

My experience from Promyse on social entrepreneurship in health and social care

PROMYSE Training, Vilnius 3/7 September 2018

PROMYSE is a transnational project, financed by Erasmus+ Programme and coordinated by IARS, that promote youth social entrepreneurship by developing an interactive capacity-building and networking platform offering innovative courses and learning opportunities for young prospective, and by encouraging the adoption of best practices in promoting social enterprises in the health and social care fields. To check the training activities and discussion questions in response to the youth expectations, a five-day meeting has been organized in Vilnius, Lithuania from 3th to 7th September involving young interns/volunteers and staff members from each partner organisation coming from five different countries: Lithuania, Italy, Greece, Belgium and the UK.

I had the great opportunity to be part of this experience and be exposed to an enriching multicultural environment where in a friendly atmosphere we participated in topic presentations, interactive exercises, open discussions and ideas exchange combined with visit to local best practice. I arrived with a limited knowledge on the topics and many questions and some scepticism on the possibilities to combine social initiatives and business activities, but the training helped me to see different point of view and learn from the experience of experts in the sector. Moreover, I knew more of the initiative of Promyse and the importance of providing technical knowledge and support necessary to help young motivated people to develop social enterprises and create social value, in a society where opportunities are limited and motivation must be supported by innovative solutions.

The format of the training was really efficient and well balanced with an intense theoretical part on know-how set up a social enterprise, create networks and synergies, develop and measure impact followed by interactive exercise to put into practice the knowledge acquired. Working together in groups has been an important part of the training challenging the participant capacity and skills in a stimulating and sometimes debating exchange, where cultural differences offered a great contribute to the discussion. I personally appreciated the 'in the field part' being able to visit local best practice and meet innovative ideas and passionate people, that gave us the perspective of the real life applications of the theoretical part. Regarding the content of the training, I found particularly interesting the module on how setting up a social enterprise and developing a social business model and a business plan combined with the start-up simulation of an enterprise to provide health and social cares. This approach was useful to get a better understanding of the requirements, implications, and barriers of the entrepreneurship process.

The last day focused on a general discussion and exchange on the participants and organizers learning and social experience, to understand the strengths and the potential limits of the training process, before receive our attendance certificate. I left with a positive feeling

and a much greater awareness of the importance of investing in social enterprise opportunities and innovative learning solutions, happy to have spent a week with friendly and interesting people in the beautiful city of Vilnius.