

Animation Training: the Cartoon Project

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Abstract

Cartoon - Animation Training is a two-year project, part of the EU Leonardo programme, which aims to create and promote animation training. Designed by the Livingston Training Agency in collaboration with the MBVision communications company, it makes the Town Council of Lari the leader of a prestigious partnership that includes important European contributions like the ISIA – Higher Institute for Artistic Industries of Florence (Italy), ESBAR – Ecole Superieure des Beaux Arts de la Reunion (France), Iniciativas de Proyectos de Formacion (Spain), the Balkanplan consulting company (Bulgaria), the Intercultural Consult company that deals with intercultural projects (Bulgaria), the GAYA Institute of social and economic research (Turkey), the TAGETE publishing house (Italy), the Amarganta cultural association (Italy) and lastly two institutional boards like the Town Council of Santa Maria a Monte and the Province of Pisa. Try to imagine a course that deals with security at work; and then imagine that, instead of taking part in a normal lesson with a teacher, you watch a cartoon that manages to explain, in an exhaustive and fascinating way, the rules and correct behaviour you should follow at your workstation. This is animated training. **A different way of teaching, a different way of learning, a different way of transmitting** and receiving knowledge and a different way of training. The **Cartoon** project aims to systematically develop this teaching tool; in fact it already exists but its potential has never been fully exploited and understood. Educational animated training units (comics, cartoons, illustrated books, multimedia DVD) will therefore be created during the development of the project and, at the same time, strategies will be studied to arrive at the definition of the appropriate teaching methods for identifying a new type of teacher. This **professional figure** will therefore be enriched with new skills, such as the ability to **dramatise** his teaching, in other words, to translate the entire course into a story that will then be transposed into images by the artist or the cartoon maker. This form of language offers some important advantages. First of all, it makes it possible, in many cases, to overcome language barriers (no dialogue). Comics and cartoons, moreover, are a media that already form much of the culture of young people, who are the potential users, and are charged with an innate attraction. Lastly, animated training products are well suited to new technology and the **new instruments of communication** and knowledge; it is in fact then extremely easy to transmit a cartoon on the web. **The Cartoon** project is therefore directed towards teachers and trainers, who will have the chance to add new knowledge to what they already know, to comic makers, script writers and cartoon makers, who make their personal creativity available, to principals and executives of educational structures, who can carry out teaching programmes suitable for avant-garde schools, to policy-makers, who can utilise the basic ideas of the project to define political proposals on vocational training and lastly to the users of the teaching and professional training programmes (students, university students, apprentices, trainees) who are the final recipients of these innovative teaching methods.