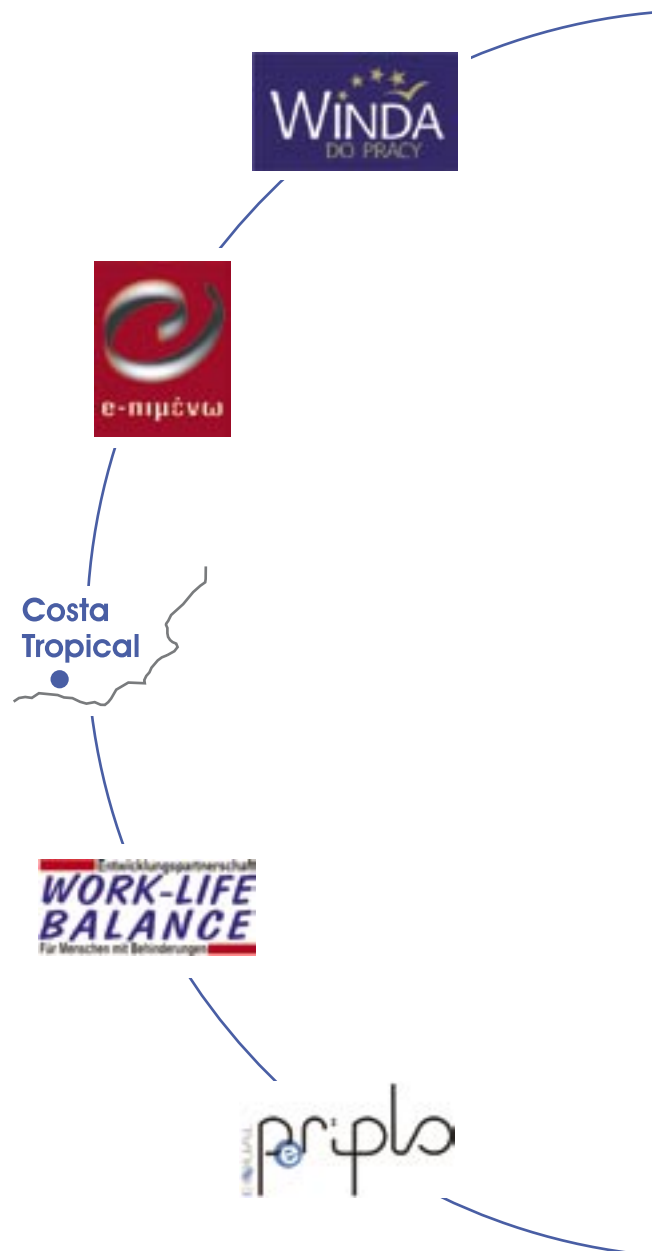


WAYS TO A SUCCESSFUL WORK LIFE FOR PEOPLE THREATENED WITH SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND THEIR FAMILIES





AUTHORS

Poland: Beata Karlinska (working group leader)
Pawel Zimecki
Ewa Bieniek
Jaroslaw Malesza
Barbara Stawicka

Spain: Encarna Navarro Navarro
Maria Sanchez Pineda

Greece: Maria Tsonioti

Germany: Weronika Wegrad –Paul
Stefanie Grämke
Michael Schmitz

Italy: Paolo Sgreccia

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INTRODUCTION

EQUAL INITIATIVE DESCRIPTION

EQUAL is the Community Initiative of Human Resources promoted by the Social European Fund for the period 2001-2006.

The Initiative Community EQUAL, which forms a part of a strategy integrated for the employment, takes the struggle as an aim against all the forms of discrimination and inequality that are produced on the market of work and, especially, against those that base on the sex, the race, the ethnic origin, the beliefs or the age.

To reach this aim, the projects EQUAL must have an innovative content designed and developed across mechanisms of cooperation between entities of different nature and from a perspective of transnational work.

EQUAL, as the previous Community Initiatives of Human Resources, affects in the transnational cooperation, in the innovative character and of demonstration of the projects, in the equality of opportunities between men and women and in the transfer of the good practices to the general policies. At the heart of EQUAL lies the principle of integrating and incorporating new ideas and approaches into policy and practice. To assist in this „mainstreaming“ process, EQUAL provides structures and tools, both at national and European level, for transferring the good practices resulting from EQUAL to policy makers and key stakeholders. All Member States have established specific mechanisms for assessing the relevance of the results, identifying the lessons learnt and clarifying the conditions that were key to achieving the results.

EQUAL co-finances activities in all EU Member States. EQUAL differs from the European Social Fund mainstream programmes in its function as a laboratory (principle of innovation) and in its emphasis on active co-operation between Member States. Two calls for proposals for EQUAL projects in the Member States have taken place so far, the first one in 2001, the second one in 2004. Responsibility for the implementation of the Community Initiative programmes in the Member States lies with the national authorities.

The building blocks of EQUAL are the following ones:

- Partnership: To bring together key actors (local and regional authorities, training bodies, public employment services, NGOs, enterprises, social partners) in Development Partnerships (DPs) on a geographical or sectoral level to tackle discrimination and inequality.
- Thematic approach: To concentrate actions on thematic fields in keeping with the European Employment Strategy.
- Innovation: To explore and test innovative approaches in formulating, delivering and implementing employment and training policies.
- Empowerment: To strengthen capacity building by making all relevant actors, including beneficiaries, work together on an equal footing.
- Transnationality: To render it possible for individual DPs and national authorities to learn from each other and co-operate productively across borders.
- Mainstreaming: To develop and test new ways of integrating best practices into employment and social inclusion policies.

Project and Objectives

The European Commission, by issuing the joint initiative EQUAL, initiated a labour market programme, which aims at developing and testing pilot strategies for eliminating any kind of discrimination relating to the labour market. Those innovative actions developed and implemented successfully within the EQUAL programme are to be mainstreamed into the labour market funding policies of all member states and shall contribute to a further development of European employment strategies.

EQUAL, being a transnational programme, is also designed as promoting exchange, mutual learning and the exploitation of synergies among the key players in programmes and projects on a European level. Thus EQUAL also aims at promoting social cohesion and the integration of new member states.



The transnational partnership JOSHA („Joint Strategies for Handicapped People“) cooperated from July 2005 until June 2007. Five development partnerships from Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland and Spain formed the network JOSHA in order to exchange experiences in the vocational and social integration of disadvantaged people. On national level, the participating development partnerships in the individual EQUAL projects initiated new strategies for eliminating discrimination in the labour market. Depending on the national and regional peculiarities, innovative methods and instruments were developed and tested for the respective group of beneficiaries and the key players on the labour market were specifically motivated to adopt social responsibility.

The transnational partnership JOSHA organized an intensive exchange of experiences among experts, representatives of the target groups, enterprises, scientists, coordinators and consultants of the five national EQUAL projects. By developing, testing and disseminating comparative studies and innovative solutions for selected problem fields relating to integrating disadvantaged people, JOSHA aimed at influencing the design of national and European guidelines in a sustainable way.

The five EQUAL development partnerships:

- **The German development partnership “Work Life Balance for people with handicap”** developed specific measures for successfully integrating people with handicap into the labour market and preparing them for the competition on this market. New instruments of vocational training and integration were tested in nine different sub-projects. These are, for example, business start-ups, the targeted modular vocational training, integration and support for migrants or the vocational training for young people with learning difficulties. The idea of Work Life Balance focuses on the holistic perspective of the beneficiaries’ situation and a tailored support of their vocational targets.
- **The Polish development partnership „Winda do Pracy - Lift to Work“** developed methods and instruments, which improve the participation of people with muscular diseases in social life. Special attention was given to the recognition and elimination of barriers which prevent these people from participating in normal social life with work and social contacts. The activities specifically include the families of these handicapped people and thus also grant a holistic perspective to the vocational integration of their family members.
- **The Italian development partnership „PE.RI.PLO – Training Paths for Local Development“** relates vocational integration of elder unemployed people in the area in the north of Rome with the development and revitalization of the natural reserve in the “Veio Regional Park”. The inhabitants of the region were actively involved in the economical restructuring of the region by different integration measures like business start-ups, the creation of new qualification models and job profiles in order to create new jobs.
- **The Greek development partnership „E-NSIST – Skill advancement for handicapped people through the application of a novel e-learning platform“** focussed on the vocational support of people with neuromuscular diseases. By developing an advanced e-learning platform, an important means of communication was created for the target persons. The beneficiaries, apart from participating in further training, will also be able to find information on coping with their disease, care institutions and opportunities for social integration.
- **The Spanish development partnership „Action for Employment“** works for a wide scope of target groups, which are people who are disadvantaged due to their race, status as immigrants, their sex or their inadequate school education. The objective of their activities was a vocational and social integration of the beneficiaries through different training and support measures, combined with a comprehensive public relation work in order to raise awareness of the situation of disadvantaged people in their social environment.

The cooperation of the JOSHA partnership was based on a “Transnational Cooperation Agreement (TCA). The kick-off workshop in Schwerin on October 26th and 27th 2005 was the starting point of the structured cooperation of 70 experts from 5 countries. The set-up steering committee in the JOSHA partnership, which consists of the project managers of the national development partnerships, ensured the achievement of the objectives that were set in the TCA. By drawing up a joint working plan and by regular meetings, it was possible to draw up the transnational products as scheduled. The University of Rome was responsible for the scientific guidance of the working processes through regular evaluation. The joint communication platforms, the JOSHA website (www.josha.org), the transnational secretariat and the transnational coordinators ensured the smooth communication within the transnational network on a high level. Targeted public relation work made the activities of the JOSHA partnership visible on national levels as well.

The joint results that were to be produced within the JOSHA partnership were developed and drawn up in transnational working groups, in which representatives of all national development partnerships participated. These working groups covered the following topics:

Working group 1 – coordinated by the Italian development partnership

Organizational framework and national funding instruments for the integration of people with handicap in Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland and Spain.

Working group 2 – coordinated by the Spanish development partnership

Instruments and practices for awareness raising and motivation of employers for employment of people with handicap.

Working group 3 – coordinated by the German development partnership

Successful instruments for the vocational qualification and placement of people with handicap under special consideration of growing sectors.

Working group 4 – coordinated by the Greek development partnership

Structures, modes of operation and networking of organizations for the support of people with handicap.

Working group 5 – coordinated by the Polish development partnership

Ways to a successful work life for people threatened with social exclusion and their families.

Objectives of this working group

Our working group was in charge of identifying pragmatic, innovative measures that support, help and strengthen people threatened with social exclusion as well as their families. The funding instruments, the political measures, the legal framework as well as the institutional situation for people with handicap in the countries participating in our Transnational Partnership JOSHA, have been investigated in the other four working groups. This is why our working group concentrated mainly on identifying and disseminating good practices. The examples listed below result from intensive discussions during our working group sessions. They were selected as being the ones most suitable and pragmatic and useful to the other partners.



1. A GOOD PRACTICE FROM THE GREEK DP: SUPPORT SERVICE FOR SOCIAL AND OCCUPATIONAL INTEGRATION OF PEOPLE AFFLICTED WITH NEUROMUSCULAR DISORDERS – A TAILOR-MADE E-LEARNING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME



The target group of the e-NSIST programme is people between 16 to 40 years, who suffer from neuromuscular disorders, who live in Greece.

- Some of them are members of MDA (Muscular Dystrophy Association) Hellas, but some other don't even know about the association or other similar services in country.
- Some of them (people with muscular dystrophy) use wheelchairs and they have serious health problems (respiratory problems, cardiological problems etc), which are barriers to being educated or to work.
- Most of them live in Athens, but there are a serious number of them who live in small villages far away from universities.
- We have many differences in pursuit and in knowledge about new technology. Also most of them prefer a holistic academic programme with possibilities to be in contact with other subjects like art, entertainment etc, than a strict educational programme us usual.
- Some of them are interested in working after the end of the programme, others aren't.

So we had to create a programme, trying to be as satisfactory as we can be, for most of the participants, and we have:

- An e-learning educational programme
- Based in new technologies in several levels
- Adding activities of art, entertainment etc
- Supporting for occupational integration
- Trying to promote "work by distance"

To achieve all of these and trying to be in contact with the participators we created the "Support Service".

The aim of the present activity is the facilitation of integrating people suffering from neuromuscular diseases into educational programmes and furthermore to help them integrate into the job market.

Operational objective of Support Service for the Social and Professional Integration of Individuals with Neuromuscular Diseases is to provide continuous support for all individuals, who take part in the programme, to inform the neuromuscular patients and their families that want to become or are already members of MDA Hellas. They also accept that they are included in a list of contacts, which will be created at the process of establishing a database with regards to their rights regarding the health, the providence, the employment and the education/training.

More analytically, the creation of Support Service aims at offering the following services:

A. Services to the members of the target group

- Individualised advisory support for the participating (and their families) in the pilot action of training
- Advisory support on common level
- Service of information to the members of the target group, who are interested in professional training and/or finding a job.
- Mediation between target groups and job market, aiming at the placement of work for part of or all individuals, who will take part in the pilot action of training
- Placement into a job for any other interested member of target group
- Support service for members of target group.

B. Extrovert action for the promotion of employment of individuals with neuromuscular diseases

- Contacts with Public Services of Employment, local Advisory Services for handicapped people, Centres of Promotion of Employment
- Concretisation of activities for the attracting of interest on the side of employers
- Undertaking and conduct of a coordinated campaign of sensitization of executives of enterprises (diversity acceptance, diversity management) with main tool the Driver for enterprises that will be developed
- Exploitation of publicity measures for the promotion of aims of the Service
- Exploitation of the formal and informal networks of MDA Hellas and the remaining partners aiming at the placement of beneficiaries into jobs.

Organisation of support service

In complete growth of Support Service, is forecasted the following organisational structure:

- Coordinator of Support Service: social worker with experience in the collaboration with individuals of target group, person in charge for the internal co-ordination of Service
- Person in charge of services to profit: psychologist or Social Worker with experience in the advisory support and intensification of handicap people.
- Specialised services to profit: it concerns the concretisation of activities for the improvement of the expressive and communication dexterities of members of the target group, who wish their integration into the job market.
- Persons in charge of follow-up of subjects of employment: executive specialised on the issues of policies of employment and social integration. They have the objective to promote the contact with the government-owned services and the follow-up of developments with regard to the institutional environment for the promotion of employment of handicap people and more specifically the members of target group.
- Person in charge for contacts with employers: specialised executive for the `extrovert` action of Service - interconnection with enterprising world, action of sensitization of executives of human resources directors of production etc.
- Secretarial support: 2 individuals
- 1 driver of partial employment on the locomotions profited (it exists special vehicle of transport of property of MDA Hellas)

Provided services

Support (individualised and in groups)

The services to the members of target group are provided by specialised executives of the Support Service. They are distinguished in individual meetings and group sessions. The individual meetings become then agreement and they can include also benefit advisory and services to the family of the patient. If there is a problem of locomotion of the patient, it can be provided for example by the special vehicle of MDA Greece or the beneficiary accepts at home visit of executive of Support Service. This service exists for beneficiaries in Athens or in Thessalonica. For the remaining, the communication is implemented mainly by phone. In the case where it is created in a territorial located team interested, it is possible, that an executive of the Office of Support visits the group.

Group sessions are organised once a month in Athens and Thessalonica. Exists convenient briefing interested (???). Objective of common congresses is the acquaintance and communication between suffering, the sense of being a member of a group with the same problems and the support via the exchange of experiences of life.

Benefit of information for possibilities of integration in the job market - contact with proportional Public Services

The members of the target group are informed on the possibilities that are offered via special programs (subsidised programs of training, programs of subsidy of employment of handicap people, aid of business dexterity of handicap people, etc), for the rights that the state provides for them and the way, the means and the techniques on how to claim fair and equivalent treatment in the job market.

Services of mediation for placement in places of work that they watched the educational programme

The executives of Support Service via the benefit of support to the individuals that participated in the educational program, it is in a position so that they know very well the dexterities and the possibilities of these individuals. This allows the localisation of potential employers and the beginning of contacts aiming at the guarantee of places of work. The executive, who is in charge for the contacts with their 'potential' employers, develops each possibility in order to do this.

Support of individuals , who have been placed into a job

These people are monitored and they are supported continuously at the search of work, and/or while they work in order to identify potential difficulties and to adapt the advised auxiliary techniques, choices and per case solutions

Concretisation of activities for the attracting of employers

The Support Service provides information for the potential employers about the chances and motives and the advantages of creation of new places of work for handicapped people and parallel it supports the enterprises for smoother integration of handicapped people into the job. In this frame, a specialised action of sensitization of employers is organised, based on the beginnings of diversity management. The total of this action is included in the frame of coordinated expedition of briefing. Basic tool for the concretisation of these energies is the Guide on the Lifting of Discriminations that will be worked out in the frame of this Action.

2. A GOOD PRACTICE FROM THE SPANISH DP: S.I.I.L. - SERVICIOS INTEGRALES DE INSERCIÓN LABORAL (INTEGRAL LABOUR PLACEMENT SERVICES)



DEFINITION AND STRUCTURE OF S.I.I.L.¹

Structures offered by S.I.I.L.

The structure is based upon the four established Integral Labour placement Services, which should be considered as a unified physical space, integrated and coordinated within the entire region of the Costa Tropical of Granada. These services are provided in Motril, Almuñecar, Salobreña and the Confederation of Municipalities of the Costa Tropical, and the mobile S.I.I.L. in Molvizar.

Each S.I.I.L. has the necessary material and human resources to carry out all the activities contained within the integral paths to placement: labour-related and integral guidance, labour market intermediation and management of training activities, with the support of the administrative team.

With this structure in operation, coordination between the different S.I.I.L.s is fundamental, for which a continuous flow of information exchange has been developed, supported by common materials and tools.

The coordination of the whole service is performed from Motril as coordinating partner.

The service is also supported by the existing employment, training and social services structures available in the region, with the objective of making all the resources, training, and social and labour integration possibilities available for the benefit of the users.

Integral Paths to Placement.

Description of the process followed in the Integral Paths to Placement.

Following the launch of the S.I.I.L.s of Motril, the Confederation of the Costa Tropical, Almuñecar and Salobreña, the next step was the implementation of working practices leading to individualised attention of the users. The guidance process begins with a personal interview, in which all the data is collected, which is stored on a computerised platform enabling rapid access to each user's information, and also enabling the printing of physical copies by means of a paper-based form system. In this way data is obtained regarding personal details, training, work experience and other personal circumstances that help us to understand the user's environment and if they belong to a high-risk social exclusion collective.

The process continues with a one-on-one labour guidance tutorial. Here, the counsellor and the user identify his/her personal situation with regards to employment, capacity and the skills he/she has or needs to improve, aptitudes and interests, etc., giving the attended person the best possible chances in the search for employment. In fact, the next step taken is to design a strategy for searching for work, leading to, where necessary, training activities and personal coaching. The user is also informed about the resources available in the region relative to training, social services, employment, help centres, etc. In the end, the most suitable occupation and training are obtained for each individual, which is the starting point of the next stages: labour intermediation and training.

The integral path to placement continues with the management of job offers and training resources that the beneficiaries may attend, with support and monitoring until an adequate employment integration is achieved.

¹ Servicios Integrales de Inserción Laboral: Integral Labour placement Services.

Employment Guidance

Description of guidance and assessment activities

Within the Integral Paths to Placement, career guidance is one of the most important activities that takes place, and is therefore accessed by all the S.I.I.L. users.

Integral Paths to Placement include employment guidance activities. These are applied individually, and cover all the professional orientation activities. Firstly, the user's self-awareness is developed to determine the professional vocation that best fits his/her professional competences and personal qualities. This way, the person is actually placed into the job market, taking into account not only the person's qualities but also the region's professional offers with the greatest openings. Following the analysis, the user is directed to workshops and training activities, to improve his/her personal and professional characteristics with regards to employment.

The guidance continues with the design of a schedule or strategy for the search of employment, which goes from writing a good curriculum to detailed information regarding businesses from a specific sector. The guidance is adapted to each person and collective, based on their particular problems, encompassing legal, social, etc. aspects as well.

The integrated guidance is complemented with the detection of opportunities for self-employment and the creation of businesses, stimulating the entrepreneurial spirit, directed at the opportunities and new employment sources of the region, as well as the fundamental elements to be taken into account when starting any business activity.

Guidance in the selection of training

The topics covered in the individual tutorial inform the person about the wide range of training resources available to them, based upon their personal characteristics, both in regulated training as well as occupational vocational training, and about the prerequisites for accessing training courses. The importance of training is emphasised with regards to both employment and social integration, and guidance is provided regarding the most appropriate training paths for each person, with an aim to facilitate an integrated path to placement.

In the individual guidance session, the aim is to make the person's situation clear with regards to the job market, in terms of their personal characteristics, training, experience and personal qualities. They receive guidance about major work opportunities in each sector and emerging professions, with special focus on the techniques and strategies to access them.

They receive guidance about employment consolidation and improvement, mainly by means of continuous training activities. Depending on their professional profile, they are guided towards the most convenient routes for improvement, promotion and even a change in career in certain cases.

Employment search technique courses

In certain cases, the user of the service requires not only information, but also lacks the basic abilities that would benefit them in accessing the job market, for which they receive help both in the preparation of their curriculum and also knowledge about writing and modifying it, so that they can adapt it when required. Similarly, they receive advice about computerised tools for accessing the market, and the resources for sending offers over the Internet.

Guidance about new professional profiles

To a lesser degree, but still a considerable sector amongst the users, we find some cases in the individual tutorial sessions in which the person has built skills in their daily life and does not know how

to put them to professional use. Examples are minders of the elderly, the sick and children. This sector, following specific training, manages to find a space in the job market, as they already have the experience and only require its validation through training.

Guidance about the diversification of professional options for women

Taking the particular characteristics of female unemployment into account, the objective is to take specific measures towards the removal of barriers that affect the employment of women, and to promote equal opportunities in the job market, with an aim to significantly reduce female unemployment statistics.

Training of People

Description of the training activities aimed at unemployed people, working people, adaptation to the workplace, distance training, and professional training laboratory.

The objective of the training is to empower the beneficiaries in the acquisition of professional knowledge, enabling them to develop the aspects and knowledge that facilitate their access to the job market under equal conditions.

COURSES OFFERED BY THE DEVELOPMENT GROUP

COURSE	ACTION LINE	STUDENTS	HOURS
NEW TECHNOLOGIES (Permanent class: 30 editions)	New Technologies Laboratory	450	40
Initiation to Gender Perspective	Continuous Training of Personnel		100
INTRODUCTION TO THE INTERNET	Professional Training Laboratory	15	40
Initiation into new Technologies applied to Guidance	Continuous Training of Personnel		40
Gender Perspective Further Training	Continuous Training of Personnel		200
GERMAN	Skill Recycling Laboratory (Workers)	10	200
NEW CUISINE	Skill Recycling Laboratory (Workers)	10	300
INTRODUCTION TO THE INTERNET	Professional Training Laboratory	15	40
INTRODUCTION TO THE INTERNET	Professional Training Laboratory	15	40
COMPUTING	Authorised Distance Learning	10	200
ENGLISH	Professional Training Laboratory	10	200
ENGLISH	Skill Recycling Laboratory (Workers)	10	200

Further Training of new Technologies applied to Guidance	Continuous Training of Personnel		80
KITCHEN HELPER	"On-The-Job Training" Laboratory	10	500
CHAMBERMAID	"On-The-Job Training" Laboratory	10	300
Initiation of Collective Discrimination Factors	Continuous Training of Personnel		100
GERMAN	Professional Training Laboratory	10	200
Further Training of Collective Discrimination Factors	Continuous Training of Personnel		200
TOURIST BOAT GUIDE	Adaptation of the unemployed from the fishing sector	8	250
GRAPHIC DESIGN	Authorised Distance Learning	10	700
INFANT FACILITATION	Training Laboratory - Practice in the Workplace	10	600
FRENCH	Professional Training Laboratory	10	200
Social Marketing	Continuous Training of Personnel		100
ELECTRONIC COMMERCE	Skill Recycling Laboratory (Workers)	10	60
GOVERNESS	Skill Recycling Laboratory (Workers)	10	125
SMALL BOAT REPAIRS	Adaptation of the unemployed from the fishing sector	8	700
ADVERTISING DESIGN	Authorised Distance Learning	10	700
BUSINESS PREMISES QUALITY	Skill Recycling Laboratory (Workers)	10	60
BELLBOY	"On-The-Job Training" Laboratory	10	300
CANOEING	Adaptation of the unemployed from the fishing sector	8	105
FRENCH	Professional Training Laboratory	10	200
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TRAINING	Professional Training Laboratory	15	60
PAINTING	Training Laboratory - Practice in the Workplace	10	600
SOLAR PANEL INSTALLER	Training Laboratory - Practice in the Workplace	10	600
RESTAURANT / BAR WAITER	Training Laboratory - Practice in the Workplace	10	820

GERIATRIC HELPER	Training Laboratory - Practice in the Workplace	10	585
NEW TECHNOLOGIES (WOMEN)	Professional Training Laboratory	15	100
NEW TECHNOLOGIES (WOMEN)	Professional Training Laboratory	15	100
INTRODUCCION TO THE INTERNET	Professional Training Laboratory	15	40
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TRAINING	Professional Training Laboratory		
PAINTING	Training Laboratory - Practice in the Workplace	10	600
SOLAR PANEL INSTALLER	Training Laboratory - Practice in the Workplace	10	600
RESTAURANT / BAR WAITER	Training Laboratory - Practice in the Workplace	10	820
GERIATRIC HELPER	Training Laboratory - Practice in the Workplace	10	585
NEW TECHNOLOGIES (WOMEN)	Professional Training Laboratory	15	100
NEW TECHNOLOGIES (WOMEN)	Professional Training Laboratory	15	100
INTRODUCCION TO THE INTERNET	Professional Training Laboratory	15	40
LINEN / DRY-CLEANER / IRONER	"On-The-Job Training" Laboratory	10	500
CRANE OPERATOR	Professional Training Laboratory	10	275
CHAMBERMAID	"On-The-Job Training" Laboratory	10	400
STORE ATTENDANT	"On-The-Job Training" Laboratory	10	250
END-USER COMPUTING	Professional Training Laboratory	10	200
STUDY, VAIBILITY AND MANAGEMENT OF BUSINESSES (3 EDITIONS)	Business Incubator Project	6	100
NEW BUSINESS TECHNOLOGIES	Skill Recycling Laboratory (Workers)	10	200
CARER FOR THE DISABLED	Skill Recycling Laboratory (Workers)	10	200
MASONRY	"On-The-Job Training" Laboratory	5	600
MASONRY	Training Laboratory - Practice in the Workplace	5	1000
PAINTING	Training Laboratory - Practice in the Workplace	7	600
MASONRY	Training Laboratory - Practice in the Workplace	5	1000

PLASTERER	Training Laboratory - Practice in the Workplace	7	700
GARDENING AND POOL MAINTENANCE	Training Laboratory - Practice in the Workplace	6	700
BUILDING MAINTENANCE	Training Laboratory - Practice in the Workplace	8	600
KITCHEN HELPER	Training Laboratory - Practice in the Workplace	8	600
RESTAURANT / BAR WAITER	Training Laboratory - Practice in the Workplace	10	600
KITCHEN HELPER	Training Laboratory - Practice in the Workplace	10	400

Employment Intermediation

Intermediation is the meeting ground for the supply and demand of employment. For this reason, actions in this area need to take into account both seekers and providers of employment. This area has special relevance, as the services that are finally delivered to the citizen are those that, in the most direct manner, put employment providers in contact with job seekers, performing the role of contracting facilitators.

The job database, which has a job offer search-engine, is aimed at people seeking employment, providing an "Offer" service that adapts to the professional profile of each user and established within their Path for Placement by the Counsellors.

Specialists from the Placement Area collaborate with businessmen in the recruitment of people suitable for the profiles of their employment offers, according to the curricula sent by the guidance service on behalf of the employment seekers. Additionally, these professionals locate employment offers using various sources, the most effective (according to the positive results) are direct visits to businesses to offer the service, communications media through the reading of specialised press, co-ordination with Temporary Employment and other Agencies and the search of offers over the Internet.

3. GOOD PRACTICES FROM THE POLISH DP:



3.1 Social and professional activity of parents with disabled children

The social and professional integration of parents with disabled children is an opportunity for their disabled dependents for appropriate functioning in the society and reducing the threat of social exclusion. Active caretakers may provide their dependents with a normal contact with the society, and thus guarantee their proper development.

3.1.1 Good practice

The good practice is based on an assumption that caretakers who are not active socially and professionally are one of the main barriers for disabled people to enter the labour market.

Therefore, we emphasise that activities focusing on disabled people should cover their parents as well.



The social and professional integration should start from a two-week rehabilitation seminar attended by parents with their dependents. During the seminar they learn how to use the service of a personal assistant. Assistants take care of children, while parents attend various activities, go shopping or swimming in a lake. Parents and children adjust to the fact that it does not make any harm when someone other than a parent takes care of a disabled child.

After the seminar, parents participate in a workshop improving their social competences, and then in courses developing their professional skills. However, before such courses, parents undergo social and professional competence tests and individual development paths are prepared for them. The whole training cycle takes 6 months. After that, parents take up their jobs. It is advised to start with a part time job or distance working. Distance working seems to be very attractive for people who need to take care of their dependents. Nevertheless, the job cannot be performed at home, because then such a person still remains socially excluded.

During the whole process of social and professional integration of caretakers, their dependants receive the service of personal assistants.

3.1.2 Problem solved

Very limited possibility of being active, makes people with disabilities, dependant on others, most frequently someone from the closest family. This reduces professional and social mobility of disabled people and their caretakers.

Because caretakers provide continuous care of their dependants, they cease to be socially and professionally active themselves. Moreover, they pass their mental inhibitions onto their dependants and cannot reconcile their private and professional life. And thus caretakers become socially excluded. Very often, they become overprotective towards their disabled children.



The solution proposed improves low social and professional activity among parents with disabled children. According to the survey carried out by the Partnership between February and March 2005, 67% of caretakers remain without jobs (group surveyed: 159 people, of which 87 people with neuromuscular disorders and 72 people taking care of people with neuromuscular disorders). On top of that, the majority of unemployed caretakers live on the pension received by their dependants. Additionally, 60% of unemployed caretakers declared that they do not want to work and the main reason for that was reluctance to vest care about their disabled children in a strange person. Disabled people themselves (over 60% of the surveyed), are not interested in using the service of a personal assistant. On the basis of survey findings we may conclude that unemployed caretakers constitute a barrier for social and professional integration of people with disabilities.

3.1.3 The target for integrating parents having disabled children

The service should produce the following final effects:

- Enhance social involvement of families with disabled children;
- parents with disabled children should find jobs;
- distance and part time work taken up by people taking care of their dependants;
- increased independence between caretakers and disabled people;
- social integration of disabled people starting from the kindergarten, continued at school, and until they find jobs.



3.1.4 Who can use the service

The model for integrating caretakers of disabled people may be applied in all institutions and organisations assisting people with disabilities. Local governments may use the service themselves or commission it to NGOs.

3.1.5 Necessary activities

While introducing the model of integrating caretakers of disabled people, it is important to have a relevant support system in place.

3.1.6 Necessary cost

In comparison to solutions applied so far, an additional cost is related to classes improving social competences among caretakers. At the same time, it should be emphasised that the social integration of parents having disabled children should contribute to reducing possible future costs related to social integration of children.

The service provides beneficiaries with measurable results by increasing the chances for social integration, and thus should improve their social status. Thanks to the service, beneficiaries have an opportunity to test and experience proposed solutions, as well as try to integrate fully with the society.



3. 2. Personal assistant for a disabled person

People with physical disability often require a personal assistant for their normal functioning in the society. Without the service a disabled person is not capable of functioning independently. A personal assistant enables a patient to perform many activities without involving his/her caretaker. This includes also taking up a job. A personal assistant not only takes care of a patient, but also frees parents or relatives who, during that time, may take up a job themselves. The service is necessary to develop social behaviours among people with serious disability.

3.2.1 Elements of good practice

A. Competence profile

The objective of the description is to develop and strengthen competences necessary for a good personal assistant. Additionally, the set of competences is going to be supplemented with tools for analysing those competences.

Previous experience and research by the Partnership show that a good candidate should possess the following qualities: physical fitness, availability, empathy, and perseverance. Additionally, a person should be emotionally stable and understand what it means to help others.



The competence profile for an ideal candidate includes two groups of competences: basic competences (key competences without which a person cannot be a good assistant) and desired competences (less important, to a moderate degree determining his/her professional success). The two competence groups should be understood as follows:

Basic competences

- Physically fit – physical conditions should enable a given person to provide care of a patient
- Availability – a person should guarantee to be available during certain hours; a candidate needs to be reliable
- Empathic – a candidate needs to be able to place him/herself in the position of another person - "see the world with other person's eyes". He/she should be perceptive, vigilant, recognise states and emotions of another person, and be able to respond to them in an appropriate and adequate manner
- Perseverant – resistant to frustration; failure and difficulties should not discourage a person too fast. He/she should not follow sudden emotions, should be firm, reliable, and consequent
- Emotionally stable – a candidate should be able to control emotions, remain calm and composed. He/she should not react in an aggressive manner, should remain "cool" in difficult situations, and should not lose his temper. Any criticism, malicious remarks, and failure should not imbalance his/her behaviour
- Understand the idea of helping others – He/she should know "his/her place", be able to stay in the background, since the person should always be guided by the physical and mental welfare of a patient. He/she should not impose their opinion, do not tell others what to do, or limit the patient. He/she should show respect to a patient and will to help him/her in the way desired by the patient. A candidate should be discrete.

Desired competences

- Independent thinking and activity – a candidate needs to be logical, predict consequences of his/her activity, handle various/difficult situations, find solutions to problems, be innovative and creative if required, make fast decisions
- Sociable – He/she should be "humane", easygoing, does not create barriers or a distance, be natural, open, and like the contact with people

- Happy/Optimistic – He/she should be able to use his/her sense of humour to release tension, be cheerful, optimistic and positive about the reality

B. Professional competence profile

For people with mobility deficiency the education of a personal assistant is less important. Organisations employing assistants for disabled people and disabled people themselves emphasise practical skills of the assistant as a tool compensating disability and equalising opportunities in overcoming barriers related to disability. The level of education is, therefore, less important. Important factors include physical fitness and first aid skills. It is not important that a disabled person should receive services of the same assistant. Assistants may change depending on temporary needs of a disabled person.



Experience of organisations supporting disabled people show that the best candidates are unemployed people and people involved in substitute military service.

C. Training required

No training and preparatory courses are needed for the post of an assistant of a physically disabled person, because an individual approach to specific needs of disabled people using the service. The needs are identified through a direct contact, and a direct contact is necessary to develop relevant skills. A physically disabled person is a teacher for an assistant. The best candidates are people having middle, vocational and primary education since disabled people using the service need in fact physical assistance rather than support in making decisions. Our patients are fully mentally able people, frequently of considerable intellectual potential.

D. Function performed and duties of the personal assistant:

- Assistance in everyday activities such as washing, bathing, going to toilet; dressing and undressing;
- Helping during sleeping if needed;
- Helping during meals;
- Participation in rehabilitation and recreation; school classes and similar activities;
- Assistance in travelling and attending vocational courses;
- Assisting patients in travelling to attend various activities (pushing wheelchair, helping patients who have problems with walking);
- care and assistance during trips;



E. Proposals for legislative changes related to the personal assistant service in Poland;

Project results also include recommendations for amending existing regulations.

The idea of equal rights covered by the EU Constitution, in particular regarding full social integration and conditions for independent living. While analysing EU regulations, we can see that the history of such regulations started in 1989 with the Community Charter of Basic Social Rights of Employees. Article 26 of the Charter includes a provision saying that disabled people have right to means improving their social and occupational in-tegration. The same issue is referred to by the European Commission in its Communiqué on equal opportunities of disabled people 'New Community Strategy for Disabled People' of 30 July 1996. These provisions are confirmed with the Council Resolution concerning equal opportunities for disabled people of 20 December 1996. The document calls Member States to revise their policies from the point of view of ensuring active participation of disabled people in social life, including elimination of barriers to implement the right.

The objective of the legislative proposal is to make the service of personal assistants available for people with major disabilities (who need such a support) regardless whether they live alone or with their families. The objective of the service is to assist a disabled person in their physical functions and preventing negative effects of the disability. A disabled person is in a way an employer for an assistant. Common availability of the service should be considered a principle.

A person with serious disability needs to have the right to receive the service while working. The cost of employing the assistant should be incurred neither by the employer nor the disabled person, since assistants will be paid by social services depending on the degree of disability and its impact on employment opportunities.

A very important element is that an assistant is employed by a disabled person (depending on disability) – a position being an employer is an additional factor having positive influence on a disabled person.

F. Suggested sources of funding

It is suggested to designate funds for that purpose in the local government budget: 60% of funding should be provided by the central government and 10% from fees paid by people using the service. Such a division is based on estimates concerning state revenue from running the service. In our opinion, 50% of disabled people and their caretakers using the service will be able to start working, and thus they will become payers of income tax and social security contributions. The same will be paid by people employed as assistants, the majority of whom are now unemployed.

Additionally, local governments should cover the cost of public transportation for assistants or free them from such fees.



3.2.2 Problem solved

The service should stimulate the professional and social activity of disabled people and their families. Social and professional participation among disabled people is low also due to the fact that they lack independence. Therefore, such people need someone to support them.

In Poland, the care is usually provided by the closest family. This limits the professional and social mobility of a disabled person and his/her caretaker. The situation can only be changed by introducing the service of a personal assistant.

The service enables people with major physical or mental disability to become independent in their social and professional life. The service is a precondition for stimulating the activity of the disabled who need the support of another person. Thanks to the service, a disabled person can perform numerous activities, including finding a job, without involving their caretaker (who then has a chance for finding a job).

The service provides for an opportunity to find a job not only for a disabled person but also people with low professional qualifications. Such people, who are frequently unemployed, would be able to enter the labour market. Additionally, increase number of jobs thus offered in the sector of service will reduce unemployment.

3.2.3 Final effect

The final result is to create conditions for people with major disability to:

- Become self-employed or employed on the primary labour market;
- Increasing the number of people with middle and higher education; enabling education in public and private schools at middle and higher levels;
- Promoting the idea of personal assistance among disabled people, authorities, and institutions for disabled people;
- Introducing a legal and comprehensive solution in the form of the service;
- Creating possibility of independent functioning for people with major disability;
- Labour market integration of disabled people.



3.2.4 Who can apply for the service

The service can be applied for by all institutions and organisations, dealing with disabled people. Local governments may provide the service themselves or commission it to NGOs.

The service should be available locally. We may assume that local governments will have certain funds for such services and they will be commissioned to NGOs providing infrastructure and management.



3.2.5 Necessary activities

Firstly, it is necessary to employ assistants and a coordinator for the service. Candidates will be recruited from among unemployed people of graduates, social workers or university graduates (courses of pedagogy or psychology). Institutions interested should use already developed competence tests, which show whether a given person is suitable for becoming a good assistant.

3.2.6 Cost involved

The service requires employing assistants. An average cost of the service per 1 disabled person is 700 per month. In practice, after integrating a disabled person on the labour market, the service should be paid at the level of at least 10% of its cost, that is PLN70. A disabled person would be able to deduct the cost from its taxable income.

Salaries for assistant servicing people with mental disability is on average PLN15 per hour, whereas the same cost in the case of a person with physical disability is PLN9 per hour. We estimate that the service will be used by people with disabilities for 2 – 8 hours a day.



Appendix 1

Application for a personal assistant of a disabled person

Name and surname
Statistical number or ID number
Address
Date of birthtelephone

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED*

- | | | |
|---|-------|----------|
| a) disability status | Major | Moderate |
| b) invalid group | I | II |
| c) incapacity to work / incapacity to work on a farm / incapacity to function independently * | | |
| d) disability status of a person up to 16 years of age | | |

SCOPE OF SERVICES REQUIRED *

1. Assistance in public transport:
 - a) to move from home to school, university, work, healthcare institutions, public and cultural institutions, rehabilitation classes, rehabilitation camp,
 - b) to return home from school, university, work, healthcare institutions, public and cultural institutions, rehabilitation classes, rehabilitation camp.
2. During activity at school, university, work, healthcare institutions, including assistance in moving to lecture rooms, cafeteria, library, faculty office.
3. Assistance in toilet, dressing, preparing a meal, serving a meal.
4. Assistance in household activities, including cleaning, laundry, shopping (only for people living on their own or without caretakers).
5. Assistance during a stay at a rehabilitation camp.
6. Moving from one place to another, e.g. from bed to wheelchair, downstairs, to a car.
7. Assistance in health maintenance (preventing bedsores).
8. Assistance in maintaining contact with peers.

SERVICE PERIOD

(Please specify period in which the service will be required – date, hours)

.....

I agree to process my personal data according to the act of 29 August 1997 on protecting personal data (Journal of Laws of 2002 No 101 item 926 and No 153 item 1271).

.....

Date

* mark appropriate.

.....

Applicant's legible signature

Attachments

1. Decision on disability status or equivalent.

3.3 Secondary school for physically disabled young people from small towns and rural areas

Living in rural areas in Poland involves a threat of social exclusion. This applies in particular to people with disabilities, since in small towns such people do not have possibilities to educate. Their access to culture is also hampered, and the same applies to specialist medical service and rehabilitation, as well as modern means of communication. Transportation is another major problem. Due to the above mentioned predicaments, people with disabilities are not able to prevent difficult life situations by using their own means, skills, and opportunities. The shortage of proper education is often a reason why those people become helpless and deprived of self-assured.

3.3.1. Description

The practice involves enabling the access to knowledge at the secondary school level, including junior secondary, comprehensive secondary and post-secondary, by physically disabled people from small towns and rural areas. It is foreseen that those people will be able to continue education as well as participate in extra classes combined with rehabilitation. This should enable them to complete their education and start working, and thus become independent and integrate with the rest of the society.

In a special centre, physically disabled young people from small towns will have the possibility to stay 24h a day, since the centre will provide boarding in a dormitory situated within the centre. Teachers and nurses will also provide 24h care. Young people will be able to use specialist medical treatment and rehabilitation. All students covered by the programme will additionally learn English and attend classes on business, accounting and office operation. They will enjoy access to computers and the Internet as well as operation applications. During their free time, young people will participate in workshops on journalism, editing school newsletter and conducting interviews with centre personnel. According to their individual abilities, they will voluntarily in classes on cooking and diet, and art. Such classes are designed to enhance their skills that can be later used to provide an additional source of income in the future and improve their attractiveness on the labour market. If need be, transport service will also be provided, thus enabling young people to visit their homes during holiday breaks. All patients will have personal assistants allocated to them.

3.3.2. Problem solved

In rural areas and small towns, assistance offered to people with disabilities is usually limited to minor financial support, while those people really need to build up their knowledge and forward education as the secondary level, as well as specialist rehabilitation, medical treatment, and professional development. The practice is designed to facilitate the achievement of the highest possible level of functioning for physically disabled people in the society, enhance the quality of their lives, as well as higher social and labour market integration.

3.3.3. Final effect

The disabled people should benefit from the practice in the following manners:

- integration in their environment,
- at least partial independence,
- improved opportunities for appropriate education,
- possibly the largest level of their functioning in the society,
- improved quality of life,
- social and labour integration,
- the largest possible quality of life.

3.3.4. Who may apply the practice

The model may be applied in public and non-public special education institutions as well as in rehabilitation establishments furnished with relevant facilities, staff and equipment.

3.3.5. Activities necessary

While implementing the practice, it is necessary to develop an integrated activity system, including education, upbringing, medical treatment, and rehabilitation measures, as well as services of personal assistants and transportation.

3.3.6. Cost involved

Apart from legal compensation for children and youth attending schools and covered with social security, additional cost will include specialist medical treatment, intensive rehabilitation, personal assistants, transport and extra curriculum classes.

4. GOOD PRACTICES FROM THE GERMAN DP



4.1 Beneficiaries meet Politicians

Introduction

In working group 5 of the transnational partnership „JOSHA“, besides best practice-results, also a leaflet „How to talk to politicians“ will be provided, which serves to contact and to inform politicians (see photo below). This was a consequence of the participation of an Italian politician in the working group. The purpose of this leaflet is to improve the understanding of the problems of handicapped people among politicians, who are – after all - responsible for legal regulations. In the German project „Mobility development for young people with handicap“ there were different opportunities for beneficiaries and project workers to talk to politicians and employees of ministries.

Serving as a link between the leaflet „How to talk to politicians“ and the work and experiences gained in the meetings are summarised below.



Employees of the Ministry

Regularly, an adviser of the Ministry of Employment is invited to speak on the topic of „youth unemployment“. As a specialist for the development of new services to reduce the youth unemployment, and therefore as a consultant for the Minister of Labour, he reports on topic-related problems and new possibilities. The specific content of the conversation was:

- Presentation of a list ranking the first 20 professions where young people don't find work
- Discussion of strategies for the solution of the problem „youth unemployment“. The focus is on the necessary mobility of the youngsters
- Investigation, whether the young people are ready for a substantial change in their life and creation of a link between the political measures and the day-to-day life of the youngsters.

The youngsters also used the opportunity to ask questions to the expert directly. The young people were interested in information about projects of the land Mecklenburg-Vorpommern that help young people and in possibilities for further qualifications. In addition to that, it is also interesting to talk about the personal biography of the politician and to get individual consultation from himself.

Conversation with the Minister for Labour and Construction

As one of the few development partnerships in Germany, the DP „Work life balance for people with handicap“ succeeded in attracting the travelling exhibition of the Federal Ministry of Work and Social Welfare into the region. Citizens, enthusiasts and participants of the EQUAL projects could visit the exhibition during more than four weeks and used the numerous services offered by the project partners. Because of the outstanding significance of the EQUAL projects, the exhibition was inaugurated by the national EQUAL-coordinator, Dr. Heister, as well as by the Minister for Labour and Construction of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Mr. Holter. During the buffet, two participants of the Equal project „Mobility development for youngsters with handicap“ used the possibility to speak directly with the minister. Already in the approach of the event, the young people thought about whether there is an opportunity to establish direct contact with the minister, whom they know only from newspaper or television.



Mathias S. talking to Mr. Holter, the Minister of Labour and Construction

During the opening ceremony the youngsters asked several times whether they should then really approach the minister. The project workers encouraged them several times to do so. After the official talks and watching the exhibition, the young people really had the opportunity for conversations with him during lunch buffet.

The youngsters asked questions about two subject areas:

1. New possibilities of employment for young people.
2. Cuts in the state payments and the unemployment benefit.

Being asked regarding their experiences with the conversations, both had the feeling that the minister had taken their concerns seriously. For both it was important that they could express their opinion to the minister directly and honestly. Although they haven't received any concrete answers relating to their specific problems, they would, nevertheless, like to talk again with politicians about subjects which seem important to them.

In this respect, the possibility of a short exchange with political representatives left definitely a remaining impression. Especially in times of disenchantment of politics, it seems important to give young people such possibilities.

For other EQUAL projects it could be recommended, to directly contact the politicians in charge. For this, the leaflet created in our working group serves as a good basis.

Michael Schmitz,
m.schmitz@evjucan.de

4.2 A Questionnaire for the beneficiary's evaluation of project activities implemented in her/his favour

Design and function of questionnaires

Introduction

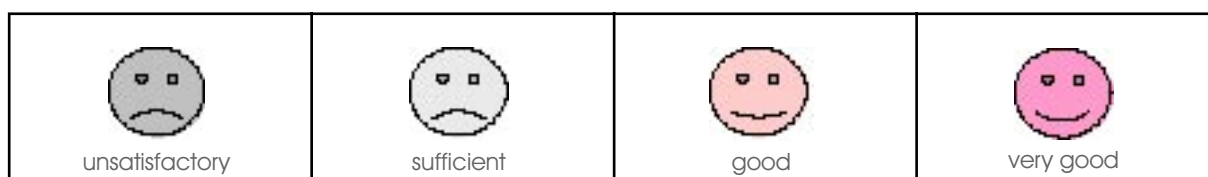
Compared to the background of the subject of our working group („Ways to a successful work life for people threatened with social exclusion and their families“) the instrumentalisation of evaluation questionnaires as an example for good-practices seems surprising on first sight.

But many projects have the objective to develop a draft or a curriculum, which allow just these „successful ways“. Taking this into consideration, it is important - also within the scope of empowerment - to keep on questioning the participants about the projects and to use the results for the updating of the drafts and curricula. The (self) evaluation is, so far, very important as well as the realisation considering the background of the working group.

During a project presentation in Athens about the current working state within the project, the questionnaires used in Germany were considered as especially interesting. This is where the idea to use these questionnaires as an example for best practices emerged.

The design of our questionnaires

In two large workshops, the German development partnership has worked on the subject of the self-evaluation. Apart from different instruments, some questionnaires have also been developed, so that the participants can give a regular feed back about the courses they take part. The person, who is instructed with the evaluation of the German development partnership, Mrs. Buggenhagen, has introduced the following graphic elements for the field of the evaluation.



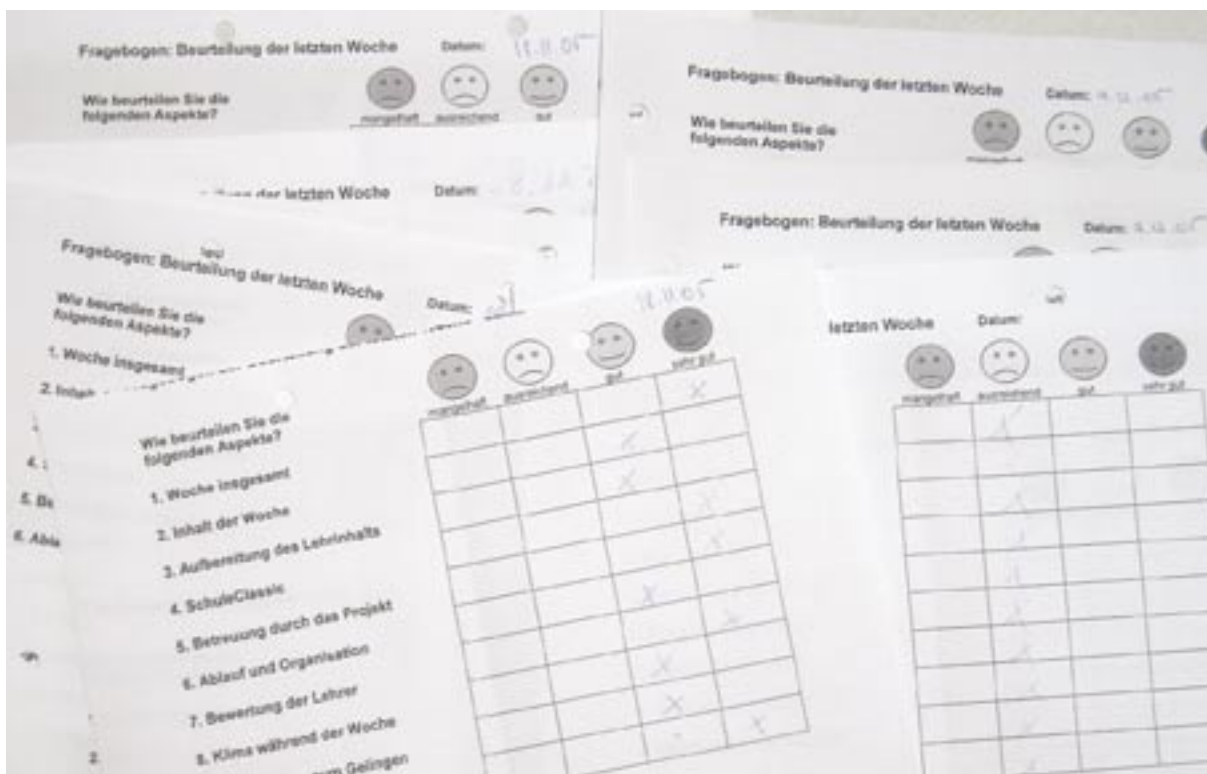
For our part project within the German development partnership these symbols seemed to be very suitable, because the participants are handicapped, and above all, young people with cognitive disabilities. These symbols, the "smilies", express very clearly what is meant. There is an additional written explanation directly under the symbols which is, however, not really necessary. This way, people who have difficulties to read, can answer a questionnaire if the questions are read to them (or to the whole group).

The role of the questionnaires within the Equal project „mobility development for youngsters with handicap“

For the employees as well as for the participant these questionnaires and their evaluation offer a good possibility for reflection. In addition to that, in some part projects they are useful for the final „Equal product“, e.g., for the further development and permanent improvement of curricula or drafts. For these products we need the regular feedback of all partners. Our course has a duration of more than 7 months. The theoretical part lasts 4 months, the following practical part (training period in companies) lasts 3 month.

To be able to check the direct effect of our project, we have developed a variety questionnaires for our participants. To increase the exploitation of this method within the scope of the transnational

development partnership JOSHA, we include also the contents of the questionnaires - not only the graphics. Maybe that way the questionnaires can be used by our transnational partners in their countries and projects.



The questionnaires are used for the following deadlines with the given contents:


1) Weekly feedback

At the end of every week, the questionnaires are distributed, completed and collected. The summary of the results occurs anonymously, but completing the questionnaires very often stimulates a discussion about the respective week.

How do you judge about following aspects?	 unsatisfactory	 sufficient	 good	 very good
1. The whole week				
2. Content of the week				
3. Preparation of teaching material				
4. SchoolClassic				
5. Care taking by the project				
6. Process and organization				
7. Judgement of the teachers				
8. Atmosphere during the week				
9. Own contribution to the success				
10. Result of the week				

2) At the end of the theory module (4 month)

Parts of the theory are also visits to companies, school lessons, charitable work and short craft activities, but the young people do not work in a company. The theoretical part takes place in homely equipped rooms with everyday obligatory presence.

How do you judge about following aspects?	 unsatisfactory	 sufficient	 good	 very good
1. The whole course				
2. Learning program				
3. Teaching methods				
4. Teacher				
5. Process and organization				
6. relation to personal advancement				
7. Atmosphere in the group				
8. Materials / Documents				
9. Equipment and technology				
10. Own contribution to the success				
	Too much	A little bit too much	Too little	Much too little
11. Time involved				
12. Learning requirements				

3) At the end of the practical training (3 months)

After the theoretical part, a training period in a company. Until then the young people should have learnt a regular daily routine and be able to go every day for a certain time to the company. During the training period the project employees take care of them.

How do you judge about following aspects?	 unsatisfactory	 sufficient	 good	 very good
1. The whole practical training				
2. Content of the practical training				
3. Care taking in the enterprise				
4. Care by the project				
5. Process and organization				
6. Relation to the practise				
7. Atmosphere in the practical training				
8. Own contribution to the success				
9. Result of the practical training				





	Too much	A little bit too much	Too little	Much too little
11. Duration of the practical training				
12. Requirements in training period				

4) At the end of the whole training measure (7 months)

The questionnaire corresponds basically to the one at end of the theoretical part.

5) Long time evaluation 6 month after the end of the training measure

For the project development and for the employees it is of course very interesting to see what happens with the participants after the course. Therefore, we have also developed a questionnaire for this area.

How do you judge about following aspects?	 unsatisfactory	 sufficient	 good	 very good
1. The whole course				
2. How useful was the learning program?				
3. Was the practical training useful for the professional development?				
4. Which parts of the learning program have been especially important (examples)?				
5. What are you working at in the moment?				

	YES	No
6. Are there still any contacts to the institution where the practical training has taken place?		
7. Are there still any contacts to the Equal-project?		
8. Employment in the first labour market?		
9. Employment in the second labour market?		

Further possibilities for the use of smilies

The single graphics could be made available through the intranet of the homepage of the transnational partnership JOSHA, so that the partners can benefit directly from it. After the suggestions for this work the German development partnership would be very glad to see very soon similar questionnaires in Greek, in Spanish, Polish or Italian.

Michael Schmitz,
m.schmitz@evjucan.de

4.3 Measures for immigrants, who are put at a disadvantage both by physical restrictions and by language deficits

1. Good Practice

In the project activities, the aim is to empower immigrants to promote and to demand and to support themselves in a physical qualified sense, to create a work and life situation in their new native country Germany, which corresponds to the integration and the idea of Work-Life balance as much as possible.

50 immigrants are advised individually, in order to create and raise participants' motivation and their chances for integration (with the main emphasis on health issues, professional case history and linguistic competence). To achieve this, a 4-months vocationally orientated language support together with key competence (motivation, commitment, mobility, flexibility) development measures is carried out. A 3-month business traineeship, tailor-made to the capabilities, the professional as well as the language prerequisites of the beneficiary shall facilitate the integration into the first labour market.

2. Problem Solved

Their physical handicaps in conjunction with their German language deficits and their social problems should be overcome by eliminating integration barriers. Another problem that had to be solved was, that their vocational qualifications – acquired in a foreign country, was not acknowledged in Germany. This meant that the beneficiaries had to accept other professional alternatives and not insist on working in their “old” profession.

We would like to explain briefly the first results of this project at the example of two participants with very different individual situations:

Sergej Belinski

Mr Belinski was born in Kazakstan on 19.6.1958.

On 20.4.2004, he travelled to Germany with his wife and his two children.

Despite all efforts, he was unemployed since then, although he had taken a basic German language course.

Mr Belinski attended the junior high school in Kazakstan for 10 years and worked as a driver for many years. He has the German driver's license and wanted to work as a driver or as a courier driver.

His swaying blood pressure and nervous eye twitch and stutter (this results from an accident with animals in his childhood) had inhibited him during interviews, so he could not find a job

At the beginning of the course Mr. Belinski was very closed-up and inhibited.

Family problems (divorce –search for housing) required and increased his need for advice and care.

At first, it was difficult for him, not only to overcome his language barrier connected with physical hindrances, but also to talk German during the lessons.

Nevertheless he pointed out to be a reliable, hard-working, team-capable and patient participant.

During the course, Mr. Belinski lost some of his inhibits and gained confidence in teachers and in other participants, which resulted in losing his nervous eye twitch and the stuttering.

During the traineeship acquisition he showed an initiative of his own and was able to start a traineeship as a janitor in the Russian organization „friendship”. Initially there had been some scepticism, whether he would only speak Russian there, but this did not prove to be the case.

A lot of people came to this association with many requests, and so Mr. Belinski was obliged from the very beginning to deal with different problems using the German language and he also had to talk to strange people he had never met before.

So he wasn't only a craftsman but also an adviser for others in many respects.

He succeeded in both parts of the work, so that the organization signed an employment contract with him after completion of the traineeship.

After five months now, it turns out that this decision was right for Mr Belinski.

He works independently and reliably in his area of responsibility. It stands out that he shows less nervous reactions, speaks more German. He copes independently with offices and authorities and only takes an interpreter in rare cases.

He also could solve his family problems with support of the project employees during the course.

Primarily the communication with his wife, who lives separate from him, could be improved.

The Equal course has helped Mr Belinski to find a task, which has strengthened him in his self-esteem. Thus his emotional impairment has decreased and his quality of life improved substantially.

The integration into the labour market and in the German society was possible through the Equal project.

Mariola Kotlorz

Mrs M. Kotlorz was born on 2.12.1968.

She is a Pole and has come with her husband and her daughter to Germany on 13.9.2002. Since then, Mrs Kotlorz, who is a trained shop assistant, has been unemployed despite her intensive search. Since she moved to Germany, Mrs Kotlorz has actively tried to find a job and improve her German. She has also used every opportunity for further training.

After conclusion of the basic language course, Mrs Kotlorz took the opportunity to apply for a training for geriatric care and nursing.

She wanted to achieve her professional and financial independence from her husband as she was used to it in Poland.

She has gone through the 4-week preparation course for the education by herself, but couldn't start with the professional education, however, because it turned out in the context of this assessment measure, which was also combined with practical exercises, because of her physical restrictions. The heavy physical activity in this profession couldn't cope with her with its back problems.

Since Mrs Kotlorz has a high motivation and is very interested in her integration, she applied to take part in our Equal project for immigrants with physical restrictions on October 2005. She completed the language course with excellent results, although many concepts from the area of the working world were new and strange for her.

She completed her 3-month traineeship in a branch office "Ernstings family" (textile one-line store particularly for children and teenagers). This traineeship was particularly suitable because it didn't have any effect on her efficiency (the physical handicap (back spinal column), because she was able to change postures (stand, go, sit).

She worked in the traineeship reliably, helpfully, friendly and independently as expected, so that already after short time, she was allowed to lead the branch office alone. After completion of the traineeship, Mrs Kotlorz received a contract of employment due to her good performances. Today she is happy despite of her handicap. She has an income of her own and reduced her dependency on her husband.

3. Goals achieved

The vocationally orientated linguistic proficiency of some participants could be improved considerably. The participants went through an EDP basis course successfully and are able to research on the Internet for job vacancies and prepare application documents in good quality and specifically in German.

Social problems, such as family problems and problems with German offices, could mostly be removed and at physical problems were given support.

The goal formulated in the project of integrating was the obligation to place at least 25% of the participants into the first labour market. At the end of the project, the participants are employed in different working time models. These reach from mini-jobs to part-time and full-time employment.

A positive result is also the fact that several participants in the Equal project could take German professional degrees, due to the improved linguistic competence, and thus the chance for integration will increase.

A higher self-esteem has taken shape by the better integration for the participants, who took a work or education which has also big effects on the personal situation besides the material improvement by an income of ones own in the family, circle of friends and the social environment.

They are now able to recognize their opportunities and this has opened up new life prospects.

4. Who can use the service?

The project addresses at immigrants with handicap, which have the aim to build up an employment perspective in Germany. The innovative concept is available for all institutions and organizations.

5. Necessary activities

Since the language training is mainly directed at preparing the beneficiaries for the work life, it was mainly job-related issues that were discussed during the lessons:

- Description of the job each participant had
- The educational system in Germany
- Requirements on the labour market

- Different situations in day-to-day life as well as in the job
- Requirements of the different job profiles
- Readiness for compromises and flexibility in the job
- Application forms and interviews
- IT basics

In order to gradually introduce these topics to the participants and to reduce the barriers in using the German language, those topics that dealt with very personal things and general topics were introduced step by step, ensuring high motivation. This also ensured that the communication skills in day to day live in companies could also be improved.

During the language training, a balance has always been maintained between job and private life topics.

The language skills acquired during the training courses were monitored regularly by tests and immediate assessment of the results. Individual skills were promoted by using electronic learning software.

Included in the qualification course is the preparation of participants for an in-house training in a real company. During this in-house training, a monthly „day of reflection“ is held, in order to clarify problems that have emerged during the work in the company and to discuss experiences.

The following accompanying measures, which reach far beyond a regular language and integration course, facilitated and promoted the beneficiaries' integration into the labour market substantially:

- The beneficiaries were supported actively when searching for a job for in-house training and during their contacting the companies. This was implemented by visits to the job information centre of the employment agency or project work in the local library, through web research and reading of job offers in the local newspaper.
- It is possible to establish contacts with consultancy institutions, in case personal problems need special care and attendance.
- In addition to the 6 regular language lessons daily, experts are available for individual consultancy and training, for example for supplementary lessons or support in drawing up application documents or in order to cope with personal or health issues.
- The beneficiaries have the opportunity to set up an e-mail account at our premises, in order to be able to answer to job offers by mail. After completion of the course, the beneficiaries may use these addresses for their own purposes. They also have the opportunity to use our online job portal and they receive support in doing so.
- For self-assessment and in order to prepare application interviews, these interviews are being practiced and recorded by video.

6. Costs involved

The financing of the measure is guaranteed by the EU as well as the Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs as well as the „ARGEN“.

5. GOOD PRACTICE FROM THE ITALIAN DP



LEAFLET: "BENEFICIARIES MEET POLITICIANS"

Within the framework of the work in our working group, it became obvious that in order to optimize regulations, structures and funding instruments, it is important to sensitise politicians and decision makers for the issues of people with handicap. Unfortunately, beneficiaries and those working with and for them on the one hand and politicians as well as decision makers on the other hand do not speak the same language. It is necessary to disseminate information in terminology tailor made for the target group (in this case the politicians). The Italian DP, represented by an actual politician, offered to draw up the text of a suitable leaflet. The leaflet was designed by a beneficiary from the Greek DP.



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Contact Details Working Group (WG 5):
Fundacja Pomocy Chorym na Zanik Miesni
70-478 Szczecin, al.Wojska Polskiego 69
Tel./fax: +48 91 489 42 51
E-Mail: biuro@miesnie.szczecin.pl

Contact Details Transnational Secretariat
Britta Kremke
E-Mail: b.kremke@projektkontor2.de

WWW.JOSHA.ORG

