

Title and acronym: Open Innovation Competences for Responding to Modern Economic

Challenges [OPI]

Project type: Erasmus+ KA2 Project, Strategic Partnership for Adult Education

Ref. no.: 2020-1-RO01-KA204-080196

Promoter /Coordinator: University of Pitești, Romania

Duration: 01/11/2020 to 31/10/2022

Total project grant: 218081 Euro

Total expenditure (grant) for the University of Pitești: 51722 Euro

Transnational coordinator of the project: Assoc. Professor Dr. Eng. Dumitru CHIRLEŞAN

Local coordinator for the University of Pitești: Professor Dr. Constantin CIUCUREL

Summary:

Nowadays, many European citizens face high risk of unemployment due to fast changing requirements of the job market. Technological changes, decreasing relevance of traditional

working competencies and key meaning of new ones put many Europeans in high unemployment risk (i.e. due to automation or inadequacy of their competencies) or employment out of their competence profile (skills mismatch) leading to decreased productivity and life quality (Rathelot & Rens 2017). Especially constant innovation related changes, new technologies or business models, create the need for fast adaptation and developing corresponding competences which are not immediately available at the job market.

In this scope, taking into account especially the major role of SMEs for EU economy, open innovation (OI) provides companies unique chances to engage in forefront innovation in face

of often insufficient resources (Vanhaverbeke 2017). This however requires recruiting specialised staff that could support OI processes. Despite increasing (and expected to increase

further) role of such positions as OI specialist/manager, networks and partnerships coordinator, knowledge manager, managers struggle to source recruits with required competences in this scope, while many EU adults face unemployment or high unemployment risk (Dabrowska and Podmetina 2014, Cedefop 2018).

The OPI project aims to develop and test a comprehensive methodology and tools for requalification of human resources to obtain professional competences for those future oriented positions in open innovation scope. Due to, from one side, high importance of OI especially for strongly SMEs based economies and from the other, limited understanding of the OI processes, their benefits and job market opportunities among many job market stakeholders, the OPI project will aim at building labor market intelligence and competences in the area of open innovation that will allow to effectively develop supply of skills to fill the market gap while

capitalising on existing pool of human capital. To this end, OPI will develop solutions that will focus on capacitating HR professionals to provide quality career guidance and counselling in the area of open innovation opportunities and requirements together with ready to use requalification/upskilling tools for unemployed and adults in risk of unemployment.

Objectives:

- To improve awareness of OI related professions, of their relevance and specifications among the staff related with HR development and guidance (staff of HR agencies, employment offices, NGOs fighting unemployment issues and firms' internal HR staff) and capacitate the staff to prepare employees and job seekers to adapt to new types of positions. In this scope, the project will not only extend and develop the competencies of the HR personnel supporting adult learners, but will also provide them with ready to use digital tools to diagnose re-qualification potential and further on, an on-demand OI upskilling program developed for the specific needs of OI competence building of unemployed/adults in unemployment risk.
- To directly address the needs of unemployed and staff in the need of requalification or upskilling to obtain key for modern and future market competences which is highly obstructed by lack of awareness of OI in the target group and lack of access to high quality learning opportunities in the OI area. It will allow them to gain practical competencies responding to the market needs. By providing specific methodology based on empirical research of market, its future orientation and target group needs, the project will support the individuals in obtaining key competences highly relevant for employability and innovativeness in a long-term. In OPI scope they will not only gain access to their needs-oriented program for development of in-demand professional competences, but by capacitation of the specific HR support staff they will gain access to guidance in the area and will obtain critical motivation related with realistic recognition for the competences' relevance in their job market environment (EIB 2019).

Outcomes:

Specifically, the project will deliver:

- Study of local state of open innovation competencies,
- Methodology and tools to build open innovation understanding among HR specialist and build their ability to guide job seekers or employees through upskilling/requalification to take
 - position in scope of open innovation,
 - Diagnostic tool to evaluate human capital in scope of open innovation,
 - E-learning solution for building unemployed/employees in high unemployment risk competencies to take roles in scope of open innovation,
 - Comprehensive requalification guide for HR professionals and adult educators.

Partnership:

1. Universitatea din Pitești, Romania (coordinator)
2. E&D Knowledge Consulting, LDA, Portugal
3. Asociación Valencia Inno Hub, Spain
4. Stowarzyszenie Centrum Wspierania Edukacji I Przedsiębiorczości, Poland
5. Warp Innovation OG, Austria

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