New Steps

MAY 2026

NEWSLETTER

EU'S FIRST STEPS TOWARDS CAREER TRANSITION SUPPORT FOR DANCERS

We're pleased to share the first update from NewSteps: EU's first steps towards career transition support for dancers (project n. 101255403), a new European project created to support dancers for more sustainable working career.

This newsletter is the first in a series. In the coming months, we'll be sharing the project's progress, activities and results, while also opening up a wider conversation around career transitions and changes through our partner countries.

At the heart of NEW STEPS is a simple but urgent question: what happens when a dancer's performing career ends early, and there are no concrete tools to help build what comes next?

A dancer's artistic career is intense, highly specialised and usually shorter than that of a 'traditional' profession. For this reason, the transition to new professional opportunities creates a crucial challenge, requiring appropriate tools, transferable skills and a stronger supportive ecosystem.

The Creative Europe-funded project NewSteps was created to support dancers by researching and piloting an innovative dual-career pathway, as well as other capacity-building opportunities, that bridge the worlds of dance, cultural management, and new employment opportunities in the cultural and creative sectors.

Through research, training, international mobility, networking, and awareness-raising activities, the project aims to strengthen participants' skills and contribute to greater awareness of the issue of dancers' career transitions and changes at the European level.

Alongside research and training, NewSteps also wants to contribute to a stronger structural conversation. A key part of the project is raising awareness among institutions, policy-makers and cultural stakeholders, so that career changes for dance professionals becomes a recognised and supported issue at both national and European level.

Co-funded by the European Union

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NEWSTEPS PROJECT OFFICIALLY LAUNCHES IN FINLAND

The NewSteps project's Kick-Off Meeting took place on April 28-29 in Kuopio, Finland. The project is funded by the European Union through the Creative Europe program and aims to support the career transition of professional dancers through a dual-career model.

Representatives from the six partner organizations met in person for the first time, after collaborating online for many months during which they worked on planning and drafting the project.

The meeting was hosted by Savonia University of Applied Sciences, the project coordinator - a leading institution in public-private collaboration in the field of education, as well as a model for teaching dance pedagogy.

These were two intense and crucial days for the project's future development. Meeting in person the people with whom we will be collaborating over the next three years is essential for building a relationship of mutual trust and cooperation. Together with our partners, we analyzed all phases of the project from an operational perspective, identifying the most complex challenges to be addressed and outlining solutions that will be refined over the coming months.

The two days, however, were also an important opportunity to "get a taste" of some aspects of the culture of the city and the North Savonia region. The partners attended rehearsals for a performance by young students from the Savonia UAS dance pedagogy education. In addition the project partners had a stakeholder meeting with Kuopio Dance Festival, local Dance Theater Minimi and The Regional Dance Center of Eastern Finland. They then watched several dance performances at the City Theater and tried their hand at some traditional dances thanks to a folk dance lesson.

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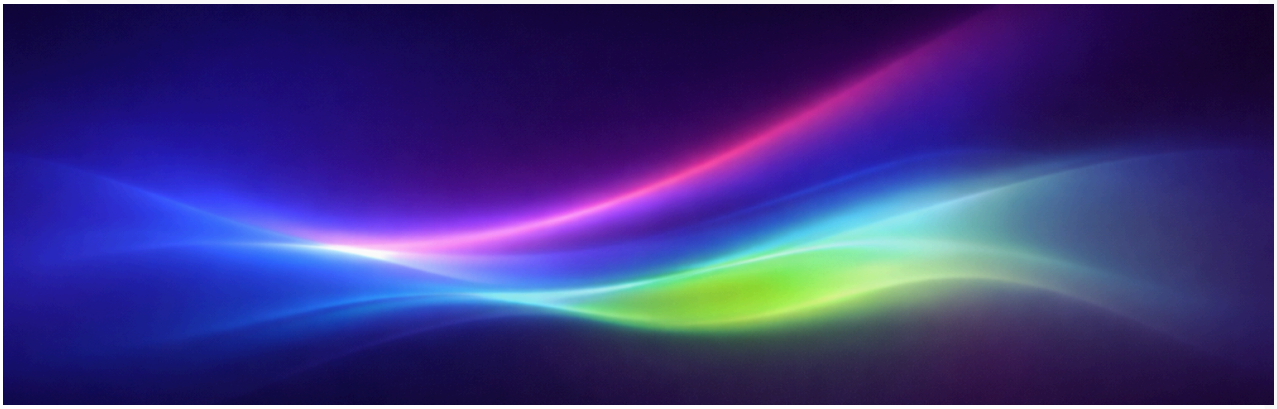
OBJECTIVES

- To provide updated research and comparative analysis at EU level on dancers' career transition, mapping existing services, gaps and common needs.
- To increase dancers' knowledge and skills in business, cultural management and the dance industry through a tailored, digital and recognised blended capacity-building course.
- To promote the integration of dual career pathways in the dance and cultural sectors through research, networking and stakeholder engagement.
- To improve and reskill dancers' competences in order to increase their employment opportunities in the cultural sector across Europe.

PROJECT RESULTS

- Transnational research on dancers' career transition in Europe, including data, needs, gaps and good practices.
- A capacity-building e-learning platform focused on cultural management and performing arts management for dancers.
- A report on the results of the blended course, analysing learning outcomes and the effectiveness of the training methodology.
- The New Steps Declaration, addressed to institutions and public decision-makers.
- Networking and dissemination events at national and European level to raise awareness and connect stakeholders.



THE PARTNERSHIP

- **Savonia University of Applied Sciences** (Finland), project coordinator;
- **Spaces Foundation** (Bulgaria);
- **Clubul de Dans Phoenix** (Romania);
- **MV International** (Italy);
- **Dance Club Mimi** (Slovenia);
- **Hypex** (Italy).

Together, the consortium combines experience in dance, education, cultural management, digital innovation, European cooperation and stakeholder engagement. Our shared goal is not only to test new ideas, but to recomment models that can be relevant, sustainable and replicable across Europe.

We're very glad to begin this journey with you.

As this project develops, we'll use this newsletter to keep you updated on the main milestones, share insights from the research and training activities, and highlight the people, ideas and conversations shaping NewSteps along the way.

Thank you for being part of this first step.

To stay connected and follow the project's progress, you can visit the official website and follow NEW STEPS on Facebook and Instagram.

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