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EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL AFFAIRS & INCLUSION



E-Newsletter N. 5

This number of the WIT newsletter intends to briefly introduce the WITGIS platform and some other examples of good practices recognised by the WIT partners, as close-fitting to consolidated European policies addressing vulnerable groups. Support from peers, encouragement to vocational training of vulnerable groups, counselling, multi-professional teams and intergenerational self-help arise as some leading elements, revealing the ongoing change in professionals approaching new complex emerging social needs.



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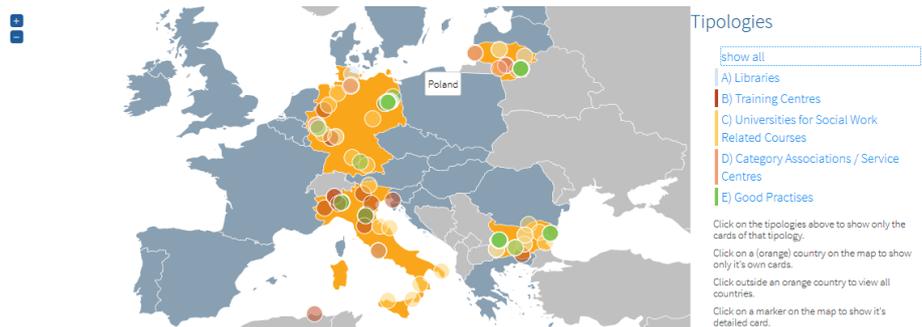




WIT GIS Snapshot

The WIT GIS has been conceived as an infographic system able to identify some of the European sources supporting the upgrading of skills for European social services professionals, with

WITGIS



a particular focus on the 4 partners countries (Italy, Bulgaria, Germany and Lithuania). Additionally, thanks to the easy to read data provided, the informatic system will help realizing a better match between supply of social services and demand of social support, supporting social work professionals (i.e. graduated or having different levels of professional education) to a better understanding of territorial instruments at their disposal.



The resources identified belong to 5 main categories: 1. libraries; 2. training and research centers; 3. universities for social work programs and course; 4. Professionals' associations and services centres; 5. good practises.

More than 180 cards have been collected, reporting description of the main activities carried out by the recognized "places" for the development of formal, informal and not formal skills to help the enhancement of the social work profession.



The WIT GIS will moreover help the decision makers and key actors on the field to read data in a comprehensive manner and to stimulate debate on the development of new skills for 21th century social service professionals.

For further info visit our project website <http://www.witproject.eu/>



The Peer Support Expert



The Peer Support Expert (PSE) (Legnano, Italy)

A growing awareness of the need for mental health services to be orientated to recovery, meant as care and respect for the person, trust in the possibility of healing, optimism, attention to the aspirations and objectives of the individual and social inclusion has been affirmed in recent years.



The **Peer Support Expert** is a professional, who has previously faced with similar issues in his private life, specifically trained to accompany the path of recovery of other people. She/He carries out activities and scheduled interventions that promote the socialization, the patients' accompaniment along the recovery, the users' rights protection, the self-mutual aid and the development of 'natural' support networks and the maintenance of life skills, in collaboration with mental health services workers.



A peer support activity, initially tested in the context of addiction to psychoactive substances, has been demonstrated to be effective even in the psychiatric field, as far as healing paths from mental disorders. The development of real networks of self-mutual aid under the movement for the users' rights and their social inclusion, allowed an increasing professionalization of the same users to become Peer Support Experts (PSEs).



For further info visit our project website <http://www.witproject.eu/>



Emerging needs and target groups:

The function of Peer Support Expert (PSE) has been designed specifically for people who lived experience of mental distress and with the aim of facilitating the orientation to recovery of services. The activity of the PSE is addressed as a priority to patients with severe and persistent mental disorders who, although modest therapeutic 'maintenance' interventions, require major interventions of socialization and inclusion within society.



Capacity and general skills acquired:

- ✓ Capacity of self-awareness and recovery compared to the personal distress;
- ✓ Perform an empathetic tutoring through the active listening;
- ✓ To facilitate access to groups of self-mutual-help, to services, to associations in the territory;
- ✓ Helping the patient's reflection on the strategies that can be used to solve problems and to build his own life project in collaboration with the équipe of services;
- ✓ Working in order to recognize individual, personal, social, cultural and spiritual strengths;
- ✓ Using the personal experience and job training in order to foster the peer support;
- ✓ Raising awareness of the path of recovery becoming a "model", with a 'positive' role, using a language based on strengths rather than weaknesses;
- ✓ Promote a culture of hope with respect to mental suffering, against prejudice;
- ✓ Promoting positive thinking on the theme of mental illness.





Encouragement to vocational training of vulnerable groups



Supporting Vocational Education and Training of Disadvantaged Users' Communities (Plovdiv, Bulgaria)



Provincia di Milano



The project, funded under the Lifelong Learning Programme and Leonardo da Vinci Programme, was implemented by six organizations from four countries - Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece and Romania. The lead partner and project coordinator was the Centre for Research and Technology Hellas (CE.R.T.H.) - Greece. CE.R.T.H. is a National Research Center operating under the supervision of the Greek General Secretariat for Research and Technology. It aimed to provide technical infrastructure (tools and services) and an opportunity for training aimed at developing and sharing available resources for e-learning, as well as e-learning courses that can be used by different platforms and e-learning programs.

The main results of the project are:

- Exchange of know-how between European countries to create available resources for e-learning courses and providing e-learning services to people with disabilities;
- Validation and testing of the main results in different European countries;
- Transfer of innovative e-learning practices in Europe;
- Representation of established training practices in a formal and technically reusable way using international specifications and Standards (such as IEEE LOM and IMS Learning Design), so that both training e-content and e-training practices can be reused and interchanged between different platforms.



For further info visit our project website <http://www.witproject.eu/>



The expected effect of the project was to raise awareness about computer literacy and equal training opportunities for people with disabilities, as well as to facilitate the development of innovative practices in the field of vocational education and training other than higher education.



The project has mainly addressed communities with individuals with disabilities and those in social deprivation, individuals with vision deficiencies, and daltonians.

Not formal, informal and formal skills strengthened during the described activities are patience, teamwork, professionalism and also:



-rising sensitivity on digital literacy and equal training opportunities for People with Disabilities;

-facilitating development of innovative practices in the field of vocational education and training;

-providing technical infrastructure (tools and services) and enabling training aimed at developing and sharing available resources for the e-learning;



-transfer of innovative e-Training practices across Europe;

-supporting the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies, and practice for lifelong learning.



Counselling and Multi-professional teams



Women Night Café - Nighttime Crisis Intervention Centre (Berlin, Germany)

The **Nighttime Crisis Intervention Centre** (FrauenNachtCafé - FNC) is a nighttime intervention centre for women. It opens three times a week (Wednesday, Friday, Saturday) from 8 o'clock in the evening to 2 o'clock in the morning and on nights before a holiday. For the clients it is possible to stay anonymous. They can visit the centre without previous notice and it is for free. It addresses to all women in a crisis situations. At FNC it is possible to get counselling (face-to-face or by phone), to meet others women for self-help activities, take part in different workshops and more. Wildwasser, the non-profit association who runs FNC, works against sexual abuse since 30 years. Many of the clients have experiences of sexual and domestic violence and/or mental health problems. The FNC is a low threshold project. FNC is networking with many other social projects.



The FNC-employees don't necessarily have a degree in social work or psychology but they need experiences in this field and informally developed skills (like counselling skills). They also need the willingness to further education and lifelong learning. It can be helpful to have very different professions (like linguists, sociologists, economists, social workers) in a team, especially for clients who find typical therapeutic and social work approaches not helpful (enough).



The FNC is realized with the support of public funding (European and national).

For further info visit our project website <http://www.witproject.eu/>



Intergenerational self-help



Provincia
di Milano

A day together: model of self-help between different generations (Vilnius, Lithuania)

The aim of the project is to revive and actively apply self-help methods of traditional communities by creating the Generations' House in order to improve psychosocial situation of socially excluded persons and help them to enter the labour market.

Target groups were persons who have difficulties to find jobs – older than 50, long-term unemployed women, persons with disability, single parents, parents having many children, persons at social risk, etc.



The task of the project was to create the model of the Generations' House in 4 regions of the country, to use multiple methods to facilitate integration of target groups into the labor market, to prepare recommendations for applications of this model in other regions. During the project activities the local communities were educated how to save resources (financial, energy, food, etc.), how to more efficiently manage household economy, how to recycle, etc. The activities were flexible – adapted to the needs and priorities of the target groups. Persons involved into activities taught each other and learned art activities, joinery, traditional crafts, cooking, etc.



The establishment of the Generations' House was anticipated by the learning visit to Germany, training of the staff and volunteers; adaptation of physical environment for the activities of the House, search for participants of the project, etc. One of the key aspects was empowering and motivation of target group persons to participate in the project activities.



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How to join and share experiences: the WIT Community.

Are you interested to share your expertise and join a thematic workshop? **WIT thematic workshops** are open focus groups of experts, practitioners or simply very interested in the field people (researchers, advisors, people from the worlds of NGOs, public and private social sectors, to mention some) focusing on a specific subject, while sharing knowledge and experience. Each thematic workshop tries to feed practical innovative solutions to problems or opportunities in the field drawing on experience derived from tailored useful projects, initiatives and practices.



Don't lose the occasion to join the on line thematic workshops! You can easily download all useful background information, videos and materials via this [link](#).





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The seven-year Programme targets all stakeholders who can help shape the development of appropriate and effective employment and social legislation and policies, across the EU-27, EFTA-EEA and EU candidate and pre-candidate countries.

For more information see: <http://ec.europa.eu/progress>.

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