



RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHANGE

> GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE



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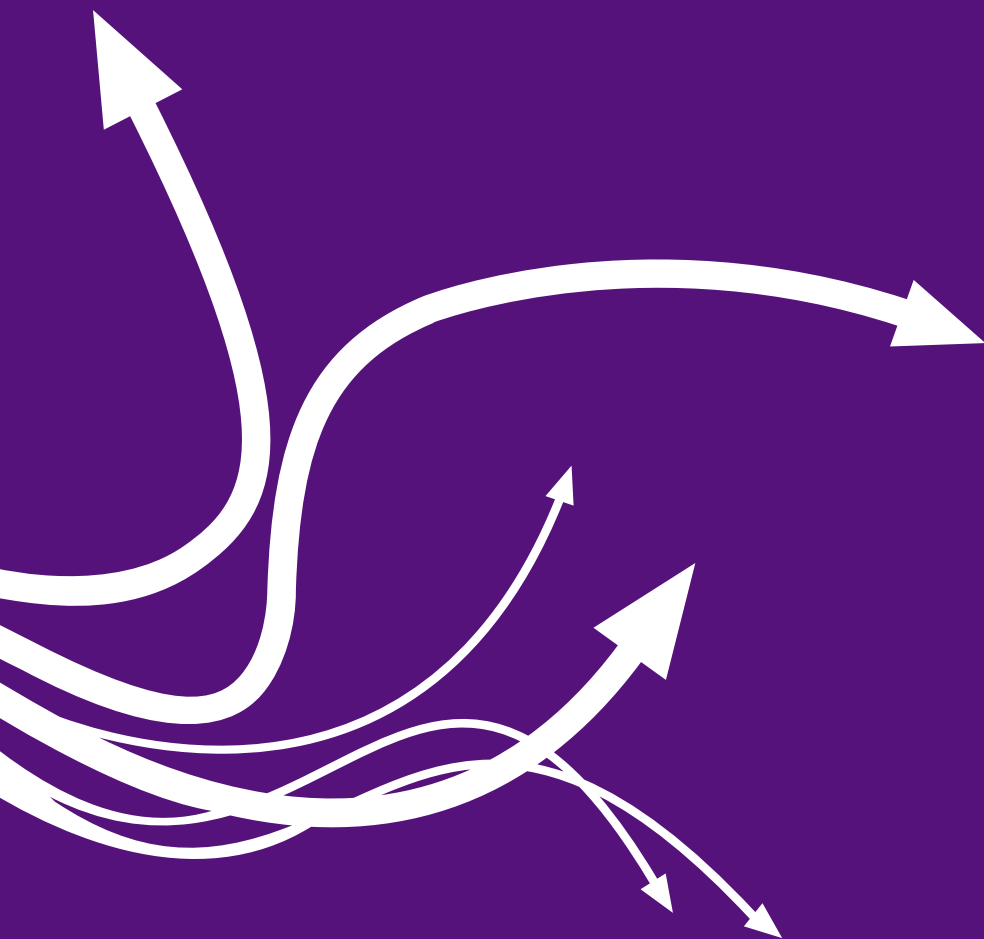
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1 INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The “Responsibility for Change” EQUAL Transnational Co-operation Partnership was established in the spring and early summer of 2005 during the Development Phase 1 of the second round of the European Union EQUAL Programme.

The 6 Development Partnerships (DP) who validated the Transnational Co-operation Agreement (TCA) were:

a) The “Fresh Futures in Financial Services” DP, led by Tower Hamlets College from the United Kingdom (UK).

This had the overall objective of developing, testing and mainstreaming innovative models, approaches and support systems to help local people from deprived communities in East London to gain access to the labour market, particularly jobs in the financial and business services sector. It particularly targeted the most disadvantaged groups, including ethnic minorities, refugees and women, and complemented local and national strategies to promote Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and neighbourhood regeneration.

b) The “ResponseAbility” DP led by the Núcleo Regional de Centro da Associação Portuguesa de Paralisia Cerebral (NRC-APPC), based in Coimbra, Portugal.

This aimed to develop, test and promote models for CSR for enterprises and their stakeholders, in order to achieve innovative practices of human resources development, including employment opportunities for disabled groups.

c) The “Proyecto Ercova” led by the Institut Valencià de Atenció a los Discapitados, based in Valencia, Spain.

This sought to facilitate the access and return to the labour market of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable sectors of the community, including immigrants, people with disabilities and women, through the development of labour insertion models and strategies involving guidance, training and CSR.

d) The “ILEX” (Inserimento Lavorativo Extra-Comunitari), project led by the Co-operation Sociale, CTR (Comunicazione Territorio Relazioni) from Italy.

This aimed to enhance access of immigrants to the labour market in Sardinia, through the development of training pathways and career progression opportunities within the domiciliary care sector, meeting an identified demand for these skills.

e) The “Competence Tool Kit” DP, led by the Ingenior for Eningen (Institute of Engineers) in Copenhagen, Denmark.

This aimed to develop tools to assist immigrants and refugees to identify and gain recognition for vocational competences developed in their countries of origin, as well as in information technology and danish/english language skills, and to use the results to enhance their access to job opportunities, including jobs at higher levels.

f) The “Equal Highway” project led by the Lithuanian Labour Market Authority.

This project had the overall objective of promoting the labour market integration of groups facing discrimination in the labour market, including older workers, ethnic minorities, women and long term unemployed people, by developing and testing innovative career guidance and training programmes and methodologies, and a multifunctional internet based platform.

PARTNERSHIP COMMON INTERESTS

In many ways, this partnership appeared to be highly diverse, a number of the individual partners focusing on different target groups, based in regions featuring sharply contrasting socio-economic characteristics and with projects pursuing a variety of objectives. However, this very diversity has proved to be one of the key strengths of the partnership, and the effective transnational collaboration that has resulted from it.

During the development phase, the partners spent considerable time identifying their projects' common interests, which they pointed within the TCA as being as follows:

- (i) They all addressed the problem of economic and labour market exclusion, faced by the most marginalized target groups, including ethnic minorities, immigrants and refugees, people with disabilities and the unemployed, including women.
- (ii) They all sought to develop and test models and new approaches to enhance the employability of these target groups and supporting their labour market insertion.
- (iii) They included a common focus on the need for approaches and interventions, which address the demand and supply sides of the labour market, i.e. changing the attitudes of employers, as well as enhancing the employability of individuals within disadvantaged groups.
- (iv) The partnership included a strong emphasis on the development and testing of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) models and methodologies, and particularly how CSR strategies can enhance the access of disadvantaged groups and communities to the labour market.
- (v) They all sought to develop progression routes, frameworks and career pathways for individuals within the groups and communities targeted to support labour market access and insertion.
- (vi) They included an interest in developing tools and frameworks for identifying competences, recognizing/accrediting these, and using them to support the development of progression routes and career pathways.
- (vii) They included a common focus on the importance of mentoring, job coaching and role models, and they will develop innovative models in working with the groups and communities targeted.
- (viii) They all sought to develop frameworks of Good Practice, which can be used to support mainstreaming and dissemination.
- (ix) They involved the use of innovative ICT applications and products in addressing the needs of their target groups.

PARTNERSHIP COMMON OBJECTIVES

The original 'common objectives' of the partners identified in the TCA were:

- (i) To share information and experience of existing good practice, by working with the disadvantaged groups targeted, including in the application of strategies to enhance their employability, and working with employers to develop recruitment strategies, that may be more responsive to their needs.

(ii) To compare and contrast career guidance, progression and qualification frameworks within the regions and member states represented within the partnership, developed and tested by the individual DPs, as well as their effectiveness in supporting labour market insertion.

(iii) To develop parallel and transferable models and approaches to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) which will support employers in the development of recruitment strategies, designed to enhance opportunities for the disadvantaged groups targeted, as well as company competitiveness. This will include:

- > A transferable model for CSR implementation in companies, in the context of quality management standards and frameworks.
- > The development of a transferable professional profile for the role of CSR Mediator.
- > The transnational piloting of a CSR Mediator training programme (adapted from existing programmes plus original materials).
- > A CSR Good Practice Manual, which will include case study material highlighting the key components of parallel and transferable models to support labour market insertion, including CSR strategies.

(iv) The parallel development and testing of innovative approaches to mentoring and job coaching within employability strategies for the disadvantaged groups targeted.

(v) To enhance the knowledge and awareness of the benefits of transnational cooperation through promoting mobility and exchanges of stakeholders, CSR mediators, company representatives, practitioners and beneficiaries.

(vi) To collaborate in evaluation and dissemination, both at transnational and national levels.

(vii) To implement these objectives, the common activities agreed included, at an early stage, a strong commitment to develop a Best Practice Manual, based on the practice of the individual projects, but more specifically on the shared experience of the partnership. Apart from providing a vehicle for disseminating the results of the partnership's work, the manual is designed to be a practical tool for practitioners engaged in related areas of work, supported through EU programmes and national and regional programmes in the future, as well as for stakeholders and policy makers involved in developing strategies, and interventions, designed to promote social and economic inclusion.

To provide some background and context, we will begin with a brief summary of each of the participating projects, and this will be followed by thematic chapters on each of the main areas of collaborative work in the partnership. Each partner has taken the lead in the preparation of at least one of the thematic chapters, which have been grouped under the headings of 'Demand Side' activities (i.e. focusing on the demand for labour and employer attitudes) and 'Supply Side' activities (i.e. focusing on equipping disadvantaged groups with skills and competences to access employment opportunities).



INTRODUCTION

The strategic goal adopted by the Lisbon Summit of March 2000 – to become by 2010 the most competitive and dynamic knowledge - based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion - is one of the main challenges of the European Union. In line with this objective, the European Council made a special appeal to companies' sense of social responsibility, regarding best practices on lifelong learning, work organization, equal opportunities, social inclusion and sustainable development.

In recent years, corporate social responsibility (CSR)⁽¹⁾ has experienced a strong surge in popularity among mainstream companies. CSR activities referred to social responsibility with external community are a reality for a large share of small and medium enterprises (SME). Nevertheless, SME's are not yet defining social responsibility as an issue to be incorporated into the enterprises core business activities. In this sense, the project "Responsibility for Change" developed and tested several instruments to attempt managing it strategically, mainly related with disadvantaged groups.

As we can see in this section, responsible recruitment practices involving in particular non-discriminatory practices could facilitate the recruitment of people from ethnic minorities, women and long-term unemployed and people at disadvantage. Such practices are essential in relation to achieving the European Employment Strategy objectives of reducing unemployment, raising the employment rate, and fighting against social exclusion.

CSR extends beyond the doors of the company into the local community, and involves a wide range of stakeholders in addition to employees and shareholders: business partners and

suppliers, customers, public authorities and non government organizations (NGO) representing local communities, as well as the environment.

Recognizing that CSR is an ongoing learning process for organizations and stakeholders, and the development of tools and good practices⁽²⁾ is in progress, the guide provides simple background information on the main practices and instruments developed by the Project "Responsibility for Change" to integrate people in the society, namely in the labour market.

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[1] Most definitions of CSR describe it as a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis.

[2] The term 'good practice' is often used to mean effective practice, practice that promises results or best practice, when in reality these terms all mean slightly different things. For the purposes of this guide, we have defined 'good practice' as: *'approaches that are working well and can be duplicated elsewhere'*.

It offers an easy-to-read and useful guide on key features, aiming at developing a better understanding of these matters, seeing the two dimensions Supply and Demand.

The Demand section presents a cross section of the findings of the projects^[3] on the various aspects that the integration involves, relating directly to the activities carried out in each countries Equal projects relating to “Responsibility for Change”^[4], including practices and instruments.

The 3 subchapters have been regrouped under three main headings:

Employer recruitment of disadvantaged groups, which is mainly addressed to customers, illustrating various approaches, products and instruments offered to the target groups.

Communication, information and awareness, which describes and explains communication in a CSR context, and explains companies developing their internal and external communication strategies in relation to specific groups.

Training employers / developing tools, which includes models of training and instruments setting out standards and management issues, for companies to embed CSR values into their strategies and operations and drive performance improvement.

This is our contribution giving a perspective on development that is based upon the innovative practices in the field. It will expand strategic knowledge and experience of the employability of disadvantaged groups, thus bringing benefits to the target audiences at whom it is aimed. We trust that readers will find a useful compilation and source of information, which is otherwise scattered and not within everyone’s grasp.

The main aim of companies is to generate wealth and employment in accordance with the conditions of a free market economy. As companies are aware of the difficulties involved in being efficient in an increasingly competitive, globalised and technological market and in which clients are becoming more and more demanding, they invest a large amount of resources in gaining the best information, the most useful business tools, the most reliable work methodologies and the most highly-qualified workers.

Companies therefore have a strong command of concepts, such as stock market, retail price index, supply and demand, competitiveness, etc. Even the least advanced companies are experts in concepts such as long-term business strategy and human resources policies.

But what happens when the economic context of a company changes?

The most efficient companies, the best equipped, those that are characterised by their great flexibility, and their ability and their ability to transfer changing knowledge, tools, strategies

■
[3] A short synopsis of the projects is included in the appendices.

[4] In this section, from England, Italy, Portugal and Spain.

and skills into specific resourceful actions makes these the once that are best equipped to survive. Such companies see this effect as an opportunity rather than a threat. A changing market offers new opportunities for the companies that are most able to adapt to the demands of all its stakeholders.

We cannot stress this situation enough. What happens when it is the socio-economic and environmental context of the company that changes? What happens when terms such as “sustainable development”, “globalisation”, “stakeholders” and “business cooperation” come into play? Or more specifically, within the scope of the EU initiative EQUAL, are companies aware of terms such as “European Employment Strategy”, “European Higher Education Area”, “diversity” and “integration and adaptation of people at risk of social exclusion”?

We work on the basis (supported by various theories) that a company's competitiveness depends not only on its relationship with clients and the owners of the company, but also on all the people and organisations that affect or are affected by the company's operations, i.e. their stakeholders. In addition corporate reputation and image or the company's ability to create alliances or cooperate with its environment is essential factors in its long-term competitiveness. We also believe that the company's stability in the long term depends on its ability to simultaneously develop in economic, social and environmental terms. The consolidation of this macroeconomic model - sustainable development - and its macroeconomic dimension - corporate social responsibility (CSR) - would force companies to improve their command of concepts, tools and strategies for which they are not yet prepared.

At present, only a few companies - all the large multinationals and very few SME's and micro enterprises - are capable of meeting the challenge that is sustainable development. Only a few companies know about the essential tools for becoming more competitive and adapting to new market changes: globalisation, new technologies, emerging economies, increasing a company's intangible values (building worker loyalty, corporate reputation and image), and new forms of marketing and communication to achieve stakeholder commitment.

However, the European labour market is not maintained by large multinationals. In fact, quite the contrary; it is actually micro enterprises and SME's that are more dynamic and flexible in terms of labour recruitment, and therefore these are the companies that should be better prepared to meet the new challenge that faces them: “sustainable development”.

In order to become more competitive, they must be the most capable of understanding and taking advantage of social responsibility practices, such as that with which the EU initiative Equal is concerned: the integration of people at risk.

We therefore outline below some of the possibilities presented to companies by the work carried out by those involved in the “Responsibility for change” project, to improve their skills in terms of sustainable development and social responsibility, thereby providing such companies with greater possibilities of becoming a modern, flexible and competitive.

This work focuses on:

- > Information and measures for raising awareness
- > Training (see page x)
- > Support tools (see page x)
- > International conventions, established standards and principles (see page x)

Although it could be said that the beginning of CSR - or at least of certain good practices that are directly linked to it - dates back to the seventies, this phenomenon has actually only been seen as a new management model for companies in the last few years.

We could therefore suggest that the year 2000 really marked the beginning of CSR within the framework of the European Union. This was the year in which the European Council of Lisbon set a new strategic goal for the coming decade⁽⁵⁾.

On the basis of this, the European Union itself has done a great deal of work to provide companies and their representatives with information about how to meet the strategic goal set in Lisbon. A few examples of this are:

- > The European Council of Nice: in favour of a greater number and higher quality of jobs, modernising social protection, encouraging equality between men and women, anticipating changes in the working environment, and taking advantage of such changes by establishing a new balance between flexibility and security.
- > During 2001 the European Council of Gothenburg launched a far-reaching strategy for sustainable development.

> Green Paper on “Promoting a European framework for corporate social responsibility”, which aims were, firstly, to stimulate discussion on the concept of corporate social responsibility, and secondly, to define the means by which to create a partnership with a view to establishing a European framework for promoting CSR. This Green Paper acknowledges that this new model could help achieve the goals set by the European Councils of Lisbon, Nice and Gothenburg.

> Later (in July 2002), the Commission’s Paper on “Corporate social responsibility: a business contribution to sustainable development” was written as a follow-up to the previous year’s Green Paper, in whose six chapters the Commission explains its proposed strategy for promoting CSR.

> Lastly, in March 2006, the Commission presented a Communication to the European Parliament, the Council and the European Economic and Social Committee entitled “Implementing the Partnership for growth and jobs: making Europe a pole for excellence on corporate social responsibility”.

As we have seen, over the last decade there have been numerous EU initiatives aimed at providing a work and information framework for employers with regard to how they can meet their social and environmental commitments.

It must be said that the emergence and consolidation of the phenomenon of CSR in our economic area is not just the result of work by the European Union Institutions themselves; private and public companies (at a state and local level), multi-stakeholder organisations, business organisations, NGOs, trade unions, etc, have also helped stimulate discussion, raise awareness, create tools and provide a suitable framework for promoting CSR.

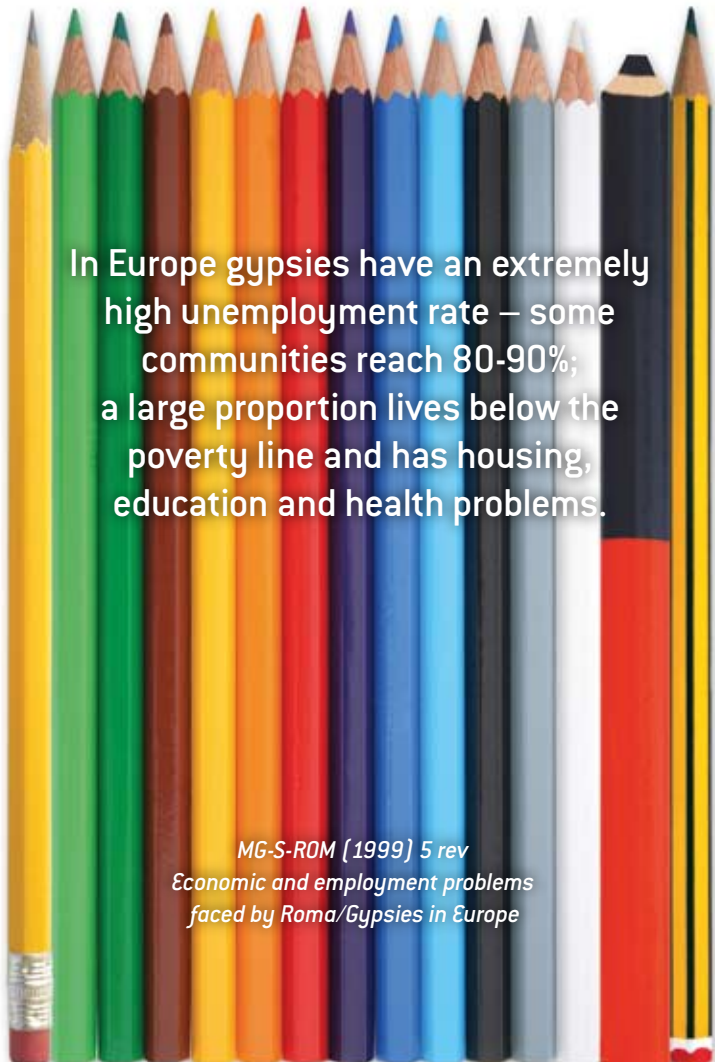
The “Responsibility for change” programme falls within the context of one of these, the EU initiative EQUAL, and it has undertaken important work in terms of providing information and raising employer awareness.

⁽⁵⁾ “to become the world’s most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy that is capable of sustainable economic growth with not only more but also better jobs and with greater social cohesion”.



States should consider appropriate measures so that ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic minorities may participate fully in the economic progress and development in their country.

Based on the *United Nations General Assembly Resolution 47/135, Article 4 [5]*
18 December 1992



In Europe gypsies have an extremely high unemployment rate – some communities reach 80-90%; a large proportion lives below the poverty line and has housing, education and health problems.

*MG-S-ROM (1999) 5 rev
Economic and employment problems
faced by Roma/Gypsies in Europe*

EMPLOYER RECRUITMENT OF DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

> THE ENGLISH PROJECT

The Fresh Futures in Financial Services Equal partnership seeks to address inequalities in the labour market relating to the Financial Services Industry in London.

The industry employs over 900,000 people in the UK. Some of the highest salaries in the country are found in this industry. Companies from large multinational investment banks helping listed companies to raise finance, to retail banks and a range of service providers linked to insurance, mortgages and financial advice encompassing a vast range of business and individual financial products are located in Canary Wharf in Tower Hamlets, with a similar array of Finance and Related businesses (including legal services) close by in the City of London. More than 12,000 vacancies, one in every three, are proving hard to fill, and 11,000 new jobs will be created every year until 2010. (Financial Services Skills Council, March 2007). However, for local people, the chances of being employed in the industry are relatively slim. The level of unemployment in Tower Hamlets was the highest in the country for the period of July 2005 – June 2006 at 12.7%, according to the Office of National Statistics.

The Fresh Futures in Financial Services Equal project was therefore set up in order to redress the balance, and seeks to increase access for local people into the industry.

There are six objectives for the partnership. Each objective explores new ways of working relating to:

- > Mentoring
- > Work experience and recruitment initiatives
- > New Learning Programmes
- > Provision of an Information Advice and Guidance service focused on the Financial Services Industry
- > Corporate Social Responsibility and how it can be linked to local recruitment
- > A toolkit bringing all products and models together

The majority of the interventions carried out by the partnership are related to the increasing of skills in the local labour market – i.e. preparing supply to meet demand. However, demand in the local labour market is inextricably linked to this. Often the interventions that are developed result of joint ventures with employers that have transpired as a result of business needs.

Business needs can be categorized in a number of ways. Broadly, there are specific business needs as well as overarching needs for a sector. External overarching needs, including elements such as almost one in five (19%) of the industry's workforce, will retire over the next few years, including 40,000 professionals and 29,000 managers. (FSSC, March 2007). All of the preparatory work that is being carried out by the Fresh Futures project links to demands for competent staff in the sector, and is vital when considering the demographics of Tower Hamlets: 23% population growth is predicted for the borough between 2001-2011, compared with less than 11% for inner London over all. (www.towerhamlets.gov.uk borough website, 2007).

However, the examples given here relate to specific requirements of local businesses that have been best met by local intervention. Tower Hamlets College and other partners in the Fresh Futures in Financial Services project have developed flexible solutions to meet these business needs. The significance of this lies in comparison with former recruitment methodologies that do not meet staffing needs. These approaches are not, therefore of merit simply because of finding local people employment in a growing sector: they are of merit because the methods employed are effective where customary methods failed.

➔ CASE STUDY: MITIE GROUP PLC

MITIE is one of the UK's leading support services companies delivering facilities, engineering and property services. It employs in excess of 44,000 employees and provides support to over 6,000 UK companies in all areas of support services.

MITIE always needs to recruit good quality candidates and in partnership with East London Business Alliance (ELBA) - a natural lead on this scheme through their well established links with Canary Wharf and City firms - MITIE developed the 'Real Apprentice' scheme to enhance its London recruitment levels. The pilot scheme saw ten 17-25 year-olds undergo ten weeks of on-site operational training based at some of with MITIE's corporate clients sites – including ABN AMRO, Morgan Stanley, Linklaters, Merrill Lynch, Network Rail, Skadden Arps and the Financial Services Authority - where they are taught the soft skills and attitudes needed to work in a corporate environment. These include timekeeping, personal presentation, line management instruction, teamwork, as well as the technical skills needed to work in an office services department.

Many of the trainees were recruited via Ocean NDC (New Deal for Communities), another partner in the Fresh Futures in Financial Services project. The area attracted and DC status due to particular disadvantaged in the area; 34% of Ocean men and 68% of women in 2000 were economically inactive, with 34% of men unemployed / seeking work and 51% of households living on less than £ 10,000 a year.

Thanks to the training, the original Apprentices are all employment within the in corporate environment and have the very real opportunity to develop careers. Following the success of this original pilot scheme, MITIE has run several more programmes which have seen over 20 young people into employment from this route alone.

In April 2007, MITIE launched its latest Real Apprentice programme for a total of 31 people largely from the Ocean NDC area. Previous Apprentices are actively involved in assisting with the ongoing programmes.

The Real Apprentice scheme is acknowledged as the blueprint for employer-led training and has won several awards.

'The BobNetwork' were also involved in mentoring the trainees, providing positive and successful role models from the Bangladeshi community. The

BobNetwork is a network of professional and entrepreneurial Bengalis in the UK, many of whom work in Financial Services related jobs.

The growing success of these programmes illustrates the very real results which can be achieved when partnerships are formed between the public and private sectors.

Employment Solutions have continued to support this initiative. ■

➔ CASE STUDY: LEHMAN BROTHERS

Lehman Brothers are a global investment bank. Its headquarters are in New York, and its European headquarters are in London, in Canary Wharf. Lehman Brothers were seeking to increase their diversity and age profile and therefore approached Employment Solutions at Tower Hamlets College to explore whether a more diverse mix of staff could be provided that would also have the right skill and aptitudes, offering an alternative recruitment model for the company.

An internship programme was devised by Tower Hamlets College to ensure that the needs of the company were met. Employment Solutions worked with the company to ensure that skills and aptitudes were developed with the potential staff to ensure that they could be successful in post.

Following the construction of the programme, an internal advertisement was placed across the college, aimed at attracting young people who were following level 3 courses, and were considering employment in the sector as a real alternative to higher education.

Five people were recruited to take part in intensive training following screening interviews to assess their motivation and aptitude for participating in the programme and assessing a career in the sector.

The skills development training identified with Lehman Brothers focused on teamwork, assertiveness techniques, customer service, change and the need to be flexible in new situations, using initiative and questioning skills, understanding diversity, equal opportunities and tolerance in the work place, and communication skills.

Training in these areas was intensive and took place over a week. These ranges of skills were developed in the candidates using a variety of innovative methods to ensure that the training involved as many realistic situations as possible. Training included the use of actors to ensure that communication skills, for example, are assessed via a mock interview providing a dual purpose of acting as review of the training, whilst preparing candidates for the potential interview with the company. If successful in the interview at the end of the training, candidates were then offered permanent positions with the company. This resulted in two people gaining employment with Lehman Brothers in the operations team. The other candidates were able to be placed subsequently into work due to the experience they gained during the placement.

The bespoke programme preparation of the above example represents one breakthrough for the partnership in matching the business needs of local companies to the talents and skills of local people. Further collaborative models with employers from Investment banking have been developed consequently. These models have a focus on employer demands, and show the effectiveness of a specific combination and integration of numerous elements. These are employability preparation, achievement of industry recognized qualifications, one-to-one coaching to ensure specific company knowledge and appreciation of corporate environments, and work experience. ■

➔ CASE STUDY: BNP PARIBAS SECURITY SERVICES (BNPP)

The Securities & Investment Institute (SII) is a professional body providing progressive examining, training and membership activities for those working in the investment industry internationally. Around 35,000 SII examinations are taken annually across the UK and 30 countries around the world and the Institute has provided services for 43 of the world's top 50 banks. Tower Hamlets College have a partnership with the SII in order that local people can access training and qualifications provided by the SII.

The SII introduced Employment Solutions at the college to BNP Paribas. (BNPP) BNPP has a presence in more than 85 countries worldwide, therefore boasting an extensive global banking network. The company had expressed a desire to explore ways of increasing diversity in their security services and investment banking division, based in the City of London.

Employment Solutions staff worked with the bank in order to prepare candidates for a nine month internship with the company. The emphasis was on ensuring that the 3 candidates put forward for the internship were fully aware of the demanding nature of the global banking, in addition to having undergone extensive employability preparation on the Graduate Management Training programme developed at Employment Solutions (similar to that detailed under Lehman Brothers) and having passed the SII Introduction to Investment Award level 3 qualification as prerequisites. Candidates were coached on a one-to-one basis about what to expect in BNP Paribas, and were prepared for interview both through interview practice, but also through testing their knowledge about the bank and ensuring that they were suitably motivated by key staff at Employment Solutions. The approach combines positive training interventions for disadvantaged groups with private recruitment consultancy methods of baseline preparation for employability with the development of focused company knowledge to enable a real fit between individual aspirations and company ethos.

One SII graduate trainee was selected for a 9 month internship, financed by BNPP on a salary of £350 per week. Following the success of the internship a further 3 month work placement was offered by BNPP's Human Resources division in the City Headquarters. During the period of the work experience placement the candidate received £50 a week from Employment Solutions at Tower Hamlets College, plus travel and subsistence provided by the employer. Additionally, BNP Paribas committed to training the intern on PeopleSoft, a complex and state-of-the-art Human resource management and business solution software package used by global companies. The companies were clearly committed to supporting the placement in a very positive manner. The method used demonstrates that the approach is almost 'try before you buy' allowing the company to ensure that candidates have the necessary skills and aptitude before committing to employ

them. The initiative is very positive as it demonstrates a practical approach to equal opportunity and empowerment through the internship approach – the candidates could not have met the job requirements on the open market as they did not have experience. The result of the placement was that the intern was offered a £24k job before the completion of the 9 month period. The positive impression that was made by the original intern the partnership between the company and Employment Solutions has now developed into further placement opportunities being offered, these are current at the time of writing. ■

➔ CASE STUDY: CITIGROUP

Another joint project between Employment Solutions (ES) and a Financial Services employer was developed together with Citigroup (Citi) – with the SII again key brokers in the relationship. Citi is actively involved in CSR on many different fronts. This programme dovetails with Citi's commitment to financial education, employee volunteering, diverse recruitment and building links to local communities. Ever since Citi moved to Canary Wharf, it has engaged in a number of initiatives, usually education-oriented, in the surrounding neighbourhood. The results of this particular programme stand out, though, as being especially concrete, because it led to actual employment opportunities.

Several different groups worked in partnership and played key roles in the programme's success. The students went through a graduate management programme developed by Employment Solutions, and had passed the SII Introduction to Investment Award, an examination appropriate for staff entering the investment industry in a variety of roles, for example: investment administration, client services, IT, sales and marketing, or Human Resources. Candidates then spent time at Citi involving trainers, HR personnel and departmental managers.

In an effort to further enrich the learning experience for the programme's top students with hands-on training, Citi agreed to host some of the students for 4-week work experiences in 5 different departments at Citi in Canary Wharf. The students were chosen after they had passed the Securi-

ties & Investment Institute "Introduction to Investment" award and also completed with high marks the ES Graduate Management course. Besides receiving CVs and meeting with the candidates themselves, Citi also liaised with the programme coordinators.

All five were welcomed onto four-week placements by Citi; although not originally planned this way, the initial placement was then followed by four weeks of paid temporary work after the placement ended. On top of hands-on job experience, a structured programme was provided including induction programmes, workshops on recruitment skills as well as the provision of a "Buddy" for each participant via Citiroots, Citi's multi-cultural employee network in the UK.

The outcome of the hands-on placement has had positive results for all 5 candidates: 1 is working in a front office prime brokerage position in Citi; 1 has a position in Citi's Operations academy, which is a two year rotation programme; 1 has been transferred to Citi's preferred temporary resource supplier and is temping in the same department at Citi; 1 has been referred to an account client manager at Joslin Rowe and has been temping at Merrill Lynch for four months; 1 is now temping at Morgan Stanley.

None of the candidates had experience in Financial Services before their involvement in this programme, which – thanks to the experience provided – served as a springboard to other, concrete job opportunities. All of these examples demonstrate that local people from diverse and disadvantaged backgrounds can make the grade in demanding financial services environments with training designed to unlock their potential by developing their skills, knowledge and aspirations. Partnership, collaboration and imagination were vital to the programme's success. In the above example we were able to place the candidate at Merrill Lynch as we were able to illustrate to Joslin Rowe that the candidate's time at Citi constituted relevant work experience in the financial sector.

Piloting these approaches as part of the Fresh Futures in Financial Services programme means that Employment Solutions and the Skills Academy for Financial Services, in conjunction with local partners, are in a strong position to ensure that local people can access the financial industry by meeting business demands, not in spite of them. ■

> THE SPANISH PROJECT

Social and employment mediation has been developed in IVA-DIS as a methodological tool to assist in the resolution of conflicts that hinder job placement for disabled people.

Stages in the Mediation Process

The social and employment mediation process developed by our project consists of six stages.

- 1 > Initial stage: creating trust and structuring the process
- 2 > Approaching the facts and isolating the problems
- 3 > Creating options and alternatives
- 4 > Negotiating and decision-making
- 5 > Clarifying and drawing up a plan
- 6 > Putting into Practice, Analysis and Review

1 > Initial Stage: creating trust and structuring the process

In this stage, the first direct or indirect contact with both parties is established. At this point, it is advisable to explain the mediation process, the mediator's role, how the sessions will take place and their duration, and the principles and rules governing mediation.

Tools/documents used at this time are: the opening speech, handing over the principles under which the process takes place and the confidentiality agreement, together with the mediation protocol.

The rules governing the mediation process are as follows:

- > Respecting speaking turns
- > Willingness on both parts
- > Neutral position of the mediator
- > Confidentiality
- > Impartiality
- > Finalising the mediation process at a suitable moment, agreed equally by both sides and the mediator.

The objectives of this first meeting are:

To check willingness to undergo mediation, acceptance of the process, the procedure and the roles to be played by the mediator and by both sides.

To gather information about the points of view held by both sides in the conflict.

This stage is used to obtain the necessary information about how both sides perceive the conflict, their goals and expectations and the current situation of the conflict.

To establish the working mechanism for sessions, subsequent meetings and possible session timings.

2 > Approaching the facts and isolating the problems

During this second stage the mediator's intervention is focused on summarising and searching for common ground in the problem situation. Both sides also summarise and define the conflict. Getting both sides to define the conflict is essential in order to know what aspects are to be changed and for both sides to take ownership of the dispute.

The objectives of this stage are:

To uncover all the important facts and isolate the real problems in order to present them to the participants.

To obtain information about both hidden and expressed conflicts on both sides.

Hidden conflicts are understood to be those which are not expressed as such; they are problem situations not explicitly described by the people themselves but can be detected by the mediator despite not being formulated verbally.

Throughout the process, both sides are encouraged to take a rational and objective position, avoiding emotional outbursts.

3 > Creating options and alternatives

This is the most creative stage and enables people to take the lead in making decisions and accepting compromise, using previously-agreed criteria.

The basic question is asked: how can what we want be achieved in the most effective way? The participants must collaborate together to find the answer.

The mediator's tasks are focused on:

1) Helping both sides to articulate the options that they know about or want.

2) Developing new options that may be more satisfactory than the previous ones.

The mediator's role must reflect this duality, since he/she facilitates the first task and hands over and synthesizes the second. It is important to take care that the second role does not replace the first, since a mediator who offers too many new options in a very short space of time may inhibit the participants' ability to express themselves and their points of view.

4 > Negotiating and decision-making

Together with the outcomes previously agreed between the participants, getting the cooperation of both sides is the most important task during this stage of mediation. [It is important to try to get both sides to commit to some of the less significant points – pre-agreements – thus ensuring that this task is achieved. As far as more wide-reaching problems are concerned, the sides must choose the options that are acceptable to them, even though these may not coincide with their original wishes].

The negotiation and decision-making stage is when the participants examine the reality and the consequences of the options they have developed.

The mediator's task consists in refocusing the negotiation to ask the question: "Which option best fits everybody's needs?" The mediator must drive both sides to move from a competitive negotiation towards a cooperative problem-solving position, encouraging interaction between them.

5 > Clarifying and drawing up a plan

The aim of this stage is to produce a document that clearly sets out participants' interventions, their decisions and their future conduct. This action plan should be drawn up so that both sides can read it easily and so that it can be reviewed subsequently should problems arise once again.

It should be written concisely but fully, using language that can be understood by all participants and in a clear format. Both sides must understand that this is a working document that can be changed at a later date and adapted to current circumstances. This document is called an agreement record.

6 > Putting into Practice, Analysis and Review

Mediators must be available to provide continued support and assistance in the event of any difficulty during the Putting into Practice phase with regard to previously agreed measures to resolve hidden, unresolved intrapersonal conflicts. If during the previous stages an affinity and trust was established with the mediator, it is likely that the participant will turn to them before anyone else, particularly if they acquired counselling skills as part of their training.

Once the process is finalised, two possible scenarios may arise:

- > an agreement is reached.
- > no agreement is reached.

Once the process is finalised, a final evaluation is carried out in order to detect the errors and successes of the actions undertaken.

It must be taken into account that mediation is a dynamic and open procedure, and therefore changes can be made at any step and whenever deemed appropriate by the professional in charge. It is important to remember that although the final objective of mediation is to resolve a conflict, it is possible that at the end no agreement is reached; alternatively the process may be interrupted at any time before the closing stages.

➔ CASE STUDY

A girl aged 16 with a mild learning difficulty came to us having been referred by an association with which we have contact, in order to receive training in a vocational area in which she had an interest and in which she might subsequently be able to work. After a series of interviews, which she always attended accompanied by her mother, who answered questions on her daughter's behalf, we could see that the mother was overprotective and this was having a limiting effect on the girl's needs and possibilities. During one of the meetings, we asked the mother to remain outside the office, enabling us to speak alone with the girl. It was our impression, shared with the person who referred her to us, that her mother was exaggerating the girl's disability. We suggested she undertook a shelf stacker course offered for disabled people by a supermarket chain and she was very excited at the prospect. When this was put to the mother, she did not agree and began to raise objections in an attempt to prevent her daughter undertaking the course. For the first time, in front of us, the daughter rebelled and stood up to her mother. In our view, initiating mediation process which included the stages and methodology described in this document was the best way of achieving the girl's integration.

Finally, the girl undertook the course successfully and the mother has changed her attitude, enabling her to deal with her daughter's disability in a more positive way. ■

> THE PORTUGUESE PROJECT

The mission of “Respons&Ability - investing on diversity” project is to *“develop, test and communicate models for CSR for enterprises and their stakeholders, in order to achieve innovative practices of human resources development, including employment opportunities for disabled people”*.

In the past we have been very aware of how crucial it is to have relations with employers, the main stakeholder to integrate disabled people in the labour market, and consequently, we have done much to engage with them. After the creation of several methodologies and tools we have entered into active dialogue with companies in an effort to ensure that they can understand the perception of disability today and collaborate to facilitate integration^[6].

The project has a strong focus on CSR as a creative way to open up companies to new ways of thinking and acting, bring us closer to the realities of society and the social problems of local communities. Studies made by the Copenhagen Centre conclude that other than tangible gains such as new jobs, one should not neglect the wider societal gains that new social partnerships can bring. These include promotion of a change in “traditional thinking by local actors, removal of stigmatisation barriers and increased self-esteem among beneficiaries. So while there may be a “business case” for companies to participate in social partnerships, that is just as importantly also a “societal case” and this needs to be reflected in our understanding and daily work of “benefits” and “success”.

➔ CASE STUDY: AUCHAN

In Portugal, Auchan Group develops its activity in the retail sector, with the trademarks *Jumbo* and *Pão de Açúcar*. Assuming an active role in the community where it is placed, Auchan promotes and develops several initiatives, aiming to integrate its activities into society.

Since 2001 Auchan has followed a proactive policy for the integration of disabled people. This policy establishes the integration in each hypermarket, between 3 and 5 citizens with physical and mental disabilities, and the promotion of at least one traineeship a year, in each hypermarket. By the end of 2004, the Group had already 26 citizens with disabilities and 5 trainees integrated.

Today, the Group has 54 disabled employees. By the year of 2010, the goal is to employ 100 disabled persons.

Beyond this integration, Auchan promotes traineeships in partnership with several local NGO´s. In 2005, Auchan promoted 19 traineeships.

This policy also includes the development of specific services for disabled customers, such as products labelled in braille and the creation of a personal shopping service.

In 2003, Faro hypermarket was awarded, amongst 59 companies, with the “Merit Diploma of First Category”, by the Institute of Employment and Professional Training (IEFP), for the integration of disabled people. This project was developed in partnership with ACAPO and the Employment Centre and the local IEFP.

The project consisted of the integration of 4 citizens with visual disability in the “customer service”. These employees direct customers in the hypermarket and give information on product location and price, amongst other tasks. This work is possible due to a computer application developed specifically for this project, which stores all the necessary information and works in conjunction with voice software.

^[6] For more information see Social Marketing - Changing Behaviours and reversing trends: The MARKTH!NK way.

<http://www.markthink.org/backoffice.cfg/documents/files/Marketing%20Social-Inglês.pdf>

This project involved a long training process and adaptation to the workplace. In the first two weeks of integration, these employees were trained in the hypermarket, for 80 hours each one, to recognise differences in the hypermarket sound with and without customers, and about product location, in the two first weeks, the employees were trained for more than 80 hours about the computer application specially developed for them. The same hypermarket integrated a person with mental disability in the merchandise section, a paraplegic in the Jumbo Card Service, a person with Down's syndrome in the bakery, a person with visual impairment as a telephone opera-

tor, and more recently, a person with hearing impairment in the paying boxes. Integrating people with disabilities is an opportunity for Auchan to reinforce its positioning as a social responsible company. It's a process which brings benefits to all the stakeholders involved: the institutions, because they train and prepare people and see them integrated in the marketplace; the people with disabilities, for providing them with a life full of opportunities; Auchan, because it gives one more step to fulfil its ambition of developing a social awareness in the company, and to influence positively their customers, drawing their attention to the need of integration of these people. ■

Working together in partnership has allowed companies to focus on disabled groups and to tap into their resources. But to establish this win-win relationship requires competences from the DEMAND side.

NRC-APPC has an approach to working with companies for the labour integration, based on a marketing methodology it has begun to look at how companies and the public authorities and Vocational Training Centres can work together to integrate disabled people into society through the labour market, achieving the goal of giving a chance, to helping integrate them into society through employment.

The APPC **Integration Service** aims at the full integration into the labour market of disabled people with extra employability problems.

There are two complementary methods of promoting conditions for their full integration in this market.

1st Phase | **Training Service**: providing important content/training and access to new technologies for disabled people, fundamentally developing relationship skills in them.

2nd Phase | **(Re) Integration Service**: the priority is the promotion of employability, facilitating the entry and/or return to the labour market of those with the greatest integration and reintegration problems, with respect to a market that must be open to everyone.

The Training Service

Recruiting of disabled people, which will be done starting with NRC/APPC trainees.

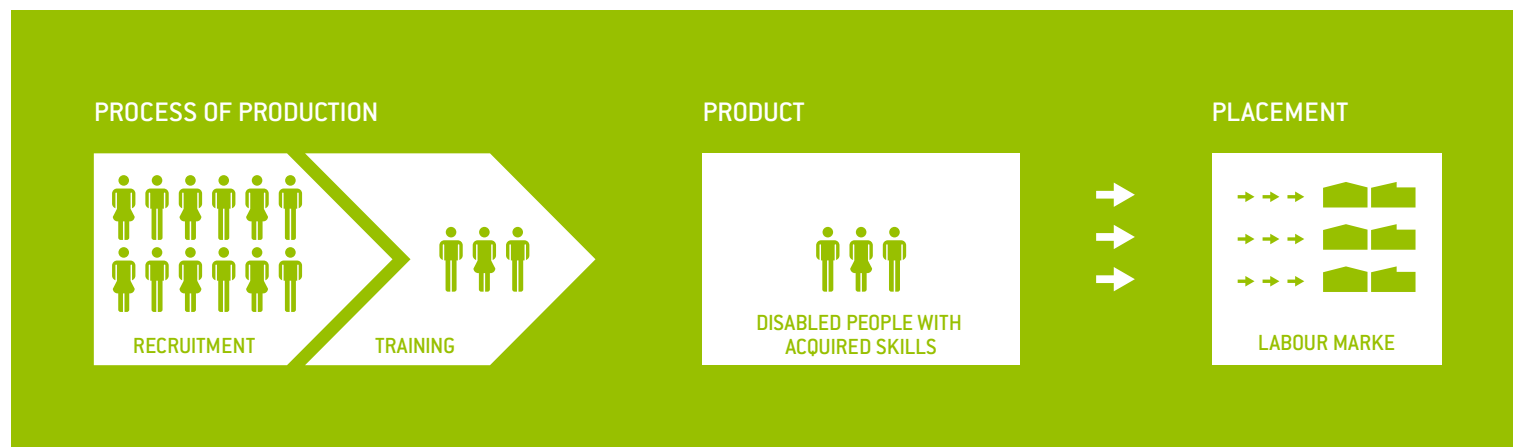
Selection, according to specific criteria, to be mentioned ahead in this text, in particular residence, age, education and prior training of the group.

Training, given to the selected individuals, in accordance with the needs of both trainees and employers.

The (Re) integration Service

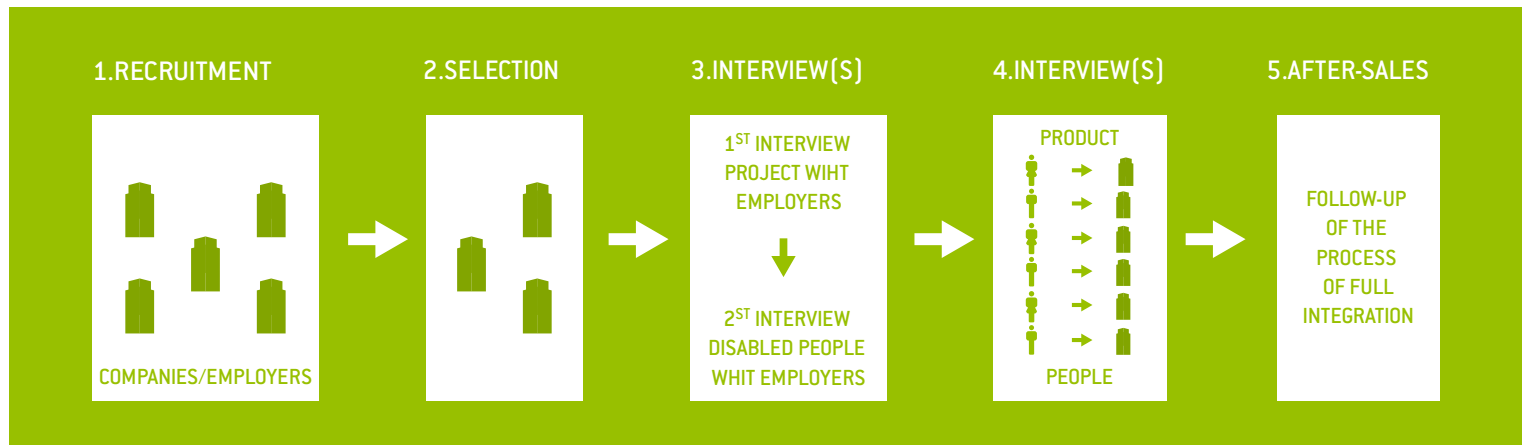
The (Re) Integration service places the “product” of the training (disabled people with acquired skills) on the market. This is achieved through the contacts to be made with employers/firms from the widest range, since the basic training (with the NRC/APPC) covers a variety of areas.

➔ TOTAL SERVICE OFFERED



Mediation Service (Goods): process for routing disabled people with different skills to the labour market. To produce a quality service, it is fundamental to *facilitate the access of disabled people with qualifications to the labour market, by means of contacts made with employers/firms*. This process will take the following form.

➔ (RE) INTEGRATION PROCESS



1st Recruiting firms

It is based on their sector of activity, since they will have to include disabled people in firms, according with their skills and vocational training.

Example: a disabled person who has trained as a gardener could get a job in a company involved in this sector: e.g., flower-growing in greenhouses.

2nd Selection of firms

Criteria pre-established criteria to the selection:

Size: from the start, medium or large firms will be chosen, since these are the ones employing most workers. But this does not mean the exclusion of micro, small and medium firms.

Availability of Employers: verification that employers are open to the integration of disabled people with skills in their firms (looking first at the firm's background will enable some conclusions to be drawn, especially with reference to sensitivity to social causes/ Social Responsibility).

Conditions offered by the firm: Physical conditions for the integration of certain kinds of disability in the firms in question and the conditions of the possible job.

3rd Contact between the mediator and employers

Contacts will be made between the mediator's technical team and these firms to try and arrange an interview to present the project and its purpose. Interviews will then take place between the "project" and the employers, and afterwards between the latter and the disabled people.

Interview between the MEDIATOR and the Employers: the "project" will put forward its proposal, "paving the way" for fixing another interview between the trained applicant(s) and the Employer(s).

Interview between the Employers and the Disabled People: in this is the point (among others, especially in training), the disabled people will have to put in practice the skills they have developed during the training provided by the project (relational skills, self-analysis skills, etc.)

4th Integration

The disabled people are integrated into the firms.

5th After-sales (Follow-up)

The disabled people and the employers/firms will be followed-up by the mediator, after they have been integrated into the firms, to determine the reasons for success/failure, as this information could be useful for the future of the project.

Support Service (goods): these auxiliary services do not facilitate consumption, but do increase our ability to differentiate the service from that of the competition, and are inherent to training essentially aimed at disabled people (and their follow-up technicians). However, some materials will be provided for employers, in the expectation that, by giving some explanatory materials to this public, they might be made aware of the problems associated with disability.

The Fluctuation of Demand with respect to the service to be offered to employers is "broad", in that there could be times when there is a greater demand and others when there is a lower demand for disabled people with skills (employees). For example, when the market or the national economy is stronger, employers could be more receptive to these applicants. However, employers should keep in mind a strategy associated with social responsibility. When they want to start implementing such a strategy, they may feel disposed to include disabled people with acquired skills in their firms^[7].

The innovative aspects of the service in question prioritize independence, human relations, learning, and the intense involvement of the individuals, giving them the possibility to enjoy a professional and "recreational" daily life capable of creating formative value.

^[7] NRC-APPC in their Services of prospecting, for each year, has a database of 50 new enterprises – SME's - for the integration work.

Within the scope of a model that implies more independence, creativity, professionalism, decentralisation, participation and co-operation among individuals and partners (empowerment), programmes and activities that promote integration and team spirit are essential.

Among the innovative methodologies that characterize the service, special emphasis is placed on Outdoor Learning and Drama Techniques.

So far, the price associated with the service is related to financial and non-financial costs. In this case, clients may support non-financial costs, as well as the financial ones inherent to the process of change. This process could be of a *cognitive nature*, or could be characterized by a *change of action*, of *behaviour* and, finally, a *change of value* (Kotler and Roberto, 1992). An example of change relating to disabled people could occur at behavioural level, implying the development of their skills. In terms of employers, an example of a behavioural change could occur at the level of including disabled people in their firms⁽⁸⁾.

One way of cutting these costs, in particular for the employers, is to always focus on the issue of Social Responsibility, that is, on “their” commitment to turn their firms into “good citizens” (Alves, Bandeira, 2001). A way of cutting costs for the disabled people is to focus on the change in their behaviour in the light of the acquisition of skills that will help them enter the labour market.

■
(8) Concerning the Official Journal of the European Union (17.11.05) the commitments entered into voluntarily by enterprises must be published and it must always be possible to verify the effectiveness of these commitments. By way of example, an enterprise which declares its intention to open up access to employment to handicapped persons should publish figures showing the proportion of handicapped persons which it has taken on and the adjustments it has made in connection with the relevant jobs. As responsibility is measured by actions and not by words, enterprises have to demonstrate transparency.

> THE ITALIAN PROJECT

It is quite a difficult task to persuade Sardinian employers to offer a job opportunity to disadvantaged people. It is even more difficult, if not almost impossible to persuade them to take into account the possibility of hiring non EU citizens. This happens for several reasons. First of all, it happens because people are not acquainted with the professional competences of immigrants and their ignorance is fed by an unjustified wariness due to strong cultural and/or racist prejudices, which are an impediment to getting acquainted with the newcomers. It takes time to be at ease with new cultures and customs, and immigration in Sardinia is a new phenomenon.

Furthermore, a high level of unemployment together with a SME 's local economy makes it difficult even for the locals to find a job. Moreover, immigrants do not always have a good knowledge of the Italian language, and this could generate problems of understanding during work.

Finally, there are no economic benefits for employers willing to hire non-EU citizens, whereas Italian laws provide for fiscal and contributory benefits for businesses that hire other disadvantaged people, such as people with disabilities or the long term unemployed people (i.e. two year unemployed).

There is however an exception relative to the home care sector. A private individual that hires a person to take care of a family member may deduct the costs, such as salary, social security taxes, etc, from his/her taxable income.

➔ CASE STUDY: IMMIGRANT WITH DISABILITY

Fatna is a 41 year old Moroccan, who has been living in Italy for 13 years. She is not married and does not have any children. She arrived in Italy as a domestic help for a family in Cagliari. After changing two employers in Cagliari, she left for Milan, where she worked for a family but without a regular contract. In 1999, Fatna had a stroke, which left her with a disability of 60%. She was not able to move her left arm anymore and she had problems with walking because of the partial palsy of the left leg. After the stroke, Fatna moved back to Cagliari, in order to follow a rehabilitation programme, but also because there were some parents of hers (cousins) living there. From 1999 till 2006 she occasionally worked as a companion for old people, but she could not attend more difficult tasks (such as cleaning or lifting heavy things). She could not find a permanent job and she risked losing her permit of stay (linked to a job, under the Italian immigration law).

Fatna has not completed her studies in Morocco. After graduating high school, she attended University in Morocco for two years. Then she had to quit studying because she had to work. In Italy she did not participate in any training programme, because of lack of time and economic reasons.

When she came to us, she was unemployed and worried that she would not find another job because of her health problem. She contacted us because of an ad she had seen on a bus.

Step 1: Detection of needs

Fatna was registered in ILEX guidance and career counselling programme. She attended four guidance interviews and one group meeting. She and her career counsellor talked about her personal and professional experience and they drew up an individual action plan. Her personal resources were time, experience in the elderly home care and motivation. She was perfectly aware of her health problem, even if, in the beginning, she was a little reluctant to tell the whole story to the counsellor.

Step 2: Drawing up the individual action plan

Fatna would like to work in agriculture, but she is aware that it might be difficult, given her disability. Because of her experience, she is willing to take a job in the home care sector and she is also available to a job that offers bed and board.

Step 3: Finding a job

One of the main goals of the ILEX project is to facilitate the labour integration into the labour market of non EU citizens. The case of Fatna was two times difficult: because of her personal status of immigrant and because of her health condition. Nonetheless, we decided to introduce her to the family of an old lady, who needed some company and some help with the house work. The job place was a small village, outside Cagliari. One of the daughters of the old lady is a doctor so she could perfectly understand the needs for treatment and rehabilitation that Fatna was supposed to follow. The family also agreed that Fatna should take care only of the tasks she could handle without putting her health at risk.

Step 4: Following-up

Fatna was hired with a permanent employment contract. Once in a while she comes to visit us at the Agency. We talked several times to her employer, also in order to solve some misunderstandings related to Fatna's permit of stay and her rights under the Italian immigration law. No other major problems intervened between the two parties. ■

The ILEX project handled the service of job brokerage for non-EU citizens who reside in Sardinia. It is the first local project involved in the field of labour integration of immigrants. Although provincial jobcentres are supposed to address non-EU citizens too, unfortunately they are still in a transitional phase, and they are not yet equipped with the necessary instruments to operate the brokerage.

The ILEX project did not develop specific instruments for communication activities to employers. However, it was essential to address in some way the demand side in order to make the brokerage service work. To this end, ILEX put into effect some initiatives and activities, in order to make its services known to the potential employers and to awake their interest in hiring its beneficiaries.

The project started with a research conducted on 224 Sardinian businesses, in order to assess their likelihood of hiring non-EU citizens and the reasons behind their reluctance to do so. Only 5 businesses showed some interest in the brokerage service of the ILEX Agency, and agreed to being contacted for a possible job interview with the Agency's beneficiaries. The research underlined essentially what we've only suspected at first: little openness to foreign manpower, a strong presence of racist prejudices and, of course, a labour regulation that is too burdensome and often too rigid.

After its opening, the ILEX Agency promoted a communication and advertising campaign using different instruments: a press conference, public seminars, and brochure describing its services, ads in the local newspapers and on town buses. The objectives of this activity were, on one hand, to rise employers' interest to hiring non-EU citizens and, on the other hand, to eliminate or prevent doubts and confusion that could rise, because of the complexity of the legal rules on hiring non-EU citizens.

One of the professionals who work at the ILEX Agency has a main task of making developing contacts with businesses. She assesses the possibility of a job placement within their structures for ILEX beneficiaries. The contacts are made either by

phone or email, followed by meetings with the businesses or businesses' association's representatives.

Every employer that responded to us underwent an individual interview with one of the professionals of the Agency, in order to clarify the potentially problematic aspects of hiring non EU citizens. This interview has proven itself very useful, especially for the families that requested a home care assistant. Unlike businesses, private citizens do not entirely know or completely understand the implications of not respecting the labour laws, regarding non-EU citizens. Often, there might be conflicts due to different interpretations of the same law. That is why the legal adviser has an important task to perform: most of the time, she gives the correct information and facilitates understanding of legal dispositions.

Another instrument that the ILEX Agency developed for the demand side is the cultural mediation service. This service is to be understood either in order to permit a better linguistic comprehension during a job interview, or as a conciliatory conflict resolution instrument, regarding cases of misunderstanding, due to lack of communication between the parties or to different kinds of prejudice. The goal was to try and break down barriers and to address fears of employers, avoid conflicts in the work environment between different groups, and address issues of prejudice. Cultural mediation with employers is meant to represent the needs of different ethnic groups, and how they

can be integrated into the Italian labour markets. The tools we used were mainly face to face meetings with employers, the format of sessions was developed to enable open discussion on the needs of groups and how diversity can be managed. We are also organising a 4 session training course for the tutors in the businesses that host our interns. It is planned to start by the end of March and it will be coordinated by ISFORCOOP (a professional training institute), one of our national partners. The main goal of the course is to instruct tutors on the needs and expectations that our clients may have in relation to the job they are training for.

Regarding the outcomes, the ILEX project had a great success with the communication and advertising campaign. Many families addressed the Agency because they found out about it after seeing an add on a bus or in the newspaper. The biggest success was obtained with families, more available to hiring non EU citizens, also because of the lack of local manpower in this sector, and the growing need of assistance for older people. It was a little more difficult to involve businesses in our project, also because of the difficulties of the local labour market nowadays. The new job placements represent nonetheless a success. The cultural mediation service also represented an achievement, succeeding in breaking down many barriers for employers and educating them towards a better understanding of the capacities and competences of non-EU citizens.

COMMUNICATION, INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

A responsible enterprise must justify its action towards all those that contribute to its existence – suppliers, clients, stockholders, community and collaborators. Hence, all areas of social responsibility must be included in the communication of the enterprise. All actions must integrate the development strategies of the enterprise and must not be sporadic, but instead they must be long lasting, developing more and more as the will to change is implemented.

Communication is at the heart of the social responsibility strategies, assuming like never before its transversal character and allowing to give visibility to value and to prolong the compromises assumed by the enterprises.

All means traditionally used in entrepreneurial communication may be used in responsible communication. Nevertheless, whether the publics are internal or external the means to prioritize must be information, sensibilization and training.

Communication is the only mean that allows enterprises to assume publicly their compromises, to gain the trust their internal and external publics. This must be done by establishing the best possible relation with them, by involving collaborators and community, by earning legitimacy and credibility, as well as the loyalty of their stakeholders.

The fundamental values of responsible communication are the dialog with stakeholders and transparency.

All that exists is what is visible

An enterprise which claims to be socially responsible must prove it's engagement and it's attention towards the expectations and needs of the stakeholders. The enterprise/brand must be alert, must answer the concerns of their publics, must communicate about it's activities and educate its publics to value them.

The main role of communication

Responsible communication has to do essentially with the activity of the enterprise and its core business. All of the means of traditional communication are used. Nevertheless, the most privileged ones are those which allow for dialogue and transparency, the feedback and the construction of the relationship. All means and actions must be coherent.

Benefits of socially responsible communication

The benefits of socially responsible communication are many, and don't reside only in communication but derive from the management of human resources in the perspective of social responsibility. Firstly, and from a recruitment stand point, an enterprise with a good internal and external image and with a good reputation regarding the way their collaborators are treated, will find it easier to recruit qualified people for the places available. Collaborator turnover will also be slower, that is, the enterprise will spend less in training.

Another aspect that derives from this positioning, and leads to a reduction in costs, is the health status. "Happy" and motivated collaborators become ill less often, according to *Great Place to Work*. The enterprise also gains the satisfaction of its clients because the image given by the collaborators is more positive, its productivity is higher and their products have a higher quality.

Some of the challenges of communication for the enterprises

One of the challenges for the enterprises working in communication is to give sense to the act of buying, taking into account the difficulty to respond to the needs of the consumers, when the name of the brand is not the name of the enterprise (relationship brand/corporate), and the difficulty of the brand itself to overcome the suspicion of consumers (never before as there been so much communication from entrepreneurial associations).

Another challenge for enterprises at this level is to respond to the influence of NGO's and to establish partnerships with these stakeholders, namely in what anti-globalization is concerned, the tyranny of brands and mistrust.

To be coherent is another of the challenges of communication for enterprises, taking into account that a little carelessness may destroy all the work done. An enterprise must be coherent in all areas of its action and must anticipate risk.

Types and strategies of communication

There are three types of strategies of communication, which diffuse social responsibility:

Advertising of a product.

Advertising which communicates the values of the enterprise regarding social responsibility.

Advertising which communicates what the enterprise has developed regarding social responsibility.

> First situation: advertising a product

Any enterprise, which uses advertising to promote its product, knows that the campaign will produce an effect, which is expected to be the purchase of the product by the consumer. The way in which the advertisement is created – the concrete message, the underlying message, the visual symbolism, the stereotypes used – will influence the consumer and, ultimately the community. It's about this influence and its effects that consumers associations have been studying, analyzing ethical limits of advertising communication and demanding that the enterprises have responsible attitudes in their messages. This thought has become mandatory in a time when consumers became more critical and suspicious and when advertising is drained and stuck in its matrix of type-message.

Self-regulation codes – the way to responsibility

Advertisers and publicity agencies have created codes of self regulation for the development of more responsible advertising. One of those codes, the International Code for Loyal Practice in advertising, created by the international chamber of commerce, gathers enterprises worldwide. In Portugal, the Portuguese Association of Advertisers is committed to promote codes of sectorial or thematic good practices.

All these voluntary codes of good practices are a first step towards the rethinking and minimization of the negative effects of many advertising messages. Nowadays there are countries that have adopted a legal framework regarding specific issues such as the prohibition of tobacco advertising. However, many consumer rights associations consider the existing regulations insufficient to face matters, such as social discrimination or the exploitation of the lack of experience and excessive trust from the part of children. Since children are very vulnerable group regarding effects of advertising communication the International Chamber of Commerce has launched a "Compendium of rules about marketing, children and youngsters". Generally speaking there are some aspects that a responsible enterprise must take into account to reduce the negative impact of advertising, namely:

To think about ecologic approach on communication (paper consumption, waste production, recycling).

To think in a different way about the choice of means and the planning of the campaign to avoid environmental pollution (a leaflet based campaign is more pollutant and produces more waste than a poster campaign).

To develop a positive message, to promote self-esteem and avoiding discriminative stereotypes (e.g.: advertising that puts women in the role of being in charge of the domestic chores, advertising that associates alcohol to social or sexual performances).

To develop a message that doesn't encourage attitudes or behaviors that may be at risk for health or security (e.g.: car advertising, which values speed).

To develop communication which does not go against the existing regulations nor certain standards of behavior adopted by society regarding social or environmental issues (e.g.: a brand of beer produced a campaign which showed a penguin which was very little concerned with the problem of global warming as long as he could have a beer of that brand, in a time when the environmental consciousness of the Portuguese is still weak).

Does social responsibility question the selling of a product?

To base advertising on values of social responsibility doesn't mean that enterprise gives up its first goal – to sell a product; it only means that it's done thinking about the social and environmental values of the enterprise. On the way, the brand can educate the consumer by valuing more responsible behavior both at the social and environmental, or by helping to dismantle prejudice. If the society in which the advertising is diffused is fighting with concrete problems such as alcohol consumption, road accidents, and unequal opportunities for men and women, then the brand may even contribute to change behavior.

In the market, these approaches may be a differentiating factor by selling to the public that “extra little thing” beyond the product, helping to build the long term credibility and reputation of the brand.

> Second situation: advertising that communicates the values of the enterprise/brand regarding social responsibility

The enterprise that invests in advertising, which conveys its values regarding Social Responsibility, has a greater chance of reaching their target. In the book “L'entreprise verte” (the green

enterprise), Elisabeth Laville, one of the European specialists in social responsibility, underlines that “the difference advertising about social responsibility makes is that it establishes a connection between the consumer and a positive reality, where the question is not to consume more, but to consume better”.

To mix social responsibility with the business

There are still many enterprises that are shy to communicate about social responsibility, fearing to be too exposed to criticism on the part of the media and the NGOs.

If the enterprise shares and implements the values the values of Social Responsibility and aims to communicate them through its communication, then it's being coherent and positioning itself in the market with a differentiating feature. In this way, it keeps up with the evolution of the more attentive citizens, by showing them that they share their concerns in a number of issues other than the sell of products.

This strategy can only be credible if coherent, which means that it goes together with the development of social responsibility in other aspects of the activity of the enterprise, and in a continuous way over time. This behavior is therefore an indispensable condition for the advertising to communicate honesty and truth.

The enterprise may be positioned with this type of communication, through useful or pedagogic information: communication is an act of responsibility on the part of the enterprise to pass through an informative or educational message, which helps the consumer.

> Third situation: advertising that communicates what the enterprise has developed regarding social responsibility

Another opportunity for communication is the advertising that diffuses the actions carried out by the enterprise regarding social responsibility. This strategy is more usual, but it is also seen

with more criticism because it's considered to be no more than the "revisiting" of sustainable development for commercial purposes. That's why, in an attempt to avoid such risk, some enterprises just refuse to communicate their responsible actions.

There are two prerequisites to the implementation of a communication strategy about the social responsibility actions. On the one hand, the action must be part of a broader social responsibility policy on the part of the enterprise; on the other hand, the enterprise must show that whether internally with the collaborators, externally with the suppliers, or in terms of environment, it implements the values of social responsibility. This transversal feature is very important to give credibility to all advertising.

The consumers are interested in the values of the enterprise and its brands. That is more and more the sense in which consumers point their choices. The continuity and coherence of the actions with the rest of the policies of the enterprise are fundamental for client retention.

To expose is to promise and to promise is to expose

In a time when social and environmental responsibilities begin to integrate the core of the daily strategy of the enterprise, this choice will make the difference for the products and the brands of the enterprise. There is no reason for the communication not to mention this difference.

Apart from that, by communicating, the enterprise is publicly committing itself to progress. There are examples of advertising regarding quality, which are evidence to that: the consciousness of imperfection and the will to improve. Elisabeth Laville claims that "one doesn't ask the enterprises to be perfect, but instead, to be honest regarding their success and their failures". It is also a way for the enterprise to show good will, and to make it possible to measure progress.

Communication for integration

In the framework of Corporate Social Responsibility, communication assumes the role of an essential facilitator for integration.

Communication can be looked at from inside out, concerning the management of the relationship between organizations and their stakeholders. This dialogue between organizations and their stakeholders provides information and raises awareness to the needs of disadvantaged groups, such as disabled people, ethnic minorities and immigrants, amongst others.

Communication concerning diversity can be faced in two different perspectives: supply and demand. On the one hand, communication is the means to inform about the opportunities and the needs of enterprises labour wise. On the other hand, communication is a way for the enterprises to know the resources and existing competences amongst the disadvantaged groups.

Hence, the project ResponseAbility is developing tools and methodologies so that the enterprises can be open to this dialogue, and may create their own mechanisms and information exchange algorithms with their stakeholders. This attitude of dialogue promotes and ensures the interaction with the external environment. The goal of which is to facilitate the integration of disadvantaged groups in the labour market.

By opening up, enterprises get to show their job offers as well as they get to know the new competences that may satisfy their labour needs. The will to dialogue is a key element that allows an interaction, which is only possible through communication.

Concerning the projects "Responsibility for change", the phase of diffusion is the corner stone that guarantees success. The diffusion of the products developed by the partnership provides the target groups with the means to implement the concept of inclusion, through the management.

TRAINING EMPLOYERS AND DEVELOPING TOOLS

> THE PORTUGUESE PROJECT

Training

Peter Lacy from EABIS^[9] said *“The gap between innovative practices on the ground and bodies of theory is widening, and we need to bridge this gap by forging partnerships between business, academy, public authorities and others”*.

To prepare Small and Medium Enterprises^[10] (all hierarchical levels) to integrate CSR suitability of processes human resources management (HRM) and accessibilities, an example of an integrated Plan - is Taylor's “Conception with Certification” (ECTS - European Credits) of the portuguese project - Respons&Ability. The ultimate goal is to ensure that future managers can understand and incorporate CSR issues into future practice with links to the academy.

The objectives of the educational training are to develop CSR principles and Sustainable Development (SD); to enhance the taking up of CSR organisational behaviour; to promote the employability of disabled people and their integration in the normal labour market; to provide to companies with the arguments and tools for sustainable management; and to prepare the contents for new subjects of the Management Degree and

curricula training MBA and PhD at the University of Coimbra. The structure is composed of 3 Modules of intensive Training and workshops for Advanced Training. The target groups are SME's top management, management students, NGO's and members of the Partnership and National Network of EQUAL CSR. Training was disseminated to Business Associations, as well [see p. 37].

Developed by the Partnership and some CSR experts, invited for the sessions^[11], the Economics Faculty made the scientific supervision for the sections and we had a strong demand from MBA students, PhD students and executives in educational training and workshops. Several organizations are clearly concerned about these issues.

The project gave the opportunity for a consolidation of research and development of curricula to include business and society issues into mainstream business education.

At the same time, we provide a forum for case study discussion between the companies^[12], students with disabilities, executives, employers, students of management and other professionals.

Through innovative methodology sessions of outdoor learning, with a focus on CSR, we developed competences of group management, and combined direct discussions on Supply and Demand^[13].

[9] European Academy of Business in Society – for more information's see, please, www.eabis.org.

[10] For an European definition of SME's, please have a look at the Commission Recommendation of 3 April 1996 concerning the definition of small and Medium-sized enterprises (SME's), OJL 107 of 30.4.1996. For simplification purposes SME's are those enterprises with fewer than 250 employed persons.

In Portugal were selected SME's as a Target-Group there are 99% of SME.

SME represents 33% of the employment in Japan, 46% in U.S.A. and in Europe 66%. In Portugal we have a duality: Innovative SME companies, flexible, adjustable to the needs of the market, with very high qualify employees and employers; and some of them with serious difficulty to compete because of the lack of knowledge, qualifications. [Observatory of European SME, 2002].

[11] Sponsored by Equal Initiative, Copenhagen Centre, Getúlio Vargas Foundation and Det Norske Veritas gave Workshops about CSR, in University of Coimbra - Portugal.

[12] The Portuguese partnership contributes with the important experience of 3 companies / partners. Delta Cafés was the first enterprise in Portugal certified with SA 8000 [<http://www.delta-cafes.pt>] Saír da Casca is an enterprise which core business is Communication for CSR [www.sairdacasca.pt] and Det Norske Veritas, an enterprise for Certification of Quality.

[13] See more, please, in <http://www.markthink.org/backoffice.cfg/documents/files/Outdoor-ing.pdf>

EDUCATIONAL TRAINING

➔ **MODULE 1: Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainable Development**

Objective

To discuss the concepts, the language and the practical implications of CSR and sustainable development.

Contents

The company and the society

Ethics in business

Social responsibility of companies

The CSR and strategic sustainability: NOVADELTA case study

➔ **MODULE 2: Managing Diversity**

Objectives

To develop the discussion about diversity as crucial in CSR

To create awareness for the collective benefits integrating disadvantaged people

Contents

The challenges of Diversity Management

The case of Disabled people

Gender: case studies

➔ **MODULE 3: Diversity in action | Outdoor Learning**

Objectives:

To promote the interaction between students with disabilities, executives, management degree students and other professionals

To develop competencies of group management through outdoor learning focusing on CSR

Contents:

Workshop “Paper chase – treasure hunting”

Workshop “Canoeing and paintball”

Teams

All participants gained a certificate of participation, with corresponding ECTS, which demonstrated considerable demand for the educational training. As Dean Laura Tyson says *“the goal is to get future managers to think about these issues in the same way that they think about marketing, accounting or strategy”*. We believe there is no inherent conflict between social and economic objectives. Both can contribute to improve competitive advantage. Education and training are important instruments to move away from these defensive strategies and start thinking in terms of efficiency and value creation.

Developing tools

> Benchmarking

To present a study on good practices in terms of strategic integration processes of diversity in SME´s (focusing mainly on the integration of disability, ethnicity, gender and nationality^[14]), a benchmarking^[15] research study has been done in six European countries, which are Portugal^[16], Spain, Italy, Denmark, Lithuania and the UK.

Number of partners involved in produce development	2
Number of transnational partners involved in product development	6
Number of languages in which the book will be translated	2 (Portuguese + English)
Number of good practices (Portugal) for case study	2
Number of good practices (transnational) for case study	5
Total of companies inquired through survey	150
Number of inquired companies (Portugal)	125
Number of inquired companies (transnational partners)	25

[14] For more information , please contact IDIM – Sandra Gomes – Phone +351 229398080

[15] “Benchmarking is “a systematic and continuous process of evaluation of products, services and work and organisational process that aim to achieve the best practices in order to improve organisations” (Spendolini, 1992)

[16] In Portugal the sample of SME´s certified by ISO 9001, 1401, 1801 e OHS are 150 enterprises.

Main activities developed in this product

- > Theoretical/conceptual Research in Diversity management and its connection with CSR.
- > Sample selection (certificated SME's) – We began with a cohort of 4042 SME that were certified with the following certifications: ISO 9001; ISO 14001; OHS. We consider that these SME's would be more structurally prepared to implement diversity management and CSR. In Portugal we asked to the institutes and enterprises that awarded the certification mark to give us the names and contact details. Then we calculated a sample with 95% confidence of success and divided it into regions of Portugal. The total of the sample required is between 150 and 250 questionnaires. We did not take into account any specification of activity sector.
- > The questionnaires were taken by the responsible for HR management or the administration Board of the SME and by on-line survey^[17]. The main goal was to analyse and compare of organisational performance, functions or processes considered to be “the best practices” aiming not only to achieve them but to exceed them.

Construction and implementation of the survey

The content of the questionnaire was:

- 1 > Characterisation of the company (SME)
- 2 > Processes of recruitment and selection in general and regarding to diversity
- 3 > Diversity indicators: Disability; Gender, Nationality, Race/Ethnicity.

- 4 > Knowledge of social responsibility
- > Good practices selection. These good practices were selected after we analyse the results of the questionnaires in SPSS programme.
- > The case studies, throughout all the countries interviews were carried out with people responsible for selection and recruitment in the SME selected plus some interviews to better understand the national picture.
- > Selection of companies' in Portugal for the e-benchmarking approach was also carried out following the results of the surveys.
- > Implementation processes follow-up.

The Benchmarking^[18] book presents a study of reality for SMEs in terms of diversity management, providing valuable information, and allows us to understand the existing differences between them, as well as to point out good practices and strategic orientation for European SMEs.

> Integration and Evaluation Guide^[19]

This is a guide for companies designed to evaluate their positioning concerning good practice in the management of diversity relating to the integration of disabled people (DP). This guide is intended to be an easy to use evaluation tool (internal and external) simultaneously providing practical tool for progression towards best practice and the improvement of processes of integration for disabled people.

^[17] To see the questionnaire on-line, go to <http://ipam.kamae.pt>.

^[18] Product's - Main Contents: Introduction; Theoretical approach: social responsibility; diversity management; benchmarking; Methodology: benchmarking; case studies (survey, interviews, observation); Good practices description: Portugal; Denmark, England, Italy, Lithuania; Spain. Good practices implementation, Main conclusions, References, Attachments.

^[19] To have more informations, please, contact Carlos Cavaco – DNV/Portugal -Phone: +351 213929300.

This guide is composed of an introductory section, which explains what CSR is and the strategies or advantages relating to the integration of disadvantaged people; plus guidelines for self evaluation, which include a risk assessment impact matrix for the company.

This product offers strong inspiration regarding quality systems management, and is supported by a range of useful information, with practical examples of how to apply the evaluation guide.

Basic concepts

Guidelines are structured around 8 main sections:

- (i) Each section is divided in 3 columns – from left to right, question, and guidelines on identified practices or evidence of implementation, variable score.
- (ii) Each section is structured around 3 or 4 specific questions.
- (iii) Each question to be scored based on the actual level of implementation against the identified best practices in the middle column or other sources.
- (iv) First question in the section is always a Yes / No (0 or 10 points).
- (v) Remaining questions are all variable score (0 to 10 points).

Critical aspects of the product

- (i) Top Management involvement.
- (ii) Structured management approach, including but not limited to certifiable systems (i. e. ISO 9001 / 14001 or similar).
- (iii) Identification of legal requirements and level of compliance.
- (iv) Evaluation with a certain level of reliance on subjective / personal factors.

Added value

- (i) Compatibility with structured management practices / systems
- (ii) Scoring capability – measurement, comparison and evolution tool
- (iii) Internal or external evaluation capability
- (iv) Adaptable to all types / sizes of organizations
- (v) Information on identified good management practices, sources of information
- (vi) Involvement of all levels in the Organisation, empowerment of middle management levels
- (vii) Inter company comparison possible – resulting in benchmarking

> Marketing and Communication Guide

Many people care about the social and environmental impacts of business^[20]. Yet people trust companies when they believe they are acting according to their values, and not just because it happens to make sense in that particular instance. Credibility comes from the confidence that a business will continue to behave ethically in the future.

Marketers have a critical role in building trust. In particular, they can help to create inspiring communications, which are honestly based on the abilities of the organisation and the resources that it can realistically devote to enhancing its social and environmental performance. Approaches to success include involving staff in community programmes, making credible external claims, exploring the potential of partnership, using innovative approaches, building employability and planning for Change.

[20] A survey of Fortune 100's Most Admired Companies, for example, recently showed that the average reputation score for those companies with an expressed commitment to business ethics was around 5% higher than the group without such a commitment.

In line with this, “Communication” explains the main mechanisms to identify and to make a plan for dialogue and collaboration with stakeholders. In this sense, auto diagnosis & application tools were developed in order to help companies^[21] to assess their internal and external communication. The Marketing and Communication Guide put a special emphasis of the self evaluation of diversity management, relating to the process of recruitment, selection and management of careers of disadvantaged groups.

The briefings provide a series of questions and tools with which to trigger conversations across your company and influence its future direction.

> THE ENGLISH PROJECT

Training

Employer workshops

The Employer Engagement Manager at the City of London, employed directly through ESF Equal project Fresh Futures in Financial Services, interviewed a wide range of CSR and human resources managers in financial services companies in the City and in Canary Wharf to assess attitudes and needs, regarding local recruitment. Relating to the development and support of disadvantaged groups in the area, it obtained feedback from a wide selection of companies interviewed with over 50 respondents from the sector. A program of seminars was put together to cover those areas that employers wanted the most. At the time of writing only 3 of the programmes had been delivered.

Programme

Employer engagement and local recruitment initiatives: This focused on how employers can get involved in local recruitment initiatives, and showcased some good practice taking place across several partners.

Internships – planning successful placements

Diversity, cultural considerations in the workplace (run twice due to demand)

CSR – local recruitment in practice: This session will be run for MBA students at the Cass business school and form part of the CSR module. The students are mainly senior executives in corporate specialization in the City and Canary Wharf.

Meet the neighbors – local recruitment specialist services in the City and Canary Wharf: The focus here will be on Employment Solutions (Tower Hamlets College and Skills match, London Borough of Tower Hamlets), Brokerage City link, ELBA, THEBP. The focus for this workshop is to demonstrate to employers that services offered by these specializations are bespoke and based on dialogue between providers and employers, rather than on preconceived and potentially inaccurate perceptions of what industry requirements are. This helps companies developing confidence that local providers understand the sector and that we are responsive to skill sets that employees within it need to develop.

■
[21+] In Portugal, a special emphasis was for SME's.

Staff within these companies focused on these options in part to know what their competitors are doing regarding local recruitment, and how to emulate good practice. These workshops allow staff to ask questions in a safe environment and to receive practical examples on important issues relating to the support of disadvantaged groups. For example, the diversity and cultural considerations workshop included local Muslims talking about their own concerns before going to work in a corporate environment. Specific information is discussed regarding Muslim faith issues such as Ramadan and Eid, arranged marriages, prayers, heap and how all of these issues can be managed without detriment to working practices. Getting this knowledge across to employers in Canary Wharf and the City is of high importance to local groups, such as Bangladeshi communities and their abilities to progress into work in corporate environments.

Some outcomes from the workshops are that CSR and Diversity managers can use the knowledge to help with their professional development, and gain training in areas that they would otherwise not usually have access to, relating to a specialization in financial services. Their knowledge is updated, they are more open to employ local people, they develop confidence in models of recruitment offered by local providers and can question continued reliance on usual methods that offer little insight into local workforces.

Financial literacy training

The UK DP, Fresh Futures in Financial Services, developed new learning programmes as one of its core objectives. These learning programmes were created to meet both supply and demand; demand in that employers need financial literacy awareness amongst potential employees as a precursor to any possible career development towards Financial Services, and supply in that training for disadvantaged groups relating to employability and to general life

skills needs to encompass financial literacy. The two programmes are both targeted at employers in specific areas with a view to impacting positively on the lives of disadvantaged groups.

Financial literacy for tutors

This programme was written to address a need that was identified by the FSA. The FSA - Financial Services Authority – is the regulatory body for the Financial Services Industry in the UK with rule-making, investigatory and enforcement powers. The FSA has a core objective of promoting public understanding of the financial system and its products and services. The need identified was that generally tutors in schools, colleges and universities do not have a good level of awareness and understanding of the financial system, and are largely unable to offer pastoral support to students regarding an understanding of money and basic financial products such as bank accounts, insurance or loans. In the context of EMA (Education Maintenance Allowance) - money given to students through a bank account to support their continued education post the age of 16 - this meant that many students lacked money management skills and would not use their EMA funds efficiently. They also risk falling into debt. The Financial Literacy programme for tutors is a short accredited level 2 course with online support that enables tutors to gain basic knowledge of finance and the finance system, including budgetary management and methods for analysing and solving money related problems.

Financial Literacy for the voluntary sector – train the trainer

Another course for training employers was designed together to meet the needs of the voluntary sector in the UK regarding financial literacy. The voluntary sector – NGOs – in the UK is vital in the support of disadvantaged groups such as homeless or disabled people, asylum seekers or those with multiple disadvantages. Many voluntary sector agencies assist with training disadvan-

tagged groups with life skills and employability skills. However, Tower Hamlets College in conjunction with other Fresh Futures partner organisations such as the Basic Skills Agency, Metropolitan University and SAFE (Services Against Financial Exclusion) had identified a need to train staff on how to assist their clients to increase their levels of Financial Literacy. The accredited programme is 3 days long and includes significant amounts of industry information, with a focus on how to assist clients without giving regulated financial advice – a very specialist area – and includes the opportunity for develop a micro teaching session in financial literacy training delivery.

> THE SPANISH PROJECT

The second part of the process of equipping employers in Spain is training. In terms of the rights to education, professional training is becoming an aspect of increasing individual and social significance. The professional qualification provided by this training serves to raise people's quality of life, encourage economic and social cohesion, and promote employment. As regards training related to SD, CSR and labour recruitment of risk groups, we have to say that things have only just started to get on the right tracks. This aspect, which is considered a fundamental tool by the European Union's group of multi-sector CSR experts, has been set as a priority by all the partners.

The Spanish project ERCOVA contributes through the creation of two types of training programmes. The first is aimed at improving sustainable development skills among university students through their inclusion in post-graduate courses or conversely in university credits. Another level of short modules has also been designed to introduce companies and social organisations to the basic concepts of CSR and SD.

The tools that provide more detailed information on certain important aspects of SD in the case of the ERCOVA project can be classified as follows.

Diagnostic tools: where employers are offered information about the good CSR practices their company is implementing and the degree to which their company participates in socially responsible actions.

Guides for communication about CSR: communication about CSR is a key factor in achieving the participation and commitment of stakeholders. This guide explains the contents that must be communicated to those who have to communicate and it explains how to go about doing this.

Guide for implementing CSR strategies: this guide gives the company the chance to decide whether it wishes to collaborate with sustainable development by carrying out good practices or implementing a strategy. In the case of implementing a strategy, the guide offers detailed information covering the three steps.

STAGE 1: PLANNING



STAGE 2: DIAGNOSIS



STAGE 3: DEVELOPMENT
OF THE CSR STRATEGY

→ STAGE 1: Planning

This stage involves a step prior to developing the CSR strategy. The organisation must consider a change of attitude that requires previous planning.

Planning steps:

- Commitment by the Management, which voluntarily assumes the intention to act within the framework of CSR by means of a DECLARATION OF INTENTIONS, for example, which may contain the following points: identification of the Strategic Social Goal; company's Mission and Vision; awareness of the company's role as a social agent and its positive and negative impacts.
- Commitment to improving its positive impacts and reducing its negative impacts.
- Designation of a Head of CSR / CSR Committee; the management must designate one or more people to be in charge of tasks associated with the development of the CSR strategy in the organisation and must define their duties and workload so that they may carry out the assigned tasks.
- Communication to the company, that is, the management must establish internal communication channels to ensure that all the organisation's employees are aware of the company's intention to develop a CSR strategy.

→ STAGE 2: Diagnosis

The organisation has to analyse its starting point in order to identify the main needs, expectations and level of satisfaction of the company and its environment, and to establish the fundamental courses of action.

Diagnosis steps:

- Map out the stakeholders. The stakeholders are all the groups or people that affect or are affected by the organisation's activities.
- Define the work methodology, which is, defining the most suitable methodological techniques for collecting the data provided by the stakeholders: in-depth interviews, discussion groups, questionnaires, among others.
- Collect and analyse data, which involves the necessary fieldwork to collect the information that we are given by the stakeholders.
- Report the conclusions and propose courses of action. The diagnosis must conclude with a report that contains the courses of action on which the organisation's CSR strategy must be based.

➔ **STAGE 3: Development of the CSR strategy**

The diagnosis must give rise to a set of guidelines that are to be followed in the development of the CSR strategy. Developing the strategy steps:

- ➔ Designing a Plan of Action. This means arranging the organisation's involvement in order to implement the Plan of Action. It can be done in the following manner:
- ➔ Define the goals.
- ➔ Establish the specific actions needed to achieve these goals.
- ➔ Set a schedule for this.
- ➔ Assign resources: people or person in charge and material resources.
- ➔ Monitor the plan.
- ➔ Implement the Plan. This is a matter of setting the Plan of Action in motion.
- ➔ Evaluation. By noting the results of developing the CSR strategy in the short, medium and long term, the organisation will be able to evaluate the implementation of the Plan of Action: its impact on the stakeholders and any obstacles that are identified, thus enabling it to propose improvements.
- ➔ Internal and external communication. This is a matter of providing people with information about the CSR initiatives that the Organisation has undertaken and the results achieved by implementing such initiatives.

Social Responsibility instruments: standards and criteria for implementation

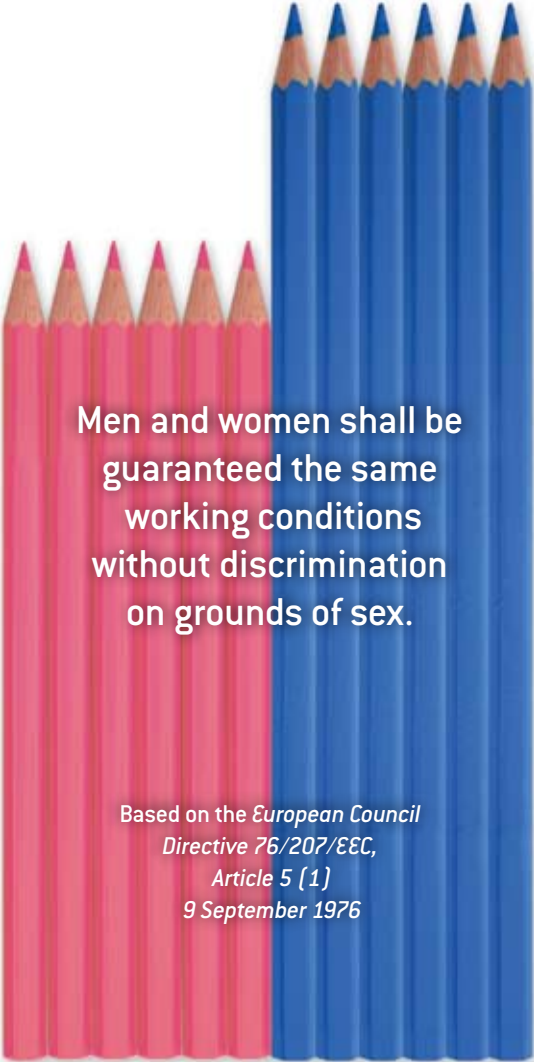
Although it is true that when it comes to developing sustainability practices or strategies each employer must adapt them to the specific needs of the socio-economic context of the community in which the company carries out its business operations, we must not forget that there are a number of established standards and criteria that can be readily adapted to each company, the use of which can generate a great deal of transparency.

These are the most important ones that must serve as a basis for carrying out any CSR actions or strategies: ISO 9000; ISO 14000; SA 8000; AA 1000; GRI; EMAS; The United Nations Global Pact; OECD guidelines for multinationals; The Millennium Development Goals; European sustainability indicators. To be reliable and valid, all of them must allow comparisons to

be made over a number of years; allow the same action to be compared in different regions; be accompanied by qualitative definitions; take into account the socio-economic, cultural and legal circumstances of the company, as well as its size, geographical area and the sector in which it operates; allow comparison between companies.

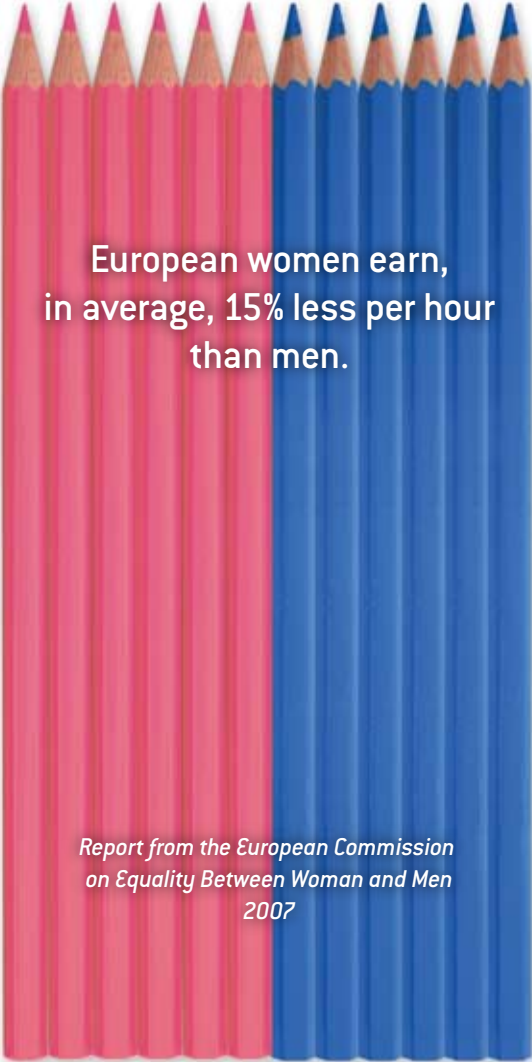
In particular, an aspect that is fundamental in the "Responsibility for change" project is that the partners have developed products and methodologies linked to these standards or criteria: Guide for communication: highlighting the importance of the GRI in producing sustainability reports.

ERCOVA seal: Dimensions (economic, social and environmental) according to the global reporting initiative and structural development and verification in accordance with ISO 9000. Guide for implementing CSR strategies through the use of sustainability indicators for the whole of Spain.



Men and women shall be
guaranteed the same
working conditions
without discrimination
on grounds of sex.

*Based on the European Council
Directive 76/207/EEC,
Article 5 (1)
9 September 1976*



European women earn,
in average, 15% less per hour
than men.

*Report from the European Commission
on Equality Between Woman and Men
2007*

CONCLUSIONS

“Responsibility for Change” has developed a number of highly successful integration programmes, focusing on disadvantaged groups. It is nevertheless very clear, in all projects, that there is great need and potential across the communities to instigate similar practices in other places.

The project seeks to communicate its tools and practices, and facilitate the “channeling” of disadvantaged groups into the labour market by means of mediation strategies. The “Responsibility for Change” project ultimate purpose is to change values. However, this kind of change - to promote equal opportunities in the labour market – is hard to achieve in the time-frame established for the project because is a lengthy process.

Consultation with employers on practices and aptitudes towards CSR and links to local recruitment makes it possible to bridge the gap between companies and people looking for employment. Through community involvement and dialogue with stakeholders, further awareness-raising and support to dissemination of good practices help promote CSR amongst them.

Whether a multi-stakeholder partnership aims to integrate ethnic minorities or to retain women in the work force, or to give disabled people equal opportunities on the labour market, the goals are similar – to address mechanisms of exclusion to see if these can be overcome.

Such projects can be instrumental to changing the way people think and act, to help break perception barriers and the monotony of habit, when dealing with challenges of social inclusion. Stakeholder^[22] dialogue is playing an increasingly important

role in shaping company policy and practices, with a more systematic approach to engaging in dialogue becoming apparent in the companies studied by the benchmarking survey. The effectiveness of CSR in a company depends on the institution's capacity for dialogue. To understand and provide solutions for what is deemed important, permanent systems must be established for communication with stakeholders.

The companies studied are reasonably clued up on CSR – at least they are articulated in the language of CSR. What is often missing, however, is that sense of an all-pervasive set of values within the company that define every aspect of its approach to doing business. Too much that passes for CSR is little more than a “tack-on” to mere charitable giving.

In fact, “what distinguishes today's understanding of CSR from the initiatives of the past is the attempt to manage it strategically and to develop instruments for it”^[23]. “Responsibility for Change” gives an important contribution with its products developed, with the mainstreaming phase, their effectiveness will become clear. The challenge is for innovative and committed businesses to take these tools to the next level – to disclose and invent the new CSR strategies that can benefit themselves and their communities.

■
[22] Those persons or groups who have, or claim to have, an ownership, right or interest in an enterprise and its past, present and future activities. Two main categories of stakeholders can be identified, that is to say, internal stakeholders (i.e. employees, shareholders and managers/owners) and external stakeholders (i.e. business partners and suppliers, customers, local communities, as well as the natural environment itself).

[23] In Campaign Report on European CSR excellence 2003-2004.

➔ IMPACT OF TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION

The 'Responsibility for change' transnational partnership developed a combination of independent and parallel as well as joint products when achieving objectives relating to demand and integrating disadvantaged groups into the labour market.

The 'Responsibility for change' transnational partnership conducted three international surveys to gain knowledge and comparative analysis relating to labour markets in all six countries. Two of these, one on CSR Benchmarking – led by the Portuguese, and the development of a CSR mediator job profile, led by the Spanish, are focused on demand side, since they were completely focused on company opinions and business practices in their development. The third was related to a comparison services for immigrant populations across the six countries, led by the Italians and described in the Supply section of this book.

The Benchmarking (see chapter x) study, led by Portugal was carried out in order to find out how SME 's were able to integrate CSR practices into their day to day business, focusing on diversity.

Transnational collaboration provided a unique opportunity for the Portuguese researchers to access SME 's in all partnership countries and interview business owners "in situ" resulting in powerful case studies on diversity in practice. This resulted in the first European study of this kind detailing Benchmarking approaches focused on diversity.

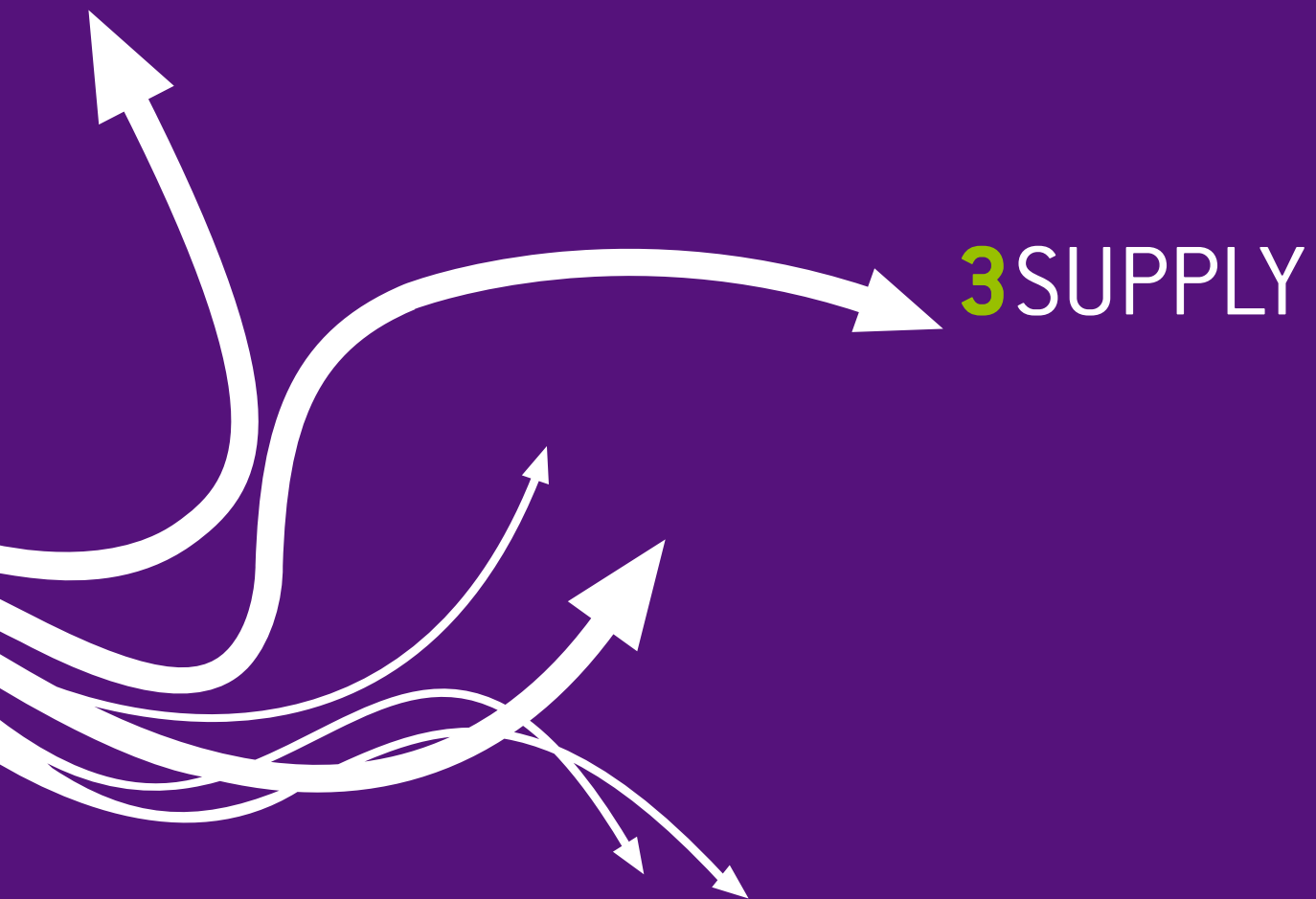
The Spanish research was carried out in order to construct a CSR mediator profile, defining which core competences would be required by the six countries represented, for working in CSR (see Chapter y).

The transnational study was carried out through collaboration between all six countries to administer a questionnaire about CSR devised by the Spanish to as many companies as possible. This was translated into English and all countries apart from Spain administered it in English. The questionnaire covered questions exploring what CSR means to different professionals, what skill set would be needed to work effectively within it, plus associated analysis of where a CSR related role would be best placed within a company to integrate the resulting profile into practice. Whilst the number of companies consulted varied from country to country, the findings of the study indicated that a CSR mediator could have a role within, in general, human resources or in marketing. Other conclusions reached demonstrated that a different approach may be to site a CSR mediator within an agency external to the company, offering CSR expertise as part of a range of consultancy and support functions. The particular benefits of carrying out the research involving all partners allowed for a wide range of perspectives on the issue to be gathered together, the resulting mediator profile is now being used to inform training for employers being put together by Valencia University.

In addition to research carried out across the partnership, mobility exchange visits enabled all partners to experience different approaches and practices relating to the integration of disadvantaged groups into the labour market.

The Responsibility for Change partnership approached transnational exchange visits from the perspective of impact on the development of visiting countries work and potential for international collaboration in the longer term. This meant that some visits were to companies and to host partner organisations that were outside of the host core development partnership. For example, the Portuguese partners were particularly interested in meeting people from a University perspective in the UK, so the English set up links with Queen Mary and Westfield College, University of London. This has resulted in continued collaboration between Coimbra University and Queen Mary and Westfield College, both in terms of CSR development as part of the Portuguese "ResponseAbility – Investing in Diversity" Development Partnership, but also with a view to longer term collaboration between the Universities.

Organised tailor made visits also allowed the Portuguese to visit companies that had assisted with the CSR Benchmarking exercise. This has enabled companies visited be presented as case studies in the write-up of the research. This focus on the national perspective in each of the countries offers clear insight into the national knowledge and practices on CSR in the SME 's represented.



INTRODUCTION

The three sub-chapters of this chapter comprise a description of five of the six projects involved in the “Responsibility for change” partnership, focusing on the activities developed for the labour supply side. The common aim of the five development partnerships was to equip disadvantaged groups (immigrants and refugees, people with disabilities, unemployed, women, etc), with skills and competences to access employment opportunities and/or to transfer empowerment with the help of elaborate guidance and career counseling programmes.

Each project created and developed its own tools and activities in order to reach the goal of enhancing the employability of these target groups and supporting their labour market insertion.

Their choice depended mainly on the labour market condition in their country, on the target group of each project, and also on the level of integration acceptance that specific target group had already achieved in the national community.

The basic idea followed by each project was to assure a more efficient way to a stable inclusion in the labour market.

Each sub-chapter takes into account and explains a specific part of the single projects, i.e. the guidance and career counseling activities, the career progression supporting activities and the brokerage service.

These three sections coincide with the three steps that “Responsibility for change” projects identified as necessary in any strategy aiming at a better labour market integration of disadvantaged people.

The guidance and career counseling described aim at raising the awareness of the beneficiaries, regarding their personal,

educational and professional competences. The activities described under the career progression section have the objective of equipping beneficiaries with new competences and/or refreshing their competences through training courses and internships, in order to allow them to adapt to the demand of the labour market.

The final step is placing the beneficiaries in jobs. Only four projects developed a strategy of job searching and job placing for their beneficiaries, with results depending on the characteristics of the local industry and on the specificities of each project.

Each project had an individual and innovative approach to this three-step strategy. The Danish project tackled the issue of high-skilled immigrants and their placement in jobs at higher level.

It created an original competence toolbox that allows a better understanding of their competences and gives them a better knowledge of themselves, hence enhancing their opportunity for a better job.

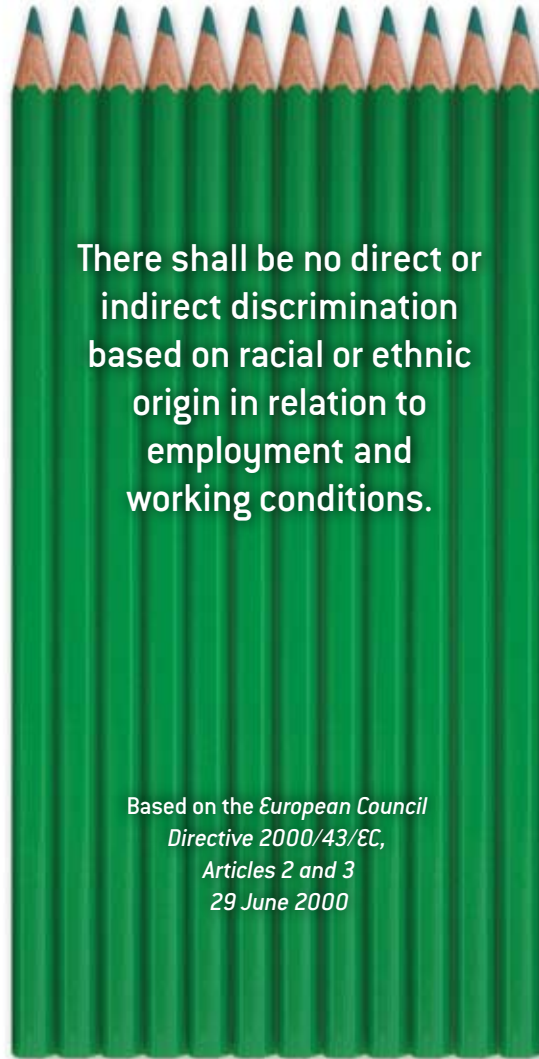
Italy created a special structure (the ILEX Agency) that was for more than a year the only reference point in Sardinia for

immigrants looking for a job. The Agency mainly dealt with the domiciliary care sector, but it also promoted professional training opportunities and job placements in other sectors, everything following a guidance programme of assessment of competences.

The “Fresh futures in Financial Services” DP developed specific training pathways and promoted job placements in the financial sector for disadvantaged groups (immigrants and women) living in one of the most deprived boroughs in London.

The “Responsibility” development partnership provides a service of assessment of job skills and abilities and identifies the kind of work to look for, a 4 year training programme and suitable job placements for people with disabilities.

The “Equal Highway” development partnership promoted innovative guidance modules and self-help tools, concentrating on the empowerment of disadvantaged groups with the support of professional advisors and expert career counsellors.



There shall be no direct or
indirect discrimination
based on racial or ethnic
origin in relation to
employment and
working conditions.

*Based on the European Council
Directive 2000/43/EC,
Articles 2 and 3
29 June 2000*





In 2005, graduated
immigrants in Europe had
a lower employment rate (67%)
than Europeans with
secondary education (69%).

Employment in Europe 2006

> THE DANISH PROJECT

The main objectives in the CTK project has been to give immigrants a higher education from their country of origin a better chance to get a job as equal to their competences as possible. This has been done, by offering them a number of tools, which give a better knowledge of the value of their competences in a Danish Labour market context.

Guidance and career path

The objective of this part of the project has been to get a general knowledge of the target group and their needs for guidance to help them get in the right direction on their way to an academically labour market.

In the CTK project each career councilor first invites the beneficiary to a personal individual interview. On basis of the interview the beneficiary gets access to the toolbox.

They are at the same time offered a course in labour market knowledge and a course in how to make a CV.

These career guidance initiatives are structured according to the following objectives:

- > To get better knowledge of the individual beneficiary.
- > To decide which tools from the CTK to offer (what is relevant).
- > To give the beneficiary the feeling that it is possible to get a relevant job.

The guidance was made directly by a professional. Each counselor made an individual agreement with the beneficiary (by phone or by mail or when the beneficiary was arrived at the community office). A meeting was set up and the interview could take place.

The outcome of the process has been quite successful. We have had contact with 70 beneficiaries with degrees from their home country – shared between the three communities we work with – the first 45 recruited have been through the labour market course and the CV-course. The rest have been offered the individual tools from the kit. Moreover, we have produced a guide, which the career counselors can use in their counseling about labour market knowledge for highly educated people, and a manual containing ideas and examples showing how to make a CV in a Danish labour market context.

> THE ITALIAN PROJECT

Guidance service of the ILEX Agency

The Equal ILEX project counts, among its activities targeted at immigrant citizens, a guidance path called “Personal Balance”. The main goal of this path is to raise individuals’ awareness of their own personal resources and potential, in order to develop a personal project for their professional future.

The idea behind this initiative is linked to the fact that, most of the times; jobs for immigrants inserted into the labour market and lowly skilled.

Usually the immigrants undertake tasks that have nothing to do with their education path or the professional experiences gained in the country of origin. In addition, the workers themselves tend to ask for jobs according to established stereotypes: women ask for jobs related to the domiciliary assistance and care, men for jobs in the farming field.

In order to guarantee a correct labour insertion, we believe it is of utmost importance to know immigrants better, to listen to their stories and their experiences, and give the necessary support for a better knowledge of the territory and the opportunities it can offer.

The guidance service is based on the following elements:

- (i) It is a path strongly centred on individuals, which intends to promote workers' empowerment and make them aware of their personal resources.

- (ii) It favours the review of all the experiences previously acquired, on a professional and extra-professional level.
- (iii) It allows the operator to help the immigrants in the analysis of their skills and interests, and support them in the development of their personal goals.

For this reason, the guidance action seems to be particularly useful for the empowerment of immigrant workers, who are often cut out of the labour market due to the lack of measures favouring their insertion.

The Personal Balance phase developed within the ILEX Agency follows the hosting one and it consists of:

- ➔ 1. Analysis of the personal story, either educational or professional, aimed at stimulating self evaluation and gathering data regarding the user in an objective way.
- ➔ 2. Analysis of motivations, resources and personal and professional competences, in order to draw up the user's personal profile.
- ➔ 3. Evaluation of the knowledge of the territorial context and the local labour market.
- ➔ 4. Support for the drawing up of the curriculum vitae.
- ➔ 5. Development of an individual plan to define the personal goals.

Within the guidance path the operators realistically assess the potentials and the desire of change of the immigrant, and set the different steps for the development and the implementation of the personal and professional projects.

In order to do so, the guidance path tries to point out the basic competences of the user: language knowledge, computer literacy, workers' rights and duties; overarching competences such as flexibility, problem solving capacity, undertaking responsibilities (work groups, adaptability, stress management, etc.); personal resources: kindness, willingness to good relations and mediation, organisational capacities.

Personal Balance phases

The first phase is that of *information, the drawing up of the balance pact and the creation of a relation based on trust between the guidance operator and the immigrant worker.*

> It is a very important part since it sets the mutual commitments and the expectations, regarding the results of the guidance path.

> During this phase the method used is that of a personal interview between the worker and the operator.

The second phase *represents the longest and most interesting part of the whole process.*

> It is based on the analysis of motivations, interests and professional abilities, and the assessment of the training and educational experiences.

> Individual one-to-one interviews alternate with group work led by the psychologist, who acts in close cooperation with the guidance operator.

In the third phase *we have a deep examination of all information gathered during the preceding phases, an analysis of the different factors favouring or interfering with the personal project, a definition of the steps and the strategies needed for its implementation.*

> It consists of the processing of data and the planning of times and strategies aimed at implementing the personal project.

> It is the final phase, when the worker participating in the guidance activity becomes the main actor of the personal path, and the operator stimulates the planning skills, evaluates information, and helps the worker to draw up the personal project.

More than two thirds of the people, who have started up the guidance path, have concluded it or are going to conclude it. Most of the people who left the guidance path before conclusion, did so because they found a Working placement in the meantime, or needed to find one immediately.

> THE LITHUANIAN PROJECT

Main objective of the socialization in the project EQUAL HIGHWAY: Development Partnership Klaipėda-Vilnius.

The purpose of socialization segment programs is to motivate unemployed people to look for a job and develop social competences which are necessary for the labour market. Programmes were also customised to the needs of the representatives of the target groups. Recommendations for modification for the programmes to other socially excluded target groups are developed thus making possible to use programmes in different institutions and for different target groups after the project finishes.

The socialisation stage is important for specific client groups that we work with. In this stage clients learn to understand their motivation, needs, strengths and barriers, gaining a wide range of social and individual competences before commencing the job search process and progressing into the actual workplace.

Four target groups were involved in the project:

- Women
- Long term unemployed people
- Ethnic minorities
- Older workers

Four socialisation and empowerment programmes are developed, tested and validated:

- > Positive self-assessment and active job search skills using art therapy methodology, 80 hours.
- > Personal and social competences development using outdoor and experiential learning methodology, 80 hours.
- > Development of the social skills necessary for integration into the labour market, 80 hours.
- > Work skills development using group activities and group therapy, 80 hours.

Client needs were analysed in the individual meetings. Then clients are recommended to join one of programmes. Recommendations are made according to their interests, motivation and preferred learning style.

A big emphasis on group dynamics and social skills development in the groups was made. The following was discussed in the group meetings:

- > The importance of knowledge of one's capabilities for career, recognition of strengths and weaknesses.
- > Clarification and identification of the needs, options and desires in professional career.
- > Analysis and evaluation of skills, personality and abilities.
- > Group work, collaboration and recognition of one's own role in a group.
- > Cooperation in solving conflicts
- > Transmission of information and barriers to communication.
- > Understanding of the current situation in the labour market, possibilities for vocational education and retraining.
- > Job search methods, CV and covering letter writing.
- > Individual profiles empower to propose individualised programmes.
- > Successful self introduction to employers.

Outcomes

4 programmes based on different methodologies were developed, tested and validated. Recommendations for dissemination and use for other target groups were made.

1. 680 representatives of four target groups participated in the research. The results of the research were used when developing the socialisation and empowerment programmes. The research of the representative groups made possible to develop programmes adapted to their needs which are both similar and different in certain parts, especially concerning the motivation to work.

2. 250 people finished four socialisation and empowerment programmes. All four programmes were focused on developing the same skills: understanding and expressing one's own potential in the labour market and strengthening personal and social skills necessary to communicate and work more effectively. The uniqueness of the programmes lies in different methodologies used in them: art therapy for more reflective and artistic people, outdoor and experiential learning for more active people and those who have greater learning and behaviour difficulties, group work for those who are ready to talk and verbalise the situation. 90 percent of participants enrolled in the programme finished it. In the short term 30 percent of participants found the job. Long term (in the period of more six months) results are still to be followed up. 80 percent of participants who finishes the programmes say they have better understanding of their opportunities in today labour market and higher self-esteem to use those opportunities.

3. 40 staff members of the partnership participated in the training how to use different methodologies. This ensures that different programmes and methodologies can be used in all the partner institutions and national wide.

4. All four socialisation and empowerment programmes can be adapted to the needs of other socially excluded groups than covered in the project. As an outcome of the project certain questions are formulated that ought to be discussed and modified during the adaptation period: common motivation to work, legal and individual environment that encourages or constrains from working, etc.

5. Using successful networking is one of the key outcomes for the project. Having 17 partners from different sectors: governmental and counselling institutions, private companies, non-governmental organisations and social centers. Partnership made it possible to discuss and find solution that are the most user friendly and closest to the people programmes are targeted at.

> THE PORTUGUESE PROJECT

The NRC-APPC Disability Careers Service works in order to give, assessment guidance and support in order to provide an opportunity to attend a professional training course.

Because we are working with disabled people we must pay attention to the individual condition of each beneficiary, not only their academic competences and individual motivations but also their motor or/and intellectual handicaps.

The guidance and assessment is made with recourse to an interview made by the Assessment Team - Psychologist, Social Worker Physiotherapist an Occupational Therapist, and also with recourse to different evaluation tools.

After this initial phase the student is advised about the training opportunities of NRCAPPC. The student is given the opportunity to take one training course option (from 15 courses).

Professional training arises in response to the needs of people with disabilities, facilitating access to the normal labour market through the acquisition of knowledge, attitudes and technical and professional skills that will enable them to obtain social and professional integration. Professional training is for people over 14 years old, who have exhausted all the possibilities in regular school and need to learn a new profession.

This service aims at developing trainee's abilities, acquiring knowledge, attitudes and competences, creating conditions of autonomy, independence and sociability, arousing young people's awareness in the values underlying the improvement of the quality of life, and facilitating the insertion of trainees into a professional activity, in the regular labour market.

Courses have four year duration, the first three years being in context of simulated practice and the final year work experience practice, through an agreement established with an enterprise.

Practical training is complemented with social, cultural, scientific and technological training, functional rehabilitation, information and communication technology and environmental sensitisation.

Characterising people with disabilities especially at an intellectual and at a muscular skeletal level, necessitates the constitution of teams formed by experts in the behavioral area, psychological and mental health such as psychologists, as well as physiotherapists focused on the prevention and treatment of functional kinetic disorders in organs and systems of the human body. But also by occupational therapists whose orientation for the performance and human occupation is crucial in the assessment of physical functions, in the identification of areas of (dys) function and involvement of the person

in a structured rehabilitation programme and gradual independent functional involvement in significant activities.

An “Individual Training Programme” is created for each student and revised four months in order to reach realistic aims. With the participation of all the interested parties, the beneficiary acquires professional and social competences, which allow him to get a job.

> THE BRITISH PROJECT

Guidance service provided by Fresh Futures IAG project

Fresh Futures Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) service is a unique service available to advise and assist individuals interested in working in the financial services industry. Our aim is to demystify the Financial Services industry, raising awareness of the diverse careers that exist within it, and provide detailed information relating to specialist sector areas. The service provides impartial advice relating to careers and routes into this industry sector, and the steps individuals need to take to achieve their career ambitions. Service users will have their abilities, skills and experience assessed to gauge what level they are at, which enables the adviser and client to agree on actions they need to take to achieve their career objectives. The service is available to anyone who lives in East London and between the ages of 16-65, with consideration being given to extend the service to students at age 14.

In East London, particularly in the borough of Tower Hamlets, there is a high population of Ethnic Minority communities. In fact, Tower Hamlets has one of the most diverse local economies in the UK. A third of the population is Bangladeshi, and there are big Caribbean, Chinese, Somali, Vietnamese, Indian and Pakistani communities in the borough as well. Bangla-

deshis in Britain are a largely young population, heavily concentrated in London's inner boroughs and experience a range of socio-economic problems. The third generation of Tower Hamlets' Bangladeshi population – those 'born and bred' in the area - constitutes approximately half of the community. Bangladeshis, both here and in other parts of Britain, experience disproportionately high rates of unemployment, overcrowding, and certain types of health problems. For example, Bangladeshi men suffer from twice the national average for type two diabetes at 8% (Annual report from the Director of Public Health, Newham, 2007). Symbols of wealth and prosperity like Canary Wharf overlook areas of real social and economic deprivation. Tower Hamlets have a rapidly expanding population – with the second highest proportion of Under 16s in London at just fewer than 30%, and with more than 70% of those belonging to ethnic minority groups. The cosmopolitan nature of our population contributes to the rich cultural diversity of life within the borough.

The last three decades have seen massive structural change - made necessary after the rapid decline in the traditional dock-related industries that dominated the area for hundreds of years. Radical restructuring of these industries, plus the emergence of a broader mix of trades - including a thriving new finance and business district at Canary Wharf - have turned the local economy around. Derelict buildings and vacant land have been transformed into Wharfside apartments and some of the most modern office complexes in London. The regeneration of Tower Hamlets is a continuous process. The massive change experienced in recent years, characterized by major redevelopments drawn by significant inward investment is likely to continue for the next decade. In particular, the increasing numbers of large financial organizations situated in the Canary Wharf area have increased opportunities for local people to access jobs in finan-

cial and related business services (FRBS). It is crucial that the economic benefits of this inward investment are effectively harnessed and made to work for the people of Tower Hamlets - to give them a real share in the prosperity of the future.

The situation has improved as local people's aspirations have risen; however, more still needs to be done. It is not that there are no jobs, or a lack of opportunities, but poverty of attainment. The FSSC predicted in 2006 that London would account for over 5,000 new jobs in Financial Services to 2010. However, many local people have low aspirations, and they don't think they will get those jobs. There is a mismatch between the skills employers require and those possessed by local communities and the qualifications needed are NVQ Level 3 and above. The majority have NVQ Level 2 or below. Managers at some large companies have explained how they have to look further field. High finance related skills are required for senior positions such as investment bankers and risk analysts, and these are the skills local people have not yet acquired. Some of these jobs have been filled by local people, but not as many as there should be, particularly in relation to the high levels of opportunities and potential. However, Tower Hamlets does have the labour force to fill front line staff in these financial companies, particularly in an administrative and customer service roles

The uniqueness of the IAG service is that not only is it designed to help local people into work, but it helps people to understand the industry and the focus on range of jobs they can do. There are many people in Tower Hamlets, in fact the UK, who don't understand what financial services is and feel apprehensive about working in this sector. The fear comes from not understanding the jargon and different areas of services which are words not used in every day life.

This project through IAG can help people to overcome these barriers and help them overcome any fears they have about the sector. Our goal is to encourage individuals to focus on their transferable skills and look at ways in which they can use and develop them to find a career progressive role, where pay packets are comparably better.

The IAG unit plays an effective role as it compliments regional and local initiatives designed to reduce unemployment and get local people into work. In particular the service plays a leading role in advising on pathways to employment and overseeing a wide range of training and skills development initiatives delivered at Tower Hamlets College to ensure that they support the delivery of the borough's strategic objectives. This is a positive step in the regeneration of the borough through the Local Strategic Partnership. The benefits to the local community will be far reaching through the operation of this service. The IAG Unit is a fine example of how community initiatives can make a difference in creating awareness of 'opportunities of careers, training and employment for local people.

The approach in the unit to the delivery of IAG is client centered, providing the client with all the information they need to understand career paths in the various sectors of financial services. The information is tailored to suit individuals' needs, to ensure all our information is user-friendly and easy to understand. Details of how and what individuals need to do to in order meet their career objectives are carefully explained, particularly outlining the first steps they would need to take. The interviews allow the adviser to inform the clients of the range of options available to the individual, providing links to our in-house financial and employability courses. which help transferable skills, exploring progression routes and where they lead.

IAG interviews are conducted on a 1-2-1 basis, in a designated area, where both adviser and client are free from distractions. Initially we ascertain whether the service is appropriate for the individual, thus deciding if the interview can go ahead, or whether the individual needs to be signposted elsewhere. For clients interested in the service, interviews proceed to investigate and explore the individuals 'current situation', and 'what job they would like' to be doing. The adviser ensures the individual is able to give a full account of his/her previous history and what their ambitions are. Various interviewing techniques are used to uncover any information which may not have been discussed, yet relevant to decide a course of action. All discussions from the interview are recorded on an action plan, where the information is summarized to highlight the main discussion points. If the adviser identifies a need for numeracy or literacy skills, it will be suggested that the client takes a skills test and assessment to find out what level they are at. From the test results the adviser can suggest whether they need to improve their literacy skills, and the options available to them. For 'job ready' clients, we can offer referrals to industry recognized courses and qualifications in financial and related business services. We also offer a range of job preparation and employability courses covering interview and telephone techniques, letter writing, self presentation, attendance and punctuality. Help with CV's and application forms can be arranged, complemented with job search support and job search methodology. In addition, we provide detailed information and resources on many of the financial services companies in the City and Canary Wharf district, providing an overview of the company, the range of products and services they provide, and the type of person they are seeking to recruit.

Training related to the financial services sector includes finance courses such as Introduction to investment award [SII], a course for clients to learn about the corporate and banking sector. The course enables clients to develop and increase knowledge of the sector, how the markets operate as well as the terms and technicalities. This is one of our most popular courses, particularly as it gives the client an overview of the range of services the sector offers. We also offer CeFA – (Certificate for Financial Advisers) and CeMAP – (Certificate for Mortgage Advisers), and are planning to diversify into insurance specific qualifications. These courses relate to specific career routes individuals wish to take. In addition we provide bespoke employer led courses, specifically tailored to meet employer needs. These courses are carefully designed to increase the employability skills of the attendees, giving them a better chance of finding work in a specific organization or the sector.

Our clients are given the opportunity to be in control of their career paths, understanding the reasoning behind the decisions they make and the advantages and disadvantages of their choices. Our commitment to clients is to be impartial, but informative, providing structured guidance with various options to do with career routes into the industry. Clients recognize the professional approach we use, and the honesty shown by the advisers, so there are no false hopes for the client. We tell clients how realistic their career ambitions are, and provide a detailed action plan of how they can achieve their objectives.

Mentoring

Mentoring is well established in the UK and has been integral to the Fresh Futures in Financial Services programme.

Mentoring is a supportive relationship between two people, a mentor and a mentee, that is neither parental, nor pedagogical. In the context of the Fresh Futures in Financial Services project, many partners support the mentoring relationship, notably Tower Hamlets College, Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership and East London Business Alliance. THEBP and Tower Hamlets College have worked on a similar approach that links people in Financial Services business with students across the borough and at the College. The mentor and mentee meet each other usually once a month and discuss a range of issues and problems that allow the mentee to benefit from the experience of the mentor. Often this is with a particular work or study related focus, but sometimes it is more general. These relationships are best described by case studies.

➔ CASE STUDY: ABDI BAHDON, MENTEE

Tell me a little bit about yourself?

My name is Abdi and I am 18 years old. I am a College student studying A-levels in Psychology, Sociology and English Literature. Outside of college I am a poet and songwriter, which I use as another way of expressing my feelings. I also act and will soon be appearing in The Bill on ITV.

What were your main aims and reasons for joining the mentoring programme?

My aim was to meet new people who could bring me new ideas about the industry and the world of work. I can gain experience and also at the same time, they can learn from me and I can learn from them.

To what extent do you think that your aims have been met?

My mentor worked for Deloitte and he really did teach me a lot about the industry; how business works. He really gave me a good experience. He invited me once to his company where I met the office people, saw the environment, it was a big environment.

What have you learnt from being mentored?

My mentor taught me how to become independent, how to stand up on my two feet. How to look at life from a different angle and take every opportunity that comes my way, even if it is minor thing.

How do you think that you have benefited from being involved?

I think I have benefited in a very good way. Everything that I have done so far was kind of positive; it kind of made me grow up in a way.

How has your mentor helped you?

For example giving you advice and guidance etc? Please give examples.

My mentor helped me set out a timetable for me to revise and prepare for exams and was good at Maths, which he helped me [with], and I passed my exam. I appreciate what he did.

How would you describe your experiences of being mentored?

I think that the Mentoring Programme is a great idea, whoever came up with it. There are a lot of students in this College who really need that extra help, who need someone to talk to and someone to trust.

What have you enjoyed the most about being mentoring?

Meeting someone who works for a big company, who has already been through what I have been through and who has had different experiences in life is what I enjoyed the most.

What would you say to a prospective mentor?

They could maybe try and do a little research into the area of East London and the environment in inner London, sometimes called the ghetto or the struggle, as the students are from the inner city. So if they do some research into their background, it might help them to relate and understand each other, therefore they can be a bit more open and get on well. A mentor needs to be able to listen and allow the student to express their feelings.

What would you say to a prospective mentee?

If you think that you are struggling, or you are having any problems with your work, organisation, or you don't really have an idea what university you want to go to, I would advise you to get a mentor and talk to them. It would be a great help.

I think that having a mentor is not really hard work, but it takes commitment, for example if you say that you will meet on Friday, you need to be there because a mentor is a busy person who has a job.

What was your favourite session with your mentor, and why?

When my mentor and I were just talking about personal things, like relationships, I saw my mentor as a friend and not as a mentor. I was disappointed when he moved to another company and he could not continue it any more. However, I now have a new mentor.

How did the activities and conversations in your mentoring sessions change as the relationship developed?

The first session that we met, I just viewed him as a big authority, but as we met more and our relationship developed we became close friends, and we always spoke over the phone. We just became close friends really. He was a great help.

How many times did you meet?

When we started we used to meet twice a week, but then we increased it to once a week, every Friday for one hour. If I needed help I would just phone him and arrange to meet mid-week.

What did you learn as a mentee?

I learnt things from my mentor that I can take with me, and pass on to another student. I learnt how to be organised, how to prepare for exams, how to write a personal statement. We also went through university choices and I know that I want to do a degree in Sociology.

How long were your meetings?

One hour on Fridays and when the school was shut at holidays we would meet somewhere else for coffee and catch up. ■

➔ CASE STUDY: BELINDA LODGE, MENTOR

Tell me a little bit about yourself?

I am the Pro Bono Co-ordinator at Simmons and Simmons, and have been working here since 1994. I have been doing my current job since 1999. I organise the pro bono, community and charity work such as mentoring, legal advice work and charity fundraising for my firm. I have mentored three sets of students from Tower Hamlets College.

What were your personal and professional objectives for becoming a mentor?

To give advice to people that may need a bit of advice and encouragement. I thought that it would be interesting to meet teenagers, as I have teenage children myself; and to give something back.

With my position being the Pro Bono Co-ordinator, it is quite interesting for me to mentor myself, as in this way I understand what the other mentors will be doing.

To what extent do you feel these objectives have been met?

It is interesting to meet somebody who is not the kind of person that I would normally get to know. My last mentee was an 18 year old boy who told me that he does not really mix with people outside his community, so without the mentoring programme we would have never met.

I saw my last mentee on a monthly basis; it was interesting because he had a completely different life to mine. When we met and talked, we did so as if we were friends, which I think was quite good for both of us in a way.

What activities have you and your mentee taken part in?

I gave my last mentee a tour of the offices, and we have had one to one discussions. He also came in for a one week work experience placement, which I think he found interesting, and gained an idea of what the running of an office is like. Not everybody would like to come in for work experience; some mentees want to discuss other things with you.

In what ways do you think your mentee/s have benefited from mentoring?

My last mentee was very shy at the beginning but by the end he was not shy at all because he had grown in confidence. The first time we met, his hands were shaking, he could not do anything because he was so nervous, and by the end he was a lot more relaxed in an office environment. I think this experience would prepare a mentee for an interview or an office based job as it allows a mentee to get experience in a professional office environment.

In what ways do you think that you have benefited from mentoring?

I have a greater understanding of teenagers and what goes on at college, on a personal and professional level. I have learnt about a different life style, we spoke about college and what my mentee was doing at home and about his family as well. I have a better understanding of other people and another religion. This experience has broadened my mind.

How would you describe your experiences of being a mentor?

I have found it interesting, enjoyable, and rewarding. I don't think that I particularly helped him pass his A Levels, but I did feel that he got something out of coming in here.

It was rewarding to watch a mentee grow. I felt that the last time we met, he had a different understanding of office life than he would have had, if he had not joined the Mentoring Scheme.

What have you found particularly positive?

It's a good experience, and really is not much time out of my day to spend trying to help someone. Meeting my mentees for an hour a month is not much really.

My last mentee actually invited me to his brother's wedding. A previous mentee was more confident; I actually helped him with a class project. You get a different experience from each mentee that you meet which is why I find it interesting, you don't know who is going to come along next or in what way you can actually help them.

What advice would you give to a prospective mentor?

Go into it with your eyes open, you don't know what mentees are going to ask you, so you have to be ready. I think that it is good to ask mentees what you can do for them, it will make them think, and then the next time they are ready to ask you things. I think that you have to be prepared for whatever they are going to ask you.

What would you say to a prospective mentee?

Use this opportunity of talking to someone and ask questions, [and get] whatever advice you can. It's a good opportunity to come into somewhere like Simmons and Simmons, or any other office, and meet someone who has been working there, possibly get some work experience, see how a place runs and use that experience for your future.

What topics have worked best and why?

We spoke about his career. My mentee was most interested in his career path and we discussed the courses that he was doing at college, which degree courses he was looking at doing and which universities he was looking at joining. My mentee joined Queen Mary's University to do Business Studies.

What was the most successful activity that you completed with your mentee?

The work experience was very successful; apart from that we just had discussions.

What was the least successful activity and why?

At the start it is a bit more difficult, as mentees are generally quite nervous. It is easier as you get to know them better. After they have been to a few mentoring sessions the mentee gets to know you better and you can discuss things in at much deeper level.

How many times did you meet?

We met once a month, however my last mentee continued to meet with me after the programme had stopped.

How much in advance did you prepare you mentoring meetings?

I was sometimes asked to find out information for my mentees, and I always asked, 'Would you like me to find something out for you before we meet up again?' In the intermittent time between meetings I would find out about what had been requested and bring the answers to the next meeting. I think that this worked well.

What resources did you use?

All I needed my computers.

What format did you your meetings take?

The meetings mainly took the form of a discussion.

Did you set your mentee work to do between meetings? If so how successful was this?

I always asked my mentee if there was anything that he would like me to find out, so actually I was set work by my mentee. I suggested that he email me if he wants any other information, which he did.

How long were your meetings?

Our meetings were one hour long. We booked a meeting room so we could not overrun by more than ten minutes, as the room would be needed by someone else.

What did you learn as a mentor?

I learnt to communicate better with teenagers. I believe that you have to view each person as an individual.

I listened to what they want, rather than imposing [my own] view on them. I think that it is good to just bounce ideas off them and that is what I tried to do. At a young age you are open to suggestions, but may lack direction, so I tried to give some suggestions, which they could think about and take on board or leave.

How would the mentoring programme help individuals into a career path in your sector?

I don't know if the mentoring programme would help, although I had a lawyer and a trainee lawyer who participated in a mentoring programme at a local school, they changed their path and went to become teachers. Someone has actually left Simmons and Simmons to do her teaching PCGE.

Additional comments

Mentoring may open the eyes of both mentors and mentees to what they else they can do. ■

SUPPORTING PROGRESSION

This sub-chapter describes the activities and tools developed by each partner in order to support their beneficiaries until they achieve full integration into the labour market. The need to support progression of our clients becomes obvious when one thinks of the difficulties in placing every of our beneficiaries into jobs.

It is quite difficult indeed to find jobs for everybody and this happens for various reasons. One of the reasons is that our beneficiaries must acquire more social and professional competences and more labour market awareness in order to become competitive in the labour market. Another reason is that many of our beneficiaries' competences are not suitable to the requirements of the industry of the host society; either because their competences do not correspond to those needed on the local labour market, or they are out of date. On the other hand, employers are not always acquainted with the competences of disadvantaged people. They often think they are just unsuitable to their industry. Our experience showed that in many cases it is easier for the employers to offer a job opportunity to a disabled person or to an immigrant after an evaluation period such as an internship.

The differences between the six national projects are minimal and they are most of the times limited to procedure employed. They all pursued a common objective, which was to transfer empowerment to the beneficiaries in conjunction with the support from the advisors and other experts that worked for each national project.

At the heart of supporting progression service are training courses and internships. Advisors and job coaches are also entrusted with an important role. They help the beneficiaries when taking their first steps into the labour market by pro-

viding them with professional advice of where to search for a job, how to write a CV and/or a letter of motivation, how to fill in an application form etc. As for differences, the Danish project developed its own testing toolbox so that the beneficiary gains a better knowledge of his or hers own professional and personal competences in a Danish labour market context and of course to make the beneficiary better able to search for a job within their area of competence. The Italian project used a cultural mediation service in order to smooth the social and labour integration of its non-EU beneficiaries, especially when they come from cultures that are very different from the host society and they are used to different job search approaches. The Fresh Futures Information Advice and Guidance service's uniqueness was that it assisted individuals interested in working in the financial services industry. The service provided advice on careers and routes into this sector, and supported the individuals in taking the necessary steps to achieve their career ambitions.

> THE DANISH PROJECT

The objective of this part of the project has been to give the individual beneficiary a better knowledge of the professional and personal competences in a Danish labour market context.

After the initial career guidance the beneficiaries start on a two day labour market course to get a better knowledge of the Danish Labour market model – in terms on trade unions employer' organisations, flexicurity models (combining flexibility for employer's with security for employees) etc. One to two months after this course, they start on a 3 module CV-course, 1 day each module. Here they are introduced to the Danish

way of writing a CV and job applications. On the last module they practice job interviews with help from professional recruitment personnel.

After the two courses working in groups on 15 –20 people, the beneficiaries progress to more individual support. They are offered the four tools in the toolbox, knowing that not all of them need all tools. The four tools are as you can see below:

- > An individual test in personal and social competences with individual feed back from a certified counselor. The test takes around two hours to get through and two hours to give feed back on.
- > An individual language test, where the Danish as well as the English spoken and written language can be tested. The career counselor also does this.
- > An IT-test – to show the level in using general IT-tools such as Office and the internet. The test is computer based and can be run on any stand-alone computer anywhere.
- > A tool, which gives a professional snapshot on theoretical skills as well as on skills acquired through work experience. The theoretical snap shot takes place on a relevant educational institution. The snap shot based on work experience takes place in relevant companies where HR-consultants as well as professional employees in the relevant area assist.

Finally the beneficiary and the career counselor together find a relevant company where an internship can be arranged. The duration of the internship varies from company to company.

The project has also made good results in working together with JCI (Junior Chambers International) setting up Mentor Network to support the single beneficiary in his or hers choice of career path giving good advice about attitudes and behavior, and expectations in a Danish company.

All these initiatives are carried out mainly to secure, that the individual gets a better knowledge of his or hers own professional and personal competences in a Danish labour market context and of course to make the beneficiary better able to search for a job with in their area of competence. Last but not least our experience is that this is the best way to help the beneficiaries develop a network in Denmark and to get in contact with Danish companies.

Outcomes

45 out of 70 beneficiaries got through the labour market and CV courses, due to the fact that it was only possible to finance these courses at the beginning of the project. As we have been working with ongoing admission to the project the group of beneficiaries who enrolled later on didn't get the offer of these courses.

Evaluation up to now shows that the beneficiaries have been very satisfied with the courses, both those focused on labour market knowledge and on CV-writing. All of them think that they have improved the quality of their CVs

Remarks from the evaluation of the other tools:

- > GARUDA (Danish HR software) (all 70 beneficiaries took this test, on personal competences): the beneficiaries feel that they have got a better knowledge of their social and informal competences – and the career counselors have improved their interview technique.

- > The IT-test (15 –20 beneficiaries took this test): Some of the beneficiaries became aware that their IT-skills were out of date. This led to supplementary courses on Word and Excel.
- > Language test: (15 –20 beneficiaries took this test): Just like the IT-test some chose to add new courses. It is important to note that some got a confirmation of their language skills, which they thought they did not have.

Snap shots: (10 used the theoretical snapshot 15 and the experience snapshot) these gave both the beneficiary as well as the potential employer the opportunity to find out the level of his or her professional competences compared to the requirements of the Danish labour market.

Some figures

The project has been running in three communities (Copenhagen, Aarhus and Vejle)

Participants:

- > 17 career counselors from the three communities
- > 3 HR-consultants from private companies
- > 70 Immigrants through the CTK
- > 40 into work within their relevant area of competences
- > 6 started additional education
- > 2 started their own company
- > 2 in internships
- > 2 left to have children
- > 12 still searching for internship
- > 6 lost contact

Professional Snapshot 1: Engineering College in Copenhagen

The basis for the interview was a CV, an assessment of foreign educational qualifications from CIRIUS and a copy of a Diploma front page from the Gh. Asachi Polytechnic Institute, Iasi Faculty of Mechanics. A Danish Test level 3 certificate was not attached but was mentioned in the CV.

Education

According to CIRIUS, the Polytechnic Institute Gh. Saachi, Iasi Faculty of Mechanics, is an officially approved educational institution. The education, which is scheduled for five years, was completed in 1990. The admission requirements were 12 years of schooling. CIRIUS estimates that the level of education is comparable to a Danish degree in civil engineering specialized in machinery.

According to the Engineering College, the education is not directly compatible with the Danish civil engineering education. According to the Engineering College and international references as found in “The National Recognition Information Centre for the United Kingdom” the education corresponds to a Bachelor in engineering rather than to a complete degree in civil engineering.

No continuing education was undertaken after completed education.

Labour Market Experience

Having completed the education, the Person worked in several kinds of business. The tasks primarily concentrated on production sequence coordination and quality control. The Person has worked with ISO 9001-2000 certification of companies. In addition, the Person has worked with guidance in and interpretation of rules and with complaints related to privatization and the financial re-structuring in Homeland.

The Engineering College considers that the jobs after completed education and the competences gained do not directly fall within the normal working fields of a mechanical engineer. The Engineering College estimates that the tasks were primarily related to those of a production engineer.

Experiences in Denmark

From the arrival in Denmark in 2000 and until 2005 the Person has been employed for shorter periods only and primarily within care and nursing. After the arrival in Denmark, the Person has focussed on family life. The Person has had two babies.

The Person has a temporary job in a Danish engineering company and expects employment as a trainee in June 2006. A driver's licence is required. In connection with the temporary job, the Person has completed an intensive Autocad course. In the company the Person works with engineering drawing using Autocad.

The employer has expressed a wish for a qualification upgrade in operating systems such as PLC systems and industrial automation solutions.

The Person finds the present field of activities in the company interesting and would like to improve the skills in this field.

Draft Action Plan

An action plan should focus on maintenance and development of educational qualifications and on the competences gained on the labour market in Homeland. An action plan should focus on a professionally and technically well defined field of activities such as engineering drawing/Autocad or operating systems. The Person should identify which focus to choose. The Person needs help for such identification.

An action plan should take into account that qualifications related to technique and natural science are rapidly outdated.

A qualification upgrade could take place at the Engineering College in Horsens or at the Vitus Bering Herning as vocational training or single subject studies within the normal educational system [Open Education].

The above summary of the guidance interview and subsequent evaluation is made on the basis of written material and a follow-up interview. No further information was procured.

Professional Snapshot 2: Roskilde University

Two interviews were held at Roskilde University. The interview on 18 April 2006 lasted approx. three hours and took place between the Person and Karen-Margrete Frederiksen, Senior Master in Danish as a second language at the Institute for Language and Culture. Participating in the interview on 12 June 2006 were Senior Master in English Therese Hauge, the Person, and Karen-Margrethe Frederiksen, Senior Master in Danish as a second language. This interview lasted approx. two hours.

The Person, born in December 1974 in Homeland, came to Denmark in 2004 to join her husband within the family reunification scheme.

Basis for the Interviews

- > CV
- > Assessment of foreign educational qualifications from CIRIUS
- > Diploma from a Homeland university translated into English. The translation is certified by the notary public in Homeland.
- > Diploma Supplement, mark sheets translated into English.
- > Danish Test level 3 certificate forwarded later, Study Test in Danish as a second language (Reading 8, written presentation 8, listening 10, oral communication 11).

Interview Language

The first, introductory interview was conducted in Danish. The second interview, which went in-depth with the professional content of the education, including English language skills, was conducted in English, the Person's major subject. During both interviews the conversation was fluent and easy.

Education

According to the Diploma the Person has passed: "Complete Course of Homeland's pedagogical linguistic university in speciality English and German languages, Bachelor of Arts".

Duration and completion of the Education

Five years. Completed summer 1996.

The Education

The education comprised the following subjects:

- > English (phonetics, grammar and translation). Five years
- > German (phonetics, grammar and translation). Two years
- > Italian (phonetics, grammar and translation). The Person took Italian as an extra, optional subject. The content is comparable to that of German.
- > Psychology
- > Pedagogy
- > Foreign language educational methods
- > Technical teaching aids
- > History of British and American literature
- > Language history
- > Knowledge of literature and society in English-speaking countries
- > A variety of subjects, primarily: philosophy, history, economy and courses in Homeland language and literature

According to the Diploma Supplement, the Person has passed four officially approved exams:

- 1 > English language skills
- 2 > English theory
- 3 > German
- 4 > Teaching methods and pedagogy

In addition a thesis on English literature, cf. below.

All examinations, including the thesis, were evaluated as: Excellent.

The education also comprised

Six months of teaching practice in English, in a primary school as well as at upper secondary school level. Forms of examination, reporting on teaching planning and progress etc. via project writing.

The education finally comprised

Thesis: The thesis dealt with a literary text. Volume approx. 70 pages, one term. Language: English. Form of examination: Statement.

CIRIUS assesses the education to equal the level of a Danish BA in humanities.

After the interviews at Roskilde University the evaluation concludes that the Person's education should rather be compared to that of a vocational bachelor with English as main subject (first foreign language) and German (second foreign language) and Italian (third foreign language) since the education includes a number of subjects, primarily: philosophy, history, economics and courses in Homeland's language and culture, which are not included in a BA which deals with one subject only. The BA in question and the professional bachelor education are not directly comparable and consequently reference is made to the above description of the actual contents of the education.

Having completed the education, the Person has gained vast experience in Homeland teaching English and Italian to both adults and children at university level and in the primary school. After her arrival in Denmark, the Person has given lessons in Russian to adults.

The Person's CV draws a clear red line of competence development, which has probably contributed to the fact that since May 2006 she has been employed as a university graduate in the Ministry of Education dealing with consultancy tasks such as translations, correspondence, integration and problems related to the educational environment.

The Person's goal for the future is to continue working with languages, communication, presentation and management, preferably in an international context.

> THE ITALIAN PROJECT

The experience of the ILEX project with foreigners suggested that giving welcoming to immigrants and providing them with information on work opportunities in the territory are not enough to achieve real integration in the labour market. The immigrant workers need further awareness and support, not only to find a job, but also to find a stable and suitable job for their skills and qualifications. Besides, the first impact with the local labour market can create confusion on a psychological and professional level, since the new working context is often very different from the one the immigrants come from. Work insertion should be carried out in a gradual manner. Therefore, tutoring actions should be planned as regular interventions through the use of key tools.

The ILEX project also took into account the fact that the local labour market does not always offer opportunities for an immediate job placement. In order to avoid that our beneficiaries being excluded from the labour market while they are looking for a job, it is necessary to support them with tools and actions contributing to improving their chances of a future job place-

ment. The objective that we aimed at was, on one hand, to permit our beneficiaries to keep in touch with the labour market by taking training and refresher courses. On the other hand, our beneficiaries had the opportunity to get acquainted with the business realities, that they had not had the possibility to know before, our brokerage service also had more success in the home care sector.

In order to achieve these objectives, the ILEX project developed three key tools: a training course, internships and linguistic and cultural mediation, put into practice by the operative body of the project, which was the ILEX Agency.

The training course was conceived for the home care sector, as the initial ILEX project was limited to the job placement of caregivers (“badanti”), more often subject to exploitation and threatened with job loss. The course aimed at improving the competences of our female beneficiaries in the field of home care. It consisted of 150 class hours. The lessons took place on Thursday afternoons or on Sunday mornings according to the students’ availability. The subjects taught were Italian culture, rights and immigration laws, information technology, first aid, elderly care, Italian cuisine, communication, Italian language, communication and personal interaction. 14 of ILEX’s beneficiaries successfully completed the course.

Internships are provided for by Italian law and aim at acquiring specific abilities by means of a training period on job placement and at improving the professional competences of people at risk of exclusion from the labour market. The objective of promoting internships within the ILEX project was to allow those of our beneficiaries that have never worked before to have first contact with the business realities and,

on the other hand, to permit those who have lost the job to keep in touch with the labour market in order to avoid exclusion associated with long unemployment. Italian law does not provide for an obligatory reimbursement for the internship period, leaving it to the employer’s discretion. Nonetheless ILEX promoted the internships with a financial aid for the interns, paid for the project itself. This is because most of our beneficiaries did not have sufficient economic resources to support themselves and they preferred a job to an internship, especially when the internship lasted six months. Moreover, many of our beneficiaries did not have any family in Sardinia that could finance them for a period of 6 months. Therefore, it would have been really difficult to convince people to accept an unpaid internship.

Internships were promoted by the ILEX Agency in cooperation with the Regional Labour Agency (public body responsible for promoting professional training activities in Sardinia). Individual training projects were drawn up for each intern, specifying the objectives of the internship and the competences and abilities to acquire during this period. The individual training projects were signed by the intern and the business’s representative. The intern’s training was supervised by a tutor that was also an employee of the host organisation.

Our market labour expert contacted local businesses and business’ unions in order to propose that they host our internships. We selected the candidates for the interview with the host organisation according to their competences and personal abilities. Younger candidates were preferred because it is more difficult for them to find a job, considering their lack of experience.

The ILEX project started 10 internships that last till the end of July 2007. By the time we edited the *Good Practice Guide*, it has not been possible to evaluate the integration process of the interns in the host organisation, although our hope is that at least some of them will be hired at the end of the training period.

Linguistic and cultural mediation was another tool the ILEX project applied either during the first interview and guidance or after the job placement of our beneficiaries. With regard to the subject of this section, cultural mediation worked as a conflict resolution tool, aiming at improving communication and solving misunderstanding that might rise between employer and employee because of different attitudes and social and cultural peculiarities. It is also a service aimed at giving a more “compassionate” aspect to the whole tutoring process, contributing to increase a sense of confidence in the system and diminish the fear of the other people. It involved the following actions:

- > providing the workers with assistance during their interviews with the employer, and accompanying the worker to the workplace, at least in the first time;
- > organising seminars and/or meetings with employers and workers, in order to overcome the possible negative views of the immigrants in the workplace.
- > monitoring the work insertion of the immigrants during their work contract through regular calls, private meetings and/or visits to the workplace.

Mediation is an important tool not only after the job placement, but also during interviews in order to prevent conflicts and misunderstandings due to the complexity of the regulations on immigration and hiring of non-EU citizens. ILEX pro-

fessionals therefore always took some time to explain to potential employers all possible information and legal advice on the procedures to follow and rules to abide by in case of hiring a worker or hosting an intern.

Finally, as a general tool of support for non-EU citizens’ labour integration, the ILEX project organised individual interviews or group meetings with the beneficiaries in order to prepare them for the job interview. The objective of these meetings was to teach presentation techniques, to simulate, if necessary, a typical job interview and to make enable beneficiaries to gain more confidence in front of an employer. These meetings were supervised by the career counselor or psychologist.

The ILEX project did not develop specific evaluation tools. There is not an actual evaluation tradition for social projects in Italy. Italians prefer to work with periodical and continuous monitoring of the results. ILEX also put into effect a monitoring action, which is part of a larger empowerment activity developed in cooperation with the University of Cagliari. By the time the *Good Practice Guide* was being edited, the empowerment action was still in process. The psychologist who took care of the monitoring used questionnaires to be filled by our beneficiaries and organised individual interviews and group meeting in order to assess the impact of the actions we had promoted for students interns and workers and to verify the level of satisfaction levels of participants, the educative value of the training course and to assess the possibility of improvement in the future. At present only have results of the evaluation of the training courses, which showed that the beneficiaries were generally satisfied with the course and also very interested in deepening their Italian and IT knowledge.

> THE LITHUANIAN PROJECT

Main objective of the supporting progression through career guidance and counseling in the project EQUAL HIGHWAY: Development Partnership Klaipėda-Vilnius.

The purpose of the career guidance and counselling part of the project is to enhance employment opportunities for women and long term unemployed people and other socially vulnerable groups using individual profiling, individual and group job search discussions and consultations.

Two career guidance and counselling programmes are developed, tested and validated:

- > Individual profile development and career path planning, 54 hours.
- > Job strategy and information search programme, XX hours.
- > E-modules on the IT based platform

Method of the individual profile development and professional career planning

Implementation – this totally new methodical tool is tested with target group members in different Lithuanian cities, to identify its effectiveness and results.

Process:

- 1 > Introduction – getting to know group members, identification of their needs, induction with the purpose and the proceeding of the programme
- 2 > Adaptation to change skills which include explanation of psychological adaptation to change theory, analysis of successful changes in the past, constructive problem solving skills and positive self-evaluation skills development
Different group work methods, case analysis, games and other interactive activities are used.

3 > Assessment of the individual potential. Group members do benchmark tests of personality, needs and motivation. Results of the tests are presented to the participants and discussed individually, in the professionally led and self-help groups.

4 > Analysis of the opportunities in the labour market. The following topics are discussed: analysis of the situation in the current labour market, CV writing, interview with the potential employer skills and other skills development using different adult education and active learning methods.

5. Development of the individual career plan.

Outcomes

The uniqueness of the project is the fact that methodologies are developed in constant discussions among all the 17 partners network and representatives of the target groups. This ensures programmes and methodologies are as close to the individual and group needs of the target groups as possible.

200 people finished the career guidance and supporting progression programmes «Individual profile development and vocational career planning» and « Information integration and job search strategy ». 90 percent of participants enrolled in the programme finished it. In the short term 30 percent of participants found the job. Long term (in the period of more six months) results still to be followed up. 80 percent of participants who finishes the programmes say they have clear understanding of what opportunities they have in the labour market and what steps they should take in the job search process.

→ CASE STUDY

Rasa, a young woman of 27, was born and lives in Vilnius. Rasa has two children: they are one and three years old. Since graduating from secondary school she has neither studied nor worked.

Rasa came to the Blessed J. Matulaitis social centre to get involved in the socialisation (empowerment) programme aiming to get the job.

The programme which Rasa was involved was composed of 14 groups activities of three hours each, as well as individual consultation and virtual job search activities. During the group meetings Rasa was very active in the group discussions, was learning how to analyse her experience and skills gained while raising kids. As Rasa says, one of the most important achievements for her was to identify and describe what kind of work she is willing to do. During the roleplays Rasa verbalised skills she still needed to improve, problems she would had to overcome, and social contacts she needed to make and described the real steps necessary to take in order to make her dream come true. During the activities Rasa realised she had many important skills and capabilities like initiative taking, energy, ability to listen and keep the conversations going. Rasa realised that those skills are valuable in the labour market as well as in social life.

In 2 months after the programme finished Rasa started working as a reception administrator in a hotel. This is one of her dream jobs she expressed during the group activities. Rasa found a way to deal with child-care – her husband and mother got more involved. In several more months Rasa started management and administration studies at the College and continues working. ■

→ CASE STUDY

Teresa, a woman of 55, was born in Vilnius to a mixed Lithuanian-Polish family. She has a higher education degree. She lives alone after her husband died.

Teresa was involved in the programme of experiential learning consisting of a number of outdoor and indoor learning activities as well as individual consultation that supported her progression and gave more clear direction to find her place. Teresa was active, cooperative and empathic. According to her own opinion her biggest achievement is higher self-esteem after the programme. As Teresa keeps saying she always liked to listen to people and assist in finding ways of solving their problems; now she had found the place where skills and empathic attitude are valuable.

Teresa found her place through volunteering and running self-help groups for people like herself in the social center. Teresa has on-job training how to lead the groups and consult people individually.

The purpose is to enhance employment opportunities for women and long term unemployed people and other socially vulnerable target groups representatives using individual profiles. ■

Duration: 54 hours

Implementation – this totally new methodical tool is tested with target group members in different Lithuanian cities, to identify the effectiveness and results.

Process:

> **Introduction 2 hours** – getting to know group members, identification of their needs, induction with the purpose and the proceeding of the programme;

> **1 module** – Adaptation to change – 18 hours.

> Explanation of psychological adaptation to change theory to participants

> Analysis of successful changes in the past;

> Constructive problem solving skills;

> Positive self-evaluation skills development

This theory is applicable together with group work methods, case analysis, games, and etc.

> **2 module** – Personality potential evaluation– 12 hours.

> Group members do benchmark tests of personality, addictions and needs;

> Results of these tests are presented to participants;

> Self-help groups

> **3 module** –Professional career opportunities– 16 hours.

> Studies about current labour market;

> CV writing;

> Interview with employer

> **4 module** – Development of the individual career plan – 10 hour.

> Training of professionals from different sectors in order they could work with their clients in the way which is the most clients friendly.

> THE BRITISH PROJECT

The Fresh Futures Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) service is a unique service available to advise and assist individuals interested in working in the financial services industry. (see section x above).

Providing continuous support to our beneficiaries is vital as it helps them to achieve their ambition of finding work, but also

enables the client to understand how near they are to this ambition. When required, advisers will empower clients, helping them to overcome any fears or barriers they face. Advisers will devise an action plan, a very suitable and practical way to measure the distance the client is from their desired goal and the number of steps they need to take to get there. On-going support also ensures the client doesn't become de-motivated, as the adviser will keep the client focused on what they have to do and why.

Advisors at the IAG unit write an individual action plan with clients, where interview discussions are summarized and noted, and where agreed actions are listed so they can be followed and referred to at the next appointment. All action plan targets are agreed between adviser and client, therefore we ensure the plans are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound). If the client is unable to conform to the agreed actions because they find them too difficult, the adviser can then amend or agree new targets to ensure the individual is able to carry them out. Ongoing support would also include help with CV's and application forms, referrals to industry recognized courses or employability programmes. Clients will also have access to our free job search resources such as internet, newspapers, trade magazines, telephone etc. We provide a drop-in area where computers can be used by clients to update their own CV's and apply for jobs online. Advisers are contactable during normal working hours, so clients are aware they are able to contact the adviser and arrange other appointments when required. Advisers also encourage clients to call if they require IAG on the phone.

Our Individual Action Plans are also a means to record referrals onto an industry recognized course, or to achieve a curriculum qualification like Maths. The adviser is therefore able to show and record the methods they used to improve the client chances of working in Financial Services, and justify reasoning behinds decisions taken. Clients with lower level skills can be guided towards courses where their literacy or numeracy can be improved, but also to help these clients to enhance opportunities with entry level jobs.

Suitable clients are enrolled onto industry recognized courses, and on completion will have the necessary understanding and aptitude to apply for more specific roles in financial services.

Clients who need more guidance are provided with different access routes. This may involve taking courses to improve their employability skills, or their basic skills. By completing these courses clients have improved and acquired new skills, therefore taken a significant step nearer to improve their chances of finding employment. Typically, skills acquired can be presentation skills, team-working skills, confidence building techniques, all of which can be used in the workplace. Clients who have completed the level 3 equivalent finance courses realistically become 'employable' for work in financial services, and therefore can be fast tracked to potential employer links we have. Often the client feels they are competent enough to job search themselves, with minimum guidance. On other occasions through IAG interviews, clients recognize that working in financial services may not be for them. When this is the case, the adviser will provide a range of options they may choose to follow, signposting the client to a more suitable career path. This could include referral to a colleague in the organization specializing in the clients chosen area of career choice.

The IAG approach to project outreach, networking and marketing has played a significant role in the development of our service. The way in which these strategies have been formulated has impacted on the way we are recognized in the wider community. Our marketing strategies have been developed with support from our partner organizations and in-house marketing team to a) market the IAG unit, and ensure beneficiaries are aware the service is available to those interested and b) to encourage those with 'other skills' which could be transferred into the finance sector. The objective is to encourage beneficiaries to use the service without them thinking "it's only for people with previous qualifications or experience in finance."

In addition press releases, endorsed by key figures in the industry, have gone into local 'free' newspapers which are posted through every household in Tower Hamlets. Adverts have also been placed in these and other newspapers since the services were launched. Adverts on plasma screens are also in the local Ideas Stores; these are substantial learning resource centers for the public in Tower Hamlets, to encourage individuals to find out more about the IAG service. The Fresh Futures website also provides a wealth of information about the IAG unit, detailing the type of support offered and relevant information about careers and sectors in the financial services industry.

A significant step in our outreach strategy has been to deliver our IAG from the only two Jobcentres in Tower Hamlets. Jobcentres are comprehensive resource centers, used by thousands of jobseekers in the local area, including those on mandatory benefits related training programmes, for example New Deal. They provide many services including job brokerage, and benefits advice. In order to capture these beneficiaries, we negotiated with the Jobcentres to offer the Fresh Futures IAG project some office space, where we can provide on-site IAG to individuals interested in careers in finance. Initially we were given a 4 week trial to see whether or not the service was suitable for their clients and whether these clients actually benefited from the IAG and referrals. The Jobcentre have been very happy with our service objectives and the way we have supported and advised their clients, therefore they have given us a permanent room to deliver IAG. Due to increasing numbers of referrals from the Jobcentre advisers (on-site), we have been in contact with many individuals for IAG, often referring to suitable provision such as employability, Learn direct or industry recognised course. Furthermore, we have also added our IAG service details onto the Jobcentre's National 'Training Menu Da-

tabase' which enables Jobcentres and their advisers all across London to know about our IAG service, and how to access it.

Marketing materials in the form of leaflets and posters have also been carefully designed and produced to get our '*find out about careers in finance*' message across. The Leaflets provide detailed information about the service and what clients can expect from us in a very easy-to-understand way. We have maintained consistent colour schemes for all our marketing materials to ensure consistent branding of the project.

To complement IAG support for beneficiaries, resources have been produced to aid the client with their employment objectives. This may be in the form of providing a one-page overview of some of the financial service companies such as Morgan Stanley or Citibank. These documents are for beneficiaries to find out more about the company, the type of work they do, and the type of person they employ. We also provide a list of the top-50 companies in London, again making our clients aware of the type of companies which exist, and the main functions of their business.

In Tower Hamlets there are many employment support organizations, which hold a shared objective of helping their particular disadvantaged target groups to achieve their ambition of finding employment. As this project has a similar objective, although with a different approach and focus, we have networked with many of these organizations to share information about our respective services and how way can help each other. As a result we have built relations with many organizations dealing with specific communities, age groups, and ethnic backgrounds. These include organizations who specifically deal with the Bangladeshi and Somali Communities in

the borough, and Connexions who deal with individuals aged 14-19. We also work closely with the 'Ocean Job shop', an organization located in one of the most deprived areas of Tower Hamlets, where we provide outreach information advice and guidance and employability support.

Between August 2006 and March 2007 the IAG service has interviewed 156 beneficiaries, all receiving tailored advice to suit their specific needs and to meet their career objectives. From the 156, 126 have been referred to customized courses designed to improve their employability skills. From the 126, 34 beneficiaries have gone onto study professional industry led finance courses.

Canary Wharf Recruitment and Training Centre

Tower Hamlets ranks as one of the most disadvantaged areas in London but is home to some of the youngest, most diverse and vibrant communities in the capital. It is also home to Canary Wharf, one of the richest, fastest growing business economies in Europe and fringes the wealthy international financial services centre of the City of London.

Tower Hamlets has been described as the 'The Tale of Two Cities,' with one of the highest levels of deprivation, wordlessness and unemployment in the country, but with average earnings more than twice the average for Great Britain, and 60% higher than London as a whole.

Working closely with community partners, Tower Hamlets College and Tower Hamlets Council through their 'Employment Solutions' partnership successfully work with employers to deliver customized training, job brokerage and support services. In 2006, over 700 local people were placed into sustainable employment by the partnership. The partnership's initiatives have been greatly enhanced by the opening of the Canary Wharf Training and Recruitment Centre at Heron Quays in heart of Docklands. Canary Wharf Group, through its CSR strategy, is committed to supporting local recruitment initiatives. A new recruitment and training centre has been provided by Canary Wharf Group and supported through ESF Equal which represents a one stop shop for employers to work with Employment Solutions partners to address their recruitment needs.

The Centre provides dedicated space for employers from key business sectors including banking and finance, hospitality, security and property support services to recruit people from east London and will be integral to the 2012 Olympics up-skilling and employment strategies. It also provides a base for Employment Solutions partners to deliver workforce development initiatives to help up-skill people already in work, and for employers to raise awareness about their businesses to school and college leavers.

The Canary Wharf Training and Recruitment Centre represent an exemplar of innovation and partnership based on mutual-ity of needs and opportunity.

BROKERAGE

This sub-chapter focuses on what we call brokerage. The chapter gives a short description on how the different projects have tried to “build the bridge between the beneficiaries and employers”.

> THE DANISH PROJECT

To understand of the Danish project, it is important to underline, that the main focus has been on creating a number of tools, which can be used by career counselors in the Danish Jobcentres on an individual basis. This was done because of experience from former projects where the only focus had been brokerage to employers and afterwards the establishment of internships, salary supported jobs or jobs with general conditions. Of course one of the aims has been to create as many relevant internships or jobs as possible, but the main focus has been on getting the individual beneficiary to create a more realistic picture of his or her competences and skills in the light of the Danish labour market, leading to jobs on a level relevant to prior academic achievements. Nevertheless we have completed a number of activities leading to the establishment of a network of interesting companies.

First of all we invited three large Danish companies to participate actively in the project on the same level as the career counselors. It was also meant that the career counselors should use their company network already established through their daily work in other projects. Secondly one of the tools “the snapshot with focus on labour experience” is a tool, which only can be used in cooperation with a company. It means that a relevant employer interviews the beneficiary – first with focus on general competences and then on professional skills within the relevant area.

Applying for internships the beneficiaries have been told to market their working experiences explicitly. They were trained in constructing CV's with focus on certain working experiences, completed projects etc.

Brochures were produced describing the project and the need for internships and jobs, with the companies as the target group. These were distributed by the career counselors in the three communities, as well as by the Employers organisations that participated in the steering committee.

When contacting companies we used role models from the project to market the level of competences in the group. All media newspapers (local, regional, national), trade papers, radio, television and internet have been used to market the project and need for internships and relevant jobs.

Last but not least the mentoring network also gave access to a number of companies. The mentors in the network are all employed in different companies, and have a large network both through their own company and through private contacts.

The career counsellors made contact with and established agreements with the individual companies. The project management put together a letter to explain the content of the project and the commitments the companies had to agree to. These were sent out by the counsellors.

Each beneficiary had to apply for an internship just as if it was an ordinary job, completing an application and supplying an updated CV.

Numbers of internships and jobs can be found in the previous chapter.

> THE ITALIAN PROJECT

The objective of the ILEX project was to create an innovative approach towards the social integration of immigrants, in order to build a territorial network capable of providing its beneficiaries job opportunities in the sectors of home care, medium and small enterprises and local craftsmanship. This social integration through job placements aimed mainly at a better use of the human and cultural resources of the beneficiaries, represented by non-EU citizens. Although the objective of the initial project was only to increase job opportunities in the home care sector, we registered some interest from other economic sectors. Jobs in the home care sector remain the most requested, but some businesses also registered with the ILEX Agency and expressed their interest in benefiting from its services.

It is very important to specify that ILEX was conceived as an experimental project and, therefore, even a small number of job placements could be assessed as a success in the local labour market. In fact, the project operates in Sardinia, one of the less economically developed regions in Italy, with a 14% unemployment rate only among local people. Moreover, immigration is new in Sardinia and this implies that a strong wariness and reluctance towards newcomers is still present.

ILEX is the first local project regarding labour integration of non-EU citizens. The jobcentre cannot yet develop a brokerage service, because they are currently reorganising. The Jobcentre in Cagliari, for instance, is currently looking for a labour market expert that should manage the brokerage service.

Before creating its main operational structure, the ILEX project carried out a research on 224 Sardinian small and medium enterprises operating in different economic sectors. The research was coordinated by the University of Cagliari together with ARCOIRIS, an immigrants' association, and also a national partner of the ILEX project. The goal of this research was to assess the possibility of job placements for non-EU citizens and the availability of employers to work with the ILEX brokerage service. The businesses were first contacted by phone to check out whether they wanted to fill in the questionnaire. Afterwards, the businesses that answered positively filled in the questionnaire by phone or via personal interviews. Only 37,5% of the businesses answered the questions and only 2% of them declared themselves happy with hiring non-EU citizens and remained available for a future interview with the Agency. Only one of the businesses contacted the Agency to request assistance with hiring people. The objective pursued with the ILEX Agency was to offer non-EU citizens another mean to find a job. The Agency's task was to develop a brokerage service between demand and supply, under the supervision of a specific professional figure similar to the English Engagement Manager. This expert is charged with making contacts with businesses and businesses' unions, in order to assess whether they are available to hire non-EU citizens and whether they could be convinced to do so. Initial contacts were always made by phone. They were followed most of the times by meetings with the representatives from the businesses. Some of the employers contacted us directly by coming to the Agency in person. This was also due to the communication and publicity campaign, supervised by Eurocontact Ltd, one of the national partners of the ILEX project. The publicity consisted of ads insertions on buses and in the newspapers. The outcomes were great even if limited to the private employers such as families for the home care sector. Many came to us or told others they could come in order to benefit from our services.

Every job offer is registered on the Agency database after the employer fills in a request form detailing the job requirements and the description of duties. If the request arrived by phone, the form is filled in by one of the Agency's employees and signed by the employer when he/she comes for the job interview with the selected candidates. Furthermore, the relationship between the every employer and the ILEX Agency is formalised with a protocol agreement that states the duties of each party regarding the brokerage service and the undertakings of the employer in case he/she decides to hire one of the candidates. The last part is a very important part of the protocol because the Italian law is very strict on certain aspect of labour immigration. When they hire non-EU citizen, employers must be aware of the legal and economic requirements. Therefore, the purpose of the protocol is also to make it clear to employers that they are bound to abide by the law and apply the contractual clauses as defined at national level.

On the other hand, beneficiaries go through an internal selection. The candidates are chosen from those who have completed the guidance programmes. The criteria we use to select our beneficiaries takes into account not only their personal and professional competences analysed during the guidance interviews, but we also check out whether they are still available for that specific kind of job. If necessary, the selected candidates have an interview with the career counselor/adviser in order to prepare him/her for the job interview.

The selected candidates are invited to a job interview with the employer. The job interview takes place at the Agency under the supervision of one of the Agency's employees in a private environment. Before introducing the candidates, the employers usually request information on the administrative procedures for hiring non-EU citizens or the economic burdens that em-

ployers have to support. The Agency's employee that guides the job interview gives the necessary information, introduces the candidates and is sometimes joined by one of the cultural mediators. Employers that come to the ILEX Agency are not obliged to hire one of ILEX's beneficiaries. In case they decide to actually hire someone, they must send a formal communication to the Agency. The Agency takes care that the two parties agree on the date and place of meeting and, if necessary, one of its employees accompanies the future worker to the place of job. Every job includes a trial period and each party can recede any moment during this trial period. Only after it ends, the contract becomes definitive. The job development is monitored periodically by the Agency, through phone interviews, direct calls and questionnaires.

The outcomes of the brokerage service are quite satisfactory. In one year of activity (since Feb 13, 2006 till Jan 31, 2007) 78 employers contacted the Agency, 45% of them signed the protocol agreement and agreed to interview our candidates. Only 17% hired one of our beneficiaries. 13% of them are still working. Most of our job placements were within families in the home care sector. The fact that we had some difficulties in involving more businesses in our project made us try out another strategy, which was to promote paid internships as described in the previous chapter.

> THE PORTUGUESE PROJECT

The NRC/APPC Disability Employment Service provides national leadership by developing and influencing disability-related employment policy and practice affecting the employment of people with disabilities, providing:

- > Specialist services to disabled people and employers in order to get suitable employment.
- > Assessment of job skills and abilities to identify the kind of work to look for.

➔ The Disability Employment Services offers:

- ➔ **An Employment Assessment** – offering a practical way to find out what work will suit the disabled person and employer, and planning the steps needed to be taken to obtain or retain suitable employment
- ➔ **Suitable jobs** – through contact with local employers and the Local Employment Centre about vacancies and arranging work experience on a trial basis, via Job Coach
- ➔ **Advisory Service** – ensuring that people with disabilities reach their full potential in the workplace follow-up
- ➔ **Special Aids and Equipment** – work provision of special equipment to suit particular work needs arising from a disability
- ➔ **Access to Work** – offers advice and help in a flexible way that can be tailored to suit the needs of an individual in a particular job
- ➔ **Communication Support** – practical support for deaf people or people who have a hearing impairment or speech problem
- ➔ **Travel to Work** – special transport provided when a disabled person needs to travel from home to work
- ➔ **Training** – advice on training to employers or key individuals for Disability Awareness (e – training) or on life long learning

For the NRC /APPC, the compelling arguments for employing Disabled people in Portugal are:

➔ Portuguese background

Over than one million disabled people in Portugal are not in work

Forms of discrimination based on disability is vary widespread in Portugal (60%)

More employers understand the benefits of providing flexible working opportunities for Disabled people (Corporate Social Responsibility)

- > Unemployment amongst disabled people is twice as high than with non-disabled people
- > Social exclusion and unemployment in disability are closly related

→ Portuguese legislation

- > Portuguese Constitution - Article 71 of the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic determines that citizens with disabilities “enjoy the rights and are subjected to the obligations contained in the Constitution, with the exception of the exercise or compliance with those for which they are incapacitated”.
- > Employment - Quota system for Public Administration.
- > General Law - Legal system for prevention, habilitation, rehabilitation and participation of people with disabilities.

→ Portuguese policy

- > There is a National Plan for the promotion of accessibility centres for the recognition, verification and certification of competences at national level for training adults who are disabled. This includes:
 - > Life long training of people with disabilities with the support of the IEFP's Local and Specialized Resource Centres.
 - > Pilot Projects for the Return to Work in 10 Professional Rehabilitation Centres
 - > Complementary training in entrepreneurship.
 - > Work placements in national companies with the target of 50% insertion in the labour market.

The *Disability Employment Office Services* results are a small part of Portuguese Employment Policies in the disability field: aiming to reduce the long term unemployment rate; promote the accessibility in workplace; recognise employers showing progress in Social Corporate Responsibility.

The main results of NRCAPPC are:

- > clear progress in disability awareness in local employers (*training*).
- > 60% insertion in local labour market clearly achieved (*advisory*).
- > promotion of accessibility in many local enterprises (*special aids and equipment*).
- > clear reduction of local unemployment rate in disability (*employment assessment*).

- > work experience on a trial basis for all NRC/APPC trainees (*suitable jobs*).
- > employers participation in experiential learning activities (Like outdoor activities).
- > aiming the improvement of disability employability.

> THE BRITISH PROJECT

Brokerage services provided by Fresh Futures project

The brokerage services we offer reflect the growing commitment of the local community to diversifying the workforce and supporting the local neighbourhood. The service is for individuals looking for work in the financial services or business sectors, particularly around the City of London, City Fringe and Docklands. We provide a wide range of support including: ca-

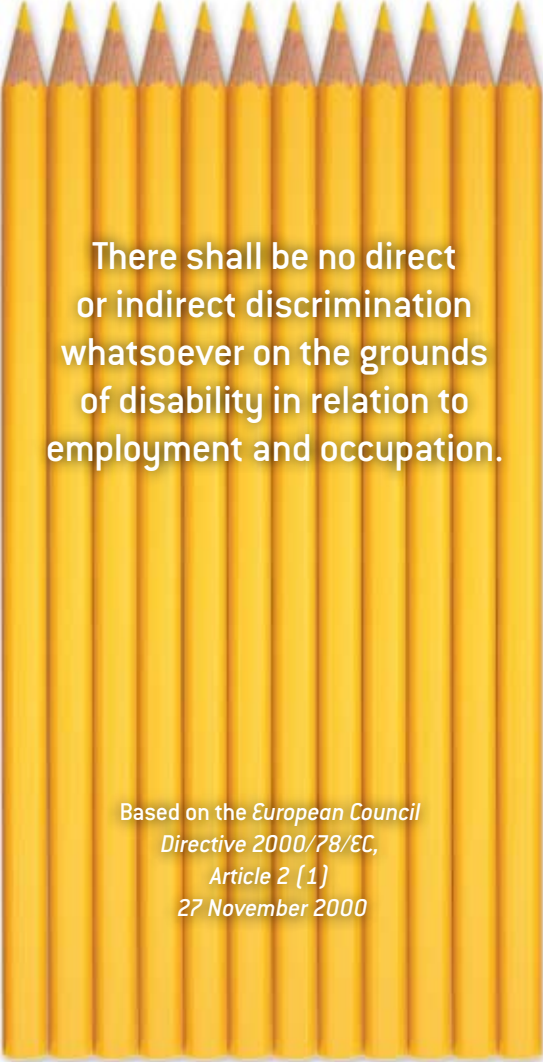
reers advice and guidance, information on entry level opportunities, employability training, access to accredited training courses, information on vacancies, ongoing support once in work. The service is offered through Employment Solutions, a partnership between London Borough of Tower Hamlets Skillsmatch, Tower Hamlets College and Jobcentre Plus.

We run workshops and courses on all aspects of working life in the sectors. Courses cover practical areas such as presentation, CV's, interviews and application forms and sector focused sessions around in banking and 'the world of financial services'. We advise on opportunities information about graduate recruitment, internships and assessment centers. Bespoke employer-led courses are designed to create direct links to employment opportunities, with the hope that successfully run courses could be ongoing and followed by other employers.

Our aim is to help employers find the staff they need to develop a workforce with a diverse mix of backgrounds, cultures and lifestyles. Employers need to know they have a labour force which is multi-skilled and diverse at their doorstep. Through our local recruitment programmes we have access to individuals with a range of experience and qualifications from entry level individuals to more experienced graduates and second jobbers, seeking opportunities within support roles in the financial and business services sectors. Our Employer Engagement Manager visits companies and HR/Procurement managers to find out ways of tackling local recruitment issues, and discuss innovative ways for employers to consider recruitment strategies. Our aim is to build a bridge between us and the employers, so the transitions for our clients who are ready to enter the labour market have a better opportunity to secure employment.


Through our Employer Engagement Manager visits to companies in the City & Canary Wharf districts, workshops have been designed to look at issues and benefits of recruiting local people. Community schemes and bespoke training programmes with employers give local people an insight or first hand opportunity of what it may be like to work in a corporate environment.

Through the work of brokerage service, successful Work placements have been secured with corporate banks through Training & Qualification programmes which have led to permanent employment. Through the marketing of the Fresh Futures programme by our Employer Engagement Manager and media outlets and events, companies are now contacting the college to work on bespoke programmes to address entry level jobs shortages.



There shall be no direct
or indirect discrimination
whatsoever on the grounds
of disability in relation to
employment and occupation.

*Based on the European Council
Directive 2000/78/EC,
Article 2 (1)
27 November 2000*



Disabled people are
two to three times more
likely to be unemployed
than their non-disabled
counterparts.

*Eurostat ad hoc module 2002
population and social conditions,
theme 3-26/2003*

CONCLUSIONS

Despite the diversity of the social and economic circumstances in which they worked and of the target groups they addressed, the common experience of the “Responsibility for change” partnership on the supply side was that disadvantaged groups face substantial barriers to their social and economic integration. These barriers include the lack of job opportunities due to structural unemployment and discrimination, low skills or out-of-date qualifications that are inadequate to the demands of the local labour market, lack of work experience and formal education corresponding to representative education in the host country.

Each project followed an approach customised to the specific needs of the beneficiaries. All partners believe that detecting beneficiary's needs and working on an individual basis is preferable to designing activities first and then recruiting people to participate in them. That is why each project developed a guidance and career counseling programme in order to assess the personal and professional competences of the beneficiaries and to draw an individual action plan for each of them. This individual action plan could lead to advise further training and/or education or to search for a job placement for the beneficiary.

We find it is important to support our beneficiaries throughout their progression into the labour market, giving them advice on how to act in order to look for a job and increasing their awareness both of what they can do and on the opportunities offered by the local industry. The tools developed by the “Responsibility for change” partnership can be useful to our beneficiaries even after the projects end. For example, teaching them to write a CV or a covering letter, the assessment of com-

petences or the qualification they received after an internship period or a training course, can all be used in the future when looking for a new job.

The personalised approach used on the supply side led to great outcomes in terms of job placements, internships, training course and guidance. In some cases the numbers are quite high, in other cases smaller, but this depends particularly on the economic situation of each country. Consequently, the outcomes should be understood in the light of the difficulties met by each partner regarding local labour markets. The conclusions are nonetheless positive. The concern is now the projects' mainstreaming. In some countries, (Italy) this could be a problem, because of the lack of funds (mostly public). In other countries (Denmark), the competence toolkit will be used as a working tool by Jobcentres counsellors. Regardless of mainstreaming, the strategies developed under the “Responsibility for change” projects could still be successfully used by future projects working on the theme of integration and job placements.

➔ IMPACT OF TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION

Transnational cooperation offered a great opportunity to each partner to exchange good practices and expertise and to study common work methods and tools in the field of labour integrations of disadvantaged people.

The transnational cooperation has been active since the beginning of the “Responsibility for change” partnership and started with a survey coordinated by the Italian partner and involving every national project. It is indeed quite difficult to develop an efficient transnational cooperation if we do not know what we are talking about in the first place, meaning the specifics of each country's situation and the resources available at the local level. The survey was completed between October 2005 and January 2006 and it regarded the situation of immigrants in the national contexts of each partner. It consisted of a brief description of the statistics on immigrants residing on the territory, public and private services addressing immigrant beneficiaries and the national immigration laws. The results of the survey showed differences of the economic and legislative context, but also on the typology of immigrants that live in each countries. Nonetheless, the survey also indicated some similarities regarding mainly the issues concerning immigrants' integration into the labour market (the lack of job opportunities due to structural unemployment and discrimination, low skills or out-of-date qualifications, inadequate to the demand of the local labour market, lack of work experience and formal education corresponding to official education in the host country). Consequently, and purpose of this survey was to get an overall idea on the immigrants' legal and social situation in each country in order to verify the possibility of importing good practices from one national context to another and to try to apply some ideas developed already to the building of new services. The transnational survey contributed to identify the problems the project needed to consider and the context in which these problems had to be dealt with, as much depended on local resources and legal framework. The results of the survey are available at www.equalilex.it.

One of the major achievements of the transnational work was the dynamic and interactive expertise exchanging process. It has been done through the study visits and periodical transnational meetings.

The objective of the study visits was basically to “steal” ideas from the other partners in order to implement them in the national context. Although national projects developed on a parallel level because of the legal and social differences of each territorial reality, the partnership succeeded in identifying a common work method which is the customized approach to our beneficiaries' needs. Transnational cooperation gave national partners the chance to debate on the possibility of a common work method and basic tools to address the target groups. Study visits at the structures in each country and meetings of the transnational team were the main instruments used to this end. The method that the partners identified as a good practice is that described in the supply chapter and it regards the customized approach tailored to the specific needs of the beneficiaries, organized in a three-step strategy (guidance/counseling, training and brokerage).

The transnational cooperation also contributed to transfer expertise and ideas already developed in some national context to projects that did not tackle with those issues. For instance, transnational meetings focusing on CSR improved the Italian Ilex project's approach to employers regarding their involvement in the project and in the immigrants' labour integration.



4CONCLUSIONS

CONCLUSIONS

In the introduction we referred to the apparent diversity of the “Responsibility for Change” partnership. The 6 national Development Partnership projects, focused on different target groups, in a range of socio-economic circumstances, and had a variety of objectives. In Portugal, the “Responseability” DP led by the NRC-APPC for instance, has targeted people with disabilities who face major challenges in gaining access to the labour market, whilst in the UK, the “Fresh Futures in Financial Services” DP has targeted disadvantaged groups and communities, including ethnic minorities, refugees and women in the East End of London with a view to assisting them to gain access to jobs and opportunities in a specific growth sector, the financial and business services industry. The “ILEX” DP in Sardinia has sought to develop training pathways and progression opportunities for immigrant groups, whilst the “Competence Tool Kit” DP in Denmark has also targeted immigrants, but specifically people with a higher education background who need to gain recognition for vocational competences to access job opportunities in the engineering industry. The “Projecto Ercova” DP in Valencia, Spain has sought to develop labour market insertion strategies for a range of marginalized groups including people with disabilities and immigrants, and the “Equal Highway” project in Lithuania has targeted a variety of groups facing labour market discrimination including older workers and long term unemployed people, through a more specific focus on innovative careers guidance and employability training programmes.

Despite this diversity the common experience of the partners has been that disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and communities face major barriers to social and economic integration. These barriers can include a lack of opportunity in the labour market due to the structural unemployment and discrimination, low skills and qualifications levels and a lack of recognition of competences resulting in a ‘mismatch’ between the skills and qualifications of individual, and those required for job opportunities becoming available, lack of work experience and labour market awareness and cultural barriers.

Many projects focus primarily on the disadvantaged individuals and groups themselves, and ways of increasing their employability and capacity to compete for job opportunities in the labour market. Whilst this is clearly necessary and desirable, the “Responsibility for Change” partners believe that labour market insertion strategies of this kind only address a part of the problem, and that a genuinely comprehensive approach also needs to address the ‘demand’ side of the equation i.e. the discrimination faced by individuals and groups who are effectively often at the bottom of the labour market ‘food chain’ and the need to change the attitudes of employers. We believe that a particular strength of the partnership has been that it has developed and tested innovative methodologies and tools relating to both the ‘demand’ and ‘supply’ sides of the labour market.

The work of the partnership has resulted in a number of key conclusions and products which the partners believe are of direct relevance to a wide range of stakeholders and future interventions seeking to promote labour market integration and social and economic inclusion. They include:

1. The importance of Corporate Social Responsibility [CSR] in providing a framework for working with employers to support integration strategies. CSR has gathered momentum as a concept since the European Council at Lisbon in 2000; the 2002 European Commission Green Paper “Promoting a European Framework for Corporate Social Responsibility” defined CSR as “A concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis”. The core of the concept is that a company’s competitiveness depends not only on its relationship with the clients and owners of the company but on all of the stakeholders affected by its operations. The corporate image and ultimate sustainability of the company

depends on its ability to simultaneously develop in economic, social and environmental terms. In this sense CSR should not be seen as a token 'add-on' to the company's operations but rather as a critical component of its competitiveness, survival and success. The "Responsibility for Change" project has worked within this overall context and has undertaken a valuable benchmarking exercise which researched good practice in strategic integration processes and diversity management in the 6 partner countries, and involved 225 companies. This provided the basis for the development of a number of products, including employer guides and toolkits.

2. Effective employer strategies for the recruitment of disadvantaged groups can be developed through CSR. The Portuguese project, led by the NRC-APPC carefully selected firms it believed would be most receptive to social responsibility, and established a Mediation Service to identify the employers' needs and 'match' them to those of potential disabled employees. It describes the 'win-win' scenario that can be achieved through examples such as Auchan, where the company was able to reinforce its image as a socially responsible company, the disabled persons involved gained access to employment and career opportunities and training providers were successful in preparing and integrating people into the labour market. In the UK, the "Fresh Futures in Financial Services" project used CSR as a vehicle for assisting major corporates in the financial services sector to recruit local people from disadvantaged communities in East London, particularly from within ethnic minority [especially Bangladeshi] communities. People from these communities would normally have only limited opportunities for developing careers in this sector and a significant incentive for the companies was their recognition of their need to develop a more diverse workforce reflecting the growing diversity of their customer base. The project organised a series of employer awareness workshops and seminars and established a specialist local recruitment service based in Canary Wharf in the heart of London's financial district. Through these they identified major corporate partners and placed small groups of graduate trainees on tailored placements and internship programmes, and achieved a high rate of conversion into full-time job opportunities for beneficiaries.

The individual DPs involved in employer engagement and recruitment all found that employers were more likely to be receptive in the context of employment growth and labour shortage. Even in Sardinia, where unemployment is high, the "ILEX" project was successful in establishing a cultural mediation service to assist employers, often families, to become more aware of the needs of non-EU immigrants working or seeking to work in the domiciliary care sector, which experiences labour and skills shortages. A specialist agency was established to undertake the mediation role. In Sardinia and the other partner countries involved in this project, mainstream services are usually not equipped to play the pro-active role required in matching the needs of employers to those of disadvantaged groups and are unable to provide a response which is sufficiently customised to individual employer needs.

3. CSR is ultimately concerned with changing the values of employers so that they have a broader concept of what is required to achieve business competitiveness and sustainability. In the interim there is a need for practical strategies and tools to support employers and the "Responsibility for Change" partners have been involved individually and collectively in developing a range of products which have considerable potential for application and transfer throughout the EU.

> The “Proyecto Ercova” in Spain developed diagnostic tools which provided employers with information on CSR Good Practice and a means of assessing the extent to which they met these standards, as well as a guide for implementing CSR strategies. It also developed a CSR Kitemark. It established a CSR Resource Centre in Valencia which provided a focus for its work with employers

> The Spanish and Portuguese DPs developed Marketing and Communication guides or toolkits and both they and the UK DP developed training courses for employers which included both short courses targeted at SMEs and components of university and post-graduate programmes

> The DPs jointly identified the key competences required for staff within companies with a specialist CSR role. They concluded that these were unlikely to provide the basis for full-time professional roles in the overwhelming majority of companies but that it is more likely that a growing number of posts in HR and Marketing departments of companies will require specific CSR competences and skills

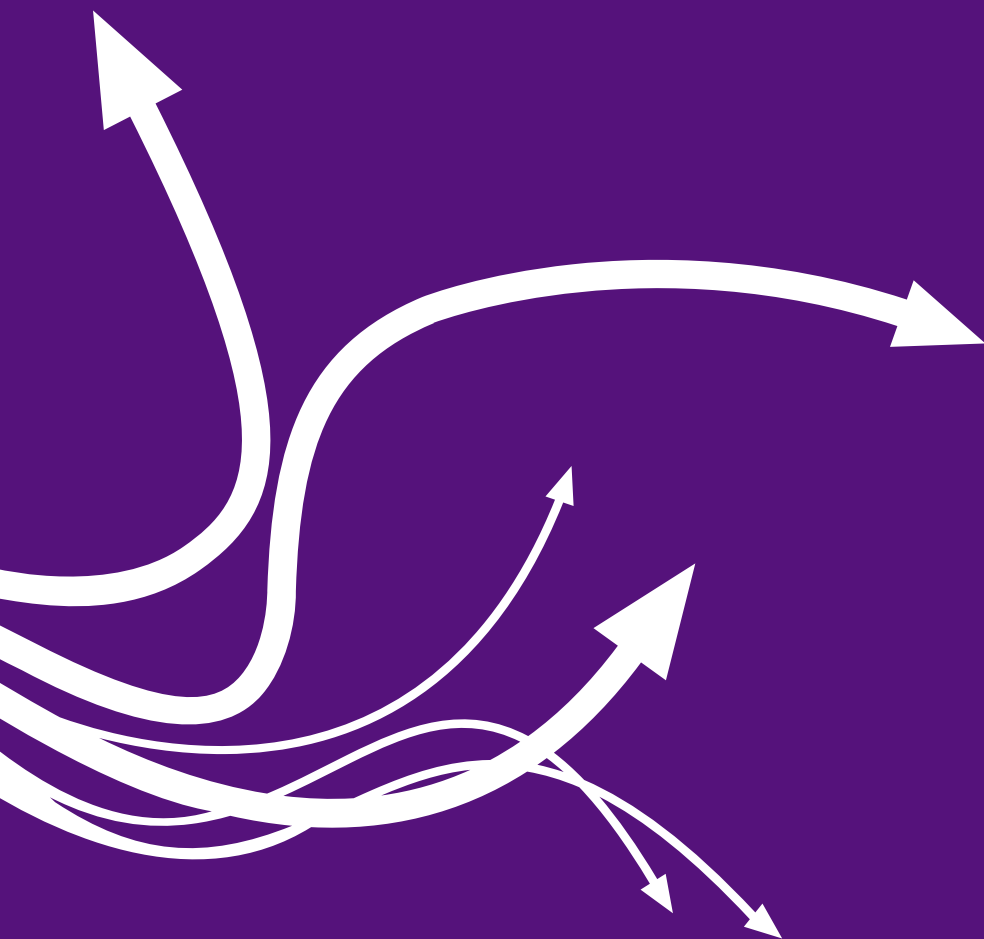
4. On the supply side, all of the DPs identified the critical need in working with groups disadvantaged in the labour market, for an approach customised to the specific needs of the individual. This contrasted with the approach prevalent within many mainstream services within each of the partners’ countries, namely, designing the service first and then recruiting people to participate in them. The personalised approach used in all of the DPs resulted in substantial improvements in the outcomes achieved by individuals whether measured in terms of job placements, internships, access to training programmes and qualifications or guidance.

5. A key feature of all labour market insertion strategies adopted by the individual DPs, was the role of high quality tailored careers guidance and counselling. This proved to be the case regardless of the target group i.e. it applied equally to relatively under-qualified individuals such as immigrants in Sardinia, and long-term unemployed people in Lithuania as well as to the relatively highly skilled immigrant engineers targeted by the Danish project. Important features of the services developed included development of labour market awareness, individual action planning, identifying existing competences [social and vocational] and actions to address specific barriers faced by individuals. In most cases this was linked to short training programmes to enhance employability skills, support in job search training for specific job opportunities. For some target groups a wide range of services are required at this stage to meet individual needs [e.g. the Portuguese project involved a psychologist, social workers, physiotherapist and Occupational Therapist to support beneficiaries within the disabled target group]. The UK project broke new ground by establishing an Information Advice & Guidance [IAG] service specifically geared to opportunities in the Financial Services Sector.

6. All of the partner DPs recognised the needs for tools and frameworks to support the progression of their beneficiary target groups into the labour market. People from disadvantaged groups can experience low self-esteem and have often had a poor experience of education, training and the labour market and can easily be ‘lost’ at different stages in their progression into employment. Key features of the methodologies adopted by most of the partners included the development of integrated personalised programmes, linking initial guidance and action planning with bespoke employability and vocationally specific training and elements of job brokerage, ongoing guidance, support and mentoring at all stages together with the setting of personal targets and goals and the regular review of these both during and after the programme.

7. Whilst the partners found that it was important on the 'demand' side to work with employers using CSR and other means, to enhance their receptiveness to the recruitment of disadvantaged groups, on the 'supply' side many developed employment brokerage services to 'build the bridge' between beneficiaries and employers. Most of the partners developed brokerage services and mechanisms tailored to the specific needs of their target groups. The NRC/APPC in Portugal for instance, have established a Disability Employment Service which includes a range of specialist services to disabled people and employers to identify employment opportunities and address potential barriers such as the need for aids and equipment, transport and communication. The ILEX DP in Sardinia established the ILEX agency which recruited employers, identified job placements and 'matched' these to the personal and professional competences of beneficiaries. The UK DP established the Canary Wharf Recruitment and Training Centre which has worked with the Tower Hamlets Employment Solutions service to link specific sector careers guidance, training, CV and interview preparation with job and internship opportunities identified through an Employment Engagement Manager who works with HR managers of companies to develop local recruitment strategies. The Danish DP has used its Competence Toolkit to match the individual competences of beneficiaries with employment and internship opportunities identified through links with companies in the engineering industry established through its mentor network.

The "Responsibility for Change" transnational partnership has been highly successful at a number of levels. The partners have undertaken joint research through the CSR Benchmarking exercise, the results of which will be widely disseminated with a potentially significant impact in the context of the growing debate on CSR within the EU. They have developed joint products, particularly in the form of the competency profile for CSR professionals, and a range of parallel products and methodologies. All of the partners believe that the experience of the partnership has had a substantial impact on the work of their national development partnerships. A series of dissemination events have been held at regional and national levels over the past 2 years in which the main products and findings of the partnership have been discussed with practitioners, stakeholders and representatives of beneficiary groups and the partners are committed to continuing this process after the end of the project, including through the use of the partnerships ICT platform. The potential for mainstreaming the results of the work is also considerable; in relation to CSR, the partners have strong links to existing EU networks, and in most cases individual partner DPs have established robust mechanisms for supporting mainstreaming.



5 APPENDICES

> DENMARK DP

Project identification: Kompetenceværktøjskassen (The Competence Tool Kit)

Number: 620

Denomination:

Website: www.kvk.socialfonden.net

ABOUT THE LEAD PARTNER

Lead partner: IDA (The Society of Danish Engineers)

Address: Kalvebod Brygge 31 – 33, 1780 Copenhagen V Denmark_

Telephone: +45 3318 4848

E-mail: lec@ida.dk

ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP

Project partnership details

Company: Københavns Kommune

Website: www.jobnet.dk

Company: Århus Kommune

Website: www.jobnet.dk

Company: Vejle Kommune

Website: www.jobnet.dk

Company: Vejle-Fredericia Sprogcenter

Website: www.sprogcentret-vejlekom.dk

ABOUT PROJECT COMMITMENTS, POSITIONING AND EXPECTATIONS

Issues-problems considered in the project development

The spirit of the project has not only been to provide tools for integration and use here and now. As the active work population in many European countries will be diminishing within the foreseeable future, it is likely that Europe will go looking beyond its borders to attract an additional workforce – and for that reason, it has been the idea to develop and test qualification assessment tools well in advance. IDA believes that the tools that have been developed from the present project can be of very good use for this purpose.

The project objectives

The objectives of the project have been to develop a tool kit, which can be used for a full assessment of work- and education-related skills among refugees and developing World immigrants in Denmark and other EU countries.

Project benefits to target groups

For the refugees / immigrants taking part in the project, the emphasis has been put onto guiding them into taking ownership of their qualifications and competences, rather than leaving this for their counsellors. A thorough training has been given, including a 2 to 6-month internship in Danish companies. The refugees / immigrants have also been trained in constructing a good CV, and in keeping it updated according to their progress during the project.

PROJECT PRODUCTS

A tool kit consisting of:

A tool to clarify *Professional competences*

A tool to clarify *Individual competences*

A tool to clarify *IT skills*

A tool to clarify *language skills*

A one-module course about the Danish labour market

A three-module course about writing CV's and filling in application forms

> ITALY DP

Project identification: ILEX

Number: IT-G2-SAR-053

Denomination: ILEX (Inserimento lavorativo degli extracomunitari/Immigrants' integration into the labour market)

Website: www.equalilex.it

Email: agenzia@equalilex.it

ABOUT THE LEAD PARTNER

Lead partner: Cooperativa sociale CTR onlus

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Fax Number: ++39 070664534

E-mail: a.pianu@ctr.it

ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP

Project partnership details

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Company: ARCOIRIS Onlus

Email: arcoirisonlus@tiscali.it

Company: EuroContact s.r.l.

Website: www.eurocontact.it

Company: Eurodesk Italy

Website: www.eurodesk.it

Company: IS.FOR.COOP

Website: www.isforcoop.it

ABOUT PROJECT COMMITMENTS, POSITIONING AND EXPECTATIONS

Issues considered in the project development

The Ilex was based on the observation of the transformation, in recent years, of the population's composition in the specified area; a mixture of languages, races, religions coming from a constant increase in the presence of immigrant citizens in Sardinia, has emerged.

Regarding the immigrant participation of foreign people in the labour market, we can focus on two interesting factors, which may seem to be contradictory:

- 1 > Notwithstanding the slow development of Sardinian labour market, the number of immigrant citizens regularly inserted into the job market is in constant growth;
- 2 > a high rate of immigrant workers carry out low qualified jobs, usually not corresponding to their educational qualifications and professional competences developed in their countries of origin.

The issues considered by the project were:

- 1 > the labour market in Sardinia needs and employs immigrant workers;
- 2 > the immigrant workers carry out unqualified job roles, and they seek out and are available for jobs local citizens do not take into consideration;
- 3 > it is very difficult to get immigrants into training: immigration law asks for them to have a job in order to be able to stay in Italy and the Italian welfare system does not work too well for foreign citizens;
- 4 > there are still cultural prejudices toward foreigners and a lack of knowledge of immigrants' competences;
- 5 > public employment services cannot reach immigrants, because they are not equipped with the necessary tools to address the needs of foreign citizens.

Objectives

The Ilex project aimed at identifying methodologies and pathways in the sector related to the access of immigrants to the labour market.

The Ilex project used an innovative approach towards the social inclusion of immigrants, aimed at promoting their human and cultural heritage and creating a local system capable of offering training and work opportunities in the care sector, the SMEs and the local craftwork.

This initiative intended to be a contribution to the policies against the illegal working, favouring contact with services and immigrants and the brokerage.

The general objective of the Ilex project was to address the demand and supply sides of the labour market, providing the immigrants with guidance paths and support for their work insertion in the local market and offering the enterprises a valuable support for recruitment.

Project benefits to target groups

The final beneficiaries of the project were immigrants, families and SME's.

The results pursued in the project were the following:

- 1 > implementing innovative actions in the territory in order to favour the labour insertion of the immigrants, through the creation of an agency for immigrants' integration to meet the needs of supply and demand;
- 2 > implementing integrated actions of information, guidance, counselling, training and work accompanying;
- 3 > providing the immigrants with training paths aimed at acquiring skills required in the labour market;
- 4 > identifying flexible tools for the job insertion aimed at removing obstacles to meet both workers' and enterprises' needs;
- 5 > identifying routes for the transfer of skills between different countries and different sectors;
- 6 > implementing actions targeted at the most marginalized groups (empowerment) within the new local welfare, with special focus on home care interventions in order to favour the social cohesion;
- 7 > activating empowerment processes and promoting gender mainstreaming;
- 8 > promoting the building of new competencies for the local bodies and operators in order to face problems related to the employability of the most marginalized groups;
- 9 > enhancing the activity of the local authorities in the field related to the policies in favour of the social and working insertion of the disadvantaged groups (immigrants), and promoting the growth of the employment rate in the territory.

Project products/activities

The actions and products are related to the creation of a support structure for the meeting of supply and demand (Agency), to the training pathways for the acquiring of professional and language skills (training course), different promotional and information activities in the territory (communication plan), and empowerment actions targeted at single workers and enterprises. All our materials and brokerage window are on the website of the project (<http://www.equalilex.it>).

The Agency for immigrants' integration into the labour market (ILEX Agency)

The Agency develops a wide range of actions: information, guidance and job counselling, legal advice, training, brokerage and cultural mediation. We used data bases of our beneficiaries, informative leaflets, brochures and CDs on legal and administrative issues addressed to all our potential beneficiaries.

The Agency activity is also based on the building of a network between the different actors working in the field of social and economic integration of disadvantaged groups (voluntary associations, trade unions, enterprises, public and private bodies...).

Training activity

Ilex project promoted training courses and internships for immigrants and it is currently preparing the platform for the on line training course that will start by mid April.

Empowerment activity

The empowerment process aimed at: creating/supporting the employers in view of the arrival of the immigrant workers and in order to develop strategies for a good integration; promoting meetings between organizations, families and immigrants; enhancing the mutual satisfaction and carrying out an evaluation system to envisage the possible difficulties; involving citizens, public/private bodies and institutions in the organization of public events (workshops) to disseminate information and promote welfare and safety in the territory.

The empowerment expert used special questionnaires and individual interviews.

Territorial communication and dissemination activity

The communication and dissemination activity dealt with the promotion and dissemination of the activities carried out within the project. It was also responsible for all the external initiatives organized by the Ilex Agency, and for the implementation of the information campaigns targeted at the citizens through leaflets/brochures, posters, press releases, ads, CDs/DVDs. The Agency also organized seminars and meetings aimed at raising awareness, informing on issues of interest for the different stakeholders and working towards mainstreaming the projects' results.

> LITHUANIA DP

Project identification: EQUAL HIGHWAY: Development Partnership Klaipeda-Vilnius Number:

Number: EQ/2004/1130-04/480

Denomination: 1 675 416 Lt./ 485 234 EUR

Website: www.equal-highway.lt

ABOUT THE LEAD PARTNER

Lead partner: Lithuanian Labour Market Training Authority

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Telephone: +370 52310369 Fax Number: +370 52310620

Website: www.darborinka.lt

E-mail: info@ldrmt.lt

ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP

Project partnership details

Company: Klaipėda Labour Market Training and Counselling Office

Website: www.darborinka.lt

Company: Baltic Education Technologies Institute

Website: www.beti.lt

Company: JSC “Kaunas Petrasiunai Labour Market Training Center”

Website: www.pmc.lt

Company: Municipality of Klaipėda

Website: www.klaipeda.lt

Company: Klaipėda University

Website: www.ku.lt

Company: Kretinga Women Information and Training Center

Website: www.kretvb.lt/women

Company: Blest. J. Matulaitis Social Center

Website: www.lcn.lt/Matulaitis

Company: Blest. J. Matulaitis Family Support Center

Company: „Persona optima“ Ltd.

Website: www.personaoptima.lt

Company: JSC “Vocational training and management institute”

Company: Studio of preventive programme “Rafaelis”

Website: www.rafaelis.lt

Company: West Lithuania Business College

Website: www.vlvk.lt

Company: Vilnius Justinas Vienozinskis Art School

Website: www.vienozinskio.vilnius.lm.lt

Company: All Saints Family Support Center

Company: Klaipėda Labour Market Training and Counseling Office

Website: www.darborinka.lt

Company: Kaunas Labour Market Training and Counseling Office
Website: www.darborinka.lt

Company: Šiauliai Labour Market Training and Counseling Office
Website: www.darborinka.lt

ABOUT PROJECT COMMITMENTS, POSITIONING AND EXPECTATIONS

Issues considered in the project development

The project EQUAL HIGHWAY in Lithuania aims to develop innovative approaches and ways of empowerment and counselling in the process of the integrating target groups into the labour market.

Issues to tackle during the project are the following:

- > very little partnership between institutions despite a number of institutions and organisations approaching the same topic – integration of different target groups into the labour market is increasing – and creating their own but the same methods is increasing,
- > lack of adaptation of psychological and training methods to the specific needs of the target groups while the gap between personal situations and legislation is getting bigger,
- > lack of organised information on the internet while the number of people using the internet for information and consultation search increases rapidly.

Key interventions

- 1 > Research on the needs of the representatives of target groups.
- 2 > Two career counselling and guidance programmes for the target groups.
- 3 > Four socialisation and empowerment programmes using different methodologies adapted to the needs of target groups and individuals.
- 4 > Staff training in order to share and disseminate lessons learnt.
- 5 > Two e-modules on the IT platform www.equal-highway.lt
- 6 > Formalisation and validation of the career counselling and socialisation programmes in the register of the nonformal education programmes of the Lithuanian Labour Market Training Authority.
- 7 > Implementation of transnational experiences in the nationally used programmes.
- 8 > Networking between 17 partner institutions from different sectors: including governmental counselling institutions, private companies, non-governmental organisations and social centres.

Project benefits

Target groups: 90 ethnic minorities, 120 women, 120 older workers (55+) and 120 long term unemployed people.

- 1 > 680 representatives of four target groups participated in the research. The representative groups enabled the development of programmes adapted to their needs which are similar but different in certain parts, especially concerning motivation to work.
- 2 > 200 people went through the career guidance and supporting progression programmes «Individual profile development and vocational career planning» and «Information integration and job search strategy».
- 3 > 250 people went through the empowerment (socialisation) and career guidance programmes. The uniqueness of the programmes lies in the different methodologies used in the programmes: art therapy for more reflective and artistic people, outdoor and experiential learning for more active people and those who have bigger learning and behaviour difficulties, group therapy for those who are ready to talk and verbalise
- 4 > 40 staff members of the whole development partnership participated in training on how to use different methodologies. This ensures that different programmes and methodologies can be used in all the partner institutions.
- 5 > Programmes can be adapted to the needs of other target groups other than those covered in the project. As an outcome of the project certain questions have been formulated that ought to be discussed and modified during the adaptation period: common motivation to work, legal and individual environments that encourage or constrain from working, etc.

- 6 > Networking is one of the key issues in the project having 17 partners from different sectors: governmental counselling institutions, private companies, non-governmental organisations and social centres. Partnerships made it possible to discuss and find solutions that are the most user-friendly and most appropriate for the people the programmes are targeted at.

Project products

- 2 > Research on the needs of the representatives of the target groups.
- 3 > Four empowerment and socialisation programmes to all four groups.
 - 3.1 > Positive self-assessment and active job search skills using art therapy methodology.
 - 3.2 > Personal and social competencies development using outdoor and experiential learning methodology.
 - 3.3 > Development of the social skills necessary for integration into the labour market.
 - 3.4 > Work skills development using group activities and group therapy.
- 4 > Two career guidance and counselling programmes to all four groups:
 - 4.1 > Individual profile development and vocational career planning.
 - 4.2 > Information integration and job search strategy.
- 5 > E-modules on the Internet based portal for information search and consulting www.equal-highway.lt.

Transnational produced instrument “Effective networking” at the international level.

> PORTUGAL DP

Project identification: ResponseAbility – *investors in diversity*

Number: 2004/EQUAL/A2/AD/211

Denomination: ResponseAbility

ABOUT THE LEAD PARTNER

Lead partner: Núcleo Regional do Centro da Associação Portuguesa de Paralisia Cerebral

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Fax Number: 239 79 21 29

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ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP

Project partnership details

Company: Núcleo Regional do Centro da Associação Portuguesa de Paralisia Cerebral

Website: www.appc.pt

Company: Det Norske Veritas

Website: www.dnv.com

Company: SDC – Consultoria em Desenvolvimento Sustentável

Website: www.sairdacasca.com

Company: Universidade de Coimbra – Faculdade de Economia

Website: www.fe.uc.pt

Company: Instituto para o Desenvolvimento e Investigação em Marketing

Website: www.ipam.pt

Company: NovaDelta

Website: www.delta-cafes.pt

Company: Secretariado Nacional de Reabilitação para a Integração do Deficiente

Website: www.snripd.pt

ABOUT PROJECT COMMITMENTS, POSITIONING AND EXPECTATIONS

Issues-problems considered in the project development, concerning corporate social responsibility (CSR)

Contributing to a more sustainable and fair world, by working with high level education establishments, organisations, SME ´s and communities, to promote responsible business practices, innovation and collaboration regarding the integration of people with disabilities in the workplace. This ambition takes into account that customers, investors, employees, society and community are all important part of business in the fast changing world.

Key-interventions in CSR area

Preparation of different management levels of SMEs to Corporate Social Responsibility integration and adaptation of procedures.

Development of communication and business marketing support policies, including best practice in integrating people with disabilities.

Definition of the profile of competences of a social responsibility mediator and design of the training (national and transnational).

Dissemination of benchmarking well alongside innovative case studies regarding diversity management in SMEs.

Incentive for an Academy for the development and implementation of training / education on Corporate Social Responsibility and Diversity Management.

Project contribution to CSR

Identification and involvement of companies with experience of integrating people with disabilities and/or who are willing to implement Organisational Social Responsibility and to define Social Responsibility goals, as part of their business strategy.

Inclusion of Corporate Social Responsibility as a subject in university programmes, as an investment, establishing investigation and integrating businesses in social issues, as a competitive advantage.

Creation of means for direct dissemination and information means, through contacts with media, about Social Responsibility, from the perspective of the inclusion of people with disabilities.

Use of the training model, to ensure that all participants implement the tools to balance the expectations of all stakeholders through benchmarking, marketing and policy indicators in their companies.

Project products concerning CSR

Guide of integration and evaluation – It includes tools of assessment “in situ” regarding accessibility, workplace conditions, competencies and needs.

Guide of communication and marketing to Corporate Social Responsibility in SME ´s – It includes a self-diagnosis tool, so that SME ´s can evaluate their performance, regarding communication and marketing.

Book “Diversity in SME ´s” – It consists of a benchmarking study about the practices of SME ´s regarding the integration of people with disabilities.

Training – An intensive course, with 3 modules, and a set of workshops about Diversity and Corporate Social Responsibility.

> SPAIN DP

Project identification: PROYECTO ERCOVA

Number: 335

Website: <http://www.equal-ercova.com>

ABOUT THE LEAD PARTNER

Lead partner: IVADIS (Instituto Valenciano de Atención a los Discapacitados)

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ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP

Project partnership details

Company: FSVE (Fundación Servicio Valenciano de Empleo)

Website: <http://www.sve.es>

Company: FUNDACION CEDAT de la Universidad Politécnica de Valencia

Website: <http://cedat.webs.upv.es/>

Company: AEPA (Asociación de Empresarias de la Provincia de Alicante)

Website: <http://www.aepalicante.org>

Company: CIERVAL (Confederación de Organizaciones empresariales de la Comunidad Valenciana)

Website: <http://www.cierval.es>

Company: Concejalía de Bienestar Social e Integración del Ayuntamiento de Valencia

Website: <http://www.valencia.es/bienestarsocial>

ABOUT PROJECT COMMITMENTS, POSITIONING AND EXPECTATIONS

Issues-problems considered in the project development, concerning corporate social responsibility (CSR)

Advising to companies about CSR, for awareness raising and implementing actions or strategies directed at the insertion of people at risk and equality of opportunity between men and women.

Key-interventions in CSR

General information on CSR and sustainable development

Training and developing of CSR strategies

Project benefits to CSR

Creation of methodologies

CSR Diffusion

Product development and methodologies for the use by companies and organizations

Project products concerning CSR

ERCoVa Kite Mark

CSR Training

CSR Communication Guide

Implementation of CSR Strategies Guide

> UNITED KINGDOM DP

Project identification: Fresh Futures in Financial Services

Number: 05E024ES0

Website: www.tower.ac.uk/freshfutures

ABOUT THE LEAD PARTNER

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ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP

Project partnership details

Company: East London Business Alliance (ELBA)

Website: <http://www.elba-1.org.uk/>

Company: Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership (THEBP)

Website: <http://www.thebp.org/>

Company: London Borough Tower Hamlets (LBTH)

Website: <http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/>

Company: City of London Corporation

Website: <http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/Corporation>

Company: Financial Services Authority (FSA)

Website: <http://www.fsa.gov.uk/>

Company: Newham College of Further Education (NCFE)

Website: <http://www.newham.ac.uk/>

Company: Ocean New Deal for Communities

Website: <http://www.oceanndc.co.uk/>

Company: Services Against Financial Exclusion (SAFE / Transact)

Website: <http://www.toynebeehall.org.uk/page.asp?section=00010001000100030005&pagetitle=Financial+Inclusion>

Company: Financial Services Skills Council (FSSC)

Website: <http://www.fssc.org.uk/>

Company: Basic Skills Agency (BSA)

Website: <http://www.basic-skills.co.uk/>

ABOUT PROJECT COMMITMENTS, POSITIONING AND EXPECTATIONS

Issues-problems addressed by the project

The Fresh Futures in Financial Services ESF Equal Development Partnership was set up to increase access into the Financial Services Industry for the local people of Tower Hamlets and East London. The project seeks to combat exclusion and discrimination through the development of models, services and interventions to assist excluded groups and employers, integrating the needs of both groups resulting in a harmonisation of demand and supply in the Financial Services labour market in Canary Wharf and the City of London.

Project objectives

The project has six objectives, each concerned with exploring innovative ways to increase access into the industry for local people. This is achieved through mentoring, new models of work experience and recruitment, new learning programmes for financial literacy, a dedicated Information Advice and Guidance services focused on the Financial Services Industry, the development of Corporate Social Responsibility to include local recruitment, and a toolkit to bring all of the resulting models and products together.

Project benefits to target groups

The benefits to target groups cover a wide range of empowerment and employability preparation activities. Subgroups for the project were formed with key project partners focusing on each of the project objectives. The subgroups explored the development of new approaches and models – or products - to increase integration into the labour market for target communities in Tower Hamlets, East London and the City. The benefits to target groups can be assessed in terms of how these products increase access into the Financial Services sector for local people. Some are tried and tested, such as our Information Advice and Guidance service dedicated to the Financial Services industry. The service has seen an average of 35 new people every month since it was first launched in August 2006. Around 70% of people interviewed have started studying for financial services qualifications, significantly increasing their opportunities of progressing into work in the industry. We are confident that the other products developed by the partnership will impact in similar ways. An outline of the products for the partnership and expected benefits is indicated in the table below.

Products | Objectives | Benefits

Product: Mentoring website.

Objective: to develop mentoring services.

Benefits: The mentoring website provides a resource to support both mentees and mentors, to increase knowledge about and access into the financial services industry for local people. The website also provides an online network.

Product: Integrated model of work experience including employability training, mentoring relationships, supervisory training for target company staff; Business case for diversity (THEBP); Work experience toolkit (THEBP).

Objective: to develop work experience and recruitment initiatives.

Benefits: Through integrating work experience with mentoring relationships and employability training, beneficiaries are certain to get clear and consistent messages about the Financial Services industry, its work environments and focus on customer services. Linking to supervisory training for company staff offers a clear benefit to employers and increases sustainable direct links to employers.

This focus allows target groups to quantify the benefits to potential employers of speaking different languages and understanding different cultures.

The toolkit ensures that work experience placements are of mutual benefit to beneficiaries and employers. Through analysis of work and planning tasks in advance, problems with communication or underutilizing skills of those on placement can be minimized.

Product: CATS programme (ELBA).

Employer engagement seminars (City of London).

Objective: to develop CSR initiatives.

Benefits: The CATS programme (see page x) has benefited Bangladeshi communities in Tower Hamlets as it demonstrates to both communities and training providers that key training in related skills and behaviour in specialist environments can be learnt irrespective of background. The CATS have also become ambassadors for their communities, showing them that progression into Financial Services companies is achievable.

Employer engagement seminars are of benefit to communities as they have addressed key barriers to engagement with target groups for many employers. They also offer the opportunity for networks sharing best practice to be maintained.

Product: IAG service with 'Matrix' accreditation.

Main website with focus on IAG.

Employer engagement seminars (City of London).

Objective: to develop IAG service.

Benefits: The Fresh Futures Information Advice and Guidance service offers clear benefit to target groups through demonstrating different routes into the industry, the qualifications required and the jobs available. Matrix accreditation is a quality standard for providing Information Advice and Guidance in the UK. The Fresh Futures website supports the IAG service.

Product: Toolkit.

Objective: to create an employer toolkit.

Benefits: The toolkit, bringing together products and initiatives for all the other objectives, will include as many products as possible, and will also be linked to CSR and local recruitment initiatives. It will therefore be of major benefit to target groups through assisting employers to recruit locally.

Product: Two main programmes Financial Capability for tutors and on How to teach financial literacy for the voluntary sector.

Objective: to develop new learning programmes.

Benefits: Increased knowledge for tutors, allowing Financial Services to be discussed freely; finance issues are often shied away from by teaching staff. Staff in the voluntary sector will be able to include financial literacy in key skills provision. The benefits to target groups will be significant as demand for both these courses is high with potential for mainstreaming all over the UK.

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