

GRUNDTVIG PROJECT Breakable workers MEETING in Berlin from 28/06/2010 to 29/06/2010

Der erste Studienaufenthalt des Grundtvig-Projekts fand am 28. und 29. Juni 2010 in Berlin statt. Für die Organisation und inhaltliche Ausgestaltung des Treffens zeichnete die Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Arbeit verantwortlich. An diesem Treffen beteiligt waren Vertreter/innen sozialer Integrationsbetriebe aus Belgien, Österreich und Deutschland.

Projektbesichtigungen bei der LOWTEC gGmbH

Am ersten Tag standen Projektbesichtigungen bei der LOWTEC gGmbH an zwei Standorten in Berlin auf dem Programm. Die Gäste aus Österreich und Belgien erlebten kreativ ausgestaltete arbeitsmarktpolitische Maßnahmen aus den Bereichen Handwerk, Kunst und Gebrauchsgüter. So lernten die Besucher/innen den positiven Einfluss künstlerischer Elemente in Projekten kennen. Die LOWTEC gGmbH erarbeitet in ihrem Projektzentrum Velo mit jungen Erwachsenen, die einen Schulabschluss nachholen, „Pixelbilder“ aus bemalten, ausrangierten Leinwänden anderer Künstler.

Im Projektzentrum Mitte der LOWTEC stand eine Führung durch den gewerblich-technischen Bereich auf dem Programm. Die Gäste wurden in arbeitsmarktpolitische Maßnahmen in den Gewerken Holz, Metall, Textil, Druck sowie die Produktion und Entwicklung von Behindertenhilfsmitteln und die Bereitstellung von sozialen Dienstleistungen für Benachteiligte eingeführt.

Workshop mit Erfahrungsaustausch zum Thema Vermittlungsstrategien

Am zweiten Tag des Studienaufenthalts stand ein Workshop zum Thema „Wie wird Vermittlung organisiert?“ auf dem Programm.

Claudia Avanzini von JobTransFair aus Wien berichtete, dass die Zielgruppen ihres Unternehmens sowohl Jugendliche, Wiedereinsteiger/innen, Männer 58+ und Frauen 55+ sowie Migrant/innen ab dem ersten Tag nach Eintritt der Arbeitslosigkeit als auch langzeitarbeitslose Menschen mit multiplen Vermittlungshemmnissen seien. 75 Prozent ihrer Kund/innen würden in die Bereiche Reinigung, Küche, Grünpflege und als Kita-Helferinnen vermittelt. Dabei entstehe ein Dreiecksverhältnis zwischen den so genannten Transitarbeitskräften, ihrer Integrationsfirma und dem regulären Unternehmen. Eine Förderung sei nur möglich, wenn die Unternehmen eine Anstellung in Aussicht stellten. Die Zahlung des Arbeitsentgelts an die Arbeitskräfte erfolge durch die Integrationsfirma.

Die Zielrichtungen dieses Konstrukts seien in erster Linie Beschäftigung, um die Beschäftigungsfähigkeit zu erhöhen und Arbeitstugenden zu fördern, und Vermittlung. Qualifizierung sei dabei nicht zwangsläufig.

Langzeitarbeitslose Menschen seien in der Regel die Zielgruppe der Beschäftigungs- und Qualifizierungsunternehmen in Deutschland, berichtete Alexandra Schimanski

von der LOWTEC gGmbH Berlin. Sie schätzte ein, dass ca. 75 Prozent der Maßnahmeteilnehmer/innen bei der LOWTEC aus dem niedrigschwelligen Bereich kämen.

Die deutschen Teilnehmerinnen am Workshop sehen einen Schlüssel für eine erfolgreiche Vermittlung in den ersten Arbeitsmarkt vor allem durch Qualifizierungsanteile in den Maßnahmen und durch Praktika. Als eine erfolgreiche Integration wird in Deutschland nur eine Vermittlung in den ersten Arbeitsmarkt angesehen. Als Stichtag für die Erhebung der Vermittlungsquote gilt der 92. Tag nach Austritt aus einer Beschäftigungsmaßnahme.

Bert Quintelier von Ateljeevzw aus Gent informierte darüber, dass in Belgien keine prozentualen Vorgaben bei der Vermittlung erfüllt werden müssten. Personen, die einen Anspruch auf Arbeitslosenunterstützung hätten, könnten zwischen zwei Möglichkeiten der Integration in Beschäftigung wählen:

1. ein Vertrag über vier Jahre oder
2. eine dauerhafte Integration in einem sozialen Unternehmen (für Personen ohne höhere Schulbildung und mit mindestens einjähriger Arbeitslosigkeit)

Ein Wechsel in den regulären Arbeitsmarkt sei jedoch jederzeit möglich.

Bei den erwähnten sozialen Unternehmen in Belgien handele es sich um Firmen, die sich regulär am Markt bewegen, erklärte Bert Quintelier. Als Beispiele nannte er Recycling- oder Sicherheitsunternehmen. Diese Unternehmen erhielten 50 Prozent Förderung, die anderen 50 Prozent müssten durch Eigenerlöse erwirtschaftet werden.

Die Zuweisung der benachteiligten Personen in diese Unternehmen nehme das Arbeitsmarktbüro vor, erläuterte Bert. Während es in Wallonien schwierig sei, Personen für diese sozialen Unternehmen zu finden, weil sie zu unbekannt seien, stünden in Flandern zu wenige solcher Plätze zur Verfügung. Der Unterschied zwischen dem Einkommen in sozialen Betrieben und der Arbeitslosenunterstützung sei sehr gering.

Die sozialen Unternehmen in Belgien haben keinen Vermittlungsauftrag. Etwa 10 Prozent der Teilnehmer/innen wechseln in den ersten Arbeitsmarkt, in der Regel wegen des höheren Verdienstes.

In Österreich weist der Arbeitsmarktservice die Personen zu. In einem Bewerbungsgespräch wird geklärt, ob einerseits die entsprechende Arbeit (z.B. in einer Schlosserei oder Kita) für den Betroffenen/die Betroffene Sinn macht und andererseits ob die Person zur Firma passt.

Die deutschen Vertreterinnen berichteten, dass alle Teilnehmer/innen die ihnen das JobCenter zuweise, auch in die Maßnahmen integriert werden müssten.

Als Abschluss des Workshops wurde eine **SWOT-Analyse des Modells aus Flandern** vorgenommen:

Stärken Sozialer Auftrag Kontrolle durch den Staat (Recht auf Arbeit!) Auseinandersetzung mit den Problemen des Einzelnen Verschiedene, marktnahe Tätigkeiten und unbefristete Arbeitsverhältnisse („richtiger Job“ mit Entgelt und mit sozialer Absicherung) Betreuungsschlüssel 1:5	Chancen Soziale und berufliche Integration Wirtschaftliche Herausforderung durch Marktbeteiligung Fördernotwendigkeit bleibt erhalten/ist unstrittig
Schwächen Zu wenige Arbeitsplätze (ca. 3.500 Arbeitsplätze bei 30.000 Arbeitslosen)	Bedrohungen Schlechtes Image der Zielgruppe bei den Wirtschaftsunternehmen Abhängigkeit vom politischen Willen / staatlichen Auftrag Wirtschaftsunternehmen sehen Sozialbetriebe als Konkurrenz

Die Teilnehmenden stellten abschließend fest, dass der Austausch von Erfahrungen über die Ländergrenzen hinweg sehr wertvoll sei, obwohl es keine einheitliche Vermittlungsstrategie für Europa gibt. Als große Gemeinsamkeit in allen drei Ländern wurde der Auftrag sozialer Unternehmen identifiziert, arbeitslosen Menschen mit multiplen Vermittlungshemmnissen und einem besonderen individuellen Förderbedarf die Chance auf Teilhabe und Inklusion durch sinnvolle Beschäftigung zu eröffnen.

GRUNDTVIG PROJECT Breakable workers
MEETING in Graz from 07/10/2010 to 08/10/2010

Grundtvig Partnership
Reference No. Austria LLP/AT-430/53/09

The Grundtvig Project “Breakable Workers” intends to explore the situation of the most vulnerable group of unemployed people in the three participating countries Austria, Belgium and Germany and compare the offers for them in social integration enterprises in these three countries. The second meeting of this partnership was arranged by BDV and bbs (the regional network of Styria) and took place in Graz.

The main topic of the meeting was

Options for long-term unemployed

The focus was on the situation of long-term unemployed people who have no professional education or qualification and are confronted with several personal and professional problems. They may already have been employed in social integration enterprises for a limited duration but their chances to get a job on the regular labour market are still minimal. The kind of jobs for unskilled workers that would meet their capabilities do hardly exist anymore and they would need more time for their personal stabilization and to achieve a sustainable employability.

The challenge is:

- To develop the personal employability of the target groups
- To establish an effective counseling and support environment
- To find new forms of qualifying them for the regular labour market
- To offer support structures for enterprises and target groups
- To define job profiles meeting their capabilities

The second meeting was attended by four trainers from Germany, a manager of a Belgium social enterprise and the coordinator of SST (the Flemish network of social enterprises) and the manager of BDV, the coordinator of bbs (the Styrian network) and several managers of Austrian social enterprises.

On the first day, 7th October 2010 site visits to several social enterprises took place in Graz.

OEKO-Service GmbH: is a non for profit limited company, founded in 1994. The main aim is to give jobs to unemployed people in the field of environmental services. The company offers 24 transitional jobs and each year around 50 target group persons are employed, the average employment being around 6 months.

OEKO-Service GmbH offers four main fields of activities:

Garden and shredding services: lawn care, shredding of garden waste, cutting of hedges and trees, composting

Rental of tableware and washing facilities for cups, glasses, dishes and cutlery

Recycling: E-scrap recycling, collecting and recycling of used cooking oil

Cleaning service for offices, staircases, construction sites

The company works in close contact with the city of Graz and supplies tableware and glasses for a lot of events in Graz and the surrounding area. In summertime they have to work in two shifts in the washing facilities to cope with the work.

They also have long-term contracts with waste disposers and provide them with work force for waste sorting and scrap recycling.

The company offers a special training programme for their target group combining personal development and professional qualification.



OEKO-Service, Graz: rental of tableware

The target group are mainly long-term unemployed with no or very low professional qualification. Among the target group there is a high percentage of migrants.

Caritas tag.werk: is a project for employing young people between 15 and 25. They usually are seeking employment since at least 6 months, very often they have stopped an apprenticeship, they come from difficult backgrounds and have little chances to find a job on the regular labour market. tag.werk offers them a possibility to work on a day by day basis to earn at least some money for their living.

At tag.werk the young people design and produce all kinds of bags out of recycling material. They also run a shop where they sell the bags.



Caritas tag.werk: sewing workshop

Bicycle: is a so called “social-economic enterprise”, also mainly for the target group of young people between 15 and 25, although they also employ older long-term unemployed to give them a chance for finding a job on the regular labour market after a transitional job of a maximum of one year at Bicycle.

The main activities are the repair of bicycles and “everything around the bike”.



Bicycle Graz

8th October 2010

Location of the meeting: BAN – a social enterprise in Graz

Exchange between Belgium, Germany and Austria about the options for long-term unemployed in their countries:

- What kind of counseling/tutoring offer social integration enterprises in the three countries?
- Are there any support structures for enterprises that employ long-term unemployed?
- What kind of subsidies exist to support the employment of long-term unemployed on the regular labour market?

Social Integration Enterprises in Austria

Presentation Charlotte Gruber(see annexe) on the Austrian situation

Main points of the discussion:

Social work is very individually. A kind of „development plan“ is set up for a year formulating the aim of the work in the SIE. An Agreement and steps to reach the final aim are written down together with the person, not done for the government. It is neither an advantage, nor a disadvantage to work in an SIE – they get a proof of their work afterwards.

There is paperwork to be done, but it is not an overload.

When SIEs don't achieve the aims, they maybe lose clients, but there is no penalty. When they do not meet the aims in several of consecutive years the enterprise might eventually be closed. In

Germany the situation is worse: penalties must be paid, when the aims are not reached.

In rural areas a driving license is a very important precondition for getting a job. In Austria, SIE's try to assist people in getting a driving license. In Germany it is very difficult to assist people in getting a

driving license. There are huge differences in prices of a driving license (Germany: 3.000 Euro, Belgium: 60 Euro – no need to take hours with a professional instructor, Austria: 1.000-1500 Euro). Social Label – a quality label for SIE was developed in Austria. There is an examination of how the money was spent. Financial Management and Quality Management are two different topics. AMS – the Austrian Employment Agency - is interested in the success of integration of persons – they check this via the social security numbers.

Social Integration Enterprises in Flanders, Belgium

Presentation Kelly (see annexe)

There are different offers for the unemployed:

- Work experience (70% move on to regular work)
- Training Centers
- Social Workshops

Social Workshops: need permission from the government in what field they are working. Placements into regular work are (probably) impossible. The social workshops are financed through 55% own revenue (turnover) and 45% is subsidized (72% of the wages are subsidized). Supported employment for people coming out of the Social Workshop is possible. ACTIVA – for 24 months a federal subsidy of 500€ a month and a discount on social security contribution, for employees of 45 years or older: unlimited subsidy. Claudia Avanzini (Austria): it is a strange political symbol that people 45+ are heavily subsidized.

Sst campaign: a beautiful campaign of getting to know social workshops in Flanders was started in 2010. „ A social workshop gives you more than good work“ - the Exhibition is shown all over Flanders. Competition: every local government sponsors a picture on a truck – sponsored by local government. The Campaign started with a workshop: Would you like to be model for this campaign? A professional photographer decided whom to take - can he/she be the face of a social workshop? Campaign helped in involving everyone. Internal communication: all the pictures were published in the internal magazine. Use your own people – make it your campaign. Flanders has a Flemish minister of Social Economy supporting the sector.

Social Integration Enterprises in Germany

Arbeitslosengeld 1 6 months to 1,5 years unemployment benefit 65% of last salary (Austria: 55% from net-earning)

Arbeitslosengeld 2 (Hartz IV) limited with individual agreement – social benefit; there are two options:

Grundsicherung: social benefit for persons who cannot work

Hartz IV: unemployment office and social office work together to put people back to work.

Search for work 3 months before the intervention ends. Persons may earn 1,50€ per hours in addition to Hartz IV

There are plans to organise a Third Labour Market („Bürgerarbeit“) for 150€ per month in addition to Hartz IV.

Second Labour Market: first six months: 1,50€/hours, then Bürgerarbeit for 3 years.

Persons with a work contract earn 1.300 € before taxes per month.

Projects:

MAE – without contracts (Mehraufwandsentschädigung) 1,50€ per hour

For people further away from the labour market. They have to prove that they want to work, than they can „move on“ to get a work contract.

AGH – with work contracts (Arbeitsgelegenheit) earning a salary between 1.150€ to 1.300€ a month before taxes.

They are only allowed to work under special conditions („positive list“ from Berlin Senate) – it is no real work, because there must not be any competition with the private sector, only additional activities are allowed.

In both projects qualification plays a major role. One integration assistance is responsible for 80 persons, they attend on a voluntary basis, only the first appointment is obligatory. The integration assistant concentrates on those people who have a chance to find a job. A status quo is compiled (qualifications that are missing, social problems/health problems) and a development plan is established. There is Special funding for qualification - 10.000€ budget can be spent (for 80 persons) (!) some courses are done within the company.

Many tasks of the employment office are outsourced in Germany. The different projects work under a high pressure to reach the set aims.



Discussion at BAN in Graz

The second day of the meeting was concluded with a visit at the site of BAN. BAN is a social enterprise employing altogether over 50 people, being engaged in clearing out furniture, different appliances, books etc. These things are either disposed of or recycled and sold in a second hand shop. They also run a carpentry workshop renovating old/antique furniture.

GRUNDTVIG PROJECT Breakable workers

MEETING in GHENT from 03/31/2011 to 04/01/2011

REPORT

Introduction

The Grundtvig project, Breakable workers aims to exchange on the different models of social and professional integration in three countries: Germany, Belgium French and Flemish speaking and Austria.

Two previous meetings have been held in Berlin (Germany) and Graz (Austria) in 2010. This third workshop took place in Flanders, Belgium and was about the execution of training programmes. The final meeting will take place in Brussels in June/July 2011. The results of the whole project will be then disseminated around Europe.

Summary

During two days, twenty three professionals were present in Ghent in order to share experience and opinions on the way the different partners of each country see and implement the training and qualification in their own enterprises.

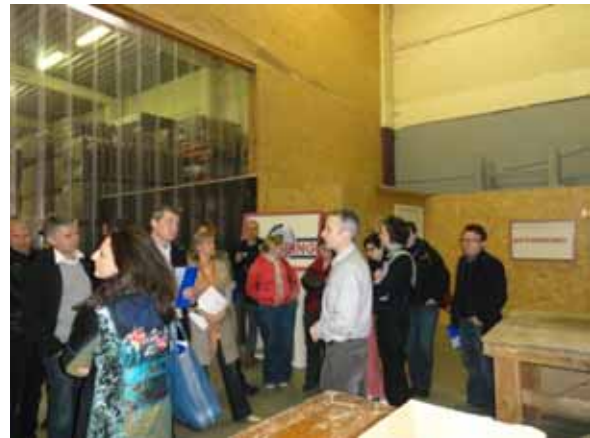


The first day was dedicated to **visits** of social integration enterprises in Flanders. The group began with the visit of a social workshop named "De Sleutel" which aims at the integration of jobseekers with an addiction problem and is active in several activities like renovation (building, painting, sanitary, electricity, etc.), greenwork (construction and maintenance of parks, gardening, etc.) or industrial work (packaging, mailing, etc.). This organisation is particularly careful about the methodology of integration used with its workers and has thus widely presented the kind of accompaniment it gives to the target group. "De Sleutel" can be seen as a special structure, being the only one in Flanders that offers limited duration contracts. Infact, contrary to Germany and Austria, Belgian integration enterprises normally offer contracts of unlimited duration. People can move onto the general employment market but they also have the opportunity to remain in the integration enterprises. "De Sleutel" made this personal and philosophical choice because they are convinced that private enterprises on the general economy are going to require more low qualified persons like the ones the association trains and there will be more opportunities to rejoin that labour market..

After having had the opportunity to learn more about the peculiar method of this organisation, the participants moved to "Ateljee", a social enterprise which vision is directed by three main goals: attention to the environment, payable goods and social employment. Three different locations guided us around Gent and through the various activities of the organisation, so that we could see how embedded they are in the social structures in the different districts across Gent . The first

workshop was in charge of repairing electronic devices and bicycles (including assembling of new bicycles), the second of sorting second-hand textile and the last one was a re-use shop where people can bring and/or buy different items from books to furniture. These different enterprises, give disadvantaged people unlimited duration contracts, as a way to improve the social and economic quality of their lives. Ateljee is also part of the Kringwinkel label, which has been set up among second-hand stores in Flanders to guarantee quality for the customers and employees and socially and environmentally fair production.

ENSIE, the Belgian organising association, with the help of its Flemish member, SST, The Belgian organising association, SST has also been very attentive to make the participants discovering some local aspects, in particular by having the meals in alternative restaurants at social, ethical or cultural levels.



On the second day, everybody met in CAW, an association helping victims and witnesses of crimes or accidents that offered us a meeting room where we organised an **exchange** about how the Social Integration Enterprises from Germany, Austria and Belgium train their trainers and employees.

Context

Coaches in Social Integration Enterprises work with long-term unemployed people who have little professional education or formal qualifications and are confronted with several personal and professional problems. We expect the coaches to be technically skilled and, on top of that, to accompany/coach the unskilled workers in a professional way. But how can we make sure the coaches are up to this double task?

Guidelines

The meeting was organised under three general guidelines :

1. What kind of (official) educational training for coach/trainer in SIE exists in the three countries? Does a degree in “coach in the SIEs” exist?
2. Do SIEs train their own coaches/trainers? What kind of training is available?
 - For technical skills? For social skills? For educational skills?
3. What are the most important competences a coach should have?

Exchanges and debate

After a round of introduction, Charlotte Gruber presented a summary of the training and qualification in Austria where the SIEs train both the professional staff and the employees on temporary contracts with the aim of integration into the traditional labour market.

The technical staff, working day-to-day with the target group is made up of professionals of the relevant occupations and has thus a technical knowledge in the field (carpenter, mason, cook, etc.). Besides this they also need educational and social competences to teach and accompany the “transitional workers” during their stay in the enterprises, that’s why they

also receive a particular pedagogical training. The social-pedagogic staff is composed of persons qualified in social work and they also receive training and experience in working as a coach.

There is no centrally coordinated training at national level for the staff of SIEs beyond their specific professional qualifications. Instead, each regional network of the county, in cooperation with training institutions, offers the possibility to SIEs staff to learn about leadership, communication and resolving of conflicts, motivation and managing stress, anti-discrimination and diversity management, dealing with addiction or mental health problems. A yearly meeting is also organised with the support of BDV Austria, the national network of SIEs, bringing together the social pedagogical staffs of all nine provinces to exchange experiences.

On the other side, the “transitional workers” are them trained with a predominant focus on “learning by doing”. The main aim of the SIEs in Austria is to increase the chances of the target group to find a job on the general labour market. For that, they’re hired for contracts from six to twelve months to gain work experience in a market-oriented occupation. As the employees of SIEs are usually further from the labour market, it’s important to give them some social competences (punctuality, working on a regular basis, working in a team, respecting and obeying to instructions, etc.) beside a professional training according to the needs of the person and the requirements of a future job. They also have the opportunity to have an assistance in obtaining driver’s licences or permission to handle lift trucks, etc. For some of them, a more basic education is also available.

Finally, in her presentation, Charlotte Gruber also identified the future challenges of the SIEs in Austria. With an unemployment rate reducing, the budgets are decreasing (cuts in funding, reducing the budgets for training and qualification, etc.) and it’s being more and more difficult to support the disadvantaged persons. It’s thus important to secure the SIEs with more own generated incomes.

In Germany, the situation is rather the same. The training of staff has very regulated procedures, which have been regulated and formalised through the procurement practices of the national employment office. This makes it difficult for career changers to work in the sector if they do not have the necessary formalised professional qualifications. Their work experience is not enough even if the company assures quality of training. In Belgium, the situation is similar and SIEs are in competition with profit-companies.

What would be important in the training of the target group is to take people over their imagined limits, to go a step further with the persons in difficulties in order to give them the possibility to be hired on the traditional labour market and not just to employ them in the SIE at their current limit. In particular with regard to the demographic challenges in Europe, the present employees of the SIEs are going to be able to work in traditional, private enterprises. In this perspective, SIEs have to offer training but also modernisation and promotion within the enterprises. One of the workshop of “Ateljée” we visited the day before has been taken as an example and lead to a wider debate: we looked at which opportunities employees sorting out textile products with a contract of unlimited duration have of promotion within the workshop. Moreover, a reflection was made about the method of working, the kind of jobs created in SIEs (“nobody in the labour market would sort out clothes this way” The process is too labour intensive but it is the only way to ensure quality and infact is a hallmark of the label). A German example was then taken in comparison to explain the necessity of going further. An enterprise developed a computer-programm to manage reuse furniture items including their storage, pricing and ticketing . Computerizing the production involves the training of the employees at the computer level (a skill more than needed nowadays) but also to the modernisation of the sorting out of textile products and to the possibility of promotion of the employees in the enterprise but also broadened their job opportunities on the general labour market in any warehouse, department store or other logistical processes. The conclusion is that SIEs have to find pathways to the labour market, through their training and production methods which means they have to have more flexibility than other companies. Many enterprises are developing new methods for this work keeping a balance between providing work and developing skills. A more flexible system for the enterprises with provision to operate more closely with the general market would offer more options to people.

In Flanders, the government decided to change the law in June and to allocate disadvantaged people with a “backpack”, an amount of money that would evolve according to the person’s situation, to her needs in training and to the different stages she goes through. A similar model is also discussed in Vienna which would be combined with a performance-related premium (the faster the person is brought to the labour market, the more money would get the enterprise). But the bigger risk with the individual funding is the creaming. From Germany we heard about the experiences with vouchers in training

provision for the unemployed. It has been established that long-term unemployed persons with several disadvantages are rarely chosen for the voucher scheme or when chosen are faced with insufficient advisory systems that they do not cash in the voucher.

Another important issue we looked at was the missing link between education and employment administrations and sectors. Unfortunately, the two sectors haven't been integrated and are considered separately. This needs to be addressed.

Introducing "hard skills" (more quality, more complex competences) instead of the usual "soft skills" in the SIEs is also essential. This was discussed in the framework of the SYSCOM project. The SIEs have also to be part of the debate of the European 2020 strategy flagship "New skills for new jobs" in which presently only big training and educational enterprises are represented.

In Flanders, competence profiles (list of competences) linked with a test are being developed to enable people to prove their experience. By passing this test, the person gets a certificate. This method is very positive, especially for the target group (for some it is the first "certified qualification" in their life) and promotes their experience beyond the usual training requirement. This can be a bridge between the two labour markets (third sector and traditional labour market). It's also a way to treat the employees with respect. But the method still needs the external recognition of this certification by enterprises.

In the UK, there is the OCM model, a similar method of recognising competencies by experience, that gave good results years ago. (<http://www.theocm.co.uk/default.asp>)

Conclusion of the debate, the future of SIEs

There will always be people that cannot step into the general economic system. As SIE we are very much dependent on society and the social and political will to help these people. It has always been important to work at the political level to make things change and SIE are embedded in the local structures providing services for the community. The financing of the social economy sector is a challenge for Europe 2020, this needs to change and the importance recognised. There are two necessities:

- 1) To believe in the possibility of people to learn, develop and find new skills,
- 2) To have money to put them to work.

Social integration enterprises are all modern companies operating in an economic surrounding, real enterprises training and giving people a real job, trying to go a step further. SIEs try to find a balance between the economic, the social and the training aspects.

Other guideline to debate during the next meeting

The European Commission is developing a European Skills, Competences and Occupations taxonomy (ESCO), which will describe the most relevant skills, competences and qualifications needed for several thousand occupations. Aimed at institutions and stakeholders in the labour market and education sector, this new tool will be progressively developed over the coming years to include as many occupations as possible. Once finalised, ESCO will be the first classification of its kind available in all EU languages.

Could we describe the most relevant skills, competences and qualifications for the trainers of SIEs? Is it interesting to have a common/European description? This is the question to be asked at our next workshop in June

Conclusion

These two days of meeting between the participants from Austria, Germany and Belgium have been full of debates and exchanges about the training and the present and future challenges of the SIEs.

The main important points that have been discussed concerning the training are:

- Importance of linking together the education and the employment sectors;
- Necessity of trying to go further with the employees :
 - o promoting “hard skills” beside the usual “soft skills”,
 - o modernising when it’s possible,
 - o trying to give opportunities of promotion within the SIEs,
 - o offering quality jobs, etc.;
- Acting at the political level and being sure, for example, to take part in the Europe 2020 strategy (link to the role of the networks);
- Recognition of the experience among the competences of the employees;
- SIEs carrying on being innovative.

The next and final Grundtvig meeting is planned for June or July 2011 and will take place in Brussels.

GRUNDTVIG PROJECT Breakable workers

MEETING in BRUSSELS from 21/06/2011 to 22/06/2011

Introduction

The Grundtvig project, Breakable workers aims to exchange on the different models of social and professional integration in three countries: Germany, Belgium and Austria.

Three previous meetings have been held in Berlin (Germany) and Graz (Austria) in 2010 and Gent (Belgium) in 2011. This fourth workshop took place in Brussels, Belgium and included disseminating results to a wider European audience.

Summary

During two days, twenty professionals were present in Brussels in order to share experience and opinions on the way the different partners of each country deal with unemployment and the question of inclusion in and through their own enterprises.

The first day was divided into two thematic parts. This included a visit to a urban employment and training project in the heart of Brussels and an exchange of experience with members from over member states. For many of the participants this was the first chance to visit projects in their member states and particular attention was paid to the learning environment for them. During the introduction session the participants were paired off in interview partnerships and asked to find out what is interesting about the social integration enterprise which their interview partner works at. Returning to the whole group they were then requested to introduce their interview partner. This meant that since the company was not previously known to them they presented the new company in a way which was accessible for the whole group (they had already asked all the right questions and filled in the cross-cultural gaps during the interview stage). By the end of the introduction round the participants had a good understanding of the legal framework which the companies were operating in in the participating countries (Germany and Austria). Equally the participants had become accustomed to which questions need to be asked in order to understand a different employment system and were becoming aware of the danger of "assumed" similarity in their learning approach.

After the introductions we visited the urban project "Recyclart" at Brussels Chapelle Station. Right at the beginning of the visit we were asked to go up onto the open air platform to get an introduction to the project. At first we were perplexed by this because acoustically this seemed to get the visit off to a bad start. Trains passed through the station constantly and the noise made it difficult not only to hear what was being said but also to concentrate, then suddenly we realised what we were experiencing. Our guide (the project manager) explained to us how with the decision to make Brussels a centre for Europe dramatically changed the infrastructure in the town for the residents. Transport ways across Brussels were changed making it accessible from all directions but cutting through the heart of previously residential and locally commercial areas. Looking to the left and right we could see and experience the physical consequences of this policy. Recyclart was originally set up to convert the station site and its neglected waste surroundings into a new lively quarter. At the centre of the project were the local residents, Recyclart wanted to pick up on their creativity to redesign the area and develop socio-economic ideas. Today they provide employment opportunities for unemployed persons in the field of handicrafts, providing supported but temporary workplaces in carpentry, metal and maintenance as a support for the artists who are guests in their theatre and art rooms. They also

run a café-restaurant in the once vandalised station buildings providing more work opportunities there too. They act as a community centre making art for many local residents for the first time accessible and also encouraging them to take part in a local photography project documenting urban life. Recyclart hosts festivals and summer events bringing together theatre, music and art for the local community and making their district one of the liveliest parts of Brussels. As part of the site development a skaters park was developed which now enjoys international fame.

The success rate of placement from the workshops at Recyclart lies at 80%. For our visitors there were many links to their own companies especially in the embeddiment of Social Integration Enterprises in the community and the provision of services for a particular community. The added value of cooperation with arts and young artists was a new impulse for some visitors particularly those involved in youth placement schemes.



In the afternoon the group joined up with the members of European Network of Social Integration Enterprises to exchange on

1. Main aim of social integration enterprises and strategies for job placements
2. What kind of support is offered to the target group
3. Importance of training versus employment

in the various member states.

To set the scene we received short reports to these topics from Romania, Italy, Luxembourg, Czech Republic, Portugal, Belgium (both Flanders, Walloon) and Spain.

From **Romania** we learned that there is no direct policy governing the integration of disadvantaged persons via Social Integration enterprises. The NPO Structures which are emerging in this field combine elements of the French Spanish and Belgian systems. There is no state aid provided but the wages from the solidarity contracts are not subject to taxes. The companies are working together with public authorities in the field of recycling and community services. The target groups are those who have never worked before or are long term unemployed, including school drop-outs, illiterate persons, former prisoners and the disabled. The persons receive an amount just above the local usual wage. Some activities are also funded from NGO's these are however activation orientated and not salaried

work. A legislative act has been drawn up to create a legal framework for SIE's in Romania. It is hoped that this will be introduced to parliament in autumn 2011 and agreed on by early 2012. The current structures cooperate with private companies and provide the necessary training to replace on the labour market. However the main barrier back to work often lies in social problems.

From the **Czech Republic** we learned that most of the current support is being channeled at cooperatives and social workshops but not at social integration enterprises. They hope to set up new structures which will encourage more social enterprises to be created with a focus on training and placement.

From **Italy** three considerations were presented: the role of the social cooperatives in employing drug addicts and persons with mental disorders has been instrumental in providing alternative structures for the care of these groups. They have their roots in the decision to close many major hospitals and provide today over 35000 workplaces. They have built up good relationships with the individual citizens (the political will was already there but they needed to get the general public involved and consenting). Now it is becoming increasingly necessary to redefine social cooperatives and make them more economic. The methodology includes a large proportion of training in very simple manual work. The person is at the centre of this methodology their aim is to give back dignity. The person usually comes on a two year temporary contract but the enterprises try to create permanent positions for them as their chances on the labour market remain extremely limited. Public contracts under €100.000 are reserved for these social cooperatives and whilst no state aid is paid to the companies and the salaries of the target group are exempted from taxation easing the burden on the companies. The legal framework requires for this that 30% of the workers must at all times be from the certified target group. The cooperatives try to pay the best possible wage but with reference to market conditions. This averages out at € 900 - € 1.000 per month but the main problem for the persons is that hardly any of them are actually working full time in the social cooperatives making it still difficult to survive on that wage. The social cooperatives do not have much of a problem through competition with the private sector their biggest problem is the grey economy.

From **Spain** we learned that their official target group are the long term unemployed and not disabled persons. The Social Integration Enterprises have their own legislation which is valid for all of the 17 autonomous regions – the employees can stay for up to three years receiving a full contract and also a personal path which is a deal between them, the company and the social services. The companies are operating in the field of gardening, catering and recycling. The next goal for the sector is to have an EU Quota which would require the member states to restrict a share of the public market for Social Integration Enterprises. The companies are already cooperating with the private sector and in each company at least one person is responsible for supporting the personal paths to placement on the general labour market.

In **Luxembourg** the mission of the Social Integration Enterprises is placement in employment on the general economy. Up until recently unemployment has not been such a big issue in Luxembourg averaging at 3% but the rise to 5% has not been accompanied by new solutions to integration issues and now they are faced with a need for a new social strategy, even the European Commission has recommended that they rebalance the social structures. At present the transit workers are coming to the companies for a maximum of two years and contracts between the companies and the authorities are renewed yearly. One of the new strategies could be a strengthening of the a new social solidarity economy between the social and private sector.. Whilst stable employment is falling in Luxembourg over 1000 stable jobs have been created in cultural and social services which could be a new employment motor in Luxembourg for the disadvantaged.

In **Portugal** there are currently 2 scenarios for work integration 1) work integration enterprises operating on the general economy and 2) companies providing integration workplaces for the disabled partly on the general economy but also in a “protected” economy. The report we heard concentrated

on the problems of work integration in rural areas and services in agricultural services. Portugal compared to many other member states present at the meeting has a long tradition of migration within the country and out of the country rather than migration to the country. In rural areas the migration has become particularly high and now it is question of how to pay for the workforce that is left behind, those who cannot migrate. Since entering the European Union Portugal has put a huge emphasis on training and less concentration on job creation. With an increase of unemployment from 7 to 12% there is a realisation that the focus now needs to be on job creation and the models of training need to be questioned. The proposition is to have new and more companies with the role of Social Integration enterprises being to organize the work flow from company to company. The main focus would be to find work for the individual, then to solve the social problems and focus in on training needs. The SIE becomes the trust factor between the job seeker and the company. This translated into a rural setting becomes an important factor when dealing with small farming units.

From **Flanders** we heard that the main aim of the Social Integration Enterprises was to integrate the disadvantaged back into society through employment rather than into the labour market. The employment contracts are not restricted and the employees can stay for as long as possible. The duration of the contract often depended on individual motivation although some people do progress back onto the general economy. But often this is not an option and the target group which is allowed to work in the SIEs must be low qualified, unemployed for at least 5 years and with a psychological/ social problem. A staff key ratio of 5:1 on the on the shop floor is also indicative of the core focus being the person and not the production.

In **Walloon** although the picture with the unlimited working contracts seems similar legislation is however different. Legislation for SIE came into force in 1998 and sets the goal for the Social Integration Enterprises to create sustainable jobs. There are a number of legal requirements which the enterprises have to fulfill – they must be a trading company with a social purpose (9 specific articles define the social purpose). The workers have to be associates of the company and in the company statutes they have to define how funds will be distributed. They need a certificate from the the Chamber of Commerce and 10 other institutions which requires them to present a sustainable financial plan. It is not possible to unload the target group workers and after the initial 4 years a balance of at least 50% target group workers must be achieved and thereafter maintained. The target group is set together from low skilled (they need not be long term unemployed) and the long term unemployed. The subsidy for the salary is degenerative over 4 years from €7.500 per annum through to € 5000 to € 3500 and finally € 2500 per annum in the fourth year. Complimentary to the salary subsidy they receive a subsidy for overheads of €40000 over 3 years. A social worker is subsidized at a ratio of 2:50 persons. This subsidy is withdrawn after 5 years. Providing the company reinvests any profits in the company they do not have to pay tax on annual profits. About 6000 people are employed in such companies in Walloon. One of the main sources of work is through the domestic cleaning voucher system. Such € 20 vouchers can be exchanged by private homes in the companies for cleaning service, the private person pays €12 of the voucher, € 8,00 is subsidised by the government. The SIE can take part in all public procurements which are applicable to their skills; there is no reservation of certain contracts for them. They operate fully in the general economy. The skills of the companies lie in recycling, maintenance of parks and woods, garaging, domestic services etc.

The reports we heard acted as an axis to begin a comparison of the different systems but also for a deeper reflection about one's own national system. With this particular focus on placement we looked more deeply at the question whether the nature of the refinancing of integration at a state level played an influence on placement tasks. As in all the previous visits the question of contract duration in the companies was of particular interest to this new learning group. The group could easily see the more excluded the system is to the market the more state invention is necessary, this meant that placement was only an issue outside of the company and fulltime work opportunities in the companies for low qualified persons were not an option. This misses out on the potential of this sector of a social

economy as a job motor, particularly as they would be more inclined to provide jobs for this target group than the private sector. This we would see very clearly in the site visit on the following day.

It was again interesting to find through the report from Portugal that the group was reflecting on the role of training and the missing intersection between supported employment and training (see the analysis in Gent).

Site visit

On the second day we transferred the learning session to the site of a Social Integration Enterprise in the Walloon, to the company Terre.

The beginnings of the activities of Terre are in 1949 in the immediate post-war time. A group of friends decided to put their efforts together and help those in need –after the war this was mainly to have roof over your head, to have something to heat a house The situation in Belgium improved fast after the war and the next step of Terre was to initiate projects in the Third World. The financial means for these projects came from waste paper collections, collecting textiles and various metals. All collection work was done by volunteers and the revenue of the sale of the collected materials was used for the projects in the Third World.

Then in 1973 the first oil shock came and our “rich” country experiences a series of crises and unemployment rates were climbing. Also many of the volunteers engaged in the collection lost their jobs. So in 1980 it was decided to start an enterprise for helping those marginalized by the economic development: young people without qualification, handicapped people, former prisoners, former drug addicts...

Today, Terre is a major integration company employing around 300 persons in the field of reuse and recycling, construction and cuistax renting (a type of three-wheel bicycle only common in Belgium). Their three main principles already formulated from the very beginning are:

- the provision of stable employment
- participative management
- north-south solidarity.

Their aim is to offer permanent and stable employment to the target groups whilst not neglecting the chances of placement in companies outside the Terre group.

At Groupe Terre in Herstal, we visited the reuse textile site and the recycling paper milling site. Terre is allowed to operate in the private economy and the subsidies for the employees run out after four years although their contracts continue on afterwards. Therefore a large part of the turnover has to generate enough income to pay these salaries. Terre is a major player in the reuse sector and since the collection and sorting of paper is reserved for the integration sector they have joined with private companies together to update their processing units to include an automatized paper sorting which can cope with the tonnage coming in every day. From this they produce amongst other things audio insulation partition walls made out of 100% natural fibres as well as audio cabins and other movable partition walls. In the metal workshop they also construct spiraling staircases and metal gangways. The textile reuse centre concentrates on the collection and sorting of used textiles which in turn are then either sold in the companies boutiques (only 1,5 % of the daily intake), made into cleaning rags and the largest part is sold to third world countries.

The employees at Terre can start each month and are encouraged right at the outset to take an active part in the company's operative decisions. Meetings are held on a regular basis and workers can vote at these meetings on a number of executive decisions, including salaries and how annual profits should be reinvested into the company. Although not all of the workforce take part in this participative

management system on an average XX% do (please can someone fill this percentage in). Terre sees this as an important mission in creating a responsible workforce and securing their sustainability. In the past these structures have helped to deal with such topics for example how to cope with the range of differing output capacity within the workforce itself (balancing tolerance and performance).

From the Terre visit a number of issues arose for the learning group

- **role of Social Integration Enterprises as a job motor,**
- **role of state financing, getting more on investment** through market inclusion,
- **protected procurement – working** with the private sector **to offer better** quality jobs, etc.
- participative management

The question of permanent contracts and placement took on a new angle during the two days. This changes the mission of the companies from one of solely integrating back to being the provider of sustainable employment themselves. Herein lies the question how many people can be supported in such a system (quality of the workplaces), how to balance performance within the workforce (using the best from everyone), how to pay the best possible wage (leaving the poverty trap) and what is the role of the companies in the skilled worker gap (giving everyone the chance to grow). The learning group saw it as necessary to tackle these debates particularly in the framework of the Europe 2020 strategy. They felt the best setting for SIE's would be to combine placement and sustainable employment strategies and start a new agenda with the private economy to achieve these aims together. Whether this agenda can be achieved through protected procurement (forcing the private economy to cooperate and take on responsibility for the low-skilled and taking an active role in combatting poverty), through models as in Portugal for rural areas or by the state development of a social economy will be the challenge of the next decade. What needs to be addressed for the Strategy 2020 is a better intersection between training and employment provision at state level. This would undoubtedly improve employment placement chances and would build on the work out of the Lisbon Strategy.



This was the last learning session in the project. On reflection all learning sessions have been of vital use to the networks involved in introducing key employees from the companies to different models in Europe, in getting them to question placement strategies in their own countries and in identifying what is the ingredient for success in their own system and what is holding them back. For many participants it was the first chance to learn at an european level in a mixed group and all participants reported back

that they were very interested in developing new learning partnerships on the basis of this experience. This was particularly rewarding for the organisers and a extra value from the project.

Placement strategies cannot be standardised within one country or across Europe. It depends on the mission to the companies from the member state and the level of steering which the state wants to reserve for itself and impose on the structures. It would be of extreme value to compare at a European level how much this steering aids or peanalises the process.
