



# Erasmus+



## **GUIDELINES**

**2015-1-IT02-KA204-014787**

**"Proposals and Strategies for Women  
Entrepreneurs"**

**Cooperation for innovation and the exchange  
of good practices  
Strategic Partnerships for adult education**

# The project

The Pro.Women (Proposals and Strategies for Women Entrepreneurs) is a project funded by the European Commission under the Erasmus + programme (KA 2 - Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices, Strategic Partnership for Adult Education). The project is a transnational initiative involving eight organizations of 8 European countries: Italy, Spain, Greece, Macedonia, Cyprus, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Croatia.

Following the Europe 2020 strategy and the ET2020 strategy, the Pro.Women project has created innovative, productive and effective synergies through a formative experience both personally and professionally.

The project intends at new interesting proposals and strategies to help mothers in realizing their own Home Based Businesses.

The project is aimed at a particular target group, women with children, who are seeking their own professional fulfilment and they are confronting with a double difficulty, to find a job and to reconcile work and family.

The economic crisis of the last few years does not seem to give signs of improvement in terms of employment. As evidence of this, is the slow economic recovery announced for 2015, that does not seem to give signs of improvement on the labour front.

Technological advances in recent decades have made working at home easier and more feasible. There are other benefits (cost-related, career development, etc.), but more important is the opportunity to spend more time with family and be present in the growth of children.

Due to the abovementioned current economic and financial crisis, the difficulty of finding a job for women who are also mothers, is added to the commitment of reconciling domestic and family life with work.

Many researches carried out in different European countries show a problematic situation for women:

- High Rate of unemployment, worsened by the fact that many women who don't work are not even registered as unemployed,
- Many women leave the job in order to make grow their children, unable to bear the excessive costs of childcare and babysitting,

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-Women who intend to start a business are disadvantaged if compared to men in obtaining necessary funding,

- Businesses created by women are less competitive and less innovative than the male ones.

The project has been providing valuable assistance to women-mothers, addressing the double problem of unemployment and the need to balance work with family, through a targeted training that has given them the skills necessary to promote female entrepreneurship.

We aim with this project to give continuity to the work carried out, conscious of the need to make our contribution in order to decrease unemployment, increasing professionalism and competence.

This project is designed, primarily, with the aim of increasing employment, encouraging cooperation and lifelong learning by developing skills such as' entrepreneurship, digital competence, multilingualism.

## The objectives

The project is designed primarily with the aim of increasing employment, encouraging cooperation and lifelong learning by developing skills such as entrepreneurship, digital competence, multilingualism.

The specific objectives, which aims to reach, are the ones to allow to acquire with firmness and conviction to the participants and potential entrepreneurs appropriate methodologies and working tools in order to achieve an occupation from home by creating qualified figures.

First and foremost, a viable strategy has been intended in order to increase skills for the target group women-mothers” who wants to combine work and family life by finding appropriate solutions as Home Based Business.

In addition, the promotion of the linguistic diversity and the intercultural awareness of the European Union were within the main objectives.

Nowadays, investing on women, on their training and specialization, in the current critical context that involves the whole national and international economy, appears to be a proper solution to support employment, local and national economy and, specifically, to support families who may rely on an additional income, a lower risk of poverty, more time for educating and raise children.

By using an informal method and focusing on the direct involvement of the participants, the project aims to increase the sense of initiative and entrepreneurship and to provide women with the personal, professional and linguistic growth they will need in order to become successful professionals and managers. The Pro-Women project allows mothers to acquire and develop social, civic and intercultural, linguistic and professional skills, which are the basis of an entrepreneurial This project has been funded with support from the European Commission under the Erasmus+ Programme. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

mindset and behavior. The participants are expected to be sensitized on the topic of self-employment and entrepreneurship as possible career choices.

As a consequence, the participants will get strengthened in their professional life. It is expected that they will implement the acquired skills in the workplace and that they will transmit them to their personal and working environment.

## Activities

In order to achieve the objectives, an efficient strategy plan has been implemented by the partners within the 2 years of duration of the project.

The preparatory phase lasted for six months and included the following activities:

Sector study and market analysis concerning the employment situation nowadays,

the European policies to support entrepreneurship and the entrepreneurial realities present in the participating countries with focus on the businesses carried at home by women operating in sectors such as manufacturing, catering, web-marketing, with a view of green economy.

The implementation phase that followed and had duration of four months, consisted of a research activity, interviews and visits to companies. In this phase the participants were enabled to search for experiences of successful entrepreneurial activities based at home.

The classroom training was next in the activity row. It included the development of three basic modules, i.e. Catering version eco-compatible; Crafts-manufacturing environmentally sustainable; Green Web marketing and was based on basic business knowledge. A small group of 15-25 women with children had the chance to attend the training in classroom.

After the completion of the classroom training, the learners women participated in an e-learning course with theoretical and practical instruction on the skills necessary for new enterprises, challenges and opportunities including tools for problem-solving.

During the follow-up-impact activities there will be an effort so as to assess the impact of the project for the participating organizations and the beneficiaries. It is expected that the project will have a real and concrete impact into the acquisition of knowledge and new skills for employability for the participants and the realization of a European network for participating organizations aimed at capacity building and necessary skills to promote their transnational cooperation.

An important added value of the project towards a more intensive European cooperation is going to be provided by the presence of four participants per country during the transnational meeting to be held in Greece. The mobility of the learners will give them the opportunity to participate in round tables that allow to exchange experiences, opinions, ideas, and establish business  
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partnerships. Taking part in the transnational meeting the participants will gain greater ability to work in teams; greater confidence in speaking a foreign language, increasing its interest in other languages and idiomatic expressions. Additionally, they will develop a greater inclination to intercultural relations.

One of the most important parts of the project is the dissemination. The results of the project are disseminated across Europe using a database of materials and e-books with open licenses. Moreover, a series of multiplier events will be organised in each partner country in order to present the intellectual products created in the project.

In conclusion, the evaluation of the project will indicate whether the objectives were met and the results were satisfying.

## Partners

### GIOVANI PER L'EUROPA



Giovani per l'Europa is a no-profit organization in social benefit. It was founded in 2006 by some young people having heterogeneous formative and professional courses. The focus of the association is to make known the various European and extra European cultures, so that there is an democrat and mutual exchange among the different people. In the frameworks of LLP and Erasmus plus Giovani per l'Europa specialize in the organization and management of every aspect of work experience and exchange projects funded by the European Commission under Erasmus plus for all key.

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### MAD FOR EUROPE



MAD for Europe is an international organization established as a reference training institution in Madrid. We are active in the labour market and in the fields of education, training and youth; specialized in Cultural development, European mobility projects, Intercultural and linguistic Learning and we operate with National and European programs. Our mission is to contribute to the

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evolution and social inclusion of all human beings by providing educational experiences that are part of a lifelong learning process, on issues of development, vocational training and social improvement, with particular attention to the condition of young people, women and vulnerable groups.

MAD for Europe

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## INFORMO



Informo is a non-profit organization working to encourage employment through various forms of education, organization of seminars and consultations. As a non-profit organization, Informo acts with an aim to improve the life conditions of the Croatian citizens in various areas with a special attention to the youth and the unemployed.

In addition, Informo performs consultations in regards to preparation and implementation of projects which apply for national and international funding (EU, UN, and others) and the implementation and evaluation of projects financed by EU funds, providing information services on the EU options, and other consulting services.

Informo

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## ECQ



European Center for Quality was established in 2001 in Sofia, Bulgaria as limited liability company specializing in several directions: development and management of EU funded projects; development and implementation of Management systems; consulting services to the Bulgarian

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SMEs with regard to increasing their own competitiveness and productivity; business analyses and marketing surveys; preparation of reports for different economic sectors or companies.

We have 15-year professional consultancy experience in cooperation with business unions, municipalities, enterprises, consulting companies, educational and university institutions, training centers, NGOs under 152 different national and European projects.

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## LINGUA



The school of foreign languages Lingua was founded in 2004 in Bitola, Macedonia, and has since been one of the leading language teaching schools. It was established on the basis of the tested needs of a target group of foreign language learners. The main intention of our school is to teach foreign languages to young and adult learners corresponding with their needs and specific requests. With that being said, we employ capable and professional teachers who are experts in their field. These teachers incorporate adequate approaches in accordance to our learners' age, level of knowledge, time and needs which later produces great results. In addition to English, our school offers courses in French, Italian, Spanish, German and Macedonian for foreign learners.

We consider the inter-cultural approach of learning and teaching crucial in order to give a European dimension to the adult language courses and make the learning process more creative. According to us, it's imperative to be permanently in touch with the culture whose language is being taught.

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## EUROSUCCESS CONSULTING

Eurosuccess Consulting was established in late 2009, by Mr Giorgos Giorgakis. The main objective and purpose of the organization is to inform and support, individuals and organizations on how to obtain funding, through the various opportunities available from EU and national schemes and programs. By exploiting these funding opportunities, enables the creation, development and implementation of the strategic objectives, which will aid towards meeting their operational needs.

First and foremost task of our organization is the continuous qualitative and quantitative improvement of our offered services towards our clients. Meanwhile, Eurosuccess Consulting has extensive experience in relation to coordinating and managing National and European research projects.

Based on all of the above, Eurosuccess Consulting may participate in consortiums and support to the maximum extent possible the desired approval and consequently the successful implementation of such proposals. The Organization is associated with a wide range of partners (research institutions and businesses, Universities, non-profit organizations etc.), from various EU countries, who at any time are able to support and assist at any request, depending on the nature and needs of each proposal individually. Furthermore, Eurosuccess Consulting is accredited as a VET Center from the Human Resource Authority of Cyprus.

## EUROSUCCESS CONSULTING

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## SOCIALINIŲ INOVACIJŲ FONDAS- SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND

Social Innovation Fund was started in 1994 and became recognized as an extremely effective Lithuanian non-governmental organization working in many different spheres such as democracy building, women's human rights, gender equality and diversity, as well as social inclusion of socially disadvantaged groups (unemployed, disabled, immigrants, youth-drug users, women survivors of domestic violence, trafficking and prostitution, etc.).

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During more than twenty years, the SIF has been involved in more than 50 different national, European and international projects partnering with NGOs from many countries. We have been and are involved in many projects aimed at increasing employability options to target groups as well helping our target groups to recognize and pursue new entrepreneurial opportunities including social entrepreneurship and starting new enterprises. As the Coordinator for several European projects, in 2010 we began exploring the possibility to invite partners from the USA to join our European partnerships to enrich our activities and outcomes and share their expertise.

Nowadays the Social Innovation Fund is seeking for implementation of social innovations through the creating Social clusters (including International social clusters). The idea of Social cluster means fostering cooperation between the political, governmental, scientific, private and non-governmental organizations in order to solve the specific problems in the fields of the public interests and societal gain, such as promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities, women's empowerment, social welfare and well-being at workplaces, overcoming unemployment, social rehabilitation and social integration of the vulnerable groups, violation of women human rights, violence against women, trafficking, etc.

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## **N.G.O. CIVIS PLUS**



N.G.O. CIVIS PLUS was founded in 2011 and it was established in January 2012 with the aim of fighting against social exclusion, poverty, social inequality, as well as protecting the natural and social environment, thus contributing to the endeavours of Civil Society towards social prosperity and sustainability.

N.G.O. CIVIS PLUS is a non-governmental and non-profit organization, i.e. it is a legally constituted organization operated by legal persons acting independently from any government to which the distribution of any profit is explicitly forbidden. The organization has the status of a private legal entity of a non-profit character, according to the articles 741-784 of the Civil Code. It operates adopting the International Non Governmental Organizations Accountability Charter, which enforces transparency and audit in the actions of non-governmental organizations around the world. It is run by an elected Board of Directors in office for two years.

Purpose of N.G.O. CIVIS PLUS is the creation of programs of humanitarian and public benefit actions having as their object the defence of human rights regardless of race, nationality, gender, creed and cultural background as described by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

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In particular, purposes of the organisation are:

- The creation of programs against poverty, unemployment and social marginalisation.
- The creation of programs with the aim of promoting and deepening the concepts of Democracy, Freedom and the European ideal.
- The creation of programs to support and protect immigrants, refugees and asylum-seekers in Greece. The defence of the rights of people from third countries entitled to protection in our country as well as their smooth integration into Greek society. The creation of programs against racism of every kind. The offer of support for repatriation procedures to citizens of third world countries willing to go back to their native countries.
- The supply of urgent humanitarian, food and development aids to the population of developing countries through actions contributing to their economical and social growth, particularly in the fields of health, education, basic social infrastructures, as well as to the strengthening of their institutions and to the promotion of the respect of human rights.
- The creation of programs to promote equality between the two genders according to the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discriminations against Women of the UN.
- The creation of programs for the enhancement of quality of life and for the protection of social and natural environment.

N.G.O. CIVIS PLUS is a member of the Anna Lindh Foundation Network, of the YINFO Network and of the International Platform for Citizen Participation. For the promotion of its charitable purposes, the organisation works with entities, organisations, University Foundations, European and International organisations.

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## **History and Traditions related to women in each partner country**

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## ITALY

In Italy during the Middle ages, Italian women were considered to have very few social power and resources, although some widows inherited ruling positions from their husbands. Educated women could find opportunities of leadership only in religious convents . The Renaissance (15th–16th centuries) challenged conventional customs from the Medieval period. Women were still confined to the roles of "monaca, moglie, serva, cortigiana" ("nun, wife, servant, courtesan")



Women have been for decades, along with older people and children, invisible subjects in the world of work. In the past, women began to work at a young age, they had lesser aspirations, a lower level of education than men, and work was mostly lived as a transitory experience.

In the past woman was an accessory of the breadwinner (father or husband). In the 1865 Family Code, women had no right to exercise custody over legitimate children, nor the right to be admitted to public offices. Women, whether married, could not handle the money earned with their work, because that belonged to her husband.

In the early 1980s, women started to work very young and left the labor market very soon when they started a family and had children.

Over the last 27 years the pattern of women's participation in the labor market has changed profoundly, both with the increase in the rate of female activity and with the moving forward in the years of entry into the labor market and the definitive exit.

Today, the Italian woman is approaching the world of work at a more advanced age, with a high level of education, with expectations certainly higher and with the intention of not abandoning work before retiring. New female subjectivity emerges in all ages, even in the elderly. The female universe has become a highly heterogeneous and dynamic age: women are more invested in culture than men, they are better at studying, they give greater emphasis to work than they are in the past, they have a multiplicity of roles in different phases of life , They have more complex and jagged life paths.

In Italy less than one woman on two is occupied (46.1%). The European average distance (58.2%) is over 12 percentage points. In the regions of the South, female workers are less than one third (30.5%).

The employment rate of Italian women graduates is the lowest among all countries of European Union.

Although female employees account for 41.5% of the total number of employees, women with managerial qualifications are only 12.9%

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A plot of transformations, aspirations and behaviors that redefines their biographical traits (formative, working, affective, conjugal), altering the amplitude and content of the different phases of the individual and family life cycle. Thanks to the long march in the education that brought them from a disadvantageous situation to overtaking in all the orders of study, and after entering with determination in traditionally male courses, women also affirm themselves in the cultural and new fields of Technologies. Work, becoming an increasingly important aspect of female identity, has seen the growing number of women employed, their involvement in all types of work (including shifts, night work, evening and Sunday work), improving so their job position.

However, there remain some critical areas of concern:

- In the transition to school-work women find work later, are worse paid and continue to be less satisfied with the type of job they find;
- The barriers to access to the labor market with particular reference to family workloads;
- In the interruption of work at the same time as the birth of the children;
- The strong difficulties of access to high decision-making roles;
- In the disadvantaged socio-economic situation of older women.

## SPAIN

The history of women in Spain has evolved a lot, although it has yet to evolve more, already in the prehistory and age of iron, demonstrated its role, important but always in the shadow of man. As in Greece, in the Iberian era, society was very sexist and women were limited to being at home, taking care of their children and being for the husband. Already in Rome has something more evolution and is allowed to go to public events such as religious and theater. In the Middle Ages, the role will also be null, but at the end of this period, in the second half of the fifteenth century, there is a rebound, the woman can go to college, become more independent and read and write, Santa Teresa de Jesus will be an example of a woman fighter, for her rights, the role of women will again be in the shadow until the nineteenth century.



We go back to the process that from the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries demanded a new social status for a group that always used to be left aside, the feminine.

In the Second Republic, legal equality between the two sexes was founded, in 1933 women obtained the right to vote, the right to divorce and parental authority over their children, then women began to make themselves visible on the streets and in the streets. Public life, as shown by the presence in the Cortes of some deputies.

During the Spanish Civil War, on the Republican side, the ideal of the independent and emancipated "new woman" was advocated. .

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Rationing and the precarious economic situation, due to the absence of the head of the family, forced women to increase their occupations, but also to develop their independence. In this sense within Republican Spain, many women positively valued the incorporation to the work outside the home, thus broke with the monotony of the tasks that were imposed to them according to the sort.

In Spain since the 1960s, important groups of women organized themselves as

Feminist movements and opposition to the regime.

These groups were very visible in the transition and their demands are incorporated in the political agenda.

The Democratic

The Women (MDM), created in 1965 and linked to the Communist Party of Spain, was one of the most important because of the large number of independent women that grouped.

The woman today.

The role of women today is another, more complete and more challenging because we are more prepared; We have demonstrated again and again that we play a good role in the labor market.

The woman has been able to incorporate the new ones that involve being a professional into the usual tasks (of mother, wife and housewife). Meanwhile, try to fulfill the "other tasks" like taking the children to and fro, meeting with family and friends, going to the gym, following a diet, going to the beauty salon to stay "presentable" ... We must add university careers, professional women, aggressive, committed and fierce competitors.

## CROATIA

Women in Croatia represent more than half of the population and are enjoying gender equality, at least in a formal sense. Croatia is still mostly portrayed as a patriarchal society and women still struggle to achieve equality in almost every area, especially the professional one. Even though women are represented in most professions and are not likely to take a secondary role in public life, there is still lots to be done for gender equality.



Traditionally, housework and child care were only women's tasks, but nevertheless, women have long been part of the labor force. Before communism, rural women worked alongside men in fields and on the farm. They were also preparing meals and processed food for storage, kept the house, did laundry, and took care of the children. Under communism, women were encouraged to join the workforce. Today, most of Croatian women have a job or career or at least they expect to have one.

Employment: A research made by Marija Brajdić Vuković, Gunn Birkelund, and Aleksandar Štulhofer shows that in general, non-traditional attitudes toward women's employment are strong in

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the Croatian society today. However, in some aspects, especially related to gender roles, Croatians are more traditional.

Their study suggests that the (post)transitional and postwar Croatian society is influenced by the global trend of decreasing gender inequalities, both in public and private sphere. In addition to socio-demographic factors, gender related attitudes and values were shown to be affected by women's employment, both in terms of mother's and wife's employment. Although gender role attitudes and values are mostly shaped during primary socialization, they are likely to transform during adulthood.

### Marriage, Family, and Kinship

Today, couples arrange their own marriages. A young man and woman usually have a serious relationship before they meet each other's families. Individuals theoretically have a great deal of choice about marriage partners, but it is still strong in Croatia the probability to marry people of the same nationality and religion and with the same educational level and social status. Most men and women marry in their early 20s. Monogamous marriage is the rule. Divorce is increasingly common, although it is still considered undesirable. Pregnancy before marriage is not uncommon, but is not usually the sole reason for getting married.

In the past, the rule was for three-generation households. A married couple usually lived with the husband's parents. Today young people are ambivalent about living with their parents or grandparents after marriage. There is still a cultural preference for extended families, but young people tend to want privacy. This fact is caused mostly by the shortage of housing. There is also a preference for keeping small children in the care of grandparents and for caring for the elderly at home. Young children are often placed in day care or kindergarten. Increasingly, elderly people spend some time in a nursing home, which usually creates a financial burden for their families.

Croats practice bilateral kinship. In principle, they prefer the father's side of the family. Couples traditionally resided with the husband's parents after marriage, and were expected to have more to do with the husband and father's relatives. In practice, however, many families have resided with or near the wife's parents. Whether a couple live with or are closer to one set of parents or another depends to some extent on personal preference, and also on economic factors.

## BULGARIA

The current position of women in Bulgarian society has been influenced by a variety of cultures and ideologies, including the Byzantine and Ottoman cultures, Eastern Orthodox Christianity, communist ideology, and contemporary globalized Western values.



### Emancipation

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Bulgarian women live in a society that is customarily patriarchal. While Bulgaria is often described as a patriarchal society, women may have substantial authority in household budgeting or agricultural decision making. Women and men have equal legal rights although during the communist era nevertheless, civil rights and freedoms for both women and men were merely symbolic, due to the authoritarian nature of the government. Nowadays, both men and women have the right to vote and own property and are equal to the law. Women in Bulgaria got the right to vote in 1938 with the introduction of new Law on elections for the National Assembly. Despite decades of socialist ideology of gender equality, women are often employed in lower paying jobs, remain responsible for most household chores, and represent more than half the registered unemployed. They also occupy leadership positions less frequently than men. In 1996, fewer than 14 percent of post-socialist parliamentary representatives have been women, and only one in five municipal councilors were women in that year.[1] By 2014, women represented 20.4% of the Parliament.[2]

## Employment

Many women entered paid employment during the socialist era, when an ideology of gender equality was promoted, and they made up nearly half the workforce in the late twentieth century. Women are frequently employed as teachers, nurses, pharmacists, sales clerks, and laborers and less often involved in management, administration, and technical sciences. Women are also largely responsible for household tasks—child care, cooking, cleaning, and shopping. Agricultural labor is divided according to gender, with men working with animals and machinery and women doing more hand labor in crop production, although flexibility exists in response to specific situations.[1] Despite this, the gender segregation in the workforce is somewhat less pronounced in Bulgaria than in other European countries.[3] Compared to the European average, Bulgarian women have a higher involvement in traditionally male fields such as science, maths, computing and engineering; and a lower involvement in the service field.[3] Also, the gender pay gap (in 2013) is 13.0% in Bulgaria, which is lower than the European Union average of 16.2%.[3] As of 2014, the employment rate (age 15-64) for women was 58.2% while for men it was 63.9%.[4] The employment rate for both sexes has been relatively low during the past two decades, due to hardships experienced by the national economy after the fall of the communism. Nevertheless, the exact involvement in the labour force is quite difficult to determine, due to the presence of the unregulated informal sector. According to World Bank, women in 2014 made up 46.6% of the total labour force, pretty much the same as in 1990 (47.9%).[5] Bulgarian women's strong involvement in the economy can be seen in the fact that almost all employed women work full-time - the highest percentage among employed women in the EU.[6] Before the communist era, Bulgaria (like other Eastern European countries) was a largely rural agricultural society, with women being integrated in the rural agricultural work. As such, they occupied a relatively high status in society (although not equal to men). Under the communist regime, the country was industrialized and "modernized", and people came from rural areas to urban areas. The communist new ideology and economy integrated women in paid employment - in the late 1970s, Bulgaria had the highest percentage of working women in the world.[7] Women were integrated in almost all fields, including science and medicine, nevertheless they were strictly under the control of the state, were educated to be submissive to the state authorities (who were mostly male), and had very little power of self-expression. The fall of the communist regime had mixed results for women: while their economic security was affected

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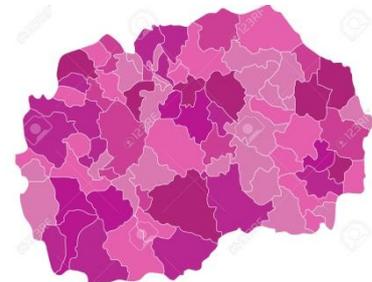
(although this affected men too - as both men and women lost, in large numbers, their state-guaranteed jobs), women got the newly discovered freedom to open business, freely pursue artistic and cultural activities, and have freedom of speech. While the newly emerging, 'wild', unrestricted capitalism of the 1990s was often hostile to women, many women have, in fact, succeeded: one-third of company owners and top managers in Bulgaria are women.[8] The high involvement of women in business is common to countries in the Eastern European region: "Overall, Eastern Europe continues to top the rankings in gender equality, with 35 percent of senior roles in the region held by women and just 16 percent of businesses with no women in senior management", according to a 2007 study.[9] Still, there is a positive trend that these numbers grow rapidly in recent years.

### Marriage and family life

While marriage was traditionally very important in Bulgaria, there has been a rapid increase in unmarried cohabitation after the fall of communism. The transition to market economy had a great impact on the demographic behavior of the population. The legal and social pressure to get married has declined, and the population has started to experience new life styles.[10] As of 2014, 58.8% of children were born to unmarried mothers.[11] In the European Values Study (EVS) of 2008, the percentage of Bulgarian respondents who agreed with the assertion that "Marriage is an outdated institution" was 27.2%.[12] A new Family Code came into effect in 2009, modernizing family law.[13] Legally, Bulgaria has long recognized the equality of men and women in family law. Despite legal equality, societal norms of the Balkan culture often consider the wife to be in a position of subordination to the husband.[14]

## MACEDONIA

The Macedonian women live in a society which is somewhat patriarchal. However, through the years women have played an important role in establishing peace during the periods known as the pre-conflict, conflict and post-conflict period due to the internal conflict known as the Insurgency in the Republic of Macedonia. Traditionally, the women in Macedonia are often considered housewives, able to raise a family and do the domestic work. However, in the last fifty years there has been an increasing rise of women in positions of power. In 1946, women in Macedonia were finally given the right to vote. Afterwards, many important state positions were and are still held by women. An example of this is the fact that in the year 2008 Macedonia saw a woman candidate for Prime Minister, while in 2009 there was even a woman candidate for President. Although, both women were not elected, this was proof that Macedonian women could easily compete with men, and that the stereotypes of past years are no longer valid. From an academic standpoint, men tend to dominate in the field of science and engineering, while women can mostly be seen in the humanities.



### Employment:

The employment rate of women in the Republic of Macedonia is 35.3% which is drastically lower when compared to men, where the employment rate is about 52.3%. The rate of women looking for

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a job is about equal to the rate of employed women with 31.0%. This rate is often attributed to the fact that women in Macedonia are mostly the ones who tend to stay at home and raise the children. It is also common for women to care for the elderly members of the family as well. Therefore, this is one of the main reasons why women have a lower employment rate than men. When looking at the part-time segregation, 6.7% of the female population in Macedonia works part-time, while the male population numbers 5.5%.

The distribution of women and men across the sectors of the economy in the Republic of Macedonia shows a gender bias. In the Republic of Macedonia, 9.6% of the employed women work in the “health care and social work” sector, and this number is equal to women working in “education” as well. Both genders show the most interest in the three most popular sectors which are “Manufacturing” which consist of 22.6% women employees, “Agriculture, forestry & fishing” with 18.1% and “Wholesale & Retail” with 16.3%. Apart from the most popular occupation, which is "Agriculture, forestry and fishery labourers", the distribution of women and men across occupations is additionally characterised by a strong gender bias. One quarter of all employed women in the Republic of Macedonia work as "assemblers" or as "sales workers" followed by occupations such as "clerks" and "teaching professionals". Men, on the other hand, are predominantly employed as "building workers", "personal service workers" or "drivers and mobile plant operators". Due to this it is imperative that the Republic of Macedonia take actions to motivate women to enter the “typically male” occupations, as well as motivate men to enter the “typically female” occupations.

## CYPRUS

The Cypriot Women at Home. Cyprus is essentially a male society. Patriarchy, the social system in which a male is the family head and primary authority, is still very much alive in Cyprus. This is probably due to the political conflict that prevails on the island.



On both sides of the island, meaning that, there is a strong, though contested and decreasing, element of patriarchy. Economic, social, and political power are concentrated in the hands of men, and only men can become religious functionaries, whether Christian or Muslim. Women are almost absent from political offices, although they are entering the workplace in increasing numbers. However, in general they are employed in jobs of lesser status and lower remuneration than men. The entry of women into the job force, while offering a financial base for more independence and security, often means that women undertake both the role of working outside the house while still retaining their responsibilities in the home, resulting in a double burden.

Traditionally, the expected primary role for Cypriot women has been to get married and have children and all other achievements were perceived as secondary. Nowadays, Greek-Cypriot women are split when asked if they believe that their social role is different from men.

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Marriage. Whereas half a century ago a significant proportion of marriages were arranged (often by the father), this has largely disappeared, although parents may still exert strong control and influence over marital choices. Most people consider getting married to be the normal course of action, so the vast majority do in fact marry; those who don't are often viewed as being either eccentric or unlucky, or both. Whereas previously the provision of a dowry, mostly for women, was considered mandatory, parents still feel they should provide as much economic support as possible for their children when they marry. Ideally, the parents hope to provide the newlywed couple with a fully furnished house and other basic needs, such as one or two cars.

Domestic Unit. The typical family arrangement on both sides is the nuclear family, often with fairly strong ties towards a more extended family, especially the parents. Most couples hope to have two children, preferably one of each sex. The more traditional division between the public domain (work, etc.), which is overseen by the male, and the private domain (the home), which is overseen by the female, is still strong, despite women's entry into the labor market. Since people usually move into city apartments or build their own home, relatives do not live in as close proximity as in the past, when they lived in clusters of houses in the same town or village.

Education. At the beginning of the 20th century, the proportion of girls to boys enrolled in primary education was one to three. By 1943, some 80 percent of Cypriot girls attended primary school. When, in 1960, elementary education was made compulsory, the two sexes were equally enrolled. By the 1980s, girls made up 45 percent of those receiving secondary education. Only after the mid-1960s did women commonly leave Cyprus to receive higher education. In the 1980s, women made up about 32 percent of those studying abroad.

Female Employment. The participation of Cypriot women in the workforce has been steadily increasing. In 1976 women's share in the workforce was 30 percent and a rise to 37 percent in 1985. Today women's share in the workforce is 44 percent. 62.1% of women between the ages of 15–64 years old are active in workforce.

Cyprus has long had a high degree of female participation in the workforce. There were great changes in the nature of female employment. Women's share of the urban workforce rose from 22 percent to 41 percent, while their share of the rural workforce fell from 51 percent to 44.4 percent. The decline in rural areas stemmed from the overall shift away from agricultural work, where women's contribution had always been vital, to employment in urban occupations such as manufacturing and services.

The occupational segregation of the sexes was still persistent in Cyprus at the beginning of the 1990s. Even though the participation of women in clerical jobs had more than doubled since the late 1970s, only one woman in fifteen was in an administrative or managerial position in 1985. Women's share of professional jobs increased to 39 percent by the mid-1980s, compared with 36 percent ten years earlier, but these jobs were concentrated in medicine and teaching, where women had traditionally found employment. In fields where men were dominant, women's share of professional positions amounted to only 11 percent, up from 8 percent in 1976. In the fields where women were dominant, men took just under half the professional positions.

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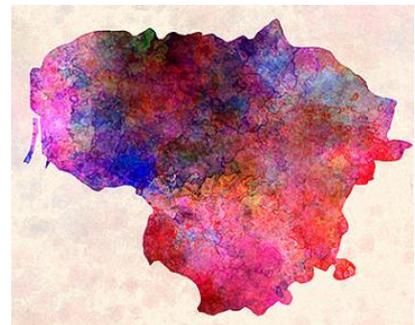
Nonetheless, there is still room for improvement pertaining to the gender equality Cyprus women are experiencing in the workforce. Not only do Women represent 14.4% of high posts, women are also paid on average 24% less per hour compared to their male counterparts.[6] The equal pay-equal work principal would help to solve this problem, but the women are generally in lower positions than men resulting in the unequal pay.

According to the 2006 Population Census, the unemployment rate for women was 19%, whereas for men it was 6%. In 2010, the unemployment rate was 17.5% for women and 8.9% for men. Even though the unemployment rate for women is decreasing, the rate is still twice as high compared to men.

## LITHUANIA

In Lithuania there are more women than men. Furthermore, the percentage of men is decreasing gradually: in 1995 there were 47.3% of men, in 2000 there were 47.1%, and in 2011 only 46.5%.

Although Lithuania can be traditionally considered a patriarchal state, women here had great influence and importance since ancient times. Today they are equal partners in various areas and do important work, discoveries, etc.



The history of Lithuania is full of strong, loving, searching, thinking, fighting, and persistent women.

They play an important role in the development of Lithuanian society and life; they are creative and seek changes by showing an example and encouraging improvement.

You now have an opportunity to learn about Barbora Radvilaitė, the Grand Duchess of Lithuania and Queen of Poland (16th century); Emilija Pliaterytė, Lithuanian Joan of Arc, participant of rebellion in 1831, captain of Polish army.

Žemaitė - the most prominent writer of Samogitia who did not succumb to life difficulties, and sought light and truth (19th century); a brilliant fighter Jurga Ivanauskaitė, Lithuanian prose writer, public figure, playwright and painter (20th century); current President of Lithuania Dalia Grybauskaitė, first woman president of Lithuania.

Women and men equal opportunities: Employment and unemployment

Lithuanian women and men in employment, unemployment and gender equality is influenced by the economic recession, during which the gap between women and men in employment, unemployment, wages and poverty decreased. But gender equality progress has not been achieved, because these changes were due to reduced employment, higher unemployment and significantly

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reduced wages for both women and men. After the economic crisis, men in the labor sector returned to work much more quickly than women, whereas industrial sector has recovered much faster. It is predicted that women working in public service or public sector, on the implementation of economy measures, will suffer long-term the negative impact on the labor market.

#### Employment of women living in villages

The difference between gender equality indicators of Lithuania richer and poorer regions are emerging. Despite the fact that the Lithuanian villages are quite rapidly adapting to the change of economic and social environment, women have a large enough load during this change. High qualification of the rural population and youth migration intensifies, and the majority of emigrants are women, who have a negative impact on rural social and economic life.

#### Women entrepreneurship

Women and men have equal legal opportunities to start a business, despite the fact, in all age groups the number of women entrepreneurs is less than that of men. Although in recent years women entrepreneurship is progressively increasing, covering a wider range of activities.

#### The difference between women and men salaries

Women throughout life earn less than men and their pensions are lower and the likelihood of poverty in old age is higher. The reasons for this are: women and men are paid different salaries, even though they perform equivalent work; men and women work different sectors; women and men are encouraged differently for the results; few women are in management positions; it is hard to combine family and professional life, etc.

## GREECE

### In Ancient Greece

Women in ancient Greece were under the authority of men. Until marriage, women were under the guardianship of their fathers or any other male relative; and once married the husband became the new guardian. As a result, women lacked political and equal rights and remained in the shadow of men. As citizenship was linked to the right of property and the means of life, women were never considered full citizens. In Sparta, the situation for women was different. Spartan women enjoyed a status and respect unknown by Athenian women. As men were away from home all the time, the need to give women more rights became a necessity. Women's principle responsibilities were childbearing, weaving the fabric and managing the household. Although women's social restraints were extreme in classical Greece, Greek mythology is full of powerful female goddesses from jealous Hera to Aphrodite who used her charms to make men lose their wits or Athena who could resist marriage and motherhood.



During the war of independence

The origin of the Greek women's movement can be traced back to the late 19th century. And indeed, already during the Greek war of independence, women emancipated themselves, for instance, Laskarina Bouboulina sailed to Nafplion with her own Greek flag or Manto Mavrogenous spent all her fortune for the Hellenic cause. Changes were on their way.

In the 20th century

Since Greece joined the European Union (EU), it continued its journey toward modernization. However, Greece has always been very attached to its ancient legacy it struggled to find balance between modernity and its rich cultural heritage.

An important step occurred in 1952 where women finally gained the right to vote. It paved the way to important changes in their status. In 1983, Greece enforced a law which provided gender equality in marriage, abolished the dowry and gave equal rights to children born out of marriage.

According to women's rights advocates, gender equality means equal representation of men and women in committees, government, parliamentary assemblies, managerial posts, unions and public and private bodies, and public institutions. Moreover, gender equality shouldn't exist only in the work environment, the society as a whole, should change its attitudes and values to promote it.

Gender equality was put on the table thanks to the harmonisation of the national legislation of the EU. Both Greece and the EU are determined to promote gender equality and there is already a good legislative framework. As a result, Greece should focus on how to implement the existing legislation. Throughout the 2000s, the goal was to reconcile working and family life by implementing protection against dismissals during pregnancy, maternity and paternity leave, benefits for marriage and children. However, family dynamics are still conservative and extramarital child bearing or long term cohabitation are not widespread. Moreover, Greece should also raise awareness among women and make sure they know their rights and are not afraid to claim them.

With the economic crisis, women's participation in the economy increased. Women in Greece were facing two burdens: the responsibility of taking care of the household and the pressure to help when the family could not rely on other members. As a result, they accepted precarious jobs and were forced to comply to gender discrimination. There are also crucial differences between the private and the public sectors when it comes to discrimination and policies facilitating the working life of women with children. The public sector protects them better and self-employment seems to be the only other alternative.

Prejudices are still alive and there is a belief that women should not carry out demanding tasks because of their family duties. According to Haris Symeonidou, research director at the National Centre of Social Research, «the role of men and women in marriage remains traditional» and it has consequences also in the work environment.

There is still a lot to be done to fight gender discrimination in Greece. Greeks are still very attached to their long-established traditional way of life but Greece has all the legal basis it needs to ensure This project has been funded with support from the European Commission under the Erasmus+ Programme. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



gender equality and empower women. For Angela Daifa-Frantzeskaki, president of the Panhellenic Women's Organization, «Greece's legislative framework is one of the best in Europe», the country should take advantage of it and continue its good work.

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# National Chapters

## Implementation of the project

This project  
Programme  
responsible



Erasmus+  
not be held

# ITALY

Italy is bordered:

- on the north by **Switzerland** and **Austria**
- on the east by **Slovenia** and the **Adriatic Sea**
- on the south by the **Ionian Sea** and the **Mediterranean Sea**
- on the west by the **Tyrrhenian Sea**, the **Ligurian Sea** and the **Mediterranean Sea**
- on the northwest by **France**

In addition to the boot-shaped peninsula, the Republic of Italy comprises the islands of Sicily, Sardinia, Elba and many other smaller islands. Enclaves within mainland Italy are the independent republic of San Marino and Vatican City, the smallest country in the world, that is the papal state, mostly enclosed by Rome.

The area of Italy is 3011,323 sq km (116,341 sq mi).

Administratively, Italy is divided into 20 regions, each of which is subdivided into provinces and communes.

The capital and largest city is **Rome** (population, 2016 estimate, 2 873 598), which is famous cultural and tourist centre.

## Culture

From antiquity to modern times, Italy has played a central role in the world culture. Italians have contributed some of the world's most admired sculpture, architecture, painting, literature, and music. Although the nation was politically unified less than 150 years ago, the Italians do not consider themselves to be a "new" people, but see themselves instead as descendents of natural geographical boundaries and the disparate cultural heritage that has come down from Greeks, Etruscan, Arabs, Normans and Lombards. Regional particularism is evident in local dialects, holidays, songs and regional cuisine. Central to all Italian life is the tradition of the family as a guiding force and focus of loyalty.

## Economy

In the post-war period, Italy was transformed from an agricultural based economy which had been severely affected by the consequences of the World Wars, into one of the world's most industrialized nations, and a leading country in world trade and exports.

Despite these important achievements, the country's economy today suffers from structural and non-structural problems. After strong GDP growth in 1945–1990, the last two decades' average annual growth rates lagged below the EU average; moreover, Italy was hit particularly hard by the late-2000s recession. The stagnation in economic growth, and the political efforts to revive it with massive government spending from the 1980s onwards, eventually produced a severe rise in public debt. In addition, Italian living standards have a considerable North–South divide: the average GDP per capita in Northern and Central Italy significantly exceeds the EU average, while some regions and provinces in Southern Italy are dramatically below.

### A brief description of the activities carried out during the project.

Both in the design phase and after the approval of the project, a market research was carried out at national and local level. Thanks to the research carried out on the unemployment rate in women aged 25-34, the province of Vibo Valentia, the seat of our organization, is one of the Italian province with the highest rate of female unemployment, reaching a rate of 43.7%. After the research, we have selected companies created by women. We have published a notice of selection on our facebook page and on our website. In addition, we have left several brochures (created ad hoc for the project) at the most frequented places by women, such as schools, supermarkets, the Municipality, libraries, hairdressers and medical clinics. We have received several requests to participate in the project, so we decided to make a selection of women, taking into account the disadvantages experienced by such women. Once completed the selection phase of the participants, we have given to the participants an " initial "Evaluation Questionnaire of the learning objectives" , for the evaluation of the initial knowledge ;

Together with other partners in December 2015 we have created the website of the Pro.Women project , but a new blog was created by the new Spanish partner in its entry into the project.

Between March and June 2016 we had carried out three interviews with successful Italian businesswomen.

The interviews will be carried out by a person of the staff and some selected learners. Women entrepreneurs were interviewed by learners.

Interviews were filmed. Among the women interviewed there are:

- Ms. Lea Corigliano, who created a business Which has revitalized a company that for some time has failed to produce any results. Pantalea is a young mother. The factory of her father had having serious difficulty to sell the production of his oil. Thanks to her tenacity she has started a new home based business path by selling her products online. First of all, Pantalea,

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has decided to take control of the company. She has created different kinds of biological oil, such as: oil with lemon, oil with orange, oil with hot peppers, and in addition to this, she has created new kind of sweet cream with the oil that she produces. Today Pantalea thanks to her innovative ideas and her tenacity appears to be well integrated into the oil market.

- Ms. Fiorella. Fiorella Company is born from the intention to reconcile family with work and the need to collaborate on economic income, and to save and preserve the ancient art of body care over time. The total absence of preservatives and chemical correctors, the exclusive use of natural components cultivated and processed in a region in the middle of the Mediterranean, form the basis of the absolutely natural and delicate "Fiorella" product line. Thanks to this home-based business, Ms. Fiorella has been fully integrated into the world of work, guaranteeing an economic income indispensable for her family.
- The third interview was made to Mrs. Vecchio, during the economic crisis, Domenica has not been discouraged and she has started a catering service from home which has as a principle the exploitation of the products of the territory. After a few years of starting this home business, and thanks to the results obtained, Mrs. Vecchio decided to open a restaurant on the sea.

Following the timetable of the project, months ranging from March to August 2016 were dedicated to the training course preparation. During those months each partner took charge of editing the module assigned during the design phase. In the same period the modules have been exchanged between partners and have been translated into all national languages of the partnership.

In the months from September to October 2016 it was held a course in the classroom, where the following modules have been studied:

1. Catering in eco-compatible version;
2. Crafts-manufacturing eco-sustainable;
3. Green Web marketing.

The participants completed a mid-term Evaluation Questionnaire of the learning objectives.

At the end of October began the e-learning course, that is finished at the end of December. 96 participants from all over the country, followed the e-learning course. We have received many mails from women, but also men, who have used our platform to deepen the topics proposed in the project, they were very happy to have been able to use our platform for free. All learners selected as well, have attended the online course.

During the e-learning course participants have studied the following modules:

Internet Marketing

Technical English,

IT module

E-Commerce

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The participants completed the final “Evaluation Questionnaire of the learning objectives” and the E-Learning Evaluation TEST. At the end of the course a certificate was delivered to all learners.

### **A brief description of how the participants experienced the project and their involvement**

At the end of the course we asked to the participants how they experienced this experience. The feedback received from our participants was very positive. Thanks to these interviews we have realized that we have reached our goal.

Ms. Isabella (49 years old) says: for the first time I was included in a project focused on women. Thanks to the project, I learned many things I did not know, and I had the opportunity to meet new people, to establish new relationships, and to confront myself with those who, like me, can not balance working life with their family life.

Ms. Claudia (29 year old) tells us: for a long time I have been looking for a job, but without success. Thanks to this project I realized that I can also create a home-based business to earn something, relying solely on my skills.

Ms. Rita (29 years old) says: The course was really interesting, but the visit to companies created by women, has certainly opened my eyes and gave me energy to be able to rely on myself, women are a force of nature, if we are able to grow children up by ourselves, we will also be able to nurture a business dream, I will surely take on my home a new career.

Ms Assuntina(24 years old) says: This course was exciting and suggested me ideas for opening my home based business.

Ms. Francesca (38 years old) says: Since my children have been born I can not work because they take me time. I'm a passionate about photoshop and photography, this experience has given me the useful information to start my own business from home.

Ms. Elisa(29 year old) says, " Since I've finished college I'm looking for a job, but in Calabria it's almost impossible to find a job. I never thought of having a job to do from home. Now nothing prevents me from starting a home business, and maybe one day I can have my own business, I hope so.

# Greece

is a land rich in history, art and culture: for this reason it is defined as the cradle of the western civilization. Greek culture is a combination of different influences – from the Balkan area and from the Orient, but it still maintains its uniqueness. Greece is also a developed country with a population of 11,1 million, a high standard of living and a very high Human Development Index (ranked 29th in the world, 2014). Its economy is based on the service and industrial sector, especially shipping and tourism. World War II devastated the country's economy but it miraculously recovered from 1950 to 1980 when the country enjoyed a high level of economic growth. From 2000, Greece thrived, its GDP growth was above European average with a peak at 5,8% in 2003 and 5,7% in 2006. Unfortunately, the prosperity didn't last very long because the following great recession and the Greek government debt crisis plunged the economy and the levels of GDP went under 0. Indeed, in 2011, the GDP dropped to -9,2%. The debt reached its highest point with €356 billion before a debt restructuring with the private sector which helped lower it to €280 billion in 2012. Naturally, the crisis has had an impact on employment and according to the OECD, 73,1% of the population was in a situation of long-term unemployment in 2015, one of the highest percentage in the world. Moreover, 27,9% of the female labour force is unemployed compared to only 19,5% of the male labour force. However, an increase in the rate of entrepreneurship and self-employment is observed which almost doubled from 2009 and 2013 among young people. Greece has one of the highest number of self-employed in the all European Union with 35,2%, of which 29,6% are women, compared to 16,1% in the EU. In fact, women are the leaders in this field, from 2000 until 2011, they were the biggest group with 20% of them self-employed. From 2013, self-employment rate increased and reached 60% among young people, 30% of which were women. Self-employment appears to be a solution to fight unemployment and for women it is also a way to reconcile their working and their family life. This is not negligible considering that 200,000 women in Greece are single mothers.

Nevertheless, self-employment represents a small portion out of the 40% of the female work force. Furthermore, women still hold low-income and low-skilled jobs like in the service work, the public sector or in part-time jobs. Not only women's position in the labour market is weaker than the one of men, but they also earn less money. Indeed, the gender pay gap is real and in Greece, women earn  $\frac{3}{4}$  of what men earn for the same job. Moreover, 60% of women are still unemployed and 1 700 000 are housewives. Yet, women have well recognized academic careers nowadays, the doors of the universities were opened to them for the first time in 1890. Nowadays 60% of university students and more than 50% of the university graduates are females.

In the current economic crisis context women all over Greece struggle with new and diverse impediments. The activities implemented by NGO CIVIS PLUS in the framework of Pro.Women project aimed to empower women with fewer opportunities, with a special focus on mothers through a variety range of activities.

As the project kicked off, a sector study and market analysis on the employment situation in Greece, on policies to support entrepreneurship and on present entrepreneurial realities in Greece were held. The useful data and outcomes were used in order to structure the next steps of the project.

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The call for the participants was absolutely successful as most of the Greek media contacted showed big interest in the training course. The fact that most of the media contacted were websites, portals and newspapers specialized in entrepreneurship and business issues played a very positive role in the dissemination of the training course and could be considered as good practice. A lot of women-mothers from all over Greece expressed their interest in participating in Pro.Women's activities. Sixteen of them participated actively in the classroom training, while 137 women had the chance to enroll in the e-learning course.

The group of the participants that attended the classroom training was a heterogeneous one. There were women from different age groups, with different educational background, with more or fewer ideas about their future business but with the same expectations, desires and hopes. The participants were living in Athens and facing the daily challenges of living in a busy, cosmopolitan urban area. A common ground of the women who took part in this project is the lack of spare time and their desire and feeling of the need to gain new skills, to develop themselves.

The implementation of the project took place in different stages, each one aimed to lead and fulfill the objectives of the project.

On the first stage, the research activity, took place on a period of four months. During this stage, the range of the activities were based on interviews and visits to some Greek companies that are successfully carried out by woman entrepreneurs, who effectively found a balance between their personal life, the difficult business environment, and a successful business. We had carried out three interviews with very active and successful Greek businesswomen, which have been also recorded. We did not hesitate to ask for well-known female entrepreneurs to share their experiences with us and with the participants of the project and the feedback that we got was totally positive. This particular detail, i.e. not to be afraid to aim high, could also be beneficial for other projects and also for the participants themselves. We had the privilege to interview Ms. Stavroula Panopoulou, the founder of deBop.gr, a website that promotes urban events and information on a broad range of themes as culture, city life and so on. The participants had the opportunity to be present and to actively take part in it. The interview started with a short presentation of the field of the activity, the path from the idea to the current stage of the business and focused on the challenges, limits, and fruits of the business. The second part of the interview focused on a Q&A session and an open discussion between the interview's guest and the participants. We also had interviewed Ms. Giota Mantaou, the founder of Aelia Greek Sandals. Her business promotes the Greek tradition of manufacturing handmade leather sandals. The third interview was with Ms. Eva Epitropaki and Ms. Vera Papangelopoulou, who introduced us to their on-line shop Jamjar.gr, a unique boutique on the Greek market. The last two interviews were held without the participants' presence, due to the heavy workload and limited available time of the businesswomen, but they were proven a very helpful tool in the dissemination of the information. The interviews were based on the questions provided by the coordinator of the project and in additional, more related to the Greek situation questions which aimed to bring in the surface new perspectives and ideas. These questions had addressed some of the more particular needs of the participants. The scope of these interviews was to bring the participants closer to the business environment and to possible create a first contact between the participants and the Greek women role models. The interviews aimed to provide the

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participants with ideas about business areas and possibilities, fresh ideas about how can they play their strengths and success in their own businesses.

Another activity that partook during this period was the preparation of the educational material needed for the training and the e-learning course. On the one hand, some of the materials provided were focusing on information related to the project's basic modules as Catering version eco-compatible, Crafts-manufacturing environmentally sustainable and Green-Web marketing. On the other hand, we have tried to take into account also the particularities of the participants and to provide the participants with materials which address their particular needs. Part of the material produced was the creation of the E-commerce module that has been prepared by NGO CIVIS PLUS according to the expertise knowledge and the professional experience that is acquired throughout the organization's years of operation.

The second stage of the implementation of the project consisted in a classroom training. Because of the dynamics of the participants, we decided to held the classroom training during the weekends, both sessions took part on Saturdays and Sundays, in a very compact, all day activities schedule. We have opted for this schedule because our participants were busy mothers with very diverse daily schedules. The classroom training was held in our office building, in a working- learning friendly environment. The spectrum of activities was carefully created in such a manner that each activity was participant's oriented and aimed at improving or developing a broad variety of skills, focusing on business related skills. The main goal of this classroom training was to provide the targeted women with skills that will help them to set their own Home Based businesses, in a successful manner which merges the job demands and the family life. The classroom training was structured in such a manner that allowed the participants to acquire and develop a series of social, civic and intercultural skills, linguistic skills and last but definitely not least professional skills. Moreover, the classroom training was structured around the basic modules envisioned by the core program, i.e. catering version eco-compatible, crafts-manufacturing environmentally sustainable, Green Web marketing. In this context, we tried to merge both the project's requirements and recommendations and our participants' particular needs.

The classroom training had started with a short introduction and presentation of the participants and of the tutor, the program, the objectives, the goals and the activities that will be implemented. The idea of starting with the basics was well appreciated by the participants. An introduction into the core knowledge of the training was attempted through the detailed presentation of the construction of albums, decoupage and felting (Crafts-manufacturing environmentally sustainable module). The tutor also tried to teach introduce them to the basics of starting your own business process, therefore the next learning session was 'Reference to basic concepts for creating a firm', where the participants had learned how important is to have a strong vision about the future business. Some of our participants already had a solid idea about their future business, while others were open to collecting different ideas and outputs and start thinking on an innovative idea of business suited to their skills and knowledge. Also, the participants have learned that not all the ideas are viable or easy to translate into practice. The tutor has also tried to give a special focus on how important the market research is for a new business and how without a careful market research a business can fail. In the second part of the day the tutor has provided the participants with basic knowledge about strategic planning in a business, what strategic planning means, about the external and internal This project has been funded with support from the European Commission under the Erasmus+ Programme. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

environmental analysis, SWOT analysis, about vision, mission, goals, objectives and the configuration of the objectives, work ethics, values and so on. This session was followed by an open discussion with a specialist and a short practice session, whose purpose was to sediment the theoretical knowledge that the participants had learned in the first part of the day. After the first introductory day, the second day of the classroom training had focused on the basic modules envisioned by the program. During the first part of the day, the participants had learned about the particularities of a catering company and the concept of ecologically sustainable supply and environmentally friendly practices and catering tools (Catering version eco-compatible module). Also, they had learned about financial statements and business plans and how to create them. On the second part of the day, the participants had the opportunity to have an open discussion with a lawyer and they had learned about the legal forms of businesses. The information provided has proven very helpful for the participants and made them get even more familiar with the business sector.

On the second week of the classroom training, the goal was to go in deep on a start-up process of a new business. During the first day of the second week of the classroom training, the tutor provided the participants with information about the Green Web Marketing, the advantages of an ecological marketing mix and how they should use the Green Web Marketing. The training had continued with a presentation of the Green Web Marketing tools, a discussion about all 20 new rules of this kind of marketing and also, about the 8 keys of a successful on-line marketing and strategic Green Web Marketing. Even if this part of the session was very specific, our participants developed a strong interest in it and they found it very interesting and helpful for their future new businesses. Moreover, there was discussion about smart ideas of marketing and about some useful tips on how to increase the sale. The second part of the day was dedicated to the financial section, the discussion headed towards the types of financing and the participants had the opportunity to discuss their queries with a specialist on funding issues. The last day of the classroom training was envisioned as a sum-up of the previous days and the activities were settled around the idea of reviewing of the acquired knowledge and skills with additional remarks on the business concept, the presentation of business ideas and the implementation steps. The last part of the classroom training was a Q & A and a feedback session.

The approach of the classroom training combined the formal with non-formal teaching methods. There were sessions which were more tutor-centered with information given from the tutor to the participants but there were also sessions where the participants were very much involved and had the chance to interact both with the tutor and with each other. The non-formal approach has helped the participants to become more open and talk freely about their ideas, expectations, and fears, to share knowledge and to learn from the others. Another benefit of this approach was that a bond was created between the participants so in the last session they discussed about their future endeavors and shared their contact details to stay in touch. The Facebook group that was created after the classroom training was warmly welcomed by the participants. They gladly joined the group and shared entrepreneurship/educational opportunities, news about the project and stories of personal success.

The last stage of the project consisted of an e-learning course which was intended to combine theoretical and practical information on a variety of needed skills for new enterprises. E-learning This project has been funded with support from the European Commission under the Erasmus+ Programme. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

was a tool that allowed a wider participation and affected less the family commitments of the participants. 137 participants from all over the country, even from marginalized areas, followed the e-learning course. We have received e-mails from participants who were expressing their enthusiasm for the e-learning as most of them didn't have access to educational opportunities and were feeling excluded from the various projects and trainings that have been being held only in the major cities of the country. The educational tool used during this stage was an on-line platform which allowed the participants to gain freely and easy access to the provided materials, slides, exercises and a detailed study plan under the guidance of the tutor. The materials provided on the on-line platform included the modules that were taught in the classroom training and a variety of topics as, Internet Marketing, E-Commerce, Basic English, ICT and so on. After the completion of the e-learning course, the participants were asked to take an evaluation test in order to assess the final competencies they had learned. After they got the results of the evaluation test, the participants were provided with an attendance certificate.

The feedback from the participants was truly promising. They unanimously agreed that they benefited from this training in multiple ways. Ms Maria Vagena told us "I got ideas so as to start new things from now on". For some of them, it was their first experience in this type of training ("The participation in the training was a very important asset for me. It was the first time to participate in such a training", Ms Elizabeth Michail), while others already had a clear idea for a future business, while others didn't. Nevertheless, they have all gained a lot of general knowledge but also specific, regarding entrepreneurship, business management, problem-solving and improved their skills. They were really pleased with the organization insofar as they were able to identify the gaps which gave them the opportunity to find ways to fill them. The learners also learned a lot from each other, the interviews were really helpful to understand better what is happening in the field of home-based businesses, they could exchange views and ideas, or even share concerns. Participants said that they were inspired by the successful women and it gave them the incentive to do something in the future. One of them started with her own business of handicraft jewelleryes some days after the completion of the classroom training and found her first clients among the participants of the training. Others found new opportunities and volunteered for an already implemented business as to gain experience. Apart from improving their working skills, the learners have also boosted their self-confidence. As Ms Eleni Emmanouil explained "The training worked as a driving force for me. It gave me more confidence so as to start a business", According to the learners' statements, they felt equipped, encouraged and motivated to explore the home based entrepreneurship. The participants told us that they had the chance not only to realize all the things they could accomplish on a professional level but also to create friendships and to grow on a personal level ("It was very nice to meet interesting women with ambitious business plans", Ismini Rentzeperi). The project had an unexpected international impact as Ms Mariana Conduraru informed us. "I have gained a lot of knowledge from the training. After the training I went to Romania, where I met a lot of people and discussed about my experiences of this training. The people there were very interested in it and I hope that there will be some kind of cooperation in the future", Ms Conduraru said. The major recommendations that we have received was to carry out another training for female entrepreneurship soon, to include more topics on funding issues and expand it to incubator services as well.

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# Spain

Located in south western Europe, bordered by the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, its geographical features and the excellent climate make the Iberian Peninsula a place of first order at the moment of choosing it as a destination whether for holidays, or for study/training and even as a definitive destination.

Spain is a very characteristic country, is a country full of life, celebration customs and traditions. From Andalusia to Madrid, Catalonia, Valencia, Galicia and the Balearic Islands.

It is a country with most landscape and climate varieties across Europe, this makes that the Iberian Peninsula looks like a mini continent in which you can reach in a very short time a Mediterranean paradise beach or a luxuriant Atlantic forest.

The fiesta and its rich gastronomy, as well as its beautiful historical cities with astonishing cathedrals, make this country really a unique one and between the best suited for spending some time here.

The cultures of Spain are European cultures based on a variety of historical influences, primarily that of Ancient Rome, but also the pre-Roman Celtic and Iberian culture, and that of the Phoenicians and the Moors. In the areas of language and religion, the Ancient Romans left a lasting legacy. The subsequent course of Spanish history added other elements to the country's culture and traditions.

## **A brief description of the activities carried out in the different phases of the project .**

Thanks to the Pro.Women Strategic Partnership Project, MAD for Europe realized a lot of activities for mothers who suffer any social discomfort and aim at working and balancing it with family life.

MAD for Europe accesses the project only after seven months of its kick-off and due to the renounce of the first Spanish partner. So we immediately realized a field study and market analysis about the employment situation in Spain, and also an in-depth investigation on European policies aimed at supporting entrepreneurship. We also created the website <https://ka2prowomen.jimdo.com/> in order to start sharing all project results with partners.

The call for the participants of the project was initially announced on the web site and social media of the organization and later through the distribution of the printed brochure in cultural centres and institutions dedicated to women. The call included a lot of information about the project and the detailed description of the classroom training and the following E-learning. Several women with children from Madrid expressed their interest in participating in Pro.Women's activities by e-mail, telephone and social media. Finally 15 of them could participate in the Training Course and two of them also in the Interviews to the four businesswomen of Madrid.

The Interviews to Business Women had a great success between our participants that enjoyed the occasion to learn from them how they can balance work and family life and also they took some ideas for their future businesses. Our first interviewed woman-mother was Ms. Rosario Armada (AGAIN Cashmere), mother of four children and now owner of two renowned cashmere shops of

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Madrid but who started this business at home before reaching this great success. We also interviewed Ms. Covadonga García-Solans (Estudio Tributario y Fiscal García-Solans), whose business is about fiscal and tax advisor and she has now a lot of customers and enterprises of Madrid and nearby. The third interview was with two mothers that are also friends and some years ago decided to create their own business with flowers and decorations, they are Ms. Irene Ruiz y Sara Manzano (La Sastreria de las Flores), who presented in a very detailed way their daily work routine and family organization. The interviews were based on the questions provided by the coordinator of the project, however we focused more on suggestions and tips on balancing family with work.

The profile of the participants consisted of 15 unemployed women mothers, aged between 25 and 58 years old from Madrid, who showed interest in starting their own business. The educational background of our target group was very different (from beautician to digital marketing students, to women who want to create a home-based kindergarten, etc...); two of them have now created their own business and the remaining thirteen want to run a HBB.

The classroom training course took place in Madrid between 10th October – 25th November 2016. And included the following topics: presentation of the project; Eco-catering Module, Green Web Marketing Module and Scrapbooking, decoupage and felting Module and presentation of good practices from Spain and the partner countries. The classroom training, due to the different commitments of the participants (all busy women with children) has been organized in sessions of two hours and once a week. It was held in an interactive and dynamic in our headquarters of Chamberí District. The training consisted of a lot of practical exercises on how implementing a business from home, how to create a business plan, some English exercises and interactive learning games. All this through PPT presentations, Q&A questions, and practical exercises in small groups and also the presentation of some businesses held by women mothers. The participants received an Attendance Certificate by MAD for Europe assessing the new skills gained thanks to their participation in the Training Course.

After this, together with the entire partnership, we activated the E-Learning Course on the web platform. In Spain we have received different e-mails asking for information but finally only three participants attended the e-learning course, did the evaluation test and, once completed, received the Certificate of Participation.

The feedback we have been received not only from attendants but also from other stakeholders involved in the project has been overwhelmingly positive. Starting from the interviews to the business women that has been really useful for our participants above all in clarifying their ideas on the importance of having an own business and the possibility to realize it, even if with little children. Our participants expressed their enthusiasm on getting to know these successful women that started little by little from their houses and with such a little help the business that later have become very important. Secondly the classroom training course gained a lot of positive comments between our target group as they put a lot of efforts in acquiring as much new competences and skills as possible for their professional future and they never stopped to ask in order to learn more and more. We have for example from Ms. Cristina Sastre “This was very helpful and we learned much more than what I had expected” or from Ms. Ana Pano “This course answered many

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questions I had about my future and the possibility of creating something mine with no help and two little children, it was really amazing now I know what I can do in order to realize myself”.

From our organization we are really glad of the big contribution we received from these women during the Training activities, they participated actively in debates, works in pairs and the expression of their ideas and opinions.

## Cyprus

Cyprus officially known as the Republic of Cyprus (Greek: Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία, translit. *Kypriakí Demokratía*; Turkish: *Kıbrıs Cumhuriyeti*), is an island country in the Eastern Mediterranean and the third largest and third most populous island in the Mediterranean. It is located south of Turkey, west of Syria and Lebanon, northwest of Israel and Palestine, north of Egypt, and southeast of Greece.

The earliest known human activity on the island dates to around the 10th millennium BC. Archaeological remains from this period include the well-preserved Neolithic village of Khirokitia, and Cyprus is home to some of the oldest water wells in the world.[9] Cyprus was settled by Mycenaean Greeks in two waves in the 2nd millennium BC. As a strategic location in the Middle East, it was subsequently occupied by several major powers, including the empires of the Assyrians, Egyptians and Persians, from whom the island was seized in 333 BC by Alexander the Great. Subsequent rule by Ptolemaic Egypt, the Classical and Eastern Roman Empire, Arab caliphates for a short period, the French Lusignan dynasty and the Venetians, was followed by over three centuries of Ottoman rule between 1571 and 1878 (de jure until 1914).[10]

Cyprus was placed under British administration based on Cyprus Convention in 1878 and formally annexed by Britain in 1914. While Turkish Cypriots made up 18% of the population, the partition of Cyprus and creation of a Turkish state in the north became a policy of Turkish Cypriot leaders and Turkey in the 1950s. Turkish leaders for a period advocated the annexation of Cyprus to Turkey as Cyprus was considered an "extension of Anatolia" by them; while since the 19th century,[11][12] the majority Greek Cypriot population and its Orthodox church had been pursuing union with Greece, which became a Greek national policy in the 1950s.[13] Following nationalist violence in the 1950s, Cyprus was granted independence in 1960.[14] In 1963, the 11-year intercommunal violence between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots started, which displaced more than 25,000 Turkish Cypriots[15][16] and brought the end of Turkish Cypriot representation in the republic. On 15 July 1974, a coup d'état was staged by Greek Cypriot nationalists[17][18] and elements of the Greek military junta[19] in an attempt at enosis, the incorporation of Cyprus into Greece. This action precipitated the Turkish invasion of Cyprus,[20] which led to the capture of the present-day territory of Northern Cyprus the following month, after a ceasefire collapsed, and the displacement of over 150,000 Greek Cypriots[21][22] and 50,000 Turkish Cypriots.[23] A separate Turkish Cypriot state in the north was established by unilateral declaration in 1983; the move was widely

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condemned by the international community, with Turkey alone recognizing the new state. These events and the resulting political situation are matters of a continuing dispute.

The Cyprus Republic has de jure sovereignty over the island of Cyprus, as well as its territorial sea and exclusive economic area, according to international law (except for the British Overseas Territory of Akrotiri and Dhekelia, administered as Sovereign Base Areas, 2.8% of the territory). However, the Republic of Cyprus is de facto partitioned into two main parts: the area under the effective control of the Republic, located in the south and west, and comprising about 59% of the island's area; and the north,[24] administered by the self-declared Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, covering about 36% of the island's area. Another nearly 4% of the island's area is covered by the UN buffer zone. The international community considers the northern part of the island as territory of the Republic of Cyprus occupied by Turkish forces.[25][26][27][28][29] The occupation is viewed as illegal under international law, amounting to illegal occupation of EU territory since Cyprus became a member of the European Union.[30]

Cyprus is a major tourist destination in the Mediterranean.[31][32][33] With an advanced,[34] high-income economy and a very high Human Development Index,[35][36] the Republic of Cyprus has been a member of the Commonwealth since 1961 and was a founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement until it joined the European Union on 1 May 2004.[37] On 1 January 2008, the Republic of Cyprus joined the eurozone.

### 15 facts about Cyprus

1. The country gained its independence from the United Kingdom on 1st October, 1960 and then became a Commonwealth Republic in 1961.
2. Thanks to the legend saying that the goddess of love, Aphrodite, was born from foam, Cyprus is also called the island of love and beauty.
3. A disputable fact. One of the versions says that the name of the island was derived from the word 'copper' (cuprum). Another version says that it is derived from the name of the cypress tree, which is ubiquitous on the island.
4. An undisputable fact. Cyprus is famous for the greatest number of sunny days in the Mediterranean area.
5. Cyprus is one of the places with the healthiest climate.
6. Cyprus is a former British colony. Great Britain still owns about 3% of the island.
7. The capital of the Republic of Cyprus is the last divided capital in the EU. It is divided between the Republic of Cyprus and the other half is occupied by Turkey since 1974, after the invasion of Turkey in Cyprus.
8. Cyprus is a divided island. The North part of the island, called the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus", is ruled by the Turks, but this title is only recognized by Turkey itself, everyone else calls it "Occupied Cyprus". The southern part of the island is known as the Independent Republic of Cyprus or "Greek Cyprus" even though it's not part of Greece. However, This project has been funded with support from the European Commission under the Erasmus+ Programme. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

this gets confusing since the entire island is part of the European Union, with the exemption of the northern portion of the island ruled by Turkey.

9. You will hear a mix of Greek, Turkish, and English on the island of Cyprus. And most locals know how to speak English as the island was colonized by Britain in 1878 and didn't get independence until 1960. In fact, there are still several British military bases on the island.

10. You can see the southernmost point of the European Union in Cyprus, at Akrotiri.

### **A brief description of the activities carried out in the different phases of the project**

#### Selection of participants

Participants were recruited through communication with the EUROSC clients and through published articles on news portal SIGMALIVE and SIGMALIVE online newsletter. The call for the participants included information about the project objectives, the profile and requirements of the participants, the project activities, the duration of the project, the expected results and the project partners. In total 15 participants were recruited with an age range between 20-60 years old.

#### Profile of the participants

- In total 15 participants were recruited with an age range between 20-60 years old.
- All kinds of educational background were included in the participants – from home-based “restaurant” to women who want to run their home-based craft shop
- 5 out of 15 run their home-based business
- 10 out of 15 want to run a home-based business

#### Implementation of the training

The training took place in Nicosia between 20 - 22 November 2016.

The agenda included the following main points:

- Presentation of the project
- Eco catering & Presentation of good practices from Cyprus and EU
- Green Web Marketing & Presentation of good practices from Cyprus and EU
- Scrapbooking, decoupage and felting & Presentation of good practices from Cyprus and EU

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The training consisted of Powerpoint presentations, discussion in small groups and finally a study visit at a crafts center owned by a young lady. The participants had the chance to acquire new knowledge, to express themselves and anything that concerned them related to the topic of the project, to share freely their ideas and opinions.

At the end of the classroom training the participants received a certificate indicating their participation in the training and the competences gained through their participation in the training.

### Description of how the participants experienced the project and their involvement

The participants were strongly involved in the training process since all of them were interested in designing and implementing their own business, and they have all actively participated in the activities of the training. Their contribution in the training arose both from the discussions during the training but also from providing information from successful case studies in the Cypriot context. During the learning activity, the participants participated in a variety of different actions including discussions in groups or presentation of their ideas regarding the development of their own home-based business in the future.

In general, the feedback provided by the participants was very good. They believed that this training gave them the opportunity to think of the development of a home-based business in a more concise and professional way, and gave them the chance to exchange ideas with other women that either run their home-based business and they succeeded or women that want to develop their home-based business. Also the participants showed great interest for more case studies in Cyprus and more training modules. Also, all the trainees were positive in adopting the proposed methodologies & ideas of the training courses and they were interested on the project and asked more information and how they could be involved in its future activities.

### A brief summary about the interviews taken from the women entrepreneurs

- Inga's Veggie Heaven - Inga
- 56 years old
- Married with 4 children, aged between 25 years old and 10 years old
- Home-based vegetarian and vegan catering that turned up to be a restaurant, making only vegetarian and vegan food. This is the only restaurant in Nicosia of its type
- Top Kinisis Travel – Elena Tanou
- 54 years old

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- 2 children aged in their mid-twenties
- Running one of the largest travel agencies in Cyprus, that began as a small enterprise and turned out to be one of the largest enterprises in Cyprus.

# Macedonia

Macedonia is a country in the Balkan Peninsula and southeastern Europe. It is bordered by Serbia to the north, Albania to the west, Greece to the south, and Bulgaria to the east. With a territory of 25.713 square kilometers, Macedonia is one of the successor states of the former Yugoslavia, from which it declared independence in 1991.

The capital and largest city, Skopje, is home to roughly a quarter of the nation's 2.06 million inhabitants. The majority of the residents are ethnic Macedonians, a South Slavic people. Albanians form a significant minority at around 25 percent, followed by Turks, Romani, Serbs, and others.

Macedonia's history dates back to antiquity, beginning with the kingdom of Paeonia, a Thracian polity. In the late sixth century BCE the area was incorporated into the Persian Achaemenid Empire, then annexed by the Kingdom of Macedonia in the fourth century BCE. The Romans conquered the region in the second century BCE and made it part of the much larger province of Macedonia. Macedonia remained part of the Byzantine (Eastern Roman) Empire, and was often raided and settled by Slavic people in the beginning of the sixth century CE. Following centuries of contention between the Bulgarian and Byzantine empires, it gradually came under Ottoman dominion in the 14th century. Between the late 19th and early 20th century, a distinct Macedonian identity emerged, although following the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913, the modern territory of Macedonia came under Serbian rule. In the aftermath of the First World War (1914–1918) it became incorporated into the Serb-dominated Kingdom of Yugoslavia, which after the Second World War was re-established as a republic (1945) and which became the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1963. Macedonia remained a constituent socialist republic within Yugoslavia until its peaceful secession in 1991.

Macedonia is a parliamentary democracy with an executive government composed of a coalition of parties from the unicameral legislature and an independent judicial branch with a constitutional court.

Macedonia is a member of the UN and the Council of Europe. Since 2005 it has also been a candidate for the European Union and has applied for a NATO membership.

## A brief description of the activities carried out in different phases of the project

### Selection of the participants

The call for the participants in the project was initially announced on the web-site of the organization. Following this, a number of other dissemination activities took place, such as publishing an article in a national newspaper, calling for participants on the Facebook page of the organization, distributing pamphlets, etc. These activities were carried out in the official premises of the company or the School of foreign languages Lingua. The announcement contained a variety of information, ranging from project objectives, the profile and requirement of the participants, the

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performed activities, the time frame which encompasses the activities that followed, the results of the project and the profile of the project partners.

Another crucial channel which enabled the selection of the participants was the Employment Agency of Macedonia, which closely cooperated with the School of Foreign languages Lingua and helped in the search of the 15 participants, who were in fact unemployed women registered there, to take part in the training.

### **Profile of the participants:**

The training consisted of:

- 15 unemployed women mothers, aged between 28 and 55 years old from Bitola, who showed interest in starting their own home based business (HBB)

### **Implementation of classroom training**

The training period took place on October 2016 at the School of foreign languages “Lingua” in Bitola,

The topics covered were:

- Presentation of the project
- Presentation of the three good practices of women entrepreneurs from the region of Bitola
- Eco catering
- Green Web Marketing
- Scrapbooking, decoupage and felting.

The training consisted of a vast number of activities ranging from lectures, group work, practical activities and discussions with the expert as well as discussions among the participants. By doing this, the participants realized the work that goes into starting one’s own business, and it allowed them to freely share their ideas with like-minded people and receive feedback. They were also able to produce different things with their own hands, increasing their imagination and broadening their mind, thus opening it to the possibility of new and exciting things.

When the classroom training finished each and every participant was given a certificate which stands as an acknowledgement of their participation as well as successful completion of the training course. It also stands as a remainder of the knowledge and skills that they have acquired during the training.

### **Description of how the participants experienced the project and their involvement**

The participants were actively involved in the training process and participated in the activities that took part during this process. Their contribution to this entire process is inevitable, since it was they that brought life to the training with their discussions and ideas. In addition, the training followed the pattern of each module, thus finished each one with different tasks written in the module itself. These tasks often involved role playing, playing games, and answering questions connected with each separate module. This way, every woman had the chance to share her own views and listen to the opinions of the rest of the participants.

Several women gave their own feedback for the training, giving comments such as:

1. *“I am very satisfied with the training and the project as a whole”.*

Maja Hristovska, 32 years old

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2. *“I am very happy that I was a part of this project. I liked the presentations a lot and I think I finally have an idea for my future business”.*

Gordana Veljanovska, 55 years

3. *“Great job, girls!”*

Marija Kochovska, 33 years old

4. *“I couldn't be more pleased to have been a part of such an amazing group of women and trainers who inspired me to take risks and follow my dreams”*

Lence Radevska, 35 years old

Upon analyzing the evaluation questionnaires filled by the participants the overall satisfaction from the training course and the project can be clearly noticed. From this, it can be concluded that the women experienced the largest progress in the fields which were covered during the training. However, it can also be seen that they found the entire experience motivating and inspiring. With that being said, they showed remarkable knowledge in marketing, eco-catering, English and so on.

### *A brief summary of the interviews with the women entrepreneurs*

#### **Maja Atanasovska – profile**

- ✓ Age: 30
- ✓ Social status: Married with 2 children (7 years and 3 years old);
- ✓ Business: hair stylist and make-up artist
- ✓ Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZnRq9kg1tDo>

#### **Jasmina Antic-Atanasovska – profile**

- ✓ Age: 39
- ✓ Social status: married with two children (5 and 2 years old);
- ✓ Business: owns a private kindergarten;
- ✓ Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bnDVUmrhIg>

#### **MARIJA Hristovska – profile**

- ✓ Age: 39
- ✓ Social status: married with two children (11 and 7 years old);
- ✓ Business: produces handmade jewelry;

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Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EOudkSx4Bbw>

### Brief summary of the interviews:

- All of the interviewed women started their home-based business because of their financial situation and the difficulty to balance their personal and professional life;
- Every woman found it easier to work from home than leave her child in daycare (kindergarten) and go to work;
- All of them established their business from an idea or a hobby and transformed it into a profitable micro-business;
- They all agreed that they are much happier now doing what they love from the comfort of their own home.

## Bulgaria

Bulgaria, officially the Republic of Bulgaria, is a country in southeastern Europe. It is bordered by Romania to the north, Serbia and Macedonia to the west, Greece and Turkey to the south, and the Black Sea to the east. With a territory of 110,994 square kilometres, Bulgaria is Europe's 16th-largest country.

Organised prehistoric cultures began developing on current Bulgarian lands during the Neolithic period. Its ancient history saw the presence of the Thracians, Greeks, Persians, Celts, Romans, Goths, Alans and Huns. The emergence of a unified Bulgarian state dates back to the establishment of the First Bulgarian State in 681 AD, which dominated most of the Balkans and functioned as a cultural hub for Slavs during the Middle Ages. With the downfall of the Second Bulgarian State in 1396, its territories came under Ottoman rule for nearly five centuries. The Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78 led to the formation of the Third Bulgarian State. In 1946 it became a one-party socialist state as part of the Soviet-led Eastern Bloc. In December 1989 the ruling Communist Party allowed multi-party elections, which subsequently led to Bulgaria's transition into a democracy and a market-based economy.

Bulgaria's population of 7.2 million people is predominantly urbanised and mainly concentrated in the administrative centres of its 28 provinces. Most commercial and cultural activities are centred on the capital and largest city, Sofia. The strongest sectors of the economy are heavy industry, power engineering, and agriculture, all of which rely on local natural resources.

The country's current political structure dates to the adoption of a democratic constitution in 1991. Bulgaria is a unitary parliamentary republic with a high degree of political, administrative, and economic centralisation. It is a member of the European Union, NATO, and the Council of Europe; a founding state of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE); and has taken a seat at the UN Security Council three times.

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## 15 facts about Bulgaria:

1. Bulgaria is the only country in Europe that hasn't changed its name since it was first established. This happened in 681 AD.
2. The oldest gold treasure in the world was found in Bulgaria (in 294 graves were found 3000 gold objects dating back more than 6000 years).
3. Bulgarians shake their heads to mean yes and nod for no.
4. The Bulgarian folk song "Izlel e Delyu Haydutin" by the Bulgarian folk music singer Valya Balkanska was sent in deep space on the board of the US Space Probe – Voyager I, as part of a collection of our civilization's finest cultural artifacts – a message to an alien intelligence.
5. Lactobacillus Bulgaricus, the bacterium that is responsible for giving Bulgarian yoghurt its unique flavour and consistency, can be found only in Bulgarian air.
6. The Bulgarian army has never lost a single flag in battle.
7. John Vincent Atanasoff was a physicist and inventor of Bulgarian descent, best known for inventing the first electronic digital computer.
8. Nearly one third of Bulgaria is covered in forests.
9. The roses grown in Bulgaria's "Rose Valley" produce most (70-85%) of the world's rose oil – a component in most perfumes.
10. The Bulgarian Orthodox Church is the oldest Slavic Orthodox Church.
11. The Cyrillic script was developed in the First Bulgarian State during the 9th century AD at the Preslav Literary School by disciples of the Greek brothers Cyril and Methodius. The Bulgarian Saint Clement of Ohrid is often associated with the creation of the Cyrillic. With the accession of Bulgaria to the EU on January 1, 2007, Cyrillic became the third official alphabet of the EU.
12. Stefka Kostadinova won the high jump of the World Championships in Rome with the sensational 2.09 metres. It has been 28 years since then and no other woman has managed to match or beat this record.
13. Another world record is hold by Yordanka Donkova in 100 metres hurdles. With time of 12.21 min. this record hasn't been broken for 27 years.
14. Rayna Kasabova was a Bulgarian air force pilot and the first woman in the world who participated in a military flight.
15. Vanga is a famous Bulgarian prophetess. It's believed that lots of her predictions came true.

## A description of the activities carried out in the different phases of the project

### Selection of participants

Call for participants in the project was announced on the organizational web-site and during other dissemination activities of ECQ. The announcement comprises information about project objectives, profile and requirements of the participants, project activities, time frame, results, project partners.

Another very important channel for selection of participants was the cooperation with Labour office, Stamboliyski which directed 29 participants (unemployed women registered there) to take part in the project as 23 of them were involved in the training.

### Profile of the participants:

In the training took part:

- 23 unemployed women aged between 29 and 48 years old with kids from the town of Stamboliyski interested in development of home based business (HBB).

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### Implementation of classroom training

The training was held in the period 24-27.01.2017 in "Nikola Yonkov Vaptsarov" Community Center in the town of Stamboliyski.

The following topics were covered:

- Presentation of the project
- Presentation of good practices
- Eco catering
- Green Web Marketing
- Scrapbooking, decoupage and felting
- Elaboration of business plan.

The training included lectures, work in small groups, practical exercises - workshop, group discussions. The participants had the chance to gain new knowledge, to share freely their ideas and opinions, to prepare interesting items with their own hands, to use creatively their imagination in building business ideas out of their dreams and considering the needs and gaps of the local market.

At the end of the classroom training the female participants received a certificate acknowledging their successful completion of the training and improvement of their knowledge and skills regarding the concerned topics.

### A brief description of how the participants experienced the project and their involvement

The participants were actively involved in the training process and actively participated in the conducted activities. Thus they contributed for the better effect of the practical and interactive format of the training and were satisfied by their participation and achieved results. During the training numerous tasks and role plays were conducted according to the questions and games after each module and the women had the chance to discuss all relevant topics. For example, they were divided in groups and decided upon a common business idea, green-web marketing channels for its promotion and ways to implement it.

Some impressions from their feedback are given in the following comments:

5. "Thank you again for the *inspiring training*, as well as for the presentations from the training".

Velichka Angyozova, 42 years

6. "*Keep inspiring the people around you*. I am presenting you one of my dreams, that who knows one day may come true. (*Eco catering Module was the 'fuze'* :))"

Tsvetelina Katarcheva, 37 years

7. "*Excellent 10+! You were great!!! Thank you!*"

Unanimous

8. "*Extremely happy with the course - very good performance of the trainers and great materials, presentations and practice*. Thank you!"

Unanimous

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Analysis of the evaluation questionnaires filled by the participants shows their overall very positive opinion and satisfaction of the training. Most of the women marked a progress in their knowledge and skills on the topics covered by the training. The servants of the Labour office, Stamboliyski who supported ECQ in selection of beneficiaries shared that at the end of the training the female participants were more motivated and enthusiastic about new initiatives and opportunities for professional development. Some of the women who already had a business idea now also have to tools to make it real!

**A brief summary about the interviews taken from the women entrepreneurs (e.g. who they are, what kind of home-based business they have developed etc.)**

#### **Ivelina Mihaylova – profile**

- ✓ Age: 36
- ✓ Social status: Living together without marriage; 1 child - 2 years old girl;
- ✓ Business: hand-made and decorated accessories, souvenirs and toys; packaging of gifts, making cards, invitations, decorations and more
- ✓ Video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_2d8f8yMi1U&t=80s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_2d8f8yMi1U&t=80s)

#### **Teodora Bankova – profile**

- ✓ Age: 32
- ✓ Social status: married with two children - a 6 years old girl and a baby boy;
- ✓ Business: owning a textile company that produces designed jackets and collections to well-known trademarks;
- ✓ Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p8x4kACDE6Y&t=72s>

#### **Katya Trifonova – profile**

- ✓ Age: 34
- ✓ Social status: married with two girls 6 and 7 years old;
- ✓ Business: freelance translator and interpreter in English;
- ✓ Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bMoC0mi5tUk&t=184s>

# Lithuania

Lithuania: Lietuva [liɛtʊ'vɐ]), officially the Republic of Lithuania (Lithuanian: Lietuvos Respublika), is a country in Northern Europe. One of the three Baltic states, it is situated along the southeastern shore of the Baltic Sea, to the east of Sweden and Denmark. It is bordered by Latvia to the north, Belarus to the east and south, Poland to the south, and Kaliningrad Oblast (a Russian exclave) to the southwest. Lithuania has an estimated population of 2.9 million people as of 2015, and its capital and largest city is Vilnius. Lithuanians are a Baltic people. The official language, Lithuanian, along with Latvian, is one of only two living languages in the Baltic branch of the Indo-European language family.

As World War I neared its end, Lithuania's Act of Independence was signed on 16 February 1918, declaring the founding of the modern Republic of Lithuania. In the midst of the Second World War, Lithuania was first occupied by the Soviet Union and then by Nazi Germany. As World War II neared its end and the Germans retreated, the Soviet Union reoccupied Lithuania. On 11 March 1990, a year before the formal dissolution of the Soviet Union, Lithuania became the first Soviet republic to declare itself independent, resulting in the restoration of an independent State of Lithuania.

Lithuania is a member of the European Union, the Council of Europe, a full member of the Eurozone, Schengen Agreement and NATO. It is also a member of the Nordic Investment Bank, and part of Nordic-Baltic cooperation of Northern European countries. The United Nations Human Development Index lists Lithuania as a "very high human development" country. Lithuania has been among the fastest growing economies in the European Union and is ranked 21st in the world in the Ease of Doing Business Index.

## 19 Interesting Facts about Lithuania

1. The football star Romualdas Marcinkus was the single Lithuanian pilot to serve in the Royal Air Force during the Second World War.
2. The name of Lithuania was mentioned for the first time in the Annals of Quedlinburg in 1009. That's old.
3. According to a study made by a French scientist in 1989, Lithuania is in the geographical center of Europe.
4. Lithuanians were the last nation in Europe to convert to Christianity.
5. The Lithuanian language is more ancient than Greek, Latin, German, Celtic, or the Slav tongues. It belongs to the Indo-European group and is nearest to Sanscrit.
6. Some philologists generally agree that Lithuanian is the most ancient of all the living languages.
7. Lithuania is known as the land of storks, the national bird for the country, with about 13,000 pairs.
8. From a ranking in 2011, Lithuania ranked first worldwide for internet upload and download speed. I can attest to that.
9. Lithuania is expected to join the Euro in 2015.
10. Making vodka from corn was first discovered by the Lithuanians.
11. Easter granny brings the Easter eggs, the bunny just helps paint them.

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12. Lithuania was the first to declare independence from the Soviet Union in 1990.
13. Lithuania is the only country in the world with its own official scent, called the Scent of Lithuania.
14. Forest covers 1/3 of the country, including many protected regions and national parks.
15. Basketball is the most popular sport. Several Lithuanians have become NBA players, maybe most famous being Arvydas Sabonis.
16. By the end of the XIV century, Lithuania was the largest country in Europe, and included Belarus and parts of Ukraine.
17. Vilnius University was the first University in the Eastern Europe.
18. Hannibal Lecter from The Silence of the Lambs was born in Lithuania.
19. The mother of Pope John Paul II was of Lithuanian descent.

## **A description of the activities carried out in the different phases of the project**

### **Selection of participants**

SIF managers invited the participants to the training through the Labor Exchange, SIF website, SIF Facebook and from the fund database. SIF manager informed the participants about project objectives, profile and requirements of the participants, project activities, time frame, results and project partners.

### **Profile of the participants**

15 participants studied in classroom based and online. In addition SIF have invited around 20 women for online course – we have organized wide dissemination campaign via our networks. The participants aged between 23 and 54 years old. Target group – women with kids, long-term unemployed or interested the small business.

### **Implementation of classroom training**

Project „Prowomen“ training began on the 6th of October and ended 19th of October. The trainings were held 6 times (duration of each 5 hours).

The following topics were covered:

- ✓ Catering in eco-compatible version
- ✓ Crafts-manufacturing eco-sustainable
- ✓ Green Web marketing

Methods were used during the classroom based trainings. SIF managers prepared presentations about the topics. The trainees studied in small groups, had groups discussions and searched for additional information using computers, performed practical exercises.

The participants had received new knowledge, could freely share their ideas and opinions, and used business ideas out of their dreams and considering the needs of the local market.

Especially participants were interested in training module Green-Web Marketing. For some of them it was new.

Three groups of our target group were participating in online course:

- ✓ 15 women who completed face-to-face trainings

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- ✓ Additional participants. We are inviting them individually in order to introduce online course (2-3 hours introduction)
- ✓ Women who were invited via social networks and use prepared learning materials for self-directed learning. Unfortunately we do not have information about them as do not have an access to the training platform as the trainers.

### Assessment of the learning outcomes

Initial questionnaires of self-evaluation on soft skills (using 10 points scale) have been distributed during first day of the face-to-face training. Women filled them in with help from the trainer as translation was needed. The final questionnaire consisted of two types of questions:

- ✓ Close one choice questions for the assessments of learners knowledge obtained during the course.
- ✓ Close questions for self-assessment and self-recognition of the competences.

Participants could range their new competences and then they could be more confident to go for validation of new skills. The same questionnaire distributed at the end of the course in order to assess impact of the training on the participants.

### A brief description of how the participants experienced the project and their involvement

Many women wrote that got a lot of new knowledge, the courses have been more helpful. Some women already have ideas how to start a small business

Some women feedback:

- ✓ “Thank you for the interesting training”

Agnė Banikonytė, 23 years;

- ✓ “I learned a lot of new”

Kotryna Kolpakova, 24 years ;

- ✓ “Training prompted me to take action”

Lina Marsčionkienė, 40 years;

- ✓ “I gain a lot of knowledge and self-confidence. Thank You”

Julita Stankūnaitė, 46 years.

### A brief summary about the interviews taken from the women entrepreneurs

#### Inga Unguraitytė

Age: 26

I think that this project gives a lot of opportunities to create your own business. I think this project helped to construct a new idea using e-marketing module. This new knowledge will be useful in the future when I will create my own business.

#### Aušra Variakojienė

Age - 43

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The training gave a lot of new information, I gained a lot of confidence. I have some new ideas how to create my own business. I think it could be some kind of training courses of lithuanian language or courses about healthy lifestyle.

### **Rasa Trepkuvienė**

Age - 54

During the training I came up with new ideas for my own business. I think I will use the knowledge I gained from the e-marketing module and I will involve family members in my business. I learned a lot of new things and new friends. I think it will be useful in the future.

### **Natalija Podolianko**

Age - 54

I learned a lot of new information, the internet marketing module was very interesting. After this training I came up with a lot of new ideas about creating my own business and I think I need to take initiative to start it.

## **Croatia**

Croatia (Listeni/kroʊˈeɪʃə/ kroh-ay-shə; Croatian: Hrvatska [xř̩vaːtskaː]), officially the Republic of Croatia (Croatian: Republika Hrvatska, About this sound listen (help·info)), is a sovereign state between Central Europe, Southeast Europe, and the Mediterranean. Its capital city is Zagreb, which forms one of the country's primary subdivisions, along with its twenty counties. Croatia covers 56,594 square kilometres (21,851 square miles) and has diverse, mostly continental and Mediterranean climates. Croatia's Adriatic Sea coast contains more than a thousand islands. The country's population is 4.28 million, most of whom are Croats, with the most common religious denomination being Roman Catholicism.

A unitary state, Croatia is a republic governed under a parliamentary system. The International Monetary Fund classified Croatia as an emerging and developing economy, and the World Bank identified it as a high-income economy. Croatia is a member of the European Union (EU), United Nations (UN), the Council of Europe, NATO, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and a founding member of the Union for the Mediterranean. As an active participant in the UN peacekeeping forces, Croatia has contributed troops to the NATO-led mission in Afghanistan and took a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for the 2008–2009 term.

The service sector dominates Croatia's economy, followed by the industrial sector and agriculture. Tourism is a significant source of revenue during the summer, with Croatia ranked the 18th most popular tourist destination in the world. The state controls a part of the economy, with substantial government expenditure. The European Union is Croatia's most important trading partner. Since 2000, the Croatian government constantly invests in infrastructure, especially transport routes and facilities along the Pan-European corridors. Internal sources produce a significant portion of energy in Croatia; the rest is imported. Croatia provides a universal health care system and free primary

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and secondary education, while supporting culture through numerous public institutions and corporate investments in media and publishing.

**A description of the activities carried out in different phases of the project**

Selection of the participants

Profile of the participants:

**A brief description of how the participants experienced the project and their involvement**

**A brief summary of the interviews with the women entrepreneurs** (e.g. who they are, what kind of home-based business they have developed etc.)

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# Conclusion

Females are an under-represented segment of entrepreneurs, yet, women are one of the world's most untapped sources of creativity and growth. In recent years, a record number of women have been breaking out of corporate life and embracing entrepreneurial careers as an alternative to inflexible work practices and outdated systems. Although more is needed to reach a definite conclusion on this issue, market analysis and research shows that women are also mothers, and they are afraid that they can't juggle motherhood with the intensive entrepreneurial life. More has to be done to address the needs of women in the job sector/entrepreneurship.

The Pro-Women project achieved various short term impacts such as empowering women, providing them with new skills to start a Home Based Business and strengthen their self-esteem. The program also achieved and is yet expected to achieve, long term outcomes such as promoting female entrepreneurship and giving incentives to all women to enter the job market, improve the quality of life of the families and fight unemployment.

Moreover, the program has successfully addressed the problems of unemployment through a complete training and the need to balance work with family by promoting female entrepreneurship and sharing information, experiences, results, good practices by interviewing successful business women. It has also promoted linguistic diversity and intercultural awareness of the EU and has taken off an area in need of suitable and effective strategies in order to exit from the current crisis.

Hundreds of women from eight different countries participated in the Pro-Women project and benefited from a targeted training that gave them the necessary skills to start a business from home. It provided unemployed women with less opportunity the chance to reconcile working life and family life and has given to the women the skills and knowledge needed to enter the business world with confidence and increase the employability.

A total of 132 women from 8 different countries participated in the classroom training of the Pro.Women project. The e-learning course was successful although some participants, especially in Cyprus, Spain, and Croatia, preferred a traditional type of learning. 330 participants enrolled and completed successfully the e-learning. Fifteen (15) women created their own businesses following the training. Nonetheless, although some of the participants already started their own business, some of them have stated their intention to do so in a near future.

The group of participants in each country was heterogenous. The participants had different experiences, came from varied educational backgrounds, diverse age-groups and with more or fewer ideas about a future business but with the same hope and expectations. This diversity benefited the participants because they could help each other, exchange ideas, experiences and results, share concerns, form future partnership but also created friendships. It has also benefited the

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project since the participants brought their background knowledge and could contribute actively to the training.

The interviews with successful businesswomen had a very positive impact on the participants as they had the opportunity to listen to real-life business problems and entrepreneurship stories by one of them who is running her own business. It brought the learners closer to the business environment. Some found inspiration; other examined more thoroughly their ideas. The participants have raised awareness on issues regarding female entrepreneurship. Awareness is crucial as women are one of the weakest social groups when it comes to the job market but the world needs women entrepreneurs. Indeed, women are a clear asset because “they see the world through a different lens”, so, do business differently. In fact, women have excellent communication skills, are fair and just leaders and they value team work among other things; all qualities needed in the work place. The biggest challenge for women is to find an appropriate solution to combine work and family life which is exactly what the Pro-Women project has done: it has provided all the necessary skills to start a Home Based Business through a classroom training and e-learning. Moreover, women need entrepreneurial education to feel confident and the training strategy has led to exactly this. The project has become an example and guide for many women looking for their own personal and professional fulfilment. The participants were strengthened in their professional life insofar as they will implement the acquired skills in the workplace. They have been already transmitting their savoir-faire to all those with whom they are and will be in contact everyday which will also impact on the all community because they will represent an example of power and determination.

Furthermore, they have gained concrete knowledge and skills needed to help them create their own Home Based Businesses, the training offered women a human, professional and linguistic growth that will make them serious professionals and managers and allow them to acquire social, civic, intercultural, linguistic and professional competencies. They learned the bases required to start a Home Based Business, the importance of having an idea, what is happening in the market and more about eco-friendly businesses. In particular, it helped those with no ideas to think about starting a business, it provided the others with the tools necessary to go further and improve their business plan. Preparing the business plan was paramount because it enabled future businesswomen to define, collect and describe their ideas, but also to compare the different methodologies they learned during the training in order to apply these methods outside the classroom when they will start their own business.

The participants who completed the training strengthened and with the necessary skills needed in the workplace and their professional life. In addition, they will pass on their knowledge to future generations and all the people around them by sharing their experience, feeling more confident and organised and becoming role-model. As a result, they will become a true example for other women and guide for the other women who are looking for a personal and professional accomplishment.

Finally, the outcomes of the training went beyond providing women working proficiencies. Women gained in self-confidence, motivation to really put their knowledge into practice and use what they have learned to promote female entrepreneurship even after the end of the project. They will do so

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by starting their own business, by sharing their training experience, and becoming the spokesperson in favour of female entrepreneurship. Moreover, the Home Based Business is a great solution to overcome the work/family life struggle. In the current economic crisis this is all the more important because thanks to the Pro-Women project, women will finally have the chance to enter the job market. They can now enter the business market with no fear but determination and assurance thanks to the knowledge acquired during the training. It will also improve their quality of life and that of their family. Surely, the family as a whole will benefit from an extra professional who will bring an additional income. Furthermore, according to the Economist, women reinvest 90% of their earnings in their families and communities; as a result, investing on women and enabling them to enter the job market by creating their own business, is also an investment in the world economy and the future of all of us.

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