

“CAREER MATES - ADOPTING GOOD PRACTICES AND DEVELOPING SERVICES TO CURB YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT”

You are invited to join a project breaking down barriers to youth employment

THE CHALLENGE

Despite a recent increase in youth employment rate in the EU, combating youth unemployment remains one of the priorities of national and European social agendas. The Youth Guarantee Council Recommendation tries to ensure that, within four months of leaving school or losing a job, young people under 25 could either find a suitable and quality job or acquire the education, skills and experience required to find a job in the future through apprenticeship, traineeship or continued education.

The long-term unemployment rate has decreased from 5.2% in 2013 to 3.5% on average in the EU in 2017. However, there are still great differences between Member States, and the share of long-term unemployed (being out of work for more than one year) is still about 45%.

Despite the above policy initiative, more effort is needed to support "hard-to-reach" young people: those who are not registered with the public employment services; are low-skilled; have dropped out of school; and face multiple barriers to entering the labour market (such as poverty, social exclusion, discrimination, disability and poor mental health).

The economic difficulties caused by the current epidemic situation have further worsened the situation of young people, as those who are permanently unemployed or have inadequate qualifications and skills are also most affected by the challenges of starting a career. However, adaptability and openness to new technologies of this group is still better than average.

This fact and available international know-how and good practices on youth-employment provide a potential for adapting or replicating them across European countries with the goal of creating more quality jobs and lower youth unemployment rates.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The **mission of the CAREER MATES project** is to develop social and labor market related skills of young people aged 25-29 (NEETs and long-term (i.e. min. 12 months) unemployed), thus promoting their employment and social integration. Project partners will adopt good practices and develop/provide thematic services for the target groups.

The **basic pillars** of our service development rest on focusing on competence development - in line with current educational trends, and the application of peer-to-peer coworking (including both leaning from contemporary peers and intergenerational knowledge exchange) as a methodological-motivational tool.

Goals of the project include:

- To adapt a Swedish good practice on youth peer learning and counseling and to plan activities along international experience. We would like partners to set up youth peer support centers helping each other throughout the development process, to exchange experiences and to provide feedback on specificities of applicability in the local context.
- To strengthen young people's targeted knowledge, labor market skills and competences, and to enable them to enter the world of work either as employees or as entrepreneurs.
- To provide solutions to current challenges, such as the changing labor markets following COVID-19 or the occupations expected to be replaced by artificial intelligence in the future.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

In order to reach the goals above, the planned peer support centers could provide the following **labor market and career counseling services** for 25-29 years old citizens. The services listed below may be extended or modified according to the local context, provided that the objectives are effectively achieved:

- a. Competence and knowledge development required for employees / entrepreneurs.
 - b. Incubator services for start-ups and businesses - enabling peer support learning and counselling.
 - c. Family, intergenerational learning, development:
 - Master and disciple: successful professionals present their profession from their own perspective;
 - Career patterns: coaching / motivational training to revive individual commitment and to strengthen positive patterns and break down negative ones;
 - Living library: grandparents, parents sharing relevant experience about their work and profession.
 - d. Supporting programs and development of civil, corporate and educational partnerships.
- + Small scale investments to create the necessary physical conditions.

ABOUT THE LEAD PARTNER – ÓBUDA-BEKÁSMEGYER MUNICIPALITY, HUNGARY

Óbuda-Békásmegyer (or briefly Óbuda) is a district of Budapest, on the western bank of the Danube, on the northern side. It has a population of about 40 000 people. In line with its limited population, the range of locally available services is relatively poor, though general conditions are continuously improving as many local infrastructural developments have been realized in the last decade.

Within the project framework, Óbuda plans to provide tailored labor market and general social / mental health services for 25-29 years old citizens of the district itself, neighbouring districts and the northern side of the greater Budapest area.

FUNDING PROGRAMME, BUDGET AND TIMING

The CAREER MATES project application is planned under the following funding programme:

- **Fund scheme:** EEA Financial Mechanism (2014-2021), EEA and Norway Grants Fund for Youth Employment
- **Support area:** 2. Transfer of know-how and good practice
- **Project budget:** 1-2 M EUR
- **Typical Project Partner budget:** 100,000 – 200,000 EUR
- **Typical Lead Partner budget:** 250,000 – 450,000 EUR
- **Co-financing rate: 85%.** In case of NGOs, co-financing can be provided as in-kind contribution.

The **submission deadline** is 05 January 2021. The planned duration of the project is **30 months**, with a preliminary schedule of 01 September 2021 – 29 February 2024.

PLANNED PARTNERSHIP

We plan a **circle of 3-4 cities and 1-2 expertise partners** as the preferred structure of partnership (with cities represented by their **municipality or a relevant employment/education service provider**), optionally involving local professional partners from each city. Cities should have a **joint ambition** in finding, testing and sharing initiatives ensuring access to employment, education or training of 25-29 year-old citizens. **Expertise partners** are meant to support the projects by sharing expertise, experience and know-how.

Eligible beneficiaries: any eligible entity established in a Beneficiary State (BG, HR, CY, CZ, EE, GR, HU, LT, LV, MT, PL, PT, RO, SK, SI), Ireland, Italy or Spain.

Eligible expertise partner countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Iceland, Germany, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden.

Consortium members (lead partners or beneficiary partners) may not participate in another project consortia/application under this call.

Entities currently active as lead partner or beneficiary partner in projects selected under the previous EEA call (Active Youth) are not eligible applicants or partners under this call.

Expertise partners selected under the previous EEA call (Active Youth) can apply as expertise partners under this call.