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Title: **The Grundtvig Project "FOCAL - Fostering Creativity in Adult Learners with Disability Through Arts"**

Abstract:

The project "FOCAL – Fostering creativity of adult learners with disabilities through arts" aims at the better integration of people with special needs into the European society. The project run from 2009 to 2011 and was funded by the European Commission under the Lifelong Learning Programme - Action Grundtvig - Multilateral Projects. Eight partners from seven European countries (Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Lithuania, Poland, Slovenia, Hungary) participated in the project. During the project lifetime the well composed consortium of eight members from the different European regions developed a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) course for teachers and trainers. The consortium of institutions as adult education centres for people with and without disabilities, day care centres, universities, and SMEs implemented a needs analysis in all partner countries and collected best practice examples to identify needs and barriers to foster integrative offers for people with and without special educational needs (SEN). On this basis it was possible for the partners to develop a CPD course manual/handbook and a course curriculum to train interested staff. The draft version of the manual and curriculum was tested in national and international settings. On that basis the handbook and curriculum have been revised, printed and distributed to interested institutions. The handbook was presented during the FOCAL final conference in Ljubljana, Slovenia, in May 2011. Through the FOCAL course it is possible to bring together people with and without SEN in a new, innovative and low-threshold setting. The project partners developed a comprehensive dissemination strategy to reach stakeholders on all levels. This enabled the consortium, e.g. through national transfer workshops or contributions of partners on conferences on national and international level to reach stakeholders and persons who are not involved in integrative/inclusive training approaches so far. The FOCAL exhibitions, showing exhibits produced during the preceding learning partnership "ACT WELL" by artists with SEN from different European countries, opened the topic of FOCAL to another very important target group: The society. Due to the fact that the exhibitions were hosted in established museums, universities, etc. people got in contact with the topic in their daily life.

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RIGHTS CHANGES IDENTITY URBAN MULTIPLE POPULATION PHENOMENON VARIABLES CULTURE INTER-DISCIPLINARY SOCIETIES WORLD GOVERNANCE AWARENESS  
CONSTRUCTIONS LINKED STRUCTURES SEGREGATION COMPLEXITY DYNAMISM ORGANIZATIONS MARKETS PERSPECTIVES AGE GENDER REALITY DEFINITION MULTICULTURALISM DECADES  
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All activities of the FOCAL project led to one aim: The partners of FOCAL wanted to cause changes in adult education of learners with SEN. For that reason the most important objective was the development of the named high quality handbook introducing a more effective programme to bring together people with and without SEN in education programmes based on an inclusive/integrative approach. By the development and implementation of the FOCAL manual these aims have been reached.

From October 2009 until September 2011 the project partners, experts in different fields of creative education working together with SEN teachers, exchanged about the state of art and national good practice examples. Based on that, they identified, discussed and elaborated ways, methods, tools and learning arrangements for the work with people with SEN. In this context the partners developed new ways to use music, dance, drama or arts to give people with SEN new perspectives for their personal development and to improve their everyday life. The result of the common work of all partners is a handbook as basis for a CPD course including a manual and a curriculum. The manual on the one hand consists e.g. of the results of the conducted needs analysis, information how to reach stakeholders and win them for inclusive/integrative classes, theoretical basics, teacher competences and information about disabilities including case studies. The curriculum on the other hand shows a way how to implement a CPD course. It can be understood as implementation standard for (inter-)national CPD courses but also as a pool of tools to implement a trial course to give interested trainers the possibility to get in touch with the topic.

The developed handbook was validated by the partners in national and international setting with the direct target group (adult educators, trainers, etc.) and the final beneficiaries (people with SEN participating in the international workshops in Zaragoza and Ljubljana). Through the testing of the manual it was possible to give common guidelines and recommendations for the practical work to more than 100 adult educators from the partner countries and thus a more specific work with the final beneficiaries is possible.

FOCAL impacts on three levels:

1. Local: More inclusive education offers will be implemented (many organisations already stated their commitment to implement the FOCAL training by letters of intent).
2. National: Exhibitions were available for a broad public (e.g. in universities, museums) many people learned more about the issues of FOCAL and the integration of people with SEN in society. The public was thus sensitised for the topic.
3. European: Inclusion of the European audience through the presentation of FOCAL on international conferences and the final project conference 2011. Additionally the FOCAL film can be ordered on the FOCAL website.

Overall the partners produced more than 30 deliverables with different dissemination levels and target audiences. To reach all given levels and target groups in an adequate way the deliverables were published on different restriction levels. The results published on confidential level are foremost of management and administrative nature and meant only for the partners (e.g.



A word cloud of terms related to diversity and social issues. The words are arranged in a horizontal line and vary in size and color. The terms include: DIFFERENT, DIFFERENTIATION, DEMOGRAPHIC, GLOBALIZED, PLURI-METHODICAL, RECOGNITION, COMPLEX, NARRATIVE, INTER-DISCIPLINARY, SOCIETIES, IMAGES, MONO-CAUSAL, STUDIES, RIGHTS, CHANGES, IDENTITY, URBAN, MULTIPLE, POPULATION, PHENOMENON, VARIABLES, CULTURE, MINORITIES, WORLD, GOVERNANCE, AWARENESS, CONSTRUCTIONS, LINKED, STRUCTURES, SEGREGATION, COMPLEXITY, DYNAMISM, ORGANIZATIONS, MARKETS, PERSPECTIVES, AGE, GENDER, REALITY, DEFINITION, MULTICULTURALISM, DECADES, BORDER-CROSSING, NEW.

partnership agreements). The next level is the restricted level and includes inter alia internal status reports and evaluation reports. Also the developed handbook and the film about the project are published on restricted level. People interested in the handbook or film can send a request to the consortium (e.g. kessler@euconcordia.de) or subscribe on the website ([www.focal-project.eu](http://www.focal-project.eu)) to receive a copy. Most FOCAL results and outcomes are published to a broad public, so everybody can profit from FOCAL. Especially activities as the national transfer workshops for stakeholders, the exhibitions, the final conference, the newsletter issues and the developed CPD course (offered as international Grundtvig courses to all European citizens after the project lifetime) were and are tools to involve the public and sensitise it for the concerns of FOCAL. Furthermore the final beneficiaries (the people with SEN) were included in the project (e.g. participation in two project meetings) and will have the chance to use the FOCAL findings in international setting during the Workshop “Creative Europe” hosted by Bergische VHS in Germany in March 2012. Through the high quality outcomes developed by the consortium during the project lifetime it was possible to reach the project aims like the improvement of the integration/inclusion of people with special needs into the LL process and the society.

Additionally the partners got into talks with other adult education providers and assured them use the FOCAL materials in their work and to train their staff to be able to offer more inclusive/integrative courses. Furthermore the project itself fostered the integration of people with SEN by bringing them together during two international creativity and arts workshops in Zaragoza, Spain in October 2009 and in Ljubljana, Slovenia in May 2011. The highlights of the second workshop in Slovenia were the performances of the participants at the final conference of the project with nearly 100 guest from European, national and community level. There the participants showed how the newly developed ways to use music, dance, drama or arts give people with SEN new perspectives for their personal development and improve their everyday life.

In March 2012 the Bergische Volkshochschule (applicant of the project) implemented a Grundtvig Workshop with 22 participants (people with and without disabilities) in Germany. During one week the participants from 7 European countries worked together with creative methods, got to know each other, and lowered barriers for European exchange. The workshop, implemented by experienced FOCAL-trainers, was a great success and an unforgettable experience for all participants.

Keywords: Integrative , Inclusive, Creativity, Train the Trainers

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