

NEWSLETTER no. 1



EDITORIAL

According to forecasts of employment trends, skill requirements for jobs are increasing, whereas job opportunities for low-skilled and unskilled workers are facing a dramatic decline. Since learning has become a necessary precondition for successful employment, the introduction of "self-directed learning" (SDL) into didactic concepts for low-level educated adults, has proved to be a feasible solution for this dilemma.

The main objective of this transfer project is to sensitise and inform VET teachers working with disadvantaged persons about the possibilities of introducing self directed learning into their teaching practice.

Partnership:

-  The project partnership consists of 7 organisations of 6 countries.
-  and the support of strategic partners in Slovenia, Romania and Turkey

SDL in Romania – by FRG



According to the latest European studies, Romania doesn't have a well developed educational system in terms of formal learning. Thus, there is a huge potential for SDL to be implemented in VET areas and special schools (such as for deaf, blind or handicapped people).

The Romanian publishing house *European Institute* edited a book by Horst Siebert called “*Învățarea autodirijată și consilierea pentru învățare*” (SDL and learning counselling), which is now completely sold out in bookstores all over the country. This means that teachers and other VET tutors and trainers (even providers) show an enormous interest in this subject.

In our formal schools students learn a lot about general matters and other topics considered “useless stuff” which brings them to drop out of school or to consider it useless (“you don't make money if you go to school”). For example, the Romanian hacker who manipulated e-Bay has a low education and said that he dropped out of school because: “I have nothing to learn from school”. These feelings and thoughts are acutest in our target group, where deprived persons are forced to work for a living, but are not able to find a job because they have no qualifications or certificates to prove their skills.

SDL in Romania – by FRG



In Romania, with professionals or skilled people emigrating to other European countries, the labour market is being confronted with a major deficit in work force. Also, there are many young people in jail (imprisoned for minor offences caused by poverty). On the other hand, especially Italy and France deport people of Roma descent and they have to be integrated into our society. The Roma NGO *Împreună* reports that 35% of the Roma population do not complete primary school and 60% are unemployed. Roma children are segregated from other students in schools and in other cases excluded from education altogether because of a lack of identification. Furthermore, the percentage of Roma without graduation certificates has risen from 25.1% to 34.3% within ten years, and the number of illiterate Roma has increased from 57,100 to 104,737 (according to the 'Save the Children Romania' organisation).

We consider three major ways to help with our project:

- 👉 to find solutions for adapting SDL for deprived people (prisoners and Roma people); in situations where learners perceive that they lack information, their curiosity is aroused and this motivates them to fill their information gaps by exploring their environment (Loewenstein, 1994); we also consider that SDL matches the free spirit of Roma people very well;
- 👉 to provide information to all VET organisations;
- 👉 to bring learning and knowledge from a “high” level to the lowest and thereby empower those who lost their confidence in learning values.

SDL in Turkey – by GLOBAL & TEKSAV



The General Directorate of Guidance and Consultancy Services for Special Education, founded for the purpose of providing educational services to those who are in need of special learning and affiliated with the Ministry of Education, is the sole authority for planning and implementing special education programmes in Turkey. These services are offered only to students who lack knowledge and skills required for formal education in public schools and corresponding private educational institutions. The majority of students using these services are mentally or physically handicapped children. Another important group comprises adults who, for one or another reason, have been deprived of the possibility to follow sufficient formal education although they were neither physically nor mentally handicapped.

Given the total population of 70 million and according to the official records, the number of employed people is 22 million, while 3 million, corresponding to 11.2 % of the total population, are unemployed. People without any proper knowledge or skills have a hard time finding a job in a country where even those, who dispose of skills, experience difficulties in that aspect. The constitution and laws of the Republic of Turkey, which is a social state governed by the rule of law, stipulates that the citizens, who aren't sufficiently endowed in terms of knowledge and skills required to find a job, shall be offered educational services aiming at helping their employment. Some projects have been implemented for that purpose, and groups with a low level of knowledge and skills have been trained using national and EU funds. Modifications aimed at improving the educational level of these groups have been made and are still being made in the relevant laws, in order to attain and comply with European standards.

SDL in Turkey - By GLOBAL and TEKSAV

EMPOWER



DEPRIVED LEARNERS

“Empower Deprived Learners” shall make significant contributions to the education and employment of people in need of special education through the method of “self-directed learning”. Within the scope of this Project, we cooperate with the General Directorate of Guidance and Consultancy Services for Special Education, the Department of Educational Research and Development, the General Directorate of Technical Education of Girls, the Vocational Education Faculty of Gazi University and Vocational High Schools. The first information meeting for the Project took place in Ankara on January 29, 2008 and the information related to the Project was presented to the participants. The second meeting with the National Strategic partners will be organized on May 29, 2008 in Ankara. This cooperation shall continue and a special education program tailored to the requirements of Turkey shall be developed and implemented throughout the Project period.

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CONTACTS:

Project promoter

Rogaland Kurs og Kompetansesenter
Arkitekt Eckhoffsgate 1
N-4001 Stavanger
T: +47-51 51 67 37
F: +47-51 52 38 60
www.rkk.no



Coordinator

BEST Institut für berufsbezogene
Weiterbildung und Personaltraining GmbH
Mariahilfer Straße 8
A-1070 Wien
T: +43 1 / 585 50 50 - 0
F: +43 1 / 585 50 50 - 77

