



Understanding My Journey: Supporting Soft Skills Development for Young People

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In This Issue

- Dublin Multiplier Event
- Reggio Emilia Transnational

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Understanding My Journey: Supporting Soft Skills Development for Young People (UMJ) is a new Erasmus + Project being led by Ballymun Job Centre along with European Partners OAZA (Croatia), STRIM (Poland), Dianova (Spain), Anespo (Portugal), Action Synergy (Greece), IFOA (Italy) and REY Europe (UK).

Understanding My Journey aims to support young people, and their practitioners, to ensure that the interventions they take part in, including mobility, training, volunteering and entrepreneurship programmes, have maximum impact in terms of soft skills development (SSD) that can be quantified and built upon. It is hoped that producing tools using an IT base will make them easily accessible to young people. The project consortium work with young people on initiatives that aim to increase employability and develop soft skills (SS). We have observed, and participants have reported, significant change in terms of personal development but they are less able to break down and articulate how they have changed, using practical & tangible examples of SSD.

The project partners offer opportunities to young people to develop their skills and equip themselves for employment in the future, through a range of interventions. We are seeking to support the transition period and equip young people with skills for employability such as work ethic, attitude, communication skills, emotional intelligence & other personal attributes crucial for career success. We will develop tools to support young people to reflect on the SS they have developed through participation in a specific activity. We are a diverse partnership, in our organisational profiles & target groups, which will facilitate powerful collaboration for tools to be developed and applied in different contexts.

Project Update

In September 2018, the Ballymun Job Centre hosted an event in Dublin to launch the results of research conducted by the Understanding My Journey partners to identify relevant soft skills for young people's personal and professional development. Ruth Baker of the Ballymun Job Centre introduced the aims and objectives of Understanding My Journey and presented the partners' consolidated report with recommendations regarding best practices.



A panellist discussion with key stakeholders also take place which included input from Louise Fitzpatrick from the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, George Ryan from FIT, Dr. Mary Gordon formerly of the National Educational Psychological Service, Avril Browne from Kylemore Community Training Centre, and Paulina Opielka from STRIM.



In March 2019, all partners attended a transnational meeting in Reggio Emilia hosted by project partner IFOA. During the two day meeting, project partner Rey Europe presented the soft skills development toolkit and project partners Action Synergy and ANESPO illustrated how the mobile app and practitioner's guide will be developed.

All partners are now piloting the toolkit with their clients until Summer 2019 at which point the app piloting phase will begin.

