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Erasmus+ programme project

Get Involved in EP4A: European Partnerships for Apprenticeships

We would like to present you the first newsletter for **Get involved in EP4A: European Partnerships for Apprenticeships**, where you can find the general information about the project, the highlights of the first partners' meeting, which took place in Zagreb (Croatia), as well as information on European Union initiatives relevant to the project.





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About project

The European Union Erasmus+ project **Get involved in EP4A: European Partnerships for Apprenticeships** brings together intermediary organisations and VET stakeholders to build capacities of intermediary bodies such as chambers of commerce, industry, trades and crafts supporting apprenticeships in SMEs and to support strong partnerships with social partners and other relevant stakeholders such as chambers and various competent institutions.

The project's overall objective is "to contribute to the increased employability of young people in the partner countries" enabling them to meet the Europe 2020 and respective national targets.

The project specific objective is to promote apprenticeships by building partnerships between intermediary bodies, companies, VET providers, public authorities and social partners in project countries.

Apart from establishing partnerships between businesses, VET providers and intermediary organisations together with public authorities and social partners with the aim of getting more SMEs involved in apprenticeships; the project will enhance the awareness of the benefits of apprenticeships among target SMEs through the implementation of tailor made attractiveness campaigns.

The main target group are SMEs with no or limited experience in apprenticeships. This project will also involve public authorities such as ministries and VET agencies, VET providers, student and parent associations, social partners and other related key stakeholders.

This project is expected to generate wide and high quality impact on SME level. SMEs will be able to co-shape WBL-reform within the Apprenticeship Partnership structures and thus contribute to the modernisation, attractiveness and better accessibility of apprenticeships; benefit from better awareness and advisory services on apprenticeship programmes (planned and existing) and be recognised and awarded for recruiting apprentices. Thus, the supply, quality and attractiveness of apprenticeships will be improved in all four partner countries.



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About partners

Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts (HOK), Croatia (Coordinator)



The Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts (HOK) is an independent professional business organization of tradesmen and craftsmen. Its members are tradesman and craftsmen who perform a trade/craft business on the territory of the Republic of Croatia. Membership is mandatory. The tasks of the Chamber are the following: promoting trades and crafts, representing tradesmen and craftsmen's interests before state authorities and in economic policy making, providing state authorities with opinions and suggestions when passing regulations concerning trades and crafts, assisting tradesmen and craftsmen in establishing and operating a trade/craft business, performance of other tasks stipulated by the law and legislative documents of the Chamber. Within the tasks stipulated by the Law on Trades and Crafts, the Chamber has public authorities in the area of initial and lifelong vocational education and training.

Website: www.hok.hr

Regional Development Agency Senec-Pezinok, Slovakia



Regional Development Agency Senec-Pezinok (RDA) is an interest association of legal entities engaged in regional development since 2002. It is a member of an integrated network of regional development agencies established by the Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development of Slovak Republic. Our board members are: Bratislava Slef-governing region, City of Senec, Regional association of villages Podunajsko, Slovak Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Slovak Chamber of Crafts, and NGO No-Gravity. RDA cooperates with public, SMEs and NGO sectors in Slovakia and similar bodies from EU and third countries. Main activities relate to vocational education and training (VET) in the lifelong learning context, consultancy and support service for elaboration of socio-economic strategies, project management and tailor-made VET training. Focus is put on VET, community development, partnership, empowerment of stakeholders, VET valorisation in SMEs, decision-makers, VET schools, as well as SME associations, chambers and social partners.

Website: www.rrasenec-pezinok.sk



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Rinova Ltd, United Kingdom

Rinova Ltd is a social enterprise that specialises in the design, development and implementation of innovative partnership projects in the following fields:

- Employment
- Skills & Learning
- Arts & Culture
- Social Action & Enterprise.



The staff at Rinova brings some 25 years of experience in the lifelong learning sector in the UK and Europe and an extensive portfolio of project work in relation to learning design, training, quality assurance, evaluation, with an emphasis on innovation.

Rinova co-ordinates the Rinova Consortium (see www.rinova.co.uk/rinova-consortium), a unique network of employability & skills organisations who are working together to create new opportunities for young people – with an emphasis on creative and imaginative provision in the arts, creative industries, sport, health, leisure, tourism & hospitality sectors. Its consortium has extensive reach with employers in these growing job sectors.

Website: www.rinova.co.uk

Regional Chamber of Commerce Kraljevo

Regional Chamber of Commerce Kraljevo is a business professional organization of companies and entrepreneurs from the region of Raska and Morava district and deals with issues of common interest of its members.

As a service economy organisation within the single chamber system, participates in the initiatives for making, preparing and revising laws and other regulations in the field of economic system, and economic policy.

Regional Chamber of Commerce Kraljevo provides technical assistance to its members in solving practical problems, such as the affirmation and promotion of their production programs and the economy at home and abroad.

In cooperation with the local government, it is taking measures to improve the regional business environment and create a profitable, modern, market-oriented economy of the Region.

Website: <http://www.rpk-kraljevo.co.rs/>





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Kick-off Meeting

The EP4A project has been launched on 24-25 October in Zagreb (Croatia), with the participation of 4 partners and the associate partner.

This meeting allowed:

- Gathering all partners involved in the project (e.g. administration, financial issues, technical issues, etc.) in one location to become familiar with each other and ensure fluent communication between and within the partner organisations involved in the EP4A project.
- Detailed project presentation
- Agreeing on different procedures for the smooth project implementation
- Reviewing and validating EP4A objectives
- Establishing activities and goals to be achieved in the short-term

The kick-off meeting has been organized in a structured manner consisting of project presentation, work-package presentations and Project Management Committee meeting.

Each work-package has been presented separately with the aim to plan and define the different tasks that will enable EP4A to meet its aim, objectives and deadlines. Also, discussions on the organization of tasks and responsibilities of participants have been held during the Kick-off Meeting.



In addition, the Project Management Committee (PMC) has been set up. The main responsibilities of the PMC will include:

- oversight monitoring of work package progress and ensuring progress remains to schedule;
- oversight of deliverables;
- decisions concerning the work plan and any major changes;
- decisions regarding any amendment to the terms of the Agency contract and Partners' Agreement;
- decisions concerning possible premature completion/termination of the project;
- amicable settling of disputes arising from project implementation; press releases and joint publications by partners with regard to the project



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European initiatives

The project will be implemented in accordance with relevant European initiatives:

European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA)

The European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA) is a unique platform which brings together governments with other key stakeholders, like businesses, social partners, chambers, vocational education and training (VET) providers, regions, youth representatives or think tanks.

The common goal is to strengthen the quality, supply and image of apprenticeships in Europe.

The Alliance was launched in July 2013 with a joint declaration by the European Social Partners (ETUC, BusinessEurope, UEAPME and CEEP), the European Commission and the Presidency of the Council of the EU. This was followed by a Council Declaration by EU countries. Although managed by the Commission, the success of EAfA lies with the implementation of national commitments and the commitment of partners, notably through pledges by stakeholders.

Apprenticeships as one successful form of work-based learning ease the transition from education and training to work, and evidence suggests that countries with a strong VET and apprenticeship system have lower levels of youth unemployment.

Apprenticeships formally combine and alternate company-based training with school-based education and lead to a nationally recognised qualification upon successful completion. Most often there is a contractual relationship between the employer and the apprentice, with the apprentice being paid for his/her work.

The EAfA promotes youth employment and supports the aims of the Youth Guarantee, while reducing the disparity between skills supply and demand on the labour market.

Website: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1147>

Youth Guarantee

The Youth Guarantee is a new approach to tackling youth unemployment which ensures that all young people under 25

– whether registered with employment services or not – get a good-quality, concrete offer within 4 months of them leaving formal education or becoming unemployed.

The good-quality offer should be for a job, apprenticeship, traineeship, or continued education and be adapted to each individual need and situation.

EU countries endorsed the principle of the Youth Guarantee in April 2013 (Council Recommendation).

Developing and delivering a Youth Guarantee scheme requires strong cooperation between all the key stakeholders: public authorities, employment services, career guidance providers, education & training institutions, youth support services, business, employers, trade unions, etc.

Early intervention and activation are crucial and, in many cases, reforms are needed, such as improving vocational education and training systems. The European Commission has helped each EU country to develop its own national Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan and start implementation.

The Commission also facilitates the sharing of best practices between governments, in particular through the European Employment Strategy Mutual Learning Programme.

Website:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1079&langId=en>

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