

NEWSLETTER No 3.



**sustainable
apprentices**



Training the workforce of the future to apply the SDGs in SMEs through Work-Based Learning in Apprenticeship programmes



www.sustainableapprentices.eu



@sustainableapprentices



**Co-funded by
the European Union**

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission, through 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.

Project number: 2021-1-ES01-KA220-VET-000025308

Sustainable Apprentices' final Conference in Spain



The Sustainable Apprentices project concluded with a closing event on January 25th at the AIN offices in Pamplona, Spain. The Multiplier Event brought together members of the project consortium from various parts of Europe to bid farewell to the initiative. Special guests included students and educators from the vocational training center ETI, and SMEs representatives, the primary target audience of the project.

The event featured a structured agenda, commencing with a warm welcome from AIN partners. Jesus Boyano, INFODEF's Director and coordinator of the project, then addressed the students, providing insights into the project's goals, objectives, and rationale. He also introduced the SDGs and its relevance to the industrial sector, the SMEs and why it is mandatory for young workers to be prepared to provide support in the implementation of sustainable practices in their work places.

Subsequently, the event showcased all resources developed by the consortium, including educational materials, courses, and the Online Open Materials platform.

Active participation was encouraged from students and educators, fostering engagement and interaction. The event concluded with a coffee session, providing an opportunity for direct conversations between the project team and attendees.

The final conference allowed for the exchange of feedback and the sharing of innovative ideas.

Successful piloting across Italy, Spain, Türkiye, and Portugal with VET educators and in-company trainers

A key part of the final phase of the project has been the piloting in Spain, Italy, Portugal and Turkey with VET educators and in-company trainers. This allowed the consortium to test the training content and methodology designed to help implement the learning programmes in line with the SDGs, as well as the learning platform.

The aim was to test the materials with 20 educators and 100 apprentices and SMEs and the partners have finally managed to exceed this number by piloting directly with 39 trainers who, in turn, have tested the materials with more than 170 beneficiaries.

For conducting the piloting phase, the project has introduced a comprehensive online e-learning platform consisting of six units. This platform serves as a versatile resource, facilitating the delivery of the curriculum and providing a virtual space for educators and learners to engage with the content. These units are meticulously designed not only to impart theoretical knowledge, but also to inculcate practical skills essential for future professionals facing sustainable development challenges in authentic SME contexts.

Project partners, co-led by AIN and INFODEF, initiated a pilot programme, granting VET educators and in-company trainers access to the platform in October 2023. Educators have been allotted approximately one month to actively participate in the units and complete the evaluation process. During this period, educators are tasked with examining the technical aspects of the platform and evaluating the practical applicability of the resources in real educational settings.

The testing process is not limited to only the educators' perspectives, but actively involves the students and apprentices who participate directly in the curriculum. Educators and in-company trainers collect valuable feedback from students on the applicability and effectiveness of the project in their learning experiences. This integrative approach ensures that the project is not only theoretically sound, but also responds to the practical needs and expectations of those directly involved in the educational process.

Through the piloting in the four countries, the following elements of the project have been evaluated:

- Evaluation of the E-LEARNING COURSE (6 Learning Units) offered on the Online Platform.
- Evaluation of the PRAGMATIC RESOURCES offered on the Online Platform.
- Feedback received from VET students and SMEs with whom the pragmatic resources have been put into practice.

Overall, the Sustainable Apprentices project has demonstrated its potential to enhance vocational training, instill sustainability awareness, and generate positive outcomes for both educators and students. The recommendations provided by participants in each country will undoubtedly contribute to the project's ongoing evolution, ensuring its adaptability and relevance in diverse educational contexts. As the project moves forward, the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders will play a pivotal role in shaping a sustainable and impactful future for vocational education in Europe and beyond.



VET educators and in-company trainers participating at the pilot phase in Italy

Spain

The Spanish pilot project received positive evaluations from both VET teachers and students, marking it a success. While the online training content, including Sustainable Apprentices, was praised for its engaging and trend-aligned nature, improvements in length and concrete examples were suggested. Pragmatic Resources were recognized for their relevance to VET students and SMEs. However, areas for improvement, such as translation issues and question structure, were identified, emphasizing the need for continued enhancement in vocational education delivery.

Portugal

Participants in Portugal appreciated the high quality and value of the training content, particularly praising face-to-face training and the conceptual didactical core. The overall feedback was positive, with trainers finding both practical activities and e-learning courses relevant to their professional practice. However, challenges in accessing the online platform were reported, highlighting the importance of ensuring hassle-free access and functionality in local languages for future experiences.

Italy

In Italy, trainers expressed overall appreciation for the resources and methodologies introduced by the Sustainable Apprentices project, particularly finding the pragmatic activities useful and engaging. Challenges arose in implementing these resources due to limited teaching hours and perceived disconnection from the subjects taught. Recommendations include making resources more flexible and adaptable to trainers' needs, addressing the time constraints, and providing shorter schedules for more efficient integration into apprenticeship programs.



Participants in the pilot in Spain.

Türkiye

In Turkey, the feedback indicated a range of positive effects from the Sustainable Apprentices activities. Participants reported increased environmental awareness among students, emphasizing the importance of balancing economic gains with environmental responsibility. While some expressed a preference for face-to-face events, others highlighted the positive impact on student engagement and participation. The activities were noted for fostering ethical considerations and generating creative ideas. Overall, the responses reflected a favorable impact on students' environmental awareness and professional outlook.

Third and final project result: a methodological guide to facilitate implementation by third parties

We are excited to introduce the Methodological Framework, a comprehensive reference document tailored for policy and decision-makers, educational institutions, VET providers, and intermediary bodies. This framework serves as a guiding tool, offering methodological guidelines and recommendations to facilitate the seamless implementation of Sustainable Apprentices project results by diverse organizations.

Within the framework, a theoretical approach is presented, focusing on the implementation of the SDGs in SMEs through apprenticeship programs. It delves into the project's achievements, lessons learned, and provides guidelines for the transferability and utilization of results at both national and European levels. Drawing on the consortium's expertise, stakeholder feedback, and insights from the pilot phase, the guide offers a robust foundation for the integration of project outcomes into various educational contexts.

Anticipated to make a significant impact, the Methodological Framework aims to empower stakeholders, policy-makers, VET educators, in-company trainers, and SMEs. By offering an innovative tool, it seeks to promote, support, and enhance the development of educational programs that champion apprenticeship initiatives aligned with the SDGs in SMEs. Ultimately, the document aligns with the overarching goal of the Sustainable Apprentices project – to foster awareness, promote innovation, and address the dynamic needs of the labor market through collaboration with policy and decision-makers, educational institutions, I-VET, C-VET providers, social partners, and other intermediary bodies.



The guide is accessible through the project website by following this link and clicking on "Download the Methodological Framework" <https://sustainableapprentices.eu/what-we-do/>

Milestones achieved: Highlights from the fourth consortium meeting



The fourth consortium meeting of the Sustainable Apprentices Erasmus+ project marked a significant stride towards the realisation of project goals. Hosted by GOI in Turkey, the primary focus of this meeting was the meticulous arrangement of the Trial Stage set to take place in September 2023.

Key objectives centred around evaluating the development progress of the Online Open Learning Materials Platform (O.2) and the Methodological Framework (O.3). For the Online Platform, the consortium delved into crucial aspects, including the incorporation of feedback garnered from target users during the B-Learning course review. A comprehensive evaluation of the E-Directory was also a priority to ensure its seamless integration into the trial stage.

Similarly, attention was dedicated to the Methodological Framework, involving a thorough review of the Comparative Analysis, methodology, and tools earmarked for the trial stage. The meeting also paved the way for preparing the development phase of the trial, outlining considerations for the subsequent writing of the evaluation report and the Methodological Framework.

The gathering showcased the consortium's commitment to meticulous planning and collaborative efforts, setting the stage for a successful Trial Stage that will undoubtedly contribute to the project's overarching goal of revolutionising vocational education and training practices.

Celebrating achievements: Fifth and final consortium meeting in Pamplona, Spain

In a momentous gathering, the Sustainable Apprentices Erasmus+ project reached a pivotal milestone with the fifth and final consortium meeting held in Pamplona, Spain in January 2024. The primary objective of this gathering was to meticulously review the culmination of efforts during the pilot stage and gather invaluable feedback from the participants.

The meeting was marked by crucial discussions and decisions, including the finalization of project results such as the Online Open Learning Materials Platform (O.2) and the Methodological Framework (O.3). The consortium engaged in productive conversations to solidify agreements for the Exploitation Plan, ensuring the effective utilization and dissemination of project outcomes.

As part of the agenda, meticulous attention was given to establishing final budget controls, conducting thorough evaluations, and outlining the framework for the comprehensive Final Report. This rigorous process ensures transparency and accountability in the project's financial management and assessment of overall impact.

An exciting coincidence adds to the significance of this meeting, as it aligns with the International Multiplier Conference.

The consortium looks forward to concluding this chapter with a sense of accomplishment, paving the way for the dissemination of project outcomes that will shape the future of vocational education and training across Europe and beyond.





sustainable apprentices

Training the workforce of the future to apply the SDGs in SMEs through Work-Based Learning in Apprenticeship programmes



 www.sustainableapprentices.eu |  [@sustainableapprentices](https://www.facebook.com/sustainableapprentices)



This project has been funded with support from the European Commission, through 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.
Project number: 2021-1-ES01-KA220-VET-000025308