



## The Pilot Test of the Project Implementation is successfully concluded!

### TSITour - Training on Social Inclusion in Tourism, by including elderly people as local storytellers for the Tourism Industry

The TSITour Pilot Test of the Project Implementation is now concluded in Portugal, Spain, Greece and Italy. The partners met online on 18th November 2021 to discuss the results of the activities, the National Reports and the next steps towards the final publication - "VET Module on Project Development for Social Inclusion – Tourism as case study".

On November 18th, 2021, the TSITour partnership met online after the conclusion of the second stage of the Pilot activities. 32 VET students (5 students from Portugal, 13 from Italy, 2 from Greece and 12 from Spain), who attended the training course in the past months, presented their project ideas on social intervention and implemented them in order to promote the inclusion of the elderly through storytelling in the tourism sector.

The activity has been evaluated through questionnaires filled by all participants: elderly storytellers, representatives of social and tourism organizations and the students themselves, who self-assessed and have compiled evaluation reports.

Thanks to the assessment, the partnership will be able to understand if the goal of increasing the social inclusion of older people through storytelling in the tourism industry has been achieved, and if the students have a clearer knowledge of the role that older people have in nowadays communities, especially if linked to ancient stories and traditions that risk being forgotten.

So far, the feedback has been very positive both from the students and from the elderly people who participated in the activities.

The partner organizations will enclose the conclusions of their respective Pilot Tests in National Reports, which will also be useful for drawing the recommendations and lessons learned for the future.

#### Piloting experience to date:



The Portuguese pilot testing was carried out in June 2021 and involved 5 VET students, 4 social institutions and 4 tourism organizations. The experience of working face to face with the elders was the most gratifying part of the implementation for the involved students. They were eager to meet the elders and listen to their stories. Also, the fact that they contacted directly with social institutions was extremely important, because they gained a new understanding of how third age is perceived and understood, how their projects could create a significant impact in helping avoid their isolation and exclusion. The implementation phase not only allowed pupils to engage with the target group defined in their projects, but also contributed to their understanding of the necessities and the difficulties of such initiatives in the field. Students and elders alike emphasized that this was a valuable experience and underlined the significance that such activities had in their lives (either at personal or professional levels).



In Italy, the project ideas have been successfully implemented in October 2021 in Partinico. 13 VET students, divided in two groups, devised two itineraries that were followed by them with 5 elderly as tourist guides and with the support of the CSC staff and organizations active in the tourism and social sector:

- Partinico of the past: the students visited places of historical, geographical and cultural importance for the inhabitants of Partinico, linked to past events.
- Traditions of Partinico: the students visited places linked to folkloric and cultural traditions of the city of Partinico, of which the elderly storytellers have a large memory linked to events of their youth.

So far, the participants' feedback was very positive, and the activities have been a source of profound exchange and interaction between generations: the pilot activity was the perfect demonstration of how social and intergenerational inclusion can be a truly enriching experience. Moreover, it was an occasion for students to engage with elderly and understand the processes that lead to the realization of this kind of social inclusion initiatives.

In Spain the piloting of the TSITour Project was developed in May and June 2021 in the city of Zamora and in December 2021 in Madrid.

In Zamora the pilot implementation engaged 5 students who followed the TSITour course, and it took place in the Ethnographic Museum of Castilla y León, a public and regional museum which shows the evolution of the lifestyle in Castilla y León. 6 users of Peromato, an organization aiming at the social inclusion of vulnerable groups, aged between 67 and 80, visited the Museum and many of the objects exhibited brought back their childhood memories, which constituted the baseline to build up the stories to be told during the touristic visit. The students have found the experience very enriching, in fact 2 of them continued performing the storyteller's workshops in Peromato as volunteers. TSITour has been very successful in Zamora, all the participants are really satisfied, the project has become a daily activity of Peromato and it matches perfectly with the Museum purposes: it brings back to reality the traditions thanks to the living voices and stories of the elderly.



In Madrid, a visit to the Royal Palace of El Pardo was organized in December 2021. This place was the scenario of numerous significant moments in elderly participants' lifetime, and they wanted to share their memories under the framework of a touristic route. It was the chance to visit the Palace inside and outside, with the enriching information provided by the touristic guide, and the experiences shared by the elders, always assisted by the students who have guided them in the whole process. This day was the climax of more than 2 months working hand-in-hand with both students, elders and all the agents involved. As a result, it was a lovely journey through the History of Madrid, getting to know both the official version and how the elders lived in their own experience their lives in such a symbolic place.



The implementation of pilot testing took place in Greece from September to October 2021. Four persons over 65 years old became Local Storytellers and shared their stories about Athens. On the 7th of October, the storytelling session "Athens Stories: Through the memories of Local Storytellers 65+" was hosted at Serafeio City of Athens. The Local Storytellers told their stories about the most prominent church of Greece, Agios Panteleimonas; the region of Voula in the south of Athens; the old refugee neighbourhood of Kountouriotika in the centre of Athens; the area of Exarchia and the National Garden of Athens. Nineteen people attended the event, including students, social care organizations, tourism organizations, municipalities and the general public. Before the session, online preparatory meetings had occurred with the storytellers and the students that had received the TSITour Training Module in a previous phase. Finally, the event was very successful, and it received exceptional feedback from the participants and the audience that appreciated the opportunity of discovering older people's stories about Athens.



#### What's next?

The pilot phase of the training course in each partner country is now concluded. The objective was to reintegrate the elderly into the community by making them bearers of history, culture and traditions linked to local places, and, at the same time, to support the tourism sector by returning more authentic experiences to the tourists.

The results will be included in a final publication - VET Module on Project Development for Social Inclusion – Tourism as case study and disseminated at the European level as part of the project results.

#### Do you want to know more?

If you represent a vocational training institution in the social and / or tourism sector, a Small or Medium-sized enterprise in the tourism sector, a body engaged in social activities for the inclusion of the elderly, or you simply are interested in the project itself, we invite you to contact us via:



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