



Lifelong
Learning
Programme

EPAEMSI

European Partnership on Adult Education and
Mobility for Social Inclusion

Lifelong Learning Programme: Grundtvig Learning Partnership

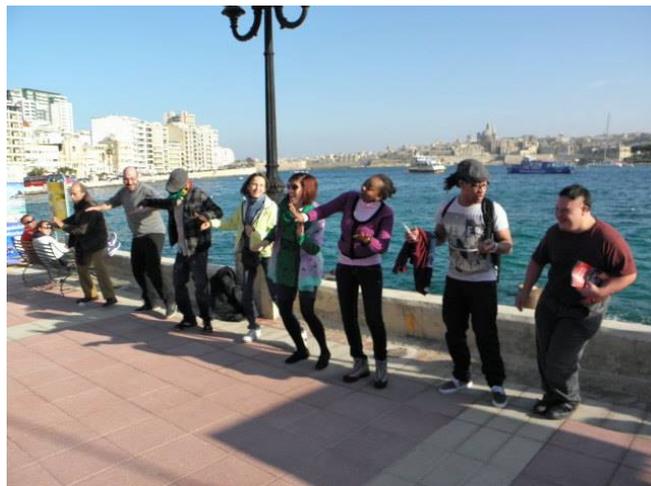
Report: "Recommendations on how to
improve education for adults suffering or at
risk of social exclusion"



1. INTRODUCTION

As mentioned in *“Pre-departure training for adults suffering from social exclusion taking part in a mobility experience”* - A tool for trainers and leaders prepared by the EPAEMSI partnership, social exclusion is a much broader concept than just income poverty, in so far as there may be many other factors that leave groups of society isolated. These include such wide ranging factors as unemployment; access to education; childcare and healthcare facilities; living conditions, as well as social participation. Therefore, the terms: “adults from disadvantaged social groups” and “those at risk of social exclusion” represent a very large group of people. It may include: people living alone, people with little or no education, minorities, asylum seekers, single parents, people with disabilities, people on a low income, the unemployed especially those suffering from long term unemployment, those living in an isolated area...

These are all aspects which must be closely taken into consideration when working with such target group to ensure a successful outcome. In order to continue assisting trainers and learners in their labour with adults at risk of social exclusion, the EPAEMSI partnership has prepared the following report. This report is a compilation of the lessons learnt during the project, built on the experience and feedback acquired during the project. To build these recommendations, as project partners, we looked back at all the activities of the project, the evaluations collected and our personal experience throughout the project.



Testing the good practices of 6 other organisations with our own adult learners at local level has taught us a few tricks on the right way to integrate a new educational activity.

Each of our good practice can be used by other organisations, from different countries and adapted to numerous profile of learners. The following recommendations should help others achieve this.

The theme of our project, described in its name: EPAEMSI or European Partnership on Adult Education and Mobility for Social Inclusion, has been at the heart of our work during the last 2 years. As such, we have used the initials as an inspiration for our recommendations.

For each letter of EPAEMSI, there is a keyword representing the valuable lessons we wish to share to help other organisations.

7 partners and 7 letters for the 7 keys for delivering quality and adequate educational activities to adults suffering or at risk of social exclusion:

Encourage

Plan

Adapt

Explain

Mix

Step by step

Improvise

2. EPAEMSI RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. Encourage

One of the difficulties people at risk of social exclusion face is a lack of trust in others and lack of self-esteem in themselves. The role of the trainer is to assist in the development of that self-confidence in order to help participants value themselves more and therefore value more their role in society. In order to do, trainers must encourage the active participation of all participants and to encourage them to work with one another. An example of this is the good practice of Stowarzyszenie WIOSNA “How do we work with people in WIOSNA? We notice their potential!”.



2.2. Plan

Sufficient time needs to be dedicated to the develop and planning of the activities involving people at risk of social exclusion.

The preparation of the activity should include:

- Preparing yourself as trainer/moderator - What will be my role? Where do I want the activity to go towards?
- Planning the content of the activity - Is it adapted to the target group (participants of the activity)?
- Analysing ahead the profile of the target group (participants of the activity): what are the difficulties/obstacles/misunderstandings which may arise throughout the activity. Could a conflict arise between the participants? Can this be prevented or what should the reaction of the trainer be?
- Analysing the exterior obstacles which may arise (weather, ...).
- Planning for a back-up plan in case something goes wrong.

2.3. Adapt

The activities must be adapted to be customized to the needs of the target group when working with adults at risk of social exclusion. Most activities may not fit completely the profile of your participants. By modifying and adapting the content of the activity to the problem that you intend to address, you will improve the effectiveness of the work being done. This means that before the activity is carried out, the specific needs of the target group must be analysed.



2.4. Explain

The briefing and debriefing are an essential part of each activity: explain to your participants why they are here, what are the goals so they do not feel like they are wasting their time. Especially when working with activities on sensitive topics such as stereotypes, conflict, discriminations..., it is important to be aware of the emotions of the group. The debriefing has a key role to play in order to ensure there was no misunderstandings, that participants understood the aim of the activity and no bad feelings are bottled up.

2.5. Mix

Fighting for social inclusion should not be done by involving solely those at risk or suffering from social exclusion. By mixing with different needs and a different background, it helps participants empathise with others' issues and situation and expand their horizon.

2.6. Step by step

In order to have a long-term and positive effect, the knowledge of the participants must be constructed bit by bit. This is why it is important to start with the basics, in order to create strong foundations. When planning your activities, set up objectives in the very short, mid and long term. Do not try to achieve a mid or long term objectives in just a few hours. Work step by step with the participants and do not move on to the next step unless the previous objectives have been achieved even if this means modifying your original plans.



2.7. Improvise

Sometimes an activity planned does not work out as one had anticipated. The participants are reacting differently due to their personality, group dynamic, knowledge and life experience,..., and the activity is not going towards the conclusion one wishes to reach with them.

In a live environment, the role of the moderator or trainer is essential. It is necessary to be receptive to the signals the group is sending and always ready to modify an activity or put an end to it when it is not going as planned. This is why a back up plan is always good to have!