



**Achievements, results
and proposals from the
transnational partnership**

**Strategies for Inclusion -
coordinated approaches for
quality employment**



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The Directorate of Labour
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The publication reflects the views of the partnership **Strategies for Inclusion – coordinated approaches for quality employment**. The Commission is not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

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Preface

Since December 2002 a partnership of different organisations working with social inclusion, training and employment has exchanged and disseminated experiences, findings and proposals. The partnership has had the promising name **Strategies for Inclusion – coordinated approaches for quality employment** and belonged to the first round of Transnational Exchange Projects in the **Community Action Programme to Combat Social Exclusion 2002-2006**.

Strategies for Inclusion has not only been a promising name, we have been active and productive partners: we organised several conferences and seminars and produced 3 Handbooks, which document the work and outcomes.

We invite all stakeholders in the field of social inclusion to work with our results and to contact us for further information and discussion. Moreover, even though the funding period for the partnership ends in 2005, all partners will continue to work with the issues and are highly interested in further exchange.

This Handbook gives an insight into the discussions and findings, which are of interest for practitioners, researchers as well as policy- and decision-makers.

We look forward to comments, questions and new projects.

Oslo, November 2005
Bettina Uhrig, Work Research Institute

Summary

Strategies for Inclusion – coordinated approaches for quality employment consisted of ten organisations from ten countries, an evaluator and a Norwegian network with seven partners (including the coordinating organisation). The partner organisations were non-governmental organisations (NGOs), public authorities, research institutes and social partner organisations.

The partnership agreed to focus on inclusion through work. A job is also seen as the best safeguard against social exclusion by most Member States in their **National Action Plans against Poverty and Social Exclusion** (NAPs/Inclusion).

From December 2002 until November 2005 the partners described and discussed various pathways to employment and their factors for success, which are published in Handbook 1 and Handbook 2. During the third year of the partnership the partners concentrated on cooperation and coordination.

As very often several organisations are involved in inclusion pathways, effective coordination is one of the key success factors. At the same time, several partner countries are working with labour market reforms, which sometimes have a huge impact on the partner organisations and their clients/customers, e.g. in Germany and Norway. Even though the situation and legal backgrounds are varying in the different national contexts, the partners have experienced that the problems are often similar and that knowledge of different systems and discussions of different concepts can lead to new ideas and solutions; therefore transnational exchange is of high importance for national developments.

In Handbook 3 **Strategies for Inclusion** portrays the conditions, outcomes and benefits of its transnational exchange and describes examples and plans of coordinated approaches for employment.

1. The partnership Strategies for Inclusion – coordinated approaches for quality employment

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1.1 Objectives and development - the history of the partnership

In September 2005, the partnership **Strategies for Inclusion** consisted of ten organisations from ten countries, an evaluator and a Norwegian network with seven partners (including the coordinating organisation). The partner organisations were non-governmental organisations (NGOs), public authorities, research institutes and social partner organisations. The partners are working with different target groups: immigrants, long-term unemployed, potential drop outs, early school leavers without formal qualifications, women on low incomes and persons with disabilities and health problems.

The partnership was created for the involvement in the **Community Action Programme to Combat Social Exclusion 2002 – 2006**. In spring 2002, the coordinating organisation – the Work Research Institute (WRI) – invited partner organisations known through previous cooperation to join the first application. Seven organisations from seven countries – Italy, Spain, Germany, the Netherlands, Scotland, Ireland, Norway - and a Norwegian network of six partners (including the WRI), participated in the application. After some months we received the news, that our application was successful: 64 out of 262 applications were selected to start with Phase I. **Strategies for Inclusion** was one of them.¹

Phase I: Defining the central issues and exchanging experience

From December 2002 until August 2003 (Phase I) **Strategies for Inclusion** worked with the following tasks:

1. Get to know each other and develop common ground

As the partnership was newly created, it was important to exchange experience, opinions, different backgrounds and values. We discussed our focus on inclusion through work highlighting that social inclusion is a multi-level and multi-faceted concept, which is not only dependent on a job.

2. Coordinate and implement the activities promised in the application and related to the Community Action Programme to Combat Social Exclusion

We set up an information system (regularly partner infos from the coordinator), organised 2 transnational meetings and produced our first Handbook, a collection of good practice examples for inclusion pathways.

To be able to collect and discuss good practice examples from different countries, we agreed upon a list of criteria for descriptions of good practice:

- Title of the initiative/project
- Objectives/aims
- Location
- Level: company, regional/national, sectoral/cross-sectoral
- History: development, status at the moment, cultural influence
- Target groups, also personnel requirements and gender aspects
- Rules for actions set out in laws and regulations and administrative requirements

¹ Information about the selected projects:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/soc-prot/soc-incl/tep_en.htm

- Actors involved, including the personnel requirements of the actors, and coordination
- Financing and funding systems
- Results on different levels: individual, organisational and policy levels
- Publications and evaluation reports
- Prospects

3. Develop future plans

We decided to continue to exchange, evaluate and disseminate successful pathways to obtain and keep a job. We extended our transnational partnership for Phase II and produced an application focussing on inclusion pathways and coordination.

4. Disseminate the experience

In June 2003 we organised a 2-day-conference in Oslo to present and discuss our experience, findings and prospects. As a result of this conference, we extended the Norwegian network for Phase II.

Our discussions are summarised in the list of issues and proposals, which was published in Handbook 1:

- Social inclusion is a multi-level and multi-faceted concept with a strong link to employment.
- Employment covers paid full time and part time employment as well as self-employment, e.g. in co-operatives.
- Support structures need a coordinated approach to be successful; the 5-stage-process is one possibility to appraise good practice examples for social inclusion.
- Good practice examples for coordinated approaches must be visible and need common criteria for their description to make comparison possible.
- National and transnational exchange is necessary to develop transferable models for successful coordination.
- The National Action Plans against Poverty and Social Exclusion (NAPs/incl) should be more than summaries of national programmes and should be known and discussed in public.
- The experience with and the results from different national and European programmes working with social inclusion should be visible, discussed and used.

Phase II: Identifying and disseminating inclusion pathways

In autumn 2003 we received the information that our application for Phase II was accepted and together with 30 other partnerships out of the 64 from Phase I we could continue to exchange our experience, joined by new partners from new countries - Bulgaria, Belgium, Finland. In addition, the Dutch partner from Phase I became the formative evaluator for Phase II.

Phase II gave us the opportunity to continue to work with the issues from Phase I and to focus on different inclusion pathways and their implementation. We worked with the following tasks:

1. **Analyse good practice examples and describe their relevance for inclusion pathways**
2. **Identify important elements in the inclusion pathways and illustrate them through case studies/stories**
3. **Describe examples and identify criteria for the success of coordinated approaches to employment**
4. **Link these outcomes to regional/national and European social policies**

Guided by these objectives we implemented nine transnational meetings and four conferences in the period from December 2003 until November 2005 (Phase II). The partners from Ireland, Scotland, Bulgaria, Italy and Finland organised national workshops, where partners from other countries could present their experience and discuss it with stakeholders from the host countries. At the same time the participants visited local projects and public administrations working with inclusion pathways. In joint partner meetings we discussed our experience and objectives and agreed upon the next steps, the products and dissemination strategies. We involved stakeholders from different countries in our discussions through the conferences in Budapest/Hungary (March 2004), Oslo/Norway (October 2004), Dundee/Scotland (April 2005) and Brussels/Belgium (September 2005).

In Phase II we published Handbook 2 “Twenty factors for successful inclusion pathways – analysis and examples”, which presented examples for inclusion pathways, factors for success and case studies, and worked on Handbook 3 reflecting on the partnership’s achievements and examples for coordinated approaches (see chapter 2).

Strategies for Inclusion has been an active and productive partnership, which has clear messages to all stakeholders working with social inclusion:

Successful pathways to employment need a coordinated approach, which is based on the needs of the client and which leads to paid work for the client. The services offered should be continuously developed and cooperation with employers should be extended.

Our findings correspond to three of the seven key policy priorities in the **Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion**:

- to increase labour market participation,
- to improve access to quality services,
- to overcome discrimination and to increase the integration of persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities and immigrants².

To work with these ambitious aims we need transnational exchange among all stakeholders and effective strategies for dissemination and mainstreaming.

² The report gives a very useful overview of trends in social protection and financing and contains country profiles from all EU Member States: European Commission, *Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2005*, (Luxembourg 2005): http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/social_inclusion/jrep_en.htm

1.2 Working on a transnational basis – cooperation and coordination

The partnership consisted of different members with different interests, values and backgrounds – and of course also different personalities. As described before, we agreed upon a common ground and invested in exchange.

The transnational exchange was based on a formal written agreement, which in itself was a product of the partnership, proposed by the coordinator. **Strategies for Inclusion** recognises written agreements as an important tool for successful cooperation (see also chapter 2) – not only in a national context, but also for transnational exchange. The partnership agreement was related to the Grant Agreement between the European Commission and the Work Research Institute and was adapted to each transnational partner, Phase and year of the funding (see chapter 5).

An important tool for the cooperation among the partners and the coordination of the partnership activities was the list of work packages, described in the applications for Phase I and II and adapted to the needs of the implementation process. Successful implementation required structured coordination of the partnership as well as guidance. The availability and reliability of the coordinator was of paramount importance.

The transnational exchange made it possible to look at our own work and the developments in our countries with different eyes. It provided a viewpoint from the outside, informed by knowledge from the inside, enriched, in turn, by new ideas from the outside. We got ideas about what is working well, what needs changing and what kinds of improvements could be useful. Through workshops, study visits, discussions, questionnaires and descriptions we identified common challenges and topics of interest.

We had to be open-minded, able to listen to and to understand each other and to adapt to various environments – including different working cultures. One common language – English – was necessary as well as the involvement of interpreters for conferences and study visits to secure the participation of stakeholders “outside” the partnership.

Strategies for Inclusion worked closely with the DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, especially with the Directorate for Social Protection and Social Integration. In addition, we cooperated with other projects within the framework of the Community Action Programme to Combat Social Exclusion and with national stakeholders.

1.3 Dissemination and mainstreaming – tasks for all stakeholders

“Dissemination means sharing information and raising awareness of the work of Development Partnerships and the results achieved good and bad.

Mainstreaming means that these results are transferred and taken up in every day policy and standard practice. They create a wide impact and influence change.”³

Even though **Strategies for Inclusion** was not a Development Partnership and had not the opportunity to work as a partnership with the implementation of projects we disseminated the results in similar ways to Development Partnerships: through websites, articles, handbooks, meetings, workshops and conferences.

We reflected on regional, national and European discussions, action plans – e.g. the National Action Plans against poverty and social exclusion (NAPs/incl) – and programmes and we discussed our findings with European and national stakeholders involved in policy development (see also chapter 3).

We presented our suggestions at several national and international events, e.g. at the “Third European Round Table on Poverty and Social Exclusion” in October 2004 in Rotterdam/The Netherlands. The “tailor-made approach”, which the partners saw as one main factor for success, was highlighted at the final session of the Round Table:

“It pays to invest in people who are at a great distance to the labour market. In a greying society, we need everyone who is capable of working...Work is the best remedy for poverty. It is therefore essential that the EU provides tailor-made solutions for vulnerable groups that lead them towards employment opportunities...”⁴

At the end of the funding period for this transnational partnership it is now in the hands of all transnational and national partners and stakeholders to work with the results and to continue with mainstreaming.



All Handbooks are available through the website of the Work Research Institute:
www.afi-wri.no (prosjekter – EU projects – **Strategies for Inclusion**).

³ European Commission, *Making change possible – A practical guide to mainstreaming under EQUAL*, August 2005, page 7, http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/equal/index_en.html (news).

⁴ *Conclusions EU-Conference Poverty and Social Inclusion in Europe: EU needs everyone who can work*, Dutch EU Presidency, Presidency meetings, October 2004, <http://internationalezaken.szw.nl> (news).

1.4 Main findings published in Handbook 1 and 2: the five-stage-process and the list of 20 factors for successful inclusion pathways

Inclusion pathways

All partners in **Strategies for Inclusion** implement inclusion pathways. They differ from each other in the kinds of activities, which are included, and in length. For a 16-year-old school dropout, without qualifications, a self-esteem rebuilding programme and a training programme are highly relevant activities. For well-qualified women, who want to set up their own firm as a way out of unemployment, an enterprise-training course may be necessary. Some pathways take a few months, others might be as long as a few years.

The partners, however, have identified a series of common stages relevant for all pathways. These are:

- An intake phase, in which the client is identified, or referred, to the pathway organisation
- An assessment phase, in which the skills, needs and interests of the client are identified
- An employment-finding phase, in which either a job is found in the open labour market, with or without support, or a job is created
- A support phase in which, for a shorter or longer period, support is offered to the employer, the (new) employee or the newly set up firm

The five-stage-process

The transnational partners have identified several models of good practice as inclusion pathways. One of them is the 5-stage-process. This approach is developed and implemented by the Employment Disability Unit of the city of Dundee, Scotland. The process is specifically designed to support persons with disabilities who are disadvantaged in the labour market, but who have sufficient vocational skills to secure employment.

The stages of the Dundee employment intervention model are as follows:

- Stage 1 Pathways to Job Readiness
- Stage 2 Competence Profile / Assessment
- Stage 3 Job Search / Job Finding
- Stage 4 Employer Engagement
- Stage 5 On/Off-the-Job Support

Within each of the 5 stages there may be a wide variety of activities; some will be unique to the individual or a specific client group, other activities may be more general and could apply across all disadvantaged and disengaged groups. These activities will vary from person to person depending on the person's disability and their personal, domestic and health situation. It is aimed at persons who are motivated to find and keep a job.

The list of 20 factors for successful inclusion pathways

Within the partnership, issues relating to the quality and the success of the various inclusion pathways were discussed. What have our pathways in common? Which facets contribute to the effectiveness of the various models? What makes them work? In summary:

Which are the factors contributing to the success of pathways to quality employment?

To answer this question all partners were invited to discuss and list the aspects, which contributed to the success of these roads to employment. The list clearly demonstrates that the degree of success of an inclusion pathway is the outcome of a complex interplay between factors at all levels. For example: a change in an income policy can be instrumental in convincing a client to enrol. A change in the age limit for a specific benefit can lead to participants dropping out. The introduction of a one-stop approach may increase the number of participants; the loss of a partner in the inclusion network may decrease the number, as a specific support can no longer be provided.

The list of 20 success factors:

On the personal level, a successful inclusion pathway

1. focuses on the client's needs, interests, opportunities and motivation
2. has a well-structured, step-by-step process and offers additional support measures
3. involves the client actively in the planning
4. covers individualised guidance and counselling
5. includes individualised vocational / enterprise training
6. ensures that the client has an income
7. includes a job offer
8. offers long-term, follow-up support

On the organisational level, a successful inclusion pathway

(Model)

9. implements a one-stop approach (one place to go)
10. offers immediate access

(Staff)

11. is provided by high quality, motivated staff
12. is based on good communication between all staff involved
13. works with case managers and job coaches

(Agencies)

14. focuses on close cooperation between relevant authorities and organisations
15. is based on a written, regularly revised agreement
16. provides a clear remit and autonomy to the core team

On the policy level, a successful inclusion pathway

17. has clear, longer-term financing arrangements
18. is linked to stakeholders: employers and other decision makers
19. is linked to local and national policies

To maintain a successful pathway

20. the inclusion model must be constantly adapted.

2. Tools for coordination of collaborative efforts between organisations in the employment field

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2.1 Coordination and the process of collaboration

Throughout Europe various groups of stakeholders are involved in more or less coordinated efforts to “move” marginalised groups from unemployment to employment: public and private service providers, employers, NGOs, and so on. Seldom, if ever, is there only one single stakeholder involved in a (re-) integration process. Marginalised groups in the labour market are often confronted with various barriers and they consequently have to deal with several problems at the same time - e.g. discrimination, lack of adequate qualifications, drug problems, health problems, housing difficulties, etc. Usually a successful result (i.e. employment) depends on the efforts and involvement of several stakeholders, each doing their “part” of the job in a coordinated way. It can no longer be expected of a single organisation to be able to provide the full range of necessary support measures. The pathways described by the partners in **Strategies for Inclusion** are therefore based on the combined actions of social services, health care services, probation services, guidance and counselling organisations, employers, training providers, business consultants, rehabilitation centres, employment services, job centres, trade-unions, local authorities, etc. Each project within the partnership is on average based on the collaboration between six local or regional and national partners⁵.

It is evident that it is not necessarily an easy task to coordinate the cooperation between many organisations working together. Still, good coordination seems to be a precondition of growing importance for successful pathways to employment. Just consider the alternative: lack of or insufficient coordination in service provisions. Well-known pitfalls associated with insufficient coordination are:

- Repetition i.e. organisations duplicate the same or similar activities
- Omissions i.e. there are gaps in the pathways offered by the organisations
- Divergence i.e. diluting activity across a range of activities
- Counter production i.e. organisations pursue conflicting activities
- Fragmentation i.e. there is insufficient coordination between the organisations
- Lack of transparency i.e. neither clients nor the organisations know what each one is offering
- Lack of accountability/quality control of the services delivered.

In this partnership we have described and analysed coordinated efforts of organised collaboration between various stakeholders in various fields of employment-related service provision. The partners came from 10 countries, operating under a variety of more or less favourable conditions. It has become a strong conviction in this partnership that better coordination of efforts by various organisations in bringing people back to the labour market, is necessary and has many advantages. To mention some of them:

Efficiency and better pathways

There are many efficiency arguments. Here we will only mention the concern with coordination of public service delivery to avoid duplication in service provision that cannot be justified against public expenditure. As a result of the combination of resources and approaches better pathways will be provided.

Learning and transparency

Organisations pursuing some joint activity have the potential for mutual learning. Networks of organisations in the same service sector, or concerned with the same area of service delivery, will improve their performance by forming learning partnerships. Omissions in designing inclusion pathways can be detected and avoided.

⁵ See Handbook 2 for more details about the numbers of collaborating organisations.

Access to resources

The “pooling” of resources with other organisations’ resources may improve each organisation’s capability and thus create synergy effects that all organisations participating in the effort will profit from.

Shared risk

In some cases, organisations may profit from collaboration because the consequences of failure on a project are too high for them to risk taking it on alone. Cost-intensive development projects are typically of this sort.

Policies promoting coordination and seamlessness

The provisions of public services that appear seamless to the service user have been a concern for many governments in recent years.

The moral imperative - there is no other way

For many, the vitally important problems of society, such as unemployment and social exclusion, cannot be tackled by any organisation acting alone. Issues like these have ramifications for so many aspects of society that they are inherently multi-organisational.

A process model of collaboration⁶

How can collaboration between various organisations working in the employment field be facilitated? Research evidence indicates that all stakeholders trying to establish and improve collaboration between organisations with no traditions in collaborating with others, have to address and handle the following aspects in one way or another:

Problem setting

This entails identification of the stakeholders who face similar challenges and mutual acknowledgement of the issue. To facilitate collaboration, it is important that a consensus is reached among the stakeholders as to who has a legitimate stake in the issue and exactly what that joint issue is.

Direction setting

In this phase, the stakeholders articulate the values which guide their efforts and begin to appreciate a sense of common purpose.

Structuring

To reach constructive solutions to persistent, complex problems, there is a need to manage stakeholders’ interactions in a systematic manner and to create long-term structures to support and sustain the stakeholders’ collective appreciation and problem-solving activities.

⁶ See Gray, B. (1985): *Conditions Facilitating Interorganizational Collaboration*. Human Relations, 38 pp 911-36

These three aspects and the conditions which facilitate their application have a clear link with, and reinforce, a number of the organisational aspects as included in the list of '20 success factors for inclusion pathways' as identified and described by the partnership **Strategies for Inclusion**. At the organisational level, a successful inclusion pathway:

- focuses on close cooperation between relevant authorities and organisations;
- is based on a written, regularly revised agreement;
- provides a clear remit and autonomy to the core team.

In particular, a written agreement, in which the roles and obligations of the various organisations in the preparation and delivery of pathways are outlined, can be a powerful tool, as the issues of problem-setting, direction-setting and structuring debates are brought together.

A number of tools to improve the coordination between stakeholders are described in the next section.

2.2 Examples of tools and new organisations to improve coordination and collaboration in delivering successful inclusion pathways

The projects in the partnership handle the problems associated with the improvement of coordination between organisations in different ways. Their approaches are based on local conditions, traditions and the structure of opportunities. This is one of the results of the discussions held between the partners at various meetings and presented at the final conference in Brussels in September 2005 (see chapter 3).

Below, the focus is on one particular way to enhance the effectiveness of the coordination of activities between the parties involved. Four examples are described. They are implemented at local / regional levels (examples from Spain and Finland) and at the individual level (examples from Germany and Norway).

2.2.1 A Local Action Plan for Social Integration from Spain

*Based on information from Lidia Garcia, Federación de Municipios y Provincias de Castilla la Mancha, Toledo, Spain (see also chapter 3.2)
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In Spain, in the region of Castilla – la Mancha, a Local Action Plan for Social Integration is a formal agreement which outlines the activities to be undertaken by municipal authorities (i.e. social services, urban planning, housing, health, etc), education and training services, voluntary groups, NGOs, etc. at local / regional level to identify socially marginalised groups and, through a series of coordinated actions, support their re-integration into the labour market.

The Federacion Municipios Provincias, Castilla-La Mancha supports several municipalities in the development and implementation of local action plans. Plans focus on underprivileged districts of municipalities which have over 10,000 inhabitants.

The Action Plan is regarded as a major means to tackle social exclusion. As a result of the plan overlap between and duplication of services will be avoided, thereby increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the services provided.

The Local Action Plan promotes:

The organisation of actions based on a shared diagnosis of the challenges in the community, which will facilitate the orientation of services towards common objectives;

The designing of common integrated strategies so that before any action is taken there exists an agreement on who will do what and when they will do it, thus simplifying such actions and reducing costs;

The avoidance of wasting public resources and a low level of efficiency resulting from disorganisation, lack of coordination and duplication of services;

On-going and final evaluation. Have the proposed objectives been achieved, at what cost, and how?

It is seen as essential to involve all relevant stakeholders in all phases of the plan – preparation, implementation and evaluation – in order to get maximum support for it. Stakeholders include representatives of local groups, voluntary organisations, NGOs, education and training providers, university staff, social researchers, municipal and regional authorities. The support from an outside agency (e.g. the Federacion Municipios Provincias), acting as a facilitator, provides an important contribution to the whole process.

The Local Action Plan for Social Integration is developed in four phases:

Phase 1: Preliminary investigation of the local situation

An analysis is made, at the instigation of a pro-active local stakeholder or a regional authority, to assess the need for a local plan for social integration. The trigger to do so often is a combination of, on the one hand, recognising the problem at stake and, on the other, the availability of national-level resources to tackle the problem.

Phase 2: The organisation of a local participation workshop

Either the mayor or the city councillor responsible for social services invites all groups and institutions involved in or affected by social inclusion issues to a participation workshop. At the workshop:

- The results of the preliminary study of the area are reviewed. Both problems and potential solutions, and their inter-linkages are discussed.
- Priorities are set. Actions are listed in order of priority, taking into account the needs of the groups most at risk from social exclusion, the number of clients reached with the different possible actions and the resources needed for doing so.
- A provisional time frame is produced. The actions are put in a logical sequence and put into a time frame.
- An expert committee is established. This group, in which the various groups of stakeholders are represented, will take the lead in implementing the plan.

Phase 3: The designing of the Local Action Plan

On the basis of the outcomes of the participation workshop the expert committee draws up the local action plan. The plan consists of a series of interrelated projects. A specific local group or organisation has responsibility for a particular project. In close contact with the various stakeholder projects are defined and planned. At the end of this phase an evaluation plan is prepared.

Phase 4: Implementation of the Local Action Plan

All organisations implement their 'own' project, in close contact and cooperation with the other projects. On-going activities are evaluated and, where necessary, adjustments are made.

A steering committee

- monitors the success of the implementation of the action programme,
- promotes the integration of the new approaches into the mainstream activities of the organisations involved
- and discusses plans for the future.

In developing the plan it transpired that attention had to be paid to building up trust between the various groups. NGOs and local authorities which, in the past, had not always agreed on the best ways to tackle problems now had to negotiate to reach compromises – a situation which was new for both parties. In such a situation, the support from an outside organisation proved to be of great importance.

2.2.2 The Employment Service Centres in Finland

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The Finnish Public Employment Service (PES) went through a reform during 2004. This reform was preceded by a pilot period (starting in 2001) when several one-stop-shops were established on a trial basis in several localities in Finland. After the reform the PES was divided into three parts – job centres, employment offices and employment service centres (ESC).

The services of the job centres focus on self-services, i.e. IT-based services and supported self-services such as individual advice for job seeking, training in writing CVs and job clubs.

The local employment offices provide personal services:

- personal employment counselling (interviews, action plans, providing of jobs, training, active programmes, advice about education and professions)
- vocational rehabilitation for persons with disabilities, and
- career guidance.

The employment offices focus on employment services and the provision of services in support of job-seeking and vocational skills development for mainstream clients.

Employment Service Centres (ESCs) were set up to provide services for jobseekers from the most vulnerable groups in the labour market. The services of the ESCs are based on multi-professional individual counselling. The centres are joint service points for local authorities (employment offices, municipal social and health services, Social Insurance Institution) and other service providers. They offer a variety of rehabilitation and activating services for their clients. The aims of the ESCs are the following:

- to reduce structural unemployment
- to reduce social assistance and labour market support payments arising from unemployment
- to improve the activation rate and active labour market support and
- to improve the clients' ability to work and his/her functional capacity and participation.

The clients of the ESCs include long-term recipients of labour market support who have social and health problems as well. The number of clients in 2005 is estimated to be 20,000. According to plans, about 40 ESCs will be established by the year 2007. Already 29 ESCs are in operation. Similar developments are taking place in, e.g. the Netherlands, Norway and UK.

The main part of the ESC services focuses on devising individual action plans and providing case management services for the job-seekers. The centres are also using already established mainstream services, e.g. training courses aiming to improve employment potential, work training, try-outs and tasters, and wage-subsidised employment. In addition, some of the centres have included job-coaching services in their service provision. This can be seen as one way of strengthening the bond between employers and the ESCs. In some cases job coach services are provided by private and third sector organisations, and in many cases the job coaches are working as members of the ESC team.

The centres have also devised plans to track their clients' pathway through the services. For example, in the ESC of the City of Espoo all clients go first through a comprehensive assessment phase where the service needs of the individual client are evaluated. After that phase the clients continue to the case management services (including also health services if necessary) or straight to the employment support services, i.e. job coaching. Individual action plans are drawn up for every client.

2.2.3 A Skills Development Plan from Germany

*Based on information from Andreas Wendel, Vocational Training Measures Company, Berlin, Germany (see also chapter 3.2)
(wendel@gfbm.de)*

In Berlin, the Vocational Training Measures Company supports the integration into the labour market of those with:

- low (formal) education and low working and/or social skills, who are far away from the labour market;
- adequate educational qualifications and/or working and social skills.

The main activities of the (maximum 10-months) training are:

- carrying out a holistic assessment programme of the trainee at the beginning to find out skills and shortcomings;
- implementing a Skills Development Plan with defined "milestones" in qualification and personal development, i.e. a "tailor-made" training course;
- if necessary and feasible, the preparation for obtaining educational qualifications.

Therefore, a lot of coordination between the different actors is required:

- with the labour agencies (for the coordination and planning of further assistance/measures);
- with the teachers and advisers (for the coordination and planning of learning progress);
- with external supporters (for the coordination and planning of external assistance during and after the training period);
- with state authorities (where relevant, the social services, youth welfare, etc.);
- with (potential) employers (for the coordination and planning of work and work experience places).

The Skills Development Plan is a document in which are indicated (a) the various steps which will be taken to improve the 'job readiness' of an unemployed school leaver between 17 and 25 years old and (b) the roles of the various agencies (social services, probation office, youth welfare, etc) involved in the integration process.

The central person in this programme is the "education coach" ('Bildungsbegleiter'), who collects all relevant information and initiates, monitors and evaluates the progress of learning and the successful pathway to employment. Together with the client and the partners the Skills Development Plan is prepared and carried out.

After one year the first results of working with a Skills Development Plan are promising. The new structure offers:

- better coordination of the activities with the clients;
- a more transparent way of planning and providing various kinds of support;
- a greater focus on the clients' needs;
- a more "employment-directed" way of working;
- a better outcome, as more of the clients are able to take up jobs.

An internal evaluation showed that staff members had to focus even more on the new goals and therefore needed special training. In particular, the “help-and-demand-philosophy” was one issue which had to be more relevant in working with clients.

2.2.4 The Individual Plan from Norway

*Based on information from Angelika Schafft, Work Research Institute, Oslo, Norway
(angelika.schafft@afi-wri.no)*

According to the Norwegian Social Services Act, municipalities have a duty to provide services to those who cannot take care of themselves or who need practical or personal help, and to give information, advice and counselling that can help to solve or prevent social problems. Other welfare services like the national insurance authorities, vocational rehabilitation, employment services and labour market schemes belong to the state's responsibility. It is, however, the municipalities who have the responsibility for coordinating services in the local community, also those which involve other relevant sectors.

For instance, people with serious mental health conditions, those who receive drug treatment, or long-term social welfare recipients and long-term unemployed often have complex problems and a variety of support needs. Their ability to enter the labour market depends on support from different welfare services and sectors. For many of those people the variety of services they depend on is too complicated and confusing, and the lack of coordination makes it difficult to achieve good and comprehensive arrangements for an individual. Having to find one's way around the system represents a hurdle.

This is why the regulation concerning an Individual Plan⁷ has been established by law, based on several Acts, including those relating to the municipal health service, the specialist health service, mental health care and the social services. This regulation gives persons in need of long-term and coordinated services a legal right to an Individual Plan.

Clients themselves have the right to go to social services or the health service and to ask them to draw up an Individual Plan. Relatives of a client have the same opportunity. Even ‘outsiders’, like a doctor or a nurse can ask for an Individual Plan.

An Individual Plan is the result of a meeting between the client, the social services and the health service. It must always be based on the person's view of his or her needs and wishes, and each individual shall be given the opportunity to play an active part in designing and bringing the plan into action. The agreed plan is signed by the client and the relevant services. The right to an Individual Plan is meant to ensure an easily traceable and comprehensive distribution of responsibility between the client and all agencies involved, and to ensure a coordinated provision of services.

The overall aim is to ensure that health and social services as well as vocational and employment services are considered as a whole, and to ensure that all necessary services are coordinated. However, it requires that the municipalities are capable of following up these plans in practice.

For more information see: <http://www.hpp.no/index.htm> (Websites are only in the Norwegian language)

⁷ Patients' Rights Act: § 2-5 Right to an Individual Plan
(http://odin.dep.no/hod/engelsk/news/new_publ/030071-200002/index-dok000-b-n-a.html).

2.3 Achieving more successful coordination – reflections on ways and means

In the preceding section examples are given of formal agreements used as tools to prepare and regulate coordination of services, which jointly aim at reintegrating someone into the labour market. Other ways and means to do so are described in the next chapter.

At the end of section 2.1 it was suggested that as part of reaching an agreement between parties, they have to go through a process of problem setting, direction setting and structuring. Looking back at the examples, elements of these three 'phases' can be discerned. Partners have to agree on what they want to achieve jointly, on the principles on which the direction to be taken will be based and on the actual structure of their common activities.

In the discussion between the partners in **Strategies for Inclusion** and after analysing related documents, it also becomes clear that, in order to be able to define challenges, set directions and build up structures, at least three requirements must be fulfilled.

Coordination of services within inclusion pathways requires that the organisations involved

1. are allowed to share responsibilities

Joint actions imply joint decision-making. Joint decision-making implies a certain loss of autonomy. In the decision-making process the interests of the client, as well of those of the partners, have to be taken into account. This is not always easy. Issues such as traditions, rights and competencies must be dealt with. Partners must be willing, and have the opportunity, to gradually go from a situation of full responsibility to shared responsibility.

2. can go from standard to flexible procedures

Inclusion pathways require individualised approaches. Many organisations have, over time, established standard procedures to respond to requests from clients. Clients, their needs and problems, however, have changed over time. Procedures have to be adapted to become more flexible and, as a result, more responsive.

3. can take their own decisions, within generic guidelines

Local and regional organisations - such as employment offices, probation services, social services - usually are a part of, or linked to, a Ministry. To ensure common standards, decisions are taken and procedures prescribed at national level. To be able to respond to regional and local needs and the needs of groups of clients, a balance must be struck between national guidelines and local / regional decision-making.

The partnership **Strategies for Inclusion** has amply demonstrated that whenever these requirements are met, local and regional bodies can be very successful in implementing effective and efficient pro-active inclusion pathways!

3. The final conference – presenting and discussing the partnership's outcomes

3.1 **Résumé**

*Michael J Evans, Employment Disability Unit, Dundee City Council, Dundee, Scotland
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The final conference of the transnational partnership was held at Hotel Eurovillage in Brussels on Friday 16 September 2005.

In addition to the partners, delegates from a wide variety of organisations and European countries also attended. A total of 54 invited delegates from 16 European countries attended the conference.

Jérôme Vignon, representing the European Commission, opened the conference. Mr Vignon is the Director of Social Protection and Social Integration at DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, and his keynote address reflected the strategies and aspirations of the European Union's Inclusion Strategy.

Bettina Uhrig, from the Work Research Institute (WRI) in Oslo, has been the transnational partnership coordinator and her keynote address provided information on the partners and their activities and roles within the partnership. A detailed description of a good example of an inclusion pathway was demonstrated, as were the key factors involved in a successful inclusion pathway.

Kristiina Härkäpää from the Rehabilitation Foundation in Helsinki delivered a keynote address on the Key Challenges of Pathways for Inclusion through Employment. Kristiina outlined the need to coordinate the employment process and to engage with the business community. She also spoke about the development of 'one stop shops' in Finland and some other EU countries.

The final keynote address of the morning was from Kees Meijer from the Knowledge Centre for Vocational Training and Labour Market (KBA) in Nijmegen. Kees has been the project evaluator and he presented his findings from the evaluations carried out with the partners and from the partners' events. His findings reflected a very positive response regarding the various workshops and conferences that have been held and he also found that the partnership activities had improved the knowledge and awareness of all participants. (See chapter 3.3)

In the afternoon, the conference delivered four parallel workshops on inclusion pathways.

1. Features of pathways: a checklist for policies and practices

*Presenters: Kees Meijer, KBA, Nijmegen/The Netherlands and Marianna Wester,
National Employment Foundation (OFA), Budapest/Hungary*

Facilitators: Steinar Widding, WRI and Per Brannsten, The Directorate of Labour, Oslo/Norway

This workshop explored the features of pathways regarding the policies and practices. The participants of the workshop discussed the issues surrounding the hierarchy between the factors and the workshop identified a clear difference between the policy-makers and practitioners. There was a strong view from the participants that there needs to be more focus on developing relationships with employers when improving and creating future labour market programmes.

2. Examples of inclusion pathways

Presenters: Mike Evans, Employment Disability Unit, Dundee City Council, Dundee/Scotland and Andreas Wendel, Vocational Training Measures Company, Berlin/Germany

Facilitators: Angelika Schafft, WRI and Grete Wangen, Akershus University College, Faculty of Social Education, Lillestrøm/Norway

This workshop presented two examples of inclusion pathways from Dundee, Scotland and from Berlin, Germany. There was a discussion among the participants regarding the concept of 'job readiness' and how we can define 'job ready'. The participants also considered that employers require more education and training regarding accessibility for potential employees with disabilities. The workshop also discussed how the focus could/should be kept on the employment objective during a pre-vocational training process.

3. Tools for effective cooperation

Presenters: Mairin Kenny, Ballymun Job Centre, Dublin/Ireland and Marieke Genard and Myriam Koning, Vitamine W, Antwerp/Belgium

Facilitator: Roberta Messina, Mainstreaming Agenda, Palermo/Italy

The workshop discussed the importance and the difficulties in maintaining effective cooperation between agencies. Delegates heard of good practice examples of effective cooperation from Dublin, Ireland and Antwerp, Belgium. The delegates agreed that cooperation between the agencies demands time and resources and that relations and routines must be nurtured. It was also appreciated that this is often difficult in a hectic situation but nevertheless specific measures regarding inter-agency cooperation are required to ensure success in getting the long-term unemployed and those most disadvantaged back into working life.

4. Good practice in the context of national/local action plans

Presenters: Lidia Garcia Alises, Federación de Municipios y Provincias de Castilla la Mancha, Toledo/Spain and Aneta Moyanova, INTEGRA Association, Sofia/Bulgaria

Facilitator: Anne Tondevold, European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (DG EMPL), Brussels/Belgium

This workshop focussed on two good practice examples of local/national action plans from Toledo, Spain and Sofia, Bulgaria. The discussion following the presentations was about how different stakeholders - especially NGOs - are implementing the programmes and action plans. The participants also discussed the need for all key stakeholders to be involved in the development and agreement of future plans and services.

(The papers presented in the four workshops can be found in chapter 3.2).

The conference ended with a final discussion session which was led by Mr Fintan Farrell of the European Anti-Poverty Network, Ms Anne Tondevold from the EC and Mr Bjørn Halvorsen from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in Norway.

The final debates included a discussion about the role of employers and the extent of their responsibilities in addressing social exclusion. There was also a degree of disappointment expressed regarding the lack of proactivity on the part of the EU. It was felt that individual countries had to develop their own Action Plans but that this process has not lived up to expectations.

3.2 Summaries of the presentations in the workshops

WORKSHOP 1 – Features of pathways: a checklist for policies and practices

The list of 20 factors for successful inclusion pathways

*Kees Meijer, Knowledge Centre for Vocational Training & Labour Market, Nijmegen, The Netherlands
(see also chapter 1.4)
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All projects in the transnational partnership **Strategies for Inclusion** offer inclusion pathways to quality employment. Such pathways consist of a series of linked actions to support clients to enter the labour market. Actions include social and personal skills development programmes, (pre-) vocational training, rehabilitation courses, job-finding skills, work experience placements, voluntary work, supported employment, self-employment, etc. Often additional support, aimed at (the family of) the client, is provided too, e.g. health services, debt arrangements, childcare facilities, housing support.

The projects cover a wide range of client groups, including long-term unemployed, ex-convicts, persons with a disability, unqualified school drop outs and migrants with social or health problems. The projects are based in eleven countries, mostly in urban areas: Belgium (Antwerp), Bulgaria, Finland, Germany (Berlin), Hungary, Ireland (Dublin), Italy (Sicily), the Netherlands, Norway, Scotland (Dundee), Spain.

A main aim of the partnership was to further improve the effectiveness of the various pathways. The long years of experience in providing pathways and the broad scope in target groups and countries provided a solid basis for doing so. To tap this source of information the following question was posed: Which factors make the projects' pathways to quality employment successful? The answers formed, in a manner of speaking, 'the pooled expertise' available in the projects. Altogether, the partners mentioned just over 100 factors for success.

Three groups of success factors

The analysis showed that these factors could be grouped under three main headings:

Group 1: Eight factors on the personal level. To be effective a pathway must be tailor-made and client-centred. The starting point for a pathway must be the client's needs, interests, opportunities and motivation. In order to foster clients' commitment, it is important to give them an active role in the whole process. In addition, a single contact person (to build up trust) and long-term follow-up support (to convince an employer to hire a client) are relevant factors.

Group 2: Eight factors on the organisational level. A pathway must be based on partnership. No single organisation is capable of responding to the usually multiple needs of a client. Cooperation / coordination between services is to be based on (regularly revised) agreements. Together services are to form core-teams of high quality, motivated staff, which have a clear remit and autonomy in delivering pathways.

Group 3: Three factors on the policy level. The success of pathways depends on long-term stable support from both employers and policy-makers. It is highly important to build up good contacts with local and regional employers.

And, last but not least: Factor 20: The long-term effectiveness of an inclusion pathway depends on its adaptability. Only providers who can adapt the design of the pathways to changes in the clients' needs, to new organisational conditions and policy developments, will be successful in the long-term. Most partners, therefore, pay particular attention to (self) evaluation activities.

Use and further development of the checklist

The main purpose of the (check) list of the twenty factors is to contribute to the improvement of inclusion pathways and policies. Such improvements are based on the idea (or basic theoretical assumption) underlying the list, which is: the more a practice or policy reflects the factors included in the list, the more effective the pathway will be. Or, to put it another way, a service can enhance the effectiveness of its pathways through including more factors in its design.

The validity of this assumption needs to be studied further. Relevant issues in this respect are:

- the completeness of the list;
- the relative importance of each factor separately;
- the interaction between the factors at different levels;
- links between different designs of pathways and patterns of outcomes etc.

How can the list of 20 factors help an organisation which provides funding for projects and continuously designs new supporting programmes?

*Marianna Wester, National Employment Foundation (OFA), Budapest, Hungary
(wester@ofa.hu)*

The mission of the National Employment Foundation (Hungary) (OFA) is to provide financial and vocational support for those NGOs which assist in the development of disadvantaged people by helping them get back into the labour market. Its tasks are:

- creating pilot programmes for promoting social inclusion through employment;
- as a result of the outcomes of these pilot programmes, developing inclusion models;
- evaluating the efficiency and impact of the programmes;
- preparing the ground for expanding those programmes which prove efficient and have a high impact (forwarding the results to the policy makers, identifying obstacles in the way of expansion, submitting proposals for the necessary policy and institutional changes).

The clients of OFA are (mainly) those NGOs which assist in the development of disadvantaged unemployed people. We support their work by way of developing programmes aimed at different target groups (pilot programmes). NGOs may then submit applications to implement these programmes. During the implementation period we continuously provide support for them to achieve their targets.

Developing supporting programmes by using the checklist

OFA places orders for services and during the designing process of some of its programmes (e.g. Transitional Programme, KID (see Handbook 2), Roma Employment Programme, 'Back to Work') it sets the same key criteria for the project organisations which are included in the list of 20 factors developed by the members of the transnational project **Strategies for Inclusion**. The most important elements of the list for OFA as a fund provider (wishing to make optimum use of the funding at its disposal) are:

- good management and staff
- existence of the factors at a personal and organisational level
- ensuring that programmes are embedded in the local community.

We encourage the NGOs to build relationships and develop cooperation with local institutions and organisations in order to help disadvantaged unemployed people to get a job. Thus the NGOs have the opportunity to build trust with local actors during the funding period (from 1 to 3 years). Meanwhile these organisations both develop the methodological capacity and establish networks in the field of vocational training to the point where they are able to continue providing services in their areas after OFA support has come to an end. Civil society is developing significantly in Hungary. One sign of this can be seen in the fact that several OFA-supported NGOs are already participating in networks and forming associations for representing and protecting their common vocational interests.

Conducting assessments by using the checklist

The list may be helpful in assessing/evaluating ongoing projects. In the case of pilot programmes assessment is an important ongoing task for both the project staff (internal assessment) and the finance provider (external assessment). We would like to underline the importance of an ongoing learning approach on the part of the project organisations. This type of approach ensures that appropriate and instant adjustments to the needs of the clients/circumstances/environment etc. can be made.

OFA recognizes the importance of the list of 20 success factors in the inclusion process, and sees its validation as crucial. Nevertheless we still need to consider how it can best be built into our plans. We are glad to use it as a tool for improving our awareness in regard to planning and assessing the incoming project plans and also the pending projects, where we wish to put an emphasis on the personal and organisational levels.

It would also be interesting to find out the difference in impact between programmes that had been implemented with the use of these factors and programmes that had been carried out without them.

WORKSHOP 2 – Examples of inclusion pathways

Pre-vocational training measures (BvB) in Berlin, Germany

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(see also chapter 2.2.3)

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Purpose

The main objective of the project “Pre-vocational training measures” is to verify and improve the “job readiness” of the young people (17-25yrs.) during the period of training. The participants are sent by the labour agencies and the department for apprenticeships.

There are two main groups of participants:

- Those with low (formal) education and low working and/or social skills, who are far away from the labour market, (categorised as "EA" and who need a lot of training and assistance);
- Those with adequate educational qualifications and/or working and social skills (categorised as "ÜQ", i.e. intermediate skilled).

Key activities

The main activities of the maximum 10-month training are

- a holistic assessment programme at the beginning to find out the skills and shortcomings;
- a qualification and action plan with defined "milestones" in qualification and (personal) development;
- "tailor-made" qualification courses;
- if necessary and feasible, preparation for obtaining educational qualifications.

The main goal for the funding agencies (beside the stabilization of the participants) is to give a clear and valid statement about the clients' abilities and skills in relation to retaining a "sheltered" apprenticeship, which is financed by the labour agencies. Participation for at least six months in this project is necessary for this.

Beside this, we work hard on placing the participants in the ordinary labour and/or apprenticeship market by work-experience phases especially in SMEs (small- and medium- size enterprises).

Coordination activities

Thus, a lot of coordination between the different actors is required:

- with the labour agencies (for the coordination and planning of further assistance/measures);
- with the teachers and advisers (for the coordination and planning of learning progress);
- with external supporters (for the coordination and planning of external assistance during and after the training period);
- with state authorities;
- with (potential) employers (for the coordination and planning of work and work experience places).

The central person in this programme therefore is the "education coach" (Bildungsbegleiter), who collects all the relevant information and initiates, monitors and evaluates the progress of learning and the successful pathway to employment.

Benefits and results

After the first year we have the first results of this new structure which has led to

- better coordination of the work with the clients;
- a transparent way of support;
- a focus on the clients' needs;
- a more "employment-directed" way of working;
- a better outcome (more of the clients are able to take up jobs).

But some things can still be improved. Staff members also have to focus on the new goals and therefore need special training. Especially the "help-and-demand-philosophy" is one thing which has to be more relevant in the work with clients.

Some figures

Places offered:	total: 84 (28 ÜQ-places) "throughput": 112 young people (33ÜQ) most of them dismissed due to high rates of absenteeism
Job/apprenticeship after:	ÜQ: 20 (60% of total) in apprenticeships or further education (all of them in regular jobs), 1 in a regular job. EA: 27 (30% of total) apprenticeships or further education approx. 80% of them in sheltered employment. 1 in a regular job.

Transferability

The new structure can be a useful and effective way of working with the described target group. Especially for young people who are not that far away from the labour market, this is a more "forward orientated" way of proceeding with training. For those with a higher need of support (especially those with multi-problem backgrounds) the time and intensity in the training process can be too small to get the desired results.

Employment Disability Unit (EDU), Dundee City Council, Scotland

Michael J Evans, Employment Disability Unit, Dundee City Council, Dundee, Scotland

(see also chapter 1.4)

(mike.evans@dundeecity.gov.uk)

Purpose

The purpose of the EDU is to create employment opportunities for persons with disabilities and to assist persons with disabilities to find and retain work.

Key Activities

- Work Experience Placements to enable clients to develop their skills
- Job Clubs in Dundee and Perth specifically for persons with disabilities
- Workstep providing employers with support to employ persons with disabilities
- Supported Employment Team providing on-going assistance and support to people who may need help to settle into and sustain employment
- Consultancy and Advisory Service to local employers, voluntary organisations and persons with disabilities regarding good employment practice

Coordinated Activities

The EDU works with a wide range of partners in the local community to ensure that the pathway to employment for individual clients is as seamless, coordinated and efficient as possible. The EDU works in cooperation with Social Services, Medical Professionals, Jobcentre Plus (Employment Office), local Colleges and Disability Organisations. These partner organisations refer persons with disabilities to the project and also cooperate in assisting to get clients 'job ready'.

The EDU operates a 5-stage intervention process as follows:

- Stage 1 Pathways to Job Readiness
- Stage 2 Competence Profile/Assessment
- Stage 3 Job Search/Job Finding
- Stage 4 Employer Engagement
- Stage 5 On/Off-the-Job Support

The coordinated activities are mainly operated during Stage 1; however, many clients require assistance to remain in employment, and cooperation and support from partner organisations are also commonly used at Stage 5.

Benefits & Results

The benefits from this coordinated approach are that it enables the EDU to deliver a full and comprehensive service to around 400 persons with disabilities each year. The EDU secures jobs for 100 clients and provides support in the workplace to a further 80 clients. Additionally the Unit organises around 120 Work Experience Placements each year. These informal partnerships have meant that persons with disabilities are given the necessary support in identifying suitable jobs whilst the barriers they face are removed or minimised by this coordinated approach. An additional key benefit is that organisations such as Social and Health Services that normally are not involved in employment services, are given the opportunity to contribute and participate in the employment process – this has brought many additional direct and indirect positive benefits.

Transferability

Whilst this form of coordinated activity is specifically for persons with disabilities, it can be easily transferred to other disadvantaged groups in any country. We have already established that the 5-stage process is transferable and similarly this method of coordination and cooperation could be developed by most European employment projects.

WORKSHOP 3 – Tools for effective cooperation

The Equal Youth Development Partnership

*Mairin Kenny, Ballymun Job Centre, Dublin, Ireland
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Objectives

To develop an interagency model for organisations and agencies that provide services to young Early School Leavers with regard to training/education and employment.

Key Activities

- Development of interagency model of working
- Development of training course for participants in the interagency model
- Development of a common language/profiling system for use in an interagency context
- Development of comprehensive pathway approach for young Early School Leavers
- Development of an innovative way of gathering the viewpoints of young Early School Leavers
- Implementation of interagency model

Cooperation between Agencies

Cooperation between agencies is excellent at practitioner level with all practitioners enthusiastically embracing the concept. The problem, as ever, lies in convincing the lead agencies (employers of practitioners) of the need for change in planning/sharing information/placing interagency cooperation on a formal rather than informal level. The Equal Youth project is dealing with this problem by bringing in the lead agencies at development partnership level and engaging them in the development of interagency training and guidelines.

Benefits/Outputs

The project is currently in progress but the following benefits have been already noted:

- Better cooperation between partners is already evident at a local level with partners reporting better access to the resources of other agencies and organisations.
- A map of the services available to young people in both Ballymun and Mayo has been completed.
- Greater understanding between agencies of the responsibilities and the limitations of individual organisations.
- Greater willingness amongst organisations to share clients and information.

Transferability

All results of the project will be made available to all. The training course and guidelines on Interagency Cooperation will be particularly helpful to any organisation that wishes to approach Interagency Cooperation in a structured way.

Coordination within pathways to employment – description of the experience in Learn & Work Centres in Antwerp, Belgium (2001-2004)

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Purpose and main objectives

The Learn & Work Centres (LWCs) are a partnership between different vocational training projects in Antwerp. Sometimes the partner was a small organisation running only one project, in other cases the partners were one or more projects from a bigger organisation. The coordination was done by the Research and Development Department of Vitamine W. The project focussed on 2 levels:

1. the organisational level:

- i. Clustering of different small vocational (NGO) projects around sectoral Learn & Work centres;
- ii. Cooperation between all the Learn & Work centres and developing common strategies;

2. the content level:

- i. Exchange of existing experience in methodology, tools and instruments;
- ii. Development of new methods.

Main tasks of the coordinator

- Bringing the different partners together and developing a common strategy towards policy-makers, target groups, funding opportunities. Different forums were set up to discuss several issues;
- Developing common working papers (with regard to policy-makers, other Flemish NGO's, ...);
- Developing common future projects (based on the needs discovered during the project);
- Bringing together organisations / agencies which play an important role in the pathway to inclusion;
- Collecting existing tools and methods and producing handbooks to make them available. This was done by interviews, questionnaires and in a working group;
- Developing new frameworks and introducing new approaches to the work (e.g. the introduction of the competence approach);
- For recruitment of clients: development of common information material & activities directed to intermediates and the target group;
- Informing the different partners about what is happening in the projects, starting dates of courses, new publications. This was done by a monthly e-mail newsletter and a few Learn & Work days for all staff members;
- Dissemination of the results of the Learn & Work Centre.

The first outcomes: effects, lessons and transferability

- First effects: better efficiency, quality, cooperation amongst the sectors in Antwerp;
- In Brussels a similar LWC started in the field of construction, based on the Antwerp one, and was successful;
- The mainstreaming report convinced the government of the success of the LWC and after 1 year the policy launched a new call for projects: 'Experiments for Learn & Work companies'. Three organisations in Flanders (Antwerp, Ghent, Leuven) will work together on the preparation of a 'Learn & Work companies' decree;
- Lessons to learn for successful cooperation (possibly transferable to other big cities).

In order to be successful we need:

1. Mutual support and determination
2. A specific (common) project
3. A maximum degree of cooperation (for all partners)
4. Enough attention for the process
5. A clear base for cooperation (in this case the sectoral base)
6. Scaling-up of the size of projects (makes common overhead costs easier to share)
7. No successful cooperation without clear leadership and guidance
8. “Everything can be better” as a permanent motto

The methodological cooperation was easier to accept for all partners than the organisational cooperation (fear of loss of autonomy).

WORKSHOP 4 – Good practice in the context of national/local action plans

Local Action Plans for Social Integration

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(see also chapter 2.2.1)

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General Principles for Action

The basic principles are categorised into four distinct groups, which may form the basis of a local plan when put into effect on the ground. The following categories are proposed:

1. Shared diagnosis. Social interventions can have a very real effect on certain aspects of everyday reality. It seems logical that we should be well informed about this everyday reality beforehand and therefore the cooperation of various groups is necessary. These groups include: the social services due to their direct contact with everyday reality; those organisations which represent the interests of individuals and groups affected by social integration policies; independent experts; and local representatives. There is also a need for the active and determined participation of other government departments and services which are not directly involved with social services but which deal with other facets of everyday reality.
2. Integrated action. It is necessary to devise integrated programmes and projects, which take into account in a global manner the problems of individuals and communities (local neighbourhoods and urban areas) affected by social integration policies, as well as the social and economic circumstances of these communities.
3. Coordination and cooperation. The comprehensive nature of these policies will require close cooperation and complementarity between the different levels of Local Government and between these and social bodies (voluntary groups and NGOs) in their different spheres of action.
4. Involvement of local groups. In any process of community development the participation of those affected by it is indispensable. The involvement of underprivileged groups in projects designed to improve their situation and their surroundings strengthens the social fabric, which in turn stimulates the identification of local problems and the development of solutions to them.
5. Joint definition of the sequence of action. This is to be achieved by drawing up an integrated plan of action according to a time frame which has been agreed upon by all interested parties.

Objectives of the Local Action Plan

1. To organise social action directed at socially marginalized groups, avoiding overlapping and duplication of services. In this way efficiency levels will increase.
2. To organise action based on a shared diagnosis, which will facilitate the orientation of services towards common objectives and prevent any duplication of services and disorganisation.

3. To have common integrated strategies of action so that before any action is taken, there exists an agreement concerning who will do what and when they will do it, thus simplifying such actions and reducing costs.
4. To avoid the waste of public resources and low level of efficiency produced by isorganisation, lack of coordination and duplication of services in the same areas.
5. To be aware of and evaluate the purpose of what is being done. Have proposed objectives been achieved, at what cost, and how?
6. Given that a previous diagnosis and study has been carried out, to observe how different solutions may be equally effective for similar problems, if local characteristics are taken into account.

National Programme “From Social Assistance to Employment”

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Bulgaria in statistics

Located in south-eastern Europe; Population: ca. 7.5 million; Ethnic groups: Bulgarian 83.6%, Turks 9.5%, Roma 4.6%, others 2.3%; Religions: Bulgarian Orthodox 85%; Language: Bulgarian; Government type: parliamentary democracy; Administrative divisions: 28 provinces; Economy: a former communist country, striving to enter the EU.

National Programme “From Social Assistance to Employment”

Implemented since 2002 by the Bulgarian Ministry of Labour and Social Policy as part of the New Social Policy in Bulgaria. A new active social policy provides pathways to employment and offers professional and specialized social services. Special attention is given to workers with low self-esteem, ethnic minorities, older workers, handicapped people, school-leavers and the rural unemployed. The main objective of the programme is to promote an active, instead of a passive approach.

Main tasks and target groups

To deal with the requirements of the social reality and to solve the increasing number of long-term unemployed people of working age in recent years, especially those who rely on social assistance:

- Unemployed people with dependence on social assistance (with poor self-awareness) – having lost their motivation to work and the habits of working life;
- People working in the “grey” economy without legal contracts, whose income could not be ascertained - they remain registered at the state labour offices as unemployed and they are getting social assistance;
- Unemployed people taking care of persons with disabilities and/or family members. These people are in receipt of social assistance (= minimum means) but lack any prospect of improving their situation.

Activities

Training and literacy courses; community services (maintenance and cleaning of public areas, landscape maintenance, clearing of snow in winter and sanding of roads, etc); urban work; maintenance and protection of municipal and state property (e.g. renovation and building of public infrastructure), of the environment as well as of cultural heritage; industrial activities; social activities; personal assistance to persons with disabilities and the elderly etc.

Results

Many activities led to a decrease in the unemployment rate in Bulgaria. Examples for 2003: 1,727 employment contracts were signed; 387 schools, kindergartens and public buildings were renovated, 25 new buildings constructed, 330 new ramps for better accessibility for persons with disabilities put in place, 628 streets repaired, 174 new road surfaces laid, 85,746m water-supply and sewerage networks reconstructed; protection and maintenance of 200 monuments; 6,883 persons worked within "Social Assistant" initiative; 11,520 people supported by the family home patronage initiative; in 207 social houses social services support was provided; 819 persons worked in social consultancy; 172 persons were involved in the social support of drug- and alcohol-dependent persons; in community and public services, maintenance and cleaning of 33,385 streets, 4,628 gardens, cemeteries, 1,682 buildings.

Implementing institutions have been the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the National Employment Agency, the Agency for Social Assistance, the Chief Labour Inspectorate, the Employment Commission, municipalities, other ministries (of Education & Science, of the Environment, of Agriculture & Forestry) and employers.

Beneficiaries were long-term unemployed people (i.e. registered by the Regional Labour Office programme) who were at least 9 months out of work in the last 12 months and eligible for monthly social assistance.

The main conclusion: collaboration and common efforts lead to good results.

3.3 Main results of the evaluation of the partnership *Strategies for Inclusion*

Kees Meijer, Knowledge Centre for Vocational Training and Labour Market, Nijmegen, The Netherlands
(k.meijer@kenniscentrum-ba.nl)

The partnership **Strategies for Inclusion** had as its aims

- A) to exchange, evaluate and analyse successful pathways to paid employment
- B) (1) to disseminate its findings to policy-makers and other stakeholders in order to
(2) impact on practices and policies at all levels

Concerning aim A: to exchange, evaluate and analyse successful pathways to paid employment

This aim was achieved. In its first Handbook, the partnership, on the basis of a wide range of experiences in 7 countries provided a broad and relevant overview of inclusion pathways aiming at widely different target groups. In the second Handbook – based on the experience from partners in 10 countries -, a generic model for an inclusion pathway and the factors which have a bearing on a pathway's efficacy, were described. While the generic model is of particular relevance to practitioners, the list with the factors can play a role in policy development, as underlined in comments by policy-makers during the final conference of the partnership. In the third Handbook, aspects of how to best promote coordination at regional level are further elaborated.

Concerning aim B-1: to disseminate its findings to policy-makers and other stakeholders.

This aim was achieved. The partnership has disseminated its outcomes through the publication of three Handbooks and the organisation of several workshops (average participation: 15) and five conferences (average participation: 45) in eight countries. The partnership has been successful in informing practitioners, as shown by the participants' lists. Getting regional, let alone national, policy-makers to attend meetings turned out to be real challenge. In this respect, the conferences were clearly more successful than the workshops. The conferences in Hungary, Norway (2), Scotland and the final conference in Brussels stand out in this respect. In general, participants were satisfied with the information provided at the meetings: this aspect scored 8 on a 10-point scale.

Concerning aim B-2: to impact on practices and policies at all levels

This aim was achieved to different degrees. Three areas of impact were distinguished: on participants in the partnership's work, their organisations and on regional and national policies.

Impact on the individual participants was significant. All gained a deeper understanding of inclusion pathways in other countries. In almost all cases this information was fed back to both executive and other levels within their organisations. Impact on participating organisations was high. Half of them have already implemented new inclusion approaches, e.g. Dublin (taken from Dundee), Berlin (from Palermo) and Spain (all partners). Others are being planned, e.g. in Antwerp and Dublin (from Germany). All partners have indicated that they have gained new ideas for future inclusion activities.

Impact on regional and national policies was mixed. Partners have included recommendations in submission to policy forums (Ireland, Norway) and discussed them with policy-makers at regional (Germany, Italy, Spain, Scotland) and national level (Belgium, Bulgaria, Ireland, Norway). These discussions have already influenced the ways in which regional actions plans are developed in Spain and in which regional partners take part in pathways in Berlin. The impression that the partnership has functioned as a very effective generator for new approaches and ideas is confirmed by the meetings' participants: 'I have gained new ideas and concepts' scored 8.3.

The general conclusion is that the partnership was a success. Relevant information about inclusion pathways was generated and disseminated. Impact is clearly achieved at the level of practices and policies of the partner organisations. First indications of impact at policy level are present. Given the high degree of contact between policy-makers and partners, further instances of impact at regional, and possibly at national level, can be expected.

4. The partner organisations in September 2005

Ballymun Job Centre (BJC) Ltd in Dublin/Ireland

BJC is a community-based organisation that responds to the needs of job-seekers/changers in Ballymun and to the challenges facing the community.

www.bmunjob.ie

Contact Person: Mairin Kenny, kennym@bmunjob.ie

Dundee City Council, Employment Disability Unit (EDU) in Dundee/Scotland

The EDU is formed by three local authorities and addresses the unmet employment needs of persons with disabilities or health problems in the community.

www.dundee.gov.uk/pman/edu

Contact person: Michael J Evans, mike.evans@dundee.gov.uk

Federación de Municipios y Provincias de Castilla la Mancha (FEMPCLM) in Toledo/Spain

FEMPCLM is a non-governmental organisation working with regional and local action plans for inclusion and is promoting the cooperation of all stakeholders.

www.fempclm.com

Contact person: Lidia Garcia Alises, lidia@fempclm.com

INTEGRA Association in Sofia/Bulgaria

INTEGRA Association is mainly working in the field of education, qualification and training to enhance the opportunities of excluded and/or unemployed persons to develop pathways for inclusion.

www.integra.bg

Contact person: Aneta Moyanova, a.moyanova@integra.bg

Mainstreaming Agenda in Palermo/Italy

The Mainstreaming Agenda is working with all kinds of active initiatives for social inclusion, mainly in rural areas. Its network includes many public bodies, at national and regional levels, with which Mainstreaming Agenda organises sheltered job development projects, underlining equal opportunities and environmental issues.

www.mainstreaming.org

Contact person: Roberta Messina, Roberta.messina@mainstreaming.org

National Employment Foundation (OFA) in Budapest/Hungary

The OFA is enhancing employment and monitoring unemployment. The foundation pays special attention to the long-term unemployed, to persons with disabilities and to young people who are unemployed and at risk of social exclusion.

www.ofa.hu

Contact person: Marianna Wester, wester@ofa.hu

Rehabilitation Foundation in Helsinki/Finland

The Rehabilitation Foundation has the mission to enhance the working ability, employment, social integration and empowerment of those who are at risk of social exclusion because of chronic illness, exhaustion, unemployment, immigration or other reasons.

www.kuntoutussaatio.fi

Contact person: Kristiina Härkäpää, harkapaa@kuntoutussaatio.fi

Vitamine W in Antwerp/Belgium

Vitamine W is an umbrella organisation for non-governmental projects and works with people who are threatened with exclusion. Vitamine W aims at keeping people employable.

www.vitamine-w.be

Contact persons: Marieke Genard, Marieke.genard@vitamine-w.be
Myriam Koning, Myriam.koning@vitamine-w.be

Vocational Training Measures Company (GFBM e.V.) in Berlin/Germany

The GFBM develops methods and pilot projects in individualised assessment- and placement-strategies for young people to get access to vocational education and jobs.

www.gfbm.de

Contact person: Andreas Wendel, wendel@gfbm.de

The Work Research Institute (WRI) in Oslo/Norway was coordinating the partnership.

The WRI is an interdisciplinary social science research institute committed to combining research with action. The institute has extensive experience with development and change projects concerning vulnerable groups' access to and conditions in the labour market.

www.afi-wri.no

Contact persons: Bettina Uhrig (Coordinator and Project Leader), bettina.uhrig@afi-wri.no
Angelika Schafft, angelika.schafft@afi-wri.no
Steinar Widding, steinar.widding@afi-wri.no
Anne Rogstad (Webmaster), anne.rogstad@afi-wri.no

The Knowledge Centre for Vocational Training and Labour Market in Nijmegen/The Netherlands was a partner in Phase I and the evaluator in Phase II.

The Knowledge Centre engages in independent and scientific policy-directed research and advice in the field of vocational education and training in the labour market.

www.kenniscentrum-ba.nl

Contact person: Kees Meijer, k.meijer@kenniscentrum-ba.nl

All partners exchange the experience they have gained in the partnership **Strategies for Inclusion** with their regional and national partners.

The Norwegian network consisted of:

Akershus University College, Faculty of Social Education

The Faculty of Social Education at Akershus University College is training and educating people who are working with others at risk of becoming excluded or who are already excluded and living in poverty.

www.hiak.no

Contact person: Grete Wangen, grete.wangen@hiak.no

Association of Vocational Rehabilitation Enterprises (AVRE)

AVRE provides vocational training for the persons with disabilities in genuine labour environments and is an employer and interest organisation for approximately 90 enterprises in Norway.

www.attforingsbedriftene.no

Contact person: Paal Haavorsen, paal.haavorsen@sbl.no

Oslo Municipality, District Grünerløkka, The Job-Centre

The Job-Centre is working within the social welfare services and aims to get long-term welfare-clients into jobs or rehabilitation.

www.bgs.oslo.kommune.no

Contact person: Morten Sonniks, morten.sonniks@bga.oslo.kommune.no

Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (FFO)

FFO is the umbrella body for organisations in Norway which represent persons with disabilities. The primary objective is social equality and participation for persons with all kinds of disabilities.

www.ffe.no

Contact person: Stian Oen, stian.oen@ffe.no

The Directorate of Labour

The Directorate of Labour is responsible for the operationalisation of labour market policy and provides advice to the Government on labour market issues.

www.aetat.no

Contact person: Per Brannsten, pb@adir.aetat.no

The Directorate for Health and Social Affairs

The Directorate for Health and Social Affairs started its work in 2002; it has a knowledge-based way of working in order to implement important areas of the government's policy in combating poverty and social exclusion.

www.shdir.no

Contact person: Olav Tvede, olt@shdir.no

5. Example of a transnational partnership agreement

The partnership **Strategies for Inclusion** promotes the idea of using agreements among partners to structure and improve collaborative efforts for guiding persons (back) to employment.

As an example of “do what you preach” we include a sample for a partnership agreement, which was developed and used by **Strategies for Inclusion** (see chapter 1.2).

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

Strategies for Inclusion – coordinated approaches for quality employment

Transnational Partnership in the Community Action Programme to Combat Social Exclusion 2002-2006, Phase II

Second year, Duration: 01.12.2004 – 30.11.2005

Grant Agreement Ref.No: xxx

This partner agreement, drawn up under the **Community Action Programme to Combat Social Exclusion 2002-2006**, governs the relationship between the coordinator and the transnational partner organisation.

Coordinator: Work Research Institute (WRI),
(Postal address) P.O.Box 6954 St. Olavs Plass
NO – 0130 Oslo / Norway

Partner organisation: xxx

Article 1 / Scope of the partner agreement

The agreement is based on the application for funding for the transnational partnership **Strategies for Inclusion – coordinated approaches for quality employment**, Phase II and the Grant Agreement for an action between the European Community and the Work Research Institute in the framework of programmes and actions in the social and employment sectors, Agreement ref. No.: xxx (see Annex 1).

The total cost for the transnational partnership Phase II, second year, is estimated at xxx EURO.

Article 2 / Duration

The second year of Phase II has a duration of twelve months: 01.12.2004 – 30.11.2005.

Article 3 / Obligations of the coordinator

- to take all steps needed to prepare for, perform and correctly manage the work programme, in accordance with the description of the operation set out in the Grant Agreement;
- to provide support as follows: Note-taking at meetings and production of notes detailing decisions and actions agreed; preparation of agendas in consultation with partners and the evaluator; circulation of any relevant papers; production of partner infos, Handbook 3 and reports; financial administration;
- to promote, publicise and disseminate the results of the partnership activities;
- to respect all the provisions of the Grant Agreement.

Article 4 / Obligations of the partner organisation

- to show commitment to the partnership by consistent attendance and full participation at partnership meetings ;
- to provide effective communication and feedback within their own organisation as appropriate;
- to notify the coordinating person of changes to the agreement or changes in personnel that may effect the partnership;
- to fulfil financial requirements as described in Article 5 and 6;
- to respect all the provisions of the Grant Agreement between the coordinator and the European Community.

Article 5 / Financing

The partner organisation will receive payment (staff costs) for xxx days of work; the basis for the payment is the real salary of the person involved in the partnership.

The partner documents the involvement through filling out a “Time Sheet” (Annex 3), the “Internal Report Sheet – Personnel Costs” (Annex 2) and attaching a copy of his/her wage slip.

The full staff costs will be paid on condition that the partner organisation has been involved in all activities agreed upon and all documents and forms have been sent to the coordinator complete and on time (see also Article 7).

The partner organisation receives – after delivering the “Internal Report Sheet – Travel, DSA (Daily Subsistence Allowances) and Hotel costs” with all attachments (Annex 4) – the DSA and the real costs for the hotel for the participation in the following transnational meetings:

- for the exchange in Italy (March 2005)
- for the exchange in Scotland (April 2005)
- for the exchange in Belgium (September 2005)

and travel expenses up to xx EURO per person per exchange.

The DSA, the hotel costs and the travel expenses are paid after the rules from the European Commission, described on page 38 of the Grant Agreement (Annex 1).

Article 6 / Co-financing

The partners' financial contribution to the project amounts to xxx EURO.

Article 7 / Payments

30% of the staff costs are paid after the coordinator has received the signed "Partner Agreement" and the "Internal Report Sheet – Personnel Costs" with an attached copy of the wage slip. The next 70% will be reduced by the partners' financial contribution (see Article 6) and will be paid before the end of the second year. It will be paid after the partner organisation has sent the "Time Sheet" together with an invoice.

Travel, hotel and subsistence costs are paid after the transnational meetings. Basis for these payments are the information given in the "Internal Report Sheet – Travel, DSA and Hotel costs" with all necessary attachments.

All documents must be sent to the coordinator before the 1st November 2005 at the latest.

Article 8 / Publicity

The coordinator and the partner organisation take care of the EC rules for publications described in the Grant Agreement.

The coordinator takes care of the publications of the results, must name all partners involved and must specify that "this partnership has received funding from the Community" and "that sole responsibility lies with the author and that the Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein".

Annexes

1. Copy of the Grant Agreement
2. Internal Report Sheet – Personnel Costs
3. Time Sheet
4. Internal Report Sheet – Travel, DSA and Hotel costs
5. Bank Information Sheet

Signatures

For the partner organisation Name of the organisation:

Name of the legal representative:

Place and Date:

Signature:

For the coordinator (WRI)

Place and Date:

Signature:

(xxx, Director)

