



Building the Universities of the Future
through Social Innovation Education

ABOUT BUFSIE

BUFSIE is an innovative Erasmus+ KA2 project that runs for approximately three years, from December 2020 to May 2023.

The project seeks to connect students, researchers and Higher Education Institution (HEI) teachers with the business world, the local community and political actors, to make social change by integrating into HEIs' teaching practices that are student-centered, participatory and experiential.

BUFSIE scales up the novel educational pedagogy of Social Innovation Education (SIE) and transfers it to the higher education level. The project aspires to assist educators to firmly embed SIE into their culture and teaching practices, as well as empower students with a mixture of social, entrepreneurial and active citizenship competences.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

- Strengthen employability and new professional paths by providing transversal skills and social innovation learning opportunities to students.
- Go beyond teaching entrepreneurial competences and equip and improve the practical skills of students in any field of activity and academic discipline.
- Improve teachers' professional development.
- Foster new ways of effective collaboration among university-business-community and build sustainable partnerships towards integrating such collaborations in HEIs.
- Enhance education by incorporating and integrating experiential, participatory and student-centered teaching and learning practices whereby the active and practical contribution of students is pivotal.



OUTPUTS OF THE PROJECT

- O1 - BUFSIE Framework for embedding SIE in HEIs
- O2 - BUFSIE replication toolbox
- O3 - BUFSIE blended training programme
- O4 - BUFSIE Serious Game introducing SIE

OUR WORK UNTIL NOW

The partnership between the Institute for Learning Innovation (ILI), Friedrich-Alexander-Universitaet Erlangen Nuernberg (Germany), Stimuli For Social Change (Greece), Centre for Social Innovation (Cyprus), University of Cyprus, University of Zagreb (Croatia), University of Barcelona (Spain) and University of Macedonia (Greece) held the Kick Off Consortium Meeting online on 19th January 2021. During the Kick Off Meeting, the partner organisations set the foundations, aims and expectations that they aim to reach through the project.

As part of the Intellectual Output 1 (IO1), several activities have taken place at partner organisations. At the University of Cyprus, four focus groups with students were conducted, with the main takeaway being that students seem to be largely unfamiliar with the concept of Social Innovation in education. This was corroborated by the survey with academics and the national report as well. The project team at the University of Cyprus will do their best to inform stakeholders on the issue in later stages of the project and will attempt to include social innovation through various activities.

At the University of Zagreb, four focus groups with students were conducted. Students were very interested in the topic and provided many useful insights which will be used at a later stage of the project. In addition, the team members of the University of Zagreb have conducted a desk survey along with the interviews with renowned university professors which actively practice social innovation. According to the gathered information, a national report regarding the matter at hand has been compiled.

At the University of Barcelona, six focus groups with 27 students in total were conducted, while six reports, one per focus group, were completed. Additionally, Prof. Mario Barajas was a Key-note Speaker at the International Conference on Distance Education and Learning (Shanghai, Beijing, online) and gave a talk on "Building the Universities of the Future through Social Innovation Education. A European approach" in front of more than a 100 participants from 12 countries around the world. The University of Barcelona has furthermore presented the project to different local associations, and to a large number of university students and lecturers and has invited staff from other Spanish universities to collaborate with BUFSIE in the future.

Lastly, at the Department of Balkan, Slavic & Oriental Studies of the University of Macedonia, four groups of students took part in the presentation of the program at the Museum of Macedonian Struggle. Students of the School of Fine Arts and their teachers were informed about the program. The transnational report as a result of the activities from IO1 will soon be made available at the BUFSIE website.



WHO WE ARE



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