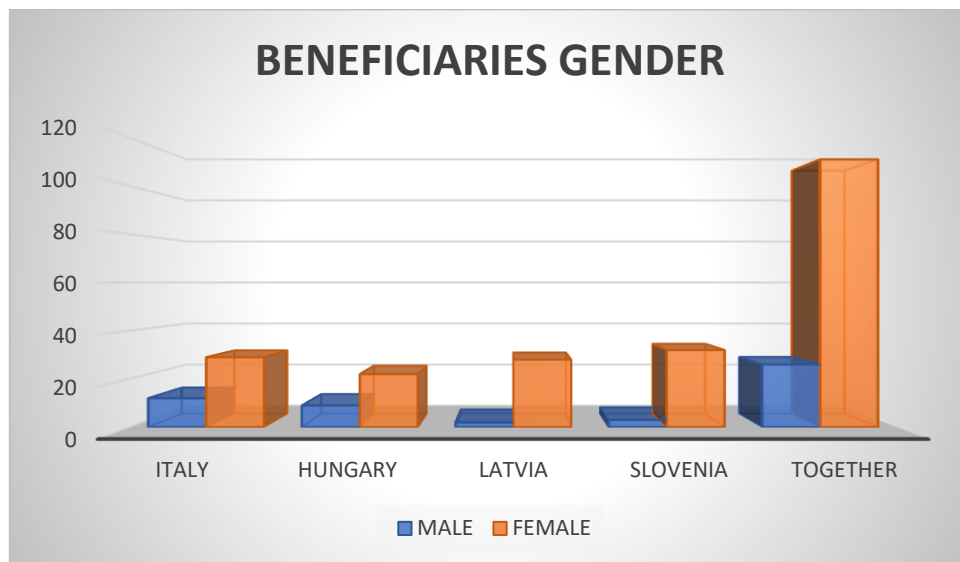


Chart3 - Beneficiaries' gender range

Educational background of people involved, shows that there were just a few people who didn't finish primary school. The majority had grammar school degrees and other secondary education, and a few had higher educational degrees.

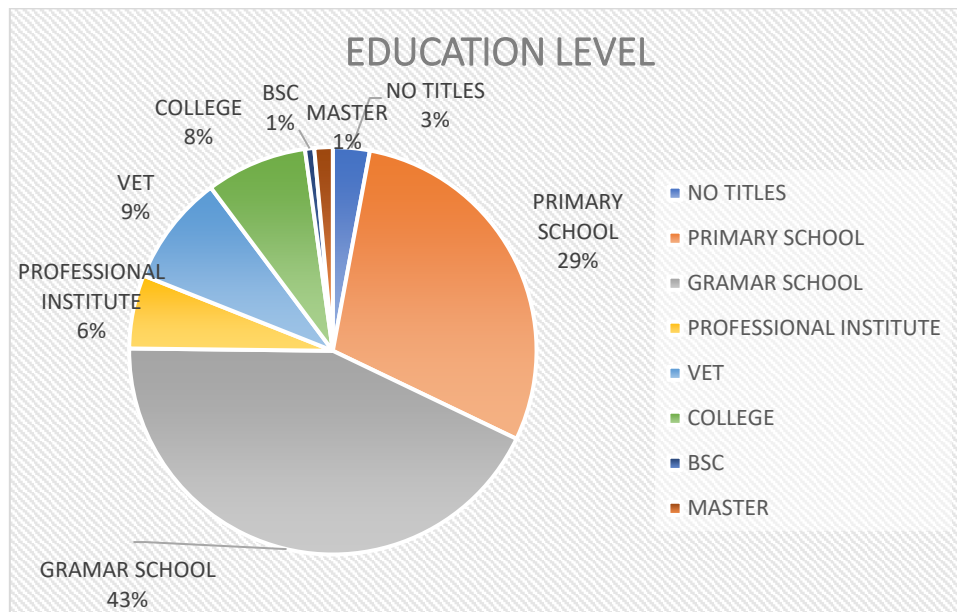


Chart4 - Beneficiaries' educational background

There were several ways people got involved into the process.

1. they were directly informed about the project
2. they attended an info event
3. they participated in the interview phase
4. they went into training
5. they went into companies
6. they did a combination of the above

The main aim which partners reached, was to interview at least 30 people about their background, motivation and skills and to ensure the minimum of the 10 selected ones further chances for deeper involvement.



### Ways to address and involve beneficiaries

As said before, the target group of the project are marginalised people in social or regional meaning (or both), therefore addressing them was mostly a challenge for partners. The main ways to find and address people were the following:

- ❖ youth information desk
- ❖ during the information/dissemination events
- ❖ via municipalities
- ❖ via social services
- ❖ through NGOs
- ❖ through employment agencies
- ❖ stakeholders including the Local Health Unit responsible for the economic / family hardship of the residents of the identified area.
- ❖ via personal contacts
- ❖ in a snowball effect (those already participating invited new ones)

In fact, some beneficiaries were present at the events and directly requested an appointment to verify their skills, while other beneficiaries were reported by the representatives of the associations involved in the events which, in some cases, accompanied them to the appointments established to define their own balance of competences.



### Information and cooperation

At this phase beneficiaries are addressed and informed about their possible involvement and about their opportunities.

The information presented to the target group was mainly about how they can benefit from being included. This envisaged various benefits:

- ❖ Being (re)integrated to (local) communities
- ❖ Getting a chance to get employment
- ❖ Mapping existent skills and needs
- ❖ Matching skills with company expectations
- ❖ Having insight to company work
- ❖ Getting education or training
- ❖ Getting experience with a company



## CHALLENGES

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Partners found hard to

- ❖ motivate some beneficiaries for participation
- ❖ find and address beneficiaries
- ❖ arrange events for information/gathering/discussion
- ❖ find resources
- ❖ find mentors and facilitators
- ❖ engage and keep beneficiaries
- ❖ combat possible psychological problems

### Italy

The first difficulty encountered concerned the fact that these vulnerable beneficiaries are difficult to find or to involve, which is why we made use of the contribution of social services and local associations. Great help in this regard was given to us by the councillors for social policies of the various municipalities involved.

The main difficulties encountered were to make the beneficiaries understand what it was and the importance of drawing up a balance of skills and making an initial orientation. It was therefore difficult to get an appointment with them.

The solution found was to explain the project and the value of guidance in detail to the referents, even if it was not possible to continue with a training course.

### Slovenia

The biggest challenge was to motivate beneficiaries to get involved in the program. So, we decided to go step by step and start with those who showed interest for the orientation interview or who would like to get a job.

Two challenges which emerged during the project were finding funding for the education/training process and the overcoming of several legal obstacles. We tried to solve the first challenge with funds from other projects and different sources of funding for certain educational programs (mostly by the Employment agency). For some trainings, the costs were borne by the company itself. The second challenge could only be solved by cooperation with the community (Legal department of the municipality, Health safety agency, Administrative unit, Chamber of Commerce, OOO Kranj, Employment agency) which we mainly asked for advice and explanation.

### Latvia

*A striking example:*

A young woman had difficulties with the project because her family did not support her. She had to work hard every day on the family farm, she had to take care of her three-year-old daughter, she felt depressed at home. Her husband's family members rejected her completely. She was afraid to take part in this project because it was an additional burden. When we started talking, the woman was physically exhausted and usually the conversation ended with her in tears. She began to participate in the project with a severe psychological condition, apathy and depressed mood, feeling that she was left behind, unsuitable for her years. The project has given her a starting point, the courage to start thinking and receiving, not to deviate from the intended - to increase one's personal professional qualification, to learn.



## Hungary

The challenges were mainly from restricted time to get involved and also fear of engagement. In Hungary further education after a certain age, especially in the countryside is very unusual. Mostly people over 50 regard education as something solely taking place at public schools in a formal way. The perspective to getting a training might be more fearful for some than promising. That is why when we presented the project and its aims, we had to be careful about how we used the concept of education. Some of our beneficiaries were illiterate or functional illiterate and with them we needed to express ourselves more simply and clearly to get and keep them motivated to be involved.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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### Italy

- ❖ For those wishing to undertake a path like this, we recommend to strictly define the target to be involved because in the context of marginality and vulnerability the categories are very broad and there is a risk of falling back on people in discomfort who, more than a requalification, need a real assistance of a psychological, economic, social nature, etc.
- ❖ As people are also in difficulty psychologically, especially with groups coming from years of inability to work, the advice is to take time to define their needs without creating illusions about their future. Being often closed in on themselves, some beneficiaries have the tendency to live in a non-concrete reality; it is necessary to make a path or a training to bring them back to the local reality, so that they realise what the labour market offers and prepare them to face it.

### Slovenia

It is a big challenge to motivate beneficiaries to get involved in the program. They are often unmotivated and in need for help. It is best to start with those who show interest for the orientation interview or who would like to get a job. It is also useful to turn for help to the Employment Agency and to organizations working with beneficiaries.

Tips for possible users:

1. During this phase it is useful to involve stakeholders (associations, NGOs, employment agency, etc.) who know the beneficiaries, the territory and its needs and that could intercept and report possible beneficiaries or inform them of the possibilities made available.
2. The work with the participants is intensive and should be carried out by a qualified consultant.

### Latvia

- ❖ A very important aspect was working in a team, which included social workers from the municipality, mentors, and other times it was necessary to consult a psychologist, as well as the support of the project coordinator.
- ❖ In order to improve the involvement of beneficiaries in training, stakeholders need to be able to successfully use the power of the social network and the ability to build mutual trust.

## Hungary

Recommendations:

- ❖ Count on the power of social contacts and network
- ❖ Build mutual trust via the community leaders.
- ❖ Investigate into the lifestyles, capacities and needs of beneficiaries in a personal contact will improve effectiveness.

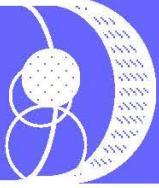
## SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS



Here you can find self-assessment questions which help you decide how prepared you are regarding various points of the procedure. These could be seen as guidelines for your path throughout the process. Questions correspond to each of the above parts of the description.

**Example for questions:**

| 1 <sup>st</sup> part (WHO)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 2 <sup>nd</sup> part (HOW)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 3 <sup>rd</sup> part (WHAT)                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ What special group would you like to involve?</li><li>✓ What would be the main conditions for participation?</li><li>✓ What are the legal possibilities/restrictions?</li><li>✓ Do you have databases, contacts, mediators to reach beneficiaries?</li><li>✓ What mediators/mentors do you plan to involve?</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ How would you seek beneficiaries?</li><li>✓ How would you motivate beneficiaries to attend first occasions?</li><li>✓ How would you motivate beneficiaries to stay in the programme?</li><li>✓ How would you overcome potential social/financial/psychological problems?</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ What challenges do you foresee?</li><li>✓ What solutions to these challenges do you envisage?</li><li>✓ What rules (governmental, legal, local, community-based) you should consider?</li></ul> |



# Orientation

## WHO

- Educational Centers – facilitators – to define beneficiaries’ needs and skills
- Beneficiaries – people in disadvantage situations – to inform about their potentialities.
- Companies – to define the competences needed



## HOW

Orientating – guiding

- Organizing individual meetings
- Collecting information from beneficiaries
- Defining the needs of the local labour market
- Re-elaborating results and matching with companies needs



## WHAT

- Meeting beneficiaries to define the skills balance
- Collecting information from beneficiaries
- Collecting information from companies
- Addressing beneficiaries to concrete objectives
- Finding hidden skills and talents
- Referring with ESCO competences qualifications and occupations



❓ How can you describe a competence that is not formally qualified?

## EXPERIENCES

The guidance practitioner has a very difficult profession. At the same time, they have to collect and process information, listen to requests, overcome barriers and avoid illusions.

The project provided shared tools that allowed, as described in this chapter, to involve 137 beneficiaries.

The guidelines offer support and guidance on the tools used and on how to use it.

Reading about the difficulties encountered can be an input for the involvement of other beneficiaries in the process.



## CHALLENGES

- ✓ Motivation
- ✓ Dreams vs reality
- ✓ Illiteracy
- ✓ Define specific competences
- ✓ Matching ESCO with company skills



For more details on this phase, please refer to the Guidelines on Learning Pact:  
3.2 Involvement of beneficiaries to the project

## 4.4 Orientation

### INTRODUCTION

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Following the identification of communities, companies and beneficiaries, the first step was to interview beneficiaries to see their already existent skills and knowledge as well as their aspirations and needs in training and employment. This orientation procedure went through with the involvement of facilitators. Mostly they were trained consultants or councillors, who had done similar orientation interviews before. Those who didn't have this as their profession, undergone a training on this matter in a 5day workshop in Italy. The orientation interviews were done with the help of documents prepared within the project (see Guidelines on Learning Pact) and additional materials. In most cases, original templates were modified according to the special conditions or individual needs of the beneficiaries.

### WHO

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In this phase the participants are the facilitators of educational centres who help to define beneficiaries' needs and skills, companies who previously defined the competences needed, and the beneficiaries – people in disadvantaged situations – who are informed about their potentialities and who communicate their needs and wishes about the training or required position and are to map their skills.

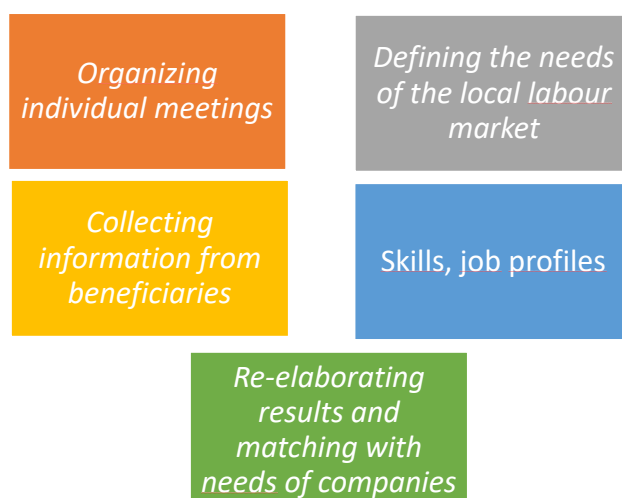
Altogether there were 137 beneficiaries involved in the orientation process in the 4 countries. They were of various age groups (with the majority between 30 and 40 years old) and with various educational background (mostly with completed secondary education). There were over 4 times more women participants than men.

### HOW

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#### Steps of Orientation



Partners mostly carried out one interview per person of a 1–2-hour duration, but many times subsequent occasions were needed, in order to get a better orientation or to raise motivational levels.

For the identification and matching of skills the ESCO framework was used. ESCO, a common European framework of occupations and skills, can be used for a comparison among different national/local skill repertoires for the Learning Pacts. The classification is directly accessible via the EU's Commission website at the following link <https://ec.europa.eu/esco/portal/>.

## WHAT



The following steps took place during the orientation phase

- ❖ Meeting beneficiaries to define the skills balance
- ❖ Collecting information from beneficiaries
- ❖ Collecting information from companies
- ❖ Addressing beneficiaries to concrete objectives
- ❖ Finding hidden skills and talents
- ❖ Referring with ESCO competences qualifications and occupations

The ESCO classification identifies and categorises skills, competences, qualifications and occupations relevant for the EU labour market and education and training. It systematically shows the relationships between the different concepts and contains accurate descriptions of occupations and skills.

It provides descriptions of 2942 Occupations and 13.485 Skills linked to these occupations. In ESCO we can also find a list of 9118 Official Qualifications (September 2019) that enables a useful comparison among qualifications that are issued by the formal outcome: an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards. ESCO uses the EQF (European Qualifications Framework) levels to range the qualifications derived from databases of national qualifications managed by the European Member States.

At the orientation interview, beneficiaries were asked which sector they would like to find work in. Most of them indicated the third sector, 26% the agricultural and 16% the industrial sector. The results are shown here

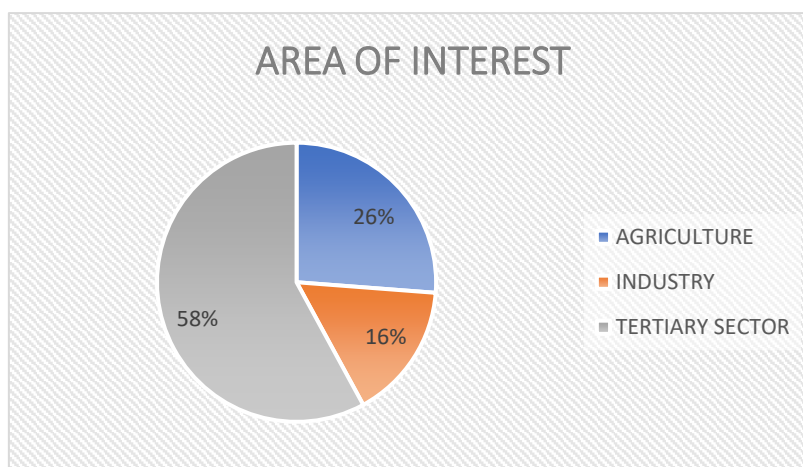


Chart5 - Area of Interest

## CHALLENGES

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### *1, motivation of beneficiaries*

Although those beneficiaries were interviewed who showed interest at the information days or direct addressing, still at times of the interview some looked sceptical about the success of the program. Many doubts were derived from the lack of confidence and self-esteem of the applicant.

### *2, Dreams vs reality*

Often, being in a vulnerable situation, beneficiaries confused attitude with the will to do, and talent with their own unattainable dreams. The greatest difficulty was therefore to bring the participants back to the reality and work available at local level.

### *3, Illiteracy*

Other challenge was that some applicants were illiterate or functional illiterate people. That meant that filling in simple questionnaires before entering conversation was hard and frustrating. Facilitators, especially trained counsellors, could handle the situation and focused on oral conversations.

### *4, Matching ESCO and company skills*

Difficulties to match the Eu competence repertoires with the specific needs of beneficiaries have appeared in professions that do not exist in the EU or are differently named / classified, perhaps divided into more different professions. To compare the content, a lot of reading and knowledge of professional standards and professional competencies was required.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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### **Italy**

- ❖ Before meeting the beneficiaries, it is useful to know in advance the territory where the beneficiary lives and what are the job possibilities in that territory, the possible means of transport, etc.;
- ❖ Before meeting with the beneficiaries, it is recommended to know and get in touch with all the associations, public or private bodies to which beneficiaries can be referred when difficulties arise;
- ❖ Shared definition of templates to collect beneficiaries' skills is a useful tool, easy to share among the partnership to discuss the results (our partnership defined the tools during the Joint Term Short Time Training Event);
- ❖ With the beneficiaries, especially disadvantage people, apart from completing a collection template, it is necessary to have a complete picture of the situation and catch difficulties and barriers;
- ❖ The counsellor should have enough experience with this type of audience to be able to identify the "cunning ones", i.e., people who do not really need help or support and who often participate in these interventions just to hang out or to meet the needs of their relatives.

## **Slovenia:**

All templates developed in the project could be individually used and adjusted to the needs of the beneficiaries. A close cooperation on the content of education with the educator, counsellor, beneficiary and company is needed, which is definitely an added value to the project, as it treats the participant holistically.

Tips for possible users:

- ❖ The work with the participants is intensive and should be carried out by a qualified consultant.
- ❖ It is necessary to take time to work with participants as well as companies. It's not worth skipping steps.
- ❖ It is also helpful if the consultant knows the needs of the region, the companies and the beneficiaries.

## **Latvia**

- ❖ To complement and improve the repertoires of EU competences with the specific needs of each beneficiary country.
- ❖ It is not always necessary, even impossible, to fully harmonise the wishes of all 3 parties. It is important to set the highest priorities among all 3 stakeholders.

## **Hungary**

- ❖ Even if you have orientation templates and methodologies taken from somewhere, they have to be handled flexibly and adjusted to the environment and the users' needs.
- ❖ Prepare for cases in which your subjects are illiterate or half-illiterate and might need special attention or questions.



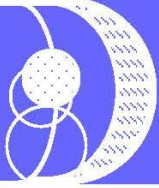
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| 1 <sup>st</sup> part (WHO)                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 2 <sup>nd</sup> part (HOW)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 3 <sup>rd</sup> part (WHAT)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Do you have trained staff for the orientation interview?</li><li>✓ If not, how are you going to prepare interviewers for the task?</li><li>✓ Who will be the subjects of the interviews?</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Where and how will you organise the interviews?</li><li>✓ How will you prepare your interviewers?</li><li>✓ How will you prepare your interviewees?</li><li>✓ How much time do you see necessary to devote to the interview?</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ What resources would you like to use/have them available?</li><li>✓ What location and resources would you need to carry out the interviews?</li><li>✓ What tools are you going to use for mapping and matching the skills?</li><li>✓ etc...</li></ul> |





# Visiting companies

## WHO

- Education Centres – mentor to give support and lead the visit/training of the beneficiary
- Company – to define terms, host and define the beneficiaries' gaps
- Beneficiary – to visit potential employers and analyze suitability and opportunities for learning
- Guidance counsellor – to follow the visit results and get familiar with gaps

## HOW

- Collecting data from companies
- Beneficiary's information
- Supporting the visit to companies

## WHAT

- Knowing in advance company regulations and needs of job profile
- Beneficiaries need to be confident about the company before the visit
- Definition of the timetable and referents
- Accompanying the beneficiary on the company
- Reviewing visit results and definition of gaps/learning needs

❓ *Are there legal ways to visit a company to avoid restrictions to the visit?*

## EXPERIENCES

In order to verify that a beneficiary is suitable to work in a company, that he/she is familiar with the type of work that the company carries out, but also to facilitate the understanding of the beneficiary's gaps in relation to the company's needs, it was decided, as described in this chapter, to organize company visits accompanied by tutors/mentors from the training institution and the company in order to define the training pathway, which is further described in the next chapter, and to confirm the possible company/beneficiary matching.

## CHALLENGES

- ✓ Mismatch in skills – attitude failure
- ✓ Limit expectation
- ✓ Find a common calendar
- ✓ Legal and safety restriction

**To be solved**

For more details on this phase, please refer to the Guidelines on Learning Pact: 3.6 Planning visits to the employers and 3.7 Visits to companies

## 4.5 Visit to companies

### INTRODUCTION

---

This step is the most crucial and probably the most difficult in the whole process. The organization of visits to potential employers normally takes place after the orientation interview with the beneficiary, comparing existing frameworks and competences repertoires. This step is necessary to confirm the possible matching between the company and the beneficiary, to define if they are good for each other and if they can find a meeting point valid for both. Once the matching is done, a careful planning of the visit to the company takes place. It is required to harmonise available timeslots, demands and expectations. Due to possibilities and the persons and the companies' capacities, the first orienteering visit can expand into a set of more visits, or a shorter or longer period of on-the-job training which can conclude in real employment.

### WHO

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In this phase the two main actors are the beneficiaries and the companies, but an in-house mentor and the counsellor could be of great help. The actors:

- ❖ Beneficiary – to visit potential employers and analyse suitability and opportunities for learning
- ❖ Guidance counsellor – to follow the visit results and get familiar with gaps
- ❖ Company – to host and define the beneficiaries' gaps
- ❖ Mentor- to give support and lead the training of the beneficiary within the company

In the course of the whole process there were altogether 182 companies involved in the four countries.

Most of these companies were addressed and consulted in the first phase of the project (88). Some also got to get the Pact signed showing interest in the community-based cooperation (71). In the end when it came to the most difficult and demanding part, 26 companies hosted the beneficiaries. This hosting could reach various levels:

- ❖ Visits (for mainly orientation purposes)
- ❖ Short on the job trainings
- ❖ Internships

In this phase we only concentrate on visits, as trainings are discussed in the next chapter. As for visits, they could be a one-time visit or a repeated one followed or not followed by shorter or longer trainings. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, a lot of planned visits or trainings had to be cancelled.

|                   | Companies involved as direct or indirect contact | Companies signing Community Pact | Companies hosting the beneficiaries | Total companies involved |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| HUNGARY           | 16                                               | 3                                | 3                                   | 19                       |
| ITALY             | 31                                               | 26                               | 9                                   | 66                       |
| LATVIA            | 22                                               | 10                               | 5                                   | 37                       |
| SLOVENIA          | 19                                               | 32                               | 9                                   | 60                       |
| <b>Altogether</b> | <b>88</b>                                        | <b>71</b>                        | <b>26</b>                           | <b>182</b>               |

*Chart6.Companies involved*

There were altogether 62 participants taking part in visits of trainings in the 26 various companies in the four countries.

## HOW



Main steps leading to the visits of companies

- ❖ Collecting data from companies
- ❖ Beneficiary's information
- ❖ Supporting the visit to companies

First of all, the beneficiaries need to know in detail what the hosting company does, and which could be their roles inside it.

It is necessary to collect data on health and safety regulations in the company to host the beneficiary: safety inside the company, insurance, specific clothes, shoes, time availability, eventual limits for the company to host the beneficiary.

The company should provide a tutor available to follow the beneficiary. The tutor should have the appropriate skills to understand the beneficiaries' knowledge gaps. Moreover, she/he has to be informed on the project and competence repertoires for the selected profile the company wants to include.

As a learning phase of the training, the guidance counsellors invite the beneficiary to get information about the host company. This activity could be important in future working life too.

Moreover, guidance counsellor and beneficiaries have to speak together about their roles, to understand if the work is suitable for them and if they like it or not; the company characteristics; the referent company tutor; and share some good practices and advice on how to behave there.

After that, the guidance counsellor, who is the point of reference for the beneficiaries when they are having some difficulties to accomplish this phase of the project, has to give them the defined date of the visit and instructions about when and where to meet with the employer, to have the opportunity to experience a day/a few hours in a work placement. On the job training could also be provided at this step.

## WHAT



This phase is to realize the visits to one or more companies to define if the matching is valid.

As a first step a careful planning is needed to do the skills matching, expectations on both sides and availability. The length of the visit could vary, depending on demands and possibilities, which could be limited or determined also by legislative restrictions, safety regulations, economic terms. The visits could last between 1-2 days of orientation to a lengthier period combined by productive work.

## CHALLENGES



- ❖ Mismatch in skills or expectations
- ❖ No time availability
- ❖ No harmony in timetable, demands
- ❖ No tutor/mentor/ counsellor available
- ❖ Legal and safety health restrictions, regulations cannot be met
- ❖ Attitude failures
- ❖ Limitations because of the pandemic

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



This is a very time-consuming phase, so be well-prepared. As there are social and economic points of use, the two might not coincide for the first time, so careful management is needed. Besides a lot of coordination between companies and participants, also compliance with legal and corporate regulations is needed. Health and safety issues are to be considered. Most of the times it is not enough to have a manager on behalf of the company, but an appointed person, who can guide the applicant is very helpful, at cases, essential. Also, some of the disadvantaged beneficiaries might need extra help to find (and stay) at the workplace. A guidance counsellor or if we don't have it an experienced volunteer from the community could make this gap up.

### Italy

- ❖ To get a complete picture of the company, beneficiaries visit must be addressed to the whole company in order to get the picture of the situation and understand the environment where they might go to work;
- ❖ Knowing partially the workers or some of them in the company during the visits is a tool that brings the beneficiary closer to the company;
- ❖ Meetings between company representatives (owners or managers) and beneficiaries may be sufficient or much more appropriate than the company visit in some situations;
- ❖ Owners or managers must be prepared by the training provider for the beneficiary they meet and give all possible answers to even unsuitable questions.

### Slovenia

This process was very time consuming. A lot of coordination between companies and participants was needed, as well as compliance with legal and corporate regulations. All the addressed

companies were ready to accept the participants, show them the company and show them the job that would be suitable for them and talk to them about possible employment. In some cases, it took a lot of time to find the right match, mostly because of the participants who themselves did not know what they want, or felt too insecure.

Tips for possible users:

- ❖ It is useful for the beneficiaries to visit the company before starting to work.
- ❖ It is also useful knowing the superiors, mentors and closest associates because it helps to break down barriers.
- ❖ To avoid problems, it is useful to collect data on health and safety regulations in the company to host the beneficiary: safety inside the company, insurance, specific clothes, shoes, time availability, eventual limits for the company to host the beneficiary.

## **Latvia**

When planning a visit to a company, keep in mind that:

- ❖ Many company managers look at potential employees only from an economic point of view, not from a social point of view.
- ❖ Companies want to spend as little time as possible on visits and joint discussions with the beneficiary and the educational institution.
- ❖ Companies often do not have suitably qualified staff.
- ❖ The company does not always have a professional skills assessor, so the consultant / mentor should not only support the beneficiary, but also help the company to precisely define the skills and knowledge of the required employee.

## **Hungary**

- ❖ Map legal, safety and security regulations well in advance
- ❖ Consider time-matching
- ❖ Provide help for the preparation of visits
- ❖ Have concrete goals with the visits, which you might consult first (both with the company and with the beneficiary)
- ❖ Ask feedback on the visits (on both sides)

## SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS



### 1<sup>st</sup> part (WHO)

- ✓ Who will be the company representatives you will be in contact when planning?
- ✓ Who will be the company representatives you will be in contact when implementing hosting?
- ✓ Who will be the contact person on your side?
- ✓ Who will help beneficiaries to arrange the visits?
- ✓ Who will be in charge of organizing/ documenting visits?

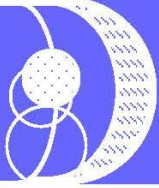
### 2<sup>nd</sup> part (HOW)

- ✓ How would you motivate companies to host beneficiaries?
- ✓ How will you prepare for the visits?
- ✓ How will you raise the necessary financial background for the visits?
- ✓ How will you document the process?
- ✓ How will you assess the process?
- ✓ How will you cope with changes/cancellations/ dropouts?

### 3<sup>rd</sup> part (WHAT)

- ✓ What regulations do you need to know before organizing a visit?
- ✓ What resources do you need?
- ✓ What areas are interesting for the beneficiaries?
- ✓ What other difficulties (distances, language, social background etc) do you have to cope with?





# Learning pacts & training

## WHO

- The Guidance counsellor of the educational centre – to define the content
- The Company – to share the skills
- The Beneficiary – to agree about the path, sign it, participate to learning
- The Community – to agree with the learning content
- The educational Centre– to provide everything necessary for the training

## HOW

- Agreeing on learning content
- Defining the learning pathway
- Taking responsibility with the community for finalizing the learning

## WHAT

- Defining learning needs and contents, in accordance with company
- Signing learning pacts
- Defining the training pathway – learning materials, courses, training on the job
- Providing/following the training

❓ *In your experience, could a learning pact be effective at involving demotivated people in training?*

## EXPERIENCES

The key to training success lies in the motivation, involvement and assumption of responsibility by the beneficiaries. The involvement of the community in the signing of a training plan is undoubtedly impactful for the end users. In this chapter we explain how the process of defining the training plans took place and which competences were taught in a theoretical or practical way, in the classroom, online or on the job.

These results then validated the success of the project especially for the beneficiaries who later found employment.

## CHALLENGES

- ✓ Funding the trainings
- ✓ Mentoring trainings
- ✓ Overcome regulations for training on the job
- ✓ Validate the pact with community



For more details on this phase, please refer to the Guidelines on Learning Pact: 3.8 Definition of the learning plan and signature of the learning pact and 3.9 Training and upskilling

## 4.6 Learning pacts and trainings

### INTRODUCTION

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The learning process of the beneficiaries is the focus of this phase. Following the previous steps by this stage the beneficiaries will be oriented towards a possible pathway where they can enter either a classroom-based learning or an on-the-job training, in order to be prepared for the work in view. First, the learning pact is designed, which should cover the aspects of the beneficiary, the educational centre and the company. Skills to be developed are defined in the learning agreement document and existent training provisions are identified. The training can start in various forms depending on needs and also human and financial resources.

### WHO

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#### Who is present in this phase?

In this phase more emphasis is put on the learning procedure, therefore educational organizations as well as the counsellor or mentor either on behalf of the facilitator, the community or the company will get into a special focus.

The main actors to be considered in this phase are:

- ❖ The mentor/Guidance counsellor – to compose the learning pact and help or provide the learning
- ❖ The Company – to provide on-the-job training by sharing the skills
- ❖ The Beneficiary – to agree about the path and sign it and attend learning/training
- ❖ The Community – to agree with the learning content

#### *Real life experience in implementation*

In the four participating countries there were altogether 62 beneficiaries undertaking training and altogether 26 companies offering hosting. The beneficiaries were predominantly women and had quite low level of education.

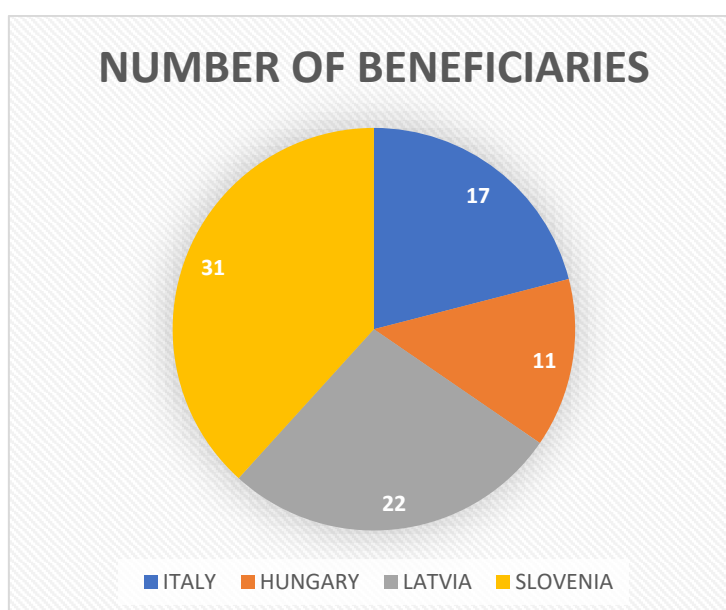


Chart7 - Number of beneficiaries



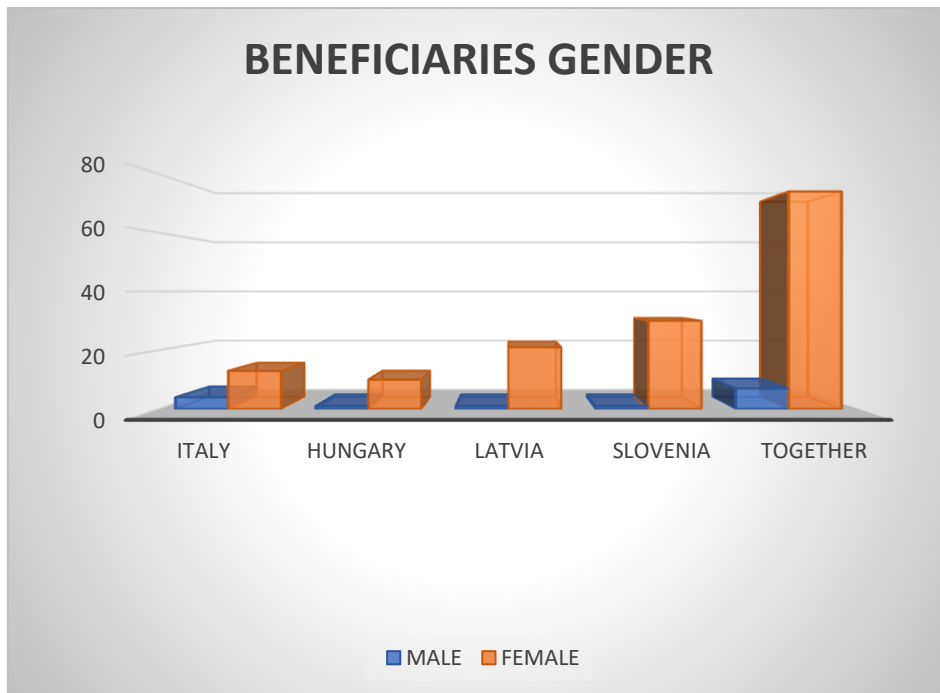


Chart8 - Beneficiaries gender

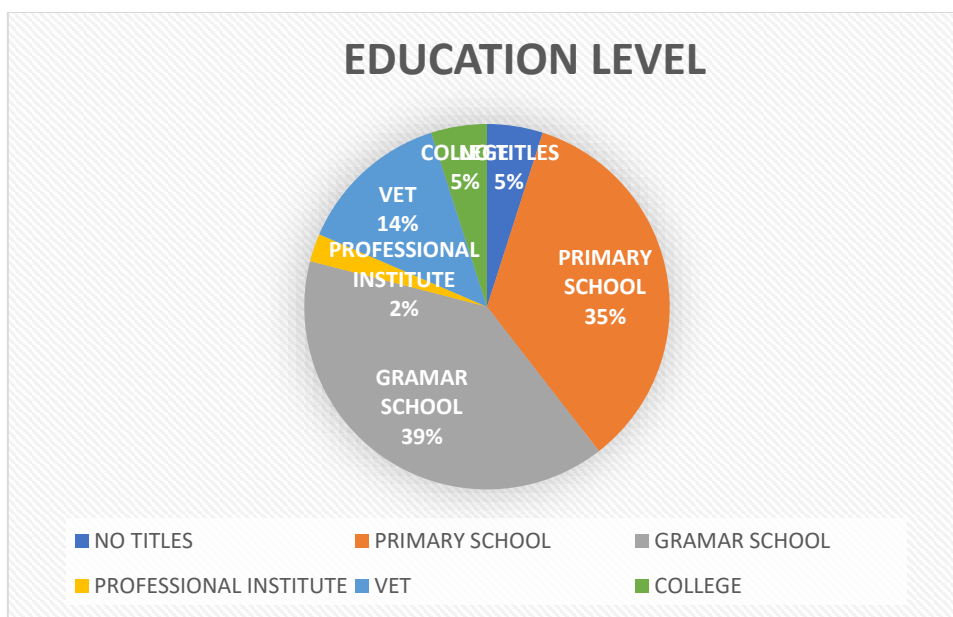


Chart9 - Education level

Beneficiaries included people in short- and long-term unemployment with young people, people living in rural areas with not much job opportunities, people with great difficulties of integration of various ages, and low-skilled migrants.



### Ways leading to the learning pact and implementation of training

There should be an agreement for the learning process between the 3 main parties: the beneficiary, the company and the educational organization. Besides, the representatives of the Local Community that previously signed the Community Pact, are involved in this phase too and have to agree with the learning pact.

The facilitator of the process defines a possible common date and place where the beneficiaries and educational centres can share the Individual Learning Pacts with the community and organizes the signature.

After the Individual learning plan is completed and signed, the educational centre defines where the training can take part and identify existent training provisions.

This is the phase where educational centres have to establish mechanisms to answer the learning needs with tailored, on-demand learning opportunities and define the most suitable teaching and learning methods to achieve the expected outcomes, including work-based learning. Possible ways of acquiring the required skills:

- ❖ by joining some already existing training;
- ❖ with the use of possible on-line or open-source contents;
- ❖ organizing a professional training directly inside the company;
- ❖ learning on-the-job.

#### *Real life experience in implementation*

Beneficiaries were either provided with already existent courses or the partners themselves made relevant trainings for some learners. In both cases the financial coverage was to be found, which mainly was provided either by the project or by local and regional funds or supports.



### Learning pact and training

Learning pacts and trainings are the fruits of the preparatory actions. The learning pact includes all the information about skills discovered and to be achieved and other relevant data for the training to be realised. The trainings should be well-prepared, in harmony with the beneficiaries needs and also realisable on both financial and organizational levels.

Shortly, here is a list of data that are advised to be included in the Learning pact (A template for the learning pact can be found in the Guidelines on Learning Pact)

- ❖ Personal details of the beneficiary;
- ❖ Educational and work experience;
- ❖ Skills and competences, (analysis of incoming and expected skills and learning outcomes);
- ❖ Specific reasons and expected results
- ❖ Activities to support the learning project;
- ❖ Assessment methods;
- ❖ Description of the training institution/education centre
- ❖ Description of the company involved

- ❖ Training / Education content
- ❖ Structure and method of delivery of internal training (Select the appropriate methods)

The trainings/learning activities follow the signature of the learning pact and are to be implemented alongside the criteria laid down in the pact. Trainings should be adapted to the existing possibilities and therefore can vary in form and length.

*Real life experience in implementation*

Partners signed 45 learning pacts and involved 26 companies in the training activities. The fields that people got training in had mainly vocational and life skill orientation. Some examples for learning contents:

- ❖ upgrading language level
- ❖ digital skills
- ❖ literacy
- ❖ accountancy
- ❖ accountancy course
- ❖ secretarial and administrative work
- ❖ agriculture
- ❖ culture and museums
- ❖ cleaning
- ❖ shop assistant
- ❖ dog pound

In terms of sectors the rate was the following

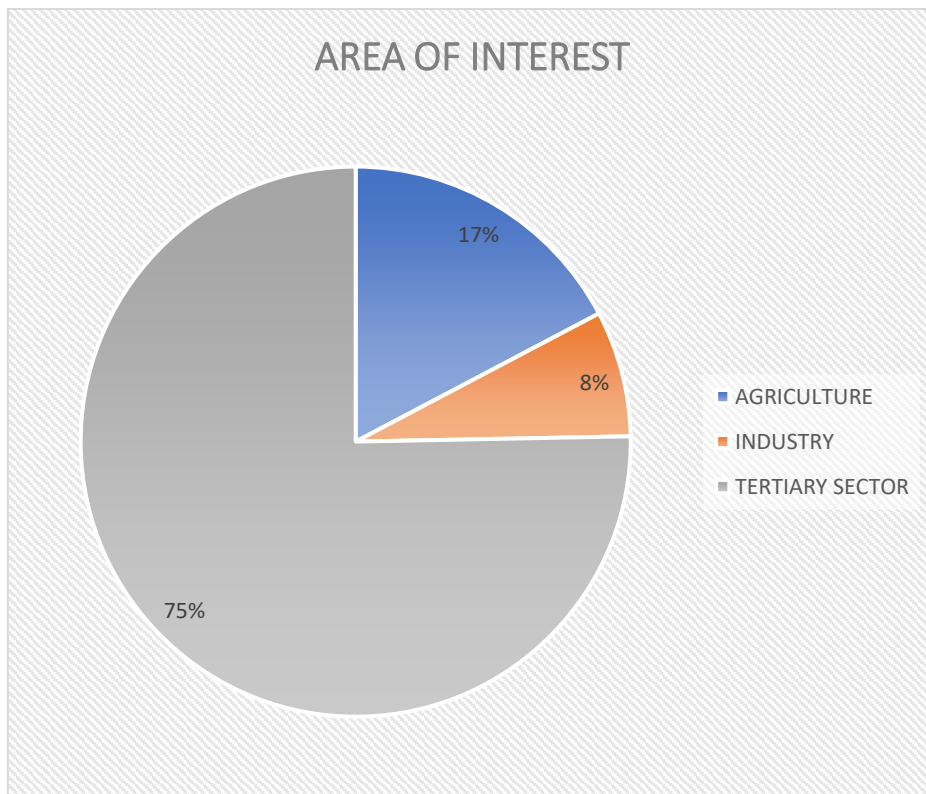


Chart10 - Area of interest

## CHALLENGES



Partners found it hard

- ❖ to make sense to the signing of the agreement by the community, also in terms of respecting privacy of individuals
- ❖ to obtain funding for education
- ❖ to provide mentors for the training
- ❖ to overcome issues of regulations
- ❖ to keep up motivations of learners
- ❖ to keep up interest of companies

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



### Italy

#### *Learning pacts*

Practices prior to the compilation of the LP is the definition of specific company needs and the "translation" of the needed skills into codes that are often difficult to compare at European level (ref. ESCO);

- ❖ To help companies to better define the needs, to use the definitions and codes provided by ESCO, for the effective marriage between the parties (beneficiary and company);
- ❖ Be sure to share with the company also which are the company values and the expectations from the beneficiary, in order to define also the transversal/soft skills that are always taken for granted;
- ❖ It is advisable to check that the proposed training is feasible for the beneficiary, both at study and practical level, i.e. that he/she can reach the place where the theory and practice are carried out, that the timetable is compatible with the activities made available by the company and with any public transport timetable, etc.

#### *Trainings*

- ❖ Vulnerable beneficiaries must be followed constantly, in order to keep their motivation high, verify their constancy, anticipate problems, talk weekly with them about difficulties and find possible solutions;
- ❖ Close tutoring during the courses or on-the-job training is a winning component to ensure that the beneficiaries could correctly conclude the pathway undertaken and also find an optimal balance with the companies.

### Slovenia

The organisation of training and upskilling took place mainly in educational centres and on the job (at the company). Based on the previous actions most beneficiaries lacked professional skills and life skills (language skills, digital skills and literacy). As education centres in Slovenia are accustomed to such training, there were no problems in the process of education and training.

Tips for possible users:

- ❖ Core skills which had to be developed should be defined with the intention to support the beneficiaries in acquiring competences needed to effectively deal with the tasks that the employment sector requires.

- ❖ The learning pacts should be designed in agreement with each beneficiary separately, the educational centre and the company matched, based on the results on previous actions (orientation interview, company existing frameworks and competences repertoires, company visit...).

## **Latvia**

- ❖ It is important to coordinate and cover all aspects: not only professional but also social (possible training time, transport, financial opportunities ...)
- ❖ vulnerable beneficiaries must be followed constantly, in order to keep their motivation high, verify their constancy, anticipate problems, talk weekly with them about difficulties and find possible solutions

## **Hungary**

- ❖ Consider the length and content of the Learning agreements well
- ❖ Be prepared for cancellations both from part of companies and beneficiaries (how would you react?, have you got a plan B?)
- ❖ Look for resources for trainings well before
- ❖ Insist on having a mentor/counsellor for the beneficiaries

## SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS



Here you can find self-assessment questions which help you decide how prepared you are regarding various points of the procedure. These could be seen as guidelines for your path throughout the process. Questions correspond to each of the above parts of the description.

### Example for questions:

| 1 <sup>st</sup> part (WHO)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 2 <sup>nd</sup> part (HOW)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 3 <sup>rd</sup> part (WHAT)                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Who will organize the signature of the learning pact?</li><li>✓ Who will be present at the signature of the pact?</li><li>✓ Who are the contact persons at educational institution/the company?</li><li>✓ Who will be in charge of organizing/documenting trainings?</li><li>✓ Who can be mentors?</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ How will you sign the learning pact (place, people, ceremony etc)?</li><li>✓ How would you involve the community in the pact signature?</li><li>✓ How will you prepare for the training?</li><li>✓ How will you raise the necessary financial background for the courses/trainings?</li><li>✓ How will you document the process?</li><li>✓ How will you assess the process?</li><li>✓ How will you combat dropouts?</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ What will you include in the learning part?</li><li>✓ What resources do you need?</li><li>✓ What areas are interesting for the beneficiaries?</li><li>✓ What regulations do you have to cope with?</li></ul> |



# **TRANSFERABILITY & SUSTAINABILITY**

## 5. TRANSFERABILITY, SUSTAINABILITY

The research, the processes, the methodology, the achieved contacts and results are all outcomes of the project, which could be applied in different contexts let it be another country or other target groups and sectors.

Education in Square Marginality resources developed in the framework of the project will be available for at least two years after the project ending (March 2021) from the project platform (<https://www.coopcramars.it/project-em2/>) and project partners' websites (see the section "Partners").

EM2 documents are available in the Erasmus + project results platform [https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects_en) and licensed under Creative Common Attribution-Non-commercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International. Third parties may therefore use and adapt the contents for educational and community development purposes.

The three documents that will be most useful and reusable by the public are:

1. Guidelines to set up the community pact (that provides a repertoire of existent models to define most suitable formats and methods to effectively realise a Community Pact)
2. Guidelines to set up the Community Learning Pact (that explains a process and provides a method and tools to involve and collect data from the target groups)
3. Handbook of Community Learning (this document, is a step-by-step guide on how to build up and manage a procedure leading to the reintegration of marginalised people into employment and education)

The partners have already discovered and exploited various potentials and are willing to go on with it in the future:

### Italy

These are the ways Italian partners would like to sustain the project:

1. This project has been very effective for the continuous development of the competences of our institutes in reference to the guidance and guiding service, for this reason, also in the future, we will use the templates defined during the project for the bilateral guidance meetings with our students and beneficiaries
2. Cramars have already signed, with Confartigianato Imprese of Udine (project partner) a memorandum of understanding for the continuation of activities at local level that includes:
  - ❖ Rethinking projects like EM2 in light of coming out of the emergency
  - ❖ Collaboration to develop projects aimed at self-entrepreneurship
  - ❖ Including, in continuing work with covenant communities, activities involving digital transition for mountainous areas
  - ❖ Support for in-company training placements
  - ❖ Verification of training needs in artisan companies
3. Commitment to continue work with potential beneficiaries from signatory communities
4. Commitment to form new educating communities (we have already obtained some requests from other municipalities and local interest groups that could not be part of the project)
5. Commitment to also help beneficiaries who are not part of the target group defined by the project, but to broaden the range of users
6. Cramars has already, with some of the signatory communities, set up some projects for the continuation of activities in the function of local development (training courses, meetings with specific stakeholder groups, etc.)



7. Use of all templates to define new balance of competences or learning pacts within our learners.
8. Cramars as project coordinator, will send information regarding the results and guidelines of the project via Facebook, with a paid post, to all adult education providers nationwide and then make themselves available for sharing, details and advice.

## **Latvia**

How it will be possible to sustain the project from Latvian partners:

1. To continue the work gained during the project in the field of cooperation: local government, non-governmental organizations, supporting institutions. Especially, to continue the successful cooperation with the employees of the municipal social service, who know the social situation in the region.
2. Make more successful use of financial opportunities provided by the State Employment Service.
3. At the national level, non-governmental organizations should cooperate more successfully with the relevant ministry (Ministry of Welfare and Ministry of Education), which is responsible for providing support to these target groups.
4. To organize network events for the company's representatives and the target group with the possibility to coordinate them (LCCI organized such cooperation events before the pandemic).
5. As the LCCI organizes trainings on various topics almost every week, the beneficiaries are invited to participate free of charge. Thus, it could broaden their level of knowledge about specific things and perhaps even help them decide what they want to relate to their future.

## **Slovenia**

1. As the reorganization of adult education is currently taking place in Slovenia and adult education organizer will also be consultants, we will definitely use the methodology and tools developed during the project with our participants. Given that we are very much involved in consulting in our organization, we will implement the developed process and all developed templates in our everyday tasks. Because we work a lot with vulnerable groups, the developed process of empowering low-educated and low skilled people will be added value to our services.
2. Continue the work with potential beneficiaries from marginal groups, motivation to engage in education and employment.
3. Transfer of project results and share of good practices to other adult education providers in Slovenia.
4. Extension of educating communities to other municipalities.
5. Take advantage of the first steps taken during the project to connect more with companies and deepen cooperation with companies.
6. Continue our cooperation with the Chamber of Crafts for the continuation of activities at local level to develop opportunities for beneficiaries to gain work experience in companies.
7. Transfer know-how developed during the project to other similar national and international projects.
8. Prepare new projects for the continuation of activities developed in the EM2 project.
9. Extension of educating communities to other municipalities.
10. Continuing with the community work done so far.

## **Hungary**

These are the ways Hungarian partners like to sustain the project:

1. Trebag, as a training company, sees the potentials of integrating the methodology of educating people within companies.
2. Methodology about orientation and skill matching elaborated in the project is well functioning and with rich accompanying materials. We will definitely use them.
3. Learning and integration with the help of the community is a method which we are ready to transfer to other target groups and sectors.
4. The Hungarian partners established very good networking with each other, with other stakeholders and also the international team, and would like to go on with these.



# CONCLUSION

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

The Handbook of Community Learning sums up all the experiences partners gained in the process of implementing the procedure of supporting marginalised individuals' access to training, education and job experience with the cooperation of the educational, business and public sectors. It also offers a practical guideline on how to implement a similar process by stakeholders willing to help their area's disadvantaged employees. As a conclusion, optimal conditions to establish an ideal so called "school company" and "school community", have been formulated via the experiences of the participating partners.

### School companies

A company which hosts people to get experience, work or training can be called "school company". Normally these places already have experience with internships. This means that they already know legal restrictions, regulations and aware of possible obstacles and advantages. Dealing with people outside of the internship system might raise new challenges. The school company needs to be aware of all rules and regulations, safety and financial issues as well. It is important to have a plan on how to start the procedure from the matching of skills, through the selection of the participants and the training conditions. It is important to have a mentor who deals with the special needs of both the company and the intern.

The company should be willing to offer learning places, in this case for this target group. They should be prepared, that by providing learning place for beneficiary, it can take a lot of time to be sacrificed, in order to explain tasks, work and everything related.

Of course, if the company has previous experience in this kind of activity, it is very valuable, but that is not necessary. The main point is willingness to provide learning place and learn during the process.

### *Characteristics a company should have to be defined a "school company"*

- ❖ a school company should advertise training places for new jobs
- ❖ a school company should have trained mentors for on-the-job training
- ❖ a school company should be prepared to present the company to potential candidates
- ❖ a school company should cooperate with educational institutions in the area
- ❖ a school company should carry out professional content training (traineeships, apprenticeships...)
- ❖ a school company should have an accurate description of work procedures prepared
- ❖ a school company should have an accurate description of job-related competencies and necessary skills for vacancies prepared
- ❖ a school company should cooperate with the local community
- ❖ a school company should introduce its activity to local communities (they should not be introverted, they should live with the environment and also respond to its needs)
- ❖ a school company should provide career counselling for new employees

*Characteristics a community should have to be defined as a “school community”*

- ❖ all stakeholders involved in the community must be prepared to cooperate and to offer all the help and support needed to become a „friendly” education community.
- ❖ should be showing that involved stakeholders’ care
- ❖ should be helping those who need help (help in finding proper education programmes, employment, financing, doing paperwork ...).
- ❖ should delegate a person who promotes active cooperation between various actors in society (municipalities, associations, NGOs, social contacts, companies, etc.). It would be best to delegate this task to one of the municipal staff who knows the area and its needs, in order to implement joint activities and improve the quality of life and social practices.
- ❖ Would better involve social service providers, as social services monitor the needs of marginalized groups. Social workers, together with local community activists, are by nature the biggest motivators of such people.
- ❖ The managers and planners in adult education organizations have to re-focus their organizational structures and their course programs in order to recognize and include marginal groups as a regular target group of their educational activities.
- ❖ building a well operating network between stakeholders, field of business, education and public sector is crucial for the success



# CASE STUDIES

## 7. CASE STUDIES

### 9.1 Italian case study

Cramars started the involvement phase by meeting, one to one, the main stakeholders of the area of Carnia (28 Municipalities + the municipality of Resia in another valley) related to Work, Social Assistance, companies and representatives of the group of municipalities.

Following the meetings where we collected feedback and advice, we decided to send an email to the mayors of all the municipalities in the area involved, explaining the project, and asking for the possibility to carry out the project activities in their communities.

We explained the initiative in detail to the adherent municipalities, carried out a research on the data of the municipality, number of inhabitants, income per capita, demographic trends, etc. and invited the population, but especially the associations and companies of these municipalities, to participate in an event to present the initiative and involve the associations in reporting the possible beneficiaries and companies in hosting them for educational visits, internships or to be testimonials in a course.

In the communities/municipalities involved, we have therefore organized a first evening event to present the project, gathering the companies' membership and the associations' reports.

In a second phase we returned to the same municipalities organizing another event useful to report the results of the dissemination action and to verify who wanted to be part of the community and sign the pact.

We organized a total of 26 events. The last phase was the signature of the Pact.

The main challenge was the involvement of the municipalities and consequently the associations and companies. The involvement, more than through the project, was possible through the data shared during the events concerning the current communities and trend of the future. The participants of the events, thanks to this data understood that, without community involvement, these marginal areas will die and that it is time to take action to make them survive.

The added value of this phase, but above all obtained by the project, was the element of involvement and awareness of the topic of marginal areas. Probably for the first time, the participants in the events have been able to confront themselves with stimulating data and understand that it will be necessary to find common solutions, which do not come exclusively from the political indications of the referents and parties on duty, but that each one must act so that the marginal areas can survive the difficulties mainly related to employability and social and health assistance.

The second added value concerns our institute of adult education, Cramars, which, through the events, has become better known in the area involved and will have, even after the end of the project funded by the European Union with Erasmus plus fund, the opportunity to experiment with other activities in the area but which has also set itself as a reference point for the territory, for the need of guidance and training for adults. The events have also allowed us to verify what the needs of the territories involved are and to develop subsequent actions to be able to somehow solve some of the current needs, especially in the field of work and employability.

In relation to community involvement there are few useful recommendations to be made that mainly concern who and how to involve the public. We started with the stakeholders who in turn gave us indications on who to contact and practical suggestions. Then we involved community leaders already present and active, as municipalities and, in turn, with the referents, we defined a method

and actions to be taken to identify the public and beneficiaries, in fact we made use of the contribution of local associations and working groups already active. Finally, and to conclude, we have brought data to the involved public, we have confronted them with the problems, and provided some solutions available through the project. In this way we have managed to reach a significant number of people who have signed the community pacts and who are ready to be involved in other initiatives.

Obviously, we have to give continuity to the project and guarantee the service provided for the guidance of the beneficiaries and the involvement of local resources / companies even after the end of the project activities, this to maintain the mutual trust established through this type of intervention.

The development of the involvement activity lasted much longer than expected, also because we had to adapt to the timetables made available to us by the contacts and to the useful times to involve a large number of users (especially in the evening). This has delayed the activity of signing the community pact and the consequent involvement of companies and beneficiaries.

### **Involvement of the companies (The needs of the job profile)**

For the involvement of companies, we have used various tools. First of all, our internal knowledge as we have activated an orientation and data collection centre for companies, then the contribution of the Confartigianato partner of the project, which members are all companies, and lastly the dissemination events in which local companies have been invited to participate.

To address Companies, we adopted two methodologies at the same time, the first was to involve companies, through the events, in the initiative by explaining in detail and indicating how the companies could be useful to the beneficiaries; from this approach we identified a list of companies available to host beneficiaries. The second method was starting from the needs of the beneficiaries, so we contacted directly local companies that could have the right characteristics to support the training required individually.

Confartigianato from his side contacted a large number of their companies and, during two internal meetings with members of the mountain area (area of Carnia and Tarvisio) they proposed and explained the project, collecting a list of interested companies. In a second step they contacted directly, one by one, the companies and did an interview with them to complete the company template and shared the information with Cramars for the possible matchings.

The major challenges were not so much about the motivation of companies to host or share their expertise with the beneficiaries, as about having the legal ability to host them. In fact, in marginal areas operate mainly small or very small companies, also and above all individual companies as farms or working in subjects such as crafts, food and agricultural production and construction.

From a legal point of view, these small companies for safety reasons cannot host trainees, so their availability could be limited to give guidance to the beneficiaries and share their skills during the courses.

These were therefore the major difficulties encountered that we tried to solve case by case with alternative solutions, for example by directly accompanying the beneficiaries visiting the companies, allowing them to have interviews, at our premises, with the identified beneficiaries or allowing them direct contact also by telephone since the situation of isolation created with the COVID-19 has only worsened the situation and the possibilities of contact and exchange.

In a second phase, after March 2020, some companies that initially gave their availability somehow have withdrawn their application for obvious security reasons.

About the added value, the meeting with the companies has allowed us not only to get to know many local realities and to appreciate their skills, but also to confirm their willingness towards the new



generations and share the problem of the succession of skills, especially because many family businesses have no heirs to leave the reins of the work done and allow a continuation.

As in the case of the events, the knowledge of the companies has allowed us as Cramars to obtain a mailing list that will be useful in the future to activate corporate training not only to the beneficiaries identified by the project, but also to open the target to the group of our adult participants in the training courses that we carry out, and that in part provide direct practice in local companies through training stages.

We were also positively surprised by the fact that many companies would like to be an active part of the community but that in fact the politicians and administrative managers on duty, especially linked to the municipality of residence, are not very active in listening to their problems.

Often the matching between companies and beneficiaries was difficult to implement, and even for the companies, once they knew the subjects, it was difficult to give a judgement or indications on the best training to be undertaken by the beneficiary to carry out the chosen job.

Companies made contributions regarding professional contents, but these were so specialised that sometimes, for the type of beneficiaries involved, they were not feasible, also because of the basic training level from which they started.

Being economic activities, companies also expect concrete feedback from their involvement which could, on the part of the project, take place only through the availability of the municipality and public. However, this is another program to be implemented that does not only deal with the practical training and new learning of vulnerable people in search of employment, but which mainly concerns the life of small communities and the animation in various fields, starting from that social one.

What we have tried to do during this process was to involve companies on the basis of the needs of some vulnerable people to find work and to be accompanied in doing so by an active community. In this case, the companies understood what their role could be and did not delude themselves to obtain further contributions from the project and the signing of the community pact, they made themselves available, above all, for their sensitivity to the topic and because they wanted to do some useful activities within the community they live in. This is what we also recommend to anyone who would like to develop a community project with the same aims or with other terms of intervention.

Another recommendation we make is that it is necessary to take into account that companies are private entities, with the main aim of making money and with little time available. From this premise it is logical to understand that when involving them, it is important to explain what contributions the company can obtain from this involvement. For example, we have tried, because the funding allowed us to do so, to include some "fragile" beneficiaries in the company at zero cost through internships.

### **Involvement of beneficiaries to the project**

We had already decided on the scope of the benefits when planning the project because, as a training body, we were increasingly encountering marginalised people with difficulties in entering or re-entering the world of work, who could not find help neither from their families nor from the public services to help them. Their marginalised situation was made even more evident by their lack of basic training, but also by their place of residence, which was often far from logistical centres, villages not covered by public transport services, etc.

The involvement of the beneficiaries took place in different ways. First of all, through the stakeholders including the Local Health Unit responsible for the economic / family hardship of the residents of the identified area.

A second intervention took place through the youth information desk that Cramars manages, which indicated the project to users included within the category of the project target.

Another approach, even more consistent, took place during the dissemination events, in fact some beneficiaries were present at the events and directly requested an appointment to verify their skills, while some other beneficiaries were reported by the representatives of the associations involved in the events which, in some cases accompanied them to the appointments established to define their own balance of competences.

Although we have some indicators to follow for the project, we have not put a numerical limit on the balance of competences to be made and not even a well-defined area, opening this possibility also to people residing in a marginal area that was not included in the territory envisaged by the community agreement.

The first difficulty encountered concerned the fact that these vulnerable beneficiaries are difficult to find or to involve, which is why we made use of the contribution of social services and local associations. Great help in this regard was given to us by the councillors for social policies of the various municipalities involved.

The main difficulties encountered were to make the beneficiaries understand what it was and the importance of drawing up a balance of skills and making an initial orientation. It was therefore difficult to get an appointment with them.

The solution found was to explain the project and the value of guidance in detail to the referents, even if it was not possible to continue with a training course.

In fact, some representatives of the associations, in addition to identifying the beneficiaries to be involved, accompanied them directly to the appointments, also because many of them were not equipped with means of transport and often the marginal areas have limited possibility of using public transport.

In some cases, to facilitate the approach to orientation, we went directly to the beneficiaries by making appointments at the town hall of reference, especially when they were unable to move.

The added value relates to the fact that we have helped some of the beneficiaries involved to get back on track and reconsider their value in society and with respect to their skills. In fact, some have started a training course directly in the company, through training internships, others in training courses that included an internship in the company; others have made a personal path to better recognize their skills and "sell" themselves better in the job market activating an active job search.

The importance and difficulties that this target encounters has also been recognized at the level of the communities involved, who have signed the community pact with the specific purpose of helping these beneficiaries.

As Cramars, we have had the opportunity to specialize in the drafting of skills balances and define paths also related to people with difficulties.

For those wishing to undertake a path like this, we recommend to strictly define the target to be involved because in the context of marginality and vulnerability the categories are very broad and there is a risk of falling back on people in discomfort who, more than a requalification, need a real assistance of a psychological, economic, social nature, etc.

As people are also in difficulty psychologically, especially with groups coming from years of inability to work, the advice is to take time to define their needs without creating illusions about their future. Being often closed in on themselves, some beneficiaries have the tendency to live in a non-concrete reality; it is necessary to make a path or a training to bring them back to the local reality, so that they realise what the labour market offers and prepare them to face it.

## **Orientation (interview with the beneficiary/ Comparing existing frameworks and competences repertoires / Matching)**

Orientation and matching did not pose a big problem for Cramars because, in addition to training, our institute is specialized in orientation and coaching and we have dedicated staff for this purpose.

We have internally involved the specialized staff in the project and defined with them, once the beneficiaries have been identified, a schedule of individual appointments. All the beneficiaries involved had a first cognitive and exploratory appointment lasting an hour and a half each, for some of them subsequent appointments were set to define the details of a possible training proposal.

As regards the matching and comparing existing frameworks and competences repertoires, we made use of the very specific standards made available through the ESF by the Friuli Venezia Giulia region which are recognized at national level and fall within the fees identified by ESCO (European Skills / Competences, qualifications and Occupations).

In following the regulations defined by the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region in the preparation of the training plans included in the ESF funding, we are used to refer to European standards every day. More difficult was, however, the comparison with companies that offer detailed skills and closely related to the business needs.

During the orientation phase we left free space for the beneficiaries to talk about their personal aptitudes and talents. Often, however, being in a vulnerable situation, they confused attitude with the will to do, and talent with their own unattainable dreams.

The greatest difficulty was therefore to bring the participants back to the present, to the reality and work available at local level and that, for their preparation or for the proposed preparation they could do in relation to their background.

The counsellors prepared for these situations were still able to bring the participants back to reality, in fact we were not able to integrate all the beneficiaries involved in the training courses but only part of them, those who in some way needed and wanted help from the training, from the company and the community involved.

The matching started from the will and / or possibilities of the beneficiary and consequently the relative companies were identified.

The added value was the possibility for some of the beneficiaries to leave their homes and get back into an active life.

The tools provided by the project were very useful, above all to collect the data (see the reference attachments) of the beneficiaries and companies and stipulate the learning pacts.

The tools used not foreseen by the project were only the direct knowledge of some companies made available to host the beneficiaries. In fact, in some cases, the contact persons of these companies carried out a preliminary interview with the beneficiary involved or gave specific indications to the reference counsellor.

As in all other cases, there was a delay in the involvement of the beneficiaries and in the stipulation of community agreements, which consequently delayed the entire progress of the project and the activities to be carried out.

The envisaged plan has been maintained; however, the difference concerns the method of matching between company and beneficiary.

For this reason, we recommend to those who want to repeat the experience to focus on the final goal.

In fact, the planned foreseen started from the needs of the beneficiary and then chose the company with the right competence and available to host her/him. In some cases, however, the opposite worked better, that is, the company was made available on a specific skill that was suggested (following the skills at the start) to the beneficiary involved, giving an indication or influencing her/his choices. This is mainly due to the fact that some of the vulnerable people encountered were unable to make an individual and personal choice and take decisions, that is why they requested to be addressed, also linked to the job opportunities in the area. This was especially true for elderly users with limited skills, whose aim was above all to reach retirement age by working the last few years.

### **Visit to companies (Planning visits to the employers/ Visits of companies)**

Once Cramars had carried out the skills balances, it immediately identified possible matching with companies that had made themselves available through community pacts, or that had been identified and contacted to ask for possible availability, or with companies that had asked us for the possibility of setting up training courses with them.

Once the matching had been identified, we contacted the referents, explained the figure to be included and asked them how to meet.

The meetings took place differently in each case.

Sometimes we accompanied the beneficiaries to the company for an interview with the contact persons, other times we made an appointment with the contact persons and the beneficiaries directly at our offices.

Following the interview, the owner or contact person of the company gave us feedback on the possibility for the beneficiary to continue with specific training in the classroom, made himself available directly to carry out the training in the company, or indicated other possible directions for the person, especially in cases where, having checked the skills, the distance between the required skill and the available one was too high.

Undoubtedly, the direct visit to the company facilitated the task of making the beneficiary understand the specific work to be done and competence to be developed, because it was verified directly in the field. In some cases of direct training in the company, it was decided in the field which specific tasks to entrust and which responsibilities to omit, depending on how ready the beneficiary felt.

The possibility of matching was the biggest challenge encountered, as there are not many companies available, but there were many beneficiaries, who were sometimes not convinced about the route to be taken. In some cases, it was the companies themselves who, once they knew the beneficiaries, put a barrier on the possibility of continuing the experience.

The advantage is precisely the possibility for the beneficiaries to meet the companies, to be able to talk to the contact persons accompanied by someone and to understand, through these meetings, how the current labour market works.

Of course, accompanying people, setting up coincidence dates, attending meetings or visits takes time. The project has given us the opportunity to use it for the benefit of the beneficiaries.

In conclusion, we can say that the meeting and the visit in the company always gives good results, as far as the beneficiaries are concerned, they can see the work to be done and choose in advance if they want to continue in the path or not, for the companies to establish a contact in advance with the beneficiaries and to give indications so that the entry in the company is favoured. We therefore recommend this method also for other possible matching paths and for the possible introduction of users/beneficiaries into the company.

This matching for Cramars arrived late because the companies had given their availability from January 2020, then there was the stoppage caused by Covid-19 and, when we contacted them again from September to December 2020, in some cases the same companies no longer confirmed the possibility of hosting or facilitating the visits of the beneficiaries. This is why the training courses started late.

### **Learning pacts and training (Definition of the learning plan and signature of the learning pact/ Training and upskilling)**

We had about thirty requests for the drafting of the balance of competences and we involved at least as many companies willing to host beneficiaries, or just to meet them for an interview, or, together with the training center to establish training needs for beneficiaries who wanted to pursue a specific course or competences in a specific sector.

Learning pacts were only established when, after several meetings, there was an effective matching between the beneficiary and the company or, following meetings between the beneficiary and the company, it became clear that the beneficiary needed to do a further transversal competences course.

The stipulation of the training pact took place differently on a case-by-case basis and, in some cases, without the signature of the company itself, which only gave indications following the meeting with the beneficiaries, when specific training was not envisaged.

The beneficiaries generally fell into the category of young people who could not find a job, relatively young people who wanted to change jobs and people in difficulty, sometimes reported by the social services, with great difficulties of integration and the need to be accompanied to get back into the world of work following a long period of inability. In the latter case we found the greatest difficulties because this target group also lacked basic training. All came from the marginal area of the Friulian mountains or foothills.

Several profiles were identified. Three people (young people) did an accountancy course, in order to be able to work in the field of secretarial and administrative work, coming from experiences of manual work, in factories, or as a first work experience. One person, already at an advanced age, was placed in an on-the-job job in the field of agriculture. One person with competence but little practice (first job) did a course in the field of culture and museums. A foreign person got experience in the field of cleaning. One person is learning to be a shop assistant, a lady with a passion for animals is gaining experience in a dog pound. Some other beneficiaries, once they met the company, wanted to continue further with a job orientation path because they did not have clear ideas about their skills and how to face their future.

Of course, we identified the needs through the balance of competences first, then after meetings with job or companies' representatives trying firstly to follow the main interest of each beneficiary.

The learning plan was then easily done, by following the European standards of competences, ESCO profiles and FVG profiles.

Being an adult educational centre, where possible, we tried to match the training needs with the possibility to develop classroom or on line specific trainings in our centre, having the possibility also to get funds from the region FVG to develop specific or individual courses or, in the case of the training on the job, to use the funds for the training ships that are partly paid by the FVG Region and partly from the company hosting the training.

Being a group of beneficiaries, in some cases in difficulty, the main problems encountered concerned the lack of constancy of the beneficiaries to follow the courses or to be present at a correct time at the host company.

Some cases were not recorded because they gave up or abandoned the course early, before its formal end. In some cases, they even waived the reimbursement foreseen by the course itself (as in the case of training ships).

To conclude, we can say that, in general, once we have identified the right path to undertake and when the beneficiaries have been convinced of the need to start learning again, we have achieved very good results.

With unconvinced or inconstant and insecure subjects, especially if already followed by the social services, we found some difficulties in the constancy or in finishing the path itself.

### **Evaluation of the learning/training process and validation**

The evaluation of the training courses carried out so far, concluded or in progress, are positive.

The tools used are different, in the case of courses and formal training we have used evaluation tools that are internal to the training organisation and provided according to the ISO 9001 rules for which we are certified. These tools verify not only the validity of the training course in general, but also assess the support of the managing body, the validity and effectiveness of the contents and teachers, the support of the training or company tutors.

If the course is not completed, we have carried out oral evaluations and obtained from the beneficiaries, tutors and referents feedback directly through constant monitoring.

This allowed us to solve any problems encountered during the course.

The evaluation was carried out taking into account the questions in the evaluation questionnaire provided by the project.

In conclusion, we can say that the modality of the previous skills assessment, followed by the meetings with the companies and the training, were particularly effective and well evaluated by both the beneficiaries and the companies.

Also, the tutor following this pathway, had fewer difficulties in motivating the students and following the training courses.

With regard to the validation of the pathway, in some cases participants obtained:

- ❖ a certificate of participation
- ❖ a certificate of basic qualification
- ❖ an informal validation by the tutor or company contact person and the possibility of including this pathway in the curriculum vitae as (in the case of training ships) it is formally recognised.

### **Follow up and sustainability**

Regarding sustainability, it must be said that internally the project was very useful for Cramars. First of all, to create and strengthen the relationship with the territory of belonging and understand in detail the training needs related to the aspect of skills retraining. The institute has enriched its curriculum and will use the method in the future. Not only the approach concerning the phases of orientation, matching and definition of the training paths but above all the way of involving companies and beneficiaries and the importance of involving the public in a bottom-up formula to the needs, to team

up and collaborate to overcome the problems arising from a marginal area, where life is made more difficult by limitations related to isolation, distances, missing services and depopulation.

We have already activated a large dissemination campaign linked to the activities carried out by the project (through the media) which has attracted the interest not only of an individual and personal nature of some beneficiaries, but also of representatives of other municipalities not involved in the project who have requested specific information and the possibility of carrying out such actions also in their territories.

In fact, the type of action undertaken concerns all the marginal areas and specifically those that are becoming depopulated. So, it can be replicated in a large area of the Alps for example.

To continue the project, Cramars, intends to prevent this relocation inconvenience through information campaigns made to young people leaving middle school (to guide them in training) or by those who have finished high school (to direct them into the world of work and propose them further specific training) above all by knowing, and it is a job that we have started to carry out as a result of this project, the needs and working realities of the territory and the entrepreneurial and working possibilities.

We must not overlook the fact that the project has allowed us to get in touch with a long list of stakeholders and representatives of the municipalities involved with whom, in some cases, we have designed other activities to respond to needs related to training and the involvement of communities that all recognized as useful to stimulate the solution of the problems of the forgotten territories.

With the project we participated in a competition called „ Montagne Attive” (Active Mountains), which rewarded the best initiatives related to mountain development in the category "Active citizenship and common goods for the mountains". The project was awarded together with seven others for the value given by the challenge of community pacts to counteract social and economic marginality. The areas involved in the presentation concern the entire Alpine arc where the project can have a large margin of replicability.

As a result of the project, we obtained a contract with a private financier to set up round tables on the main job sectors in the mountains and, in agreement with the schools, to try to assign or direct young people towards jobs that are useful in the area.

The project, at national level, was presented online at the Inequalities Forum. This has made it possible, at national level and, as far as the experiments in the Inner Areas are concerned, to make people understand the importance of reconciling with the territory and its needs and to refocus on funding that allows the involvement of local communities.

This experience currently allows us to participate, in the design phase, in an AMIF-funded project that envisages carrying out similar activities of community involvement and of people, in this case, immigrants, for an informal exchange of skills and for their integration in mountain communities.

### **Transferability**

As far as Cramars experience is concerned, what we underline, with respect to the effectiveness of the project, is the time aspect, especially with respect to the possibility that a community is involved and can make itself available to favour the training and reintegration of specific beneficiaries into the world of work.

This also depends a lot on the objectives that are set. In our case, we wanted to involve the community above all so that some subjects (companies, associations, etc.) could make themselves available to help beneficiaries in difficulty. This aspect takes a lot of time. In order to do this, we had to organise many informative events, but which could allow participants to express their motivations and at the same time obtain benefits from these meetings. This is the most difficult key to achieve.

In fact, as a good practice, we tried to motivate the participants through numbers, and with the motivation to be able to do something active for the territory and we gave them the possibility to confront themselves also with the referents of the public bodies present, regarding specific needs useful for the survival within the territory.

So, we discovered that the community sustains itself through confrontation.

Another point concerns the training community. What is recommended is to avoid going through the formal training element, especially for the community, because many people who signed the community pact were willing to teach or welcome beneficiaries but were limited by national laws (concerning safety, responsibility towards third parties, etc.). In this case, those who make themselves available to the community to teach, even transversal activities, must be able to be insured or be sure that in no way the beneficiary can be unsafe. For many, this is a big responsibility that they have not wanted to take on.

Also, in the case of school companies, the formal limitation of responsibility is what has somewhat limited the possibilities for action, including company visits.

From a legislative point of view, the owner of the company took a great responsibility in having the possible beneficiary visiting the company. One of the ways to avoid this problem was to have the company representatives and the beneficiaries to meet for interviews at the training provider's premises.

Another suggestion is to use a way to activate the company school that allows the company to be formally bought. In our case we were able to activate on the job training courses which, being formal, also provided for the payment of an insurance for the beneficiary and insured the company against labour controls.

Formative training ships on the job were also motivating for the beneficiaries because they allowed them, during their training, to get a reimbursement of expenses, which was often motivating for those who have been out of the labour market for a long time, but also useful to pay for meals and travel.

Another point to highlight, in order to become a school company is to share the objectives of the training with the beneficiaries.

The training pact, in this sense, has been very useful, also the intermediation of the training institution, which, for the beneficiaries, has allowed them, through the skills balances, to identify the objectives and realise the gaps to be filled. A real good practice to undertake is to obtain the company's needs in advance, by defining them with the manager. Once the beneficiary has been assessed, it is possible to work on the gaps that need to be filled and the possible developments that need to be obtained through the company experience.

In this way, the beneficiary shares and agrees with the path to be followed and the company is able to follow its development with more precise indications.

Obviously also for the company, having a referent available to solve eventual problems with the user, in this case the tutor of the training institution, has been very useful especially in the case of particularly disadvantaged users.



## 9.2 Slovenian case study

### Involvement of the communities

The involvement of the community, which took place during the first phase of the project had the purpose of involving a group of subjects (municipalities, associations, NGOs, social contacts, companies etc.) who know the territory and its needs based on formal and informal relationships, to implement joint actions and improve the quality of life and social practices of Kranj and surroundings.

First, we addressed all main stakeholders and decision-makers in the region. We invited them to participate, either to support us with their signature of the community pact or to get involved in the educational and employment process. Specifically, we turned to companies and organizations that could participate in education and offer employment to the beneficiaries. In doing so, we relied on their needs on the one hand, and on the needs of the region on the other. We included companies that offer service, construction, medical, agricultural, manufacturing, catering, horticultural, cleaning, trade activities.

Then, we turned to organizations working with beneficiaries. We also invited them to participate, either to support us with their signature of the community pact or to get involved in the educational and employment process. Above all, to present to their members the project and the opportunities it offers them for education and employment, and to address and motivate their members to participate in the project.

Education as one of the public goods must not only be valued by the community and the people, but must be advanced and protected or preserved. This is a responsibility of all community role players, stakeholders as well as educational institutions.

The biggest challenge was to explain to the community representatives why signing a community pact. We overcame this challenge by explaining them the role of the community in the project, in education and also the role of the individual or organization in the project. Everyone welcomed the idea of community engagement in this area and recognised the added value.

There was no deviation from original plan.

*Conclusion:* Involving the community helps stakeholders and decision-makers in the region to lead the example. It is also important to address the needs of the region and of all involved stakeholders and offering them a possible solution to their problems.

*Tips for possible users:*

- ❖ Address stakeholders directly.
- ❖ Explain to them their role in the community
- ❖ Show them the benefits of community involvement into education and employment.

### Involvement of the companies (The needs of the job profile)

During this phase we involved potential companies that were looking for workers and new job profiles and were willing to host beneficiaries to support them in the learning phase, contributing to it, and maybe to employ them.

Since we have a wide network of companies with which we cooperate in the Gorenjska region, we invited them to participate. We contacted smaller companies and entrepreneurs with the help of OOO Kranj. We approached the human resources departments of the companies and first introduced them to the project objectives and their role in the project. We contacted about 30 companies, 17 of which responded and were willing to cooperate and accept potential beneficiaries. The companies that did

not choose to do so gave various reasons (they do not accept foreigners into the company, they do not employ, the beneficiaries don't have adequate education, they need an immediate solution and they don't have the time to educate new workers, legal reservations, from experience they do not believe that it is possible to work with this target group). The biggest challenge was to convince bigger companies to participate in the project and to find the right reason for them to invest their time and money. It was easier to convince companies and organizations that lack labour - especially in the service area (retirement home, cleaning services, production workers, ...). The majority of the companies at the end decided to participate after we introduced them to their contribution to the local community.

We realized that it is best for us to implement this phase at the beginning, before knowing beneficiaries' skills for three reasons:

- ❖ 1st, we get a real picture of companies that actually want to participate/cooperate and then in the process it is easier to turn to them and there is no need to look for and convince them;
- ❖ 2nd, we get a real picture of companies' needs and what kind of job profiles they need or look for (areas of work);
- ❖ 3rd, after having all this information we can present the real situation of the needs in our region to beneficiaries and not give them false ideas. It is easier to match them to the companies' needs and to upskill them.

Another option was also to find a company that would like to host a beneficiary after him/her profile has been defined by the educational centre. We used this option only twice. The set of companies we have in our database and the fact that we already knew the companies, their activities and needs well at this stage, helped a lot. Cooperation with OÖZ Kranj and the Employment Service was also of great help to us. In one case, also the involvement of the community helped to include one beneficiary into the work process. In this special case we turned to the stakeholder, who supported us with the signature of the community pact.

The added value of the project is in the research part, the preparation (finding companies, getting to know and, in touch with them, search for links), the closer cooperation between companies and education centre and the support of the community.

*Conclusion:* To involve companies to the project, it was certainly useful to work together with the regional chambers of commerce and industry, which have a strong connection in the business world. It was also helpful to know the needs of the region and to involve companies that were looking for workers and were willing to host beneficiaries to support them in the learning phase, contributing to it, and maybe to employ them.

*Tips for possible users:*

- ❖ Work hand in hand with local chambers of commerce and industry and use their connection and knowledge.
- ❖ Address the companies directly.
- ❖ Explain them their role in the education process.
- ❖ Show them the benefits of becoming a school company.

### **Involvement of beneficiaries to the project**

During this phase we involved stakeholders (associations, NGOs, employment agency, etc.) who knew the territory and its needs and that could intercept and report possible beneficiaries or inform them of the possibilities made available by EM2 Project. This phase concerns the identification of the beneficiaries and their involvement in the project.

We turned to organizations that have already signed the community pact, to organizations we already work with and to other organizations in the region that work with target group.

Once in contact with the beneficiaries, the referent project tutor, explained about the project and the contribution it could give to help the beneficiaries to improve their situation.

The biggest challenge was to motivate beneficiaries to get involved in the program. So, we decided to go step by step and start with those who showed interest for the orientation interview or who would like to get a job. At first, we included beneficiaries who came to us to enrol in our educational programs. Then, also the Employment Agency, which referred about them to us, was of great help.

We also approached and contacted organizations working with beneficiaries. We invited them to get involved and to present to their members the project and the opportunities for education and employment, and to address and motivate their members to participate in it. OOO Kranj, with their contacts, was of great help to us in this area.

After we did circa 35 interviews, the news spread between beneficiaries and organisations; beneficiaries called us themselves to get involved into counselling or to help them to get work.

As an added value of the project for the beneficiaries we would certainly expose the orientation interview, the validation of knowledge and the arranged visits at the company and getting to know the company before employment.

Two challenges which emerged during the project were finding funding for the education/training process and the overcoming of several legal obstacles. The first challenge we tried to solve with funds from other projects and different sources of funding for certain educational programs (mostly by the Employment agency). For some trainings, the costs were borne by the company itself. The second challenge could only be solved by cooperation with the community (Legal department of the municipality, Health safety agency, Administrative unit, Chamber of Commerce, OOO Kranj, Employment agency, ...) which we mainly asked for advice and explanation.

The actors involved were willing to help in solving the problems during the project, which also affected the beneficiaries and their motivation to continue.

*Conclusion:* It is a big challenge to motivate beneficiaries to get involved in the program. They often are unmotivated and in need of a lot of help. It is best to start with those who show interest for the orientation interview or who would like to get a job. It is also useful to turn for help to the Employment Agency and to organizations working with beneficiaries.

*Tips for possible users:*

- ❖ During this phase it is useful to involve stakeholders (associations, NGOs, employment agency, etc.) who know the beneficiaries, the territory and its needs, and that could intercept and report possible beneficiaries or inform them of the possibilities available.
- ❖ The work with the participants is intensive and should be carried out by a qualified consultant.

### **Orientation (interview with the beneficiary/ Comparing existing frameworks and competences repertoires / Matching)**

In this step the beneficiaries met with the guidance counsellor to define her/his skills, in order to match them with the companies' needs. In fact, we used the documents developed in the project to check their usability as often as possible. We adjusted the selection of the templates to the needs of the beneficiaries. Some templates (content) also had to be adjusted to the beneficiaries (especially in terms of work experience). The interviews were conducted by a specially trained guidance counsellor, who also evaluated the process and gave an assessment of the education / training needs for each candidate. A close cooperation has developed on the content of education with the

educator, counsellor, beneficiary and company, which is definitely an added value to the project, as it treats the participant holistically. Given the importance and difficulty of the task, we would advise involve a professional in the field of consulting.

Difficulties to match the Eu competence repertoire with the specific needs of beneficiaries have appeared in professions that do not exist in the EU or are differently named / classified and perhaps divided into more different professions. To compare the content, a lot of reading and knowledge of professional standards and professional competencies was required.

*Conclusion:* All templates developed in the project could be individually used and adjusted to the needs of the beneficiaries. A close cooperation on the content of education with the educator, counsellor, beneficiary and company is needed, which is definitely an added value to the project, as it treats the participant holistically.

*Tips for possible users:*

- ❖ The work with the participants is intensive and should be carried out by a qualified consultant.
- ❖ It is necessary to take time to work with participants as well as companies. It's not worth skipping steps.
- ❖ It is also helpful if the consultant knows the needs of the region, the companies and the beneficiaries.

### **Visit to companies (Planning visits to the employers/ Visits of companies)**

The organization of visits to potential employers took place after orientation interview with the beneficiary, comparing existing frameworks and competences repertoires. This step is necessary to confirm the possible matching between the company and the beneficiary, to define if they are good for each other and if they can find a meeting point valid for both.

The guidance counsellor had to match the attitudes of the beneficiaries with the competences needed from the companies, using the existing frameworks and competences repertoires for the selected profiles to define the gaps between their current skills, knowledge and experience and the job description provided by the company. If the complete matching was not possible, it was necessary to understand if the beneficiary was interested, motivated or if she/he had the chance to improve the missing skills or otherwise find a new hosting company. In some cases, it took a lot of time to find the right match, mostly because of the participants who themselves did not know what they wanted, or they felt too insecure. In two cases, however, the visit could not be carried out for health reasons. It was also necessary to collect data on health and safety regulations in the company to host the beneficiary: safety inside the company, insurance, specific clothes, shoes, time availability, eventual limits for the company to host the beneficiary.

The guidance counsellor also prepared all paperwork necessary for the visit and the calendar of visits for the involved participants. To prepare the calendar of visits, template 3, the guidance counsellor had to know about the problems linked to the beneficiaries' situations such as possible time availability, transfers possibilities, health problems related to the presence in the company. Knowing that and according to company and beneficiary availability, the referent planned the calendar of the visit/s and prepared what was required to make the visit possible (such as suitable clothes and shoes, adequate protections, agreements with eventual labour institutes, attendance registers, badge as visitors, tutor's contacts, the travelling arrangements to the employer's address etc.).

The company usually provided a tutor available to follow the beneficiary.

In most cases we performed 1 or 2 visits to companies. All the addressed companies were ready to accept the participants, show them the company, introduce them to the job that would be suitable for them and talk about possible employment. All involved participants (31) attended at least one visit.

Following the defined calendar, the beneficiary had to analyse the real suitability of the role by using Template 4 “visit report” in each visit, which she/he can do with the help of the guidance counsellor. In addition, the beneficiary should identify opportunities for learning.

Once defined if the company matches with the beneficiaries’ skills and if the beneficiary is suitable for them, the guidance counsellor collected all possible information from the visit reports, also the feedback given by the company tutor, to define the final skills’ gaps to be filled. The counsellor then, together with the beneficiary, wrote the basis for the learning path. (The guidance counsellor has a double role in this part of the process: she/he is not only the beneficiaries’ tutor but can also help the company to define the beneficiaries’ gaps and missing skills.)

*Conclusion:* This process was very time consuming. A lot of coordination between companies and participants was needed, as well as compliance with legal and corporate regulations. All the addressed companies were ready to accept the participants, show them the company and the job that would be suitable for them and talk about possible employment. In some cases it took a lot of time to find the right match, mostly because of the participants who themselves did not know what they want, or they felt insecure.

*Tips for possible users:*

- ❖ It is useful for the beneficiaries to visit the company before starting to work.
- ❖ It is useful also knowing the superiors, mentors and closest associates to break down barriers.
- ❖ To avoid problems, it is also useful to collect data on health and safety regulations in the company to host the beneficiary: safety inside the company, insurance, specific clothes, shoes, time availability, eventual limits for the company to host the beneficiary.

## **Learning pacts and training (Definition of the learning plan and signature of the learning pact/ Training and upskilling)**

The learning pact was designed, in agreement with each beneficiary separately, the educational centre and the company matched based on the results on previous actions (orientation interview, company existing frameworks and competences repertoires, company visit, ...). Core skills which had to be developed were defined with the intention to support the beneficiaries in acquiring competences needed to effectively deal with the tasks that the employment sector requires.

In this process **14** beneficiaries were involved, in which the goal was most clearly defined and achievable. **6** involved beneficiaries were long term unemployed, in the age between 40 and 55.

**8** beneficiaries involved were foreign migrants, low skilled (only primary school or not finished primary school) with very little or no work experience.

The organisation of training and upskilling took place mainly in educational centres and in **all 14** cases also on the job (at the company). Based on the previous actions most beneficiaries lacked professional skills and life skills (language skills, digital skills and literacy). In 5 cases, participants acquired a new vocational education through training (4 month). **8** participants were foreigners who had to learn Slovenian first and were afterwards included into upskilling programmes (digital courses, literacy, maths...). As education centres in Slovenia are accustomed to such training, there were no problems in the process of education and training.

However, as mentioned above, it was a great challenge to obtain funding for education. We tried to solve this difficulty through funds from other projects and different sources of funding for certain educational programs (mostly by the Employment agency). For some trainings, the costs were borne by the company itself.

It was also a challenge to make sense to the signing of the agreement by the community, also in terms of respecting privacy of individuals. We have not solved this issue yet.

*Conclusion:* The organisation of training and upskilling took place mainly in educational centres and also on the job (at the company). Based on the previous actions most beneficiaries lacked professional skills and life skills (language skills, digital skills and literacy). As education centres in Slovenia are accustomed to such training, there were no problems in the process of education and training.

*Tips for possible users:*

- ❖ Core skills which had to be developed should be defined with the intention to support the beneficiaries in acquiring competences needed to effectively deal with the tasks that the employment sector requires.
- ❖ The learning pacts should be designed, in agreement with each beneficiary separately, the educational centre and the company matched based on the results on previous actions (orientation interview, company existing frameworks and competences repertoires, company visit,...).



## Evaluation of the learning/training process and validation

When the learning pact is defined, the guidance counsellor has to monitor the beneficiary during all learning path for two reasons: evaluate the results achieved, matching if results are suitable with companies needs and help the beneficiary in case of difficulties. To do it the developed tools are made available. They were used depending on the type of learning defined.

The learning process and results need to be evaluated in all their phases, to validate competences acquired by the beneficiaries, companies have to recognize them. During and after the process, to evaluate the path and recognize its value, the three parties involved reflect on learning and, in case, redefine or adjust the aims.

Depending on the learning process, different evaluation methods were used.

At the process we used all developed templates

- ❖ Template 6: Self-assessment questionnaire
- ❖ Template 7: Training Diary
- ❖ Template 9: Evaluation of the process
- ❖ Template 10: General evaluation of the training

The beneficiary could also undertake testing (the Holland test, testing foreign language skills or digital skills according to the European framework, ...) or self-assessment and discussed the results with the guidance counsellor or, in case of, on the job training also with the company. The results are a summative assessment of the beneficiary's skills and improved competences after the learning process.

### *Follow up and sustainability*

Given that we are very much involved in consulting in our organization, we will implement the developed process and all developed templates in our everyday tasks.

Because we work a lot with vulnerable groups, the developed process of empowering low-educated and low skilled people will be added value to our services.

### *Transferability*

The way education is managed today is changing. The types of companies and governing bodies that exist today are far more diverse than they once used to be, and they will continue to change. School companies themselves are not new, but the way they are now being used for partnership working, is different than in the past. A school company is not a special type of company or business;

1. it is a company which is in favour of educating its employees.
2. It is a company that is willing to educate even those who are not employed and to give them the opportunity to improve, to make changes, to acquire knowledge, to integrate into working society.
3. It is a company that works for the good of the community.
4. It is a company that also gives back to society.
5. A learning/school company is a learning space and at the same time provides a learning method, where beneficiaries mainly use the acquired theoretical knowledge in practice.
6. It is the most suitable way of training and education because it allows direct integration of theory and practice according to the principle of learning by doing.

The developed model is transferable to other areas.

A Society becomes an educational community:

1. by showing that involved stakeholders care
2. by helping those who need help (help in finding proper education programmes, employment, financing, doing paperwork ...).

In any case, all stakeholders involved in community must be prepared to cooperate and to offer all help and support needed to become a „friendly” education community.



## 9.3 Latvian case study

### 1. Communities.

One of the main partners in identifying the learners and organizing the training process was the municipalities of Dobele and Auce and Tērvete counties. These are three counties where training for marginalized groups is organized with the support intensity of different communities, so the participants in the project felt the best differences in how the municipal specialists, who are more or less responsible for this area, provide support. We consider the involvement of local authorities and local action groups to be a very important factor, as local government social workers, local volunteer action groups and various adult education organizations have made a huge contribution to the countryside. "Local activists" knew people's needs most accurately and at the same time offered support in organizing training.

Of course, there was no immediate answer, several discussions had to take place to explain the objectives of the project and the overall benefits of the cooperation. Municipalities are most concerned about the financial resources that should be invested in training these people, as they are very scarce for small municipalities. Adult education is not one of the priorities in financial planning in Latvia, it is not financed by the state, and it is supported differently in each local government. In local governments, where special attention is paid to the educational process at the management level, more funds are also planned for adult education, mainly funds are attracted through various financial programs. In general, Zemgale region is one of the most active supporters of adult education in Latvia, therefore it was supported by Dobele and Auce and Tērvete municipalities.

Given the development of production in these regions and the shortage of labour, it was a greater challenge to find learners with the right skills and motivation to work. Social workers in the municipalities were very responsive and often helped to achieve a common goal: to motivate the learner and his / her family members by offering free training opportunities, etc.

The staff of the project did not have any difficulty in finding ways to address each of the municipalities, as they themselves are people from local communities. It was initially a telephone conversation with the representatives of the municipalities responsible for these target groups, followed by meetings, participation in meetings or other events. In the territory of municipalities, they are mostly local communities (parishes), social services and educational institutions, including the Orphans' Court, sometimes even municipal police. Of course, active non-governmental organizations working with this target group (mothers' associations, women's organizations, etc.) play an important role. These are organizations who mostly cooperated for various reasons with this project's target group. The involvement of municipal politicians is important, we mostly used municipal meetings where leading politicians meet. After first informative meetings, followed more concrete discussions and common decisions on how to cooperate further.

On the part of public authorities, we mostly collaborated with the State Employment Agency (hereinafter SEA).

Information about the project was available on the website of the training centre, in leaflet format in municipal institutions, local communities, educational institutions and other institutions mentioned above. These were used for municipal meetings where leading politicians meet.

In total, there are about 21 parishes in the three counties, where the project employee selected the most suitable employees to provide information about the project and its goals, as well as to obtain information about the project target group.

Recommendation about school community (see point 13.)

## 2. Companies

Although entrepreneurs are very interested in attracting employees, at the same time they have a disbelief that the potential employees we offer will be a long-term support for the company. There is not always a bond of trust between companies and educational institutions. Several companies refused training despite staff shortages, due to previous failures in working with a public employment agency. Very often the so-called long-term unemployed (who have not worked for more than 1 year) have not successfully returned to the labour market. Lack of responsibility and motivation are most often the main obstacles at work. There were a number of cases where the company was unable to provide the trainee with a placement supervisor for a variety of reasons: mainly a lack of funds and human resources.

Due to the intensive work schedule of the companies, problems arose with the organization of the first meeting. If the company agreed to the conversation and it took place, then the result was mostly positive. Companies were selected according to the learner's wishes, abilities and motivation. It is very important for a mentor to find a suitable learner from the very beginning, here everything is decided by the mentor's professionalism.

In total, all 10 learners continue to work in these companies, which gives us a successful result.

*Recommendation:*

- ❖ You don't have to be a big company with huge resources to support on-the-job training. The key is the company's management policy, regardless of whether it is focused on human resource development and what its action plans are.
- ❖ companies should establish a regular exchange of information and cooperation with the local government and the educational institution, in order to discuss the needs of the company and the supply balance.

## 3. Involvement of beneficiaries in the project

In order to involve the beneficiaries in the project, the initial phase was very important and labour-intensive: information on the project objectives, individual negotiations. Of particular importance to the long-term unemployed was the mentor's emotional support in training the willpower, discussions about self-education methods in achieving goals, developing motivation and promoting self-confidence. The emotional, informative and instrumental support of the mentor in getting to know the professions was very important. Here, too, significant support was provided by the municipal social workers, helping to find the best possible solution so that the beneficiary could attend a psychologist's consultations and motivate him or her to start training. The emotional and professional support of the mentor in is a very important factor to the beneficiary. More than 30 learners were interviewed, and after several conversations, visits to companies and the preparation of a training plan, only 10 learners showed a truly purposeful interest in training in the work environment. Training agreements were also concluded with 10 beneficiaries.

*Recommendation:*

- ❖ In order to improve the involvement of beneficiaries in training, stakeholders need to be able to successfully use the power of the social network and the ability to build mutual trust.

#### **4. Orientation interview with the beneficiary**

Prior to the visit to the company, the learner had several discussions with a DMC specialist to determine his wishes and skills. Depending on the situation, discussions with some beneficiaries were repeated. After the interviews, the learner completed a career test. The orientation interview with the beneficiary is not always positive at the initial stage, most often it is followed by the next one, in which the motivation and abilities of each interviewee already crystallize or vice versa: unwillingness to work in the offered profession.

In order to identify the learning needs of the target group, they were asked to indicate the professions or skills that the respondents would like to learn now or in the near future. Only groups of professions / skills that were suitable for the target group's current qualification level and expected prior knowledge were offered for selection.

- ❖ Respondents with secondary education wanted to improve foreign language and computer skills for future profession, less persons with primary school education have indicated it.
- ❖ The next most frequently mentioned need is to obtain or renew a category C or D driving license and to cook.
- ❖ During the vocational orientation, about half of the respondents indicated the need to acquire a profession related to the previous occupation. This indicates that the beneficiary does not want to devote much time to the acquisition of completely new skills, but to supplement those skills that are very much needed on a daily basis.

*Recommendation:*

- ❖ Questionnaires should be simple and short.
- ❖ The interviewer must have the skills of a negotiator and the skills of providing psychological support.

#### **5. Comparing existing frameworks and competencies**

The ESCO classification was used to compare the repertoire of different national / local skills: <https://ec.europa.eu/esco/portal/>

Companies are not always familiar with this document. It was difficult to adapt the repertoire of EU competences to the specific needs of the beneficiaries, as there were professions which do not exist in the EU or which are differently named / classified, possibly divided into more different professions. It took a lot of reading and knowledge of professional standards and competencies to compare content. This was mostly done by the consultants.

*Recommendation:*

- ❖ To complement and improve the repertoires of EU competences with the specific needs of each beneficiary country.

#### **6. Matching.**

When the list of beneficiaries and companies was large enough, the consultant advised employers with the most suitable beneficiary by comparing job profiles and beneficiary skills using company

and skills balance templates, as well as a reminder of the recognition of relevant work and life experience in learning outcomes.

After several negotiations between the recipient and the mentor, the wishes and possibilities were harmonized. Full harmonization was not always possible.

*Recommendation:*

- ❖ It is not always necessary, to fully harmonise the wishes of all 3 parties. It is important to set the highest priorities among all 3 stakeholders.

## **7. Planning visits to employers**

The organization of visits to potential employers in the companies was necessary for the recipient to get acquainted with the working environment in the company, as well as for the company to evaluate the recipient's wishes, skills and interests. It was important here that all three parties agreed in between: the beneficiary, company and the educational institution. This was an intensive and time consuming process for the consultant, lasting several months, as the schedule of company visits was often postponed.

Prior to the visit, it was necessary to collect data on the health and safety rules in the company, in order to receive the recipient: internal security, insurance, special clothing, footwear, time availability, possible restrictions for the company to receive the recipient.

The company had to provide the employee/mentor to show the beneficiary working environment/demands/possibilities. In small companies, there was not always one person to lead the internship in the work environment. It was often the business owner.

Knowing the needs of the company and the recipient, the consultant planned a visit calendar. Some companies requested suitable clothing and footwear, a visitor's ID card and the teacher's contacts for the visit.

*Recommendation:*

When planning a visit to a company, keep in mind that:

- ❖ Many company managers look at potential employees only from an economic point of view, not from a social point of view.
- ❖ Companies want to spend as little time as possible on visits and joint discussions with the beneficiary and the educational institution.
- ❖ Companies often do not have suitably qualified staff.

## **8. Company visits**

Once an agreement has been reached with both parties (the beneficiary and the company), the planning of visits to the companies started.

The times planned by the companies do not always correspond to the times of the beneficiaries, then priority is given in favour of the entrepreneur and the other party must try to adapt accordingly. It happens that after a visit to the company, the potential employee refuses to do his / her professional training there. The reasons are various: unsatisfactory working hours, working environment in the company. Sometimes the learner understands that this job is not suitable for him/her and it was just

a fad, other times in addition to the main job, the learner also has to do other jobs that will not be included in his / her profession description. Situations are different and require an appropriate solution.

There are also situations where the employer in the company is not satisfied with the skills of the learner and does not want to provide additional training or provide additional bonuses so that the potential employee is trained in the company.

15 companies were visited.

The beneficiary was introduced to the description of the company, the opportunities and conditions offered by the company in work-based training.

The mentor then gave them specific visit dates and instructions on when and where to meet with the company person in charge of on-the-job training. Some companies offered a special time when the beneficiary could study the working conditions and decide on further training. In 5 cases out of 15 beneficiaries did not agree to the training process in the company. The reasons were various: in 3 cases they could not agree on the practice times (the beneficiaries lived too far from the company, public transport did not run and they did not have a private car themselves). In 2 cases, their internal expectations did not match what was seen in the company (work process conditions). In turn, the company's representative analysed the suitability of the beneficiary for the company's work needs. Form 4 was used for this analysis.

Once the company had determined whether the beneficiary was suitable for them, the consultant gathered all possible information from the visit reports, as well as the feedback from the company coach, to determine the optimal option for both parties and wrote a learning path with the beneficiary.

*Recommendation:*

- ❖ The company does not always have a professional skills assessor, so the consultant / mentor should not only support the beneficiary, but also help the company to precisely define the skills and knowledge of the required employee.

## **9. Definition of the Learning plan and signature of the Learning pact.**

After evaluating the results of the interview, the learner has been offered to acquire a professional continuing education program. That learning pathway is developed and illustrated in an individual training plan, which outlines the competencies to be acquired and is adapted on previous experiences and the needs identified in the orientation phase. The Community agreed with the learning content.

The learning pact have been signed by the three key players of the action, namely the learner, the company and the educational provider. We signed 10 learning pacts.

The Companies agreed to share the skills, the Beneficiary agreed about the path and the educational centre, in accordance with the company expert and the beneficiary, defined a training programme. The training program was matched with the company's needs and the beneficiary's skills. Educational tools which have been used, were suitable for the implementation of the skills required by the company and also for the beneficiaries. So, beneficiaries could better define their gaps and improve their performances, thanks to practical training. For signing the individual learning pact, we used template 2, template 4 and template 5.

*Recommendation:*

- ❖ It is important to coordinate and cover all aspects: not only professional but also social (possible training time, transport, financial opportunities ...)

## **10. Training and upskilling.**

The training and upskilling process was not a preformat given training, valid for everybody, but it was a result of the individual guidance defined before and tailored to the beneficiaries' and to company's needs.

The learning processes were organized in different ways, balancing the possibilities of all three parties (learner, educational institution and company). According to the needs of each, individual consultations have also been provided - the training specialist and the lecturer provided support both to the group as a whole and individually to each beneficiary. For the learners requirements during the acquisition of the program were specific conditions: if the student misses classes for 20% of the total number of hours due to various reasons, beneficiary is deducted from the group, does not receive a qualification certificate and does not obtain a specialty, as well as loses state funding. Such conditions were for those beneficiaries who were trained in cooperation with the State Employment Agency. In order to start training, a financing agreement was concluded accordingly. The learner has been introduced in detail to the course of the training process - program, time schedule, requirements. The management of the training course and the supervision of the activities were supported by the documents developed in the EM2 project. 10 learners started the training and all of them finished it.

This indicates that the interaction between all parties during the training process was successful. On a positive note, the EM2 project mentor's continued interest, supervision, advice and negotiation with the contracting parties. The mentor spent the most time on motivation and individual conversations with the beneficiary. At the end of the training process, there was a greater sense of self-confidence on their part and a desire to complete the training.

*Recommendation:*

- ❖ The only recommendation we feel to give is that vulnerable beneficiaries must be followed constantly, in order to keep their motivation high, verify their constancy, anticipate problems, talk weekly with them about possible difficulties and find possible solutions.

## **11. Evaluation of the learning process**

At the beginning of learning process all the beneficiaries were informed about the content and requirements of the training. Later, the mentor worked more individually and discussions, situation analysis, consulting were performed.

Tests and exams were organized according to the training program. In the project, 10 learners had a qualification exam, which consists of 2 parts: test and practical tasks. All 10 beneficiaries had a proficiency test. In order to evaluate the training process in general, the questionnaire developed in



the project was used (Appendix 9). An individual approach is provided in the learning process, taking into account the knowledge and skills of each learner in the respective subject.

The evaluation process in the company was done involving a mentor, a beneficiary and a representative who led the work-based learning.

Various assessment methods were used: the self-assessment method, in which the candidate, together with the mentor, analysed the learning process in the company and assessed progress, determining which skills and knowledge have been acquired. Each beneficiary was provided with the diary, where they filled in the list of works performed every day, while the responsible person for practise evaluated it with a mark and confirmed it with a signature. The results of Template 7 "Training Diary" allowed the mentor to assess whether the next action was appropriate. It is the official document of the organization. The educational institution was responsible for the use of the diary.

In addition, the educational institution received a description of each beneficiary from the company, where there was described the attitude towards the work and colleagues.

This step-by-step monitoring was also useful to redefine further learning and check if the beneficiary considered the program useful for their future career, as the questions in the template encouraged the beneficiary to see the future with a positive attitude due to improved skills. Also, it provided an opportunity to reflect on difficulties and obstacles and to encourage the beneficiary to plan in advance how to overcome them.

The beneficiary, with mentor's help, also carried out self-assessment and then discussed the results with the company. These results were the summary assessment of the beneficiary's skills and improved competencies after the whole learning process (we used Template 9 and 10). All 10 beneficiaries were completely satisfied.

*Recommendation:*

- ❖ It is important for all three parties to be involved in the training final evaluation process: the educational institution, the practice manager in the company and the beneficiary.
- ❖ It is important to use the evaluation of the practice diary in the evaluation process.

## **12. How to become a school company**

- ❖ The company should be willing to offer learning places, in this case for this target group. They should be prepared, that by providing learning place for beneficiary, it can take a lot of time, in order to explain tasks and everything related. Probably, these are the main characteristics for a company to be defined as a "school company".
- ❖ Additionally, if we take a look at the companies, that are implementing work-based learning (WBL) in their premises, they have a particular person, who has completed training courses to be eligible to work with apprentices. It would be a perfect case if the company would have such person as well.
- ❖ Of course, if the company has previous experience in this kind of activity, it would be very valuable, but that is also not necessary. The main point is willingness to provide a learning place and learn during the process.

**13. How did your communities behave as school communities, what are the main criteria to become school communities.**

- ❖ There must be a person who promotes active cooperation between various actors in society (municipalities, associations, NGOs, social contacts, companies, etc.). It would be best to delegate this task to one of the municipal staff who knows the area and its needs, in order to implement joint activities and improve the quality of life and social practices.
- ❖ The municipality is a successful mediator in the overall development of the county, including the development of enterprises.
- ❖ A social service that monitors the needs of marginalized groups would be a very important player in this situation. Social workers, together with local community activists, are by nature the biggest motivators of such people.
- ❖ The managers and planners in adult education organizations have to re-focus their organizational structures and their course programs, in order to recognize and include marginal groups as a regular target group of their educational activities.



## 9.4 Hungarian case study

### Involvement of the communities

Trebag and HCPP started the community involvement phase (and the whole process) by brainstorming within the members representing the two organizations. It became clear from the beginning, that knowledge on the social and labour situations of the region and existing networks to address communities' value more than any kind of blank advertisement. As the representatives on behalf of the Chamber were significant actors in a deprived region with outstanding contacts it soon was decided to concentrate on that area. The area in incomes and employment possibilities is underrepresented in terms of industry, touristic and other service providing sectors as has always been a centre of agriculture. It means that in the rural area 60-70 % of the habitants live from agricultural sector. This feature was in tandem with the fact that the Chamber's profile was of agriculture, too. Most people in the area could hope any employment from this sector, which previously in socialist times offered a stable income and employment possibilities via cooperation system, but by today offers and markets have changed drastically, and some people might have needed help including advisory service or training to find its way among these changed circumstances. Besides in this area small scale farming is traditionally widespread where mainly vegetable and fruit production mean the main income. In the selected area the main produced vegetables and fruits are strawberry, tomato, pepper, salad, cherry, sour cherry, apricot. These are all labour intensive and knowledge intensive cultures which require special production tools, materials. Therefore, the Hungarian team decided to use their network in the region to look for interested stakeholders and community leaders to be part of the project. This led the team to the Kunbaracs municipality, who facing challenges of reintegrated community members into the world of labour anyway, was glad to receive support from us on this field and was open to cooperation. There were several meetings to lay down the guidelines of cooperation and the Municipality involved other community leaders like that of Kerekegyházi Civil Guard Association, Kiskunbaracs Community Centre, Local Water Supply Organization, Kocsis Pál Agricultural vocational school, National Organization of Small-Scale Producers and Service Providers, 15 farmers and agricultural SMEs, Cultural Association of Kunbaracs. These partners' objectives are to support small scale farming, ensure livelihood in rural area and help to develop rural living circumstances. The only sector is the agriculture which provides job possibilities for under educated people who live in this less favoured area, other way people are forced to move to the nearest city, Kecskemet where the Mercedes car factory and its suppliers offer job possibilities. Nevertheless, the preparatory work of the interested parts proved that local people are open to learn more about agricultural activities and to work in place as freelancers. That is why the main focus was to develop learning paths which suit to the regional opportunities and traditions.

Otherwise, in Hungary the nationally led social work programme helps rural less educated and jobless people to go back to work and find their own way, which started in 2010. The leader of this programme is the Intern Ministry who charged the local governments with coordination. All the local governments could choose the most fitted sector and educational programme to develop their community. Additionally, the local governments face with the end of the project which presents a new challenge for local stakeholders. This programme and the preparation of the life after the programme meant the basis of our common work.

The challenge was to match needs, already existing programmes, and the services we could offer. To that end, we had several meetings involving representatives of various positions of the municipality and brainstormed the ways of harmonizing the above elements. It got clear that our first idea that we concentrate on the agricultural sector has proved the good track.

Another challenge we had to face was the local government elections in Hungary which fell on the given period. As we had local stakeholders from the political sphere, we focused on the point that the elections would affect the events and the programme to the least possible extent and to be able to give disadvantaged people the highest benefits possible, helped also by timing.

The added value of this phase was that we introduced the project to many actors in the region and also that our institutions could present themselves and our profile and services got better visibility.

The conclusions and recommendations we could make in this phase include that involving a community alongside already existing networks and contacts is much more effective than offering „blind dates“. Mutual trust is a good basis to start activities in these sensitive areas like unemployment and social integration.

The deviation from the other countries activities in the phase might be that we picked very early the sector we will concentrate on, while others mapped various sectors before reaching conclusions.

### **Involvement of the companies (The needs of the job profile)**

When we decided about the community involved, that determined the region, the sector and also the potential contributor types. Again, like in the community phase it was very useful that we had personal contacts with a lot of actors in the region. We contacted these companies once one by one, then organized a small gathering to some, where we explained the benefits of the project. Most of these companies are from the agricultural sector and the majority are private-owned small or medium companies. The recruitment of companies and mediating persons was continuous. We addressed some at the very beginning of the project, to map the needs of these types of companies, then after meeting the beneficiaries and talking to the community representatives we added those which matched needs or were further recommended.

Main challenges were to convince companies about the benefits to deal with our beneficiaries who were mainly unqualified and for a certain time unemployed in majority. Company leaders might have suspicions to unqualified workforce coming from out of their contacts. They were also interested in qualification of these people as the main work force in the region is offered by the Romanian guest workers who missed in 2020 due to the COVID-19 regulations. The prospective to offer beneficiaries long-term employment contract were not really the focus as it was easier to make an agreement on the first step: to offer visiting and orienteering possibilities to the target group. We hoped that in the long run if personal contacts have been established, that could open up ways for longer time cooperation even employment contracts.

The area of Kunbaracs used to be an influential agricultural centre where the main employers were cooperatives of fruit and vegetable productions. Due to changes of economy and ceasing of these cooperatives, the area lost its employer capacities and big fields were fallen apart into smaller farms. Outdated producing methods and lack of food production sector characterize the agricultural production nowadays. Production is taken over by farmers. We contacted several of them when we prepared the signature of the community pact. We tried to reach and select those who could offer placement or hosting matching the needs of the beneficiaries and who could offer also mentoring of participants or who could provide seasonal workplaces.

The community pact was signed by 3 such companies. By these companies we tried to offer to beneficiaries' knowledge which they could instantly use in their daily labour activities.

- ❖ multiplier event provided training about plant protection and forcing methods. These kinds of trainings are generally expensive and not widely accessible in Hungary, that is why the target group was satisfied to have opportunity to follow trainings from well-known experts,

- ❖ new kind of knowledge on plant protection and small-scale farming processing, and farming technics,
- ❖ new contacts with experts.

### **Involvement of beneficiaries to the project**

The involvement of the beneficiaries took place through the invited communities. Most of the potential beneficiaries were in sight of the Municipality of Kunbaracs. As a socially responsible action, the municipality had entered various programmes financed by the government, in order to give these people a chance of some public work and thus reintegration into society. This type of programme provides meaningful activities, which are useful for the public and are compensated by a minimum wage and they have a determined timeframe. The programme makes participants able to get the chance to re-enter the labour market only slightly, as sustainability is not ensured. As the programme was coming to an end, the people welcomed new opportunities we could offer via the project. Other members who were not part of the programme but were unemployed or ready to change careers also entered our beneficiary group. In the end we managed to address about 40 people of whom we made orientation interviews with 30 of them. Out of these 30 those were the selected ones for training and full programme who proved to be motivated and cooperative.

The challenges were mainly from restricted time to get involved and also fear of engagement. In Hungary further education after a certain age, especially in the countryside is very unusual. Mostly people over 50 regard education as something solely taking place at public schools in a formal way. The perspective to getting a training might be more fearful for some than promising. That's why when we presented the project and its aims, we had to be careful about how we used the concept of education. Some of our beneficiaries were illiterate or functional illiterate and with them we needed to express ourselves more simply and clearly to get and keep them motivated to be involved.

Talking to our beneficiaries had two main added values. On the one hand we managed to get them involved and as a snowball effect they invited other participants from the circles of their acquaintances into our programme. On the other hand, we got to know them better and explored more their mindset in terms of needs of labour and of social intercourses. This way, we could better pave the path for the next steps of our programme.

As a recommendation we would highlight here as well the power of social contacts and network and the building of mutual trust via the community leaders. Also, investigating into the lifestyles, capacities and needs of our beneficiaries in a personal contact will improve effectiveness.

### **Orientation (interview with the beneficiary/ Comparing existing frameworks and competences repertoires / Matching)**

Our staff who made the interviews with the beneficiaries mostly have pedagogical background and experience with dealing with educating various groups of people. None of them had a qualification enabling them specifically in orientation or career management. However, certain representatives took part in the orientation course in Udine within the project boundaries, where the framework of the orientation was trained with the leadership of a trained university teacher in the field. These participants shared the knowledge and documents gained at the course with other members, who led the orientation interviews. These interviews followed a recruitment phase for potential interested people, then an information day on the project and its objectives. Here detailed information was shared about what people could expect from participating in the program. For the orientation interview we used the documents shared by the project but adapted them to our context. Based on professional materials, we composed a small questionnaire with basic information about the applicants' backgrounds, needs and competences. When they filled in these small questionnaires,

we set with them one by one and had a talk about their views of the future training and employment and their needs and wishes. We had a sample questionnaire composed for the oral interview, but we handled the questions quite openly, modifying them if necessary, according to previous responses of the subject. We took notes and following the interview day we summed up the conclusions, shared it with other interviewers and wrote a report. The report was also enriched by the information exchange with the stakeholders of the municipalities who know the beneficiaries personally.

With matching we tried to harmonize needs of the beneficiaries and the local government and possibilities of companies. In reality, it was much harder than on paper, given the restricted resources of the companies for hosting external people. This challenge was overcome partly by not trying to offer employment, but just orientation visits. The main problem was that companies are not used to host trainees, mainly not to educate adults. In this region just one demonstration farm was settled who accept students from vocational schools. So, the challenge was also to introduce this kind of activity to the farm managers who could use this new competence in the future.

Other challenge was that some applicants were illiterate or functional illiterate people. That meant that filling in our simple questionnaire even sign the paper before entering conversation was hard and frustrating. We helped wherever we could, and, in some cases, we dropped those questions where answers were difficult to find. In talking we had to gain confidence and then participants mostly opened up for answering and got enthusiastic about the programme. We got a huge assistance from the leaders of the public labour programme who work together with the beneficiaries. In some cases, these facilitators help us to „interpret” the questions for older and less educated beneficiaries.

### **Visit to companies (Planning visits to the employers/ Visits of companies)**

We ran 4 different learning paths for the 10 selected applicants and searched for companies or entrepreneurs who could guide them matching these profiles. There are very strict rules in Hungary for internships. Also, these companies are small companies and for various reasons for them it is not easy to offer new positions however the selected beneficiaries were interested in agricultural knowledge to be able to become entrepreneur. That is why the main objective of the visit was 1, to have an orientation on what the given sector could offer and 2, to accompany theoretical study with some practice-based work-based learning 3, to offer personal relationship to access knowledge flow. The companies below took care of the orientation training of the beneficiaries considering their individual requirements.

#### *Fruit production and care about fruit trees*

The first hosting company was a family enterprise established in 2003 in order to provide knowledge for farmers in the biggest Hungarian horticultural region. The leaders of the company recognized the strong needs for help in plant protection as in this region the farmers are small from 1 hectare to 50 hectares, but they can produce high added value. The company supports the local farmers to be able to product and to minimize plant protection costs and damages. The company has fruit production activities as well and an experimental farm which offers trainings and practice to children, students from vocational schools, universities and adult trainings and experts. The main profile is to present fruit production and small-scale food processing in a damaged less favoured area where the sandy soil allows fruit production which more criteria as irrigation, strong plant protection and prevention activity, freeze prevention.

The main scope of the company is to spread the knowledge in integrated pest management (IPM) and sustainable nutrient management via advisory service. The experts accompany farmers, agricultural firms and cooperatives which means meetings and on-farm monitoring in every 2 weeks or monthly bases. More cooperatives require continuous evaluation of the pest use and daily

consultation if needed. Besides this service, the company helps producers to access Common Agricultural subsidies in the programme of Agri-Environmental Measures, which means administrative supports. The third axe of the activities is education, which covers IPM, organic pest management, soil a nutrient management for farmers, hobby farmers and professional adult trainings for plant protection experts to get certification to follow their activities.

The company work together with the National Food Safety Office, Chamber of Plant Protection and Chamber of Agriculture, Agricultural Research and Education Centre and other relevant NGOs in the sector as Alliance of Fruit producers. In the topic of education one of the most important partner is the local agricultural vocational schools who provides places for education, organizes courses for adults (farmers, experts) and VET students and who organize practical day together with the company.

The matching in this case was easy as more beneficiaries mentioned that they are interested in fruit production and organic plant protection knowledge. This company was able to host less educated people as they are used to host and train small farmers. However, the challenge was to organise practical training as the owners didn't let the people to practice in the orchard as it can cause irreversible damages. During the visit, the owners of the company presented the fruit production technologies and technics and the small-scale food production for students as jam, syrup, fruit juice processing from fresh fruits. They also participated in learning activities where experts spoke about small farming gardening technologies and integrated pest management.

In these cases, beneficiaries were able to see the structure of orchards to get knowledge on plantation and to know more about the needs of species.

### Crop production

The second company was a family enterprise which produces on 1000 hectares, mainly crop production but they manage fruit production and animal breeding. The main cultures are wheat, triticale, rapeseed, sunflower, corn, potatoes, lucerne, grassland, pastures, grapes for wine, quince, apricots. They hold beef cattle and horses. They follow the rules of integrated pest management and organic grassland production, where the 600 beef cattle can graze in the open air. The 30 horses are used for carriage (sport). From the family the 3 sons and the father work in the production and the mother the 3 wives manage the administration. They participate in many practical and vocational training to support the local schools and training centres. They accept practitioners, university and PhD students for seasonal works in order to present the latest technologies, knowledges.

The company is an experimental farm of harmonisation of new digital farmer technologies and traditional knowledge and also how generations can collaborate. They participate at the EM2 project as trainers who accept participants for learning about operations in crop production. During the spring they can present the spring field works as nutrient management, labour work, soil management, in summer they show the best management practices for harvest and in autumn they introduce the labour work and seeding technics.

In this company the beneficiaries got acknowledged on practical experiences, which means that those who were interested in crop production participated in real field demonstration. In this farm the farmers hosted the selected people with a short presentation about their history and principals of farming methods, then participants had a look on a real farm day. After the demonstration participants could raise technical questions. In this case the company was able to transfer practical knowledge to complete theoretical one.

### Vegetable production

The third company is a vegetable producer in Alföld region where the production in green houses and foliage is typical and has a long tradition. He grows paprikas, tomatoes, watermelons, root crops, strawberries. As the region is covered by sandy soil the vegetable production means the possibility

for farming and income. He sells their raw materials on wholesale market and he processes food for farmers' market. He has detailed knowledge on strawberry and tomato, paprika forcing which require professional knowledge and practices. He offers internship for students and trainees to share his knowledge and technologies. As agricultural engineer, he is able to transfer the technological knowledge on more level as the students understand the main operations and interactions.

In these cases, beneficiaries came to see and to understand the techniques of planting in foliage and to prepare the nutrient management for seedling. This phase is a very special point in vegetable production and require more theoretical knowledge besides practice. The theory was transferred on the first demonstration farm and in Kunbaracs while the practice was presented by the third company. Fortunately, we organised these opening days in springtime which made possible to hold the presentation before the lockdown due to Covid-19 crisis.

### **Learning pacts and training (Definition of the learning plan and signature of the learning pact/ Training and upskilling)**

In cooperation with the Kunbaracs Municipality and the companies and institutions participating in the pact, 30 beneficiaries were selected and interviewed in October 2019. The agricultural potential of the region and the personal motivation, competencies and work experiences of the candidates were considered and analysed the most during the interviews.

The 10 persons finally selected had long been unemployed, who had finished only primary school. They had some work experiences mainly as semi-skilled workers, and they showed a preference for agricultural activities. Neither of the participants had clear objectives, and they were unaware of the workflow and operations of the particular activities. They had no practical knowledge either. Although they had formerly been involved in agricultural education, the skills and competencies they acquired were not enough to find a job or start their own business.

The Learning Pact was concluded with 10 persons, and it was signed by the partners, including the representatives of the companies that provided the place for the practical trainings, at Kunbaracs on 18 February 2020.

Taking into consideration the similar fields of interest of the 10 beneficiaries, the following learning paths were defined jointly with them:

- A) Introduction of **small-scale manufacturing processes** to show how to prepare products such as jams, pickles etc. The significance of small-scale production is increasing in the region, hence skills acquired to prepare 'homemade' products may help the participants re-enter the labour market.

There were 2 beneficiaries participating in this training, who were taught basic hygiene concepts, and their practical and communication skills were also improved.

- B) **Basics of forcing**. This was a theoretical and practical training focusing on the specialities of strawberry planting.

There were 3 beneficiaries participating in this learning path, who were also trained to tolerate co-workers, cooperate with each other and to successfully manage conflicts.

- C) **Operational steps of row crop cultivation** (potato and sweet corn). The objective was to deliver the theoretical bases of row crop production for the participants. Furthermore, practical training was also planned within professional practice days organised at a farm.

There were 2 persons choosing this learning path, who obtained additional knowledge of the workflow and operations.

D) **Basics of market-gardening.** As green pepper is produced on a large area in the region concerned, practical steps to follow and tools used at the beginning of green pepper growing were presented.

The 3 beneficiaries participating in this learning path were, furthermore, trained for problem-solving, time management and self-checking.

The theoretical trainings were carried out on the spot, because the participants could not cover travel expenses.

The trainings were organised by Trebag Ltd, which involved the local tutors and growers that participated also in the preparation of the community pact. The trainings were implemented at Kunbaracs and the area.

The trainings could be carried out before the COVID pandemic, but the practical activities at the farms have become restricted due to the official regulations, and they have been implemented only partially to date.

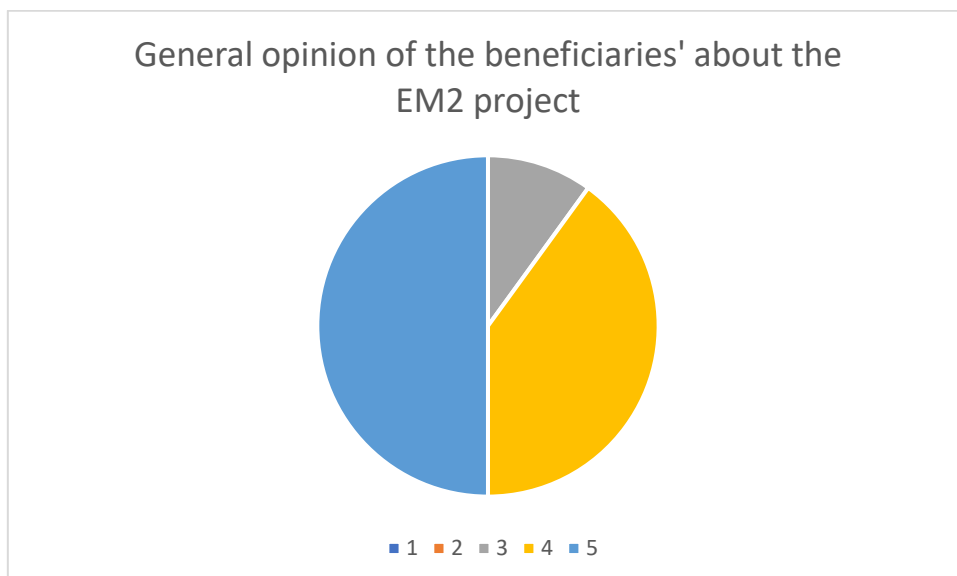
### Evaluation of the learning/training process and validation

Evaluation by the beneficiaries

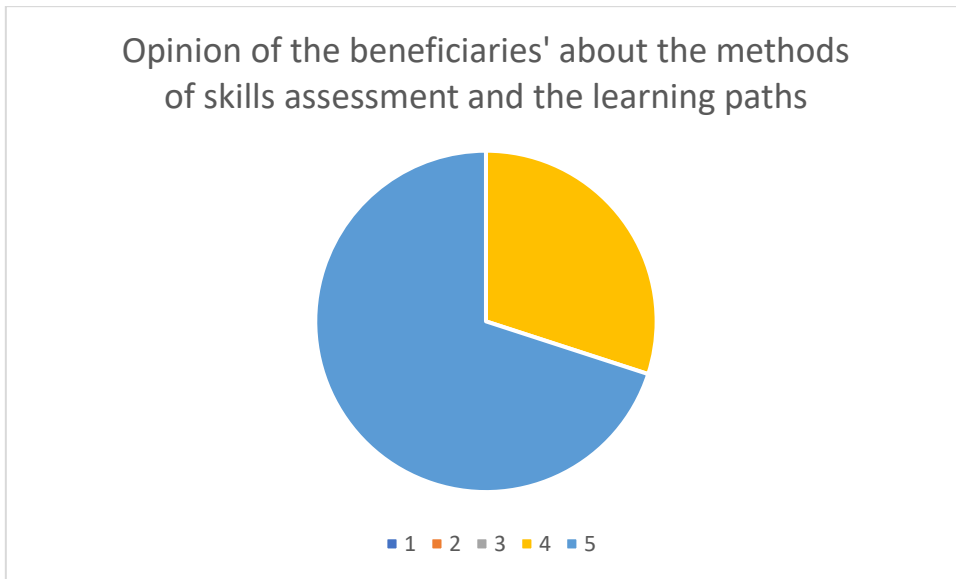
The beneficiaries filled in the evaluation questionnaire when they finished the course, but the practical activities at the companies could not be implemented in spring due to the COVID pandemic.

The 10 beneficiaries evaluated the project as follows:

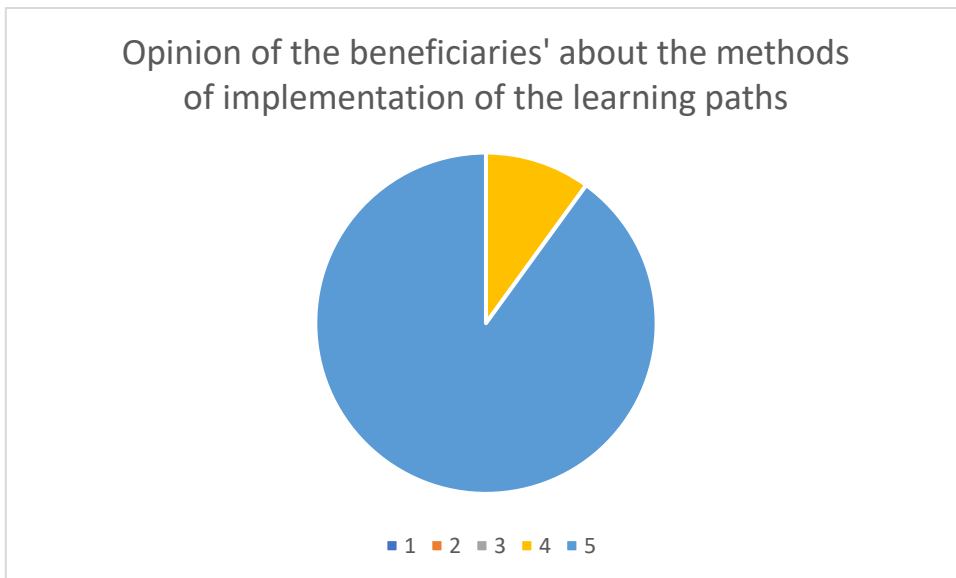
- ❖ 90% of the participants evaluated as 4 (good) or 5 (excellent) the EM2 project in general.



- ❖ All the participants fully agreed with the methods of skills assessment and the learning paths jointly defined.

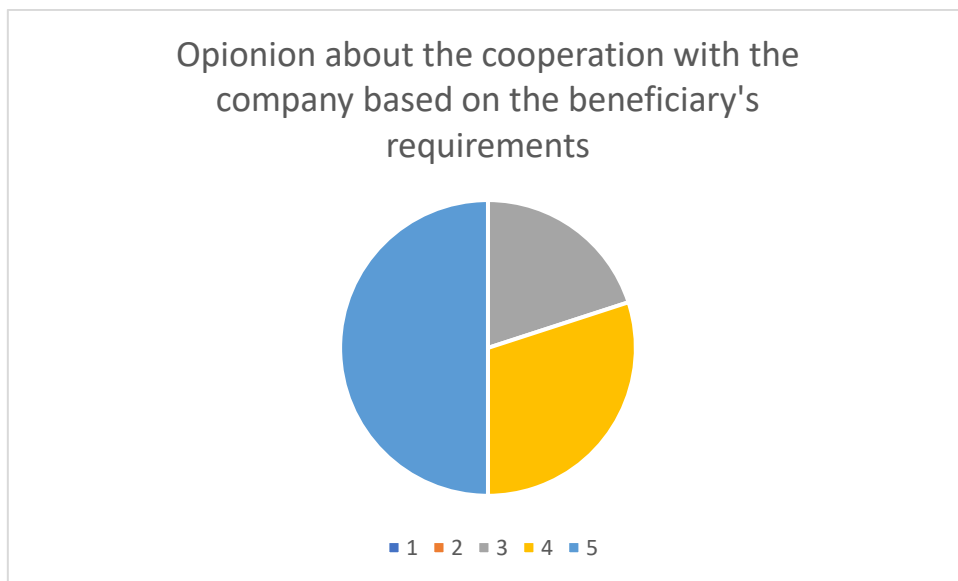


- ❖ All the participants fully agreed with the methods of implementation of the learning paths due to the similar interests, requirements and possibilities of the beneficiaries.

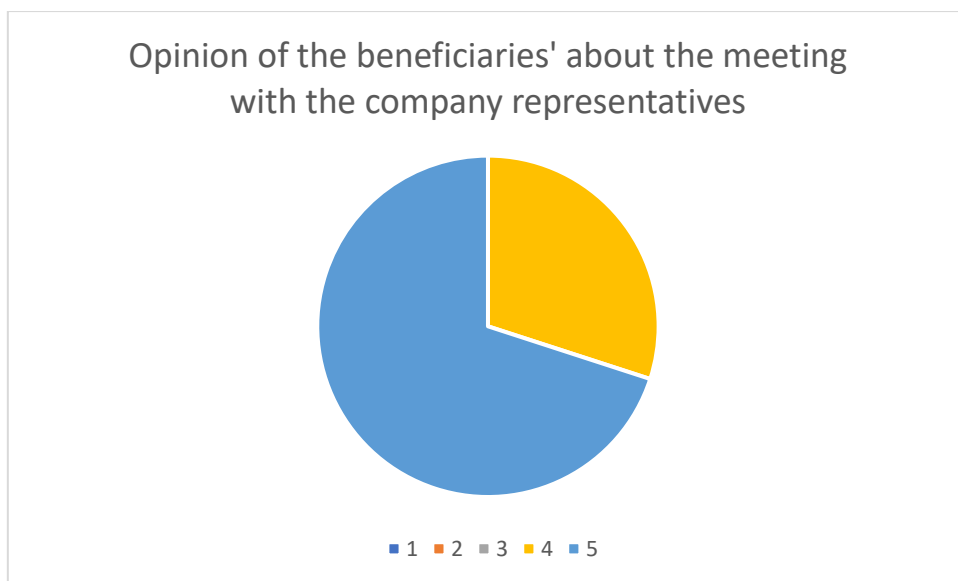




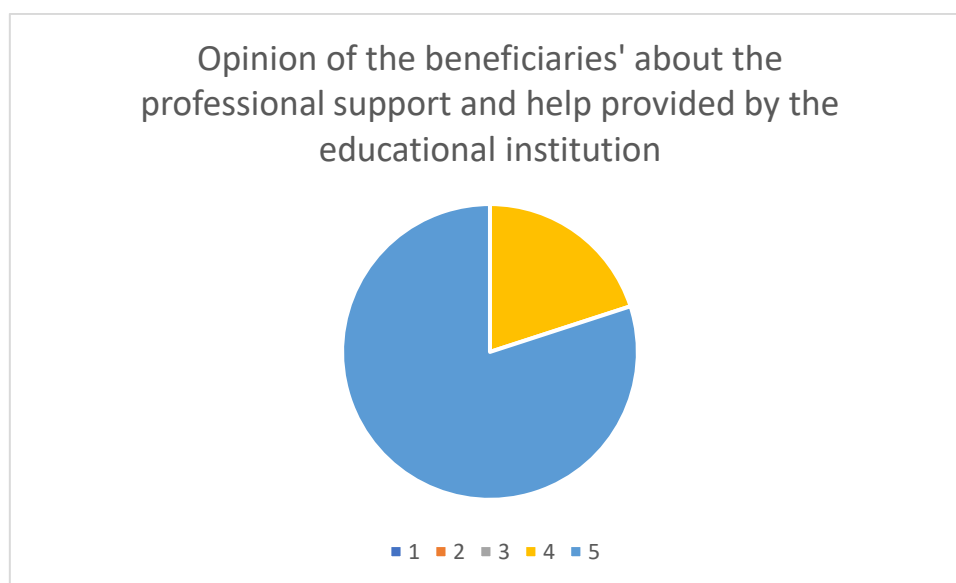
- ❖ Personal cooperation with the stakeholders and practical activities at the companies could not be fully implemented due to the COVID pandemic.



- ❖ The following figure indicates the beneficiaries' opinion only about the meeting with the company representatives.



- ❖ The beneficiaries were highly satisfied with the help and professional support provided by the educational institution.



The theoretical trainings of the learning paths planned originally were fully completed, whereas only one practical activity could be carried out after the first wave of the COVID pandemic, and another one could partially be completed due to the arrival of the second wave of the pandemic.

### **Follow up and sustainability**

The presentations delivered to introduce the community pact called the attention of the participants to the possibilities of producing agricultural products easily even on a small scale. Moreover, it was highlighted by the lecturers that organic production may make it possible to produce 'homemade' products of good quality in an inexpensive way. Feedbacks from the participants clearly indicated their particular interests in being involved in trainings focusing on small-scale food production and technologies in forcing. This latter field was the most preferred by the participants, who considered that knowledge obtained in the field of forcing may provide them a good chance to re-enter the labour market.

The participants were highly satisfied with the practical knowledge obtained during the trainings. It was their general opinion that the presentations delivered could help them start the particular activities, and that further information should be received in practice.

This necessary information could be obtained during practical trainings that helped the beneficiaries become confident in the use of their skills and competencies.

### **Transferability**

To sum up the visits it must be mentioned that not all the companies are able to become school company, but this selection is fine to complete each other's. This is a general point in agriculture sector that farmers are not ready to host students, trainees without special preparatory work. The main challenge in the agricultural sector is to find the best date and season to be able to present practical methods however in these seasons farmers are overwhelmed, so very precise organisation

is required. In these cases, a more detailed preparatory work is necessary to teach farmers to be able to host practitioners and to present practical knowledge, however in our case it was also an important task to make accessible the knowledge for the less educated, marginalised persons.

One of the biggest challenges was to find farmers who can host people and to have time and capacity to demonstrate good practices. The difficulty was to find language to transfer knowledge for less educated people who are afraid of education and they totally refuse the systemized adult trainings. That is why we had to find place and methods where these people can listen and accept, adopt knowledge. In our case the municipality who works with our beneficiaries in national social labour programme could help to facilitate the process. The facilitators of the programme always accompanied the groups and where the experts were too theoretical, they could help to find the common language e.g.: provide some examples from their daily life. These people also helped to find the host farms and to explain the needs of the selected group.

The stakeholders who signed the pact had more meetings to determine criteria, processes to elaborate the programme of the pact. This collaboration was essential to sensilize all the participants, to understand the local needs and to find eligible hosting companies.

The criteria to select the company to be school company were defined by the stakeholders:

- ❖ to possess more fruit species to present the engraving and plantation techniques, integrated pest management in fruit to preserve bees, lizards, useful living organisms,
- ❖ to have capacity to spend more day with beneficiaries and to present the farm,
- ❖ to have competences to present practical knowledge,
- ❖ to have places to host beneficiaries,
- ❖ to have deepen theoretical knowledge on fruit production and pest management,
- ❖ to be able to accept and handle marginalised less educated people.

The main conclusion of our work is that collaboration between local stakeholders and experts is needed for becoming school community. Time for preparatory work is important to explain needs and expectations for all the participants.

## **8. LIST OF TABLES:**

Chart1 - Number of beneficiaries

Chart2 - The age of beneficiaries

Chart3 - Beneficiaries' gender range

Chart4 - Beneficiaries' educational background

Chart5 - Area of Interest

*Chart6 - Companies involved*

Chart7 - Number of beneficiaries

Chart8 - Beneficiaries gender

Chart9 - Education level

Chart10 - Area of interest



This Handbook has been produced thanks to the work and collaboration of Education in Square Marginality project partners



Cramars Social Cooperative (IT)

[www.coopcramars.it](http://www.coopcramars.it)



Union of Craftsmen and Small and Medium  
Enterprises in Udine (IT)

<http://www.confartigianatoudine.com>



Dobele Training Centre (LV)

[www.dobelemc.mozello.lv](http://www.dobelemc.mozello.lv)



Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LV)

[www.chamber.lv](http://www.chamber.lv)



Adult Education Centre (SI)

[www.luniverza.si](http://www.luniverza.si)



Regional Chamber of Craft and Small Business  
of Kranj (SI)

[www.oozkranj.com](http://www.oozkranj.com)



Trebag Intellectual Property and Project Manager  
Ltd (HU)

[www.trebag.hu](http://www.trebag.hu)



Hungarian Chamber of Professionals and Doctors  
of Plant Protection (HU)

[www.magyarovenyorvos.hu](http://www.magyarovenyorvos.hu)