



SYMPATIC

Support and Value Adults Mobility and
Training for Integration into Companies

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**Occupational Profile
Executive Summary**

**Intellectual Output 1
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Aims and objectives of SYMPATIC

SYMPATIC partners have long lasting experience in working with young and often disadvantaged young adults, organizing international mobilities with them, similar to many other organisations all over Europe. But the SYMPATIC partnership detected as a shortcoming that in many cases the support for the young person ends with the return to their hometown and does not unfold the full potential of mobilities as a means of socio-professional integration.

The aim of SYMPATIC is to tackle this issue with 3 innovative actions:

- sensitizing companies and employers for the experiences and competences gained by young people during an international mobility. Additionally, the work with the companies entails a training offer for employers or HR responsible about designing a tutoring programme and good onboarding processes that lead to sustainable working relations.
- Working with staff of mobility organisations that are experienced in working with young people during the mobilities, but don't have the expertise to work with the young people on their career decisions - a training course for professionals working with young people in mobility programmes is designed to qualify them as jobcoach and encourage the organisations to think the mobility as a whole process of professional orientation.
- develop a platform that helps to match employment offers and young people's profiles focusing on soft skills needed for the open position and the experiences and informally gained skills of the young person.

The Partnership

 <p>Eurocircle, based in Marseille, specialized in international youth mobilities for disadvantages young people. Coordinator in SYMPATIC.</p>	 <p>Ciofs-FP, large Italian VET provider with regional Borads allover Italy. Offers VET courses and Guidance. Experience in organizing international mobilities. SYMPATIC is implemented in Lombardy</p>	 <p>Edit-C, VET centre in Nicosia, working with different target groups. Specialised in youth mobilities and work placement programmes.</p>
 <p>U.bus, based in Berlin, specialized in international youth mobilities for young unemployed people</p>	 <p>ADICE, based in Roubaix, specialized in international youth mobilities for disadvantaged young people.</p>	 <p>MetropolisNet, European Network with members from 8 European countries implementing local strategies for employment and social inclusion.</p>

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The Occupational Profile

The Occupational Profile aims to give a detailed overview on the labour market situation in the tourism sector in all project regions and to build a diverse network of companies willing to be involved in SYMPATIC project activities. It shapes the common understanding of the partnership, involves different stakeholders in all regions to ensure the project activities are relevant and provides the context information needed to develop needs-based curricula in the Tutor's Kit (IO2) the Mobility Pack (IO3). The partnership planned to collect the information for the 'Occupational Profile' partly by desk research and another substantial part by interviews with employers on their perspectives on recruiting, staff needs and the labour market situation. With the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in February 2020 it became difficult to maintain contact with the employers approached before and some withdrew completely from their participation. A total of 19 interviews was held, some before and some during the crisis. This was the first immediate challenge for the SYMPATIC partnership posed by the pandemic, in which other ways the project is affected and how the partnership plans to deal with it can be found in detail in the long version of the 'Occupational Profile' in Chapter 5.

Summary of the Findings

Summing up the findings of the 'Occupational Profile' in five different European regions (Republic of Cyprus, Marseille and Hauts de France in France, Berlin in Germany and Lombardy in Italy), it was clear that all regions had positive expectations for the economic development and unemployment rates were stable or lowering during the last years and in the forecast for 2020. Positive trends in all regions were seen as well in the tourism sector, which is the focus of SYMPATIC: number of visitors and the turnover of all businesses together was rising during the last years and was expected to rise also in 2020.

The regions also share similar challenges: one is an elevated youth unemployment rate which was the double or almost triple of the general unemployment figure (except Berlin, where the rate was almost equal to the general unemployment figure in 2019).

The desk research about the tourism industry revealed for all regions the challenge of a skills mismatch or a skills shortage for many jobs in the tourism sector. The interviews conducted within this research validated this. The hard-to-fill positions concern very different professional profiles, so the reasons for this mismatch situation are different and complex. As a tendency it can be said that the rather low-qualified positions of which there are always many fixed-term job openings in the beginning of the touristic season, are not so attractive for job seekers due to working conditions (working late or in shifts, many fixed-time contracts in touristic seasons, stressful tasks and also beneath average payments) and there are not enough candidates with formal qualification or relevant previous experience. But the same mismatch problem applies for expert positions or high-skilled profiles which includes sales and marketing, especially online marketing, reception and general management but as well kitchen chef. For some of them the demand is too high and for other positions the candidates don't possess the needed skills as the educational systems do not prepare them sufficiently.

In this situation employers agreed more and more to employ persons without formal qualification and previous experience and to train them on the job. During recruiting they place much more importance on soft skills and attitudes of the candidate instead of the exact qualification needed. A small insight is given by the interviews held with employers for this Occupational Profile who were asked which soft skills and attitudes are needed to be employed in their company and across all three reports from the interviews *communication and socialising skills* and being *reliable and diligent* were rated as most important. Equally, when asked for reasons not to employ someone the most given answers were a *disrespectful attitude* and *not being able to express oneself well*. A challenge mentioned by employers when working with (especially young) people who did not work formerly in the tourist sector, was that they are disappointed by the work or find another work that they prefer and leave the company still during, or right after the initial training phase.

The SYMPATIC activities have been designed with the young people as main beneficiaries in mind and aiming at supporting especially those in unemployment and being in disadvantaged situations, to develop a professional perspective and progress in their careers. In the light of the findings of this research it seems that also companies can benefit from a cooperation with mobility organisations in a way that they get in contact with young people who have recently gained work experiences and who are well accompanied by jobcoaches taking conscious decisions on their career choices. Additionally, the tutor kit can support companies in designing onboarding processes that lead to sustainable working relations and young people feel well-received in the workplace and prepared for the tasks they should perform.

Of course, this is a pre-pandemic scenario and the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in early 2020 changes the main parameters on which the project was built. The almost full stop of touristic travels and all kinds of events in spring 2020 hit businesses completely unexpected and the future scenarios are very insecure, as nobody knows how long this situation will last, if new closures will be necessary, and for how long and under which conditions state support will be granted. The assumption that the touristic sector is favourable for the SYMPATIC project as there are very regular job opening and also people with little qualifications can enter the job market, is no longer true and SYMPATIC needs to constantly monitor the situation to find the best possible way to implement the project activities.

At least it is likely that tourism will continue when the crisis is over and maybe also during times of lower contagion rates and that the skills and competences requested by the companies will not change substantially until the end of this crisis. So, ideally the time can be used to invest in education and training of young people based on the knowledge gained in this survey and in the numerous studies referenced.