



Grundtvig Programme



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IMPACT AND BENEFITS OF THIS PROJECT FOR LEARNERS AND STAFF

From the beginning of the twentieth century biography has been seen as a prime source for the understanding of History. These texts contain an instrumentality education and can be assessed in the context of a pedagogy of the example. Biographies are fascinating! Rare are those who fall indifferent in the face of vicissitudes of life. Few manage to remain outside the clashes, victories and failures experienced in other lives. The narrative of individual paths always raises interest. A biography, therefore, describes the unique path of a single being, original and unrepeatable. It is to draw one's identity reflected in deeds and words, it is to mint one's life by the testimony of the others. Authors don't write biographies in vain. They write with precise objectives: to celebrate, to criticize, to demolish, to discover, to deny, to rehabilitate, to holy... These aims and intentions mean that to portray life, natural experiences become, intentionally or not, a model of pedagogy. The educational strength of a biographical story is undeniable, particularly when it comes from lives with very own characteristics, as of the emigrants/immigrants ones.

Portugal has been, since the fifteenth century, a country of emigrants, which eventually affected its entire history. The great stampede of the country, occurred by the end of the 50s, and nowadays heads for Europe: France, Germany, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg, Switzerland, etc.. The impact of this outbreak emigration was so strong that shakes the whole Portuguese society. In less than ten years, over one million Portuguese, for example, have emigrated to France. In despite of all the obstacles, Portuguese emigration remained to this day, though more modest in size and now taking on a temporary basis, and increasingly linked to economic investments, study, work, etc..

Over the last twenty years, Portugal has also become a destination for most immigrants. Until the nineties, Portugal has been sought by residents of Portuguese speaking countries, but currently is chosen by people from the countries of Eastern Europe. The great boom of immigration occurred in 1999 and only slowed down in 2003. The number of legal immigrants in Portugal reaches around half a million people. This situation then becomes extremely difficult to control, mainly due to the action of illegal immigration networks.

Thus, the student population of adults in our school is closely linked with the factor of e/immigration, not only by the weight of the problem in our National History, but also by the connection it has with almost all the Portuguese families. In all of these families we can find emigrated relatives and the whole Portuguese society, according to the large immigration of citizens from Eastern Europe at the end of the twentieth century, was faced with this event. Therefore, all our adult learners are somehow

related to this very phenomenon. Some are children of emigrants, others were emigrants themselves, others have close family that is/was abroad, others have neighborhood, professional or friendship links with immigrants from the East. Well, learning through life with the learning that someone built doing the same route of life, seems extremely interesting, stimulating and attractive. The Stories of Life from the e/immigrants close to our adults will certainly enrich their knowledge with the experience gained, so many times hard and suffered, from those who had to leave their original country.

We think this partnership would be very useful because it would allow us to re-establish a net of interpersonal, social and professional relations, promoting trust and self-esteem. This way, we intend that this partnership will contribute to the education of our public, with the following intentionalities:

- To develop activities and educational materials to use in the research of biographical data;
- To write biographies based on uniform working standards;
- To analyze the history of life, enriching the learning of the students throughout others lives;
- To provide examples of good practice, through the described situations in the compiled biographies;
- To promote awareness that the examples of stories of life of e/immigrants can help to develop individual skills and capabilities, to overcome the unemployment and social exclusion;
- To create tools to enable adults to build their own life story, as this type of training is based on the experience of life of learners;
- To create conditions for greater success in training, knowing that other experiences are reflected in their study level;
- To share experiences of different cultures through the knowledge of the biographies of all the partner countries, in an European dimension;
- To prevent phenomena of exclusion and not learning, as it is shown that we are all capable of learning, according to previous experiences of each one, with each own kind of intelligence and style of learning;
- To raise the adults for their integration in a global world that is the European context;
- To respond to the problems of today and the challenges of the future, using these experiences of life;
- To involve regional and local authorities (Town Hall, PROFIT – V. N. Famalicão Project of Territorial Integration 2005-2009, V. N. Famalicão Job Centre), stressing important social functions, recognizing officially the important value of the History of Anonymous People.

The staff that is going to work with this adult population, find the project a very original and interesting one. All the teachers involved, are certainly going to gain a lot with all the richness it will generate, because human lives always have a lot to teach to all of us. Men made History and History is an example for human kind. It must not be made only of great individuals, but mostly with the common ones. A general is important in a battle, but it can't be won without the soldiers. Teachers will have to do research about how to write biographies correctly, in order to guide the learners.

Our institution sees this project as tremendously important to the kind of teaching it provides to its adult students, since it allows those students to acquire precious tools to use in their professional lives, but also because it puts them in contact with another cultural dimension: the European one. We need to become aware of the importance of everyone's participation in the life of the community and the capacity of organizing and mobilizing local citizens. To us, it looks especially important the sharing of experiences with other European institutions. The presence of Escola Secundária D. Sancho I as a partner of this project will surely contribute to the fact that it may become a school of reference on a local and regional basis.

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