

BLENDED LEARNING BEST PRACTICES

European Partnership for Social Inclusion and Creation of Skills for Women Entrepreneurship E-learning	
ERASMUS+ KA2: Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices, 2018-1-BG01-KA203-048016	
January 2019 - October 2020	Partnership
Element	Guiding questions
Type of document	Experience sheet
Publisher	Partner organisations: - Tsenov Academy of Economics (Bulgaria) - Euroform RFS (Italy) - European Strategic Partnerships Ltd. (ESP) (UK)
Target audience	The project focuses on the social inclusion of women wishing to develop their own business in the area of trade and logistics through integration into entrepreneurship through training, acquiring practical skills and competencies in order to generate financial, cultural and social value.
Field	Entrepreneurship
Objective	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conducting a comparative analysis of the demand and supply of skills for women entrepreneurship in the labor market in the three partner countries - Bulgaria, United Kingdom and Italy. 2. Identifying key areas and features for developing women's entrepreneurship skills based on benchmarking. 3. Expanding the knowledge, skills and competences in women's entrepreneurship in the territories of the partner countries in order to determine which of those could become the practice of commercial SMEs and how they could enhance the competitiveness of the sector. 4. Creating a tool for self-development for entrepreneurship for women in an innovative way and providing methodological guidance and tools for developing entrepreneurial skills. 5. Validating and testing the results of the project in one pilot practical training representing the learning outcomes of the project for disadvantaged learners. 6. Creating an innovative platform for exchange of experience and good practices in order to support the development of women's entrepreneurship skills, facilitating their access and engagement with

	<p>digital technologies in formal and non-formal education.</p> <p>7. Effective dissemination and open access to project results.</p>
Location /geographical coverage	<p>Action: Blended training</p> <p>London, United Kingdom</p> <p>Timeframe of the activity: 01-12 July 2019</p> <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 30 women from Italy - 30 women from Bulgaria
Introduction	<p>The project focuses on the social inclusion of women wishing to develop their own business in the area of trade and logistics through integration into entrepreneurship through training, acquiring practical skills and competencies in order to generate financial, cultural and social value. The project partners have realized there is a growing need for creative and innovative training approaches in entrepreneurship in order to overcome the previous weaknesses.</p>
Stakeholders and Partners	<p>Partner organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tsenov Academy of Economics (Bulgaria) A leading economics and business higher education institution in Bulgaria with 80 years of history, 140 000 alumni and a well-established reputation in education, science and project management. It is composed by 4 faculties, 19 departments, a Scientific Research Institute, 17 academic centers and auxiliary units (including Centre for International Affairs, Centre for Educational Quality Assurance, Centre for Postgraduate and Continuing Education, Centre for Vocation Training, etc.). D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics is an accredited higher education institution. • European Strategic Partnerships Ltd. (ESP) (UK) A VET provider institution based in London, UK, offering professional trainings in various qualifications, mainly in the field of Hospitality and Restaurant Management. The main direction of the company activities is the on-site corporate training for the management and operational staff of hotels and restaurants. The company works with more than 20 highly educated and experienced trainers, using innovative and interactive teaching methods. • Euroform RFS (Italy) A training agency that organizes training courses for more than 10 years and releases qualifications recognizable under the regional law. Since 1997 Euroform RFS has been organizing transnational mobilities under the framework of different programmes. Being an intermediate/receiving organization of mobility projects, Euroform RFS has developed qualitative services offering the e-learning activities on pre-departure orientation and Italian language course, as well as ECVET and own tools in evaluating the learning outcomes achieved during mobility.

Financing Body	Within the framework of the project "European Partnership for Social Inclusion and Creation of Skills for Women Entrepreneurship E-learning", contract number 2018-1-BG01-KA203-048016, funded by the Erasmus + program, KA2, Higher Education Sector
Context	<p>Trade is recognized as one of the main economic sectors for reducing economic expansion and economic revolution in many countries. The trade industry creates employment opportunities for a large number of people, both skilled and unskilled. It supports nationwide unification by generating currency and promoting cultural activities.</p> <p>Thus, the development of women's entrepreneurship skills ensures employment and economic growth in the partner organizations' regions.</p> <p>The implementation of the project helps to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote social inclusion by enhancing access, participation and learning outcomes for disadvantaged learners, supporting and evaluating new approaches to reducing disparities in digital access and engagement in formal and non-formal education. 2. Update and develop digital educational materials and tools in women's entrepreneurship. 3. Support employment and learning opportunities and mobility between different jobs in partner countries. 4. Improve and expand the provision of high-quality training opportunities tailored to the needs of individuals with low skills or low-skilled women in the regions to provide them with employment opportunities, enhancing their digital skills and entrepreneurial competences and thus stimulating them to become more highly qualified.
The main objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the theoretical nature of the entrepreneurial idea and business planning. • Exchange of experience between Bulgarian and Italian students, as well as sharing practical skills by English trainers. • Working in an international team and working in a collaborative environment. • Cultural, linguistic, ethnic, religious, and other integration between partners from three countries.
The description of the practice	<p>During the training seminar, the participants were introduced to the main features of entrepreneurship, in particular women's entrepreneurship, the entrepreneurial process, the requirements for structuring a business plan, the possibilities for financing a business, etc. In addition to getting acquainted with the theoretical background in the field of entrepreneurship, the participants developed a business plan on a predefined topic, by distributing the lottery principle of Bulgarian and Italian women in teams of six participants. For the fuller absorption of the content, an appropriate learning environment was provided to support the writing of the business plan, by alternating the lecture part, followed by a practical one. This allowed the teams to unite briefly around the basic idea of their business on each of the downloaded topics (e-commerce for perfumery products, production and trade in furniture, development of restaurant business, environmental protection and compost processing, etc.) and focus on developing each part</p>

	<p>of the business plan.</p> <p>The team work continued for one week as participants sought to prepare the key elements of the business plan - introduction, presentation of the basic business idea, analysis of the market and identifying competitors, market segmentation and opening of unoccupied niches, defining the profile of users, developing an operational plan for action, financing and business efficiency.</p> <p>Business plans have been developed with presentations reflecting key innovative ideas, mainly focused on healthy eating, saving endless resources, improving the quality and increased use of electronic technologies in the production and commercial processes, as well as in maintaining contacts with consumers, waste treatment and environmental protection and social inclusion of disadvantaged people.</p> <p>The presentation of the business plans took place on July 10, 2019, with participants applying various attractive techniques to attract the attention of the audience. After each team presented their business idea, each team received reviews highlighting both strengths and opportunities to improve business plans and presentations. On July 11, 2019, the final test was held, and certificates were distributed to all participants.</p> <p>The theoretical and practical training was varied by a prepared cultural program, which included visits to various landmarks and attractions in London. This helped to further unite the teams before the final finalization of the business plans and the preparation of the presentations.</p>
Outcomes of the practice	<p>Main benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the theoretical nature of the entrepreneurial idea and business planning. • Exchange of experience between Bulgarian and Italian students, as well as sharing practical skills by English trainers. • Working in an international team and working in a collaborative environment. • Cultural, linguistic, ethnic, religious and other integration between partners from three countries.
Success Factors	<p>Collaboration, motivation and sharing</p>
Constraints	<p>for some participants the difficulty was given by living a training experience partly carried out abroad, far from their own comfort zone. This initial obstacle turned out to be a resource and a starting point for growth for the participants.</p>
Lessons learned	<p>The educational value generated for society is expressed in raising the knowledge, skills and competences of women in the field of entrepreneurship and their sharing in the social group in which they exist, which leads to a smooth social adaptation to cultural changes.</p>
Sustainability	<p>The project built online and free useful tools which can be used by trainers and learners themselves. An online forum is available, to share ideas and opinions between participants. Assignments are corrected by experts.</p>

Development of the practice	The material will remain available online and usable free of charge and may serve as a starting base for further projects.
Conclusion	<p>Expected results:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The project completion will help reducing the Social inclusion by enhancing the access, participation and learning performance of disadvantaged woman learners, by supporting and assessing new approaches to reducing disparities in access to and engagement with digital technologies in formal and non-formal education. 2. Updating and developing digital learning materials and tools in women entrepreneurship. 3. Support employability and the learning and labour mobility between different jobs in the partner countries. 4. Improve and extend the supply of high quality learning opportunities which are tailored to the needs of individual low-skilled or low-qualified women in the regions in order to provide them employment opportunities by enhancing their digital competences and entrepreneurship competences and stimulate them towards higher qualifications.
Related resources that have been developed	<p>https://www.women-entrepreneurship.eu/</p> <p>Training handbook: https://www.women-entrepreneurship.eu/local/pages/?id=8</p> <p>E-learning courses: https://www.women-entrepreneurship.eu/course/index.php</p>
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