

"The Montessori education is more than a method, it's a way of life." Nobody can grow in the place of the child, nobody can develop and experience the needs of an adult. The **Montessori education is different from the traditional one because it's natural**; because it follows the **child/adult, and not the curriculum**. The Montessori education stems from the understanding of the human being and is based on observation, being an experiment in itself. "Observation is the key, and the freedom is the padlock". You give freedom to the one who needs it, as much as s/he is prepared to receive, you observe and gauge his/her reaction, and you act accordingly. The intervention is individual, it isn't the same for all the children/adults. You embrace the uniqueness of the person.



Montessori – Hallgarten is an approach which should be based upon scientific study. Therefore, our project MOMA - Montessori Method for Orienting and Motivating Adults has chosen as a starting point a research which will analyze the social and cultural reasons of the barriers to the education in groups of

adults living in situations of social hardship, and the relationships between the lack of social competences and the participation of vulnerable target groups to the any form of adult education. The analysis will take into account the specificity of the different groups and particularly: minorities; immigrants, the Roma communities; adults with disabilities; adults living situations of poverty or familiar hardships, clients with mental disorders and adults senior living in deprivation areas.

We have taken into account a survey of good practices, experiences of application of the different forms of social methodologies.

At the end of April, we have carried out an in-depth examination of the experimental methods, of the educational alternatives through the use of audio-video interviews, with examples of good practices that we have identified in our national researches, thus giving the floor to the experts and professionals. Each partner involved in the project has identified the most interesting and the most effective practices. The practices have been exemplified through video interviews, which were rounded up by an in-depth group analysis.

We have taken **14 audio-video interviews**, at corporate level, involving various experts who applied the Montessori method, managers of different institutions and organizations which provide education for adults, Directory for Social Work and

"Let's talk about the" absorbent mind " Interview with experts



Child Protection experts, managers of Montessori schools, teachers, teacher trainers.

For example, Ms Hella Klein, from Germay is an 86-years-old Montessori pre-school educator who had worked in the past with children and young people in a social hotspot. She also gives seminars for future Montessori teachers.

7 years ago, Hella's husband was suffering from Alzheimer dementia. Hella began to deal with the disease and visited regularly a daily care center for Alzheimer people in the neighborhood. She decided to develop the Montessori method further in the work with Alzheimer patients and use it to bring more light in their life. She still works in this field and in 2011 she wrote a book "Ten after ten" about her methods and her experiences. Today Hella Klein is officially authorized by the German Montessori Society to train volunteers, who work with dementia/Alzheimer patients. She gives a basic course in the Montessori Method and a special training in using this method with Alzheimer patients.

Hella Klein's principles are: "You don't do Montessori, you live it!" "People are the center - I am here for the people who depend on me."

Hella initially observes the strengths and weaknesses of the individuals playing.

Strengths of the Montessori method in the work with Alzheimer patients: People start to communicate, to take part, to do something, the people are part of a group, they feel that they are taken seriously and encountered with dignity. *The Montessori method in the work with Dementia patients is worth being further developed and introduced in wider circles.*

At the moment the method is more or less in the hand of one person, but Hella is doing some education seminars for trainers, who hopefully carry on with the idea. Also, the German Montessori Association "legalized" the method.

In Tessa's opinion the Montessori method is very suitable in the work with socially disadvantaged children and youngsters, who have problems at school. Many of them have a migrant background and difficulties in learning mathematics and German language.

Laura Mayer, research from Italy, developed a project "kidsINNscience" which has experimented an innovative method for the study of science derived from a foreign context.



"The initiative was welcomed, with a good and active participation and responsibility by the children. Observations showed gender differences in the attitudes of experimentation and formulation of hypotheses.

Asinitas Onlus, research from Italy applied Montessori approach in literacy teaching for adult foreigners in the experiment DOMUS / MIGUELIN / GROWING LANGUAGE. The aim of the project was the learning of Italian by immigrants as a tool for communication, empowerment, building relationships, recounting life experiences and social advancement. The experiment was implemented in non-profit association for the promotion of interdisciplinary activities, education and hospitality for foreign adults and children operating both in Rome and in Milan.

As a conclusion he said "Foreigners will learn the "power of literacy" not only in order to be able to communicate in the language of the society in which they live, but also to read, write and be part of it."



Mr. Marius Vulpe, Manager of the Penitentiary in Iasi, Romania said- "It's very difficult to reintegrate a convicted man, as his

precarious material status usually takes its toll. There doesn't seem to be any great difficulty in reintegrating the convicts who are supported by the family. We have problems with the persons who have a precarious education who don't benefit from social support, who receive help only inside the walls of the penitentiary, and when they are released they don't receive any help from authorities, the State or the NGOs. That's when they fail to integrate themselves in society. Inside the jail, there is a school called "a second chance to convicts", but most of them turn down the classes, stating that traditional school doesn't offer any possibility for their development. It's important to stimulate their interest through workshops, which

aim at developing their native and practical skills."

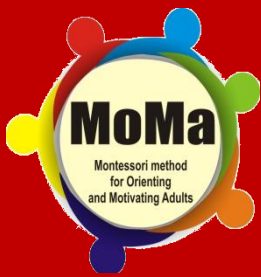
Elena Matei, Chief of the Social Assistance Service for Adult People, part of the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Child Protection, Iasi-Romania, mentions an example of good practice, that is the development of a public-private partnership through which she has founded a service of protected employment called "Revis Bakery". During this service, many disabled people have taken part in classes organized at Hirlau care centre. The aim of the activity? They wanted to create an educational environment and supervised work schedule, which aimed to stimulate their progress to a normal life, one that can develop their skills as much as possible. Our wish was to change the status of the disabled people from that of a socially assisted person to that of an employee. The bakery was equipped with special tools, bakers, specialists who usually teach the institutionalized adults, so that the latter could become bakers in their turn. There have also been mentally disabled people included in the program. Thus, we have created three services destined to the disabled people: an evaluation service, another one for the pre-vocational preparation, a service for assisted employment and another one for protected employment. Supporting a person in the social integration process means assisting him/her in the search for employment, occupying and maintaining a job. I believe that we should firstly create various forms of protected employment, special learning programs and programs for the acquisition of socio-professional skills. Seeing as our Directorate has got a residential centre for adults, we should develop some forms of education for the other members of the disabled people's family, so that they could create a protective climate.

It is very important that the disabled person should develop skills that are necessary to his passage from a supervised workplace to an open, social and free workplace.

Interview of Dr. Soraya Fernandes, Headmaster of Montessori Nursery in Loulé, Portugal:



"Montessori believed that the prepared environment is directly related to the child's development. The class room is an area specifically designed solely for children. Through free choice activities children develop their intrinsic motivation to learn. Independence and responsibility are developed



**MONTESSORI METHOD FOR
ORIENTING
AND MOTIVATING ADULTS
MOMA**



Project n. 527800-LLP-1-2012-1-IT-GRUNDTVIG-GMP

through activities in the area of practical life, such as dressing tables, pouring activities, choosing the snack time, setting the table, taking care of their own plant in the garden, helping to dress younger or is put toothpaste on the brush, and so on. "The Montessori classroom is a meticulously prepared environment and specifically organized to meet the physical, cognitive, social and emotional needs of the children. One aspect of the prepared environment includes the activities of Practical Life. Through the activities of Practical Life, the child will also develop and improve their social skills. Practical Life skills are an essential component in the Montessori classroom. Not only provide a link between home and school for the latest Montessori student, but also lay the foundation for a love of lifelong learning." As an advantage, it was mentioned that: The calm classroom, structured and focused on the child develops children's concentration and passion for learning.

"Montessori Children demonstrate a high level of confidence and independence. When transitioning to traditional education they are above average students and are highly sociable. Do not show any problems in classrooms directed by the teacher."

"M. Montessori said that teachers must divest themselves of dogmatic views about "normal" behavior. She warned Montessori teachers to give up their need to control and learn how to support the child and learning community. She taught teachers to address the development of the child with reverence and humility. The dynamics and the relationship between the Montessori teacher and the children depend on the attitude with which we approach them."

An Interview took by Mercy Maclean (HP-MOS) with Barbara Isaacs, the Academy Director, Montessori Centre International, UK talk about the Montessori Method with children/adults.

Such theories give importance to the positive influences of life experience and maturity, and to the salience of personal issues, but their appropriateness needs to be critically analyzed. Stress is a common manifestation among dementia carers and its presence can significantly affect openness to learning.

As a result of recent policy ages and of demographic shifts, nurses are likely to be increasingly involved in care support programs. They need to be aware of the Dementia Carers (Nurses mostly)."

Interviews were conducted to identify: results and added value of the methodology adopted, strengths and critical factors, testing the methodology adopted, innovation methodology.

A brief guide for the interviews was provided by the lead partner HP-MOS.

All the partners will also involved a large public of stakeholders, for dissemination activities and especially because "they could be the engine for the long term impact" (as long term target groups, as multipliers of the diffusion and as exploitation of the project outcomes). Each partner will provide a Synthesis Report SR which will further investigate the best practices analyzed at national level, in particular the practices aimed to favor the fight to the diffidence of specific target groups towards the education of adults. It will also include examples of methodologies based on the "social" education and experience of participatory and cooperative approach.

A conclusion to all the interviews would be this:

The practical principles of the Montessori method are based on the natural tendencies of the human being to explore, to move, to share information with the others, to be independent and take one's own decisions, to create one's own order of priorities, to develop the self control, to draw one's own conclusions from the experiences, to use one's creative imagination, to work hard, repeat and perfect the work methods.



"Just as people have roamed the earth with his foot and then they show area without thinking about the immense wealth hidden in its depths, so people today made progress by progress in civilization without noticing the treasures that lie hidden in the psychic universe early childhood "
"Traditional school divides and breaks the manual work from the intellectual, dealing exclusively of" intellect "intellectual culture, usually only to memorization. This means by M. Montessori, a distortion, an imbalance of personality because she said "There is a strong connection between manual work targets that occur in everyday life and the spirit of deep concentration. Although it seems, at first glance, these two things are opposite, in reality they are deeply united given because one is the origin of the other. Education hand is very important, that hand is expressive instrument of human intelligence: it is the organ of the mind ". (Maria Montessori).

MOMA project - European Consortium