

**GRUNDTVIG PROJECT
LET'S DO IT
CREATIVELY: FOR
THE BENEFIT OF
ADULT LEARNERS**

**HIGHLIGHTS
OF YEAR:**

- Project off to a successful start
- Portugal planning meeting sets agenda for next two year
- Informative and stimulating workshops delivered in Malta
- Project website up and running
- Strong partnerships formed

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Newsletter

ISSUE 1

JUNE 2010

Grundtvig Project Has a Successful First Year

The first year of the Grundtvig Learning Partnership, Let's Do It Creatively: For the Benefit of Adult Learners, has been one of real success and achievement.

Real goals and milestones have been achieved and strong partnerships and friendships formed.

Following on from a contact seminar in Malta in December 2008, participants from a number of countries joined together to develop and submit a project proposal for funding under the Grundtvig programme.

The initial partners were joined by other countries over the following months.

Working closely with the other partners, the project coordinator, County Dublin VEC from Ireland, developed a proposal

for a project that was primarily focused on sharing creative and innovative ways of teaching adult learners the key compe-

There then ensued a lot of communication by e-mail in preparation for the next two years.

The first meeting was held in Lousã, Portugal in October 2009. This meeting was focused on building relationships and agreeing clear and achievable objectives for the next two years.

Following this first meeting, a second workshop was held in Malta in April 2010. Much valuable expertise and knowledge was shared

among the partners and the project's website is constantly being developed.

It has been a busy first year of the project, but a very rewarding and enriching one for all involved.

We look forward with enthusiasm to year two of the project.



Participants at the project's first workshop in Lousã, Portugal,

tencies required in today's world.

The project proposal was submitted in February 2009 and the good news that it was successful in its application was received by the partners in July 2009.

Let's Do It Creatively—What's it About?

The project aims to promote 'enjoyment in learning', with a focus on the generation and sharing of innovative and creative approaches to adult learning.

It affords adult education practitioners an opportunity for pro-

fessional development and reflection on practice.

Through a series of workshops participants will reflect on, share and design innovative approaches to supporting the development of key competencies for education and training

as identified by the European Commission.

This project involves a number of partners from a diverse range of organisations involved in adult education who all have a depth of experience in developing key competences in learners.

Objectives of Project



Partners embrace the concept of the 'joy of learning' during a workshop in Portugal

"The joy of learning is as indispensable in study as breathing is in running."

Simone Weil

Sharing European Culture: Portuguese dancers in traditional costume entertain the partners.



Objective 1

To develop and share creative and innovative methods to engage learners so that they will develop the 'key competences' all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, inclusion and employment.

In 2005 the European Commission identified key competences that provide added value for the labour market, social cohesion, active citizenship and motivation.

The key competences are:

- 1) communication in the mother tongue
- 2) communication in foreign languages
- 3) competences in maths, science and technology
- 4) digital competence
- 5) learning to learn
- 6) interpersonal, intercultural and social competences, and civic competence
- 7) entrepreneurship
- 8) cultural expression

It is in order to meet the challenges posed in developing these key competences in adult learners that the partners in the project wish to develop and share creative and innovative approaches to organising the learning of these key competences.

The idea of developing creative and innovative approaches dovetails with the fact that 2009 is the European Year of Creativity and Innovation.

"Allows the transfer of best practice by adult education practitioners across Europe."

Objective 2

To encourage teachers to see themselves as facilitators in the learning process rather than just subject experts who disseminate knowledge.

There is an emerging consensus that the most useful learning in the modern world is learning how to learn. The emphasis in adult education should be as much, if not more, on the *process* of learning as on the subject matter being taught.

In order to encourage this, there is general consensus that the teacher should be more of a facilitator of learning rather than the traditional view of the teacher as a subject expert who imparts knowledge.

Adult learners who are able to engage actively in their own learning process will learn more effectively and with more enthusiasm.

Objective 3

To encourage the development of a 'joyful' learning atmosphere.

It is the experience of the partners, and also borne out by academic studies, that many adult learners returning to education after a number of years have negative perceptions about education as a result of experiences from their earlier school days.

It is therefore important to foster a welcoming and supportive environment for adult learners. Such an environment should be one where education is not seen as drudgery to be endured, but rather as something to be embraced as a positive, fulfilling and life-enriching experience.

To develop such an experience the partners believe that it is important to design and develop a learning environment that encourages the learners to be active in the learning process in a happy and enjoyable environment.

By encouraging such active learning in a warm and supportive environment, the project partners believe that this will lead the adult learners to engage more readily in the process of learning and developing key competences.

Often this means the learner is developing key competences without realising it, e.g. by fostering an environment where the learner is willing to engage in discussion and debate with other members of the group, the learner is developing the key competence of communication in the mother tongue, as well as developing interpersonal and social competence.

The desired outcome is that learners develop a more positive attitude to education and will be therefore, more motivated to continue on the path of life-long learning.

Project Kicks-off in Portugal



FIRST MEETING. LOUSÃ 5TH — 8TH NOVEMBER

putting the project on a firm footing and to build relationships among the partners to ensure a successful project.

In order to achieve this, the workshop had four key objectives:

1. Team building
2. Fine-tuning the project – review the activity plan, discuss budgetary issues and the allocation of tasks.
3. Setting targets – determine

milestones for the project and agree on the timeline.

4. Quality control – develop an evaluation and monitoring plan for the project.

This was a very successful meeting and clear objectives were agreed and strong relationships forged.

The partners left Portugal with a shared vision for a successful project.

“The partners left Portugal with a shared vision for a successful project.”

The first meeting of the project happened in the beautiful town of Lousã in the Coimbra region of Portugal from the 5th to the 8th November, 2009.

This first meeting was very much

Portugal—Day by Day

5th OF NOVEMBER

All the attendants met in Lousã on the 5th of November. We were 38 people: 4 from the Irish Institution, 9 from the host Institution, 5 from Romania, 4 from the Czech Republic, 2 from the UK, 9 from Spain, 2 from Germany and 3 from Malta.

There were no participants from Turkey due to family reasons. We all look forward to meet them in the coming workshops.

In a local restaurant we held a welcome session and a cultural evening of sharing typical food and drink from each participant country. We met there informally, and got to know each other. Then we were presented with traditional dances and costumes from the local community.

6th OF NOVEMBER.

The working sessions were held in the local Library. It possesses very convenient facilities, so we felt at ease all the time. Besides, it was not far from the accommodation, so we were able to walk there in a few minutes.

After the official welcome from the host and the coordinating institutions, every institution gave a presentation to provide the participants an overview of their work and reach.

Then we reviewed the aims of the Project as they had been submitted to the National Agencies, and we decided that they are appropriate.

Later we held a Team Building workshop. We were given a short demonstration of Portuguese dances and invited to join in, which many did. Creativity was also shown in a

demonstration of local arts and crafts. The atmosphere created was very enjoyable.

The workshop held after lunch was focused on agreeing a work plan for the life of the Project. A Gantt chart was developed with all the tasks to be carried out, who is responsible for each task and when everything is to be completed.

The cultural agenda included a visit to Lousã and the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the host institution, Arte Via. We also attended a Fados concert.



Fados singers provided a fantastic evening's entertainment.

Portugal—Day by Day Continued

7th OF NOVEMBER.

First thing in the morning we decided to create a logo for the project. After combining everybody's ideas, José Antonio, from Cáceres (Spain) accepted responsibility to actually create it.

Then, we focused on devising the best ways to communicate effectively during the project. The group discussion focussed on four different aspects:

- * The most effective ways of communicating,
- * The frequency of the contacts,
- * The ways to help people who aren't native English speakers.
- * The best ways of disseminating the project.

There was an agreement that good means of communication are : E-mail, Skype and discussion groups on the website. However, each of these tools should be used for a specific purpose.

The right frequency of contacts will depend on the stage of the Project, and on the item we wish to share with the other partners. The discussion forum on the web page can be widely used. E-mails would certainly increase when meetings approach. It was agreed that the coordinator would issue a quarterly report on the development of the Project. Each partner should keep the coordinator updated on the activities carried out at a local level.

To help people who are not very good at English it was recommended to use more visual aids, to speak slowly and to use simple English. To translate E-mails and written texts we could take advantage of the Google translator.

On the dissemination of the Project, it was suggested to have a short summary on the Wikipedia.

The last workshop was focused on the development of the Project website. It would be developed by the Czech and Romanian partners. We would use a free hosting service, to allow it to last longer after the Project is over.

It should include a forum, Google calendar and profiles of the institutions involved in the Project.

The main language should be English. However there should be a summary in the language of each participating institution.

The website should also include a private member's area, a download section, a section for case studies of best practice, a small news section, a link to each member institution, a section for useful links and a counter.

A sample website should be ready a few weeks after the end of the meeting.

At the end of the workshops, we all were aware that we have gathered and devised ideas, tools and goodwill enough to develop a very

rich and rewarding Project.

The day continued with a visit to the historic city of Coimbra where we visited the oldest university in Portugal.

After returning from Coimbra, we enjoyed a magical evening of outdoor entertainment in Lousã castle. We found a set of bonfires that provided some light and a very suitable mysterious atmosphere.

This had been arranged to tell us the story of the caste and the town itself, the story of the Muslim lords and Christian conquerors, the story of a beautiful Princess who once lived and loved in the castle.

Then, there was music and poetry and dance, followed by a performance to remember the fall of the Berlin wall twenty years earlier.

To complete a wonderful evening, we attended a dinner in a typical restaurant lost in the mountain, by the river which served traditional food.

In short; the aims set out for the meeting have been met more than reasonably. The four areas of focus have been covered. and after the presentations given at the first workshop, we are better informed about each member institution and their work. Now we feel much closer and ready to engage actively with the project.

“Good relationships were built and clear and achievable objectives were agreed.”

Concrete achievements of the Portugal meeting

The first workshop in Portugal achieved its objectives and more. Good relationships were built and clear and achievable objectives were agreed.

Some of the other outcomes from the initial meeting included:

- A Gantt chart setting out the objectives and key milestones of the project was achieved.
- Agreement was reached on effective communications strategies.
- Strong relationships and a sense of collegiality was developed amongst the partners.
- The basis of project's website was agreed.
- A logo and other promotional tools for the project were agreed.



Participants engage in debate and discussion during the Portugal workshop.



Malta a Success—Despite Volcano



SECOND MEETING. MALTA 15TH — 18TH APRIL 2010

The project's second meeting took place on the beautiful Mediterranean island of Malta in April 2011.

The focus of the workshops was sharing good practice in teaching Information Technology and En-

trepreneurship to Adult Learners.

The meeting was again very successful, despite the fact that, due to the eruption of the

Icelandic volcano and the ensuing disruption to European airspace, the partners from Ireland, the coordinating country, were unable to fly out.

Many participants also had some difficulty in returning to their respective countries. Epic journeys of travel by ferry, rail and car

were some of the abiding memories of the Maltese workshop.

However, the workshop itself was an outstanding success and many creative and innovative ways of teaching the competences involved were shared.

Friendships were strengthened and the partners left Malta with renewed enthusiasm for the ideals of the project. Enthusiasm is already growing for the next workshop in the Czech Republic.

An Unwanted Creativity: The journey Home

It began on Friday when the TV news said that some airports in several European countries had been closed. Nobody knew for certain but it was predictable that some partners might have problems returning home.

The Czech, German, Romanian and UK partners were informed at the Dolmen reception that their flights were cancelled and they were forced to make alternative arrangements for their journey home.

The UK partners had to stay one more night in Malta and in the evening on Monday, 19th April took an emergency school flight to Toulouse where they found that the French railway was on strike. They had to hire a car and they had to drive through the night to Caen where they embarked on Brittany ferries to Portsmouth and there took a train home to Uxbridge.

The German group was not able to get to Berlin according to plan on Sunday the 18th because airports in Germany were closed. The first flight they could catch was on Wednesday. So the four participants had to stay on in Bugibba. They got home three days later than planned.

The Romanian participants decided to take a flight to Rome on Sunday (one of a few open airports) and then bravely drove to Romania.

The Czech group decided to leave the Dolmen and stay in a cheaper hotel in Valletta from which it was easier to reach the airport by bus (and they could see the Pope on the boat in the harbour). On Monday afternoon there was a sudden chance to take a flight to Graz instead of closed Vienna. With the help of a taxi (five participants with all the pieces of luggage and a driver in one older Mercedes car) they managed to catch the flight and happily reach their home at 4.00AM on Tuesday, 20th April.

Malta—Day by Day

Thursday, 15th Arrival

The partners who managed to fly and get to the Dolmen resort hotel in Qawra were surprised and disappointed to learn at the reception that their Irish friends could not reach Malta because of closed airports.

Some partners used the time for sightseeing in Valletta, which could be easily reached by the typical yellow busses in about 50 minutes; the Spanish and Czech group met at the Upper Barrakka Gardens. The Dolmen hotel is a very special place in connection with the project, as most of the partners met there for the first time during the contact seminar in December 2008, so this is the place where the project was born.

Friday, 16th

The bus took the non-Maltese participants from Qawra to Floriana. The program was held at the Directorate for Educational Services and Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education. The meeting was officially opened by the Maltese organisers – Louise Portelli, Jonathan Borg and Frank Fabri. Bags with the project logo and nice presents for every participant were prepared (e.g. T-shirts, mugs with project logos). Then the participants were divided into 3 groups for 3 parallel work-

shops devoted to e-Twinning, video making, and blogging in education, led by the Maltese experts.

After a dinner in Valletta Grand Harbour with a magnificent view of a boat being prepared for the Pope's visit, the afternoon programme included two best practice presentations delivered by the partners - dealing with Web 2.0 and its educational potential (Daniela, Romania) and voting systems usage in education (Jan, Daniela, Veronika, Czech Republic). There was also a possibility to introduce the Turkish partner and his home institution

Then a guide, Ms. Anna Azzopardi, joined the group for a visit to the great church in Mosta and then silent city of Mdina, a former capital of Malta. Informal discussions followed during and after the dinner at the Dolmen hotel.

Saturday, 17th

The second part of the agenda was held in Dolmen Resort Hotel. Presentations on Entrepreneurship were delivered by- Franco, and Jonathan from MECB and our UK partners (Abdullah and Krzysztof). The workshops required participants to engage in group work, which brought more communication and discussion.

After lunch in the Dolmen hotel the focus was on 'creativity in tourism'.

Again with Ms. Anna Azzopardi's explanations, the team enjoyed a ferry to Gozo island (with nice views of smaller Comino and Cominotto islands) and visited various interesting places such as: a view point near the Calypso's cave above the Ramla bay, Azure window, seaside rocks and a historical city Citadel.

After a very nice dinner at the Marsalforn Bay and a ferry back to Malta, the participants thanked and said good bye to their Maltese partners and prepared for their journeys home, with renewed enthusiasm for the ideals of the project.



Project drives forward on a typical Maltese bus.



Project Website Launched

www.letsdoit.upl.cz

One of the major milestones of the project during the year was the launch of the project’s website.

This was a collaborative exercise amongst all the partners with a lot of work done by the Czech and Romanian partners.

The website is rich with many

resources. It has a summary of all the presentations given at the workshops; video clips of the presentations; links to other useful resources; and other resources and useful information.

There’s also a very useful blog on the website that allows for effective interaction and communication among the partners.

This resource has been really useful in planning and documenting the project.

It is planned that this website will be a real legacy of the project and that it will continue to be maintained long after the project is finished as a source of shared resources and a point of contact for the partners.

Partners Promote Grundtvig on Wikipedia

If you type in the words ‘Grundtvig Programme’ into the well-known online encyclopedia Wikipedia you will be presented with information that has been prepared by the partners on this project.

The entry gives some general information on the Grundtvig Programme and also provides a link to the website of this particular project as an example of the activity that the Grundtvig Programme promotes.

We have found this to be a very powerful tool in promoting both the aims of this particular project as well as the Grundtvig Programme in general

Check out the entry on:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grundtvig_programme

Workshops—Past and Future

It is proposed to hold five workshops over the course of the project.

The workshops are

Workshop	Venue	Date	Focus
1	Portugal	6 – 7 November 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team building • Fine-tuning the project –review the activity plan, discuss budgetary issues and the allocation of tasks. • Setting targets – determine milestones for the project and agree on the timeline. • Quality control – devising an evaluation and monitoring plan for the project.
2	Malta	16—17 April 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Skills • Entrepreneurship
3	Czech Republic	22—23 October 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competences in maths, science and technology
4	Romania	March 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Skills, • Learning to Learn, • Foreign Languages
5	Ireland	June 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpersonal, intercultural and social competences, and civic competence • Communication in the mother tongue

Dissemination and Promotion of Project

Much effort was spent during the year in promoting the project to the wider public and disseminating the work done to date. A major part of this publicity drive was the production of a leaflet by the partners. The production of this leaflet was coordinated by Saint Theresa College, Malta. This leaflet has been printed and is being actively distributed to raise awareness of the project.

Many of the other partners have also produced similar publicity material at a local level. An example of this is this leaflet produced by the UK partner.



Two examples of publicity material produced by the project: Leaflet promoting the project (left) and UK leaflet (right).

Benefits of Project to Local Partner Organisations

One major benefit that a lot of partners have commented on is how the Grundtvig project has helped to promote awareness of sharing creative and innovative ideas in their own organisations. There have been many instances of this over the course of the year, but two concrete examples come from Malta and Ireland.

In Malta, staff from Saint Theresa College have met a number of times and have actively embraced the goals of the project. They have even created their own blog based on the project: <http://skola.edu.mt/2010/06/st-theresa-college-in-%e2%80%98let%e2%80%99s-do-it-creatively-for-the-benefit-of-adult-learners-grundtvig-project%e2%80%99/>

The project has also been the catalyst for a major initiative in the Irish organisation County Dublin Vocational Education Committee. The Irish partners in this project represent 6 Further Education colleges dispersed throughout the city of Dublin.

The project has resulted in staff from these colleges meeting on a more regular basis and a formal network of Further Education teachers has been established. A major conference for all staff is also planned for September. All this has resulted directly from the Grundtvig project and has really helped in creating a sense of collegiality amongst the staff in these colleges.



Staff from County Dublin VEC discuss the project

Promotion in Local Media

As part of the promotion and dissemination of the project and its activities, many partners were successful in getting mention of the project in their local media.

This proved very successful in raising awareness about the project. Just two such examples are shown below:

PROYECTO GRUNDTVIG

Encuentro de educación de adultos en Malta

Profesores del Centro de Educación de Adultos de Cáceres han celebrado en Malta la segunda reunión internacional del proyecto europeo de educación de adultos Grundtvig para el que ha sido seleccionado. En este proyecto participan centros de Irlanda, Portugal, Gran Bretaña, Rumania, Malta, Turquía, República Checa y Alemania. Las ideas que guían esta iniciativa educativa son ayudar a los alumnos, demostrarles que aprender no tiene por qué ser aburrido, que la actividad académica les sirva para aprender a desenvolverse mejor en la vida diaria, y que los profesores también aprendan a guiar a los alumnos en el proceso de aprendizaje en lugar de agobiarlos con lecciones magistrales. Los docentes subrayan que este tipo de encuentro les permite «abrirse a las experiencias de otros países».

Piece published in Hoy.ES

Reunión en Malta del Centro de Adultos

Profesores del Centro de Educación de Adultos de Cáceres han celebrado en Malta la segunda reunión internacional del proyecto europeo de educación de adultos Grundtvig para el que ha sido seleccionado. En este proyecto participan centros de Irlanda, Portugal, Gran Bretaña, Rumania, Malta, Turquía, República Checa y Alemania. Se denomina *Let's do it creatively for the Benefit of adult learners* ("Vamos a hacer las cosas de forma creativa para beneficiar a los alumnos adultos").

Las ideas que guían este proyecto son: Ayudar a los alumnos para que aprendan haciendo las cosas. demostrarles que aprender no tiene por qué ser aburrido, que la actividad académica les sirva para aprender a desenvolverse mejor en la vida diaria y, por último, los profesores deben aprender a guiar a los alumnos en el proceso de aprendizaje en lugar de agobiarlos con lecciones magistrales.

Piece published in El Periódico Extremadura



OUR EUROPEAN PROJECT PARTNERS

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www.letsdoit.upol.cz

About the Grundtvig Learning Partnership Programme

The Grundtvig Learning Partnership is a framework for small-scale cooperation activities between organisations from at least three participating countries including at least 1 EU Member State, working in the field of adult education, with an aim to broaden the participation of smaller organisations that want to include European cooperation in their education activities. The financial support is for a maximum of 3 years.



Disclaimer:

Grundtvig Co-ordinator Project No.: GR2009-05C

This project has been funded with the support of the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained herein.