

THRIVE – Training Hope, wellbeing and Resilience In Vulnerable Early school leavers

Partners: Ireland, Romania, Malta, Italy, Austria

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The aim of the THRIVE project is to combine the principles, methods and techniques of positive psychology, trauma sensitivity, and emotional literacy, and create an open-access online course for educators working with early school leavers (ESLs). The course will help educators to increase their competencies in addressing the priority emotional and social learning needs of ESLs, and help these vulnerable young people gain the skills they need to benefit from education, training and employment opportunities.

Taken collectively, the evidence strongly suggests that a training programme based on resilience, well-being, and best practice approaches to mitigating the effects of trauma, will enhance the learning experiences of ESLs. More importantly, positive learning experiences will increase their ability to benefit from future educational, training and employment opportunities, and promote their personal resilience and wellbeing.

The THRIVE project aims to build on this evidence base by initially conducting a literature review in each partner country which looks at relevant research, reports, and publications to identify the best practice approaches to increasing the well being and resilience of ESLs in educational settings. The literature review will be followed by an analysis of needs, using focus groups and a national online survey, which will capture the lived experience of educators working with ESLs, and determine what their current needs are, and how they can be met at a practical level. Focus groups will also be conducted with the ESLs themselves, to ensure that their voice is heard in this programme and that their priority needs are met. The partners' national reports, generated from the literature review and field research, will be consolidated into a single report, collating and documenting best practice in the area, both in Europe and internationally, and providing a valuable resource on the topic that can be used by educators

across Europe.

On the basis of the findings of the consolidated report, a draft training programme will be created by the project partners, with each taking responsibility for drafting a module most suited to their experience and expertise. The programme will feature practical activities, tools, and resources based around creating trauma sensitive educational environments, facilitating emotional regulation, and approaches from positive psychology such as - character strengths, social skills, resilience, communication skills, team-work, critical thinking, self-awareness and self motivation. When the modules of the draft THRIVE programme are complete, a 'train the trainers' workshop will be held, where each partner will present the material they created, and be trained in the other modules of the programme. In this way all partners will be fully able to present the entire programme in their own countries, and any issues around comprehension or applicability can be addressed directly.

A pilot of the THRIVE programme will be carried out in each partner country following the train the trainer meeting, and a panel of educators working with ESLs will be recruited to trial the programme and give feedback on its content and delivery. Based on the consolidated feedback from the pilot, any additional edits to the THRIVE programme will be implemented and a final version created. This final version will be hosted online in a dedicated learning platform, linked to the THRIVE website, and will be openly accessible by educators across Europe. This online platform will be publicised by the consortium using various dissemination channels, including multiplier events, conferences and digital and social media, as well as through the professional networks of each of the partners.

The THRIVE educational platform will remain live and active after the project has been completed and it is anticipated that it will grow and expand over time with up to date resources, activities, and interactions between educators across Europe. The programme coordinators (ICEP Europe) will also encourage educators working with ESLs to become the ambassadors of the THRIVE programme, to foster positivity and increase the resilience, wellbeing, and social and emotional competencies of ESLs, and help them benefit from educational, training and employment opportunities.