

EDUCATE 4 INDEPENDENCE



TECHNICAL DETAILS

Project Name: Educate for Independence

Reference: ESF-SI-2023-SKILLS-01-0029

Program and call: Social Innovations for the Upskilling of Vulnerable Youth, Especially Young People not in Employment, Education, or Training (NEETs)

Coordinating Organization: APG23 - Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII (Italy)

Partner Organizations: CESIE ENTE TERZO SETTORE (Italy), INNOVATION HIVE (Greece), Il Ramo società cooperativa sociale (Italy), InterAktion (Austria), Asociación Bienestar i Desarrollo (Spain), Consorzio Socio Assistenziale del Cuneese (Italy)

Project Duration: 24 months

Action Area: Italy, Greece, Spain, Austria,

The “**Educate for Independence**” project aims to promote the autonomy and labor market access of young people aged 15 to 29 with a mild-medium intellectual impairment who are not in education, employment, or training (NEETs), through developing their life and labour market skills. This group shows significantly lower rates of employment, due to obstacles such as the rigidity of programs designed for a generic "protected target group" and the disregard of individual needs.

The objective is to test an innovative intervention which embraces **three domains**: outreach of the target group; defining of the learning model; skills validation and activation in the labor market.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- **Develop skills** in vulnerable youth with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities to foster their self-independence.
- Integrate youth with intellectual disabilities into the labour market by providing **training and skill-building opportunities**.
- **Promote independent living** by limiting the use of residential services and focusing on inclusive interventions and independent living pathways for young people with intellectual disabilities.

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MAIN ACTIVITIES

- **2 in-presence consortium meetings** in Cuneo and Barcelona.
- **Realization of 4 focus groups** in each country and **interviews with 40 NEETs** as part of the beneficiaries' identification process.
- **Realization of empowerment workshops** with around 200 NEETs
- Participation of 2 people from APG23 in a **Mutual learning event in Brussels** organised by the European Competence Centre of Social Innovation.
- **5 Webinars** to obtain an overview of best practices.
- **Agricultural and municipal activities** in small groups between 5 and 10 NEETs
- **4 case studies** from pilot programs
- Creation of a **Toolkit** with practical guidelines on the three domains of social innovation.
- **Engagement of 80 key stakeholders**, including educators, social workers, youth workers, and other professionals, to ensure a comprehensive support network for the youth.
- **Local events** involving over 150 professionals, including HR officers, SMEs, public/private authorities, and CSOs to create job opportunities and promote inclusive hiring practices.

EXPECTED RESULTS AND IMPACT

- **250 beneficiaries** are actively involved and empowered, increasing their awareness of opportunities and their potential for independence.
- **40 beneficiaries** have the opportunity to develop life skills and be better prepared for work through a tailored program focused on community inclusion and a clear skills validation system.
- **Change in the attitudes** towards young people with intellectual impairments, shifting from a welfare model to one that focuses on empowerment, protagonism, and independence for this vulnerable group.
- Consortium partners **enhance their expertise in training and job activation** for vulnerable youth.
- Establishment of a **skills validation method** to assess and measure the impact of the training and activation efforts, enabling continuous improvement.
- **General improvement of the partners' ability to identify and support** the specific needs of this vulnerable group, aiming to prevent situations of social exclusion, and to plan reliable, synergistic interventions.