



## SPECIAL EU PROGRAMMES BODY

### Project Case Study: Extern Positive Learning

#### THEME:

Building Positive Relations:  
Regional Level Projects

#### FUNDING (ERDF+MATCH):

€1,884,467.34

#### MATCH FUNDERS:

Executive Office Northern  
Ireland and the Department  
of Rural and Community  
Development, Ireland

#### LEAD PARTNER:

Extern

#### PROJECT PARTNERS:


TIDES Training; The Pro-  
bation Service Ireland, The  
Probation Service Northern  
Ireland, NI Prison Service  
and the Irish Prison Ser-  
vice.

Start Date: 01/10/2017

End Date: 30/06/2021

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www.extern.org/  
positive-learning](https://www.extern.org/positive-learning)

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externposlearn](https://twitter.com/externposlearn)

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Extern Positive Learning is the first project of its kind in the North West.

Its enabling the most marginalised and socially excluded people in our society to explore and share their own community prejudices, values, and civic identity as they reintegrate back into society.

As well as helping to reduce prejudice the project is assisting in the development of meaningful relationships of trust, empowering participants by providing the practical skills needed to deal with everyday challenges.

Marginalised people, drawn from across Northern Ireland and the Border Counties of Ireland, will benefit from the diversity, good relations and vocational training on offer.

*"I've lived on my own since I was 15 and struggled a lot mentally, physically and socially. I was thrown out of secondary school for being a clown and ended up with no qualifications which, at the time, didn't bother me but as the years slowly went on it impacted on my self-esteem and mental health. After years of shutting myself away, I realised I needed help. It was then that I met Extern, and I knew life was about to change for the better."*

Project Participant





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The project provides vocational training to people who find themselves on the margins of society, including people who are:

- Disadvantaged;
- Homeless;
- have an offending history;
- are long-term unemployed;
- or who are refugees.

As well as exploring prejudices, identity, and diversity the project offers a wide range of skills development programmes to help reintegrate participants back into their community. Such programmes include:

- Joinery
- ICT
- Plumbing
- Horticulture
- Catering

*"Extern has provided a safe, happy and homely learning facility with staff who are bursting at the seams with a positive mental attitude. It's hard to feel alone and upset when you're surrounded by so many good people who want nothing but the best for you. My life has completely turned around now. I now know that I owe the world something, and not vice versa. I feel happy and I wake up every day excited to get into Extern and get my qualifications. It's been a rollercoaster for me, but it's a journey I'll keep close to my heart for the rest of my days."*

Project Participant

