

Newsletter

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Soft skills training to tackle unemployment of Higher Education graduates

Soft skills are key in boosting the employability of Higher Education graduates. The ability to demonstrate them in CVs and job interviews, but also to effectively apply them in work-life is crucial for a successful career, as much, or even more, than the so-called hard, job-related skills and knowledge that are acquired through formal education at the tertiary level.

Soft skills are not a training subject in University curricula and the lack thereof is one of the reasons for the increasing number of unemployed and underemployed graduates in the EU which has been steadily increasing during the past decade. Employers, companies, and enterprises across various economic sectors face difficulties in finding the employees with the right combination of hard and soft skills, that are and will be needed in the new labour-market environment.

What does the Reboot project offer?

Having started 2 years ago, the Reboot project - co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Commission – has reached its end in October 2020. Our goal was to develop an integrated, free access learning provision for unemployed and underemployed Higher Education graduates to help them

- **Recognise**
- **Acquire,**
- **Develop**
- **Demonstrate,**
- **Apply soft skills**

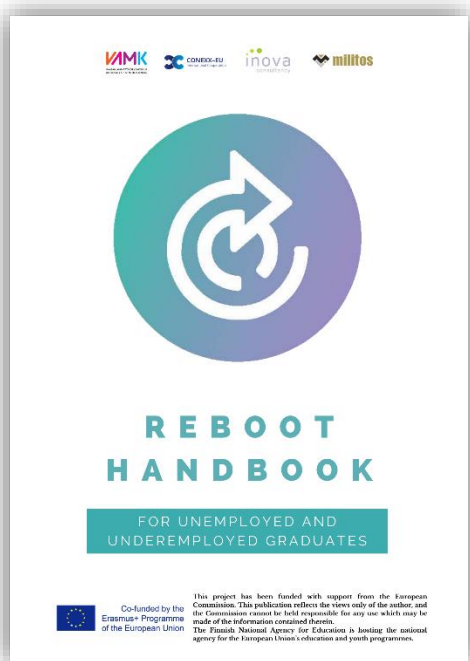
Throughout the project, we worked closely with professional development trainers and consultants, as well as employers and unemployed and underemployed graduates themselves, to develop:

The Reboot Training

- online, open and free accessible
- available in English, Finnish, French, and Greek

It consists of

- an Initial and Final Self-test,
- an introductory Module on soft skills,
- 3 Modules for the development of 22 soft skills,
- 1 Module on Career and skills flexibility,
- 1 Module for Portfolio creation,
- Open Educational Resources and Exercises supporting learning



A **Handbook for Learners** and a **Handbook for Trainers**, all available in English, Finnish, French and Greek providing a detailed walk-through for the Reboot Training for both graduates in self-paced learning, as well as trainers to support blended learning.

Detailed presentations suggesting ways to organise and carry out training sessions based on the Reboot Training Modules, including among others, Introductory guidelines and insights on soft skills, Agenda for the sessions, structure and description of each Reboot Training Module and its exercises, tips and good practices for effective training and learning, Portfolio examples.

Who can benefit?

- Unemployed and underemployed Higher Education
- Career counsellors and trainers
- Continuous VET and employment training organisations
- Public/private manpower and employment bodies
- Higher Education Institutions
- Human Resources actors

Presenting the Reboot training: Events held in Finland, Belgium, Greece, and the UK

Finland

The multiplier event in Finland took place on the 27th October 2020 virtually. It was organized by the project coordinator Vaasa University of Applied Sciences (VAMK). Altogether 16 persons participated in the event (unemployed and underemployed Higher Education Graduates, Career and employment counsellors and trainers, Pedagogical planners, Higher education teachers, Employment office representatives). Among the topics discussed were employment challenges of higher education graduates, Reboot training, soft skills and Reboot self-test on soft skills, adapting to evolving work life and promoting self with portfolios by an online workshop session. The participants appreciated novel ways to identify skills and competences in life stories and experiences, as well as the suggested ways and tools for productising them.

Belgium

On the 16th of October 2020, coinciding with the Erasmus+ Days, an online multiplier event was carried out in Belgium organised by CONEXX-EU to promote the outputs delivered by the Reboot Project. Participants representing underemployed and unemployed graduates and trainers and job counsellors attended the event and actively enrolled in the discussion proposed by the speakers of the event which resulted in a very fruitful experience.



Greece

An online event has been organized in Greece by Militos Consulting SA on the 30th of October 2020. Five experts – trainers, career development consultants, tertiary education teachers – following the model of Public Interview© touched upon challenging issues in soft skills development as crucial for the labour-market, the learning and training potential of soft skills, and the trends in CV development and self-presentation in job interviews. These issues have been coupled with the provisions and outputs of the Reboot project, by presenting the learning material, the methodology and tools provided by the project. 50 persons attended the event online, including unemployed and underemployed graduates, trainers and consultants. A Q&A session was held, leading to further awareness of the importance of soft skills in career development and the ways they can be acquired and developed through training.

United Kingdom

Inova Consultancy organised a Multiplier Event online on the 30th of September 2020, which invited underemployed and unemployed Higher Education graduates, training organisations, coaches, third sector organisations and other stakeholders. Participants of the event were able to take part in interactive activities developed as part of the Reboot project, which received great feedback and engagement.

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