



**PYLE: Post-YU for Learning Emancipation –
Supporting learners on the way to self-realization**

Duration of the project:

1. 9. 2017 – 30. 11. 2019

**INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 2 (IO2):
SUMMARY OF THE NATIONAL
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF PDCAE
PROGRAM IN NORTH
MACEDONIA, CROATIA AND
SLOVENIA**

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SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT, THE PARTNERS AND THE ACTIVITIES

INTRODUCTION TO THE DOCUMENT

Emancipatory and transformative learning, autonomous employment, autonomy and independence are social concepts which are not enough explored or practice in the region of the post YU countries. Such important concepts for the development of the societies and the local communities, but still not recognized enough on behalf of the labor market and the institutions in general. This type of learning are crucial for the adult education and the vocational training. The adult education grounds should be developing the communities, giving people the emancipatory potential to grow and develop, and developing strategies to solve social issues and needs. This is where adult education is and should be coming from – the need of people to educate themselves and to solve the issues and needs of their communities.

The concepts as such should be elaborated and practiced in order to gain more autonomy and independence to the regular citizens and empower them to use their full capacities in developing the communities on local and global level.

The everyday life shows different story. The reality is showing these concepts are not even recognized on national and local level. The financed programs which already exists are focused on the citizens entering the labor market and leaving the employment agencies. The success in this programs is the transition which is going from ticking the box from unemployed to employed person and this is where the process end. No available evaluations of the process are present and the employment agencies are very soon getting back in the system the citizens which they already ticked as employed because of the lack of sustainability of the programs. And the process is circulating in a never-ending circle. The traditional labor market is consisted of professions which are basic, not responding to the today and future world needs and not evaluated towards the need of sustainability of the development of the local communities. Because of this, there is no place for new force and energy to enter the market.

The programs offering non formal education are the only different approach in this process. These programs are the new energy and new form of education which are providing social and personal development of the person and the communities, among the other aims of the programs. In the region, the NGOs are seen as the only providers of such programs. Nevertheless, the NGOs are the ones which are responding to the requirements from the public grants calls. Most of the programs which are delivered in the NGOs are responding what the funders define as a topic and main areas. The donors are defining their priorities based on the political agendas and what is actual in the local communities and still these new concepts are not present here also.

And this is the situation which is happening in the project partners' countries. Based on the need on local level to elaborate these concepts more, the PYLE project is designed and this document is one of the outcomes of the 2 years active work. The PYLE project is tackling all these issues and exploring these social concepts through elaborating them more and practicing in the local environment. This is done through the activities of the Program for Developing Competencies for Autonomous Employment PDCAE for mentors which the reader can have more info for the implementation and evaluation process in this document.

What the participants (mentors) of the PDCAE program said about the program:

Participant of the program from Zavod Bob, Slovenia

"Throughout the training I wondered how everything that we were doing in the training would help me implement PDCAE. Only at the end of the training I realized that what I needed was to actually experience the process myself."

Participant of the program from VCI Croatia

"The experience of being part of this training has changed my life and way of thinking, learning and behaving towards myself and others."

Participant of the program from CYA KRIK

Throughout the training I realize that the emancipatory learning will help me in the process of working with the beneficiaries which I already work with. The concepts are supporting the learners to gain more autonomy and independence in order to bring change, equality and social justice.

ABOUT THE PROJECT AND PROJECT PARTNERS

The Post-YU for Learning Emancipation (PYLE) is a strategic partnership project in the field of adult education aimed at primarily developing new, innovative and complementary tools and models for empowering learners in the region and fostering self-employability among youth in their early adulthood years. The project partners are Zavod Bob from Slovenia, Volonterski Centar Istra from Croatia and CYA Krik from North Macedonia. The project duration is 27 months, from September 2017 until November 2019.

The starting point is high unemployment rates amongst youth in early adulthood (18 to 29 years of age) in countries of partner organization. In Slovenia, the unemployment rate is 20%, 30% in Croatia, and 45% in Macedonia. In times of flexible jobs and mostly precarious employment among young people, many youths are left out and remain unemployed long-term. In this group we find unemployed due to low skills, the imbalance between job market opportunities and educational attainments as well as so called NEETs. Such low-skilled young people with fewer opportunities are the target groups that need supportive and stimulating learning environments and mentoring support. In this regard, we aim to improve opportunities for their meaningful involvement and increased access to education.

In a strategic partnership in the field of youth work, the program PDCAE (http://www.zavod-bob.si/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/PDCAE_IntellectualOutput.pdf) was created and intended to support participants in both developing and implementing project ideas that have potential for participants' self-employment. The pedagogical and methodological basis of the program provides participants with the opportunity to develop basic skills as well as transversal, soft and entrepreneurial abilities. Due to specifics and PDCAE target group vulnerabilities aforementioned, mentor support in the program is essential. In this regard the PYLE project target group are professionals, adult educators who work with young people in early adulthood: youth workers, social pedagogues, andragogue and pedagogues, psychologists, social workers and others interested in training to work with unemployed youth. We will approach humanities graduates whom are unemployed to get them to join the training and/or other project activities in all project stages.

ABOUT THE PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The activities for this project revolve around the following:

- Creating and publishing an informal curriculum for training of mentors for the implementation of the PDCAE program, which will be transferable in the form of other guidelines and recommendations to work with unemployed youth in their early adulthood. We will test and evaluate the training. The curriculum will also be tested with all partner organizations implementing it with 10 to 12 participants.
- Establishing conditions for the PDCAE program and mentor training implementation in countries/regions of partner organizations (e.g. negotiating with policy makers, exploring possibilities for providing facilities, funds, and raising awareness among different stakeholders).

The partnership aims to introduce approaches that are not as appreciated in socio-cultural environments of partner organizations even though practice and research has shown considerable impact at several levels. Thus, Pedagogical Outlines will also be created for Emancipated Learning and National Recommendations to foster re-thinking learning as well as adult education. We will put special emphasis on activities that will lead to the sustainability of our project results.

The Knowledge Exchange Base web platform is maintained at www.pyle.si which serves as the main communication tool addressing a variety of target groups. The platform serves as a drawing board to address several topics: youth employability, personal success stories, legislation, knowledge exchange and so forth. Those interested can use the platform as a meeting and resource point concerning adult and non-formal education, youth work, examples of good practices and PYLE project news. The platform will also serve the project in terms of publishing intellectual outputs.

In the last two months of the project, three Multiplying Events will be organized: September 2019 in Skopje, North Macedonia as well as October 2019 in Pula, Croatia and Ljubljana, Slovenia.

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE PDCAE MENTOR TRAINING PROGRAM IN NORTH MACEDONIA

TIMEFRAME OF PDCAE PROGRAM FOR MENTORS

The PDCAE (program for developing competencies for autonomous employment) was implemented from December 2018 through April 2019 in Skopje, North Macedonia. The program was implemented by the Center for Youth Activism Krik and implemented by trainers Mila Karadafova and Dragan Atanasovski, both of experts in the youth field.

PARTICIPANTS OF THE PDCAE PROGRAM FOR MENTORS

The program gathered 10 participants and was successfully completed by 8 participants. Program participants were field workers from the implementation process of the Youth Guarantee program in North Macedonia in 2018. During this period, field workers mapped unemployed young people whom were not in education or training and supported them entering the employment system by preparing them to meet with the career workers at the Agency for Employment in North Macedonia. Agency for Employment career workers had meetings with participants and proposed some of the National measurements established through the Youth Guarantee program.

THE CONTENT OF PDCAE PROGRAM FOR MENTORS

The program consisted of 4 cycles:

- ⇒ Cycle 1 Introduction and formation of the group that took place in December 2018
- ⇒ Cycle 2 Personal development and competences that autonomous employment mentors had in January 2019
- ⇒ Cycle 3 Analysis of local community needs and various types of employment that took place in February 2019

The methodology used for the program was based on the methods of non formal education. Each of the first three cycles consisted of five trainings. The trainings were carried out at the training center of the Center for Youth Activism CYA KRIK. The

participants learned through interactive methods including discussions, group work, simulations and trainers' input.

⇒ Cycle 4 Practical work in the community that took place in March 2019

Practical work took place in March 2019. The group of eight participants was divided in smaller groups of two. In total, there were four teams working on exploring the needs of the local community and providing solutions to the needs they mapped.

PRACTICAL WORK OF THE PDCAE PROGRAM FOR MENTORS

Team Jovana and Oliver - Jovana and Oliver, under the mentorship of Dragan, worked on the analysis of the wider community needs in North Macedonia. As a field of analysis, they selected youth organizations and various forms of youth associations. Motivated by autonomous employment, the team investigated how youth organizations and association encourage and influence autonomous employment of young people in North Macedonia. As a tool they The team used questionnaires as a tool designed for organizations and focus groups of the employees of the organization. A total of fifteen organizations were included, including the National Youth Council of Macedonia. Under the mentorship of Dragan, the team prepared the plan of analysis and action plan.

Team Konstantin and Burim - Konstantin and Burim, under the mentorship of Dragan, worked on analyzing high school students' knowledge level in terms of autonomous employment from Saraj high school. Saraj is a rural community in Skopje, North Macedonia. Konstantin and Burim explored the acquaintance level of Saraj high school students with the term "autonomous employment". This research also yielded results about the way high school students think "outside of the box."

Team Alexandra and Biljana - Aleksandra and Biljana, under the mentorship of Mila, analyzed the needs of the local community in the smaller cities in Macedonia focusing on practical work. Both Alexandra and Biljana come from smaller cities and moved to the capital for work and study. Intrigued by the overwhelming migration of people coming from smaller cities to larger ones, Alexandra and Biljana engaged in causes of migration. The team carried out an analyses consisting of two different questionnaires. One questionnaire was reserved for people living in smaller cities and the reasons why they move to the bigger cities, while the other one was reserved for

people living in bigger cities and opportunities which would make them move to smaller cities.

Team Simona and Maria – Simona and Maria, under the mentorship of Mila, prepared a plan for analyzing the needs of the local community. Researching the needs of various professionals in the labor market, the team found that there is a shortage of professional staff in North Macedonia. In particular, the team looked at the planned numbers of students at the Faculties of Agriculture and Technology in which the quota for newly enrolled students is 700. The quota is determined by the state based on the needs of the labor market. The students enrolled at the faculties each year is about 100 of the envisaged 700. These numbers provide that North Macedonia has a deficit of professions related to Agriculture and Technology. The team decided to examine the attitudes of students finishing the 4th year of Skopje-based high school Nikola Karev. Simona and Maria prepared an action plan, a needs-based analysis plan and a questionnaire that was used to examine students' attitudes. The questionnaire was shared through social media channels. Maria and Simona also carried out the field work in front of the school where they engage with the students.

METHODOLOGY USED FOR THE EVALUATION PROCESS IN NORTH MACEDONIA

Methodology

The methodology used for evaluating the process consisted of:

- ⇒ Organizing focus groups for evaluation of the content of the program with the participants;
- ⇒ Anonymous online questionnaire for participants; and
- ⇒ Interviews with participants and trainers.

THE EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM WAS HAPPENING IN FEW PHASES

1 focus group organized with the participants of the program

- The focus group took place at the end of March 2019. Five of the eight program participants attended the focus group. The group consisted of several questions being asked to participants in order to give them the opportunity to share their recommendations for the implementation process of the program.

Evaluation meeting with the participants and the trainers

- The participants attended an evaluation meeting where they shared various aspects of the program processes, including personal understandings of the program as well as what they learned and gained from the program.

Anonymous evaluation form filled in by the participants

- The anonymous evaluation form that was submitted to the participants was intended to give information to the quality of the program. A Google form was prepared where in which the questionnaire consisted of eight questions. The questionnaires topics were:
 - Participants' knowledge on the topic, before and after the training;
 - Participants' level of understanding in terms of implementing what they learned for future activities;
 - Possibilities for implementation of the program at the local level; and
 - Participants' satisfaction with the quality of the program and the way it was implemented.

Evaluation and recommendation for the implementation of the program given by the trainers of the program

- The trainers had an evaluation meeting in which they discussed specifically each of the four different cycles of the program. The trainers addressed difficulties as well as recommendations participants had for each of the program cycles.

Analysis for the current situation with autonomous employment in North Macedonia

- The analysis was carried out through by exploring the current situation in North Macedonia using desk analysis as a method. The most important information was gathered from national documents, strategies and analyses that civil or governmental organizations carried out in the field of adult education and employment.

MAIN RESULTS OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PDCAE MENTOR TRAINING PROGRAM IN NORTH MACEDONIA

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FOCUS GROUP DELIVERED WITH THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE PROGRAM

- As part of the conclusion gathered from the focus group which pointed out future implementation, a space for practicing what the participants learn is recommended (out from the practice work of the program itself). The participants are expecting continuation of the activities at the local level after the practical part of the program.
- Participants provide that thanks to the program they strengthen their analytical skills and gather new research skills in support of their exploration of the local community needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FINAL EVALUATION SESSION WITH THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE PROGRAM

The trainers used the "pizza method" for evaluation purposes where they draw a circle on a flap chart paper and divide it on a few segments or "slices": logistics, the group dynamic, quality of the program, trainers, venue and the process of sharing program information. The participants graded the program at the highest level.

Furthermore, the participants shared their personal understanding for the program process, relationships formed with each other during the program and what they learned from the program. The participants understanding is that the program helped them strengthen their abilities in exploring local community needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE ANONYMOUS GOOGLE FORM

- Most participants had basic knowledge of the topic prior to starting the program;
- Program content was suitable to the needs of all participants;
- Trainers were ready to implement the program in a way suitable to participants;
- Participants feel ready to apply what they learned during the program;
- Participants are overall satisfied with the program;
- A need for more adequate space to implement future program activities; and

- Participants' desire for further practical work.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE TRAINERS

The trainers consider this program as exceedingly interesting for the participants as well as addressing a genuine call to address local community needs. The different types of employment are particularly interesting, especially for the unemployed, when the level of unemployment is on a higher level in the country. In North Macedonia, there is a lack of opportunities for registering different forms of enterprises, therefore many of the different types of employment are not well known for the participants. This is the key reason why these kinds of program are a real need at the local level. The process of training and the first three cycles are suitable and adequate for the participants, while the program itself offers depth in content and a variety of concepts that participants can explore. The practice that participants implement are giving them space to practice what they learn during the training as well as strengthening their capacities which they started exploring during the training. The process of exploring the needs of the local community offer the participants space to practice and use the resources from the communities while at the same time understanding differing needs citizens have in the local communities. The participants are using research tools which are complementary to the capacities they first started developing in the previous phase. The program itself is comprehensive and useful for the participants.

Recommendations from the trainers consist of offering adequate space in which participants can be mentors to unemployed people after the end of the program. If this kind of space cannot be offered, the program should be rephrased into Program for exploring local community needs and varying forms of employment.

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE PDCAE MENTOR TRAINING PROGRAM IN CROATIA

THE TIMEFRAME OF PDCAE MENTOR TRAINING PROGRAMME

The PDCAE Mentor Training in Pula, Croatia, was implemented from November 2018 to April 2019. In total, ten training days (five weekends of direct group work) were implemented by trainers Danijela Ustić and Tihana Fontana on behalf of Volunteer Centre Istria. Besides direct group work with future mentors, the program included other elements involving aims and potentials of experiential learning (see latter parts of the description) outside the November 2018 through April 2019 timeframe.

PARTICIPANTS OF THE PDCAE PROGRAMME FOR MENTORS

The program started with seventeen (17) participants with fourteen (14) of them successfully finishing it. Out of these 14 participants, two were male and twelve (12) were female. The average age of participants was just under thirty-three (33). Participants differed in their backgrounds and experiences in youth work. While everyone involved had strong personal motivation and interest to work with (unemployed) youth, some had experience already, a number worked previously at NGOs or in the private sector, and still others just started their (youth work) journey.

THE CONTENT OF PDCAE PROGRAMME FOR MENTORS

The program consisted of five modules (modified according to group needs):

| | Training days (organised in 5 weekends/ modules) | | | | | Other elements |
|-------------------|---|-----|-----|-----|------|--|
| Thematic clusters | 1-2 | 3-4 | 5-6 | 7-8 | 9-10 | Interview, homework, study visit, evaluation |

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|---|--|---|
| <p>Self-assessment and self-reflection, participatory planning and implementation of the Training</p> | <p>Group needs and priorities/objectives of the Training Personal attitudes about youth (and) unemployment Auto-reflection (twice a day to the end of the Training)</p> | <p>Important, supportive/mentoring relationships in individuals' adolescence Personal interest in working with different subgroups of unemployed youth</p> | | <p>Individual SWOT analysis of competencies Monitoring progress of the Training/ further participatory planning</p> | <p>Auto-reflection as evaluation</p> | <p>Personal strengths, lifelong learning aspirations Self-assessment of YW competencies Self-reflection tasks</p> |
| <p>Key concepts of the programme; Policies and stakeholders</p> | <p>Implementing organisation (VCI) Project PYLE and PDCAE programme Autonomous employment Emancipatory learning Transformative learning</p> | <p>Project PYLE intellectual outputs (IOs)</p> | <p>Self-employment* Job searching channels*</p> | <p>Social entrepreneurship: definitions/criteria, national policies, example of good practice (guest)</p> | <p>Example of social cooperative (guest)</p> | <p>Participants' definition/perception of key concepts Study visit (NGO in different local community) International meetings (6 participants / mentors)</p> |
| <p>Youth: needs, aspirations, social context</p> | <p>Participation as one of the core values of YW Developmental characteristics, needs and interests of young people</p> | <p>Youth's perception of current social context Public perception of youth Theories of unemployment (ecological approach) Side effects of unemployment</p> | <p>Theories of motivation</p> | | | <p>Best thing you can give to young people to find/ create employment and happiness</p> |

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|---|---|---|
| <p>Youth work and mentoring: theory, tools, processes</p> | <p>YW principles Youth worker's competencies</p> | <p>YW and mentoring roles and responsibilities Mentoring outcomes Building relationships in YW/M Supporting unemployed youth in self-assessment and goal-setting (tools)</p> | <p>Outreach/ attracting youth to services Preventing risks and solving problems in YW/M Person centred planning (MAPS method)* Motivational techniques Keeping the focus on young person's goals</p> | <p>Ethics in working with unemployed youth Personal and professional boundaries</p> | <p>Working with unmotivated youth Individual work structure Useful internal states of youth worker/mentor Use of language/questions in dealing with "problem trance" Participatory evaluation tools</p> | <p>Action plan for outreach Mentor's key characteristics Project planning/ writing a project proposal (2 participants / mentors) Participation in the evaluation of the Training and the creation of IO2 (2 participants)</p> |
| <p>Communication, social and facilitation skills</p> | <p>Ice-breaking and team-forming activities Self-presentation Group agreement Presentation skills</p> | <p>Critical thinking Energizers (from this point to the end of the Training)*</p> | <p>Activities in the local community Team-building Negotiation Confrontation and challenging</p> | <p>Active listening* Feedback* Effective questions*</p> | <p>Values and attitudes in YW/M (overcoming inner obstacles) Calibration Differentiating facts from interpretations Workshop (cycle) structure Focus on positive in others + recognition</p> | <p>Building trust Teamwork Practicing active listening in natural environment</p> |

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Trainers' approach | <p>Participatory planning and implementation of the Training (themes marked with * were facilitated by the participants)</p> <p>Experiential learning</p> <p>European Commission horizontal principles (equality between men and women, equal opportunities and non-discrimination, sustainable development)</p> <p>Quality School</p> |
|---------------------------|--|

PRACTICAL WORK OF THE PDCAE PROGRAMME FOR MENTORS

The Training saw high participation numbers so that participants could experience the approach employed and see it as a model to be used in their (future or present) youth work involvements. Besides direct training days, the program included other elements with experiential learning aims and potentials: introductory interview with the participants, self -assessment, self-directed learning between direct group work weekends ("homework" and preparation for participants-led workshops), study visit at NGOs in different local communities and evaluation. Henceforth we describe some of the forms of participants' practical work during the program:

Homework

Between each working weekend of the Training, participants engaged in diverse, individual and/or small-team tasks. The homework tasks were often based on self-reflection, directly or afterwards, in group work, in connection with the context and specifics of working with and mentoring (unemployed) youth. All tasks were as follows: (1) choose a photo of you, when you were between 15 and 20 years old, and use it as a base to prepare oneself for discussion about young people's needs and aspirations; (2) talk to three people one feels close to about what they appreciate about oneself and why, have a deeper discussion, practice asking effective questions, listening, and receiving feedback amongst other things; (3) remember a situation in which one felt that everything was "as it should be" and reflect on how one acted, what one felt and what one thought about; (4) find one positively-oriented and one negatively-oriented newspaper or online article about youth so to prepare for discussion on contemporary young people's social environments; (5) in small teams, prepare an action plan for reaching a subgroup of unemployed youth one is interested to work with, and who are typically hard to reach (e.g. NEET youth); (6) practice active and conscious listening in one's "natural environment" (family, friends, colleagues) and observe what happens; (7) ask oneself positive challenging questions about mentoring, coping with challenges, problem-solving, developing competencies, balancing personal and professional life and so forth. In the beginning of every module we allocated time for discussing the process and outcomes of the homework using the "results" as a starting point for some topics of the training at all

times and/or connecting them with context and specifics of working with (unemployed) youth.

Simulations and activities in small groups

The most used method during the training was working in smaller groups of participants, most often with groups with different tasks that complement each other in both discussion and reflection. Besides from this and presentations on theoretical foundations, there were several simulations in pairs (or groups of three with the third person as an observer) in which one person had the unemployed young person role while the other had the mentor role. Each person had the opportunity to switch roles and to practice and experience it by oneself while receiving feedback on performance in the mentor's role from other person(s).

Workshops

According to each person's interest, experience, expertise and/or wish, each participant had the opportunity to prepare and facilitate a workshop as a part of the Training. The workshops could also be facilitated in pairs so they could also meet the other participant and practice teamwork. The topics were either suggested by the trainers or participants themselves in an area which satisfies the planned learning outcomes of the Training. The topics which were held by participants themselves were: person-centered planning (MAPS), job searching channels, self-employment, giving and receiving feedback, asking effective questions and active listening.

THE METHODOLOGY USED IN THE TRAINING EVALUATION PROCESS IN CROATIA

The methodology used for the Training evaluation at the Volunteer Centre Istria consisted of:

1. Individual self-assessment questionnaires;
2. Board games in small groups;
3. Individual final evaluation questionnaires; and
4. Mutual trainers' interviews.

SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRES (INDIVIDUAL)

Training participants took part in two identical questionnaires: one before the beginning of the Training and the other after it. Participants assessed their knowledge, skills, attitudes and values taken from "A Competence Model for Youth Workers" from SALTO-YOUTH. The Questionnaire consisted of: an introductory part with description and theory, thirty-eight (38) questions, from which eight on knowledge assessment, ten on skills and 10 on values. In total, fourteen (14) participants filled out both initial

and final self-assessment questionnaires. The questionnaire takes about 15 minutes to fill out.

BOARD GAME IN SMALL GROUPS

The learning board game¹ was done during the study visit in Karlovac which took place after the last formal Training meeting. The game was played in two small groups (total of eight (8) participants, four (4) for each group), while trainers observed every group and took notes. The activity took approximately 60 minutes. In the game, each participant chooses a figurine and plays the board game from the same starting point in the following order: each player rolls the dice, moves on the board by the number of steps they get and answers the question corresponding to where they land. The participant shares their reflection, then passes the turn to the next participant who rolls the dice and moves to their question. The game continues until all participants reach the finish point.

FINAL EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE (INDIVIDUAL)

Final evaluation questionnaire were conducted via online forms. Forms take about 30 minutes to complete. The questionnaire consisted of a total of forty-eight (48) questions with three parts: (1) Training, methods and trainers assessment; (2) Evaluation through “quality school” elements²; and (3) “Look backwards and look inside.” In the first part, there were fifteen (15) questions, both open- and close-ended (satisfaction level on a scale of 1 to 7) primarily on technical aspects (venue, timetable, food, etc.) and about communication between participants, methods used and trainers (coordination, etc.). The second part consisted of twenty-eight (28) questions. Here, participants first evaluated the presence and expression of nine (9) quality school elements through close-ended (scale of 1 to 5) questions. Subsequently, participants had the opportunity to explain in which concrete processes they identified each element. Also, there were nine (9) close-ended questions (scale of 1 to 5) in which participants could express opinions on the usefulness of each element in the youth work group. An additional question was left for comments. In the last part of the questionnaire there were four (4) questions (and one additional one again for comments) in which participants have already answered in the initial interview before

¹ Conti, P. et al. (2017). Reflection tools for supporting individual learning paths of adults.

Downloaded on 20/4/2019 from EPAL website:

https://epale.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/in-learning_reflection_tools_book.pdf

² Questions from the second part are adapted from the Questionnaire for Self-Assessment of Progress and Experiential Learning about the Concept of Quality School (William Glasser), authored by Bosiljka Lojk, used in the first phase of Education in Choice Theory, Reality Therapy and Lead Management.

the Training. These questions were repeated so to see any change in points of view, definitions of emancipatory learning and autonomous employment, needs of unemployed youth and features of a “good mentor.” In total, fourteen (14) participants took part in the final questionnaire.

MUTUAL TRAINERS' INTERVIEW

Trainers conducted a mutual unstructured interview lasting approximately 120 minutes. The interview took place three months after the Training so to give sufficient time for reflection.

MAIN RESULTS OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PDCAE MENTOR TRAINING PROGRAM IN CROATIA

OUTCOMES EVALUATION

According to the results of both initial and final self-assessment questionnaires, statistical testing noted a change between the initial and final assessment in a way that post- Training participants assessed their knowledge and skills higher than prior to the Training. Participants assessed their attitudes and values very high both pre- and post-Training thus no change was noted by statistical test.

From the analysis of the board game, three categories were made for the outcomes from the participant's answers:

1. Concrete knowledge and tools;
2. Insights and encouragement connected with (future) mentoring; and
3. Learning about themselves (and changes in actions).

In the Final evaluation questionnaire, participants provided that all quality school elements are highly utilizable ($M > 4.50$) in the unemployed youth working group. "Success" was the element with the highest points.

PROCESS EVALUATION

From the analysis of the Board game, again three categories were made, but this time for the processes in the Training that participants noticed:

1. Safe and encouraging environment (people, methods and technical aspects);
2. Co-creation of Training and responsibility for one's own learning; and
3. Mutual learning or learning from each other.

According to the results of the final evaluation questionnaire, participants assessed as being highly satisfied ($M > 4.50$) including technical aspects (such as venue, timetable, duration and food), communication as well as working with and coordination carried by the trainers.

Participants also assessed all nine (9) of the quality school elements as highly conveyed throughout the whole duration of the Training ($M > 4.50$).

LITERATURE

Conti, P. et al. (2017). *Reflection tools for supporting individual learning paths of adults*. Downloaded on 20/4/2019 from EPALE website: https://epale.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/in-learning_reflection_tools_book.pdf

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE PDCAE MENTOR TRAINING PROGRAM IN SLOVENIA

TIMEFRAME OF PDCAE PROGRAM FOR MENTORS

The PDCAE Mentor Training in Ljubljana, Slovenia, was implemented from October 2018 to June 2019 in thirty-two (32) training days. The structured part of the training was followed by the independent work of the group of participants with continuous mentor support. The Training sessions were held at Zavod Bob, Ljubljana, with one exception, the intensive 14-hour training session held at Polhov Gradec. The PDCAE Mentor training was implemented by four trainers, core PYLE project team from Zavod Bob: Metka Bahlen Okoli, Mojca Fajdiga, Matjaž Vodeb and Anja Manja Segulin. Metka, Mojca and Matjaž are also the creators of the PDCAE curriculum.

PARTICIPANTS OF THE PDCAE PROGRAM FOR MENTORS

We received twenty (20) applications from interested participants, of which fifteen (15) attended the preliminary selection interview. After the interview, five (5) participants decided to continue their journey into the concepts of emancipatory and transformational learning, thus the program consisting of these 5 participants. There were no drop-outs and all participants successfully concluded the program.

Average participant age was 30 and all were female. While participants brought diverse backgrounds and experiences, three of them were previously involved in various projects at Zavod Bob and thus had previous experience in youth work and in non-formal education. One of them had more than three years of experience working with unemployed young adults (similar in nature to PDCAE's target group). While three participants also had experienced working in NGOs, one participant did not have any work experience but expressed a strong motivation to acquire it. Two of the participants were students from relevant social studies fields (social work and social pedagogy).

THE CONTENT OF PDCAE PROGRAM FOR MENTORS

We set the basic aims of the training following the PDCAE program curriculum as well the Pedagogical Outlines for Emancipated Learning which was the first intellectual output of the PYLE project. We expected the training would enable participants to:

- Understand theoretical and methodological foundations of the PDCAE program (participant-based learning environment, emancipatory, transformative, experiential learning, solidarity economies);
- Learn about and test guidelines and motivational strategies for dealing with unemployed people in early adulthood;
- Learn about and use ways to build tangible social networks;
- Develop transversal skills; and
- Increase possibilities for their own autonomous employment.

In the implementation of the training we followed the outlines of the PDCAE program, with some necessary modification in order to reach the aims of the training. The program was implemented as five modules with content overlapping. Reflection upon the learning process followed each activity.

We dealt with contents within the specific modules as follows:

MODULE 1 - The introduction, expressing expectations, fears and resources; exploring personal motivation, values, needs; forming a personal vision and mission; group work and reaching group agreement; getting to know the implementing organization (Zavod Bob) and its' resources.

MODULE 2 - Intensive 14-hour team building outside of the home environment (exploring personal and group resources, implementing a short test action, reflecting upon the type of research the group used in the process, creating tangible social networks); learning about the PDCAE curriculum and the implementation of the program (objectives and aims of PDCAE, pedagogical/theoretical and methodological outlines, specifics of the target group, expected learning outcomes, program contents, duration and organization of the program, practical work); exploring the concepts of emancipatory and transformative learning.

MODULE 3 - Educational contents (discussing types of economies and how they influence people and the environment, exploring organizational models in solidarity economics - study visit to Zadruga Buna); project development; networking; project planning (aimed at building the possibilities for implementing the PDCAE program); analysis of the situation; defining needs; and grant call research.

MODULE 4 - Preparing project documentation for grant call; designing an action plan for PDCAE program implementation; connecting with potential local and national program providers; and setting up an office for the group.

MODULE 5 - Organizing five workshop sessions by the participants (topics and methodology were selected by the participants based on questions that remained open from the structured part of the training); following the process of establishing conditions for program implementation; and individual mentor work with participants.

PRACTICAL WORK OF THE PDCAE PROGRAM FOR MENTORS

The practical work was organized in three parts:

I. During the structured part of the training participants, both individually and in groups, carried out in-depth research about different training topics. Some of these were used as homework tasks while others were held according to participants' self-engagement.

II. Five workshops within Module 5, designed and implemented by the teams of two participants from the group. The topics chosen were: the process of inter-vision among professionals; legal frameworks (entities) for autonomous employments; Pedagogical Outlines for Emancipated Learning; types of public project grants (platforms for following and how to verify the suitability of certain grants); and project finance planning.

III. Project documentation in preparation of two grant calls with the aim of ensuring funding for further implementation of the PDCAE program. The two calls consisted of one at the local level and the other at the international level.

The practical work of the participants ran with the support of the mentors team whom implemented the training program. In the first part, mentors were in the role of active participants, co-creating the contents and in one case also implementing it together with one of the participants. In the second part, the mentors were of external support for the group as it is previewed within the curriculum of the PDCAE program. The group was independent in the process of research for the grant calls, preparing the project proposal and submitting the applications. The mentors were meeting with the group to discuss their questions, create draft proposals, give feedback on an emerging project proposal and its' various elements and generally to support the group with the knowledge and experience of the mentor group.

METHODOLOGY USED FOR THE EVALUATION PROCESS IN SLOVENIA

1. Research purpose and objectives

The PDCAE Mentor Training Program follows the PDCAE curricula and is being implemented as training in training. This means that participants, through their own experience of participating in the PDCAE program, are trained to become mentors of the PDCAE program. This type of training has a strong emphasis on individuals reflecting and evaluating the program through the eyes of the aim group of the PDCAE program. The meta view is very important, as participants learn about what they would improve and what they would do differently, which makes it easier to predict what kind of distress the participants might face during the process. This also enables the future mentors to know the process in a more personal way.

The purpose of the research was to evaluate the success of the implementation of the PDCAE Mentor Training in Slovenia and to check whether the PDCAE curriculum is suitable to the purpose of the program.

Research Questions:

RV1: Is the training appropriate for participants to carry out the PDCAE program?

Were the training goals for the PDCAE Mentor Training Program achieved?

Does the training enable the personal and professional development of participants?

What are important aspects of the whole process of PDCAE Mentor Training Program?

RV2: Is the PDCAE curriculum suitable for pursuing its purpose - creating autonomous jobs?

2. Basic research method

The basic research method is the descriptive method. It is mainly about exploring at the level of description of phenomena. In the descriptive method we determine the state of the pedagogical field as it is without explaining it (Sagadin 1991, p. 29). According to Stake (in Sagadin 2004, p. 94), in this case it is a descriptive case study, because we were evaluating the success of the PDCAE Mentor Training Program in Slovenia and wanted to gain in-depth insight into the process itself. The interpretation of phenomena is hypothetical, because it is not based on an empirical examination of the interdependence of various factors, but derives only from theoretical findings.

We used a qualitative approach in the research. Mesec (1998, p. 26) marks qualitative research with research in which the basic experiential material collected in the

research process consists of verbal descriptions or narratives, and in which this material is also processed in a verbal way without the use of measurement procedures and statistical analyzes. The first principle of this methodology is that the researcher listens to the people participating in the study and investigates a problem that is relevant to the people involved in the research. Qualitative research has sought to achieve a content-rich understanding that can guide us in practical work (Mesec, pg. 47).

Within the qualitative method, a case study was used for the research. In qualitative research, we do not study a larger number of people in order to gain generalized findings, but investigate a single case or a small number of cases to compare with each other (Mesec 1998, p. 43). When we talk about an individual case, we are not just talking about an individual person, but it can be an individual group (family, communities, organization or a specific culture or subculture).

3. Studied units

The qualitative research included five PDCAE Mentor training program participants in one unit studied and four trainers - mentors of the PDCAE Mentor training program in the other research unit.

We investigated the training program, which consists of five modules and conducted as follows:

Module I: October 5 - 7, 2018

Module II: October 15 - 19, 2018

Module III: November 5 - 9, 2018

Module IV: November 23 - 25, 2018

Module V: December 2018 - June 2019.

The participants were included in the training process from October 2018 to June 2019. The participants are 24, 25, 30, 35 and 38 years old. All of them joined the training during the same period, but three of the five participants had previously worked in Institute Bob projects, either as volunteers or through student work, one of them was employed on a temporary basis. For the first time, two participants got to know the Institute Bob and participated in the organization's activities.

The group of mentors consists of four mentors - trainers who were involved in the project from the very beginning of the project and were also present in the co-creation of the PDCAE curriculum. We included them in the research through a focus group data collection process, as we wanted to include their insights into the training process. The mentors' age are 29, 44, 54 and 56. All are experienced trainers and practitioners of group educational activities.

4. Collecting of the data

Data were collected through three different techniques. Participants were included in the reflection groups after each training day.

Data from the participants were also collected through structured questionnaires with the possibility of open answers after each completed module.

Participants and mentors were included in the focus group after completing the training.

The research process for the focus group was based on basic questions that were prepared in advance, which served as a guide for focus group process. Researchers asked extra questions when there was a misunderstanding of what was said, and tried to clarify this by asking more detailed questions. Fundamental questions were designed based on research questions. All participants were subject to the same protocol within the focus group. The focus group was held in a relaxed and confidential atmosphere at the Institute Bob in May 2019.

5. Description of the instrument

Several forms of questionnaires were used as a data collection instrument. The first questionnaire was answered by the group of participants after each day of training.

A second group of questionnaires were given to the participants after each training module. It was adapted to the objectives of that module. The first module questionnaire contained eighteen (18) sets of four questions, two of which were open type and two rating scales (rank: 1-not at all, 2-very bad, 3-bad, 4-good, 5-very good, 6-completely). The second module questionnaire contained twenty (20) sets of four questions, two of which were open-ended and two rating scales (rank: 1-not at all, 2-very bad, 3-bad, 4-good, 5-very good, 6-completely). The third module questionnaire consisted of thirty-one (31) sets of four questions, two of which were open-ended questions and two rating scales (rank: 1-not at all, 2-very bad, 3-bad, 4-good, 5-very good, 6-completely). The fourth one contained twenty (20) sets of four questions, two of which were open-ended questions and two rating scales (rank: 1-not at all, 2-very bad, 3-bad, 4-good, 5-very good, 6-completely). The fifth module questionnaire contained twenty-two (22) sets. The sets of questions that pertained to the content that were upgraded throughout the training included four questions, two of which were open-ended and two rating scales (rank: 1-not at all, 2-very bad, 3-bad, 4-good, 5-very good, 6-totally), and the other sets of questions had three questions, two of them open-ended questions, one rating scale (rank: 1-not at all, 2-very bad, 3-bad, 4-well, 5-very good, 6-totally).

The third instrument used was the focus group questionnaire. The questions were open-ended questions, with more detailed questions asked by the examiners if further clarification was needed. The focus group questionnaire contained ten questions.

6. Material analysis

Data obtained was processed by the qualitative analysis method. The qualitative analysis process was performed in six steps: editing material, defining coding units, open coding, selecting and defining relevant concepts and categories and designing the final theoretical formulation.

Data obtained through focus groups at the end of the training day and which included only participants was transcribed and edited.

For the coding unit, we chose meaningfully completed sections of text. Through the open-coding process, we formulated concepts from records. In coding, we used the procedures of direct naming, synonyms, contradictions and unusual distant associations. We have classified individual statements and other empirical items, grouped them with similar statements, and named them with the same concept.

Literature:

- Mesec, B. (1998). Uvod v kvalitativno raziskovanje v socialnem delu. Ljubljana: Visoka šola za socialno delo.
- Sagadin, J. (1991). Razprave iz pedagoške metodologije. Ljubljana: Znanstveni inštitut Filozofske fakultete.
- Sagadin, J. (2004). Tipi in vloga študij primerov v pedagoškem raziskovanju. *Sodobna pedagogika*, 55., št. 4, str. 88–100.

MAIN RESULTS OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PDCAE MENTOR TRAINING PROGRAM IN SLOVENIA

The PDCAE Mentor Training Program took place from October 2018 to June 2010 and consisted of five modules. Five participants were involved in the entire training process and it was conducted by four mentors (trainers). The purpose of the training was to empower the participants to implement the PDCAE program autonomously. To achieve this, the training had seventeen (17) content objectives that were upgraded throughout the process (e.g. from basic knowledge to autonomous operation). The training process was designed as “training in training”, meaning that the trainees personally experienced being participants in the PDCAE program. Here we present the findings related to both research questions - whether the training is appropriate for the participants to autonomously implement the PDCAE program and whether the PDCAE program is pursuing its main purpose, participants creating autonomous employment - as well as recommendations for further implementations of the PDCAE Mentor Training Program.

1. Achieving training goals

The key to implementation of the PDCAE program is knowledge of the professional content, conceptual foundations of the PDCAE curriculum and the main methodological elements of the PDCAE program. The implementation of the training we evaluated was based on the experience of the participants with the PDCAE curriculum itself, and thus included the following contents: knowledge of the wishes, needs and motivations of the individual, knowledge of the personal values of the participants, building group dynamics and establishing a cohesive group, formation of an agreement between participants and mentors, training planning, knowledge of the organization (Institute Bob), reflection of the learning process, feedback, knowledge and use of resources, knowledge and realization of educational needs, knowledge of the environment in which the group operates, knowledge of different economic models, knowledge of educational content (principle of sustainability and sustainability, the principles of solidarity and social economy, the concept of emancipatory and transformative learning, project planning, the creation of autonomous employment and continuous individual mentoring support. In the research we also researched the extent to which the participants were familiar with the above mentioned contents and how their attitude towards these contents developed during the training.

We have found that gaining knowledge about the content was gradually being upgraded over the course of the training. **Module I** was characterized by only some basic knowledge of the content presented (about the Bob Institute, about values, reflection as a tool for raising awareness and group dynamics).

In **Module II** the participants acquainted themselves with the contents and conceptual foundations of the PDCAE program (various economies, the concept of autonomous employment, the method for recording progress, PDCAE curriculum, project work, competence framework). They spend a lot of time in Module II to the content of autonomous employment and the concepts of different economies. We found that after completing Module II the participants were intrigued by the concepts of different economies and some would like to explore the field themselves. The participants conducted a simulation of a project idea in Module II and gained significant experience for further project work.

In **Module III** the content and concepts previously adopted (concepts of different economics, knowledge of the PROJECT curriculum, methods for recording progress, methods for generating and gathering ideas) were upgraded. In addition, participants were introduced to the concepts of emancipatory and transformative learning and the principles of sustainability. We found that in module III. there had been a clear progress of the participants about knowing PDCAE curriculum, due to the emphasis in this module on this subject. In Module III. they also visited the Buna Cooperative, which was repeatedly highlighted by the participants as a good experience. They learned about the concepts of solidarity economies, but also gained some information about the principle of sustainability, but beyond the practice visit they did not get new knowledge about the mentioned concepts. On the other hand, the principles of solidarity economics were more thoroughly understood during Module III. Upon completion of Module III. the participants were well aware of the methods for generating and gathering ideas. Generally speaking, Module III. was groundbreaking for getting to know the project work because the participants started planning their own pilot project. The project idea they were building was based on the PDCAE curriculum, which represented a conceptual constraint for them when planning. At this stage of the project work, the participant group had not yet acted autonomously and relied on the support of mentors.

In **Module IV** the participants strengthened their knowledge of the Institute Bob and also utilized facilities and services within the organization, indicating greater autonomy of the participants in the training process. During the project work, the participants were acquainted with the project (public call) documentation. Many have worked independently, and some have pointed out that they would like to receive more help and support from mentors at this stage of training. This indicates the need for structured, accessible and continuous mentoring support in the second phase of training. Participants would also need more mentoring support for them to use the methods for recording progress - the participants mostly did not use the methods for recording progress in Module IV and V An important element of project

planning is also knowing and communicating with stakeholders in the environment where the process will take place. Based on the interpretation of the data, we see that the participants were hardly in touch with the stakeholders. We conclude that the group was focused on the process of project planning and writing the project documentation, so they were not able to devote time and attention to communication with stakeholders. In Module IV the participants included the principles of emancipatory and transformative learning in project planning, which indicates a good knowledge of the concepts and the ability to use them autonomously. They also included the principles of solidarity economics in project planning, as an essential principle of the PDCAE program. In this module, they focused on the realization of the PDCAE program and at the same time gaining a clearer idea of the program's reach.

In **Module V** there was a great deal of individual and teamwork. Participants got to know more about the target group of the PDCAE program and further elaborated the realization of the PDCAE program. The use of methods for recording progress did not improve from Module IV. It is anticipated that more incentives would be needed to use such methods in a process where most of the activities are performed autonomously by the group (mainly in Modules IV and V), and such methods are crucial for reflecting and evaluating the tacit knowledge of the participants. During this training phase, the group incorporated the principles of solidarity economies into group work and the implementation of the pilot project. The group also incorporated the principles of emancipatory and transformative learning, which indicates a better knowledge and use of such concepts during training. The implementation of the pilot project raised the possibility of realizing the PDCAE program, which is conceptually different and goes beyond the usual framework of prevailing Slovenian educational practices.

Based on the above, we concluded that:

- There were thirteen (13) fully and directly accomplished goals (knowledge of the wishes, needs and motivations of the individual; knowledge of the personal values of the participants; building group dynamics and establishing a connected group; formed an agreement for action; training planning; knowledge of the organization implementing the training (Institute Bob); giving feedback; knowledge and use of resources; knowledge and realization of educational needs; knowledge of different economic models; knowledge of educational contents (principle of sustainability and sustainability, principles of solidarity and social economy, concept of emancipatory and transformative learning); project planning and creation of autonomous employment;
- One goal was fully and indirectly achieved (reflection of the learning process);
- One goal was partially achieved (continuous individual mentoring support);

- One goal was achieved inadequately (knowledge of the environment in which the group operates).

In further training, we suggest reconsidering what are the most appropriate methods for reflection and devoting more time to the reflection process. In further planning the practitioners should consider how to incorporate the progress of the participants in a more structured way. We believe that the high engagement of the group of participants influenced the realization of the goal about reflection on the learning process. We suggest a more structured and continuous implementation of individual mentoring support throughout the training process. Individual mentoring support can also be a way of encouraging additional reflection. We believe that for this process, mentors must be able to be fully devoted to the implementation of the program, for which the basics for the full employment of mentors in the program must be guaranteed. We also propose that in Module III., IV. and V. mentors encourage participants to learn about and to connect with the environment (stakeholders) where they operate at.

At the same time, it should be pointed out that some of the goals were exceeded - building team dynamics and establishing a connected group, knowledge of the organization who implemented the training (Institute Bob), knowledge of different economic models and knowledge of educational contents. Knowledge of emancipatory and transformative learning stands out for the goal related to educational content. Since learning the concepts at the beginning of the training, the participants have been building and developing their process (teamwork and project planning) in the last two modules according to these principles. This also happened with the content of solidarity economies - the concept has been learned and used in the last two modules as a subset of project planning. The goal of knowledge of the organization implementing the training (Institute Bob) was exceeded, as the participants gradually got to know the organization throughout the modules and at the final module they were using Bob's resources autonomously on their own.

Also, the knowledge of the PDCAE program is extremely high. Moreover, the data collected through the focus group shows that the participants' consider the PDCAE program as their own. We believe that the achievement of this goal was also influenced by the fact that some participants had known Institute Bob well before joining the training. For future implementations, we suggest considering providing an equally good knowledge about the organization even if participants do not have prior knowledge about the organization.

2. About the process of PDCAE Mentor Training Program

Based on the interpretation of the data, we found that the conceptual and methodological design of the process made it possible to achieve the training objectives. In the following, we highlight the main elements of the training process that we consider to have been key for the quality of the training.

Knowledge and understanding of the training process were the first key elements. The participants emphasized the importance of knowing the contents of the day and the schedule that was always displayed in the room. Knowledge of the content of the training provided a sense of security in the process for the participants.

Another element that has played a key role in the dynamics of the process is the principle of co-creation of the process. The methodological design of the training has provoked the highest possible participation of the participants. Co-creation of the training process increased gradually. The participants in Module I were actively involved in the process, which they attributed to dynamic methods. They were partially co-creating the process - they only influenced the training schedule, the content framework was set in advance. They also formed a group agreement that took into account the wishes and needs of the participant.

In Module II the participants were already co-creating the process, but still the mentors remained the ones who enabled and encouraged it - the mentors have adapted the process to the needs of the group and were prepared to listen to the individual and group needs. Furthermore, the training process sought to promote the autonomy of participant's engagement, and consequently the co-creation of the process increased. Even after the training was completed, the participants maintained a positive feeling about their co-creation of the process and their active participation in the process. In the research we have also connected the positive impact of prior knowledge of the participants about the organization Institute Bob with higher level of co-creation in the training process.

This type of process has its downfalls, the main one being the process is time consuming. Participants point out that they have repeatedly spent a lot of time gaining new knowledge themselves, while it would take less time for the mentors to hand over this knowledge to them initially (e.g. through a frontal lecture). Likewise, the unanticipated prolongation of content has repeatedly aroused negative feelings with the participants, and the participants described this as a great frustration. We also find that an unforeseen extension of content took away time that was devoted to either informal socializing or reflection process about the training day. We suggest that the design of the training process takes into account the unpredictability of the process. We propose that mentors foresee additional time without any content, which they will

be able to fill it and when the process is unexpectedly extended. In this way, participants and mentors will not be in a stressful situation because of the lack of time.

The training took place over a period of nine months. The first three modules lasted just over one month, while modules IV and V slightly over seven months. Participants and mentors do not agree on whether the timing of the modules is appropriate or not. On the one hand, they point out that a longer time frame had a negative impact on the established dynamics, and on the other hand, a longer time frame is needed to create the creative solutions that the PDCAE program requires. Before further implementation, we propose to reflect on the set time frame and the design of a timeline that would maintain the establishment of positive group dynamics as well as provide space for creative solutions.

3. About the used methods and approaches

Training for PDCAE mentors was designed as 'training in training', which means that during the training the participants gained their own experience by participating in (adapted) implementation of the PDCAE curriculum. We have found that this type of training design is highly appropriate and evaluated by the participants as such - "the experience of participation from the perspective of a future mentor is invaluable and is a reference point for further work". One proposal for PDCAE Mentor Training implementation is to enable the future mentors to gain experience in working with the aim group of the PDCAE program by involving them in module V.

The concept of the ignorant teacher implemented by the mentors marked the training process the most. The concept puts the mentor in the position of an 'ignorant teacher' and follows the principle that the mentor minimally influences about what the group needs to acquire during the training. We find that the concept generated strong feelings of frustration for both participants and mentors. This can be linked to the fact that the approach itself is fundamentally different from the way most of the formal school systems operate. Likewise, the first experience with this kind of approach does not allow the framework that offers a sense of security that individuals are accustomed to from other backgrounds. With the ignorant teacher approach, the sovereignty of the performers - the mentors who trust in the approach - has proven to be important. In order to strengthen the sovereignty of the mentors, we suggest regular mentoring meetings of the mentor group throughout the training, where the mentors could share their experiences and seek solutions together. We also found that some unwanted feelings about the ignorant teacher occurred in phases when the group was not yet well built and where a great deal of emphasis was placed on learning about theoretical content. One participant proposes that the ignorant teacher approach should be implemented after the acquisition of professional and

theoretical content, during the period of mentor support to the participant. The research confirms that the concept of the ignorant teacher had a significant influence on the formation of a strongly connected group throughout the course of the training because the whole process was based on the expressed needs, desires, and the ignorant teacher did not make any decision by himself. This has contributed to the autonomy and emancipation learning of the participants. We consider that the use of this concept has also positively contributed to the establishment of co-designing the process and to higher active participants' involvement.

4. About personal and professional growth of the participants

One of the key findings of the evaluation is the intensive personal and professional development of the participants throughout the training. The essential elements that made this process possible are a good conceptual design and an ongoing adaptation of the training process to current needs (the ignorant teacher concept). In addition, training included building a strong participant group and working on positive group dynamics. The training was also based on the personal experience of the participants with a tailored curriculum of the PDCAE program.

Intensive personal and professional development of the participants during the training process is seen by their descriptions about gained knowledge, skills and attitudes, which is developed and upgraded by modules. After completion of Module I, participants reported an increase in awareness of enhanced knowledge, skills and attitudes following Module II. However, they were well aware of which knowledge, skills and attitudes they had strengthened during training. In the continuation of the training, since module III. Further, the training process allowed for an even more intensive development and reflection of the knowledge, skills and attitudes of the participants.

The training structure also facilitated and encouraged participants to become more independent and perform tasks more autonomously (individually or in groups), with less support from mentors. The concept of transformative and emancipatory learning also contributed to the autonomy of the participants. Intense personal and professional development as well as increased autonomy of the participants were also possible due to the concept of the ignorant teacher. From the very beginning of the training, it created a place for higher responsibility of the participants - responsibility for their own learning process, responsibility towards the group, for the training process and so forth. The process encouraged awareness and expression of the participants' own desires, needs and motivation on the basis of which the trainers and, in the last modules, the group itself were able to adapt the training process.

Despite the fact that awareness about both personal and professional development in youth work go together, the striking personal growth of the participants within the training is astounding. Based on the descriptions of the experience of the entire training process by participants, we conclude that a strong and positive experience of teamwork and the experience of the trainees as participants of the PCDAE program are key elements for such a strong personal experience. The group provided a safe space, space for reflection and support, personal experience with the PCDAE program, and even personal transformation, belief in one's own capacity for autonomous employment, awareness of the wider social context, change of attitude towards individual content, knowledge of oneself and one's own actions.

As previously pointed out, the reflection process is one of the elements that enabled the personal and professional development of the participants. However, multiple data from evaluations show that time distress marked the reflection process - "at the end of the day, when there was a lack of quality process time". We therefore propose longer reflection time to be included in the planning of further training courses as well as including appropriate methods that enable a space for better quality feedback and reflection.

The evaluation also indicates the processivity of the training in achieving its purpose - the competence of the participants to implement the PCDAE program, as well as the processivity of the PCDAE program itself to accomplish its purpose - to create autonomous employment. The process also reflects less obvious goals achievement and less visible results in the first training modules. We believe that this requires a high degree of patience with both the mentors and the participants. It is recommended to consider supporting elements for the mentors (e.g. discussions for a strongly connected group of mentors) and clear communication on the process before the start of the training.

5. About group development

The achievement of the training objectives was largely influenced by the positive development of group dynamics, which provided a safe environment for the participants. The participants in the focus group themselves highlighted the development of a well-connected group as one of the most important parts of the training.

The development of group dynamics took place gradually throughout the training. All participants entered the training process with the expectation of their own personal and professional development, but they did not expect the group dynamics and the formed group to be one of the most important elements of training.

During the training, the group became so connected that participants estimated that they will support each other even after the training process has been completed (creating autonomous employment down the line). The development of group

dynamics encouraged participants to reinforce their coordination skills, and to enhance their communication skills, in which feedback skills are also prominent. Many of the frustrations that the participants described during the modules related to group dynamics (in addition to time constraints), but through the joint project work the participants became an exceptionally connected and coordinated team. Inter-vision process, for which the participants self-organized themselves in Module V, also contributed positively to the construction of the group. We suggest that an external supervisor is provided in case of participants not being able to carry out the inter-vision process by themselves. The participants evaluated the team building experience as invaluable, knowing that no such process would be the same in other situations as it was highly dependent on participants.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PDCAE MENTOR TRAINING PROGRAM

We propose the following recommendations for further implementation of mentor training program:

We suggest considering the most appropriate methods for reflection and devoting more time to the reflection coming from participants. It is also necessary to consider how to integrate the use of methods for recording progress in a more structured manner in modules III, IV and V. We estimate that the goal of reflecting on the learning process would not have been a fully realized goal if the participant group were not as highly engaged as the one studied.

We propose a more structured and continuous implementation of individual mentoring support throughout the training process. Individual mentoring support can also be a way of fostering reflection and awareness of what individuals or groups can build on. To enable this kind of support, we believe that it is imperative that mentors are employed as trainers or educators within the program.

We propose that in Module III, IV and V participants are further encouraged to learn about and connect with the environment (stakeholders) in which they operate. Mentoring support and encouragement is very important here, as participants act autonomously at this stage, which may contribute to participants forgetting about some key elements of project planning.

It should be considered that participants who are not familiar with the organization implementing the training might participate in the training in the future. Consideration is needed on how to ensure that participants know about and use resources of the organization.

It should be taken into consideration that the process based on active involvement and co-creation by the participants might be unpredictable. We suggest that the mentors foresee additional time that is free of any activities. They will be able to utilize that free time when the process unexpectedly exceeds the planned schedule. In this way, participants and mentors will not be distressed due to time constraints, which would also have a positive impact on the implementation of key content that enhances the quality of the learning process, such as daily group reflections.

We also suggest reflecting on the set timeframe of the modules and the overall timing of the training as a whole. The timeline has still room for improvement, in particular by shortening the last modules of the training. However, findings showed that such a time span has had a positive effect on the development of a strongly connected group, which should be taken into account.

We propose regular mentoring meetings and interviews throughout the implementation of the training in which mentors share their experiences and seek solutions together, thus strengthening their sovereignty as trainers. This is necessary because of the specifics of the program (such as constant adaptation of the program to the participants) and the introduction of new methods (such as the ignorant teacher).

We found that unwanted feelings about the method of ignorant teacher occurred in stages when the group was not yet well built and in stages where a great deal of emphasis was placed on learning about theoretical content. We suggest that the ignorant teacher approach be implemented after the acquisition of professional and theoretical content, during the period when the mentors start providing participants with support when working on their own.

In the studied implementation of the training, a group of participants engaged themselves and organized a group inter-vision process on their own initiative. We propose that an external supervisor fee be taken into consideration to offer this type of support to participants and also to mentor the group, seen as a necessity of the PDCAE mentor training program.