

# ENHANCEMENT IN PSYCHOSOCIAL LIFE SKILLS



Strategische Partnerschaft zum Austausch guter Praxis

**Thema:** Psychosoziale Basisbildung

**Projektdauer:** November 2018 bis Oktober 2020

**Partnereinrichtungen:**

-  St. Virgil Salzburg (Österreich)
-  Bremer Volkshochschule (Deutschland)
-  Bildungshaus Kloster Neustift (Italien)
-  ErwuesseBildung Luxembourg (Luxemburg)
-  VHS – Bildungsinstitut (Belgien)
-  Volkshochschule Salzburg (Österreich)

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Summary of the project, 31.08.2021



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## Summary of the project

The basic principle of the project “Enhancement in psychosocial life skills” was to describe our contemporary living situation. Among other things, the project found that the increase in decision options for human beings, along with their greater disorientation, pressure to self-improve and the increasingly rapid pace of living conditions go hand-in-hand with a growing alienation from the (social, natural, psychiatric and spiritual) world. Life transitions are increasing and interpersonal relationships are becoming more fragile. Human beings are facing the challenge of steering themselves, designing how they live with one another constructively and in a way that fosters solidarity.

Consequently, mental stress is increasing and diagnoses of illnesses of a psychological nature are on the rise. Many people are seeking refuge in addictions or fundamentalism in an attempt to escape this pressure and to regain control over their lives. The Corona pandemic, which started during the course of the project, has placed the stress faced by human beings and their abilities to overcome this as well as their limitations in even greater focus.

An ideal image of a psychosocial, strong personality was developed that had its foundations in this analysis. Attitudes and abilities were assigned to the basic cornerstones of thinking and feeling, wanting and acting. An assumption was made here that they strengthen the resilience of human beings and their mental health. This is not only important for individuals but also politically and socially relevant, in light of the financial effects of the increase in mental illnesses.

From this preliminary work, a definition was derived of the sphere of activity in adult education “Enhancement in psychosocial life skills“ :

This may be understood as:

- supervision of persons based on a holistic image of a human being
- acquisition, attainment and expansion of fundamental skills for a responsible personal lifestyle and constructive social cooperation
- the availability of (activity) know-how in relation to matters of personal development and the overcoming of crises (psycho information/education)
- an offer that is accessible to all social backgrounds and target groups
- a course offer that takes into account the pedagogical, learning psychological and neurobiological principles of knowledge and competency acquisition

Psychosocial life skills enhancement is a preventative approach for strengthening living proficiency. It promotes the self-regulating ability of human beings in social contexts, supports their self-responsibility and offers possibilities for acquiring a personal orientation system. It strives at support of the (psychological) health of people as well as the extension of equal (health) opportunities and the strengthening of social participation. Psychosocial life skills enhancement is based on the trinity of education, consultation and supervision. It opens up “learning and feedback spaces”, “zones of encounter” and “workshops of success and failure”. It works in a resource-oriented manner, involves the target groups and takes into account forms of self-controlled informal learning. Much attention is paid to the question of knowledge transfer.

Alongside this theoretical basis, new formats were firstly devised, conducted (in some cases they had to be adapted to Corona-induced restrictions) and evaluated.

Themes of these new formats were:

- “Up to now and beyond ...“ Workshop (St. Virgil Salzburg) for 25- 35-year-olds target group
- “Explain to me with Merve – what effect does the Corona-induced lockdown have on me?“ Online course (Salzburg Adult Education College) for persons with an interest in everyday psychological questions

- “Resilience: What makes us mentally strong“ - Online course (Bremen Adult Education College) for women wishing to design their lives proactively
- “A day of strength for relatives and those affected: First Aid kit for challenging situations“ (Convention Centre at Neustift Abbey) for relatives and affected persons of those who are sick or dying
- “Introduction to deliberate, non-violent communication in adult education courses“ (Eupen Adult Education Institute) for instructors and teachers in adult education for the German-speaking community

Secondly strategies and tools were developed that ensure the quality of offers of psychosocial life skills enhancement and safeguard this. In this way a quality framework and a description of successful learning arose. Furthermore tools were developed for describing the target group, evaluation etc.

During a concluding conference, the results and experience of the Erasmus+ project were presented to and discussed with the wider public. Within this framework, there was evidence of great interest and much positive feedback was received about the project results. In addition, a wide range of suggestions were made about developing the project further and consolidating enhancement in psychosocial life skills based on feedback from both experts and participants.