

## European Exchange of Social Service Providers

Practices, activities and project take-aways of the partner organisations of the Erasmus+ KA2 project “Training and Further Education in Care and Social Services” (TECS)



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## Introduction

In early 2019 a group of representatives from 10 member organisations of Samaritan International, all working in the social and care sector, laid the groundwork for the TECS project – Training and further Education in Care and Social services – as they took the first steps toward this Erasmus+ KA 2 project to address a common issue.

In their discussion, the current situation of the social and care sector and its future turned out to be one of the most crucial topics. While the social systems in the 10 different countries of the project partners are very different, the challenges in the sector are the similar in all of Europe. Well educated and motivated personnel is one of the most important aspects of working successfully in this field.

Therefore, the future project partners decided to conduct a best-practice exchange in social services further education.

The project partners are very diverse both in size of their organisations and geographically. The project partners are from the EU countries Austria, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia, from the membership candidate countries North Macedonia and Serbia and two affiliated project partners were from Georgia and Ukraine. After the project was granted, the project partners took up the work, not yet knowing what enormous challenges the next two years would bring to the social care sector in particular. Yet, the consortium managed to successfully conduct their planned program, with the help of all partners' flexibility and valuable contributions. In this brochure, we document the full project partners' take-aways from the project.

TECS took place from October 2019 to August 2022. For more information on the project, please see the project website at:

<https://tecs.samaritan-international.eu/>

### Project partners



Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund

SAMARITERBUND



ASOCIÁCIA SAMARITÁNOV  
SLOVENSKEJ REPUBLIKY



Институт за развој на заедницата  
Community Development Institute  
Instituti për Zhvillim të Bashkësisë



INITIATIVE FOR  
DEVELOPMENT &  
COOPERATION



SAMARYTAŃSKA FEDERACJA ORGANIZACJI POZARZĄDOWYCH



სამართველოს სამარიტულთა კავშირი



## Project contributions from the partners – Practices and take-aways

On the following pages, the practices contributed by the main partner organisations are laid out as well as their impressions from the project.

### ASB – Nursing homes, assisted living

Near Leipzig the ASB provides different services for elderly people. Visited as part of the project were the two nursing homes „Am Silbersee“ and „Am Sonnenpark“. One can choose between a house with 130 or 24 inhabitants, each divided into two groups or you move into one of 54 apartments of assisted living with more or less mobile care. Another possibility are the two daily care centers with capacities of 14 and 17.



The vast majority of the inhabitants suffer from dementia and the ASB Leipzig offers different kinds of special support for them. The special concept of Mäeutik is used since 2016, which was developed by Cora van der Kooij in the

Netherlands. This caring concept is based on the biography of the seniors and creates a special connection between them and the care workers. As a side effect this implementation stopped the employee turnover which is part of the increasing staff shortage in German care since some years. Care is also complemented by palliative care and aroma therapy. To people with intense dementia the ASB Leipzig offers also electronic tover-boards for activating them

(photo) and absolutely realistic toy-cats to



get in contact with. Inhabitants withdrawing themselves are looked after in special groups together and also people without dementia get special encouragement.

The nursing home „Am Silbersee“ has got its own kitchen and laundry supplying not only their own inhabitants with their services. But the employees hand out food and clothes to the 130 elderly people of „Am Silbersee“ by themselves – for lunch they use special trolleys keeping the temperature (photo). This individual service improves their personal connection – the seniors have more social interaction and the employees get to know the individual persons for whom they are working.

### In-house education centre

„Am Sonnenpark“ also has its own education centre. This is where care trainings and seminars take place. The education centre is used for the further education of staff on the



special capacities of the ASB care centers. This greatly improves the capability and flexibility to improve and amend service provision according to current needs, such as with the current caring concept.



The education centre is also available for rent to third parties. Combined with the in-house bistro trainings and events with full catering can be implemented.

Besides the ongoing and further education of its employees, ASB Leipzig is also offering the initial 3-year training as a care professional in the context of Germany's regular VET system as well as the regular training program for emergency paramedics.

Special social service visited: Wish ambulance / Wünschewagen

The project „Wünschewagen“ is a possibility for people who will not survive an illness to get fulfilled their last wish. Volunteers accompany the ill person in an well equipped ambulance which was financed only by donations. Although the ambulance has a lot of medical equipment inside it is hidden as far as possible trying to create a normal atmosphere for the guests who want to get fulfilled their last wish like quite often going to the beach a last time. The ASB has got 23 of these ambulances and the ASB Leipzig showed the one they own since 2016.

More info available at: [https://www.asb-leipzig.de/arbeitgeber/ausbildung\\_leipzig](https://www.asb-leipzig.de/arbeitgeber/ausbildung_leipzig)

## ASBÖ – Visiting a care institution in Burgenland

The second TECS meeting took place in Stegersbach, Austria from 16 to 18 December 2019.

The Austrian Samaritan organisation (ASBÖ) is a specialist in innovative care concepts that blend into the local society and include all the people living in a town. We had the chance to show the project participants three different care homes in the area.

Tackling the care crisis by training not only for professionals, but also for care-taking relatives

While the general Austrian system of care education is a formalised vocational training degree, with training at universities of applied sciences planned for higher qualified care professionals in the future, the Austrian Federal State of Burgenland is well known for its special way in dealing with the care issue. Not only are the workers well trained and well-paid but also the relatives of people in need of care who look after them at their own home receive official training and get a salary by the state, so they do not miss insurance months while they are looking after their close relatives. With this innovative way of care education for care-taking relatives, at least a certain alleviation of the general staff shortage in care has been possible.



In the care homes run by ASBÖ we focus on small units and integrate them into the community as a meeting place or by combining it with a kindergarten with joint activities.

The staff is also trained to interact with the community and to plan inclusive activities for elderly people. ASBÖ also has serviced apartments for elderly people in the vicinity of our care homes. Those elderly people who do not need care services can still come to the community halls and have lunch and dinner there and participate in all the social activities. The housing units are equipped with emergency buttons and in the case of a

medical emergency the staff of the adjacent care home can instantly come to the residents in need.

While visiting the three different care homes the project partners had the opportunity to talk to the educators and to see first hand how the specific care concepts in Burgenland are implemented.



The participants from ASBÖ enjoyed the project a lot and got great new insights at the other project meetings and also made persisting new contacts for knowledge exchange and further cooperation. We are looking forward to working again with everyone on a new project hopefully very soon.

### ASSR – “SOS Button”

The very first TECS Meeting took place in Pieniny National Park in Slovakia. ASSR



was presenting the social service "SOS Button". Renáta Penazzi and Jakub Liscinsky also shared ideas and know-how hand in hand with the challenges they have been through in more than 13 years of providing this social service. Behind the presentation, ASSR showed a new building they bought and presented other activities in Slovakia and European Union Civil Protection Mechanism.

The SOS button service and the personnel training scheme

The SOS button is a social service guaranteed 24/7 all year long.

ASSR provides a dispatch center with trained personnel ready to respond to all emergencies. We are hiring people with some handicaps to support them and the local community. They have to go through training before deployment to be ready to react to all different emergencies. The process starts with a first aid course - more specific to home care. IT training with hardware and software. Communication training with role plays and models included.



After that, they work in shifts as a second dispatcher as practical phase of the initial training. After a couple of weeks, following reverse check is the final stage before deployment. As continuing education, all dispatchers have every month regular meetings and case studies of emergency calls.

The part of the system procedures working are family members. In case of an emergency call and there is no life threat, only minor issues dispatcher contacts a family member with a shorter estimated time of arrival while the dispatcher is in touch with the client in case of need, which has more advantages. One is saving costs and professional emergency systems from pointless deployments because there can be many more emergency situations, such as car accidents, etc.

The device which we use is from the company NEAT. For us are essential functionality and trust. Because of that, we use only the best-quality devices. NEAT unit is suitable for landline and mobile networks and functions even in power supply failure. The button “wristband” is a transmitter which is waterproof and shockproof. It is essential to say that we have very close cooperation with the Slovak “112” Operational centre network. This means that our scope is around all of Slovakia, not only in the parts where we are based. Our volunteers have opportunities to take training as dispatchers, which is happening.

Because of our Civil protection rescue activities, we have a dispatch center as a contact point. Therefore we prepared for the dispatch centre specific standard operating procedures on what to do in case of activating one of our modules for a mission. The dispatch centre is the heart of our SOS button. The SOS button is a unique service for special people.

#### Impressions after meeting?

After very lovely and open discussions at the project meetings, all guests got a chance to taste a bit from nature, culture and of course, traditional food. We were getting to know each other better and better.

From the very first time, there was an exceptional atmosphere in the working and humankind environment. The idea of sharing

information and helping each other establish or make something better was present on all sides. And that was just the beginning of the project meetings.

Not the end, let's continue!

Despite the consequences of the COVID pandemic, all project participants did a great job organizing the meetings. In addition, projects gave us new ideas and inspiration on how to be more effective because together, we can go further and faster and deliver our help to people in need in our countries. In the end, the war interrupted our project, but we stayed together and could deliver our support to our colleagues. That made our relationships stronger and closer. It is just great to work with all the people in these organizations.

We are looking forward to future cooperation!





## CDI – TECS meeting in North Macedonia, Visit to social vocational training initiative and discussions with local stakeholders

### THE HISTORY

Established in 1996, Association Community Development Institute (CDI) Macedonia is a national umbrella association for sustainable development, education and social services. CDI has been established in Tetovo, Macedonia, in order to improve the living conditions and standard of life of the citizens in the new democratic society.

### TODAY

Within its program activities, CDI nowadays operates at national and international level. The staff members provide assistance and services to various groups, and it is functioning as a resource centre for other organisations and institutions. CDI operates in diverse ethnic and religious background and it is open for all citizens regardless of its religion, ethnicity or social status.

### Principle Areas of Activity

- Ambulance sanitary transportation
- Social inclusion Services
- Vocational Education and Training
- Confidence building program
- Volunteer resource centre
- Training provider

From 8 to 10 of November 2021 project meeting was held in Tetovo, North Macedonia, hosted by Association Community Development Institute (CDI).

Vocational training as a social service

At this meeting, the participants coming from partner organisations were introduced to the vocational education and training and services provided by the CDI. The participants visited newly established Vet training center that offers training

in CNC operator, Carpenter, Baker and



metal-smith. Training curriculum and target group has been presented and explained, and results achieved. The training centre is a special social service in that it focuses young people with fewer opportunities and allows them to receive vocational training and improve their labour market perspectives. The training model, in collaboration with local VET High School Mosa Pijade, is oriented along the German system of vocational education and is the result of a cross-border effort between CDI, ASB Germany and the City of Vienna.

Learning about the vocational and social policy context

Mr. Ljupco Radovski from federation of Trade Unions of Macedonia has introduced the participants with the system of trade unions in Macedonia, workers rights, challenges and current activities of the trade union in Macedonia. The participants were particularly interested to learn how the



system works and what were the main challenges of the employees divided by sector in Macedonian economy.

The social inclusion of disabled persons in Macedonia has been presented by Mrs. Milica Serafimovska, graduated defectologist and State/Regional coordinator for inclusion. She has presented and explained that the system in Macedonia is not new, but there are many new measures for inclusion adopted recently that has changed the situation for disabled.



During the meeting, current state of social entrepreneurship in Macedonia was presented including current trend, associations and type of activities and services they organize. It was mentioned that there is no law on social entrepreneurship in Macedonia but it is not obstacle for associations to organize income generating activities.



After envisioned daily agenda, the participants had opportunity to visit some of the cultural heritage sites and to learn more about tradition, religion and culture of the citizens living in Macedonia including Museum of Tetovo, Turkish Hammam, Colored Mosque and other monuments.

### IDC – meeting in Serbia, visit to Social Enterprises and Day Care Centers

The TECS project meeting in Belgrade gave the participants the opportunity to visit two relevant local social services that in themselves have training and education as an important auxiliary activity to the core care activities provided.

IDC and the visited services provide training in the field of care, for personal assistants, but also in project management and for the establishment of new social enterprises and services. These trainings focus the management in social protection organizations.

Within the services themselves, there are training opportunities for persons with disabilities for various occupations such as laundry, hygienic maintenance and gardening.

Day Care Center and Social enterprise Naša Kuća (Belgrade, Serbia)

Naša Kuća, an association of parents of children with development disorders, is an advocate for respect of human rights of persons with developmental disorders and their comprehensive social inclusion. Naša Kuća provides support to persons with developmental disorders and their families through development of professional competence and financial security through the social enterprise.

Through the day care center the beneficiaries receive training in professional skills and produce products from recycling paper which are placed on the market through the social enterprise. In addition, *Kitchen on wheels* provides meals at affordable prices for vulnerable groups and employs persons with developmental disorders in food preparation and delivery. *Kitchen on wheels* also produces and sells luxury chocolate products.

Caritas Šabac - Day Care Center Saint Sofia, social enterprises Avlija Bogatić and cleaning service Vešeraj (Sabac, Serbia)

Cartisa Šabac, member of international Caritas network, is the biggest of social

**Initiative for Development and Cooperation (IDC)**, established 2007, focuses on: social and economic development, equal rights and volunteer program. We have experience in project implementation in more than 50 cities and municipalities in Serbia. The employees of IDC have extensive experience in programs of social welfare, retraining, additional training, active job search, development of community social services and social enterprises. Likewise, our team is highly experienced in project management, development, and implementation of different projects. We are working with vulnerable social groups, mainly those are below the poverty threshold, and united with them we are trying to fight for a higher degree of social inclusion. Through numerous support programs, we have permanently empowered many beneficiaries to start their own business and gain stable sources of income for their families. So far more than several thousands of beneficiaries have passed through our programs.

service provider in Šabac (East Serbia), which includes home care, day care center for persons with disabilities and independent living. Day care for persons with disabilities is provided in city of Šabac and town of Bogatić. Dry cleaning and office cleaning service employs women that have been long-term unemployed. The sustainable development property Avlija in town of Bogatić has a twofold function. It strengthens persons with disabilities through trainings and employment in food preparation, catering, gardening, fruit and vegetable growing and processing and pottery and the products are sold on the market through the social enterprise with the aim to develop their professional competence and provide stable financial income. Furthermore, Avlija Bogatić consists of housing for independent living for persons with disabilities.

For more information please visit: <https://caritas-sabac.com>



Impressions and takeaway from the project:

Increased capacity in provision of social services in Serbia; specifically in care of elderly, children, and persons with disabilities. Transfer of best practices and exchange of experience in social service delivery in Europe. Increased knowledge on social welfare systems in Austria, North Macedonia, Slovakia, Poland, Latvia,

Lithuania, Germany and Serbia. Networking with counterparts from other countries and possibility to develop new joint projects for the purpose of increasing capacities and quality of social services provided to beneficiaries. Furthermore, it was an opportunity to get to know new countries, tradition, customs, history and food. Throughout the project the participants demonstrated to be a compact and efficient team of social service providers from across Europe.

### LSA – Mobile Care Complex & in-patient care

Samaritan Association of Latvia (LSA) is a NGO (founded in 1992), which works in 4 fields (social care, medical care, education and charity), but social care is the biggest field. LSA has about 1000 employees and most of them are working in social care field all around Latvia. LSA is the biggest social service provider in Latvia with 37 different social services and working in 23 municipalities (of 43). During last 30 years LSA has developed many social services, which are acknowledged as very important services which must be provided widely.

In Latvia social service providers mostly are NGO's such as LSA.

LSA is providing social services like:

Care at home;

Safety button;

Mobile home care;

Day care centers for people with dementia;

Group flat for people with mental disabilities;

Assisted living service;

Homeless shelter;

Day care centers for people with mental disabilities;

Short term living for people who suffer from alcoholism;

Specialised transport for people with disabilities;

Nursing home etc.

All of these services can be funded by state, municipality or person themselves, depending on their income. Of course, social service funding is not an easy task for municipalities or state institutions. But LSA managed to prove that it is cheaper and better for the service quality, if these services are provided by NGO instead of municipality or state.

#### Development of Social Services

All the time LSA is working to develop more and more social services all around country using it's experience in this field.



Thanks to set of services called "Samaritan support at home" (SAM), which started in 2014, LSA managed to start a new era of social services in rural area in Latvia. In 2014 it started in 6 small municipalities. Well-known service included in SAM is mobile home care. This service is highly requested, because it provides home care for people at their houses even if there are some infrastructural issues, such as lack of shower, washing machine or even a hot weather. By using this service people can receive full home care service, because all of needed infrastructure is delivered to persons place. During SAM existence, LSA

has shown to many municipalities, that need of specific social services has grown and is getting more important. Just in 2022 LSA started to provide 6 new services in rural area. Need of new social services is acknowledged in municipality and state level. Such as service for parents who has kids with strong functional and mental disabilities, called "Time to rest". This service is developed by LSA by request of ministry of welfare. It is very important that organisations who provide social services are also involved in process of developing services in question, because these organisations has the best knowledge of situation in time.

#### LSA's education center

All employees are trained in LSA's own education center, so they are able to provide the best services possible.

The portfolio of the education centre is mostly centred on first aid – but it also includes educational programs for employees:

- Basics of care for social work specialists working with patients with diagnosed chronic diseases (24 hours);
- Basics of care with basic first aid course (24 hours);
- Care work (160 hours)

The main program – care work includes many topics such as:

- General/Basics of care work;
- Planning and documentation of care work;
- Labor protection, safe working environment;
- First aid;



- Human anatomy, physiology and hygiene;
- Psychological aspects of care work;
- Care for people with a disabilities;
- Basic of rook cleaning, etc.

These programs were developed by LSA for workers who provide home care service. Most of the employees are learning “basics of care with basic of first aid course” program, but if there is such need employee can be trained in other programs as well. However, since LSA currently provides many social services these programs are useful for wider range of employees. After training in specific program employees receive an approval of training. These educational programs do not require prior knowledge.

These training programs are designed not only for caregivers, but also for clients relatives who live with the person in need of care.



LSA is very interested in exchanging experience with other organisations, to achieve better social service system in all Europe.

### LSB – Visit to facilities in Kaunas

Participation in the TECS (Training and Further Education in Care and Social Services) project has been an incredibly valuable experience for the Lithuanian

Samaritan Organisation (LSB). The organisation does not have extensive experience in international projects, thus participation in this project was a perfect opportunity to take a closer look into how organisations in other countries operate in related social fields.

Presenting LSB’s facilities and staff education system

During the meeting in Kaunas, the participants received a tour of our facilities where different care services are provided (elderly, people with disabilities, child day-care). The information shared included the education and training system.

According to Lithuanian Republic laws, nursing on elderly or people with disabilities, can only be done by the staff who have a bachelor’s degree in that kind of specialization. That's why people who work in nursing sections have higher education degrees. Other people who work there are assistants. Assistants are educated by special courses in certified and licensed teaching centres.



Every year LSB organises a further education course for people in the nursing sector for them to uphold and extend their knowledge about working with elderly and people with disabilities.

## Take-away from the project

Most relevant to the LSB's fields of activities were the topics of day care and nursing services for elderly patients, services for mentally disabled people and the work of emergency call centres. Visits to several



nursing and residential care homes (ASBŲ, LSA, SPOF, and ASB) awarded the LSB team with a great deal of knowledge and ideas on how high quality person-oriented nursing services should look like. It was very useful to learn about different activity models that are applied in different nursing homes, about staff training, attention to the individual needs of each patient, and the involvement of the relatives in the creation and provision of comprehensive services. One of the most impressive experiences was the attention to and care of dementia patients. The great amount of measures such as special preparation of employees, individual room furnishing and decoration, interior details for bedridden patients, safety equipment, special means for orientation in the environment, innovative technologies devoted to improving the quality of life and maintaining social skills of dementia patients are quite unusual compared to the majority of Lithuanian nursing institutions. Thus, the acquired knowledge inspired the vision of establishing such a nursing home, and independent and assisted living facilities in Lithuania, and will also help in providing and developing day care and home care services for dementia patients. The mobile care complex provided by the LSA is a great example of services of high demand in the rural areas in Lithuania, and specific knowledge gained during the visit could solve organisational problems that have so

far prevented the emergence of such service in Lithuania.

## Potential for transfer from other project partners

For several years the LSB has been preparing to establish a home emergency call system. With only a few technical steps left before the opening of the centre, the concept of actually providing the service was still unclear. The experiences, problematic situations and adapted models shared by the ASSR and the LSA successfully working in this area for a number of years have helped to get a much clearer view on how the service could be provided by the LSB, what mistakes should be avoided and how the best model can be chosen.

Deinstitutionalisation process began in Lithuania nearly a decade ago with the aim of creating a system of comprehensively provided services, which would suggest opportunities for every child, disabled person or his family (guardians, carers) to receive individual services according to their needs and the necessary help in the community; and for every child left without parental care to grow up in a safe and development-friendly environment. For the majority of time, the process was devoted only to organising care services for orphans outside the care institutions, and only in recent years more actions have been taken



to develop quality community services for the disabled, especially for people with mental disorders. The example of the LSA

has shown that people with mental disorders can adapt to social rules and are capable of successfully living in the community. Activities for people with mental disabilities organised by the LSA and the IDC help them to maintain social and everyday skills as well as different working skills, offer them opportunities to be more self-confident and independent. The facilities presented during the field visits showed how many different activities can be adapted to individual abilities and easily performed by mentally disabled people making them full-fledged and valuable members of the community. Another particularly inspiring thing was the IDC demonstrated employment opportunities for people with difficult social background. It was very interesting to learn that the main goal of the organisation is not only about creating job positions for people in need, but also about forming a socially responsible circle by providing free services and helping the most vulnerable members of the community and at the same time managing to provide extremely high quality services. The “Etno” restaurant with its multifunctional concept is one of the most impressive examples of social enterprises.

### **SFOP - TECS meeting in Poland – Field visits of special kindergarten and senior’s day care center**

The Samaritan non-government organization SFOP is a union of 5 associations operating in the field of social assistance, education, and rescue. Since 2003, the membership organisation of SFOP is the Polish Association for People with Intellectual Disability in Tarnow (PSONI).

During their stay in Poland, the participants of the TECS project visited institutions intended for children with disabilities from birth to 9 years of age. It was a Not public Special Kindergarten and an Early Intervention Center. Participants got acquainted with the rules of functioning and financing. They watched the therapeutic activities. Additionally, the project participants visited the Seniors Day Care

Center run by SFOP. They got acquainted with the principles of operation and financing of this center, as well as the functioning of day care in Poland. The visit included the discussion of the Polish training system:

Poland has a National Training Fund that co-finances training for so called “deficit professions”. The list of such occupations is provided for each voivodeship separately. Each institution, including SFOP, can apply for funds for training its employees. When it comes to staff training in a special kindergarten and a day-care center for seniors, every year there are training courses on first aid and occupational health and safety rules in order to increase the safety of employees and residents. In addition, after observing the market and demand, industry-specific staff training is carried out to improve the services provided.

Participants also had the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the social welfare system in Poland.

The project allowed us to get to know the social welfare systems in other European countries. Possibility to compare work and discussion systems. This allows us to improve our work.



In addition, we met interesting, friendly people with lots of ideas. Participation in the project was a great experience and an amazing adventure for us.



## Outlook

35 months after the first project meeting in Slovakia the TECS project finally came to a conclusion, that at times was all but certain, given a long Covid-forced hiatus in 2020 and 2021. The pandemic took its toll on the project, not least because of the travel restrictions. Considering the subject matter of TECS, additional challenges were obvious, as personnel involved in social and care services were under extraordinary strain during this time and access to the institutions the project was meant to visit was suddenly a lot more difficult than it used to be. Yet, the project group overcame these challenges.

As you could read in this brochure the Erasmus+ project was of great benefit for all the project partners and even though the physical meetings had to be postponed due to the pandemic, the exchange of know-how and help during the pandemic was made possible thanks to the networking connections made during the first project meetings.

During the 35 months of the TECS project the cooperation between the project partners intensified. Not only a professional network was established but also great new friendships that keep on lasting after the project ended. Every participant of the TECS appreciated the productive collaboration in the project, but also enjoyed the great time together, the many new things they learned.

The project group is eager to continue working together in the important field of care services and is currently considering options to continue their exchange.

The project Training and Further Education in Care and Social Services (TECS) was co-funded by the European Union's Erasmus+ program.

For more information, please see the project website at:

<http://tecs.samaritan-international.eu/>

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