

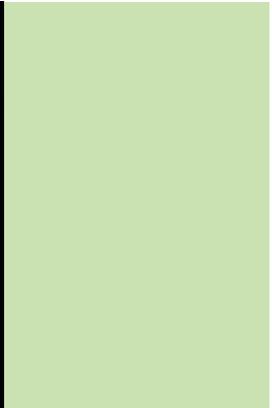


INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS FOR HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION

The best international educational projects in Hungary



2015



INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS FOR HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION QUALITY AWARDS were awarded to institutions involved in public education, VET and adult education projects supported by the European Union's education and training programmes.

The partnerships recognised with the Quality Award addressed various matters, conducting excellent project management activity, and their achievements have had outstanding impacts on the entire organisational culture.

These Quality Award winning projects received funding through the Lifelong Learning Programme between 2007 and 2013. For the period between 2014 and 2020, the programme has been replaced by Erasmus+, which also provides a number of opportunities to gain international experience, to exchange views and to learn from each other, at all levels of education.





QUALITY AWARDS, 2015:

- Don` t Worry, Be Healthy!

II. Rákóczi Ferenc Baptist Primary School and Basic Art School (Téglás)

- Act your Job!

Rogers Foundation for Person-Centred Education (Budapest)

- Adapting to the World of Work in an Integrated Environment, in Spain

Empíra European Consulting Nonprofit Ltd. (Nyíregyháza)

- Learning Group: We Can Do It!

Szorgoskert Nonprofit Ltd. (Miskolc)



comenius

School Education



Hamburger under the cover, eggshell in the cola Do you think you lead a healthy lifestyle?

INSTITUTION:
II. Rákóczi Ferenc Baptist
Primary School and Basic
Art School
(Téglás)

PROJECT TITLE:
Don't Worry, Be Healthy!

COORDINATOR:
Beáta Kissné Lesnyák

The small town of Téglás has 6,500 inhabitants; there is one kindergarten and one school, and in the school, there are more and more enthusiastic teachers who firmly believe that international relations open up a window to the world and also that it is very important – at least as much as a healthy lifestyle. The combination of the two led to a quality award winning project, the first Comenius project of the school.

How extensive are the relations of your school?
The school's international relations go back to several decades ago; we regularly organise student exchange programmes, joint exhibitions and concerts with the schools of our German, Polish and Czech twin towns, as well as our Romanian art twin school in Satu Mare. However, it was the first time that we had been involved in a several-year-long international project. Formerly, we only sought to provide an opportunity to our students to practice the foreign language they learnt; however, when we decided to join a Comenius school partnership, we already had another goal besides practicing the language: we wanted to do that with a focus on an important issue which otherwise receives little attention.

How did you choose the topic and the partners?
We had a number of interesting ideas while we were looking for partners. But when the Turkish coordinator of the project found us with the topic focusing on health protection and health consciousness, we joined with great enthusiasm. Although the idea originated from the coordinator, we planned the project together. It was an important criterion that we should use the language of children to call the attention to the importance of physical and mental health, and that we should not only explain, but also make them see and experience what and how many temptations they are exposed to today in the world of fast food, sugary soft drinks and energy drinks. We consider it important that they themselves should come to the conclusion whether something is healthy or not, because that's what real learning is.

How did you achieve that?
For example, we experimented with various foods and drinks. We put our own sandwich, made from fresh ingredients, under a cover, along with a hamburger bought in a fast food restaurant, and then we observed what happened to them for days. Our own sandwich became mouldy within a few days; however, the hamburger still looked fresh after three weeks, due to the preservatives and additives, although we knew it wasn't. Another experiment of ours demonstrated what cola does to your teeth and stomach. We put eggshell



Don't worry be healthy!



the values of the project

The outstanding value of the project is that the school has launched an English and Hungarian bilingual class, inspired by international experiences. The innovative nature of the partnership comes from the fact that the entire school and the local communities were all involved in addressing an issue which stands close to the primary school age group. The benefits and achievements of the project go far beyond the limits of the two-year partnership – the work done by those involved can be exemplary for other institutions, too.

into cola and water, and after a few days we observed that it was completely broken down in cola, whereas in water it remained intact. We shared the findings of the experiments with the whole school through the school radio, and we gladly found that cola consumption in the canteen significantly decreased.

Health is a topic which is not confined to school. Did you try to address the parents or the wider environment of the school?

Of course, since in order to change the way of thinking, the involvement of the parents is just as important as raising the students' attention through the amazing findings of the experiments. At the beginning and end of the project we had a questionnaire completed, in which, besides asking about children's eating and sporting habits, we also asked parents questions like "Do you ever do sports together with your child?". We also invited them to various project events; they attended the health day, the sports day organised during the international project meeting and the common cycling organised on the mobility week. The result was easy to measure through the questionnaire: a lot more parents gave positive answers at the end of the project. Besides the parents, the town's kindergarten, too, joined certain activities, and the local government, as well, proudly took part in the opening ceremony. As a result, more and more institutions join the opportunities offered by the Erasmus+ programme.

What are the lasting effects of the project?

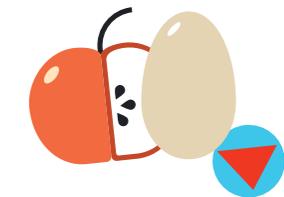
Due to the partnership, an archery club was organised at the school; besides, we also organise a health day every year, where doctors, nurses and health visitors help answering the questions which arise. We also hold fruit days and go on with the survey – children continue to complete the

questionnaires, which makes the improvement of life quality measurable and demonstrable. But the project brought the teaching staff closer to each other, too. The direct tasks only involved 8 or 10 of them, but almost everyone joined the organisation of the international meeting in Téglás – it was real team work. The project motivated many of them to start to learn English, so that they can take a more active part in the next such work. During the discussion classes with the form master, health preservation has become an important issue, and the school canteen's offer is gradually becoming healthier, too. Still, the greatest achievement is the introduction of bilingual education at the school.

How did you get this far?

In fact, it's been an old dream of ours, but the real impetus came from this project, more specifically from the Spanish partner. During the two years of the partnership, we didn't only address the issue of health consciousness, but we also tried to learn from each other from other aspects. So, for example, we visited the classes of our partners. The Spanish school has been operating as a bilingual school for years. Their experiences, their practices, as well as encouragement from our maintainer confirmed us that it's worth introducing this type of education – in only one class first – from September 2014. Thanks to our maintainer, we also had a lector by November: an American missionary couple moved to the town with their three little daughters, the eldest of whom continues her studies in the bilingual class. With her, children can practice English in everyday situations, too.

CSILLA SZABÓ





www.actyourjob.eu

ACT YOUR JOB A job interview on stage

idea; they are operated as part of the local government in a region with a high rate of unemployment. The local government has launched a number of programmes to reduce unemployment, and the Spanish partner institution thought it could be worth using creative tools, too. They worked out how the issues of unemployment and finding employment could be linked with theatre in cooperation with an actress and personality developer.

• Did drama pedagogy prove suitable for developing the skills which can help young people find employment?

Definitely. While preparing for the play, a professional helped the young people change their appearance and manner of speech, called their attention to how to dress and how to speak and articulate understandably – these skills can all improve the chances of a successful job interview. It's also important to develop their self-confidence so they try to seek employment at all. It was mainly the Spanish partner that reported the phenomenon – also well-known in Hungary – that many find themselves in a negative spiral after a few unsuccessful tries, and they give up looking for a job or put less and less energy into it. The preparation for the theatrical play, however, meant a sense of achievement for the children, as they found they could continuously concentrate on a long process, while even enjoying themselves. All this supports job seeking from the aspect of subjective experience; they felt more like dealing with

the issue and started to think much more positively about work. It's also important that most of the children had never had a chance to stand before an audience, and being able to do so, as well as the success of the play, further enhanced their self-confidence.

• Did you also integrate information about job seeking into you work?

Each institution involved addressed this field in their own particular ways. In the case of Rogers Foundation, besides theatrical preparation we also organised other programmes for the students; we held, for example, a thematic day focusing on the world of work, where the children could choose from a number of issues the one they wanted to hear about, and the teachers discussed work with them accordingly. We also took the children to interactive theatrical performances, where they first watched the play and then they could talk to the creators. I consider it really positive that our institution kept up the motivation to enrich children's experiences with such programmes even beyond performing the concrete tasks related to the project. The scripts otherwise clearly show that each performance focused on the world of work. One of our plays, for example, demonstrated how to perform well or poorly at a job interview, so at the rehearsals the students and the drama teacher considered job interviews as real life situations.

• Did the project bring success to the lives of the students involved? Did it make it any easier for them to find employment?

Most of them are only secondary school students, still preparing for the world of work, so there have only been some that reported actual changes; they, however, told us that now they are more conscious about

their appearance, articulation, etc. Although it's not a Hungarian achievement, but one that demonstrates the impact of the project well is that out of the ten Spanish participants three found themselves employment before the end of the project, and many expressed that they started to seek employment with greater enthusiasm.

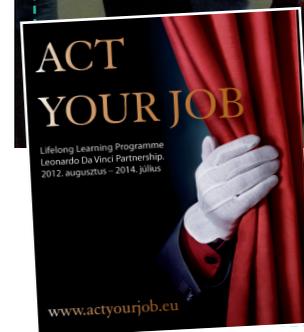
• What do you consider the most exciting feature of the project? Why is it an advantage that it was an international partnership?

During the visits abroad we could meet our partners. For the children it was a particularly great experience, because they could see that their peers in England, Hungary, Poland and Spain had similar problems. Thus, they can examine their own lives and difficulties in a wider context. They can also broaden the collection of their problem-solving strategies, as they understand that it's possible to step out of their own world and look at the same thing from a different perspective. The travels abroad in themselves guide them in this direction. The same applies to the institutional level: talking to the Spanish drama teacher, for example, helped us adopt new approaches.

• Is there going to be a sequel to the initiative?

We and our partners have won funding for another project, which is partly the continuation of this one: the goal is to develop the practical use of the method worked out. In each institution, we would like to employ a drama teacher who integrates the achievements and experiences of the project into everyday work. So the project lives on and develops.

ANETT ARANY



the values of the project

One peculiarity of the project is that it was implemented by – besides the Hungarian foundation school – two universities and a labour centre, and therefore they could consider various aspects when developing the skills needed to start work or to find employment. The students involved could gain self-confidence and have become more conscious, which can increase the number of successful job seekers and reduce the number of young people who are dissatisfied with their jobs.

INSTITUTION:
Rogers Foundation for
Person-Centred Education

PROJECT TITLE:
Act your Job!

COORDINATOR:
Zsuzsa Vastag

Using unconventional methods to develop the skills of would-be employees should always bring exciting results, especially when theatre and drama pedagogy are used to develop young people's personalities and to facilitate adaption to the world of work. The experiences show that a method based on drama pedagogy works excellently in practice, too.

• How was the project built up?

On the one hand, the coordinators were responsible for international cooperation, on the other hand, each partner institution and their students staged two theatrical performances. We sought to prepare the children to the world of work, for which we used various theatrical techniques. Within Rogers Foundation for Person-Centred Education, the implementation had two branches: one was Rogers Academy, whereas the other was 'Kulissza' Skills Development Workshop, integrated into the Foundation. In order to harmonise the activities, we conducted intensive consultation with the teachers responsible for the children and the actual tasks. They told us that they'd greatly enjoyed integrating new aspects into their work which are otherwise not in focus.

• Why drama pedagogy?

It was the Spanish partner who came up with the project





Mentally challenged young people in the world of work

Gardening apprenticeship in Spain

INSTITUTION:
Empíra European Consulting Nonprofit Ltd. (Nyíregyháza)

PROJECT TITLE:
Adapting to the World of Work in an Integrated Environment, in Spain

COORDINATOR:
Eleonóra Bánszki

Six young people with mental disabilities had a chance to challenge themselves in real work situations in Spain. They completed a three-week apprenticeship at a company manufacturing gardening products. Due to the project, discussions have been started with the local government about employing the young people.

Why did you tailor the project plan specifically to this target group?

Our organisation has two founding members: one of us has worked a lot with people with disabilities and had very good experiences, and I was the one committed to implementing EU mobility projects. The combination of these two led to the idea that we should organise a Leonardo apprenticeship in which young people with Down syndrome could also participate, besides their non-disabled peers. This has been our first project, and since it was successful, we thought that in the future we would only concentrate this target group, that is, people with disabilities. All the more, because we established the organisation exactly with the purpose of taking our share of social responsibility in some form.

Why did you choose gardening?

The participants of the projects were young people coming from a rural environment who had been familiar with cultivating plants in their parents' garden since their

childhood. Most of them are young people with moderate intellectual disability who didn't have a real chance to learn any other vocation. The Spanish host institution was recommended to us by a former partner of ours, so the jobs they could offer were given: besides the dressmaker's shop, the laundry and the joinery plant there was also a plant nursery – that's how demand and supply met.

What were the challenges during the implementation?

Not only had most of our beneficiaries never been abroad, but they'd hardly ever left their village and never spent longer periods away from their families. We were afraid that we would need to comfort and encourage them during the apprenticeship. Therefore one of the accompanying teachers was a social educator who prepared the group for the apprenticeship. The deep, personal relationship developed with her greatly helped the young people adapt to their new environment. The staff of the host organisation also welcomed us very warmly, which encouraged the apprentices to make friends through metacommunication, and thus the lack of language knowledge wasn't an obstacle, either. However, it was an unexpected problem and a great challenge that they refused to eat local food which differed so much from what they'd been used to. Fortunately, we could convince them to taste the food before forming an opinion, and they finally got used to Spanish cuisine.

From a social point of view, what do you think was the most outstanding feature of the project?

This target group is ignored by many, they're almost invisible. With this project, we directed the attention to them and we proved that these young people should be given a greater role in society and in the world of work; at the host institution, in a large plant, they performed well after a short training period, and they manufactured products of the same quality as anybody else in this trade. They were given serious duties and responsibilities since the very first day, a challenge they rose to.

The effectiveness of the project became known to some local entrepreneurs and the local government, which became more open to employing people with mental disabilities: they've already taken actual steps so these young people can participate in the local social land programme. Until this becomes reality, they have been given some land by the "Caring Love" Social Centre so they can grow vegetables for themselves and for local social institutions. The young people involved in the apprenticeship programme are enthusiastic and self-confident, playing a leading role in the team. There are a lot of jobs within agriculture which don't require a high IQ, but skill, diligence, commitment and in many cases, a tolerance for monotony, all of which they possess.

What do you think makes your project stand out among the others?

Basically, this project does not differ from the others: the goals and the achievements were the same as the ones we would have had with non-disabled students, perhaps only the emphasis was laid elsewhere – taking into account the simplicity of the work, the focus was

not on high professional standards, but on the confident execution of the work processes, adapting to the working environment, personal development and demonstrating the capabilities of the target group. Today, a number of organisations work for the social integration of mentally challenged people and implement good projects of far larger scale than ours, but I feel that with this programme we, too, have at least contributed to the construction work with one brick, which is definitely a very important aspect.

What would you suggest a new applicant should pay attention to when planning and implementing the project?

One aspect of key importance is flexible project implementation. You can always change your plans a little, or reorganise the activities, if it serves the project well. In our case for example, due to the several-hour-long siesta in Spain, a long working day would have been very tiring, so we changed the planned schedule and reduced the number of working hours a little. Another very important thing is that the host institution should be selected carefully in order to find the right partner. However good an organisation or a project plan is, however skilful and hard-working the participants are, nobody is going to feel comfortable in the project if the interests and goals don't meet somewhere, if those involved expect different things from the project. The key to the success of our project was that the two organisations matched perfectly. I think if applicants pay attention to that, it can add a lot to their project.

the values of the project

A strength of the project is that it has demonstrated that also people with mental disabilities are capable of creating value through work – that they have a place in society and in the world of work. The actual result of the foreign apprenticeship is that discussions have begun with the local government about employing the young people with mental disabilities. The project has also raised the attention of other employers; the closing event was attended by the representatives of several organisations and enterprises.



ZSÓFIA NAGY-SINKÓ



"A smile can overcome linguistic barriers"

INSTITUTION:
Szorgoskert Nonprofit Ltd.

PROJECT TITLE:
Learning Group: We Can Do It!"

COORDINATOR:
Mónika Szakács



The title of the project (We can!) carries the message that the partnership of the five countries can be implemented despite the great distance. The international partnership sought to increase the independence of students with disabilities and to complete their integration. To that end, they established so-called learning groups with the involvement of people with disabilities, supporters, parents and professionals, who drew up the work plan of the project, prepared the beneficiaries of the mobility programmes and organised the meetings.

• What was your motivation to submit a grant proposal?

We were approached by a Polish partner institution, the coordinator of the project, whom we met during a study trip. Our main motivation within the project is to develop people with autism and other disabilities, as each partner has been working with this target group for long years. We felt that this way we could give them something more, while providing our colleagues an opportunity for professional development.

• What made this project special for you?

The lots and lots of experiences, the 'unnoticed' learning, the good atmosphere of the meetings and the friendliness of our partners.

• Last year 54 projects were completed within the Grundtvig Learning Partnerships programme. What made your project stand out among the others?

I think it was the special target group and their active involvement in the project. Perhaps that was what made it special, as well as the strong cohesion, the close cooperation among the partners, which shows in the implementation of the activities. It's easy to create high quality in such a well-organised team.

• What did the participants enjoy most during the project?

The most important experience for all was how much people with disabilities were capable of with a little help and support, once they were given an opportunity, and how quickly the common goal brought people from different cultures together. A participant nicely put this thought into words like this: *"It doesn't matter what distances there are between the countries; what matters is the common thinking and the common values – these will help us overcome any difficulty."*

Another student of ours wrote this during the study trip: *"You can even overcome linguistic barriers with a smile or a handshake."*

During the mobility programmes, the students could participate in activities which were completely new within their own community: folk dancing with physical disability, throwing spear as a blind person, being a



volunteer with a disability. They learnt that it was possible to communicate and understand each other even when they spoke different languages. In an international environment, gestures and body language gained importance.

Participants were given an opportunity to learn to introduce themselves, to speak in front of a group and to conduct team work with new people. During the project, several programmes focused on encouraging participants to stand up for themselves and dare to talk about things which were important to them.

• Are you planning to continue?

The relationship between the organisations is still alive, and we are planning to continue with an artistic project: theatre – physical theatre – drama as the tools of self-expression, personal development and inclusion.

FLÓRA VÁRTERÉSZ

"In order to maintain communication among the partner organisations, we have created a Facebook group, made special by the fact that besides professionals, contact persons and coordinators, young people with disabilities and parents are also among the members. For this, we prepared the young people we take care of in a netiquette class, where they learnt how to use the internet and keep in touch with their foreign friends. A colleague also helped them overcome any linguistic difficulties."

"The success of maintaining communication is detailed in our project book, which is a kind of summary of our achievements and experiences. It was during the last meeting, held in Poland, that we came up with the idea of compiling a book about the experiences gained during the travels so they can be shared. That was how 'Project Book A-Z' was born, in which participants from each organisation represent themselves and say a few words about what this partnership has given to them. The letter 'G', for example, stands for the word 'group' used by one of the participants to refer to the community and the group work which characterised the project and the learning process.

At letter 'M', we'll find the expression magic of Ebru, which refers to a fabric painting technique popular in Turkey. One of our beneficiaries mentioned Ebru as the most impressive experience."

Alexandra Kovács, Szorgoskert Nonprofit Ltd.

the values of the project

The greatest strength of the project was that colleagues and students with autism were involved in the entire process of implementation. This inclusive approach completely permeated the partnership, allowing the diverse development of young people with disabilities. By ensuring customised learning opportunities, the project also called the attention to the importance of informal learning methods, and is, therefore, also exemplary for educational and social institutions.



PROJECTS OF OUTSTANDING QUALITY, 2015:

- **Today, Blue Planet, but Tomorrow?**
Balatonlelle – Karád Primary School and Basic Art Institute,
Standard Pedagogical Service and Kindergarten
- **Bullying and Media**
Európa 2000 Secondary School (Budapest)
- **Isolation**
Jurisich Miklós Secondary Grammar School (Kőszeg)
- **The Match between Mathematics and the Economic Crisis**
Berzsenyi Dániel Secondary Grammar School (Budapest)
- **Our Voices across Europe**
Budapest 9th District Szent-Györgyi Albert Primary and
Secondary Grammar School, Budapest
- **Practical Competences in Gardening for Sustainable Development**
Toldi Miklós Vocational School of Food Industry and
Student Hostel (Nagykőrös)
- **Modern Building and Road Construction Jobs in Germany**
Belvárosi I. István Secondary School, Jáky József Member
School, Székesfehérvár
- **Adapting Services for Persons with Disabilities to New Users**
Hand in Hand Foundation
- **New Way to Social Skills**
Szín-Tér of Pécs



Common work reveals children's hidden skills

INSTITUTION:

Balatonlelle – Karád Primary School and Basic Art Institute, Standard Pedagogical Service and Kindergarten

PROJECT TITLE:

Today, Blue Planet, but Tomorrow?

COORDINATOR:

Filoména Gombos



How to call schoolchildren's attention to the importance of protecting our waters? How to integrate a two-year project, implemented with the involvement of eight partners, into the everyday life of a school? We talked to the project coordinator about the benefits of the international partnership, about children's experiences and the details of project management.

• What makes this project special?

One of its most important features is that already the programme material was collectively compiled by the eight partner institutions, so everyone's suggestions and ideas could be included in the list of activities. The idea of water as the subject matter originally came from the Romanian partner – whose project, unfortunately, did not win – and it turned out to be a great choice as it has numerous approaches, allowing for a very complex project. Besides environmental protection, we also addressed the issue of water from a cultural aspect. A lot of audiovisual and graphic project products were made, which allowed children of different skills and abilities to be involved in the activities. Two advanced English groups of 7th and 8th graders were given a central role in project implementation, whereas the others made drawings, participated in designing the logo and made videos.

• How did the project impact the children?

I had been teaching the two advanced English groups since 2nd grade, so we had a close relationship. We are talking about children of very different personalities and skills: some were good at music, others at IT and still other at making videos. During the project, these skills could come to the surface, which might have not happened at school, and I, personally, have learnt a lot from them, too. Since each activity involves various tasks, everybody could choose the one they liked most, and even the quietest boy – who never talked in classes, although he always got the best marks – played a part in one of the short films, went to Spain, and afterwards he had enough self-confidence to speak English. On top of all that, the 8th grader boys were willing to sing the folk song "Széles a Balaton" on video! This may say a lot about the project.

The children became much more open and independent, and they performed best when they were given a free hand. During the project, their social skills developed a lot, they learnt to understand the activities, to work in teams and they can speak English fluently. All this makes them capable of participating in further projects and succeeding in life later.

• How did the school staff participate?

In our school, it's natural that when we submit a grant proposal, our priority educational goals are adapted to that programme, and thus the topic of the project permeates the school's life. The theme of our Christmas literary and drawing programme, announced every year, is also determined accordingly. At the beginning of the project, I gave each colleague a simple and clear table about the activities expected in each month, encouraging them to join in. We had a particularly active cooperation with the teachers teaching drawing and natural sciences, but the principal and the vice-principal also continuously worked on the project. The teachers of the lower grades, as well as other upper-grade teachers, gave a lot of support during the meeting in Balatonlelle by providing a great background as hosts. Still, of course, we have a lot to improve and there are always people who could be involved and mobilised more.

• How did the project manifest itself in school life?

We linked the Earth Day event to the project, celebrated World Water Day, and during the project, nature study team competitions were themed around water habitats. Regardless of the project, our school considers environmental protection very important, to which this programme was well adapted: we collect waste on the banks of Lake Balaton, we pay close attention to the built as well as the natural environment, and our after hours service, for example, lays great emphasis on waste management education.

• How can you integrate the achievements of the project into education?

I can use the project products as a resource material for language classes, the project permeated the art classes, and the videos made about water-related experiments can be shown in physics and chemistry classes.



• Did the project have an impact on the local community?

Absolutely, and we can say it's become a tradition in Balatonlelle. Through the children, these projects are a great family experience, and when next time a brother or sister is involved in a project, they will be happy to join, too. Recently, I've met a mother, to whom I told that the project was in for a quality award, and she recalled what a great experience it had been for his son to be part of the project. We also keep active contact with the music school. The mayor and the town's leadership were also interested in the activities, and we were continuously present in the local media, newspapers and television, so I can confidently say that people in Balatonlelle know what a Comenius project is.

• Can you recall any key moments concerning the project?

It was very moving when the children said goodbye after the meeting in Balatonlelle and they hugged each other in tears in the school's main hall. For me personally, the project meeting in Istanbul was a key experience: it was the first time we'd met after a year's intense preparatory work, and we could work together very effectively. There and then I felt that it was the way to do it, and that I was at the right place.

ANETT ARANY



It's scary to be brave, but it's worth

Aggression at school

INSTITUTION:
Európa 2000 Secondary
School (Budapest)

PROJECT TITLE:
Bullying and Media

COORDINATOR:
Gábor Szalánczy

The word 'bullying' refers to aggressive behaviour, harassment and abuse. It comes from the word bull, meaning an aggressive person harassing others. Bullying can be emotional, verbal or physical; moreover, there is a separate category for harassment on the internet, called cyber bullying. Bullying can range from exclusion through humiliation and emotional blackmail to damaging fellow-students' belongings and physical aggression.

• Why did you choose bullying as the focus of the project?

We are an institution specialising in media; besides tourism, this specialisation represents the greatest attraction of our school. The basic idea was to call the attention to the phenomenon of bullying, because we think it's present in society as well as in our school, although the issue is still considered taboo in Hungary and we tend to ignore it. So my colleague, Sándor Halász, and I relied on the means of media to make the activities more realistic through methods which are close to children.

• The students made short movies themselves about school conflicts which appeared very real, both from the perspectives of the victim and the bully. Were the stories made up by the students, too?

Each school involved in the project had their students write a bullying script, and the movies were shot at the international meetings collectively by students coming from various countries, based on pre-written

scripts. Lesson plans and some useful resource materials were also prepared with the short movies, available for download on our website. A movie made by Gergő Ofner, 13th grade, presented a day in the life of a boy, from the bully's perspective. It can be viewed on YouTube as 'Hungarian bullying movie'. Besides our own movies, we also watched and discussed other movie adaptations about the issue in classes and workshops.

• I understand that drama pedagogy played an important part in the partnership.

During the project, we held several drama pedagogy sessions, supervised by a psychologist and a senior teacher, as part of a workshop or a discussion class with the form master. At these sessions, the children acted out bullying situations they had written, and then tried to analyse the situations and understand the emotional processes with guidance from a psychologist. They put themselves into the situation of the bully and the victim, as well as the eyewitnesses, and then we discussed what had happened and why, who had felt what and what they

would have done if they had been that particular person. In each case, teaching tolerance and eliminating exclusion were a central element. We always emphasised that the goal was not punishment but solving situations together.

• What do you consider the most important thing to be taught to children with regard to bullying?

The active role of spectators and how important it is to do something. To teach them not to turn their heads away, but keep an open eye and report any such situation. The more students report a situation, the easier to act and find a solution. It's a rare situation where only the victim and the bully are present; in most cases, there are peers and witnesses, who don't do or say anything, and therefore encourage the bully.

The drama pedagogy workshops, the discussions about the short movies and the 'Anti-Bullying Day' which affected the entire school, and where students campaigned against school bullying, helped them a lot to gain courage and knowledge for that. Students held presentations for their schoolmates, showed movies, collected signatures and prepared pavement drawings, posters and T-shirts.

• Which situations inspired them most?

Mainly the situations they wouldn't like to find themselves in. When they could try what it was like to be emotionally blackmailed, excluded and to hear the malicious comments which slowly accumulate in the victims. It was also important for them that they were given a highlighted role among their peers, and they were proud to hold presentations in English and that they could try the role of a teacher. They were involved in researches, made an interview with a police officer and they could also participate in the trips.

• What were your most memorable moments during the two years?

When we worked on the project for hours and hours in the afternoon, and nobody cared when we could leave, we were so much immersed in work. We cut the movies and rearranged the settings until late in the evening. And then, at last year's project meeting, we did the same with students speaking five different languages. These are the experiences which make me love being a teacher. In my work as a teacher, I consider sharing creative work with my students very important, as well as treating students as partners in this process.

RÉKA FINTÁNÉ HIDY



"What I learned in the project encouraged me to stand up for a bullied student, because I knew it was right, even if being brave is scary..."

Sára Gabriella Tóth
Class, 12 F





ISOLATION SHARED



www.jurisich-koszeg.sulinet.hu/isolation/index.html

INSTITUTION:

Jurisich Miklós Secondary Grammar School (Kőszeg)

PROJECT TITLE:

Isolation

COORDINATOR:

Dr. István Mátrai

Students from five countries' five secondary schools addressed the issue of isolation from various aspects. The topic was adapted to a number of subjects and allowed varied activities, while at the project meetings the students could really experience Europe's cultural, historical and natural diversity.

● **Isolation as your choice of topic is interesting. How did the Cypriot, Czech, Austrian, Spanish and Hungarian schools come up with the idea of addressing this issue?**

Each partner, including us, used to be – or still is – isolated in a way, either geographically or due to historical events such as the isolation by means of the former Iron Curtain. We addressed this issue almost automatically, as isolation appears in so many areas in all the five countries that is was certainly worth a common project.

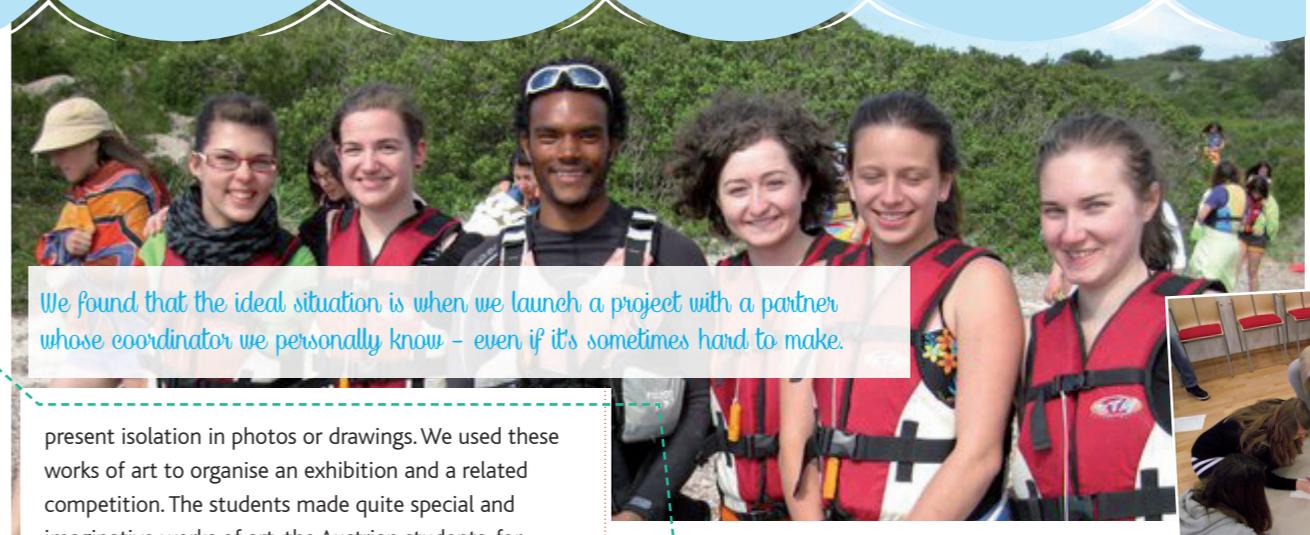
● **What were the topics of each project meeting?**

Each partner addressed each topic and worked on their

own shares, but the work was coordinated by the country which was affected most by a particular issue, and as the project owner, built the project meeting around that issue. The island of Menorca chose the issue of natural isolation. The Czech partner addressed isolation along the borders, and Hungary worked on linguistic isolation. In Cyprus, the focus was on ethnical isolation, which is still considerable in the only divided European capital. In Judenburg, Austria, the topic was the isolation of the elderly people and people with disabilities, as it is becoming a widespread problem how these groups could be involved in social activities. We also demonstrated the contrast between today's modern lifestyle, determined by our communication tools, and how isolated people in the Middle Ages lived, either in the castles of Central Europe or the monasteries of Cyprus.

● **How was the theme of artistic isolation manifested?**

The original idea was to examine the issue of isolation in art, but as the project progressed, this task seemed to be too theoretical and too large-scale. So instead we came up with the idea that students should write poems or



We found that the ideal situation is when we launch a project with a partner whose coordinator we personally know – even if it's sometimes hard to make.

present isolation in photos or drawings. We used these works of art to organise an exhibition and a related competition. The students made quite special and imaginative works of art; the Austrian students, for example, created a painting in cooperation with a physically disabled and severely handicapped painter.

● **How did the students participate in the programmes?**

They continuously prepared for the projects, but the month before and the one after the international meetings were the most intense. They prepared presentations in groups of 5 or 6, and then they shared with their peers what they had been working on in their own respective fields. They regularly organised Comenius meetings, where they discussed what to do, what suggestions they had, in what they could help. It was important to involve everyone in the work, and that each student should make the most of themselves. Already the criterion for selecting participants was to write an essay of 3,000 characters about the topic in English.

● **What do you think inspired the participants most?**

Students were affected most by cooperation: the meetings of the groups, the experience of common work and establishing relationships. At the end of the meetings, many cried because they made such good friends. One of the project's achievements is the very fact that our



students can hardly wait for another opportunity to be involved in an international partnership.

● **What was the most interesting thing about the project for you?**

I found the parallels between the countries interesting. For example, the meeting in Cyprus was held around 23 October, and it turned out that almost all countries had something to commemorate at that time: for the Cypriots, it was the Greek independence, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, Hungarians commemorated the revolution in '56, whereas the Austrian partners from Judenburg celebrated the withdrawal of Russian soldiers.

● **Are you planning a continuation to the project?**

There have been a number of ideas worth examining, but we've finally dropped them. We thought about the issue of prejudice: what preconceptions we have against certain groups and how we think about each other. Based on that, we would like to launch another common project titled 'Fight for Tolerance'. We've had excellent partners, but of course, you can't always work with the same schools, because it would lack any novelty.

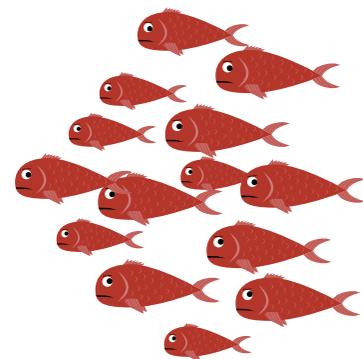
ADRIENN SZABÓ

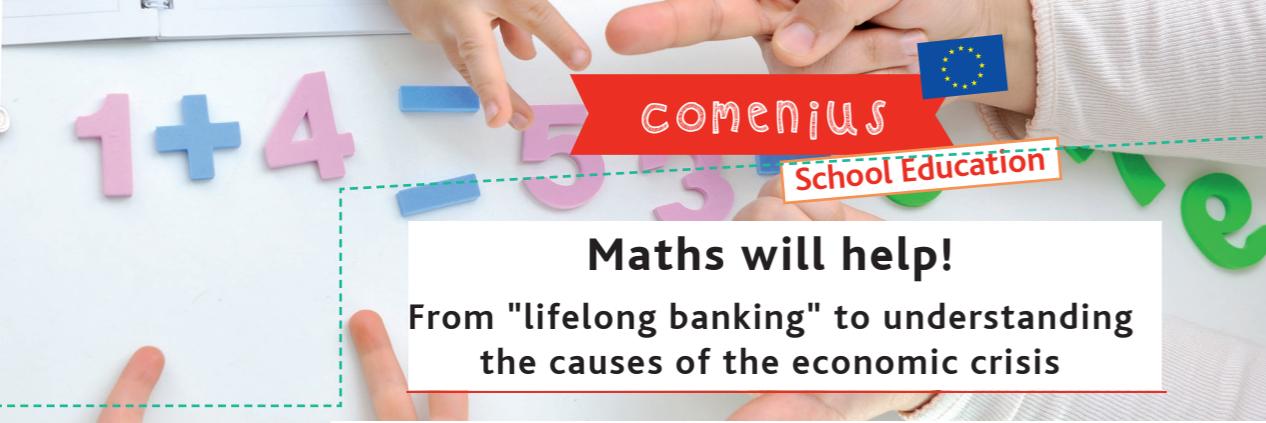
"For me, the most interesting thing was to meet foreign students who lived in a completely different environment, had different customs and languages, so we could learn a lot from each other."

Bernadett Dávid

"All in all, the project made me a real EU citizen."

Réka Somogyi



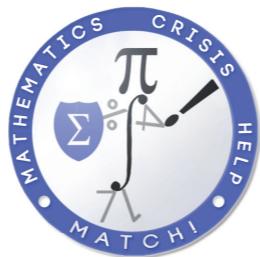


comenius

School Education

Maths will help!

From "lifelong banking" to understanding the causes of the economic crisis



INSTITUTION:

Berzsenyi Dániel Secondary Grammar School (Budapest)

PROJECT TITLE:

The Match between Mathematics and the Economic Crisis

COORDINATOR:

Márta Kovács

What should I invest my pocket money in? Is it worth taking out a student loan? How do exchange rate changes affect foreign currency loans? How does economic crisis affect the lives of our families? Issues, questions and problems to which students and teachers from 7 European countries tried to find answers relying on the means of mathematics. We talked about the experiences gained during the two-year Comenius project with Katalin Utassy mathematics teacher and Zoltán Horváth language teacher.

• The children of 14-16 involved in the project needed to use their competences in mathematics and their language skills at the same time, while also gaining some financial knowledge. What exactly were their tasks?

Katalin Utassy: We tried a number of activities during the project. While working on certain topics, we learnt the basic terminology of finance and economy, collected data and compiled questionnaires. When processing and evaluating the data, we also used basic statistical concepts. One of our topics was how the crisis affected the lives of families. We made calculations about saving money, for example, and we also calculated tax in various taxation systems.

• One of your key goals was to provide children with some economic and financial knowledge to be used in everyday life. What did you do for that?

K. U.: A major topic of our project was 'lifelong banking'. Accordingly, we discussed financial products which children may find useful in everyday life. For example, one of the groups examined banking products, baby bonds or the student accounts offered by certain banks. They calculated interests, compared the conditions and decided accordingly if it would be worth investing their savings in a given way. Another group looked at student loan opportunities and analysed examples from Hungary and abroad, mainly from England. They examined the amount to be repaid and the duration, as well as the precise financial commitment it requires, taking into consideration the high tuition fees. There was also a group which examined various life insurance opportunities. Understanding the concept and the problems of foreign exchange loans also had a great impact on students, when they saw how a loan amount can change during the repayment period, due to exchange rate changes.

• Why do you think yours was one of the most successful projects among almost 200 projects? What made your project stand out among the others?

Zoltán Horváth: We managed to find an issue which is topical and affects everyone, but we have little information to understand the problems related to

it. Since we combined practical everyday skills with mathematics, we addressed a field which was very interesting to students, because the knowledge they gained can help them make well-founded, responsible decisions in life for their own financial stability. The project is not linked to one particular subject, and the students enjoyed interdisciplinarity very much; besides, the international environment also contributed to the great interest and success. The programme allowed teachers of various subjects to cooperate, as well as to improve language skills, and it also contributed to the project's success that many members of the international team had already been acquainted.

• What are the achievements of the two-year project which others can also benefit from?

Z. H.: Content-based language teaching is only beginning to gain popularity in Hungary, but the Comenius project allowed both teachers and students to learn about it and gain some experience. Students discussed the topics related to the economic crisis both in their own languages and in English, they prepared and gave presentations, and at the international meetings they talked and held discussions in English. That was how a major project product of ours, a multilingual glossary was compiled, containing a basic terminology of economy and banking. *K. U.:* Besides, we also prepared educational resource materials specifically for teachers of finance and economy, as well as teachers engaged in content-based language instruction. We also compiled a seven-language glossary of economy and finance.

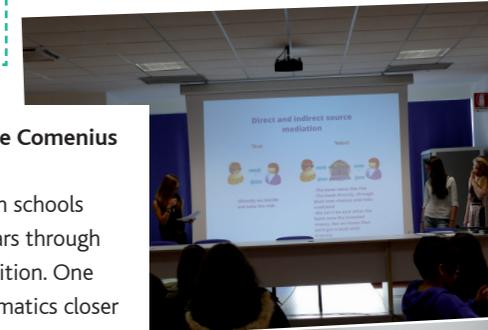
• You also prepared exercises meant specifically for the participants, based on the international competition called 'Mathematics Without Borders'.

How was this competition related to the Comenius project?

K. U.: The proposal was submitted by seven schools which had already been contact for 25 years through the Mathematics Without Borders competition. One goal of this competition is to bring mathematics closer to people who are less enthusiastic about this field of science. The exercises are based on mathematical problems taken from everyday life, and seek to call the attention to the fact that, although we may not even notice it, we regularly need to use our math skills. An Italian member of the competition committee was the main organiser of our project, so we could also channel the results of our partnership into the competition. We worked out exercises related to our current project focus, and although mathematically speaking they weren't too difficult, they presented quite a challenge to understand in English and to solve.

• What did you as a maths teacher find the greatest achievement of the common work and what was your best experience?

K. U.: I think the presentations were among the greatest achievements, and they were also a great experience. They're an achievement because in many cases we could address very difficult topics in a manner that children could clearly understand, and they were able to rethink and share their freshly gained knowledge with the others. It was a pleasure to watch how smart and clever they were during the presentations, how much they had developed. It was a great experience to meet Italian and Spanish colleagues, as were the cooperation and the common work. We were glad to see how similar methods we used in teaching, and that foreign maths teachers loved teaching just as much as we did.





www.ourvoices.eu



ON THE WAY OF MUSIC

INSTITUTION:

Budapest 9th District Szent-Györgyi Albert Primary and Secondary Grammar School (Budapest)

PROJECT TITLE :

Our Voices across Europe

COORDINATOR:

Éva Meszéna

Among secondary school students, there are few topics as popular and rewarding as music. The Comenius school partnership, implemented with the involvement of seven countries, reached students through folk and pop music. The children processed the traditions of folk music in the partner countries, and they learnt about the pop music culture between the 1950's and the 2000's not only in their own countries, but also in English-speaking countries. Through music, they could establish relationships and get to know each other, as well as each other's culture and history.

● Why do you think your project was among the best ones?

First of all because we worked with great enthusiasm and commitment, and also because this nice atmosphere was also reflected in the documentation of the project events and achievements. We laid great emphasis on making our achievements visible, so that the success of the project be evident to others, too. Although continuous documentation was team work, we still owe great thanks to the Polish partner, responsible for creating and operating the website. We knew that we, too, would need somebody to help operate the technical background, so I asked one of our IT teachers, whose aesthetic sense was of key importance in developing our school's website. The countries involved also took the European Shared Treasure (EST) website seriously – we published a lot in that website.

● Why did you choose music as your focus, what was your goal?

It wasn't music we first thought of. We were committed to launching a Comenius project, so I browsed the eTwinning website a lot for opportunities. The idea of a music-oriented project came from a school in Barcelona, seeking partners. When I found it I instantly felt that it was meant for us. The topic perfectly matches the profile of the school, as we have been teaching music and folk traditions in the lower grades for a long time, so we had a good basis to start from. Pop music is a natural part of students' lives, and we, English teachers, also use songs as a resource material in our classes. So I thought that these two familiar areas greatly combine within the project. Indirectly though, but music is also suitable for transferring cultural and historical knowledge. It's a common language which brings students together; they get to know the music and culture of other nations, which broadens their view. Music also helps students step out in front of an audience with more and more self-confidence.

● You said that you were committed to launching a Comenius project. What was your main motivation?

A few years ago, we established a partnership with a school near Manchester, with support from the British Council. The funding we won allowed us to travel there and them to travel here, without any further contribution. We particularly appreciated this opportunity because even those students who couldn't have afforded the trip could travel with us. We think

that the equal opportunities aspect is also very strongly represented in the Comenius projects, because they provide opportunities to many students whose parents wouldn't be able to pay for the expenses of travelling or accommodation. That's why I was so glad that we were granted funding.

● What was your most interesting personal or professional experience about the project?

As I talked to my colleagues about this topic, it turned out that the line between personal and professional experiences are often blurred. At the end of the first year, we prepared a presentation for the parents, the school and the other children. Then, one of our students said these trips were different from travelling as a tourist: we can see the life and culture of a country from the inside, and the world opens up. For many, the closing night in Barcelona was a key event, when we watched the dances of each nation. Of course, the visit to the Auschwitz concentration camp was an experience of a totally different nature. Before the visit, the children were given a presentation on the role music had in concentration camps, and they made charcoal drawings about what that historical period evoked in them. For me, the meeting in Budapest was an unforgettable experience. It had been the sixth meeting, so a lot of students and teachers had known each other and the atmosphere was great. We also tried to find time to discuss teaching and the schools with the colleagues, and shared our experiences about other projects, too.

● What 3 things would you highlight that you are proudest of?

As I mentioned, one was the equal opportunities dimension. I think it's a very important aspect. Another thing we're also proud of was the development and performance of our own students. Their language skills quickly improved, it was a pleasure to see that not only the otherwise more hard-working and better students made steady progress, but also those who are less motivated in a classroom environment. Besides their linguistic progress, the children's openness and attitude also changed for the better, and they learnt how to give presentations and lectures, too. Throughout the project, our students were continuously well-prepared, and they received recognition for their presentation of Hungary, as well as for their singing and dancing. It was also nice to see how they behaved at the meetings – both the teachers and the students liked their friendliness.

● What is your advice to those who are considering submitting a grant proposal?

They will definitely need to think it over very carefully, because it means a lot of work, while school work must also be done. In order to be granted funding for a project, you'll need to assume a lot of duties, and you'll also have to be able to implement them, and with pleasure. It's hard to find this balance, but it's a great experience to be part of such a partnership. It's also important that you can accept that not everything is as predictable as in the classroom. It's essential that you should build a good project team, as it provides a reliable basis throughout the project.

WIKI DICTIONARY – international pop and rock music history from the 1950's to 2000 >>
www.ourvoices.eu
SONG BOOKLET – with the score, lyrics and cultural background to the folk songs performed by the countries involved
HYMN – with the stanzas written by the partner countries and a common refrain, to the music composed by the Greek music teachers



ILDIKÓ HLAVATÝ





Leonardo



Vocational Education and Training

“These children won’t drop out of education”

Digital herbarium and a motivating praise

INSTITUTION:

Toldi Miklós Vocational School of Food Industry and Student Hostel (Nagykőrös)

PROJECT TITLE:

Practical Competences in Gardening for Sustainable Development

COORDINATOR:

Éva Gavaldik

11 ornamental gardener and gardener students completed a 4-week apprenticeship in and near Rostock. The project coordinator talked about it sincerely and with full commitment – and not only in past tense, because they've been submitting grant proposals since their first project, and every year they learn something new that they can integrate into their projects.

● What made this project of yours better than the former ones?

It represented equal opportunities very strongly, and we tailored the apprenticeships to students' skills, which we have kept up ever since. We also approached and encouraged weaker students to apply, and we could find them places where the jobs to be done didn't exceed their capabilities, but where they could, of course, learn a lot. These apprenticeships were also supervised by mentor teachers with a pedagogical qualification. At the same time, as a kind of talent management, we also offered the best students to travel; for them, we chose serious jobs where they needed to speak German better, and where they could study a lot more.

● As an accompanying teacher, what were your main duties?

The children were excited and scared, so my colleague

and I never let anybody alone, they could turn to us anytime with any problem. We visited them at work, looked at what they were working on and checked, of course, whether they left for work in time and kept their rooms and environment tidy. We also helped them manage their pocket money. I always ask them whether they want to get the whole amount upon travelling or receive a weekly amount, and we act accordingly. We take them to the doctor's, when necessary, either because somebody's got stung by a wasp, has allergy or has fallen ill at night.

● I can feel caring in all your words. What motivates you in your work?

It's that I can see that fantastic progress my students have made. When a student leaves shy and unknowing, and comes back full of self-confidence and new ideas, and with the certainty that he or she could really do it. When they tell their friends about their experiences at home, and it makes them special. We have a high rate of dropout, but these children will definitely not drop out of education. For us it's a priority to keep our starting classes together, and it requires experiences like this, because it's very difficult to provide them similar knowledge in a school environment.

● Let's talk about your partner relations.

In this project we didn't rely on mediating partners



any more to find jobs like formerly, but we did all the organisation work ourselves. It was very difficult. Since then, we and these companies have established a network so we can keep closer contact and work more effectively. We organise 2 personal meetings every year. One in Germany, because there is a German-Hungarian association of friends there who invite the group currently working in Germany, as well as their host companies, to their summer event. Each time, our students present a project there in German which they had done in Hungary as part of the preparation, and receive a certificate of recognition from the chairman of the association. The other meeting is the closing conference held in Hungary when we've arrived home. To the conference we invite the representatives of the employers, as well as a small delegation of the German-Hungarian association of friends. Here, the foreign partners evaluate our work, and we present the experiences gained abroad, and then the school's management joins us to assess the project and discuss next year's tasks. The children make a presentation, for which they may receive a principal's commendation if it's of such standards. We continuously try to motivate them and recognise their work, which means a lot to them.

● How much emphasis do you lay on assessment?

We have a multi-step assessment system. Already at the selection stage, students also have to complete a psychological test containing nearly 300 questions. In Germany, they attend a one-week linguistic preparation course, and their teacher in Germany assesses the

children at the beginning and at the end of the course, of which they receive a certificate. Halfway through the apprenticeship we visit all the workplaces, and together with the students we complete a test sheet to make sure that they have really learnt what was taught to them. We assess the answers, and if we think something is not quite right, we ask the employers and the mentor teacher to go over that particular material once more with the student, using a bit different approach. When the apprenticeship is over, we complete an ECVET assessment sheet with the employer, which will be the basis of students' practical marks at home, to be indicated in their certificate. We put it into their Europass mobility pass, so that they can show it when they go seeking employment. The students who did foreign apprenticeship this year also prepared a digital herbarium, using the plants found at their own respective workplaces. They presented it in Hungary, and they got marks for it from their teacher. Assessment, therefore, is an important part of our work, but we seek to make it positive feedback for the children.

● What are your plans for the future?

In the near future, we will try to invite all our students who have so far participated in the Leonardo programme to a meeting to see what has become of them and what benefits the foreign apprenticeship meant to them when seeking employment. As a matter of fact, more and more partners approach us for Hungarian apprentices, but for the time being, we're not considering new ways, we wish to work consistently and at high standards.

BLANKA BERKES





Building and road construction apprenticeship in Germany



INSTITUTION:

Belvárosi I. István Secondary School, Jáky József Member School, Székesfehérvár

PROJECT TITLE:

Modern Building and Road Construction Jobs in Germany

COORDINATOR:

Katalin Tóth, Principal, Ágnes Pozsár Vice-Principal for academic matters

Due to a several-year-long partnership, the building and road construction and maintenance technician students involved in vocational education and training can participate in a three-week apprenticeship in Germany. The three weeks are spent with hard work, but the masters working with the students make sure that learning remains a priority. We talked to project coordinator Ágnes Pozsár about how this affects the lives and ambitions of the students, the teachers and the school staff.

● How did you encourage your students to apply for the foreign apprenticeship?

In the first year, it was quite a challenge to find applicants; by the second year, however, interest had grown, and by now everybody knows what this opportunity means and they voluntarily apply. This project has a great appeal: students know that the school can organise apprenticeships in Germany, and this sounds attractive to them, they perform better at school and it's easier for us to motivate our students.

● How did the project impact students' lives?

There were a number of foreign groups at the accommodation in Germany, so besides their masters, our students could also meet and get to know them, and I often see it on Facebook that they still keep in touch, talking and posting to each other, and they do it

in a foreign language!

When we came home I found that the atmosphere in the class – half of which had been involved in the apprenticeship programme – had become much friendlier, the children had begun to pay attention to each other and become more tolerant, and those who had formerly been on the periphery of the class, had become part of the team.

● Are their ideas about their future careers changing?

Many are thinking about going abroad again to learn, to see the world, to work. Most of them found employment or continued their studies within their vocations – and since we can frequently see just the opposite, I contribute this to the impacts of the programme.

● How do the teachers participate in the project?

Our groups are always accompanied by a language teacher who can take over the terminology and integrate it into his or her language classes; besides, the group is also accompanied by a teacher of specialised subjects relevant to the given profession. This latter studies the work processes and different solutions and integrates them into the curriculum. It's interesting to see how our building construction technician students, for example, discover some tools – and they even know their German names – which are not used in Hungary.

I also teach them architectural history, and I use the photos taken in Germany when we reach a certain topic in my lessons.

● How does the project impact teachers' professional ambitions and progress?

Since our host institution in Germany, Vitalis GmbH, is not engaged in educational activity, we as teachers can't see how others teach. Still, from a pedagogical aspect, we learn a lot simply by being constantly surrounded by 15-17 students for three weeks. We can see that they, too, have worse days, just as we do, and we learn to adapt to each other. This is the lesson learnt which I can take to my own classes. I can turn to them with greater patience and empathy, because I can see their everyday lives abroad, and I can see how today's children are different, even when they're of similar ages. I learn more about them, and therefore I also learn how to motivate them better in the classroom.

● How is the school staff that stayed at home involved in the project?

The teachers gladly listen to each other's and the students' accounts, many of them follow the Facebook group, the work blog, write e-mails and ask questions from those currently abroad. Many of the teachers can identify with the project, they can understand and feel what it's all about, and the support given by our principal, Katalin Tóth, is also very important, as it was her who came up with the idea of applying in the first year and she has been the active organiser of the programme ever since.

● It wasn't the first project you'd launched in cooperation with your partner – how is the partnership developing?

Once I saw a diagram at a project writing seminar about the beginning of writing grant proposals. I remember what the lecturer said: most people simply get involved 'by chance' in projects and will first have 'some kind of programme'; next time they are much more conscious, dare to make requests to their partners, and so on. We feel just the same as our programmes are renewed with the same partner year by year: first they made a proposal which we accepted without any changes; by now, however, a mutual communication has developed between the two institutions, and we can easily discuss our requests. The host partner is well aware that they're not receiving foreign workers but students who go there to learn, and the masters who work with the children keep it in mind at all times.

● What would you advise to schools and teachers who are still hesitating?

My advice would be to dare to submit proposals, and don't see them as extra work, don't think about how much time the implementation would require but think of your students' faces when they come back and all the experiences they will share with their fellow students. It will be worth the effort!

ANETT ARANY



Leonardo



Vocational Education and Training

Mental illness or disability?

The supporting organisations seek solutions

INSTITUTION:
Hand in Hand Foundation

PROJECT TITLE:
Adapting Services for Persons with Disabilities to New Users

COORDINATOR:
Éva Kovács

A UN convention categorises patients with psychiatric problems as persons with disability, which poses a challenge both to organisations supporting people with disabilities and those providing services to persons with mental illness. The project sought to examine how far the countries involved had got on this adaptation path politically and strategically, as well as at an organisational level, and to present the problems which arose and the good solutions found. After the detailed and extensive surveys, suggestions affecting several sectors were developed and forwarded to decision-makers in Brussels.

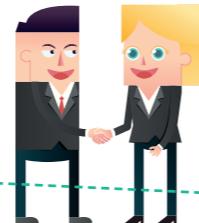
• How did the partners cooperate during the project?

We looked for partners and service providers who, in their own respective countries, have made some progress in the process in question and provide services to the given target group. Each partner collected what they considered good practice in their countries. Based on the researches and surveys, we drew up a map of strategic state of affairs together, examined the relevant legal background, how the given country had ratified the convention and to what extent the provisions were enforced in practice. The meetings focused on, among others, visiting the service provider organisations, which was part of a mutual learning process.

• According to the surveys, where is Hungary now, compared to the other countries?

Characteristically, in Hungary the social service providers caring for mental patients and persons with disabilities are very much separated. The Hungarian law builds up the system excessively according to the target group, and therefore the service providers are far too specialised, employing specialised professionals. In certain countries it's not so separated, and there's a greater overlap between the two service areas. In one respect, however, the situation is the same everywhere: in each country, there are people with double diagnosis (people with disability AND a psychiatric diagnosis), and 15-20% of the people receiving disability services belong to that group.

There are few countries, and Hungary is no exception, where the process is supported structurally by an educational system and laws – this issue is not among the major policies. There are only one or two service providers who set up a multidisciplinary staff, in order to have a professional to support people with psychiatric problems, or who provide training for their staff, but it's completely up to the organisation and it's not part of the training system yet. The project has also pointed out organising the training would be among the first key steps.



• You have made recommendations to various sectors: service providers, decision-makers and educational institutions. Which important recommendation would you highlight?

Besides launching training for specialists, it's also important how multidisciplinary teams could be further strengthened, and to build up the service based on knowledge taken from a number of scientific fields, so, for example, an organisation caring for people with disabilities won't need to employ a senior psychiatrist. Another important issue is that operating such an institution, focusing on a number of target groups and requiring a wider range of qualifications and professional staff, raises serious financial questions. For organisations operating from project funding, sustainability currently presents a great challenge.

• The number of project results and documents, also shared with those affected, was outstanding. What would you advise the other applicants about dissemination?

Our project aimed to create a large-scale strategic document and to make recommendations for policy planning. That's why there were so many 'project products'. At the same time, choosing the partners played an important part. The organisations involved were ones that could participate in policy-making and planning processes in their own respective countries, besides their work as service providers. The fact that it was a partnership of institutions operating as members of Euro-

pean umbrella organisations which have long been active at a European level was an important aspect. Project management also worked very well, due to the French partner, who followed through on the project with a committed strategic thinking. As regards dissemination, it worked well that each partner assumed as much as they could accomplish – some more, some less. Our appearance in Brussels was also due to the partnership, as one of our partners, EASPD (European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities) is operated from Brussels and has the right connections.

• What was the most interesting thing about the project?

We liked the visits to the service provider organisation, for example the operation of the Polish institution, as well as their commitment to the issue highlighted in the project. At the Welsh organisation (Learning Disability Wales) I found it very interesting how much young volunteers were involved in the work conducted with young people with disabilities, providing them an opportunity to meet in everyday life, too, and to make friends. I also liked the well-established practice in Great Britain that people with disabilities and non-disabled people do their usual work together as partners, working together for a common goal, and that it's not about a professional working for a client as an outsider. This inspiring approach of partnership is ubiquitous – it's in their environment, their everyday lives and customs.

ADRIENN SZABÓ





grundtvig



Adult Education

Creating communities through works of art

INSTITUTION:

Szín-Tér of Pécs

PROJECT TITLE:

New Way to Social Skills

COORDINATOR:

Géza Pintér

Even a special mural painting was made in the project which was born as a combination of several years' prison theatre and 'murales' activities. Throughout the common work, creating artistic value and the importance of social creation as personality-developing powers were both present. This duality gave the project its significance.

● What does 'murales' mean?

The expression comes from the Spanish-speaking areas of South-America, but it's also used in other languages today, such as English. It means a mural painting, similarly to graffiti; the difference is that it's not one person's work, but the result of creative community work. We also consistently use this expression in this project because one of the Association's heads, Krisztina Katona met this genre during her studies in South-America, and these intellectual roots remained important later, too. Artist educators throughout the world commonly use this technique for community development purposes among disadvantaged young people.

● How does mural painting meet theatre inside the prison walls?

Pécsi Szín-Tér Association has been engaged in cultural activities at the Young Offender Institution of Pécs, mainly in the form of mural painting, since 2007. The

first mural painting was made as part of this project in 2013, in the courtyard of the Pre-Trial Adult Detention Facility, also accompanied by a theatre performance. This combination was due to the fact that, within the project, the Association's work team was joined by local professionals of theatre pedagogy, which led to a large-scale and high-quality achievement in the field of social community art. The next murales programme was implemented in 2014, in a facility of another town, Kecskemét; it can also be regarded as a pioneering programme, as the participants were female delinquents.

● How cooperative were the Hungarian penal institutions?

They were quite open to the prison theatre initiative, but required, of course, consistent loyalty to the institution. Prisons are interested in hosting civil initiatives which help their work and keep inmates busy in their free time free of charge. According to the observations of prison social workers, we can generally say that prison theatre activities reduce the number of aggressive incidents within the institution.

● What role do you think the project plays in the social integration of inmates?

In the case of female inmates, for example, we found that finding their lost female identity received great emphasis. As regards male inmates, creative social experience, going beyond individual benefits, became



dominant, which is the hardest thing to achieve in a prison. I think these could be the corner stones of their reintegration later.

● What feedback did you receive from the inmates involved in the project? What were their greatest benefits?

In the case of adult inmates, the nearly half-year-long group work was closed by a more intensive one and a half months, and then a fully intensive (6-8 hours of work a day) two weeks. Following that, there was nothing to directly continue with, which left a great vacuum and emptiness in those involved, who reported that idleness in the prison become much more unbearable afterwards. This also pointed out to us that the correctional role of penal institutions lies in activities, work, play and creative work, that is, ensuring active free time, and not in aspects of comfort or discipline. Creative, instead of suppressive, development of communities is an indispensable element in the correctional and educational function of prisons.

● When do you begin to feel the impacts of the project? Can you measure or examine the effects?

We have no precise tools to make statistics about the relapse or successful social integration of inmates who had been involved in prison theatre and were later released. The personal experiences and the examples so far have indicated that most participants have found their places in society, and that the prison theatre had

definitely been a positive experience for them. However, we can never find out whether it would have happened differently without the given activity.

● Can such an international partnership bring anything new to the Hungarian professional environment?

Prison theatres are becoming more and more common in Hungarian institutions. This programme was closely related to former Grundtvig prison theatre projects; in this case, however, it wasn't a partnership of art organisations, but an international cooperation between penal institutions and civil associations. I think it's a good thing when the successful team work done in a civil environment can influence institutional, hierarchical models of cooperation.

● Are you planning a continuation to the successful project?

The project will continue. At an organisational level, new murales projects are continuously under way, and prison theatres are becoming widespread across Hungary, which is an amazing change within the course of a few years. This process is a global phenomenon which must have infiltrated into Hungary through various channels.

GÉZA PINTÉR AND FLÓRA VÁRTERÉSZ



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From 2014, the Comenius, Leonardo and Grundtvig programmes have been unified under the new Erasmus+ programme, offering a range of opportunities to implement partnerships and mobilities in the areas of VET, adult education as well as higher education.

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