

EUROPEAN TRAINING PARTNERSHIP FOR AN INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

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Abstract:

The paper presents an European project aiming to consolidate the partners' capacity of involving themselves actively in transnational partnerships in order to promote the social inclusion of young institutionalized people in re-education centres by (i) increasing the institutional capacity of concurring at the reformation and the efficiency of the education and lifelong learning system in the detention and re-education centres for underage people and by (ii) professional and individual developing of the participants in the project which can lead to local assumption of the reform.

Key words: *inclusive society, partnership, best practices*

JEL classification: *I21*

Justification

The project “European Training Partnership for an Inclusive Society – PERFORM”, co-financed by European Social Funds, Operational Sectorial Program – Development of Human Resources, has as task to start from using the project partners’ experience from five European states (Romania, France, Spain, Hungary and Italy) concerning the education and formation of institutionalized young people in the re-education centres, in order to increase their chances (through adults’ formation who educate them and the young people themselves) to integrate in the society and on an inclusive labour market. In the solicitor’s institution, Centrul de Reeducare Buzias, and some of the partners, Centrul de Reeducare Gaesti, Centrul de Reeducare Targu Ocna, Juvenile Prison Kecskemet there are interned young people between 14 and 20/21 years who broke the law, out of which many come from disadvantaged social mediums, from marginalized areas of the society; when they live the institution it is necessary that these young people to be prepared for integration in the society and to become employable. The challenges facing the personnel of these partner institution and other similar centres in Romania, ask solutions not only at the institutional level but also as regarding personal and professional development of the personnel which work in these centres. Individual and institutional needs in the professional formation domain of the personnel of the Romanian penitentiary system are confirmed in the National Penitentiary Administration (ANP) documents; so the Measures Plan in order to make efficient the penitentiary system 2008 – 2009 issued by the professional formation service of ANP underlines ‘the nonexistence of a professional formation strategy for the National Penitentiary Administration personnel’ and the low level of involvement of the personnel in making decisions regarding penitentiary system and implementation of reform solutions as two major problems which prevent the efficient functioning of ANP. The same document identifies ‘the adjustment of human resources policies with the

needs of penitentiary system' and 'the development of the educational function' as objectives of the activity meant to make efficient the activity of ANP system; among the planned activities to lead to the fulfilment of those two objectives are: (i) identifying and centralizing the formation needs at the units' level of ANP and (ii) issuing and implementing the professional formation Strategy and respectively (iii) development of the social re-insertion strategy, (iv) the diversification of the educational activities and (v) realization of a common framework concerning education and psycho-social assistance in the penitentiary system. The project wants to come with suggestions and proposals for the items and questionable aspect identified by the ANP: a study of policies and European practices in minors' re-education domain and the personnel formation in the specialized institutions who can bring arguments and propose solutions to upgrade the Romanian Law System; this study is doubled by an analysis of the needs of the personnel's competences in the re-education institutions, needs triggered by the needs of the institutionalized young people. Educational materials and resources collection aims at diversifying educational activities, material collection being able to utilize as a resource in the re-education centres. Various personnel categories – managerial, administrative, re-education, supervising or teachers have an old training format within the framework of initial education so the system of lifelong learning needs improvements. The project has in partnership institutions which provide initial formation for this type of personnel and institutions which provide long life general learning, and which can enlarge the portfolio with formation programmes dedicated to the personnel in the minors' re-education institutions. Through this project initial and lifelong learning of the personnel in the minors' re-education institutions can be synchronized at the national level and connected to the European practices. Thus within the project framework will be introduced a curriculum proposal and a support lifelong learning class for the personnel that carries out different roles in young people's education. The value added to the partnership and the proposed interventions of the project consist of the fact that it constitutes a critical mass of institutions and professionals at the minors' penitentiary system level which will have the capacity to pass as many times are needed through the reform exercise of the system and lifelong learning of the personnel, according to the model in the project.

Aim

The project aims is to consolidate the partners' capacity of involving themselves actively in transnational partnerships in order to promote the social inclusion of young institutionalized people in re-education centres by (i) increasing the institutional capacity of concurring at the reformation and the efficiency of the education and lifelong learning system in the detention and re-education centres for underage people and by (ii) professional and individual developing of the participants in the project which can lead to local assumption of the reform.

Objectives

Specific objectives: O1: implementation of a simple and vigorous scheme as a model for exchanging knowledge, information and best practices within the transnational partnerships. O2: conception of some instrument and work assignments designed to facilitate the increasing of the institutional capacity of the participants and the applicant and the individual developing of the participants in the project by means of the best practice. O3: examination of practices and policies in Romania and in the European countries concerning the organization of the re-education centres and activities of the institutionalized young people and the lifelong learning systems of the staff in these centres, establishing the European policy and practices studies. O4: conceiving and testing of a curriculum and of lifelong learning course support proposals

of the staff in the re-education centres of the institutionalized young people in order to suggest a lifelong learning programme which can be integrated in the training system of the young re-education centres network. O5: establishment of an educational resources base which will be able to support the staff's activity in the re-education centres with the institutionalized young people in order to facilitate their access to the community and on the labour market. O6: individual and professional development of the participants in exchange of best practices.

Context

In order to achieve the targeted economic performances and their correlation with an equitable social system, the European Council settles that the priority objective of the European Strategy for Occupancy is that the general rate of occupancy reaches 70%. Consequently, the increasing of the investment in the human capital which should lead to the increasing of the participation and the maintenance on the labour market of all citizen categories is foreseen in all the documents at the European level (The Integrated Guide Lines for Economic Increasing and Occupancy 2005-2008 and 2008-2010) and at the national level (in Romania, The National Programme of Reforms for 2007 – 2010). Programmes, projects and actions which should lead to the fulfilment of the European desiderata and objectives are developed and implemented in the State members, and the accumulated experience and expertise by means of these initiatives connected to the area of individuals' affiliation and integration in education and on the labour market must be effectively valued. The transnational cooperation aims just to promote the reforms by means of learning from other State members' experience, through a process of peer learning. The reviewed Lisbon strategy highlights the need of strengthening the assuming process of the reforms at the national, regional and local level: the states and the institutions must assume the responsibility of learning from each other by transnational exchanges of knowledge and best practices. The research and practice showed that the exchange of information, sharing the best practices and working together in a multicultural environment in order to identify common clues have a major multiplying effect: the innovation capacity is increased, there is strong preoccupation in modernizing and the adjustment of the institutions in the State members to the new challenges at the economic and social level, and the identification and evaluation of weak points and of the clues for reforming the policies and practices in order to fulfil the Lisbon's objectives lead to a stable development. The Legislation stipulating the functioning of the institutions which work with the delinquent young people in Romania (settled in 1972) should follow the new European context and integrate the best practice accumulated by the similar institutions in the State members and the personnel who work in these centres needs new competences and support products which endow them with the knowledge necessary to face an unpredictable and difficult labour market (especially for the economic crises and post-crisis situation). Furthermore, the purveyance of the lifelong learning for the staff in these institutions which work with delinquent young people should be a handy and quality resource so that the institutions could access it whenever it is needed. The competences' development of the different staff categories from the re-education centres cannot be successfully done outside European dimensions. The target group of this project consists of 146 individuals – personnel belonging to the transnational partnerships, as follows (i) 140 who work, on different positions, (management, education, security, instruction, etc.) in institutions that work with delinquent young people in three under development regions in Romania, institutions which are part of different transnational partnerships. The various categories of individuals/personnel which constitute this part of the target group will be involved along the project in different activities and intervention types, according to the personal needs, positions and the expertise they

have: the individuals who have management positions in the activities of the institutions and with a role of experts in lifelong learning and professional development coordination of the staff will participate at the initial visits and at the workshops within the project in order to materialize partnerships aimed to the managerial aspects, of increasing the institutional capacity, of conceiving some mechanisms and products meant to increase the quality of services offered to institutionalized young people in order to increase their chances to integrate on the market labour and in the society; persons with different positions in the current activity of the centres, and who do not have management positions, will be involved in practice stages in similar institutions of state members represented in the project in the framework of some partnerships, doubled by dissemination seminars in their own institutions. (ii) experts who are members of some institutions which have the role of providers of initial and lifelong learning at the local level in Romania and who as a result of best practices exchange and the framework of the project and the participation at transnational partnerships will be able to accumulate the necessary competences to double their expertise as providers for professional formation of adults having necessary specific competences for lifelong learning of the personnel of these institutions for re-education.

Activities

The activities of the project are organized on three main categories: (i) management activities of the project, (ii) activities which materialize the exchange of best practices, and (iii) activities which aim at informing and advertising about the actions and the products of the project. The project is planned for 24 months and the activities are organized as follows:

A. The management of the project. a.1 the operational planning consists of the monthly meetings of the implementation team for the achievement of the detailed implementation plan and the quarterly and monthly planning of the activity; a.2 the internal monitoring and quality assurance in order to assure the coordination of the implementation teams, of the activities' agenda; the monitoring of the indicators is performed within this subactivity; a.3 the preparation and finalizing of the public acquisitions; a. 4 the reporting, financial and technical activity, which is done quarterly, in due time and has as purpose to document the activity within the project and the approval of the reports for reimbursement.

B. Activities by mean of which the best practices exchange is materialized by national and transnational partnerships: each of these types of activities is supported by working assignments and it is materialized by products aimed to increase the institutional capacity of the partners and to lead to individual and professional development of the participants:

- Initial visits to partners from Romania, Hungary, France, and Spain where the members of the transnational partnerships are documenting themselves about the structure procedures and resources used by partner institutions in order to educate and bring up young offenders institutionalized in re-education centres and lifelong learning staff from these centres; through these meetings starts the analysis of the needs, the structure of the individual development portfolio, the best practices guideline, the European practices and policies study related to functioning and the reform of the re-education centres for under-aged people and professional.
- Workshops in that the transnational teams work together for the conception and realization of some support materials: curriculum proposal and support course for the lifelong learning of the staff from the re-education centres, a collection of the educational resources to be used with institutionalized young people in order to prepare them for an better social integration.

- Practice stages in that transnational team work together in the applied context of some detention and re-education centres for institutionalized young people; these activities are also carried out for the piloting of some products arising from the project (part of the educational resources collection and of the curriculum proposal and support course for lifelong learning): each of the practice stages will be followed by one series of dissemination seminars in that the participants of the formation stages disseminate their experience to their colleagues from their institutions.

C. Publicity and information activities. c.1 there are the launching, intermediated and final conferences of the project in which the experience and best practices accumulated in the projects and the obtained results are disseminated, c.2, publishing of the information materials and the products of the project, c.3 realization, implementation and maintenance of the web-site/platform of the project.

Results

The anticipated results take into consideration the specific objectives of the project and correspond to the planned activities.

Activity A: ra.1 an approved implementation plan, ra.2 24 sets of monthly plans according to the implementation calendar, ra.3 24 monthly reports of the responsible leaders of each of the best practice activities types, ra.4 monitoring plan quarterly monitoring reports, ra.5 a number of 4 technical and financial reports realized annually, in due time, according to the legislation and approved for reimbursement.

Activity B: rb.1 the analysis of the lifelong learning needs of the participants to the exchange of best practices and the needs concerning educational material support to be used with the institutionalized young people, rb.2 individual and professional development portfolios for the members of the target group, according to their specific activities and their needs, rb.3 a guideline of best practices to organize the activity of the institutions which work with institutionalized young people and the lifelong learning of the staff from these institutions so that they could assist the young people to become more employable, rb.4 a study of the European policy and practices concerning the activity with institutionalized young people and lifelong learning of the staff in the centres which work with them, rb.5 a curriculum proposal and a course support of lifelong learning of the staff who works with the institutionalized young people, rb.6 a collection of educational resources/materials to be used with institutionalized young people in order to help them to integrate in the society and to have an increased access on the labour market., rb.7 events in which the work is done in partnership and there are disseminated ideas, experiences, and best practices

Activity C: rc.1 Conferences to disseminate the results and products of the project, rc.2 advertising and information materials, rc.3 a platform - site of the project.

Project Sustainability

Project Sustainability is built in the processes and mechanisms of the project and is meant to assure maximization of the use of material and human resources and maintenance of the direct and indirect costs at minimum by means of promoting and valuing the products of the project. The joint agenda of the best practices exchange and personal agenda is based on the project participants' need analyses and on the specific needs anchored in the context of each institution. The mechanism through which the best practices exchange is realized, is participative – each partner contributes to all the processes and the products, even if this fact is doubled by the express responsibility for certain types of activities and events. The project capitalizes the partners' experience and of the networks to which they belong. The fact that each participant and organization can establish the learning agenda (based on personal and professional

development portfolio) leads to a higher level of assuming the learning and the responsibilities to introduce novelty elements and the reform in their own activity. The anchoring in the local context, the existence of needs' analysis and of a participating mechanism, positioning and applicability of the learned knowledge and of information in the specific context of each partner and mechanism which sustain the assumption of the reform and of the modification are features which confirm the sustainability of the project. At the managerial level the sustainability of the project is assured through processes which facilitate communication and participation at the management. The Valuation and dissemination activities provided in the project – the conferences and advertisement and information materials will lead to the project visibility and best practices results from them. The project aims that all its developed products and components through the exchange of best practices between transnational and national partners will be able to be integrated in the young people's re-education institutions system, in the lifelong learning system of the personnel in these centres and will be integrated by each participant institution in their current activity. Each partner and the personnel members of all partners engaged themselves in the project activities by participating in the events and through their work in the realization of the products; these competences could be used even after the project is finalized. And the numerous products of the project will be a support - with no additional expenses – to be used by the partners. The working mechanism in multilateral and bilateral partnership would have created practices which will be carried on.

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