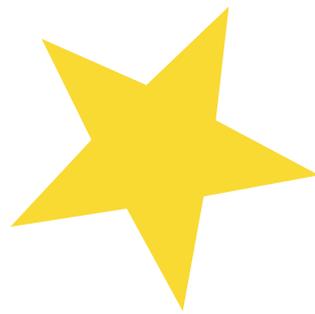


**European Union of
Supported Employment**

European Union of Supported Employment Toolkit for Diversity

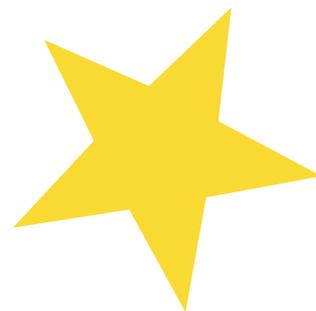
Needs Analysis Report 2013

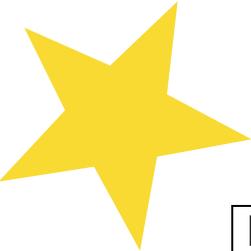




EUSE Toolkit for Diversity has been funded with support from the European Commission

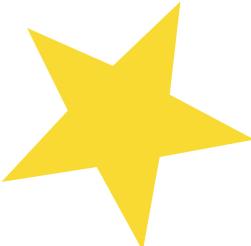
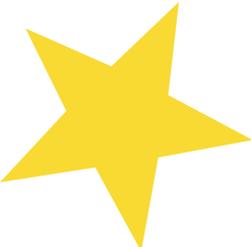
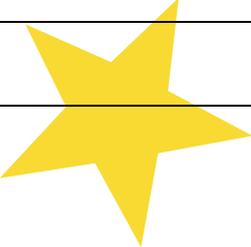
The Needs Analysis Report reflects the views only of the author, and the European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.





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Introduction

The European Union of Supported Employment Toolkit for Diversity (EUSET) is a partnership project with 12 members.

EUSE Toolkit for Diversity Background

The European Union of Supported Employment Toolkit for Diversity (EUSET) project aims to transfer and adapt an EUSE Supported Employment Toolkit, designed through a Leonardo project, to four European cluster regions (Central, Northern, Southern and UK/Ireland), adapting a proven method to other specific situations and circumstances.

Project Objectives

The project objectives are as follows:

- To conduct a needs analysis into the economic exclusion of people from disadvantaged situations (that is, young people not in education, employment or training; offenders and ex-prisoners; and people recovering from substance abuse) in the four cluster group areas.
- To review the Supported Employment Toolkit, customizing materials to meet the needs of four European cluster regions and translating them into nine languages.
- To review the Supported Employment Toolkit ensuring its applicability to specific disadvantaged groups targeted by each cluster region, other than people with disability that is, young people not in education, employment or training; ex-offenders; and people recovering from substance abuse.
- To test the adapted toolkit on a formative basis with at least 48 organizations interested in or delivering Supported Employment across partner countries.
- To deliver capacity building training to all partners to enable them to deliver training on use of the toolkit nationally to at least 24 organizations.
- To agree minimum standards for delivery and a system for quality control for the toolkit training.

The project is led by the Northern Ireland Union of Supported Employment (NIUSE) and partners work in four cluster regions.

The EUSER partners are:-

1. Northern Ireland Union of Supported Employment (lead partner)
2. Dabei, Austria
3. Rytmus, Czech Republic
4. Kiipula, Finland
5. Theotokos Foundation, Greece
6. Irish Association of Supported Employment (IASE), Ireland
7. Skinner, Italy
8. Associacai Portuguesa de Emprego Apoiado (APEA), Portugal
9. Asociacion Espanola de Empleo con Apoyo (ASES), Spain
10. Activa, Sweden
11. Supported Employment Schweiz, Switzerland
12. Status Employment Ltd, UK

This report relates to the first objective of the project, which is:

- To conduct a needs analysis into the economic exclusion of people from disadvantaged situations (young people not in education, employment or training; offenders and ex-prisoners; and people recovering from substance abuse) in the four cluster groups.

EUSE Toolkit for Diversity Background

The Supported Employment (SE) model was originally developed for people with learning disabilities. Due to its success, Supported Employment has been expanded to include all areas of disability and, more recently, it has been applied to people from other disadvantaged groups. However, the application of SE to other groups is not widespread and there are limited resources for professional development and training of SE practitioners.

A number of European studies report on the need for more educational and learning materials for Supported Employment practitioners, for example, the EU Supported Employment Study 2011 (<http://ec.europa.eu/>). One of its key recommendations was that formal training of Supported Employment job coaches be provided.

A Leonardo da Vinci partnership project brought about the development of a toolkit to provide a formal European manual on the SE model for SE professionals. This project will adapt and transfer that toolkit to professionals working with people from disadvantaged situations.

The partnership will work in four cluster regions, targeting specific disadvantaged groups.

Cluster	Partners	Target Group
Central	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dabei – Austria • Rytmus – Czech Republic • Supported Employment Schweiz – Switzerland 	Young people not in education, employment or training
Northern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activa – Sweden • Kiipula – Finland 	Young people not in education, employment or training
Southern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theotokos Foundaton – Greece • Skinner – Italy • Associacai Portuguesa de Emprego Apoiado – Portugal • Asociacion Espanola de Emplloe con Apoyo – Spain 	People recovering from substance abuse
UK/Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irish Association of Supported Employment – Ireland • Northern Ireland Union of Supported Employment – NI • Status Employment – England 	Offenders and ex-prisoners

The adapted Supported Employment Toolkit will be tested with and disseminated to Supported Employment professionals, as a valuable resource to use in accessing and maintaining employment opportunities for their clients.

In delivering these objectives, the EUSE Toolkit for Diversity partners will produce a customised resource for professionals working for the economic inclusion of pwd and people from the disadvantaged situations outlined.

Further dissemination and uptake of the adapted toolkit and training will promote adherence to best practice in Supported Employment and the acquisition of key Supported Employment competences in additional VET organisations.

About the EUSE Supported Employment Toolkit

The EUSE Supported Employment Toolkit was developed under a previous Leonardo da Vinci partnership project initiated by EUSE (lead partner Dundee City Council) from 2008 to 2010.

The EUSE Supported Employment Toolkit was based on the five stages of Supported Employment; - which are:

- Client Engagement
- Vocational Profiling
- Job Finding
- Employer Engagement
- On and Off the Job Support

The toolkit comprises a series of Position Papers (11 in total) and five How to Guides which are available on the EUSE website (www.euse.org).

The position papers provide essential and relevant information for service providers but also for pwd, parents/carers, employers and policy makers.

The How To Guides, whilst consistent with the Position Papers, are more instructional and practical in nature providing a range of both basic and specific information and useful advice on methods of 'How To' conduct a specific activity within Supported Employment.

The toolkit is an extremely valuable resource and, if imported robustly, it would bring higher standards to the application of Supported Employment to all disadvantaged groups, providing a means of quality assurance and ensuring consistency of approach across Europe.

This project will resolve existing limitations by addressing the gaps in learning materials for other disadvantaged groups; adding value to existing resources in terms of the regional applicability (including translation); and providing a consistent approach to the delivery of Supported Employment to other disadvantaged groups.

The EUSE Supported Employment Toolkit was produced by European experts in Supported Employment and was designed to increase the knowledge and skills of professionals responsible for

the delivery of Supported Employment services. It is aimed primarily at service providers and therefore it is an ideal basis for the aims of this proposal.

The EUSE Toolkit for Diversity project adds value to the outcomes and achievements of the previous Leonardo Partnership as follows:

- The toolkit will be adapted to meet the needs of people from three other disadvantaged groups.
- The toolkit will be customised to reflect the context of four cluster regions.
- The toolkit will be available in nine additional languages.
- The toolkit will be proactively disseminated in at least 12 countries across Europe through delivery of toolkit training and the EUSE Conference / EUSE Toolkit for Diversity dissemination strategy.

A consistent, high quality approach to Supported Employment will be secured across Europe. This will in turn improve the delivery of services to people from disadvantaged groups, increasing their opportunity to access paid employment in the open labour market.

Methodologies

The Needs Analysis Report includes quantitative and qualitative information from:

- Desk top research to identify government policies and practices in each state; gain insight into the relevant statistics and demographics of each state; review government strategies; and review literature, research and reports.
- Specific analysis through focus group research. Each partner coordinated focus groups or similar approaches (interviews), including:
 - People from their targeted disadvantaged group
 - Vocational training and employment service providers or other organisations working with the targeted disadvantaged groups such as NGOs
 - Government departments and agencies and policy makers

Guidance on running the focus groups and questions were prepared by the lead partner to ensure continuity across partners and states.

Data collected from each partner was collated in cluster groups and the cluster group reports are accumulated in this final report.

Cluster Group Reports

Northern Cluster

Partners:-

- Kiipula, Finland
- Activa, Sweden

Target Group - Young people at risk of dropping out / young school leavers / young people not in education, employment or training (NEETS)

The Statistics

Employment and further education

Young people in Sweden and Finland enter working life relatively late. Despite the continuous and long-term policy strategies for developing young peoples' chances to get further education and enter into the labour market, the statistics in the Northern Cluster region are not very positive in this sense.

Each year in Finland, between 4,000 and 5,000 young people from each age group are left without a place in further education. The lack of a secondary education qualification is a significant factor behind young peoples' exclusion from the labour market and society.

At present in Finland, the number of young people without an upper secondary education qualification is approximately 40,000. In Sweden, every fourth high school student drops out or leaves as an undergraduate.

The most recent data published by Finland's Ministry of Employment and the Economy from October 2012 shows that the number of unemployed young people under 25 years was 30,600. This is 3,800 more than in October 2011.

In Sweden, the rate of unemployment is two to three times higher among young people compared to the rest of the population. While the unemployment rate for the group of people between the ages of 15 to 74 is under or around 10 per cent, the unemployment rate among young people between the ages of 15 to 24 is between 20 to

30 per cent. For the really young, the number might even be higher (Statistiska Central Byrån).

Since 1991, the unemployment rate for people aged 20 to 24 has increased from 6.2 per cent to 14 per cent. Around 9 per cent of young women between the ages of 18 to 25 live in households that receive economic aid. The corresponding number for adult women is 3 per cent. There was a significant increase of young people who neither work nor study between the ages of 16 and 25 from 2007 to 2008.

In 2007, there were 85,000 individuals who were not working. Fifty-two per cent male and 48 % female. In 2008 the number increased to 102,000 individuals. Neither economic recession nor demographical variations can explain this increase.

Overall in the Northern Cluster Region, a crucial problem is the number of young people not included in the official statistics:-

- In Finland, this number stands at around 25,000.
- In Sweden, between the ages of 16 and 19, there were about 7,000 individuals that were not accounted for in official statistics and between the ages of 20 and 25 that number rises to 19,000.

These young people form the so-called “hard core” of marginalised young people, because they do not participate in education or working life, and are not even registered as jobseekers. The position of these young people is complicated by the unclear division of responsibilities in outreach work and in assisting young people to access services.

Overall, what these statistics are suggesting is that young people are more vulnerable in the labour market than the older generation.

In Sweden, research suggests the situation for these young people at risk has worsened and this is expected to be a continuous trend.

This is a structural and not a conjunctional or temporal situation ¹

State Policy and NGO actions (cases from Finland)

Services and programmes have been developed to address this issue by Government and NGO sectors such as:-

1. Youth guarantee (FINLAND) ²

The most important policy action within the Finnish Government in addressing youth unemployment is called **Youth Guarantee**. Implementation of the youth guarantee to promote employment and prevent social exclusion is one of the Finnish Government's flagship projects. Youth Guarantee was launched on 1 January, 2013.

Youth Guarantee requires that each person under 25 years, and each recent graduate under 30 years of age, must be offered work, a traineeship, or a study, workshop or labour market rehabilitation place, within three months of becoming unemployed. Every school leaver will be guaranteed a place in upper secondary school or in other means of educational education and training, in apprenticeship training, in a youth workshop or in rehabilitation.

The Youth Guarantee is primarily seen as a preventative measure. The Finnish Government has allocated €60 million annually for the Youth Guarantee Programme.

The greatest large-scale challenges are insufficient social and healthcare service provision, lack of study places, issues within the education system, insufficient support for student welfare, student guidance counselling and career planning services; and deficiencies in the determination of authorities' responsibilities. Finland's youth guarantee will be founded on the Public-Private-People Partnership approach; a forum on which young people themselves are active participants.

¹ Nilsson & Wadeskog, 2008, Det är bättre att stämma i bäcken än i ån - lönsamheten att värdera de ekonomiska effekterna av tidiga och samordnade insatser kring barn och unga, SEE & Skandia Idéer för livet.

²http://www.tem.fi/files/34215/Nuorisotakuu_1.1.2013_alkaen.pdf;
www.nuoristotakuu.fi)

Based on the Youth Guarantee Programme launched in Finland, the European Commission has developed a comprehensive Youth Guarantee to be financially supported by the European Social Fund and to be integrated into employment policies in Member States. ³

2. Examples of other Government initiatives:

Attitude solution (Asenne meininki) is an initiative supported by the Ministry of Interior of Finland⁴. Attitude Solution is a media campaign that helps employers and youths from disadvantaged backgrounds meet each other. The campaign was launched by the President of Finland (Mr Sauli Niinistö) focusing on youth drop-out prevention.

Main findings from focus group research and interviews with professionals

This target group has difficulty in relating to adults; can suffer from low self-esteem and lack of confidence toward authorities; and may experience poor relations with the government.

Many of them need practical support and assistance to navigate and solve problems overall in their lives and the helping hand should come at the point of need.

The gap between leaving school and getting assistance is too lengthy and this may lead to marginalisation within society.

There are signs in the cluster region that some parents may be lacking in the necessary skills to address the challenges and may have 'lost touch' with their young people. This means the target group is very often in need of one-to-one individualised aid.

Client needs:

- Holistic approach
- Individual support

³ European Commission Press Releases: MEMO/12/938 Event Date: 05/12/2012 http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-12-938_en.htm

⁴ http://www.yhdenvertaisuus.fi/welcome_to_equality_fi/campaigns/asenne-meininki-attitude-solutio/

- Confidence in an adult
- Peer support - groups with other (similar situation)
- Someone who believes in their capacity and potential
- Workers who have an ability to dream and create life visions
- Flexible and profound cooperation matched with the participant's needs
- Requirements that are reasonable and attainable
- Appropriate help from various sources such as private, government and NGOs

Professionals Challenges:

- Motivating the client
- Addressing client's life situation with the proper respect and attitude
- Real connection between client and the worker
- Best method to engage client in behaviours appropriate in work and society
- How to find suitable working places for clients with special needs
- How to co-operate with the family of the client
- Methods to ensure sustainability of the client's work placement.

The overall finding is that networking of all key stakeholders is essential for the success for this client group. Key actors are parents, schools and social authorities.

Central Cluster Group

Partners:-

- Dabei - Austria,
- Rytmus - Czech Republic.
- Supported Employment Schweiz – Switzerland

Target Group - Young people at risk of dropping out / young school leavers / young people not in education, employment or training (NEETS);

Statistics

The unemployment rate in Austria is at a lower level than in most EU-countries, nevertheless young people and elderly as well as migrants and people with disabilities are more likely to be unemployed than other groups. In economically troubled times these groups are more likely to lose their jobs and find it harder to re-enter the labour market once they are unemployed.

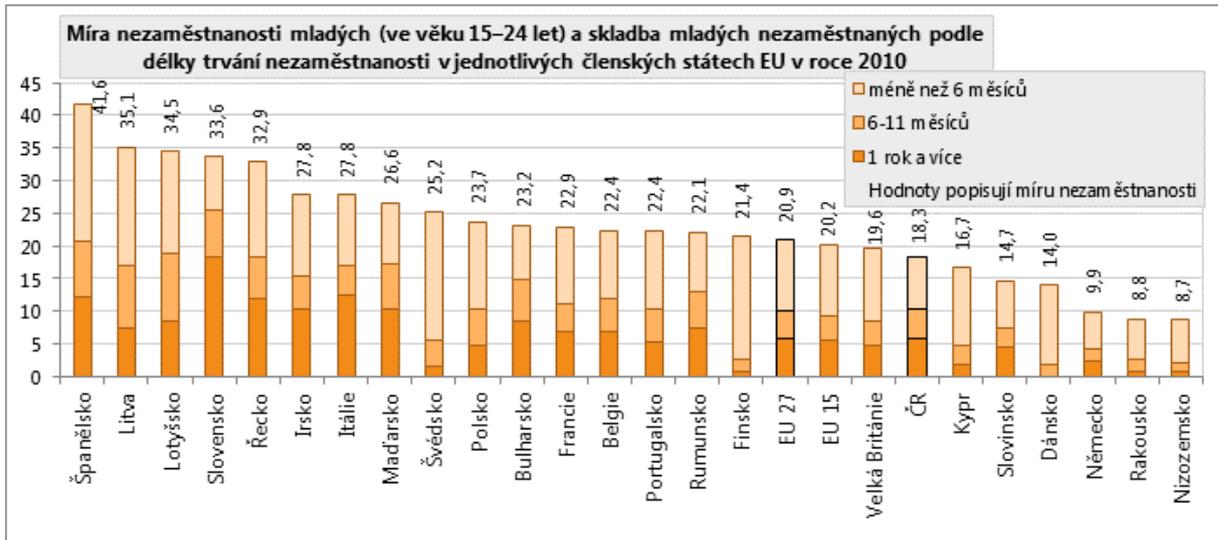
According to figures from the Federal Statistical Office (FSO), the number of employed persons in Switzerland rose by 0.9 per cent between the second quarter of 2011 and the second quarter of 2012.

During the same period, the unemployment rate as defined by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) increased very slightly in Switzerland, rising from 3.6 per cent to 3.7 per cent.

There are two levels of unemployment in Switzerland:-

- Individual level is often a problem of a deficiency in education, such as migration or lack of language skills.
- Structural macro-level, is often caused by rationalisation or globalisation (change of the workplaces/factories in a country with higher salaries).

In the Czech Republic youth unemployment has become a serious problem. More than half of all young people (under 24 years old) are unemployed longer than six months and most of them have been looking for a job for more than one year. Twenty-five per cent of young people have been unemployed for periods of between six and eleven months. Almost 32 per cent of these people have been unemployed for 12 months and longer.



The latest statistics available (October 2012) from the Czech Republic show there are 35,000 young people unemployed. In January 2013, that number increased by 10,000 bringing youth unemployment to 7%.

Employers are reluctant to give jobs to these young people due to:-

- Lack of experience
- Poor presentation
- Poor decision making
- Not able to work as part of a team

Specific issues for target group – young people not in education, employment and training

The National Action Plan in Austria includes special actions to reduce the unemployment rate of young people and to reduce drop-out rates at schools and occupational education are necessary.

In Austria, there is a political commitment to provide education and occupational education to every young man or woman (Ausbildungsplatzgarantie). On the other hand, there is a rather high unemployment rate of young people with disability, who find it hard to enter the labour market.

The unemployment rate of young people between 15 and 24 was 7.6 per cent in 2012. The unemployment rate of the group aged 20 to 24 was 9 per cent in 2012 and furthermore:-

- 14.6 per cent of young people aged between 20 and 24 had no further qualification above compulsory education levels.
- 8.6 per cent finished compulsory school and were not in further education.
- 8.2 per cent were neither in education nor in training or employment (NEETS).

Young people with a migrant background are more likely to have less formal qualifications.

According to the National Action Plan of the Federal Council, special actions to reduce the unemployment rate of young people and to reduce the drop out rates at schools and occupational education are necessary in Switzerland as well.

Switzerland has a high unemployment rate amongst people aged 15 to 24.

The unemployment rate of young people between 15 and 24 was 8.2 per cent in 2009 and 9 per cent of young people aged between 18 and 24 had no more qualification than compulsory school/Sekundar I (2009).

Young people with a migrant background are more likely to have less formal qualifications. Some 25 per cent of young people with a migrant background, born in their home-country, have only a final examination in compulsory school.⁵

In the Czech Republic, there are no special programmes for young people who leave school. On completion of elementary school young people can continue their education in apprentice school (a two-year vocational programme); or vocational secondary school; or general secondary school (assumed further study at university).

⁵ BFS. Statistischer Sozialbericht Schweiz 2011:32.

State policy and NGO, VET and voluntary sector actions

Services and programmes have been developed to address this issue by the Government and NGO sector:-

In Austria, a new service called youth coaching (Jugendcoaching) was introduced, which targets young people from 15 to 24 at schools and out of schools, with disabilities or other disadvantaged situations and NEETS.

Youth coaching is a three stage process

- Stage 1 - Client engagement, where an appointment with an advisor and areas of support are identified.
- Stage 2 - Career guidance, where detailed advice is given on the topic of career orientation, as well as assistance in making decisions about the “journey” - apprenticeship or school.
- Stage 3 - They work on strengths and abilities and earn practical experience, et cetera.

Youth coaching can last for around one year. At the end of the process the young people receive a report with specific recommendations for their future. They can also return to youth coaching at any time if they need further support.

No data analysis of the service is available as it was only rolled out nationwide in early 2013.

With regards to the Czech Republic, there are no special programmes for young people who leave school.

Conclusions

Supported Employment services are available all over Austria at the same quality, in both rural and urban areas.

Individual pathways into the labour market are possible and supported. Services are needs based.

The new youth coaching (Jugendcoaching) service is also available nationwide and defines a new wider target group. The aim is to reduce drop-out rates and increase the labour market opportunities of young people.

The three stage process can be a good way to ensure individually centered and needs based support for young people. Experience and time will show the impact on the target group. The challenge is to reach the NEET group.

Supported Employment services are not available all over Switzerland. It depends on geography and the existence of a tradition in Supported Employment. The tradition in Switzerland is following the dual system (Berufsbildung) concerning the vocational training between the company and the technical college (Berufsschule).

Individual pathways into the labour market are possible and often supported. The new service Supported Education – following the method Supported Employment is only available in pilot projects, especially in big cities.

Main findings from Focus Groups and Interviews

Findings from the focus groups and interviews differ from country to country. This might be due to the different labour market situation, legal framework and programmes available for the target group.

However there are many common issues for all cluster group partners which were highlighted during the focus groups:-

- Entry to the labour market takes a long time. Once experienced, it is easier to progress to better, full-time employment.
- People leaving school early or leaving an apprenticeship without formal qualification have to compete with other well-educated groups for the same jobs.
- Young people who leave school without enough basic knowledge (for example basic numerical, reading and comprehension skills) find it hard to apply for jobs, secure job interviews or find a job/apprenticeship.
- Personal and social problems such as debts, substance or alcohol abuse can be an issue.
- Being from a migrant background (i.e. not fluent in German or with no written German) can increase this groups risk.

Recent social research findings conducted by the Austrian Institute, Institut für Jugendkulturforschung for this disadvantaged group shows that

- Young people think that there is no possibility of finding a good job to earn an independent living.
- Young people think that when they apply for jobs, employers expect experience but are not willing to allow people to gain experience.
- On the other hand they find it hard to find a paid job – they slip from one work experience placement to another, most often unpaid.
- Young people think that there should be more support for them to examine their strengths and needs and determine which professional path is appropriate for them individually.
- Young migrants often face prejudices

Southern Cluster Group

Partners:-

- Theotokos Foundaton – Greece
- Skinner – Italy
- Associacai Portuguesa de Emprego Apoiado – Portugal
- Asociacion Espanola de Empleo con Apoyo – Spain

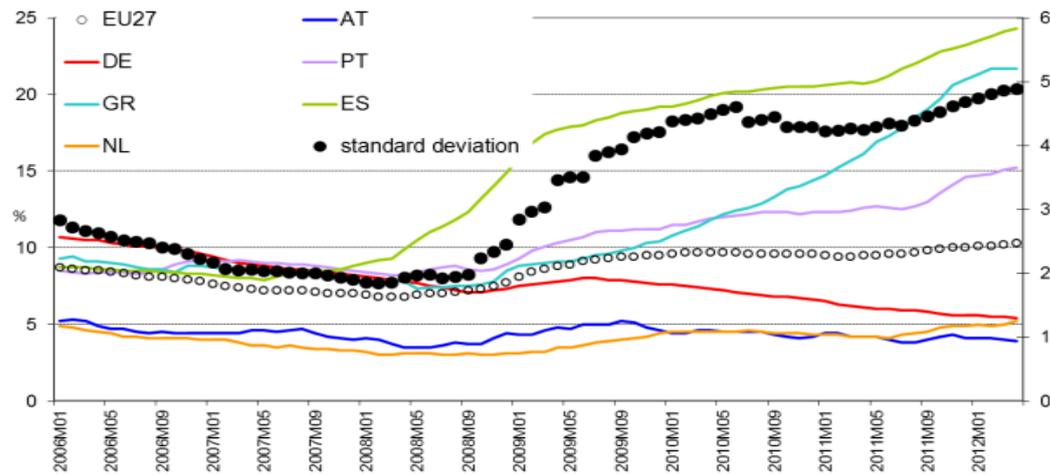
Target Group:- people recovering from substance abuse

The Statistics

Unemployment/economic exclusion

Due to the economic crisis, unemployment in the general population of Greece is extremely high and for young people up to the age of 25 years, it is 56 per cent. In Spain, the situation is very similar. In Portugal and Italy, these figures are not as bad, but the recession is causing many barriers for people in a disadvantaged situation to enter into the labour market.

The gap among EU Member States in terms of their unemployment rate continues to widen, with a range of 20.4 percentage points between the lowest rate (in Austria, 3.9 per cent) and the highest (in Spain, 24.3 per cent). That is the widest range seen in the past decade. Differences among EU Member States are at their highest, with a standard deviation rate in April 2012 close to 5 points (see Chart 1). At 22.4 per cent in April 2012, youth unemployment rates remain extremely high compared to the average, as the section on youth below confirms.



Source: Eurostat LFS, DG Empl Calculation

Chart 1: Unemployment rate in selected Member States Jan 2006-April 2012 (Lhs) and standard deviation of Member States monthly unemployment rate (Rhs)

Over the year to the first quarter of 2012, employment in a few Member States has continued to grow. Germany, Poland and Austria recorded sound growth over the year to the first quarter of 2012, by 620,000 (+1.5 per cent), 300,000 (+2.5 per cent) and 70,000 (+1.8 per cent) respectively. On the other hand, the Member States in the Southern Cluster experienced a dramatic continuous fall in employment over the last four quarters. In Spain, employment again fell sharply, by 660,000 persons (-3.7 per cent), while Greece saw a drop by 400,000 (-8.7 per cent), Portugal (-210,000 persons, -4.2 per cent); and Italy (-180,000 persons, -0.8 per cent).

Over the 13 months to April 2012, EU unemployment has continued to grow, by 0.9 percentage points (see Chart 2). Over the three months to April 2012, the trend persisted, with a rise by 0.2 percentage points to 10.3 per cent. In terms of the number of people unemployed, more than 2 million became unemployed over the last 13 months to April 2012.

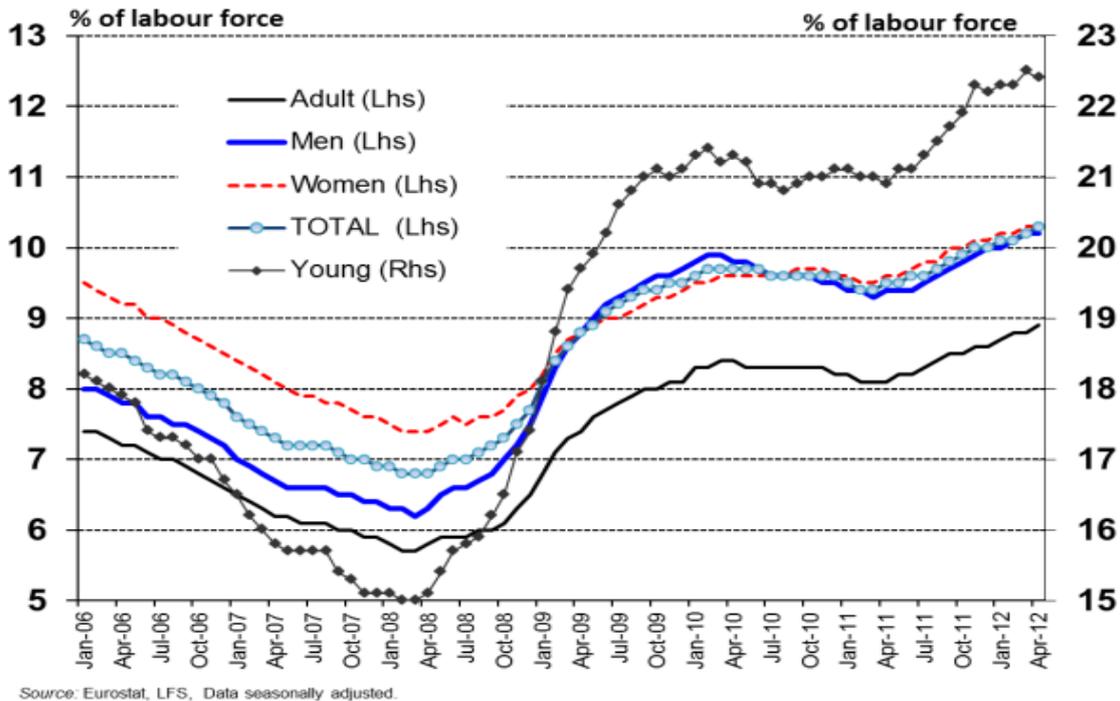


Chart 2. Monthly unemployment rate (%) for young people (15-24), adults (25-74), male, female and total Jan 06–Apr 12 in the EU

With regard to the unemployment of young people, the situation in the Southern countries is much worst. The youth unemployment rate has always been around 2.5 times higher than the rate for adults. These figures are dramatic for Spain and Greece. Youth unemployment has become a major challenge in almost every Member State.

The economies in these Southern countries rely mainly on small and medium-sized businesses, which are constantly closing. Also many businesses have and are continuing to move to other countries thus contributing to jobs being lost and the availability of employment opportunities being reduced. Nevertheless we hope this situation will change in the coming years and in the meantime governments must implement new social measures to protect people in disadvantaged situations.

Specific issues for people recovering from substance abuse

Improving a person’s capability for gaining and maintaining employment (employability) is a key element in the social reintegration of drug users. Interventions in this area recognise that drug use and problems related to it may jeopardise not only entry

and re-entry into the labour market, but also the ability to retain employment. Vocational training in Europe encompasses a wide range of programmes that aim to improve the skills and qualities needed to find and secure employment including interview and presentation skills, time management, computer literacy, self-efficacy and commitment to work. In addition, schemes to develop particular occupational competencies and qualifications may be offered by drug treatment services and by specialist providers, such as national training authorities and employment services (EMCDDA, 2011a).

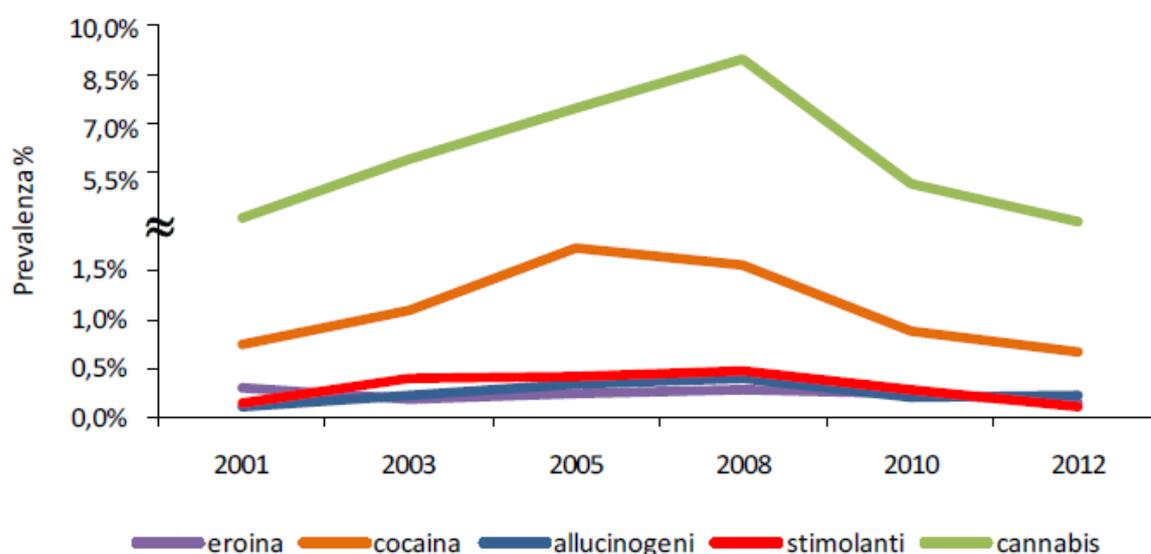


Chart 3. Drug users in the general population aged 15-64 in the last 12 months. Years 2001-2012

In Portugal, the National Coordinating Committee for Drugs, Drug Addictions and Harmful Use of Alcohol ensures the coordination and articulation among the various government departments involved in these issues. Through the Decree-Law nº 17/2012, January 26, the general manager for intervention on Addictive Behaviours and Dependencies (SIDAC) was created, extinguishing the Institute for Drugs and Drug Addictions, Public Institute (IDT, I.P.) and introducing a major innovation based on strengthening the planning and monitoring component in programs for reduction of consumption of psychoactive substances, for the prevention of addictive behaviours and for the decrease of dependencies.

The main principles are:

Focus on the person - interventions for substance abuse are no longer considered the last goal; any intervention must refer to the person's objective and subjective needs, rather than on the substances.

Territoriality - to a better understanding, intervention and planning, an increase focus on local and regional management and planning is necessary.

Integrated approaches and responses at internal and external level - approaches and responsibilities should be built in an integrated way, not dissociating individual and social reality. Services should set up their operational interventions using comprehensive response mechanisms, based on a coherent network able to deal with the complexity and cross-cutting nature of the drugs and alcohol related issues phenomena.

Spain has reduced the consumption of cocaine, among young people aged 15 to 34 years, but usage was still the highest in Europe in 2012. Spain leads the European ranking of seizures of cocaine and hashish. The National Action Plan on Drugs presented a Survey on Alcohol and Drug Abuse in Spain 2011-2012. The consumption of hypnotic and sedatives did decrease; women consume twice as many as men. Other than hypnotic and sedatives men have greater consumption, quadrupling usage to women in cocaine and tripling in cannabis (those who consume more cannabis are young people between 15 and 17 years old).

Italy is the fourth country in the EU27 as regards population size, after Germany (almost 82 million), France (65 million) and the UK (over 62 million). In 2011 Italy counted 59,464,644 resident people. The level of social exclusion among problem drug users is generally high, especially among opium users. Data on the social conditions of those entering drug treatment in 2010 show that over half (56 per cent) were unemployed and, in the last five years, this percentage has increased in 15 of the 24 countries reporting trend data. Low educational attainment is common among clients entering treatment, with 38 per cent having completed only primary education, and 2 per cent not even achieving this level. Many are also homeless, with 10 per cent of drug treatment clients reporting no stable accommodation.

Good practices – VET and voluntary sector

In Portugal, the employability of people with experience of consumption is realised through joint work between CIDAC, the Portuguese Vocational Training and Employment Institute (IEFP) and organisations involved in vocational training and employment. The relationship between the CIDAC and IEFP, IP is of great importance, since all initiatives IEFP, IP, under the professional guidance of either vocational training or employment, are relevant for the design of life and reintegration of people consuming psychoactive substances in treatment. Moreover, it is useful for achieving its goals that the coaches of both services articulate and work together. This enables the creation of innovative joint strategies to integrate new people, intervening in a line of prevention of consumption, and detachment of relapse. Finally, this combination will enable the adoption of new strategies to respond to a dynamic reality. The joint work aims to build a joint action plan between the two services with interventions that respond to the felt needs on the ground.

The National Action Plan on Drugs of the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality in Spain takes into consideration the commemoration of an International Day to launch a new campaign of prevention. There has been the adoption of a new Action Plan on Drugs 2013-2016, among which are proposals that includes the adaptation of a new set of regulations to prevent the consumption of alcohol to minors and intensify prevention and enhance research on cannabis consumption.

In Greece, the key employment promotion agency is the Greek Manpower Organisation (OAED) but they don't have any specific procedures or any methodologies for this disadvantaged group. OKANA runs Specialised Vocational and Social Reintegration Centres (EKKEE) in Athens and Thessaloniki but these only provide counselling and psychosocial support to clients. The programmes work on increasing self esteem in order for the clients to be able to find work in the open labour market on their own.

One promising approach in Italy involves the integration of support, such as vocational counselling, skills training and job placement, within drug treatment programmes. Among the models that have been studied is the provision of skills training to unemployed drug

users receiving psychosocial treatment in outpatient settings. The effectiveness has also been assessed of individual vocational counselling, job-seeking support, supported employment, case management and other interventions for substitution treatment clients. A number of studies have produced encouraging results with regard to outcome measures including employment rate, income, and welfare services (EMCDDA, 2012b). However, interventions that produce consistently positive outcomes have not been identified, and differences in approach, study populations, outcomes assessed, and lack of replication prevent any firm conclusions being made about the overall effectiveness of these measures (Foley et al., 2010). In addition, the available evidence focuses almost exclusively on social reintegration interventions for opioid users, while the needs of treatment clients who use other drugs are yet to be systematically addressed.

Specific measures adopted in Portugal in support of socio-professional integration are -

- a) Mediation to vocational training and employment - is to support the hiring of mediators that accompany the process of professional integration of drug addicts, who have or are completing treatment.
- b) On the job experience - Stage for socio-professional integration - aimed to promote job access, to a working life of drug addicts who are or have finished treatment processes in the therapeutic community, outpatient or within the prison system, through a practical training course on the paid site work (companies).
- c) Award of socio-professional integration - measure to support employers who admit drug addicts, preferably the passing of one of the other measures of the programme, under contract of indefinite duration, appropriately framed by contracting work. This support is reflected in the reimbursement of the costs of remuneration, social security and others.
- d) Employment Support - intended to support entities that employ drug addicts, by awarding grants to support some expenses such as social security, salary and others.
- e) Support to Self-Employment - consists in sharing the costs of investment, commencement of operations and initial operating costs of business units that are operated by previous drug addicts, appropriately framed by recognised bodies.

Main findings from Focus Groups Meetings and Interviews

Weaknesses

Users focus group feedback: Most of the people in this group have incomplete education and training and a lack of expertise so they can't compete in today's market. Their emotional vulnerability and inability to control reactions to pressure and stressful situations further disadvantages them and puts them at risk of relapse. The educational training of users is very basic. All have only primary education and therefore it is more difficult to find a job. Added to this they do not have self-confidence and they do not believe they will succeed in finding a job because they have a poor image of themselves.

There is very little help in finding and maintaining a job in the open labour market. Clients are assisted in part of the job search, in tasks such as registration at the public employment service, filling in a CV, internet search. But, apart from these things, there is not a real activity similar to supported employment.

The current economic situation in southern countries and unemployment rate has a very strong impact on the situation of companies, which is hampering access to employment.

The economic difficulties of individuals and families have an impact on their self-esteem.

Professional Focus Group Feedback: There are different sub-groups of people who are ex-drug users. The group with higher risk of being marginalised is that where most of the persons have not had a job for a long time; they have lost the skills to look for a job, to prepare a CV, to introduce him/herself with an adequate image, to hold an interview and so on.

In the past there have been specific measures funded by the national government or the region that have allowed the realisation of vocational training together with internship and subsequent job placement in private companies. Unfortunately, these projects are usually of limited duration and are currently not available.

From the point of view of the staff, getting a job for people recovering from drug addiction is a very difficult challenge. The main problem is that in most cases, after the period of rehabilitation, clients go back to the original background where they came from. Often the result is a reproduction of the causes that led to drug addiction, and the risk to go back on the same route is very high.

Behaviour of drug users in relation to reality is often a little 'childish', as you can see from the focus group. The dreams take precedence over the reality principle and actually show a generalized distrust (*I think I will go abroad, I want to live on a ship, in England you are happy even if you work as a dishwasher ...*).

Strengths

Users focus group feedback: All stated that they are aware of the importance of employment for reorienting their lives; after several failures they are committed to 'straightening their way'; they have decided not to lie to themselves or to others, anymore.

Professional Focus Group Feedback: The persons who are following a rehabilitation process are in a better condition than others out of treatment; they must follow terms and rules and accept monitoring, counselling and evaluation. Training courses and social skills acquisition are more likely to occur as well.

The people in this disadvantaged group have power, persistence, devotion and self-discipline after having transformed their many negative experiences to positive ones in a short period of time. Having lived through extreme experiences and following their detoxification and psychotherapy programs they have acquired a wealth of experiences, knowledge and achieved maturity. Their desire to change their lives is a major motivating factor.

Threats

Nowadays, the economic crisis has caused an increase in unemployment which means even greater difficulty in finding work for this disadvantaged group. There was always a lack of services and expertise in this field and now the crisis has added to this with funding and staff cutbacks. Social prejudices and stigmatisation are further obstacles which challenge this group.

It is now more difficult to access financing, although the vocational training programs and employment continue.

Users focus group feedback: They have fears of being excluded for ever from the labour market; the current high unemployment rate in Southern countries is a serious threat for their future. Their old circle of acquaintances and friends are also viewed as a threat as it can sometimes lead to relapse.

Professional focus group feedback: The current economic recession and high unemployment rate is the worst situation this group of people has to overcome. In addition, to achieve employment means to have financial assets and this can jeopardise the individual if finances are not handled properly.

Opportunities

Users focus group feedback: To maintain the rehabilitation process gives them the opportunity of going ahead to search for a job with the assistance of a professional. There is an opportunity to recognise their skills and capacities to look for the right job match. They want to be realistic and to adapt their search to a market where most of the opportunities are currently service sector.

Professional focus group feedback: Self-employment can be an opportunity as well to be considered; EUSET project itself is an opportunity to look at supported employment and labour inclusion as a core element within the rehabilitation process.

Conclusions

- People in a rehabilitation process to overcome a period of drug addiction, mainly those who are long term unemployed, need to be supported during the job finding phase and the following phases of labour inclusion process, in order to achieve and maintain a workplace in the open labour market.
- There is a gap between the world of employers and the world of the health system and rehabilitation centres.
- The adaptation of the supported employment model to this group of people should be very efficient to achieve labour inclusion. The job coach can be a key professional to support the employer and the job seeker during the labour inclusion process.
- The supported employment scheme should be adopted by the rehabilitation units to ensure it is considered as a key aspect to end the therapeutic process.
- Work is a key part of the rehabilitation process. The work commitment, in fact, helps to empower the individual and to regain self-esteem, which is essential to get out of the addiction. Currently however job placement is not pursued through a specific methodology, but it follows different paths according to the specific case.

- It is evident that the biggest concern for people coming out of drugs is the lack of trust from people, especially in the field of work. The need of assistance is especially related with a professional figure who can work as a *sponsor*, someone who can *guarantee on your behaviour* rather than on professional skills.
- Another clear need is that of a psychological support in order to allow clients to cope and withstand refusal.
- Promote a close link between vocational training and employment programmes, particularly with supported employment methodology.
- Promote training of technicians in the supported employment methodologies
- Promote training of organisational coordinators in networking (local networks) and supported employment methodologies.
- Disseminate the experiences of local networks to employability organisations.
- It is important to have more programmes and courses to promote skills.
- More social support is needed.
- In brief, more support is needed in accessing and maintaining employment of people recovering from substance abuse.

UK and Ireland Cluster Group

Partners:-

- Irish Association of Supported Employment (Ireland)
- Northern Ireland Union of Supported Employment (Northern Ireland)
- Status Employment Ltd (UK)

Target Group:- Offenders and ex-prisoners. For this paper the definition of an offender and ex-prisoner will simply be defined as someone who has previously been convicted of a crime.

Target Group Statistics

Northern Ireland:

The prison population in Northern Ireland is not large - 1,465 (2009) in comparison to many other European Countries. Northern Ireland has three prisons - a high security prison, Maghaberry Prison, and two medium security prisons, Magilligan and Hydebank Prisons. Hydebank Prison is for 16 to 21 year olds and women on remand or prison.

Approximately 30,000 people are convicted in Northern Ireland each year. Many of them have received their convictions for minor offences and few pose a serious risk of harm, but they can all face discrimination when they apply for a job.

The Probation Board for Northern Ireland supervises over 4,600* offenders subject to a range of court orders and sentences at any given time (**Statistics sourced from PBNi Corporate Plan 2011-2014 publication*). Most offenders are not sent to prison and those who are often experience multiple barriers to integration.

Northern Ireland also has added difficulties in how “Ex-Prisoners” are perceived by society as due to the recent history of the country a number of ex-offenders are known as “political prisoners”, which brings a new and added dimension to the challenge of employment. *A Review of literature on republican and loyalist ex-prisoners* by Professor Bill Roulston, Transitional Justice Institute, University of Ulster (May 2011) highlighted that “Ex-prisoners are four times as

likely to be unemployed as others in Northern Ireland; various factors militate against employment: the general economic situation, the refusal of employers to employ, security concerns, restricted access to training and ageism, as well as the statutory rules whereby ex-prisoners can be legally discriminated against in relation to certain employment opportunities”.

The Republic of Ireland

- The current prison population is **4,262** (15 Feb 2013)
- The rate of imprisonment in Ireland is **96 per 100,000** of population (May 2012)
- The prison population has increased by **400 per cent** since 1970.
- **60 per cent** of people serving sentences for six months or less are from situations of poverty, and are often homeless people.
- Over the past 14 years, the numbers in custody have increased by almost **100 per cent**.
- Prisoners in Ireland are **25 times** more likely to come from (and return to) a seriously deprived area.
- **85 per cent** of fine defaulters are back in custody within four years.
- **90.3 per cent** of sentenced committals in 2009 were for non-violent offences.
- **82.4 per cent** of women committed under sentence to prison in 2009 were for non-violent offences.
- **57 per cent** of sentenced committals in 2011 were for six months or less.
- Over **70 per cent** of prisoners are unemployed on committal and a similar percentage self-report as not having any particular trade or occupation.

(*This does not include those road traffic offences which would come under dangerous/negligent acts.)

England

The prison population of England and Wales on 7 October 2011 was 87,673 and the population of women in prison in the UK is 4,635.

Official figures for England and Wales showed that half of ex-offenders were on out-of-work benefits two years after being released from prison in 2008.

An estimated 86 to 90 per cent of people with mental health conditions who are not in employment want to work. Unemployment relating to mental ill health tends to be longer lasting than other health related unemployment: 86 per cent of people claiming health-related benefits for mental health reasons do so for longer than three months; the comparable figure for other health-related benefits claimants is 76 per cent.

Both nationally and internationally there is increased recognition of the benefits of work for an individual's health and wellbeing.

Unemployment/economic exclusion/employment – offenders and ex-prisoners vs general population

The employment rate in the UK and Ireland Region is on average 70 per cent, with the unemployment rate being on average 10 per cent. These figures take into account the number of people on a Job Seekers Payment, who are regarded as being actively seeking work.

The unemployment rate among ex-offenders is high. Results from the offending, employment and benefits data linkage project indicates that 75 per cent of ex-offenders have claimed out-of-work benefits at some point in the two years after release from prison while 47 per cent of ex-offenders are still claiming out of work benefits two years after release (Ministry of Justice and Department for Work & Pensions publication, 2011).

Specific issues for Offenders and Ex-prisoners

The focus group research of ex-offenders identified the following key points as central to their concerns:

- Missing out on education;
- Bad experiences with mainstream training programmes;
- None or few qualifications;
- Difficult to get reliable and accepted references;
- Criminal record;
- Lack of skill or a 'trade';
- Competing with other people who had better qualifications, experience and hadn't been in trouble;

- Peer pressure not to work and stay on benefits;
- Peer pressure not to engage with training while in prison;
- Alcohol and other addictions;
- No aspiration – no belief in own capabilities;
- Acceptance by others;
- Challenges filling out job application forms;
- Prison is viewed as a place of punishment rather than as a place of rehabilitation and training;
- Getting a chance with employers;
- The relevance of education/training and work provision within prison;
- The lack of supports and guidance for prisoners and ex offenders;
- The lack of co-ordination of services.

Addressing the basic education needs of prisoners can be the first step to ensuring that prisoners progress and get qualifications. There is also a need to make links with outside agencies so that prisoners can continue to study on release.

Disclosure

In each partner's state there is specific legislation and regulations regarding disclosure of criminal offenses, for example in Northern Ireland Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978, is the only piece of legislation aimed specifically at protecting the rights of "rehabilitated" offenders. Under the order, ex-offenders who have stopped offending for a substantial period of time have the right not to disclose their criminal record when applying for most jobs. After a period of time, convictions can become "spent" making it legally right to say "no" when asked the question "do you have a criminal record?"

An employer is not allowed to refuse to employ someone or to dismiss them because they have a spent conviction. Furthermore, having a spent conviction does not mean that it is removed from your criminal record, just that you do not have to declare it.

The length of time (i.e. rehabilitation period) depends on the age at the time of conviction and the type of sentence received. Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NIACRO) has produced an at a glance guide to convictions:-

Sentence	Age 18 or over at conviction	Under 18 at conviction
Absolute Discharge	6 months	
Probation Order, Bind Over, Conditional Discharge, Care/Supervision Order	Ceases in date order or 1 year which ever is longer	
Attendance Centre Order, Juvenile Justice Centre Order, Youth Conference Order, Preparation Order, Community Responsible Order	1 year after Order expires	
Hospital Order	5 years or 2 years after Order expires - which ever is longer	
Fine or Community Service Order Combination Order	5 years	2½ years
Prison – (immediate or suspended) or Young Offenders Centre over 6 months – under 2½ years	10 years	5 years
A period of detention of less than 6 months under Article 45 of the CJ (Children) (NI) Order 1998	N/A	3 years
A period of detention of over 6 months but less than 30 months under Article 45 of the CJ (Children) (NI) Order 1998	N/A	5 years
NB:CUSTODIAL SENTENCE OF MORE THAN 2½ YEARS CAN NEVER BECOME SPENT		

- Consecutive prison sentences count as a longer single sentence
- If more than one prison sentence was imposed, the longer period applies
- If you are re-convicted during a rehabilitation period, it may be extended

The Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) (NI) Order 1979 (amended 1987, 2001, 2003 and 2009) extends the legislation to certain types of employment/occupations that are exempt from the legislation meaning that all convictions, including spent convictions, must be declared and can be taken into account when assessing someone's suitability for work.

The range of occupations exempt under the legislation continues to expand. Information on criminal convictions may be verified, depending on the nature of the post.

Whilst this legislation was intended to support/protect offenders it has a number of difficulties associated with it, specifically:-

- Rehabilitation periods are amongst the longest in Europe
- The list of exceptions is extensive (and growing)
- It is confusing

General issues for ex-offenders

- Ex-offenders are 13 times as likely to have been in care as a child
- 10 times as likely to have been a regular truant at school
(Social Exclusion Unit, July 2008)

There is also a perception among offenders that criminal records are a barrier to finding work – of those who did not have any paid employment in the four weeks before custody, 16.2 per cent listed previous criminal records as a barrier to getting work / looking for work. (Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction Wave 1 results, 2010)

A key statistic highlighted by the Prison Service for Northern Ireland was that 60 per cent of prisoners have a hidden disability (including learning difficulties) such as Dyslexia, ADHD, ASD and mental health.

Statistics also highlight that prisoners are more likely to be unemployed prior to offending and are more likely to be unemployed after leaving prison. This would imply that there is a vicious circle of offending which needs to be broken as research has highlighted that employment prevents re-offending.

Other general issues have come from the individuals themselves and include:

- The fear of rejection;
- Issues with low self esteem;
- Low motivation;
- Fear of disclosure;
- Anxiety over losing welfare benefits
- The belief that work is no longer an option for them.

Prisoners & Mental Health Difficulties

The management of vulnerable prisoners, especially those with mental health difficulties, within the prison system has been the subject of concern and criticism over a number of years.

Research highlights the value of a multi-agency and multidisciplinary response in this area of criminal justice and considers the implications for the Probation Service in working with offenders facing mental health difficulties.

It has long been recognised that within prison and in the offender population in the community there are higher levels of mental illness and mental health difficulties than within the general population (Danesh, 2002; Brinded, 2001; Meltzer, 2008; Duffy et al., 2006). The demographic features of the prison population also show that there tends to be a higher level of drug and alcohol abuse in prison than in the general population (Fazel, 2006).

Good practices – VET and voluntary sector

Government Programmes

Recognising that offenders finding stable employment reduces their offending behaviour by between 30 per cent and 50 per cent, the **Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS)** is developing an employability strategy to create a link between the opportunities available to prisoners, through delivery of a range of NIPS services (including but not restricted to learning and skills), and employment market trends and opportunities.

In June 2012, the NIPS produced a public consultation in relation to an employability strategy for prisoners. The main thrust of this strategy is to ensure that through the provision of education, training

and employment services to offenders in custody that a reduction in re-offending can be achieved.

Prior to recent prison reform, a number of educational, vocational training and employment initiatives were developed within the prison services, aimed at giving prisoners suitable work experience, knowledge and occupational skills to improve their employability prospects on their return to the community.

In addition to this each prison has specific employability projects, such as Magilligan Prison, which has been involved with a local NGO on gardening projects and work experience opportunities.

An important strand of the NIPS Employment Strategy for offenders has been the establishment of a **Learning and Skills Centre** (3/11/2011) at Maghaberry Prison to begin the work of transitioning individuals to life/employment after prison.

NIPS has also set up a multi-agency steering group which has been working to develop and improve the delivery of the appropriate learning and skills service to offenders in custody and in the community who have learning disabilities and/or learning or communication difficulties.

Probation Service

The role of the probation boards in each of the regions of the UK and Ireland is to help to prevent reoffending by assessing offenders, challenging their offending behaviour, changing their attitudes and behaviour and thereby protecting the public.

It works with a range of NGOs to provide vocational training and employment community based services such as NIACRO, Extern, Opportunity Youth and Youth Action.

Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) - DEL is responsible for further and higher education, vocational training and employment.

The main current government funded programme to provide assistance to ex-offenders is called **Local Employment Intermediary Service (LEMIS)** (<http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/lemis>)

LEMIS is an initiative designed to help unemployed people in the community overcome those issues that may be preventing them from finding and keeping a job in certain areas of high unemployment and economic inactivity.

The employment advisers have extensive knowledge of the labour market and provide a 'professional employment service on your doorstep' at their offices and at outreach centres in the community. An employment adviser can support and help clients to find a job by providing information, advice, guidance and practical help.

Non Governmental Organisations

There are a number of more specialist NGOs which provide employability services to offenders and ex-prisoners. These include NIACRO, Extern, Opportunity Youth, Youth Action and many others.

Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NIACRO www.niacro.co.uk). NIACRO was established in 1968 and aims to work to reduce crime and its impact on people and communities.

NIACRO provide a range of programmes to assist ex-offenders or people who may offend develop a more stable lifestyle and integrate within their communities. NIACRO's current projects include:

- **APAC (Assisting People and Communities)** - works to reduce anti-social behavior and offending.
- **Base 2** is a crisis intervention, clarification and support service for individuals and families who may be at risk of violence or exclusion from the community. Base 2 gives people practical advice and support on housing and benefits and can help with travel arrangements.
- **Jobtrack** is a partnership between NIACRO, the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNi) and the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) which works to increase the employability of offenders and ex-prisoners.
- **Working with Employers** NIACRO works with employers to encourage fair treatment for job applicants who disclose criminal convictions.

NIACRO works in partnership with a range of statutory organisations (i.e. Department of Justice, NI Prison Service, Probation Service for

NI, Youth Justice and Department for Employment and Learning, Department of Health and Social Services) and NGOs.

Extern – (www.extern.org) provides social care and support services to children, families, adults and communities throughout Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. This includes ex-offenders. Extern NI started in 1978 and employs 258 people. Extern Ireland started in 2004 and employs 95 people. Extern delivers a number of employability projects for offenders and ex-prisoners including:-

Extern Works:- provides supported training and employment programmes, which provides work experience and accredited training to adults who are homeless and not in education, or employment for adults who have been through, or are currently in the criminal justice system.

Extern Recycle: Provides a range of accredited courses including essential skills, soft skills, and vocational skills – IT, Waste Management, Catering, Warehousing and WEEE Recycling

The employability model used by Extern includes work preparation and vocational skills as well as personal development. Vocational skills included catering, waste management, health and safety, IT and job search.

Extern works in partnership with a range statutory organisations (i.e. Department of Justice, NI Prison Service, Probation Service for NI, Youth Justice and Department for Employment and Learning, Department for Employment and Learning) and NGOs.

Ireland

Community Return

Community Return is an incentivised scheme which provides for earned temporary release under which offenders who are assessed by the Irish Prison Service are offered early temporary release in return for supervised community service. Community Return offers conditionally released prisoners, through providing unpaid work, an opportunity to repair the harm done by their offending behaviour to the community. Community Return works on tasks that would not

otherwise be done and which benefits communities, neighbourhoods, voluntary/community and charitable organisations, local schools and a variety of individual members of the community.

Community Based Organisations in Receipt of Service Funding

The Department of Justice and Equality, through the Probation Service, provides funding for 46 community based organisations (CBOs) to develop and deliver adult services in their communities. These initiatives have been developed and supported to meet local needs and enhance the work of the Probation Service in changing offending behaviour.

The network of CBOs and projects play an important role for the Probation Service, by adding a further dimension to services and supports that the Probation Service can offer offenders and their communities in reducing re-offending and increasing public safety.

United Kingdom

Apex Scotland

Apex Scotland works with employers in the public and private sector to develop recruitment strategies that place an emphasis on risk reduction. They provide education and training services to employers that enable them to introduce and sustain non-discriminatory risk reduction recruitment policies. These services are marketed on the basis of the mutual benefits of such recruitment policies to companies and ex-offenders.

Conclusion

Offenders and ex-prisoners face many barriers in accessing employment opportunities and their criminal conviction is not their only barrier. Offenders and ex-prisoners have a very complex set of issues which impacts on their employment opportunities such as lack of essential skills, lack of qualifications, lack of vocational and work skills and their lifestyles (personal and social) may also impact on their employability.

The greatest barrier is the perception held by the general public and employers that 'prisoners do not change'.

This coupled with the fact that many prisoners have low self esteem suggests that the Transfer of Innovation of the Supported Employment Toolkit could greatly help the agencies that work with prisoners to find employment in the open labour market.

It is important to, rather than appealing to the social conscience of employers, to appeal to their commercial sense and to the value of demonstrating that risk reduction recruitment policies involving the employment of ex-offenders makes commercial sense.

The partnership approach involving employers, statutory agencies, and voluntary and community organisations will help to achieve this objective. Therefore the Supported Employment model will assist this process.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The main findings of the working sessions with people facing disadvantaged situations, people from vocational training and employment or other organisations working with the targeted disadvantaged groups / NGOs and government departments/agencies and policy makers, was:

Young people at risk of dropping out / young school leavers / young people not in education, employment or training (NEETS) over arching findings;

- Takes a long time to find a job
- Low formal qualification
- Poor basic knowledge
- Difficulties in engaging in the recruitment process
- Different personal and social problems such as debts, substance/alcohol abuse
- Employers expect experience but employers are reluctant to allow young people the opportunity to gain experience
- Young people think that there should be more support available to empower them to find out about their strengths and needs and to find the direction for their employment path
- Young migrants often face prejudices
- Young people in certain states (i.e Finland) enter working life relatively late
- Young people who are not accounted for in official statistics form the so-called “hard core” of marginalised young people, because they do not participate in education or working life, and are not even registered as jobseekers
- In Sweden the responsibility of the undergraduates, adolescents who are not in school and are yet to turn 20, lies with the municipalities. It has been confirmed that there are flaws within this system and that many young people are not participating in any form of activity.
- A large segment of the young people that were not working were hard to find in a public register.
- Every fourth high school students drops out or leaves as an undergraduate
- A form of marginalisation is exclusion from the job-market

People recovering from substance abuse

Over arching findings:-

- Lack of employability skills
- Lack of basic education achievements
- Lack of self-confidence and belief in themselves
- Poor self image
- Lack of employment experience
- Lack of employability skills to find employment such as how to prepare a CV, to introduce him/herself to an employer, how to conduct an interview
- Non completion of obligatory schooling
- Lack of training and/or expertise in a particular field
- Difficulty in management of stress and anxiety
- Emotional vulnerability
- Increase in the probability of relapse
- Lack of professionals who are specifically trained in the employment field
- Involvement with criminality
- Weakness in changing social environments
- Apart from these experiences, there is very little assistance in finding and maintaining a job in the open labour market. Clients are assisted in part of the job search, in tasks such as, registration at the employment centre, filling in CV, internet search. But, apart from this, there is not a real activity similar to supported employment.
- From the point of view of the staff, getting a job for people recovering from drug addiction is a very difficult challenge. The main problem is that in most cases, after the period of rehabilitation, clients go back to the original background where they came from. Often the result is a reproduction of the causes that led to drug addiction, and the risk to go back on the same route is very high.

Offenders and ex-prisoners

Offenders and ex-prisoners face multiply barriers in accessing the employment arena including:

- Lack of essential skills,
- Few qualifications,
- Lack of vocational and work skills

- Low self-esteem
- Low motivation
- Anxiety in relation to society attitudes
- Anxiety in relation to welfare benefits
- Other issues such as alcoholism, mental health
- Peer pressure not to “conform”
- Criminal record

In conclusion all of the disadvantaged groups consulted have many similar barriers to entering the workforce and as such would benefit from the model of Supported Employment.

Proposals and Recommendations:

Young people not in education, employment and training: Many people need practical support and assistance to navigate and solve problems. Fundamental individual aids are addressed and highlight the individual's situation.

Key points / needs based on the findings are:

- Holistic approach
- Individual support
- Confidence in an adult
- Support group with others (similar situation)
- Someone who believes in one's capacity and potential
- Ability to dream and create life visions
- No predefined agenda
- A flexible support system which moves with the participant's needs
- Requirements that are reasonable and attainable
- Help when necessary and with the necessary (private, public, government) support
- Practical help

Organisations work with different methods and values. It is important to increase their empowerment and motivation.

Job tasters are a useful tool for guiding them into the open labour market and letting them find work that they find interesting.

It is essential that we work more effectively during the transition between school and work. If you can capture a student early and guide them to work the negative effects of being inactive will decrease.

The school system need to develop a more individualised approach to supporting young people.

In order for the toolkit to be more useful, it should include a text based manual on motivational work for practitioners.

Strategies need to be put in place at local level to work with networks and support agencies to ensure joined up thinking to improve access to the labour market for young people.

The motivation to work for boys often relates to earnings and for girls it can be the social context of a job, once the motivation is identified it is important to match with a suitable employer as quickly as possible.

People recovering from substance abuse

The adaptation of the supported employment model to this group of people should be very efficient to achieve labour inclusion.

Reinforcement of policy which subsidises employers or the self-employed. There are subsidies from the government for job places that are a major motivating factor for employers.

Creation of services for supported employment.

Example from Portugal - the Program VIDA-EMPREGO (LIFE-JOBS Program), includes:

- a) Mediation to vocational training and employment - is to support the hiring of mediators that accompany the process of professional integration of drug addicts, who have or are completing treatment;
- b) On job experience
- c) Award of socio-professional integration;
- d) Employment Support;
- e) Support Self-Employment.

Offenders and ex-prisoners

Within this group of disadvantaged people the Supported Employment model can address many of the experienced barriers by:-

- Ensuring realistic goals
- Taking a person centered approach
- Learning on the job
- Employer engagement
- Addressing self confidence and self esteem
- Multi-agency approaches
- Skilled workforce in employability issues
- On-going support

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ANNEX 1: Cluster Group Partners

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**European Union of Supported Employment Toolkit for
Diversity has been funded with support from the
European Commission**

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