

Boost Your Employability!



BOOST

YOUR EMPLOYABILITY!

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For publisher:

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Zadar, Croatia, 2015

This document does not represent the point of view of the European Union.
The interpretations and opinions contained in it are solely those of the authors.

The present survey results are realized within the framework of the transnational youth project called “Boost Your Employability! “, implemented under the European Erasmus + program.



Foreword



Europe House Slavonski Brod (EHSB) is a nongovernmental organization established in September 1998 to promote European and global integration processes and cultural, political and economic integration of Croatia into the European union. One of its main goal is promotion and development of understanding the importance of European interdependence and cooperation, human rights, environmental protection, natural and cultural heritage. The intention of creating a culture of understanding, tolerance and dialogue should be added as well. EHSB achieves its goal by spreading their ideas not only directly to its members, but also indirectly to all members of the community in which it operates, through the cooperation with complementary organizations, embassies, international cultural institutions, state institutions, local and regional governments.

EHSB develops and implements projects in various local, national and EU programs (Cards, Phare, IPA, Youth in Action, Europe for citizens...). Different project activities involve a larger number of volunteers. EDSB cooperates with teachers and students of primary and secondary schools and university students, young un/employed people and all who are interested to contribute in spreading the European dimension into education of young people. By implementation of own and its partners' activities, EHSB promotes personal and social development and creates a feeling of personal responsibility for peace, human rights, environmental protection, natural and cultural heritage.

In October of 2015 EHSB implemented a project named "Boost Your Employability!" under the Erasmus+ program of the European Union. Project was implemented in association with eight other partners - Change it! from Czech Republic, European Information Centre Veliko Tarnovo from Bulgaria, MHD UMKA Skopje from Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Konya Metropolitan Municipality Kilicarslan Youth Center from Turkey, Stowarzyszenie Edukacji Pozaformalnej "Meritum" – Poland, Asociasion Cultural Sende from Spain, EDUCIVIS from Slovakia and Centar za edukaciju mladih coming from Bosnia and Herzegovina. The document in front of you presents one of the project outcomes.



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Introduction

One of the economic and social consequences of the global economic and financial crisis is the high youth unemployment and poverty which is over twice as high as for the whole working population and exceeds 50% for some countries. It is likely to have long-term negative effects on the affected youth and on the societies as a whole, including impaired productive and creative potential of young people, alienation from the social and democratic life, lack of social inclusion and cohesion and in some cases, involvement of young people in antisocial behavior, substance and alcohol abuse crime. Social unrest is often fueled by unemployment, too.

According to the World Bank 2014 statistics, unemployment in most of the Project countries is higher than the World average: over 57% in Spain and Bosnia and Herzegovina, 51% in Croatia and Macedonia, over 30% in Slovakia and over 20% in Poland, Bulgaria, Czech Republic and Turkey. Furthermore, in most of the Project countries more young people receive below-average wages than average or above-average wages. The pattern is strongest in Macedonia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Bulgaria.

Therefore, it is obvious that fighting rising levels of unemployment - especially among young people - has become one of the most urgent tasks for European governments. Nowadays we witness many young people who leave school prematurely. Unfortunately, they are not aware that this means a high risk of being unemployed and socially marginalized. There is the same risk for many adults who did not adapt to the new job market – which now requires adaptability, speed and increased mobility.

With the situation as it is, decision makers have no other option but to “invent” new, based on previous experience, education and training system, wrapped up in youth policies, that will help young people to improve their skills and competences in order to overcome the problem and enter the European job market prepared and ready to tackle all of the challenges! Therefore, reforms in education and training can strengthen the progress towards these goals.

EHSB presents only small part in the whole vision. As a civil society organization, we support the whole process by implementing a projects with various aims and goals. “Boost Your Employability!” presents one of our projects which as a direct goal has creation of awareness, among the youth, about their own possibilities concerning entrepreneurship and other possibilities for self-employment and prosperity.

Within this brochure you will find the following information:

- Information about Erasmus + program
- Information about “Boost Your Employability!” Project
- More about program activities of the Project
- Follow-up activities and ways how to participate

So... what about Erasmus+?

The Erasmus Program (European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students) is a European Union (EU) student exchange program established in 1987. Erasmus+, or Erasmus Plus, is the new name for the program that combines all the EU's current schemes for education, training, youth and sport, which was started in January 2014. Erasmus+ aims to modernize education, training and youth work across Europe. It is open to education, training, youth and sport organizations across all sectors of lifelong learning, including school education, further and higher education, adult education and the youth sector. It offers exciting opportunities for UK participants to then study, work, volunteer, teach and train abroad in Europe.

In order to achieve its objectives, the Erasmus+ Program implements the following Actions:

- KEY ACTION 1 – MOBILITY OF INDIVIDUALS

Mobility of learners and staff: opportunities for students, trainees, young people and volunteers, as well as for professors, teachers, trainers, youth workers, staff of education institutions and civil society organizations to undertake a learning and/or professional experience in another country.

- KEY ACTION 2 – COOPERATION FOR INNOVATION AND THE EXCHANGE OF GOOD PRACTICES

This Key Action supports:

Transnational Strategic Partnerships aimed to develop initiatives addressing one or more fields of education training and youth and promote innovation, exchange of experience and know-how between different types of organizations involved in education, training and youth or in other relevant fields.

- KEY ACTION 3 – SUPPORT FOR POLICY REFORM

Knowledge in the fields of education, training and youth for evidence-based policy making and monitoring. Initiatives for policy innovation to stimulate innovative policy development among stakeholders and to enable public authorities to test the effectiveness of innovative policies through field trials based on sound evaluation methodologies.

As a reward for participation in Erasmus+ project, participants can get a Youthpass – European certificate used for recognition and validation of non-formal learning. Certificate contains information about the project, project activities and the most important, competences acquired through participation in a specific project. Youthpass recognizes 8 key competencies: Communication in the mother tongue; Communication in foreign languages; Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology; Digital competence; Learning to learn; Social and civic competences; Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship and Cultural awareness and expression.

Boost Your Employability! Project



Boost Your Employability! (BYE!) is transnational project created by EHSB, under the Key Action 1 – mobility of individuals of Erasmus+ Program. Project was implemented in association with eight partners: Change it! from Czech Republic, European Information Centre Veliko Tarnovo from Bulgaria, MHD UMKA Skopje from Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Konya Metropolitan Municipality Kilicarslan Youth Center from Turkey, Stowarzyszenie Edukacji Pozaformalnej “Meritum” – Poland, Asociacion Cultural Sende from Spain, EDUCIVIS from Slovakia and Centar za edukaciju mladih coming from Bosnia and Herzegovina; from 12th October till 20th October of 2015 in the city of Zadar, Croatia.

Each partner organization needed to send 4 participants and 1 group leader which means 5 persons from every organization. Croatian group, as Croatia is the host of the project, had 8 participants in total. So, in total, this project gathered 48 young people from nine European countries.

Objective:

The youth exchange BYE – Boost Your Employability! was developed in order to create more awareness towards employability and how to become more entrepreneurial in finding job opportunities and filling in the life. The project is designed to find possibilities and to create more opportunities and insight for the young participants regarding their education, leisure time, volunteering and future career. Participants will be working on the theme ‘entrepreneurship’ based on experiential and non-formal learning, using the tools: video, photography, role play activities and simulation games.

The priority of the exchange is to create awareness about the own possibilities concerning entrepreneurship, what the options and possibilities are and what they can gain for themselves.

Target Group

Target group for this project were young people with fewer opportunities – most of them were unemployed or young people coming from rural area.

What we did?

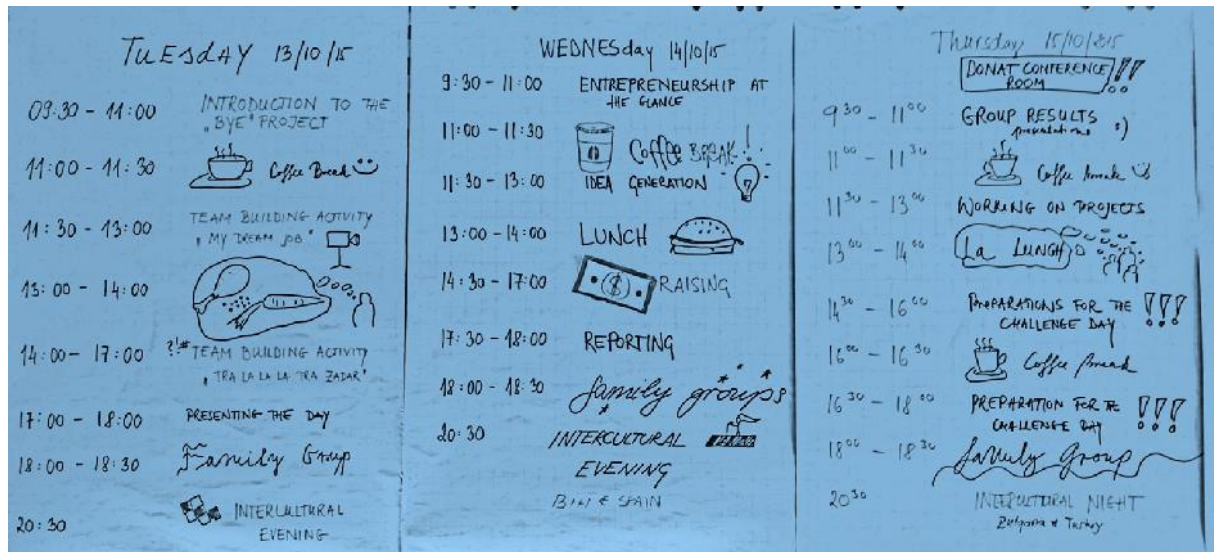


Figure 1 – Indicative program of the Youth Exchange

For the beginning, *Figure 1* will help you to picture how or working day looked like. Each of the working days had similar time frame – we had 4 sessions throughout the day and each of them lasted for one and a half hour. Between first two and second two sessions we had a lunch break, coffee break separated first from the second and third from the fourth session. During the dinner program we had intercultural evenings where each of the countries presented us with traditional food and custom of their country. If you can picture everything right, that means that we almost had no free time!

So...what we did back there in Zadar? As it is stated, one of the main goals of the project was to equip young people with mainly entrepreneurial (but also more general) knowledge, skills and attitudes which will help them to find a job or, maybe, try to start their own business. So, let's discuss about the activities which were meant to improve following competences:

Social and civic competences



This competence was built up throughout the whole youth exchange. From the beginning, where the organizer took care that participants coming from different countries share rooms, to the fact that neither of the working groups was allowed to contain more than 2 participants coming from the same country. Furthermore, some of the activities included exploring the city and approaching local peoples. All you can find in the pictures under.



Communication in foreign languages/mother tongue



The main language of the seminar was English. People from different language backgrounds all needed to communicate in English and all of the tasks were given in English. Since all of the participants were at different English level, we all had an opportunity to learn some new words, phrases and expressions. However, when there was some misunderstanding while communicating in English, mother tongue saved the situation! Participants who were better in English, afterwards translated the task in certain national language. By using this model everyone was clear on what to do.



Mathematical competences and basic competences in science and technology



Participants build up mathematical competence through several ways. One of them was calculating a budget for their project and collecting the proper amount of money needed for the project (counting) and other was using different charts and bars to describe the situation about the youth unemployment or other areas..

Financial reporting

Bill number	Name	Amount
1	Taxi to the city	40 kn
2	Taxi to hotel	40 kn
3	Taxi to next organization	30 kn
4	Pizza	15 kn
5	Pizza	15 kn
6	Coffees	10 kn

Collected: 180 kn!

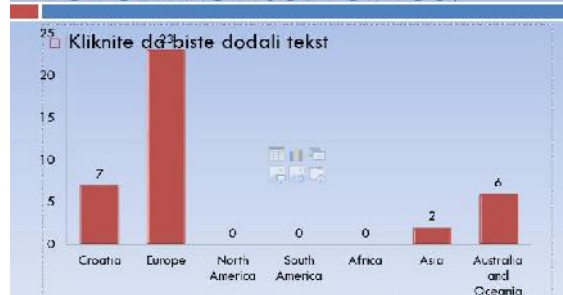


Budget chart

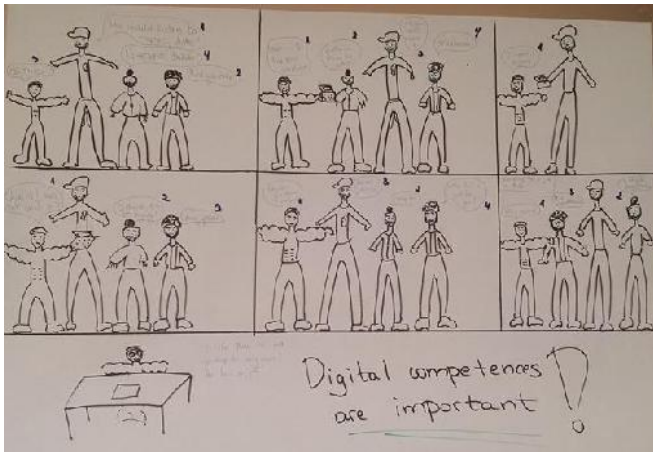
Number	Item	Amount	Price
1	Bus tickets	5	80 kunas
2	The lunch	5	50 kunas



WHERE IS THE BEST OPPORTUNITY FOR GETTING A JOB FOR YOU?



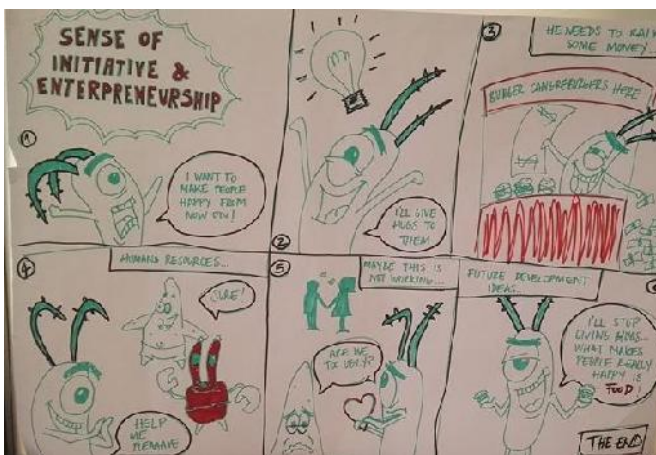
Digital competence



For almost every task participant needed to use laptop, smartphones or camera.



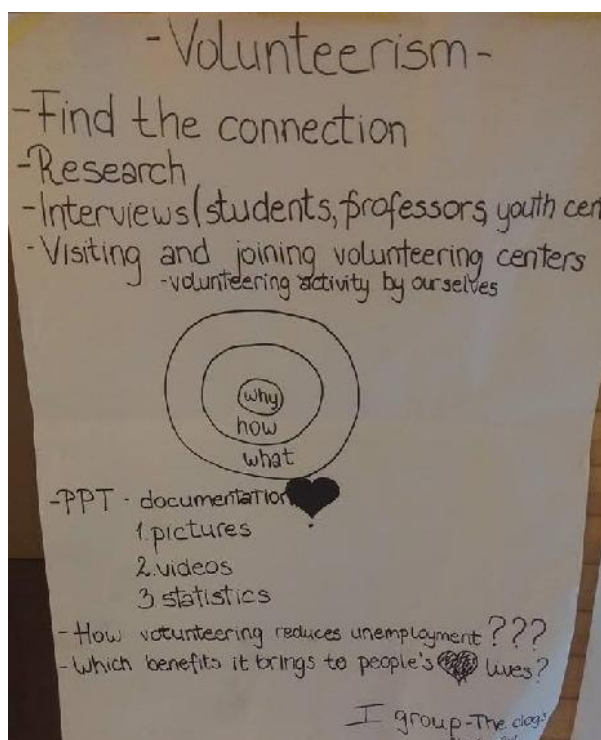
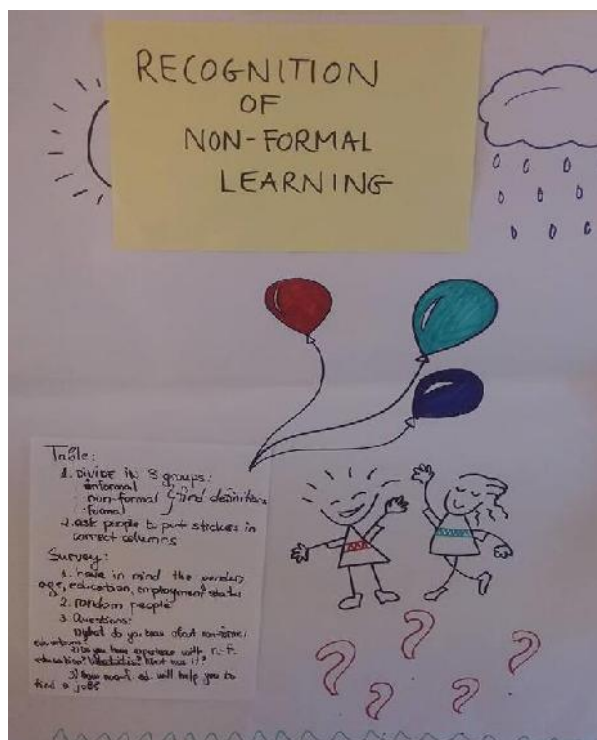
Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship



Almost every task participant was given was connected with developing this competence. At the beginning of the seminar they needed to think of their dream job and groups of six needed to combine their dream jobs into one video where they needed to include all of the dream jobs. This was initial task just to stimulate entrepreneurial thinking. We continued with the major task: Participants were divided into several

groups and each of the groups were given one task – volunteerism, recognition of non-formal learning, social entrepreneurship for instance. They needed to find out as much as

possible about given topic and prepare a project they will implement for two days in city of Zadar. What is more, they needed to think of the budget they will need for the project, time management and task division. After they did that, they needed to act entrepreneurial and to think of the possible way to earn the budget and then go outside and to really earn the needed budget. Some groups were giving “free” hugs, some were providing services like massage and painting. Other were selling self-produced postcards and souvenirs and some were selling raincoats. Here are the pictures:



Cultural awareness and expression



Participants in this seminar really needed to be aware of their expression – they needed to act, play different name games, energizers. Furthermore, they needed to approach people in the right way.

Next thing concerning this competence were intercultural nights where each of the countries needed to present their culture and traditional food.



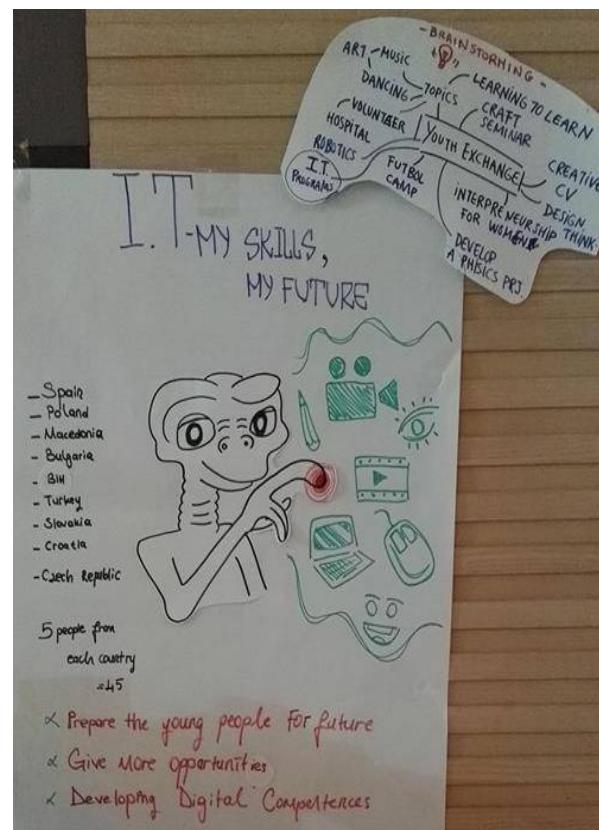
Learning to learn



Another competence which was practiced throughout the whole seminar. Methodology that was used gave participants only basic input – for everything else they needed to find the best way they will do it. During the tasks they needed to cooperate, research, arrange the facts, decide in which way they will use given materials, apply the learned for the next task, etc. To check how they do it, as the final task, participants needed to think of the possible project with open topic, but project needs to fit in the Erasmus+ funding topic. Results of the task you can see under.



Up you can see two projects, one named “Run!” which speaks about healthy lifestyle and habits, and other named “Color Your World” which would aim to increase expression competences.



Up you can see another two projects, one named “Dancing Paradise” which would gather different people around dance subject and body movement, and other named “I.T – My Skills, My Future!” which as a goal has target to increase digital competences of the participants.

Final word

We hope that this brochure gave you more insight on what you can do in order to enable your projects and give more opportunities to young person's development.

To sum up, "Boost Your Employability!" project really boosted skills and competences of our participants and prepared them, in some way, for the future and the European job market. But aside of the competences, participants made some for-life friendships and they have better standing ground for foreign job market opportunities. It is amazing what can happen when you just pull few people from different cultural backgrounds and make them work together!

In case you would like to take a part of the future projects, feel free to contact us at:

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