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Press Release

Cerasmus+ Project: a European Network for Innovation in the Ceramic Art and Craft sector

The continuous and important work of **AEuCC - European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation “Cities of Ceramics”** recently led to the approval of the European Project Cerasmus+.

The project is developed within the key action 2 - strategic partnerships (which doesn't promote in a first phase an exchange of students, but develops direct contacts between teachers and educational methods designers), fostering the improvement, optimization, innovation and internationalization of educational models and curricula.

6 countries, 8 partners, 2 years, 3 main objectives: the Cerasmus+ project, which was born from the initiative of AEUCC - European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation “Cities of Ceramics”, has started with the kick off meeting held in Perugia (Italy) on December 12, 2017, at the headquarters of TUCEP - Tiber Umbria Comett Education Programme, coordinator of the project.

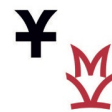
Co-funded by the **European program Erasmus+**, the project aims to protect the European traditional heritage, to modernize the ceramic sector and to develop vocational training in ceramic craft industry enhancing work based learning models.

Ceramics is one of the most ancient man-made forms of art and handicraft and nowadays the ceramic technical knowledge has gradually spread worldwide, creating districts and clusters of artists, craftsmen, associations, artistic schools and museums. National and international networks have been built and consolidated through cultural, productive and institutional collaborations, developing contacts and cooperation, organizing and promoting events such as festivals, markets, workshops, symposiums, exhibitions and prices.

Despite this strengths, however, the crafts and ceramics sectors face dangerous issues as the global competition of cheaper products, the loss of skills, the difficulties of getting into the market and the lack of financial resources and economic capacity, as the sector is mostly led by micro-enterprises, freelancers or hobby-based establishments.

The project Cerasmus+ faces these challenges relying on three pillars: Heritage, Innovation, Network.

“It's an important result which pays back our constant work in the European field”, declares **Senator Stefano Collina, AEUCC president**, “showing the efficacy of our policies and strategies and the quality of our international partnerships, which allow us to to commute in projects and concrete results the long work done in years”.



Project n. 2017-1-IT01-KA202-006158

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“It is a targeted and concrete action in the field of vocational training”, underlines the **Secretary General and Project Director of AEuCC Giuseppe Olmeti**, “which we wish can be a good omen for many other European projects in preparation, or already submitted, in other fields, such as the development of entrepreneurship, culture, territorial cooperation with neighbouring countries or in the Mediterranean area, in the Ceramic Art and Craft sector”.

“With Cerasmus+, an educational platform in the field of Ceramics is born”, states **Massimo Isola, President of AiCC - Italian Association of Cities of Ceramics and Deputy Mayor of the Municipality of Faenza**, “which will concretely develop in the single countries and overall in Europe, with numerous potentialities. The crisis of the educational system in the ceramic field can be overcome with effective actions: the experience of the ITS Course of High Specialization post-diploma in Faenza and the recognition of the historical Institute Caselli of Naples as 'rare school' by the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research are some concrete examples. Now, with Cerasmus+, an environment for a common house of the experiences and excellences in this field has been created”.

Partners of this project are 8 organizations from 6 different countries, 6 of which are training centers for ceramics:

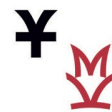
TUCEP - Tiber Umbria Comett Education Programme (Perugia, Italy), the coordinator, an association of eleven Italian Universities and Enterprises whose main activity is the organization and management of training courses at national and European level. Website: www.tucep.org

AEuCC - European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation “Cities of Ceramics” (legally based in Spain, technical coordination in Italy), which groups together the Associations of Cities of Ceramics in Europe (over 100 European cities of ceramics) with the aim to develop territorial and transnational cooperation in the field of Ceramic Art and craft, mainly to create social and economic cohesion by developing projects and services for the ceramic sector stakeholders. Website: www.aeucc.eu

Escuela de Arte y Superior de Cerámica de Manises (Manises, Spain), a hundred years old institution born to provide competences to the workers of the ceramic industry and evolved to a high school of fine arts. Website: www.esceramica.com

Istituto Superiore "V. Calò" (Grottaglie, Italy), that has been established in September 2012, counts 900 students and includes the artistic high school of Grottaglie, artistic high school of Taranto, Manduria, Martina Franca and the school funded in Taranto prison. Website: www.liceoartisticocalo.gov.it/portale

Forssan ammatti-instituutti (Forssa, Finland), a vocational institute whose guiding principle is to be a multidisciplinary, developing education institution that meets the requirements of the working life and supports each student's vocational development in his or her chosen field. Website: www.lhkk.fi



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Masarykova střední škola Letovice (Letovice, Czech Republic), a School hosting students from all over the region of Jihomoravsky. MSSL is not a large entity, it counts approximately 270 students and it's a small learning environment where students can be very well known and prepared for their professional career in companies in the area of art, design and construction. Website: www.stredni-skola.cz

Zespół Szkół Ogólnokształcących i Zawodowych (Częstochowa, Poland), a state school which was founded 50 years ago and educates in different professions: tour guide, advertising specialist and ceramist, with a focus on merging tradition and innovation. Website: www.zsmonki.pl

Kecskeméti Kortárs Művészeti Műhelyek (Kecskemét, Hungary), an International Ceramics Studio (ICS) created in Kecskemét on the initiative of Hungarian artists who had felt culturally and ideologically isolated. The mission of the art centre is to promote the formal, aesthetic and technical development of ceramics and to help foster creative skills. Website: www.icshu.org

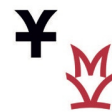
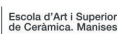
The main objectives were made clear during the first transnational meeting in Perugia. Led by the coordinator (TUCEP, Italy) and AEUCC (European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation "Cities of Ceramics"), the partners will create a **European network of ceramics stakeholders** (VET providers, craft businesses, public authorities, cultural institutions, research centres) to **analyse the sector needs** for competences, valorization of the urban environment and business start-up and elaborate new vocational trainings models with a work based learning approach, in order to strengthen the sector value at cultural, social and economic level.

The first step of Cerasmus+ is to elaborate a questionnaire for the stakeholders, in order to start assessing the needs of the ceramics sector, therefore developing, according to this research, solutions in the field of training.

The website of the project, www.cerasmus.eu, is published and will be updated with information and documents, and will also host a **networking platform** for all the interested parties in the ceramics sector to exchange knowledge, ideas, intuitions for the development of the sector value chain.

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