

Press release!

Strategic partnerships in the field of vocational education and training (KA2, Erasmus+ programm), project [Learning to develop skills in stonecutting \(EARN\)](#)

Erasmus+ is the EU programme which supports education, training, youth and sport. Its aim is to improve the level of key competences and skills, with particular regard to their relevance for the labor market and to modernize education, training and youth work.

Regional Chamber of Craft and Small Business Sežana has successfully applied for Erasmus+ funds with the project Learning to develop skills in stonecutting (EARN). Project started in September 2015 and will finish in July 2018.

Project partnership consists from representatives from employers and from school from Italy, Slovenia and Croatia:

- The Regional Chamber of Craft and Small Business Sežana from Slovenia as lead partner,
- The Secondary School of Civil Engineering, Land Surveying and Environmental Studies Ljubljana (Slovenia)
- The Higher Vocational College of the Srečko Kosovel School Centre, Sežana (Slovenia)
- Institute Salesiano "San Zeno" from Verona (Italy),
- Slovenian Regional Economic Association from Trieste (Italy),
- Stonemasonry School from Brač (Croatia) and

Cluster of eco-innovation and social development CEDRA from Split (Croatia).

The situation of young people entering the labor market is characterized by a bad connection between the education system and the labor market. Formal education institutions only marginally associated with the business sector, which makes young people (in addition to the right educational policies according to the needs of the labor market) is also a lack of practical experience. The proposed project will place particular emphasis on leveraging employers to provide practical training for the profession stonecutter, the first contact between the employer

and the students, the method of placement and design of a new model of practical training. The relationship between students, employers and schools can be strengthened and improved in a very simple manner that does not require any special organizational changes only slightly different way of working and collaboration. The experience of participating partner countries point to the same practices and needs of target groups as in Slovenia. Employers who carry out practical training with work have a major impact on the further development of young people and their careers. Integrating education and practical training to work is one of the most important areas for the introduction of young people in the working process.

In the framework of the project EARN partners are developing a new model of practical training based on best practices and experiences of the partners. This model is based on the need to connect employer and student at the very beginning of educational process and by that achieve practical connection between basic knowledge of the profession and real needs of the employer. Students get chance to develop knowledge that is needed in the real work environment and employers get employee who is already trained for the job. Furthermore, it gives opportunity to the employer to co-create content of the practical training in schools.

Objectives of the project are:

- The exchange of knowledge and best practices between the partners.
- Establishment of a new strategic partnership associations, schools and employers (Sežana, Split, Trieste) and schools (Verona, Ljubljana, Brač, Sežana).
- Strengthening the impact on employers provide practical training.
- Upgrading the current cooperation partners with similar organizations in other countries and expanding this cooperation to new partners.
- Establishment and implementation of a new model of practical training "Learning for the development of competences".
- Acquisition of new skills and competences of teachers, educators and employers.
- Acquisition of new practical and useful knowledge for faster responsiveness, and the inclusion of students after school.
- Increasing interest among young people to the profession of stonecutting.
- Increasing the corporate interest among young people.

The proposed project contributes to greater integration synergy between educational institutions (schools, which educate the profession of stonecutting) and economic sectors (chambers of commerce, employers) and the establishment of a new model of practical job training. The added value of the project is to increase the responsiveness of students to the real working environment, acquire new practical and useful knowledge for faster integration into the labor market and the responsiveness of the students after school, getting a professional to identify and market knowledge acquired.

In the framework of the first five-day professional training hosted in Slovenia by The Secondary School of Civil Engineering, Land Surveying and Environmental Studies Ljubljana, participants were introduced with some best practices in the field of practical training. They have visited stone cutting craft workshop with the oldest family tradition and modern international company. Apart from learning how cooperation between school and companies works, they have also learned a lot about quarrying activity and stone heritage in Slovenia. Participants have discussed differences between vocational education systems in all three countries and exchanged experiences with partners and stone cutting companies.

The second five-day training will be hosted by Institute Salesiano "San Zeno" in Verona. Participants will learn about educational system in the field of stonecutting in Italy. Additionally they will continue their work on the development and framing of the new model of practical training. The second multiplication event will take place on Wednesday, 28th of September at the INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR FOR STONE DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY Marmomacc, where content of the project, its goals and midterm achievements will be presented to the wider public.

For more information please contact: Luca Finelli [luca.finelli@sanzeno.org](mailto:luca.finelli@sanzeno.org)

Appendix:

- Invitation to the Multiplier event