


ASPIRE Project Overview


ASPIRE (Adding to Social capital and individual Potential In disadvantaged REgions) received more than €7m of EU funding and ran from September 2019 to June 2023. The project had a total budget of over €10m and involved 15 partners from the UK and France including a university, local and regional public authorities, as well as public and private community outreach organisations.

THE CHALLENGE :



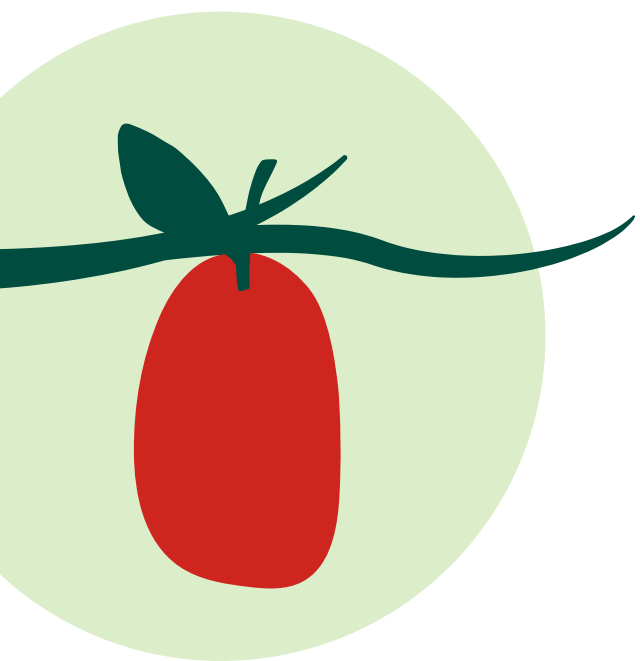
Obesity in both coastal France and the UK Channel area is a significant concern; high levels of obesity coincide with high rates of unemployment and socioeconomic disadvantage. The goal was to reduce obesity, improve wellbeing and increase employability amongst the target group.

THE AIM:



ASPIRE combined health, wellbeing and up-skilling opportunities in one holistic programme that was open to participants who were both struggling to manage their weight and to improve their employability. A key element of this was to give people the skills to grow and eat their own local, healthy food, as well as giving them the necessary skills and self-confidence to access training, work experience and employment.

THE OUTPUTS:



Participants were reached by 9 hub sites (6 in France and 3 in the UK). Participants had access to a wide range of group activities, as well as 1:1 support, all specifically tailored to boost their wellbeing, self-esteem and ultimately their health and employability.

Over 20,000 people were reached via the hub sites and wider community outreach work, via interactive health kiosks and community health walks. The project produced a holistic, tried and tested, model that is freely accessible to organisations and local authorities across Europe who want to implement an ASPIRE inspired programme in their area.

During the project, partner research found that 33% of unemployed people who are obese say they have been confronted with questions related to their weight during their search for employment. Linked to this, 45% of job seekers think it is acceptable to be denied a job because of their body shape. Discrimination towards people living with obesity in the workplace or looking for work was addressed by the partnership via a suite of practical guides for employers that reached many organisations across France and the UK during the lifetime of ASPIRE.