



IMPROVET-AM

Newsletter

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Within the Erasmus+ program SEPR, Apro Formazione, CEPFA (French-Armenian Vocational Education Center), GSMC (Gyumri State Medical College) and HovakimyanLab from France, Italy and Armenia have joined forces to enhance VET (vocational education and training) in Armenia. The current IMPROVET-AM project aligns with the European Union Neighbourhood Policy's Eastern Partnership dimension. The Armenia Education Development Strategy 2020-2030, which came into effect in December 2022, prioritizes restructuring and updating VET teaching programs to better meet labor market demands. Despite the involvement of employers in developing state educational standards for VET, their relevance to the labor market remains inadequate. In response, and within the EU and national contexts, the IMPROVET-AM project aims:

- To improve and to promote VET in Armenia,
- To support the development of the health sector in Armenia, especially in dental prosthesis and health care & personal assistance, by improving the qualifications and integrating the digital and the green transitions,
- To strengthen cooperation between VET centers and companies for mutual fertilization,
- To improve the integration of Armenian learners into the world of work, thanks to a better matching between VET curricula and companies 'needs,
- To improve upskilling for professionals and skills recognition,
- To allow all Armenian learners, even those from remote and rural areas, to access qualitative initial and continuous VET, in a lifelong learning process,
- To improve professional guidance for Armenian learners, families and for the general public.

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IMPROVET-AM Kick off Transnational Meeting in Lyon

The Erasmus+ IMPROVET - AM project kicked off its first transnational meeting with great enthusiasm on January 17-18, 2024, at the headquarters of the project coordinator, SEPR, in Lyon. Representatives from partner organizations - SEPR, CEPFA, Gyumri State Medical College, APRO Formazione, and the Hovakimyan laboratory - gathered to collaborate and share their insights on the project.



Meeting Highlights

The agenda for the meeting was packed and buzzing with several key points:

- *Management Strategy: Ensuring effective project management and maintaining high standards.*
- *Study Visit and Observation Mission: Identifying the needs of companies in the dental prosthesis and healthcare & personal assistance sectors, and understanding the state of vocational education programs in Armenia.*
- *Guidance and Employment Services: Conducting study visits and observation missions in Armenia and the EU to analyze guidance and employment services.*
- *Dissemination Plan: Developing strategies for effective project dissemination and communication.*

The meeting kicked off with all partners introducing themselves and their respective organizations. This was followed by vibrant discussions centered around the main objectives of the project and the various work packages, setting the stage for fruitful collaboration.

A significant part of the meeting was dedicated to planning the study visit to Armenia. This visit aims to delve into and identify the needs of companies and understand the current state of Armenian VET curricula for the project's two target fields: dental prosthesis and healthcare & personal assistance. This crucial step will pave the way for creating new and innovative training modules for these sectors. Some partners also had the chance to visit a dental prosthesis modeling laboratory in Lyon. This field visit provided practical insights and added an enriching layer to the discussions.

Another important focus was on planning the study visit and observation mission for professional guidance and work services in Armenia, and subsequently job shadowing and observation mission in the EU. The goal is to define policy recommendations and protocols to implement quality guidance services for learners and adults, and to enhance work services quality for adults in terms of upskilling, reskilling, and job insertion opportunities.

The two-day meeting was incredibly productive, allowing partners to exchange ideas and plan the next phases of the project. The collaboration and insights gained during this initial meeting have laid a solid foundation for the project's future success.

Dissemination Event in Yerevan

The First Dissemination event of the Erasmus+ program named IMPROVET-AM was launched on the 18th of March 2024 in the Tushpa Hall of the Holiday Inn Yerevan Republic Square Hotel. During the opening of this Capacity building project the managers presented the project's vision, goals and expected results. During the event the plans for three years of international exchange, learning and co-creation were represented to the audience. The speakers also spoke about the IMPROVET-AM main deliverables which are:

- dental prosthesis digital tools,
- new approaches to professional guidance,
- educational modules for health care assistance.

Among the guests of the event were Jan Plesinger - EU Head of Political Section, David Avagyan - Project Manager at delegation of EU to Armenia, Araksia Svadjyan - Deputy minister MESCS, Ruben Sargsyan - Deputy minister of Labor and Social Affairs, Lana Karlova - Erasmus+ Office Coordinator in Armenia, other representatives from European Training Foundation (ETF), Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports (MESCS) and Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the RA.



SEPR: A Legacy of Excellence in Vocational Education

The SEPR (Société d'Enseignement Professionnelle du Rhône) was founded in 1864 by François Barthélemy Arlès-Dufour, a businessman from Lyon, inspired by Saint-Simonian principles. Its mission has always been to provide comprehensive training for men and women, promoting both individual emancipation and corporate excellence, thereby contributing to economic development and social advancement in France.

Guided by principles of excellence, agility, originality, and innovation, SEPR is committed to inclusivity, offering lifelong learning opportunities to all. The organization's rich history is grounded in four fundamental principles: secularism, humanism, equality, and the general interest.

As a pioneer in skills development and capacity building since the 19th century, SEPR provides vocational training for young people and adults, as well as engineering and consulting services. For over a century and a half, SEPR has adapted to changing times while maintaining its core values.

Today, SEPR offers a wide range of training programs and educates more than 5,000 students annually across six main areas: arts and design; catering and hospitality; visual communication and graphic design; beauty, healthcare, and social services; commerce and trade; and technical and IT professions.

SEPR provides training from EQF level 2 to 6 through three different pathways: apprenticeship/dual system, full-time study, and continuous training. It implements

robust policies focused on internationalization, including learning mobility, partnerships for cooperation, capacity building, and centers of vocational excellence. SEPR is dedicated to welcoming learners with special needs, fostering social commitment, citizenship, and solidarity, and supporting entrepreneurship and excellence in vocational education and training (VET). It has a long tradition of cooperation with networks and stakeholders at both national and international levels.

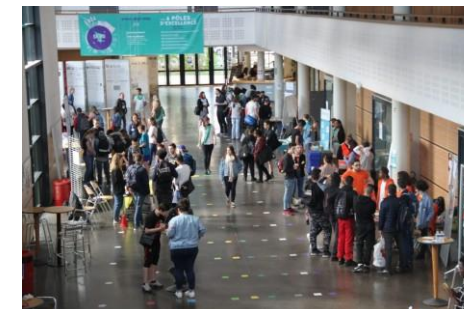
"SEPR and Armenia: A Legacy and A Long History of Cooperation..."

SEPR has been collaborating with Armenia since 1994, beginning with the reciprocal hosting of Armenian and French trainees and teachers between SEPR and the city of Yerevan. This collaboration led to the creation of CEPFA, which opened in 2001.

Since May 2022, new directions have been established in the collaboration between SEPR and CEPFA, including:

- Expansion of the CEPFA Campus: Opening new courses of study and doubling the number of students.
- Development of New Partnerships: Extending vocational education development to the four regions furthest from Yerevan.

SEPR's commitment to integrity, solidarity, and openness continues to guide its actions within the organization and in its partnerships with stakeholders. Through these efforts, SEPR remains dedicated to advancing vocational education and fostering a culture of excellence and inclusivity.



For more information visit our website: <http://www.sepr.edu>



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IMPROVET-AM Project Study Visit in Armenia: A Week of Insight and Innovation

From March 16 to 23, 2024, IMPROVET-AM project's European partners SEPR and APRO Formazione embarked on an enlightening study visit and observation mission in Armenia. This initiative, aimed to explore Work Package 2 (WP2) on creating innovative training modules and Work Package 4 (WP4) on developing a comprehensive career guidance framework. In line with IMPROVET-AM's commitment to eco-friendly management, the visits for WP2



and WP4 were combined, minimizing travel and maximizing efficiency. The mission sought to identify the needs of companies and assess the current state of Armenian VET curricula in dental prosthesis and healthcare & personal assistance. The goal was to pave the way for new, innovative training modules and to define policy recommendations for enhancing guidance and employment services.

Jam-Packed

Agenda

The agenda for the visit was action-packed, including:

- Field Visits: Hospitals, dental clinics, companies, etc.
- Focus Groups: Discussions with the private sector/hospitals, VET policymakers, and project partner VET Centers.
- Interviews: Engaging with Career Lab NGO and other relevant entities.

Prior to the visit, checklists and questionnaires were prepared in February 2024 to gather key information from Armenian private sector/hospitals, relevant stakeholders and VET Centers including two Armenian partner VET centers, project-affiliated partner HOVAKIMYAN Lab, and associated



partners the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sports and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia. The information gathered was verified during the study visit in Armenia.

Key Events and Highlights

- March 18, 2024: The project kicked off with a focus groups with stakeholders, including representatives from the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sports of the Republic of Armenia, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of

Armenia, and the National Center for VET Development, "Career Lab" Career and Mobility Center, Erasmus+ office in Armenia, etc. The day concluded with an interview with "Career Lab" Career and Mobility Center.

- March 19, 2024: Focus group and site visit at CEPFA, followed by company visits in Yerevan.
- March 20, 2024: Focus group discussions at Gyumri State Medical College, including visits to technical dental laboratories and care centers.
- March 21, 2024: Focus groups with companies in Gyumri, followed by discussions and wrap-up.
- March 22, 2024: Focus groups with companies in Yerevan, followed with a visit to Unified Social Services.

The study visit and observation mission provided a rich tapestry of experiences, allowing project stakeholders to engage directly with the people and institutions shaping Armenia's vocational education landscape.

Building Bridges and Shaping Futures

This week-long event was more than just meetings and visits; it was a confluence of ideas, experiences, and aspirations. The partners had the opportunity to delve deep into the existing frameworks, identify gaps, and brainstorm innovative solutions tailored to the Armenian context.

The study visit in Armenia was a resounding success, filled with vibrant discussions, new connections, and a collective commitment to improving vocational education and career guidance in Armenia. The insights and collaborative spirit from this visit have laid a strong foundation for the next phases of the IMPROVET_AM project.



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GSMC Study Visit to CEPFA

On the Way to Cooperation

On February 6 CEPFA hosted the students of Dental technology department and also teaching staff of GSMC within the framework of Erasmus+ program.

The enthusiasm was great. Students left for Erevan with great expectations.

The main purpose of this visit was to provide the cooperation of students and professors of both colleges, promoting the formation and development of new knowledge and skills.



The students were accompanied by the director of GSMC M. Martirosyan, lecturer of foreign language F. Martirosyan, Career officer K. Hakobyan and also lecturer of dental technology A. Yeghiazaryan.

The meeting took place in a very warm and impressive atmosphere.

The practical lesson was held on the theme Dental Structure of the Module «Complete removable tin prostheses».

During the lesson there was an exchange of experiences and also a treat during the break.

The students strengthened their knowledge and returned back with new skills and abilities that

were applied during the lesson.

The lesson was conducted by E. Sargsyan, A. Yeghiazaryan.

All the organisation work was entrusted to the college directorate with the help of L. Papyan who had the responsibility of Dental technology department.

The study visit would play a very important role in further cooperation of two colleges. The students were pleased with the opportunity given to them.

Both colleges hoped to organize such study visits more often.



Time for Job Shadowing for Apro Formazione!

Five guests took part in a week of training and exchange dedicated to international projects, guidance and educational pathways in the socio-health sector.

From Armenia we were joined by Gohar Grigoryan, Director of the French-Armenian Vocational Training Centre and Marina Martirosyan, Director of Gyumri State Medical College, involved in the Erasmus Plus IMPROVET-AM project.

Partners of the ErasmusPlus project V2V-AL also joined from Albania, making the experience more international and mutually enriching! 3 teachers from Shkolla Hoteleriturizem joined the 5 days program in Alba.

Many local partners welcomed the delegation to present their activities and strategies: thanks to the Istituto Professionale Cillario Ferrero ALBA, the ASL CN2, Cooperativa Progetto Emmaus, Piccola Casa del Cottolengo and the Rondò dei Talenti!

On 15 and 16 May, the delegation of professionals were introduced to the ASL CN2 facilities, on an informative visit to the Michele and Pietro Ferrero Hospital in Verduno and to the course of studies in Nursing based in Alba.

Ms. Grigoryan and Ms. Martirosyan were welcomed by Dr. Paola Malvasio, Director of the Presidio, by Dr. Giancarlo Mercurio, Coordinator of the Degree Course in Nursing with the DiPSa of the ASL CN2 for a tour that allowed them to understand the figure of the social-health worker in the

various areas of intervention and in relation to the other health professions; learn a biopsychosocial approach to care in order to develop training modules oriented towards it; identify new teaching methodologies and innovative training areas.

At the Verduno Hospital, the delegation was able to visit the Internal Medicine facility, the Emergency Department, the Delivery Block and the CAVS (Continuity of Care in Health Care) facilities. The following day, at the Alba Training Centre, it was possible for them to visit the professionalising laboratories of the Nursing Course, with a presentation of the simulation methodology in student learning, and the laboratory dedicated to bibliographical research for second-year students.



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Time for Job Shadowing for Apro Formazione!



The partnership between ASL CN2 and Apro Formazione, already active in the training of social and health workers and in several European projects, thus becomes an opportunity also for the development of skills for international partners.

The delegation had also the opportunity to visit two non-profit companies that take care of people with special needs: Cooperativa Progetto Emmaus that owns a few supported living accommodations for people with disabilities or mental health diseases and Piccola Casa della Divina Provvidenza - Cottolengo, a care home for elderly and disabled people.

The training tour was realised with the organisational contribution of Apro Formazione, which supports the visiting institutions in Italy for all the activities dedicated to understanding the interaction between the different health and socio-health professions, the possibilities of digital transformation in the health sector, and the learning of innovative didactic methodologies.

They also had the opportunity to visit the Piera Cillario Ferrero Institute of Higher Education, delving into the path dedicated to Health and Social Care Services.



The delegation then visited the Rondò of Talents an educational hub in Cuneo. In particular they visited the City of Talents a space for children to discover their talents through digital and analogic games dedicated to exploring their interests, skills and discovering their talents.

Moreover, Apro Formazione arranged some internal meetings to focus on specific topics: inclusion, guidance, adult learners recruitment, marketing and external communication.

Join Our Network of Stakeholders

We welcome individuals and organizations sharing our vision to become part of the IMPROVET-AM community. Together, we can drive positive change and create a brighter future for the vocational education in Armenia.



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