



The BEATS Project: Kick-off Meeting



The two-year Erasmus+ project **BEATS (Better English and Transferable Skills) for better job opportunities** was launched when the representatives of all participating institutions from five countries gathered from 22 to 26 October 2016 in Bruges, Belgium. This first transnational meeting was hosted by **IVO Brugge**, one of the six institutions participating in the project. The other participants are **Ecole Superieure des Affaires** (the coordinating institution) from Namur, Belgium, **Adult Education Institution Dante** from Rijeka, Croatia, **EOI de Mieres** from Mieres, Spain, **Alius Lingua** from Riga, Latvia, and **Rapla Language School** from Rapla, Estonia. The project lasts from 1 September 2016 until 31 August 2018.

The project aims at improving the employability of adult learners, potentially promoting work-related mobility within the European Union, by simultaneously developing the learners' English language skills and transferable skills. Transferable skills are the skills and competences that are relevant and useful in various areas of life: socially, academically, and professionally. The BEATS project focuses on equipping learners with those transferable skills that would give them a competitive advantage in the labour market, including how to write a CV and a cover letter, give presentations, present oneself during a job interview, and make business phone calls. During the project, emphasis will be put on business etiquette and how it differs between various cultures. The Europass CV will also be introduced to the participating learners. Some learners will participate in mobilities to the partner countries, which include job shadowing activities in business companies.

The meeting in Bruges was a combination of the first transnational meeting for the coordinators from each institution and a comprehensive teacher training on various ICT tools that can be used in teaching languages, offered by the hosting institution, IVO Brugge.

During the transnational meeting, the coordinators discussed important details related to the managing of the project. The teacher training sessions, which were attended by a total of 16 teachers and coordinators, focused on such topics as flipping the classroom, the Moodle environment, distance learning and teaching, universal design for learning (UDL), and creative ICT tools to be used in teaching.

There was also a rich cultural programme offered to the guests by the hosting institution. The programme included a guided tour in the streets of the historic centre of Bruges, a guided visit to the Groeningemuseum, a guided visit to the Church of Our Lady, a visit to an art gallery, a boat tour on the canals, a cooking workshop presenting traditional Flemish recipes, and a reception in the city hall.

The first transnational meeting/training was very constructive, flawlessly organised, and overall a tremendous success. An impressive feature of the organisation was that the learners of IVO Brugge had been recruited to act as tour guides and presenters of workshops; and all of them did their task brilliantly, professionally, and entertainingly. After those five content-rich days, all participants left, being inspired, informed, and full of new ideas and knowledge.

The participants will keep in touch with each other via the Internet. The project is going to have its own Moodle environment, Facebook page, as well as Twitter and Instagram accounts. The next transnational meeting for coordinators has been scheduled to take place in January via Skype. The next teacher training will take place in June/July 2017 in Rijeka, Croatia. Adult learners of English from each participating institution will join the project activities in the academic year 2017/2018. The project BEATS is funded by the European Commission within the framework of the Erasmus+ programme. BEATS is one of the Strategic Partnerships for adult education; and it falls under Key Action 2 of the Erasmus+ programme, which supports transnational projects designed to develop and share innovative practices and exchange experiences.

To sign up for the newsletter of the BEATS project, write to info@raplakeeltekool.ee.

