



Included: an inclusive sex-ed approach through creative methods

Included brings together 7 European countries to develop an innovative sexual education programme addressed to students, with the involvement of their teachers and families.

Included project partnership is glad to launch the new project website:

www.includedproject.eu.

Through the web platform we will share all the steps and outputs of the 24 months pan-European Erasmus+ project, funded by the British national agency, aiming at enhancing the offer of inclusive sex education training programmes.

Although the WHO policy recommendation for the implementation of holistic sex-ed came out in 2010, the latest reports highlight there is still much to reach UNESCO's standards for sexual education to assure the rights of all children. Besides, there is limited information on the impact of Comprehensive Sex Education (CSE) curricula on groups at risk of marginalization, including young people with physical and/or cognitive disabilities, and suitable and effective methodologies for this target group should be further investigated. This inclusive and holistic training programme will provide schools in partner countries and throughout Europe with the necessary materials and know-how to introduce sex-ed within their curricular programme in accordance with WHO and UNESCO standards. Critical pedagogy and pedagogy of the oppressed approaches can be particularly effective in fostering dialogical relationships within groups: they will be adopted by the project, by using creative methods such as role-playing and theatre games.

According to recent reports from Europol and UNICEF, the increased use of the internet due to the outbreak of COVID-19 has heightened the risk of online sexual harassment of children, since spending more time online may increase their likelihood to come into contact with online predators and therefore, they should be educated to recognise and prevent this risk. On the other hand, as COVID-19 forced schools across the country to abruptly close, sex-ed is receiving less or no attention throughout the world and many parents took on an additional role as teachers. As families spend more time together at home, parents have a chance to connect with their kids and delve into sexual health in a meaningful and more intentional way and should be supported to do so.

To these challenges intends to respond the Included project which will design, implement and evaluate:

1. an inclusive sexual education curriculum for high-school students adopting the Universal design for learning (UDL) approach: a cognitive framework that focuses on removing barriers within learning environments by modifying curriculum, concepts, materials, and environments for all learners and abilities through the use of creative options and drama-based techniques;

2. a training path for teachers, to upskill them providing the necessary competencies to implement the programme;
3. drama-based resources and approach to adopt a whole-school approach in relation to sexual education, including the active involvement of parents/guardians/carers of students with disabilities;
4. Policy guidelines and detailed roadmap based on the experience in each partner country of how to implement a creative whole-school approach to holistic and positive sexed.

The kick-off online meeting of the INCLUDED project took place on the 27th and 28th of July. During the meeting, partners presented the work plan, got to know each other, learned more about the respective national contexts and agreed on the upcoming tasks. The partnership is now moving on to designing the sex-ed training programme to be implemented in the schools.

Project leaflet is available in English, Italian, Spanish, Greek, Macedonian and Dutch: www.includedproject.eu/downloads/

Included involves a group of 7 partners, coming from 6 different countries (UK, Italy, Greece, The Netherlands, Spain, North Macedonia):

1. MERSEYSIDE EXPANDING HORIZONS: NGO that works with people who experience isolation and social exclusion in their communities, with extensive experience of supporting people with multiple barriers and complex needs. (UK)
2. ANZIANI E NON SOLO: NGO with extensive expertise in project management, and a specific focus on management of projects and realization of services and products in the field of welfare and social inclusion. (IT)
3. ASSOCIACIO LA XIXA TEATRE: non-profit organization founded in 2010 that aims to research, develop and multiply educational and theatrical tools as a means for social transformation. (ES)
4. REGIONAL DIRECTORATE FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION OF ATTICA: responsible for the coordination, supervision, and implementation of educational policy in the region of Attica, involving around 55.000 active teachers. (GR)
5. SEXMATTERS: non-profit organization committed to fighting gender inequality, social exclusion, aggressive behaviour and gender-based violence, through the implementation of workshops and training programme aimed at young people and adults who work with them, like teachers and social workers. (NL)
6. SOCIAL POLICY ACADEMY: non-profit organisation, founded in 2006, aiming to improve educational opportunities and subsequently the labour market integration, the social mobilisation and the inclusion of disadvantaged people. (GR)
7. KMOP SKOPJE: civil society organization that is actively engaged in the social welfare system of North Macedonia as much as possible and contribute to the relief of various vulnerable groups by trying to design innovative and effective solutions to some of the problems that the country currently faces, making local communities more resilient. (MK)

NOTES TO EDITORS

- To find out more about the Included project and to get involved in the activities please follow the link www.includedproject.eu.
- Included is co-funded by the European Commission under the Grant Agreement: Erasmus+ 2020-1-UK01-KA227-SCH-094470