

mPOW

Empowering and inclusive model to create an experience of a supportive community for NEET youngsters

| PROJECT in a nutshell

mPow is a two-year Erasmus+ project (1 October 2022-30 September 2024) involving four partners. The Finnish Sosped Foundation is the coordinator, while the other partners are Il Grande Carro from Italy, Check-In from Portugal and Asociace Trigon from the Czech Republic.

The official title of the Erasmus+ project is "Empowering and inclusive model to create an experience of a supportive community for NEET youngsters", acronym: mPow. NEET means "Not Employed, Education or Training".

| WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO

This Erasmus project will develop and describe a community-based approach to help youth workers better support young people with challenges such as mental health, social situations and learning. The key elements of this approach are belonging to a community, peer support and the role of the professional in relation to young people, enabling them to be truly involved.

| QUOTES

"The characteristics of a good community are a smooth flow of information, openness, transparency, trustworthiness, respect for privacy, a welcoming atmosphere, acceptance, safety, clear rules and confidence that the rules will be followed." – Man 29 years old

"Becoming part of a community like the one I was lucky enough to meet is something I wish for every person. It made me grow as a person and as a man, it changed my perspective on life. Within this community I have found people I trust completely and who even today, after so many years, are fundamental in my life. I try to find and take advantage of every possible opportunity to spend time together, because I feel it is an added value. These people have become like brothers to me: always ready to help you, always smiling and available. It is not a community, it is a real family." – Man 25 years old

mPOW

Empowering and inclusive model to create an experience of a supportive community for NEET youngsters

The project will describe how to create an empowering community, the role of young people in such a community and how professionals can best support young people in their empowerment. Empowerment takes place in communities where young people can not only take a break from social pressures, but where they can also do things that are meaningful to them and engage with their peers. The role of the professional is to educate and guide young people in realizing their own dreams and in maintaining a positive and hopeful atmosphere.

As concrete steps, we will write a handbook for youth workers describing how to create a community and a community-based approach. The handbook will also contain information of best practices of each partner and case stories from young people. The project will also provide training for young people and professionals working with young people, as well as self-reflection materials for professionals. The idea is that the Empowering Community approach can be used in the future by any actor who wants to either create an empowering community for young people or change their current activities to better support young people in challenging life situations.

CASE STORIES ARE READY

The first content objective of the project has been achieved with the publication of the case stories of all partners on the website. Each partner chose two young adults in challenging life situations to interview and interviewed them about their life before joining the organisation and their current situation. They were also asked about what a good community is and what role such a community plays in young people's well-being. The interviews highlighted, among other things, the importance of trust and equality. All interviews are available on the Case story page: <https://mpow.sosped.fi/frontpage/case-stories/>

| QUOTES

"In order for the community to be strong, honesty is important in my opinion, because when each of us feels that whether we say what is pleasant or unpleasant to us, it is necessary to know that a person can say it. Another important thing is a sense of belonging, so that the community has one circle of things to work on and all members have something in common, such as friendship, working on a joint project, a good feeling of meeting, whatever. The third area is communication. Each member should be able to say what bothers him, what makes him happy, and others should be able to listen." – Women 23 years old

"Being part of a community gives you a reason to leave home. I certainly wouldn't have gone further than the grocery store in the past without a place like this." – Women 22 years old

mPOW

Empowering and inclusive model to create an experience of a supportive community for NEET youngsters

| CONTACT US:
www.empow.eu

Sosped foundation:

www.sosped.fi

Check-IN:

checkin.org.pt

Il Grande Carro:

www.ilgrandecarro.it

Asociace Trigon:

www.asociacetrigon.eu



Our project team at the first TPM of the project in Rome on the first day of December. Our project team at the first TPM of the project in Rome on the first day of December. From left to right: Jan, Minna, Lassi, Claudia, Gracian, Ilario and Nicola.

| QUOTES

"A professional working with young people in the community should have compassion, caring, patience, understanding, communication skills and a willingness to listen, kindness, a sense of humour and reliability. It is important that the employee respects people's privacy. Of course, it is useful to know where to refer the young person if necessary. There is also a general curiosity about other people's interests. You really have to like people and be interested in their lives." – Man 29 years old

"It's amazing to find out how people so different from each other can become such friends. Being part of a community where we feel at ease, where we can discover ourselves, with all our strengths and weaknesses, is priceless. I will never stop thanking them for welcoming me from the first moment." – Man 25 years old