



## ABOUT

The **STEP\_UP: Stop Epidemic Growth Through Learning** project is a European Erasmus+ project that started in December 2020 and will last until the end of February 2023.

STEP\_UP intends to develop a training tool for social care and community stakeholders, where they are introduced to the impact of behaviours in the spread of a pandemic/emergency situation and trained, through gaming strategies, to prevent and cope.

## THE CONTEXT

Since the first COVID-19 cases appeared, countries have developed different strategies and responses to cope with the pandemic. After the emergency state, a collaborative leadership approach will be essential and working together as a collective, investing in a participatory citizenship, will be key.

It is not possible to consider this is a time with no consequences and that no other emergency situations will occur. The use of teleworking, the social distance and the increased health and care needs implied uncovering new methods of work, understanding society's biggest fragilities and will imply changes in work and training, tools and routines that will only be clear in the next months and years.

Apart from all the innovations that are being developed and the new ways services are now being delivered, there is the need to prepare bottom-up initiatives that build-up the competences of social care professionals, community leaders, informal caregivers and volunteers so that these are prepared to deal with such emergency situations in the future.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Develop a meaningful, supportive and innovative training toolkit including the game, training materials and guidance.
2. Ensure wider exploitation and contribute to informal education, especially of those with lower skills and qualifications, by the low access thresholds of a recreational game.
3. Train, empower and support care professionals, community leaders, informal caregivers and volunteers in dealing with emergency situations caused by pandemics.
4. Offer target-group oriented guidelines and insights on early detection, preventive measures, healthcare and social care interventions, policy measures and communication to stakeholders at social and political level.
5. Ensure the outreach and sustainable impacts of the project results.

# TARGET GROUPS

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STEP\_UP is first aiming at social care workers and similar target groups described above as primary users, but the game will also be usable by any citizen and will therefore have a larger aim in adult training, especially those with lower skills and qualifications.

The STEP\_UP game and toolkit will enable learners to build on competences and increase resilience to improve their communities in crisis situations. Professionals in municipalities and welfare organizations as well as social and health care providers, mainly those in auxiliary positions and lower skills, will be encouraged to better understand where to look for reliable information, to learn how to deal with pandemic contexts and to better empathize with policy decisions. Volunteers in associations, initiatives, and other community organisations are provided with options and strategies to contribute for public awareness.

All target groups will thus be equipped with strategies for intervention. By acting competently, they function as multipliers and transfer good practice examples to other persons and organizations. As regards learners with lower educational levels, the simple low threshold approach and easy accessibility of the game scenarios will encourage them to participate in a learning experience.

# RESULTS

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The core of this project will be an educational game but that can also be used as a recreational game for the common public. In STEP\_UP, the players will play with the aim to stop a pandemic from spreading. A list of measures will be displayed and the player needs to learn about them in order to be able to choose those that would help to impede the virus spread without damaging the economy or causing societal anger. This would also help people to better understand and follow governmental measures (which they actually not always do in current times) and to set aside true facts from myths and fake news.

Besides the gaming tool and the complete training toolkit, a manual on social and policy interventions will be delivered, that aims to offer target-group oriented guidelines and insights on early detection, preventive measures, healthcare and social care interventions, policy measures and communication. The manual will be completed with real-life oriented user stories, good practices and lessons learned.

# PARTNERS

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The project involves five partner organisations in five European countries:

- SHINE 2Europe (Portugal)
- AFEdeemy, Academy on age-friendly environments in Europe BV (Netherlands)
- ISIS – Sozialforschung, Sozialplanung, Politikberatung (Germany)
- Wise Angle (Spain)
- Croatian Institute of Public Health (Croatia)

# EUROPEAN COORDINATION

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