



Cl@ss — a long-term approach to the development of soft skills

The Bulgarian National School of Management, the Romanian College of Economics, the Slovenian Youth Centre, the Turkish Trade Organisation of Vocational Schools and a training and consultancy organisation based in the Czech Republic formed a consortium that implemented a two-year project called Cl@ss. Its main goal was to develop a new model for teaching soft skills.

The project was planned for a longer period of time, because representatives of secondary schools did not like one-time classes aimed at developing soft skills. School heads and management units pointed out that a longer-term approach, involving additional activities in the standard schedule of pupils, was preferable.

Meetings for teachers

Workshops for teachers were part of the initiative in individual countries – for example, the Economic College of the Mountain Banat in Reșița organised a 2-day meeting with 42 participants (project team, 2 students, one university teacher and 34 trained teachers). The main focus of this workshop meeting was:

- presentation of the results of the pilot testing of the transferred methodology in the classroom,
- discussions,
- presentation of feedback from teachers and students,
- discussion on teaching materials,
- presentation and discussion of newly created exercises, demonstration exercises, presentation of the online database of exercises and discussion on future use and development of the methodology after the end of the project.

For the purposes of the project, Slovenia decided to put the theory into practice and implemented the project activities in two schools. 55 teachers and 1,274 students of various competences were involved in the project.

In subsequent workshops, teachers trained and then presented the results of a pilot application of new methods in the classroom. They talked about the materials they use, as well as the opinions of their pupils, which they collected on an ongoing basis.

Aims

The initiative was aimed at developing a new model that would develop personal and social competences, e.g. communication, teamwork, entrepreneurship, problem solving, lifelong learning, and information gathering and management. The skill levels were expected to be increased in both students and teachers.

Results

For students, this meant more attractive classes, easier to understand content and a smooth entry into the labour market. Teachers, in turn, thanks to the project improved their qualifications, increased motivation and self-confidence. Whole schools gained valuable products which allowed the teaching process to become more



effective where teachers and pupils understood each other better. The project was favourable and gained interest during the conference, many inquiries were made about the possibility of presenting the methodology and the platform in other schools or non-governmental organisations.

The partners involved in the project were very satisfied with the final results of the project as the feedback received from all participants over the 2 years was very positive.