PHERECLOS

PARTNERSHIPS FOR PATHWAYS TO HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENCE ENGAGEMENT IN REGIONAL CLUSTERS OF OPEN SCHOOLING

TEMP
Transnational Education Mentoring Partnerships

E-SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL GROUP

Project Details

Acronym: **PHERECLOS**

Title: PARTNERSHIPS FOR PATHWAYS TO HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENCE ENGAGEMENT IN REGIONAL CLUSTERS OF OPEN SCHOOLING

Coordinator: **KINDERBURO UNIVERSITAT WIEN GMBH (KUW)**, Austria

Reference: 824630

Type: Coordination and Support Action (CSA)

Program: HORIZON 2020

Theme: Open schooling and collaboration on science education

Topic-ID: Topic SwafS-01-2018-2019

Start: 01 October 2019 – 30 September 2022

Duration: 36 months

Website: www.phereclos.eu

Consortium: **KINDERBURO UNIVERSITAT WIEN GMBH (KUW)**, Austria

                  SYNYO GMBH (SYNYO), Austria

                  UNIVERSITAET INNSBRUCK (UIBK), Austria

                  UNIWERSYTET SLASKI (UNI SLASKI), Poland

                  UNIVERSITAT WIEN (UNIVIE), Austria

                  EUROPEAN SCHOOL HEADS ASSOCIATION (ESHA), Austria

                  KOBENHAVNS UNIVERSITET (UCPH), Denmark

                  STICHTING INTERNATIONAL PARENTS ALLIANCE (IPA), Netherlands

                  SNELLMAN-INSTITUUTTI RY (SNELLMAN), Finland

                  POLITECHNIKA LODZKA (TUL), Poland

                  UNIVERSIDADE DO PORTO (UPORTO), Portugal

                  S.I.S.S.A. MEDIALAB SRL (MEDIALAB), Italy

                  UNIVERSIDAD EAFIT (EAFIT), Colombia

                  ASOCIATIA UNIVERSITATEA COPIILOR (UNICO), Romania

                  TEACHER SCIENTIST NETWORK LBG (TSN), United Kingdom

Context

Introduction

This report concerns the implementation of the **Focus Group Activity** performed by **E-SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL GROUP** and has been implemented in the framework of the Transnational Education Mentoring Partnerships TEMP Programme under the *Partnerships for pathways to higher education and science engagement in regional clusters of open schooling PHERECLOS* project.

Specific objective

The objective of this Focus Group Activity is to identify attitudes, beliefs and practices among **Adult Trainers** in Greece in order to develop a documented report concerning their experiences, practices and innovative educational methodologies.

Methodology

Participants were chosen based on who would better answer the research questions, as a Focus Group Activity is a qualitative aspect of research. A list of potential participants was compiled and the most appropriate of them were chosen. After verifying contact details, an invitation was sent via email. After that, **five (5) Adult Trainers** were chosen to take part in the activity.

Mrs Maria Malliora, who is also an Adult Trainer and has a good understanding of the subject, served as the moderator. She has excellent communication skills, which is crucial to help the group have a natural and free conversation with each other. The assistant moderator, Georgia Ropi, who was also an Adult Trainer, was in charge of keeping notes.

TEPM partners prepared a questionnaire to be used as a tool to identify attitudes, beliefs and practices among the participants. A week before the Focus Group Activity, the questionnaire which was translated into Greek (https://forms.gle/DNe1QN2dMxLiVUQB7) was emailed to the participants.

The Focus Group Activity took place through the zoom platform on **Monday, March 22, 2021**. Participants were first informed about issues related to data protection and ethical aspects. An overview of PHERECLOS project, including the project aim and the target groups, was

presented to the Focus Group participants at the beginning of the meeting. Following that, a discussion took place and the participants were engaged in a Questions and Answers (Q&A) session. The questions were freely debated by all participants. The data collected were analyzed by the moderator and the assistant moderator. They went through the notes, analyzed them and summarized the conclusion in a report.

Conclusions

The following results emerged:

1. **Education and Training received throughout the entire trajectory**

Bachelor degree in the educational field	:	5
Master degree in the educational field	:	3
Phd in the educational field	:	0
Courses on innovation methodologies or resources	:	2

2. **Which educational field are you working in?**

   Five (5) Adult Trainers were selected to participate in the activity.

3. **Educational methodologies you have knowledge of:**

STEM learning	:	4
Placed-based learning	:	2
Personalized learning	:	4
Problem-based learning	:	4
Real-world learning	:	3
Formative assesment	:	4
Other	:	0

4. **Which of the above have you ever used in your classes/courses/training?**

STEM learning	:	2
Placed-based learning	:	0
Personalized learning	:	3
Problem-based learning	:	4

Real-world learning : 3

Formative assesment : 2

Other : 0

Participants stated that they know the methodologies in theory but they do not apply them regularly due to obstacles presented below.

5. **What ICT educational resources do you generally have knowledge of?**

Information resources : 4

Collaboration resources : 3

Learning resources : 5

6. **Which of the previously selected ones has used this course for teaching?**

Information resources : 4

Collaboration resources : 3

Learning resources : 4

7. **What is the main reason why you apply any of the above mentiones methodologies - STEM Learning, PBL etc. (if you do)**

It's comfortable for teaching/training : 0

Students learn more : 4

Students are more motivated : 4

Other : 0

Participants also stated that the above methodologies enable cooperation and collaboration among learners creating a more active learning environment which can help learners meet their goals.

8. **Reasons why you do not apply the above methodologies (if you don't)**

Not having the necessary resources : 3

Problems organizing the class : 2

The desired learning objectives would not be met : 2

The subject taught is incompatible with this type of methodologies : 0

A shortage of time : 1

Other : 0

Participants stated that the main obstacle is that the application of these methodologies requires more time from trainers to prepare for their sessions. On the other hand, traditional training methods are familiar to all Adult Trainers and painless / easier to execute.

9. **How would you describe an innovative teacher/trainer?**

The desire for change	:	2
The capacity to perform relevant research	:	0
Inventiveness	:	0
The ability to implement what planned	:	1
Being a promoter of team and cooperative work	:	2
Other (Flexibility and adaptation according to the level of the students)	:	0

10. **Why do you consider necessary to innovate in class?**

Participants consider that innovation in the field of adult education is essential nowadays in our demanding fast-changing labor market as employees need to update their skills in order to adapt to new environments. More specifically, they mention that:

- Traditional educational methods that trained people for jobs no longer meet the needs of adult learners. Moreover, a large number of scientific researches have proved that traditional based lecturing is the least effective way of teaching.
- Educational intervention can better meet the training needs of rapidly changing labor markets and therefore better help adult learners to achieve knowledge, skills and competences required for work.
- There is not one way of learning that works for all adult trainees in our contemporary multicultural Greek society which includes a diverse group of adult learners in terms of age, life experience, approaches to learning, culture etc.
- By using innovative methods, a positive and effective learning environment is formed, where adult learners feel more motivated and encouraged. As a result, adult trainers are able to better support adult learners to develop knowledge and skills needed in the demanding labor market.

- Innovative methods and strategies create an environment that promotes learning and motivates trainees to be more active during their sessions.
- Innovation has the potential to develop trainees' interests and cultivate their exploratory spirit to discover new knowledge.
- They offer opportunities for trainees to deepen their understanding of the subject covered and develop their ability to think more critically and flexibly in order to better adapt to labor market.

11. What do you consider it is needed to be developed/changed/ improved in your educational field?

Curricula   :   1
Methodologies applied   :   5
Resources   :   2
Approach towards the student   :   1
Other   :   0

12. Why?

According to the respondents, improvements should be made to all areas above, especially to the methodologies applied and the resources. They also mentioned that without the above changes, there is no ground for introducing innovation in education.

Curricula should be updated to better serve the needs for training in our fast-changing world. In this view, curricula should be a dynamic document rather than a static one in order to help adult learners adapt to the future of work.

Methodologies applied in Adult Education should be revised to better meet trainees' needs. Of course, traditional teaching methods should not be rejected but adapted accordingly. They also noted that not one teaching approach works best for all adult learners, so trainers should be equipped with cutting-edge methodologies to help them find the best ways to help their learners. To add to this, adult trainees are a diverse group of learners in terms of age, life experience, approaches to learning, culture etc. In this view, the introduction of innovative strategies and methods, can better match each individual's learning needs and therefore better support each learner to develop his/her knowledge and skills.

Resources needed for sessions to be more appealing and interesting should be available to trainers. The use of ICT in the educational process enables the development of learning resources that can attract learners' interest and promote learning. Therefore, more resources should be prepared and be available to serve the educational process.

Approach towards the students should follow Adult Learning Principles in terms of creating learning environments that encourage all learners' participation.

To conclude, respondents believe that progress in all four fields has the potential to adapt training to the needs of rapidly changing work markets. By these changes, training will be more interesting and effective and trainees will be encouraged to build upon their previous knowledge and skills.

Below some screenshots of the focus group: