



# RESEARCH

About the categories of vulnerable people  
who are searching for a job in each area  
the partner organizations

**AUGUST 2024**





## **INTRODUCTION**

This research was realized during the implementation of the Erasmus+ Programme, KA220-VET - Cooperation partnerships in vocational education and training project “INCLUDE” with ID number 2023-1-RO01-KA220-VET-000160043, together with all the partner organizations from four EU countries: Romania, Italy, Spain and Ireland.

The project main objectives were to help vulnerable people to get employed by:

- Raising employers' awareness of the existing problems of vulnerable people such as NEETS and Ukrainian refugees in terms of the employment process
- Developing the organizational capacity of VET providers to prepare vulnerable people such as NEETS and Ukrainian refugees for integration into the modern labor market
- Increasing the degree of adaptation of vulnerable categories of employees such as NEETS and refugees to the rapid changes of the labor market.

In this research we identified the categories of vulnerable people who are searching for a job in each area the partner organizations and included data about needs of vulnerable people and refugees have, their qualification, the skills they have, skills they need, domains of the work they would prefer.



## **DESCRIBING PARTNERS**

- Each organization short info
- What kind of vulnerable people they have in their area

We started our research by presenting each partner organization profile and describing the the categories of vulnerable people who are searching for a job in each area the partner organizations.

### **ROMANIA**

#### **ASOCIATIA SOCIO-CULTURALA "SFANTUL IOAN BOTEZATORUL" BERBESTI**

Asociatia Socio-Culturala "Sfantul Ioan Botezatorul" Berbesti is a non-profit organization, created in 2010 by the priest from our local church "Sfantul Ioan Botezatorul" to provide help for the people in need. That is why the area of our activity is a very wide one, starting with social, volunteering work and offering educational support when needed. We identify the most urgent problems of the population in our town and try to offer them help and support. And since 2011 we also function as adult educational training organisation.

The organization is situated in a miner town in Sub Carpathian area in south-west of Romania. The mining was the main activity of the local people till the year 1995 when it started reducing its activity and personnel. A lot of people found themselves without job and any other qualification. The Mine is going to close their activity next year (so Authorities claim) leaving behind a lot of unemployed people.



Closing of the mine creates the following issues which need our active and urgent intervention:

- Lack of possibilities to find other jobs in the area. The closest town where people can seek for a job is 80km away;
- A large number of unemployed people, who were working at the mine for their entire life;
- Working their entire life in the mine those people were totally disconnected from the modern requirements of the labour market. They are not updated with the new forms of Curriculum Vitae, they lack digital skills, they are not aware of their own skills or abilities, they are disorientated and do not know where and how to start over.

All these reasons make unemployed people from our area our main target group.



## **MAKING ART SRL**

MAKING ART SRL is a commercial company with the main field of activity 9602 - Hairdressing and other beautification activities, and as secondary fields: 9602 - Body maintenance activities; 8559- Other forms of education

Founded in 2015, the company carried out its activity in a generous space of approximately 80 square meters (Celia salon) equipped with work points in the field of barbering, hairdressing, manicure, pedicure, cosmetics, massage. During the 8 years of activity, the company served approximately 2450 people who benefited from beautification services.

Currently, the company has 4 employees with a work contract of 8 hours/day and 6 collaborators for all the services offered in the field: hairdressing, barbershop, manicure, pedicure, beautician, massage technician, makeup artist.

MAKING ART SRL also organized during the period 2015-2024 various internships with adult professional training collaborators in the field of beautification, thus approximately 520 beneficiaries obtained qualifications in various occupations such as hairdresser, barber, manicurist, pedicurist. , beautician, massage technician, make-up artist.

MAKING ART SRL is also authorized for consulting and project management.

In the period 2020-2024, the need for labor in the field of beautification has become deeper due to the consequences created by COVID 19 as well as the war situation in Ukraine, so that many employers have called on the services of refugees from this country as well as the retraining of young unemployed people remain without a job.



Making ART SRL collaborated during this period with various employers for the training, counseling and mediation of this target group in order to employ them in the field.

More than 520 people - of which approximately 45% from among the young unemployed NEETS and/or the long-term unemployed and 6% from the Roma minority - have so far benefited from the services offered by MAKING ART SRL

The main dominant category of vulnerable groups in our area are NEETS young people, young people who want to work in the beauty field.



## **IRELAND**

### **DANNY'S PIZZERIA RESTAURANT AND TAKEAWAY LTD.**

DANNY'S pizzeria restaurant is a family owned traditional fish & chips in the town in central Ireland named Athlone, located by the River Shannon in Co. Westmeath.

Athlone has a population of approx. 25000 people and it has all the facilities that you would associate with a large town, ie. shopping facilities, night entertainment and of course eating out. Athlone is part of County Westmeath which has an area of 710 square miles and a population of almost 62.000 people. Athlone offers a great opportunity for tourists to spend their holidays in a pleasant way visiting Castles, Shannon River cruises and more.

Danny's Pizzeria, Restaurant and Takeaway Limited was set up on Friday the 12th of October 2018, has 2 shareholders, the status is Normal and the Principal Activity is [8690] Other Human Health Activities and is trading as Danny's Pizzeria Restaurant and Takeaway LTD having us as Company Directors: Daniel V. Bolos-Ciocan and Felicia-A Bolos-Ciocan. We have started working in the pizzeria & restaurant field 14 years ago as employee and slowly we took over a pizzeria business and we have created our own customer base. We are offering a variety of food in our menu such as: traditional fish & chips, burgers, pizza, kebabs, finger food, deserts. Our customers have the options to sit down and enjoy the food in the premises, to order for collection take away or to order home food delivery through phone or online orders. Quality and customer service leads us to results, as happy customers is our main goal and we are open to learn and explore from other business owners. We have over 14 years' food business experience, our staff is well trained, at the moment we have 5 staff and during our busy seasons we also hire extra staff to rich high customer service.



What kind of vulnerable people we have in our area?

There are a variety of vulnerable people in our area but our main target are Roma people, so the category of vulnerable people that we have decided to work with in our area Athlone, co. Westmeath, Ireland are Roma people. In general, people have a miss conception about Roma, a lot of them are willing to work but they are finding it very hard as no one will hire them, so that's why we have decided to try to help them.

The Roma people are a significant ethnic minority, they are subject of severe discrimination, social exclusion, and poverty. Due to their deplorable living conditions, isolation, and widespread antigipsism, Roma are among the most affected category in our area that we have decided to work with.

Roma face housing discrimination, work access discrimination, lack of access to mortgages and loans, high housing coast, overcrowding, lack of improved forms of sanitation, insecurity of tenure, evictions, and territorial isolation. High unemployment and informal jobs are characteristic of this population. Roma families frequently live from day to day and survive without protection by engaging in precarious, frequently irregular activities. Most of the jobs are informal, short-term activities that belong to the informal economy. Roma encounters several barriers to accessing long-term jobs, discrimination and negative attitudes from professionals, cultural misunderstanding, language barriers and low levels of literacy. For the reasons mentioned above we will work with this category of vulnerable people, trying to eliminate the barriers to employment and create a diverse workplace for Roma ethnic minority in our local community.





## **SPAIN**

### **ASOCIACIÓN DE LAS MUJERES DE EUROPA**

"Association of Emigrant Women in Europe" is a non-profit association located in Silla, Valencia.

The organization "Association of Emigrant Women in Europe", implemented in 2021, aimed to support and empower the migrant women female migrants in different life aspects by creating spaces for dialogue and exchange with total respect to rights and the principals of equality.

We help them to find their own role in the community through a creative integration plan, such as: language lessons, identifying women's integration skills, identifying job-specific skills, challenging oppressive and discriminatory actions and attitudes, enrolling in vocational courses.

We are preparing social inclusion through cultural awareness trainings, we are supporting and promoting a close interaction between women of the host and migrant societies. Our organization has 3 members and 10 volunteers.

Association of Emigrant Women in Europe" supports women refugees in their search for work and helps them integrate into society.

We mainly work with migrant communities in Valencia and refugees from all over the world.



## **ITALY**

### **C.O.G.E.M.**

COGEM is a consortium of small and medium-sized businesses operating in the communication and marketing sector, integrating graphic and multimedia creation. The purpose of the consortium is to promote the growth of associated companies through professional updating activities connected to the implementation of technological and process innovations imposed by rapid changes in all aspects of the company. During the years of its activity, it has supported SMEs in opening up to an international approach by organizing numerous missions in European countries, contributing to the development of cooperation activities in the economic field and exchange of information and good practices in process innovation. In over twentyfive years of activity, it has developed useful and necessary skills to offer services and consultancy in various fields to the associated companies. The organization has also designed developed and implemented formal and informal local and national training actions for the updating and qualification of employed and unoccupied in the sector, using various national and european programmes (P.O.R., FSE, IFTS).

The Consortium also operated in Europe through the promotion, coordination and participation in actions co-financed by the european programmes: ADAPT II, LDV pilot and LFL Doi and Toi, Culture,Creative Europe, Erasmus +.

To present a brief overview of the project activities of the Consortium we list the main projects carried out that have produced a significant impact on the beneficiaries , attention in the topics covered and in the results produced: (ADAPT action): Edigraform(coordinator), Generation Bridge(coordinator)-(LDV \_pilot action): Forcrest, Engineering of Risks Management (coordinator), Siloghraphic, ConsultinEurope-( Lifelong Learning-DOI): Eucomen-(European Communication of Enterprises)(coordinator)- ( Culture):



Chindeu – (China-India-Europe Cooperation), Studite, Red – (Creative Europe): EDS. It supported the development and implementation of the Erasmus + project: Home Budget Management which has developed an educational system for adults based on e-learning supported by the serious-games technique. It supports also the development of other ongoing Erasmus + projects: "BETTER BAKERS READY FOR AN EUROPEAN MARKET" - "SWEEP - (Select Waste for the EU Eco-system Protection)"- BioBakers.

Nowadays the presence of people without primary education, marginalized by the lack of employment and refugees from Africa has grown more and more, joined by refugees from areas directly or indirectly involved in the Ukrainian war is an important problem to face.

In Italy, these dynamics are carefully followed by the competent public institutions: government, regions, municipalities and local communities, but they are not sufficient to address the problem in a complete and satisfactory way. Private organizations are added to public ones, in particular aimed at training and integrating needy and vulnerable categories. In the area of interest of COGEM (Centro Sud-Molise), activities have been developed that also count on the support or direct participation of our organization.

The National Association “ Dante Alighieri” with its local organization promotes the inclusion of refugees through linguistic support or territorial information and by issuing formal certifications of Basic Linguistic Skills "PLIDA" to obtain residence permits and or citizenship ".

The Red Cross also organizes information and health training events on important issues. The Red Cross's activity is national but is managed and organized at a local level.



The CEI (Italian Episcopal Conference) coordinates local centers and voluntary associations in a structured way, providing assistance and help in various forms, such as ,to local vulnerable categories:

- assistance to the unemployed or older retired in difficulty to obtain the provision of mini-loans without guarantees: (Diocesan Caritas);
- assistance to groups of people with reduced mobility (daily shopping-handling formal procedures for documentation and certifications, including health care): ( Ass;; San Vincenzo);
- help to local homeless people by providing a meal and a bed to the most needy: (Assoc. Shomer).

Our organization solicits and supports organizations from various municipalities in Molise that are active in the theme and towards the target groups.



## COMMON POINTS

- Vulnerable people we have in common
- Strategies we are going to adopt

### **1. Vulnerable People We Have in Common**

Despite different national and local contexts, the research revealed a high degree of similarity in the profiles of vulnerable people seeking employment in all partner areas. The most relevant common categories are:

**NEETs** (young people not in education, employment or training), often with low or medium qualification levels, limited work experience, weak digital skills, and low self-confidence. Many of them are disconnected from formal education and lack clear career orientation.

**Refugees and migrants**, including Ukrainian refugees and migrants from non-EU countries, facing language barriers, lack of recognition of qualifications, limited knowledge of labour market rules, and social isolation.

**Long-term unemployed adults**, especially people previously employed in declining sectors (e.g. mining or low-skilled services), who struggle to adapt to modern labour market requirements.

**Ethnic minorities**, particularly Roma communities, affected by discrimination, precarious living conditions, low literacy levels, and restricted access to stable employment.

**Women in vulnerable situations**, especially migrant and refugee women, facing multiple barriers related to language, childcare



responsibilities, cultural constraints, and limited access to training opportunities.

Across all partner countries, these groups share common challenges: low employability, insufficient digital competences, limited access to guidance and counselling, lack of work-based learning opportunities, and reduced interaction with employers.

## **2. Strategies We Are Going to Adopt (Long-Term Perspective)**

Based on the comparative analysis carried out in the partner countries and on the direct experience of all partner organisations, a set of common long-term strategies was identified. These strategies respond to structural challenges faced by vulnerable people and aim to strengthen the institutional capacity, sustainability, and impact of organisations working with disadvantaged groups.

### **2.1. Integrated Support Strategies for Vulnerable People**

Partner organisations will adopt holistic support models that combine vocational guidance, basic skills development, psychosocial support, and labour market mediation. Vulnerability is rarely limited to lack of skills; therefore, long-term strategies will integrate counselling, confidence-building, language support, and mentoring alongside training. This integrated approach will remain a core organisational practice beyond the project.

### **2.2. Continuous Cooperation with Employers**

All partners will maintain and expand stable cooperation frameworks with employers, especially in the service sector. Employers will be involved not only at recruitment stage but also in training design, internships, and follow-up support. Long-term strategies include regular employer roundtables, feedback



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mechanisms, and awareness actions to promote inclusive  
recruitment and retention of vulnerable workers.

### **2.3. Development of Work-Based Learning Pathways**

Organisations will continue to prioritise work-based learning as a key strategy for inclusion. Internships, practical stages, and on-the-job training will be systematically integrated into future programmes, allowing vulnerable people to acquire real experience, understand workplace culture, and build employability through practice rather than theory alone.

### **2.4. Strengthening Digital and Transversal Skills**

Given the persistent digital divide among vulnerable groups, partners will embed basic digital competence development as a permanent component of their activities. Digital literacy, online job search, and communication skills will be combined with transversal skills such as teamwork, adaptability, time management, and problem-solving.

### **2.5. Individualised and Flexible Learning Pathways**

Partner organisations will implement personalised learning and integration pathways, adapted to individual needs, educational background, cultural context, and life situation. Flexibility in duration, pace, and methods will remain a guiding principle, ensuring accessibility for people with low qualifications, language barriers, or previous negative learning experiences.

### **2.6. Long-Term Use of Developed Tools and Resources**

All materials developed during the project (training courses, guides, brochures, methodologies) will be integrated into the regular activity of partner organisations. These resources will be updated and reused in future projects, trainings, and counselling activities, ensuring sustainability and continuous improvement.





## **2.7. Transnational Learning and Networking**

The partnership experience demonstrated the value of transnational cooperation. Partners will continue to exchange practices, methodologies, and experiences through future Erasmus+ projects and informal cooperation. This strategy ensures innovation, benchmarking, and constant adaptation to labour market changes.

## **2.8. Advocacy and Awareness-Raising**

In the long term, organisations will strengthen their role as advocates for vulnerable people, contributing to local and regional debates on inclusion, employment, and social cohesion. Awareness-raising actions targeting employers, institutions, and communities will remain a strategic priority to reduce discrimination and stereotypes.

## **Conclusion**

These strategies form a shared long-term vision for partner organisations working with vulnerable people. Developed during the project but designed for sustained implementation, they ensure that the project's impact extends well beyond its lifetime, contributing to inclusive labour markets, resilient organisations, and improved life opportunities for vulnerable groups across Europe.





## HOW WE CAN DO IT?

Below is a **developed and operationalised chapter** presenting **long-term strategies** for partner organisations working with vulnerable people, followed by **concrete activities** that can be implemented beyond the project lifetime. The text is suitable for inclusion in the “**Common Points – Strategies we are going to adopt**” chapter of the research.

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### 2. Strategies We Are Going to Adopt

#### **Long-term organisational strategies for working with vulnerable people**

The partner organisations agreed that sustainable impact requires **long-term, structured strategies** that go beyond short-term projects. The following strategies were jointly identified during the project and are designed to be **institutionalised and implemented continuously** by organisations working with vulnerable groups such as NEETs, refugees, Roma people, long-term unemployed adults, and low-skilled jobseekers.

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#### **Strategy 1: Continuous Labour Market-Oriented Needs Assessment**

##### **Description**

Organisations working with vulnerable people must continuously update their understanding of beneficiaries’ needs, skills gaps, and labour market trends. Vulnerability is dynamic, influenced by



economic change, migration flows, technological development,  
and regional employment opportunities.

### Concrete activities

- Annual or biannual **local labour market surveys** involving employers, employment agencies, and vulnerable jobseekers
- Regular **focus groups with beneficiaries** to identify emerging barriers (digital skills, language, mobility, childcare, discrimination)
- Creation of a **local vulnerability database** tracking profiles, skills, training needs, and employment outcomes
- Periodic updates of internal training curricula based on collected data

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## Strategy 2: Strengthening Individualised Guidance and Counselling

### Description

Vulnerable people often require personalised support rather than standardised training. Long-term employability depends on guidance that considers personal history, motivation, cultural background, and psychosocial barriers.

### Concrete activities

- Introduction of **individual employability plans** for each beneficiary
- Regular **one-to-one counselling sessions** focused on career orientation, confidence building, and goal setting



- Training staff in **trauma-informed and intercultural counselling methods**

- Development of mentoring programmes pairing beneficiaries with trained staff or volunteers

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### **Strategy 3: Systematic Cooperation with Employers**

#### **Description**

Sustainable labour market integration requires long-term partnerships with employers, not occasional contact. Organisations should position themselves as **mediators between vulnerable people and the labour market**.

#### **Concrete activities**

- Establishment of **local employer networks** in key sectors (services, hospitality, beauty, care, retail)
- Regular **employer roundtables** on inclusive recruitment and workforce diversity
- Co-design of **short work-based learning modules** with employers
- Organisation of **company visits, job shadowing, and practical stages** on a permanent basis

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### **Strategy 4: Embedding Digital Skills and Digital Inclusion**

#### **Description**

Digital exclusion is one of the strongest barriers to employment. Organisations must integrate digital skills as a **cross-cutting priority**, regardless of the vocational field.

#### **Concrete activities**



- Permanent **basic digital skills workshops** (CV writing, mail, job portals, online applications)

### Strategy 6: Promoting Empowerment and Active Participation of Beneficiaries



## Description

Vulnerable people should not be passive recipients of support but active participants in their integration process. Empowerment increases sustainability and motivation.

### Concrete activities

- Inclusion of beneficiaries in **co-designing training activities**
  - Organisation of **peer-support groups** among vulnerable participants
  - Encouraging beneficiaries to act as **role models or ambassadors** after employment
  - Supporting civic engagement activities (volunteering, community events, intercultural dialogue)
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### Strategy 7: Ensuring Sustainability through Partnerships and Funding Diversification

#### Description

Long-term work with vulnerable people requires diversified resources and stable partnerships beyond EU project funding.

#### Concrete activities

- Development of **local partnerships** with municipalities, employment services, NGOs, and social enterprises
- Application for **national, regional, and private funding** to complement EU funds
- Integration of successful project tools into **regular organisational services**



- Creation of social economy activities (training services, mediation services, consultancy for employers)
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## Conclusion

By adopting these strategies and implementing the proposed activities, partner organisations will strengthen their **long-term capacity to support vulnerable people**, increase employability outcomes, and ensure sustainability well beyond the project duration. These strategies transform project results into **permanent organisational practices**, reinforcing inclusion, adaptability, and resilience in a changing labour market.





**Erasmus+ Programme – KA220-VET - Cooperation  
partnerships in vocational education and training**

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