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CREAM: Leading change through STEAM

The challenges of the 21st century threaten social progress, environmental and social sustainability and peaceful relations between countries. Against this backdrop, the recent Covid-19 epidemic and ongoing **climate change** have exacerbated **social** and **economic conditions** at the European and global level and have had a particularly striking impact on the younger generations, whose educational choices have been affected in terms of transition and school and university orientation.

As a central component of its agenda, the European Union strongly emphasises the importance of forging a resilient generation of **young learners** capable of dealing with emerging global issues.

As innovations come thick and fast, schools and, more generally, the world of education, are faced with major methodological challenges, but for which we seem not yet to be totally ready.

The traditional educational models adopted in schools are no longer up to date and must be supplemented with approaches based on the open school concept and using methodologies of co-design, creativity and critical thinking.

In this context, **STEAM** education plays a key role in building a more sustainable society. STEAM stands for (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Art). Recent studies have in fact extended the domain previously exhausted by STEM to the arts and design in order to promote the creative aspect of these disciplines.

STEAM learning is important because these 5 disciplines promote **problem-solving**, **creative** and **analytical thinking**, help students of all ages grow and face daily challenges, and are closely linked to the 4Cs for 21st century skills: **Communication**, **Collaboration**, **Critical Thinking** and **Creativity**.

Our project: Is the future STEAM?

The Erasmus+ **CREAM** project aims to stimulate young students' interest in STEAM subjects by developing and testing new approaches and models of teaching through **Creative Writing Workshop** (CWL) techniques.

The CREAM project stems from the evidence of providing educational models that respond to solving everyday problems with a creative thinking approach and STEAM concepts.

The overall objective of the project is therefore to help develop an integrative and collaborative approach and expand opportunities to promote learning activities that focus on STEAM disciplines and help children learn through trial and error, experimenting and problem-solving, acquire scientific knowledge and actively participate in the innovation process of local communities.

The target groups taken into consideration and benefiting from STEAM education are **high schools** and involve their **students** (12-18 years old), **teachers** and other staff members together with **external actors** such as various learning providers (universities, research and vocational training centres), representatives of business and civil society in general (both public and private).

Would you like to know how we will act on these issues?

Our project team consists of **nine partners** from **five countries** (Italy, Slovenia, Greece, Poland and the Netherlands): SINERGIE (Coordinator - IT), DRPDNM (SI), GRM NOVO MESTO (SI), EDUMOTIVA (EL), WUT (PL), ZSO (PL), VITECO (IT), IEXS (IT) ESHA (NL).

Each of them has its own area of expertise in order to create **synergy** and complementarity within the project.

Thanks to the CREAM project, the partners will have the opportunity to develop and test a new approach for teaching and promote interest in STEAM disciplines in schools by responding to the need for new tools and methodologies to be adopted in an ever-changing context, where ICT, **digital innovation** and **environmental sustainability** are increasingly important and skills are increasingly important and skills are required both in everyday life and in the professional sector.

This will give students the opportunity to understand the importance of STEAM and to orient their university studies accordingly.

Promoting STEAM education to enable students to develop hybrid and transversal competences through a combination of artistic, humanistic and scientific-technological skills could be crucial in providing an innovative way to address the social and environmental challenges of our time.