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Press Release

The Thessaloniki EKEK Centre for Persons with Disabilities participated successfully in the Erasmus+ project 'Aiming at Professional Independence'

The Educational Centre of Vocational Training for adolescents and young adults with Disabilities in Thessaloniki (Thessaloniki EKEK for Persons with Disabilities) collaborated with MOVEU PROFESSIONAL SERVICES SL based in Barcelona, Spain in the framework of a mobility project funded by the Erasmus+ programme.

The collaboration aimed to enhance the technical and vocational skills of the students of the Centre and also improve the quality of the offered services by studying the actions implemented by peer bodies in Barcelona.

A total of 16 students and 14 members of the teaching staff participated in the 18-months duration programme titled "Aiming at professional independence". Key issue of the exchange was the promotion of the students' vocational integration with the ultimate goal of supporting their professional and social independence and autonomy. The implemented visits in the context of the programme included the exchange of experiences with bodies such as Escola Fasia-Eixample (special school), Ilunion Hotel (hotel chain where at least 40% of the labour force belong to vulnerable social groups), Fundacio Badalona Capac (NGO promoting the employment of Persons with Disabilities, in partnership with large private companies such as ROCA), Fundacio Tallers (a private company active in the preparation and professional integration of persons with Disabilities), Institut Català de Musicoteràpia (music therapy centre for persons with Disabilities) and La Fageda (a social cooperative enterprise producing dairy and other products aiming to integrate persons with Disabilities into the labour market).

Furthermore, cultural activities and visits to neighbouring cities in Spain as well as visits to museums and cultural institutions were carried out to enable students to come in contact with the history, art and culture of Spain. In the framework of the programme DYPA Head of the Directorate General for Vocational Education and Training (VET), Eugenia Laina, and other executives from the Directorate of Vocational Training also took part in the activities.

DYPA aims to transform the Training Centre into a model of European excellence, providing students with opportunities to develop their skills through specialised educational activities and enabling them to feel independent, thus supporting their successful integration into society and the labour market. The programmes implemented in the framework of the Erasmus+ mobility projects offer students an additional opportunity to discover skills, personal aptitudes but also to explore new talents that they might not have realised they have until today.



Giving students additional responsibilities helps them reinforce their practical skills, and allows them to develop their own skills such as time management, communication skills within a group and decision making.

Furthermore, it is a challenge for the DYPA executives to identify the best practices from other countries in the approach of finding suitable jobs for the students of Vocational Education and Training Centres (KEPE Centres), combined with organised apprenticeship and internships programmes.

DYPA Deputy Governor, Gianna Hormova, stated: "DYPA consistently invests in actions that enhance equal opportunities and true inclusion. DYPA's participation in the "Aiming at Professional Independence" project is a solid proof of our commitment to empower persons with disabilities by offering them the necessary tools that will lead to their vocational and social independence. We upgrade the quality of the vocational training through international partnerships, thus expanding our students' horizon".