



Pathways to Work

An Employment Upgrade Training Programme for Young Immigrants is a transnational, EU-funded project which aims to help young migrants to maximise their career potential in their new home countries.

The project is funded by European commission through the Leonardo da Vinci – Transfer of Innovation Programme.

It brings together seven organisations with expertise in employment and training, education, advocacy on behalf of migrants and communications to develop a training module that can be used across the EU Member States.

The overall aim is to assist young immigrants to upgrade their employment level by facilitating access to training, better jobs and a career plan and it is hoped to achieve this by:

- fostering greater understanding of labour market trends and employment rights
- equipping participants with improved workplace communication and teamwork skills
- increasing participants' capacity to compete for jobs with similarly skilled nationals by assisting them to build an electronic career portfolio and to use online career marketing tools effectively
- promoting greater awareness and use of host country vocational education and training structures and other training opportunities
- gaining an in-depth understanding of barriers faced by young migrants in partner countries and the practical ways they can be overcome
- transferring and adapting existing training resources by creating a new training resource combining classroom teaching and online content, which will be thoroughly tested with the participation of the target group to ensure quality
- promoting the widespread uptake and use of the training course, focusing on social actors with access to immigrant populations, vocational education and training institutions and other training bodies with potential to mainstream the course
- contributing to the personal development of migrants and the fulfilment of their potential to expand their contribution to the labour market and the economy
- creating greater awareness in the workplace of the positive aspects of cultural diversity, improving societal relations and community integration by facilitating young migrants to gain access to more diverse employment opportunities.

Pathways to Work involves the transfer of learning materials from one sector to another. Original materials were developed by Springboard Opportunities Limited and have been used for several years to assist young people from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds to develop their practical workplace and jobsearch skills.

The course to be developed by the Pathways to Work project will tailor those materials to the needs of young immigrants.

In geographical terms, the project involves transferring the materials, which previously have been used only in Northern Ireland, for use throughout the UK and Ireland, Italy, Poland and Spain taking into account the need to address language and cultural differences.

Five focus groups (one per participating country) comprising at least 10 young immigrants, will be held to research the training needs of young migrants and this will inform the development of the course materials. To compliment the focus groups, at least 100 young immigrants seeking employment, or more suitable employment, will participate in a survey. The survey will also be undertaken across the five countries. Information from the focus groups and the questionnaire will be analysed in qualitative and quantitative manners.

The Pathways to Work partners will publicise the progress and achievements of the

Rationale for the Project

Research has shown immigrants face specific barriers in the labour market, including: prejudice and xenophobia, discrimination by employers, difficulties obtaining recognition of qualifications and prior learning, cultural differences in working practices and communication skills, and lack of awareness of national support structures relating to employment and training.

These barriers place migrants at a significant disadvantage in comparison with local workers, meaning that they can end up in jobs below their skills level; are more vulnerable to job instability and experience many difficulties in terms of mobility in the labour market.

The Pathways to Work project focuses on young immigrants' needs and aims to enable them to compete with other job seekers on a "level playing field" by equipping them with practical tools in terms of job search and transition skills.

It involves undertaking a detailed training needs analysis and customising existing training materials to suit the needs of young immigrants, aged between 18 and 30.

By increasing this group of young people's skills and adaptability and enabling them to obtain jobs which recognise and utilise those skills, they will be better placed to fulfil their potential in the labour market, enjoy greater personal growth and social integration.

This will help improve their employment options and, more importantly, help overcome socio-economic disadvantage.

First Partners' Meeting

The Pathways to Work partners held their first meeting, hosted by Springboard Opportunities Limited, in Belfast on November 23-25.

Having successfully applied for the grant to fund the project, the first meeting was an important milestone as it was an opportunity for the partners to meet and to familiarise themselves with the organisations involved in the network.

Project website

The Pathways to Work project involves setting up a dedicated website to communicate effectively its products, progress and achievements.

The website is available at www.pathwaystowork.eu

Stakeholders will be informed when the website is operational.

project through a series of Ezines throughout the two-year lifespan of the project.

The project partners

Belfast-based Springboard Opportunities Limited is the Pathways to Work project lead agency.

Core partners are: Conform Consorzio Formazione Manageriale (Italy); the Immigrant Council of Ireland (Ireland); Fundacion Laboral del Metal (Spain); Uniwersytet Szczecinski - The University of Szczecin (Poland) and Canice Consulting (UK). iRED Institute for Rights Equality and Diversity based in Athens (Greece) is an associate partner on the project.



- Springboard Opportunities Limited is a non-governmental organisation which has supported the positive development of disadvantaged people since 1992, through building capacity and mutual understanding. The organisation has a person-centred ethos and believes in a two-way learning process. It works closely with the Department for Employment and Learning in the UK and FÁS in the Republic of Ireland.



- Conform - Consorzio Formazione Manageriale is a non-governmental organisation. Conform is a network of national and international public and private organisations including institutions, universities, training organisations, research centres, banks, employer associations and international voluntary organisations, that promotes the development of a life-long learning culture.



- The Immigrant Council of Ireland (ICI) is a human rights organisation which advocates for the rights of migrants and their families and acts as a catalyst for public debate, legislative and policy change. The ICI works with and for migrants to promote their rights through information provision, advocacy and public awareness. The ICI is also an Independent Law Centre. The ICI has developed a number of programmes which promote the economic, political, social and cultural participation of people who have migrated to Ireland.



- Fundación Laboral del Metal is a non-governmental organisation which was founded in 2004 to provide training activities and solutions for the metal industry in Cantabria, Spain. FLM carries out joint projects with government, trade and labour unions and designs bespoke education plans for companies and public organisations on new technologies and methodologies related to qualifications, skills updating and competencies development.



- Uniwersytet Szczecinski - The University of Szczecin. The university was established in 1984 and currently has a student population of more than 36,000 and nine faculties. The Faculty of Management and Economics of Services, which comprises 18 chairs and three departments, will be most closely involved in this project.



- Canice Consulting is an independent consultancy based in Lisburn, Northern Ireland. It focuses on training and development services, primarily for the private sector. It is active in Ireland, the European Union and further afield.



- iRED Institute for Rights, Equality and Diversity is a not-for-profit research institute that brings together interdisciplinary scholars. Its political impact is achieved through its scientific work relating to migrants and minorities, effective or potential racism and discrimination and the protection and effective enjoyment of human rights in Greece and Europe.



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme