

Newsletter

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Labour Plus Exchange Of Experiences On Education And Youth Employment

Alt Empordà, Santa Cruz, and Marburg on the Okup'Alt programme



On-site exchange of experiences in Alt Empordà

Two partners of the Labour Plus Project, the Development Agency of Santa Cruz de Tenerife and the Mittelhessischer Bildungsverband from Marburg, visited the *Okup'Alt Programme* on Education and Youth Employment in Alt Empordà on the 26th of March 2014. The main aim of this study visit, as part of the exchange of good practices between partners promoted by Labour Plus Project, was to gain first-hand knowledge on the operating and implementation of this practice *in situ*.

Okup'Alt in a few words

Okup'Alt Programme is a resource provided by Alt Empordà County Council for young people aged 16-19 who do not utilise compulsory education and instead chose to work. The programme gives priority

to those in vulnerable situations and gives them an opportunity in the process of training and integration into the labour market and helps avoid the risk of social exclusion processes. In this sense, the programme enables young people to continue their education and acquire new knowledge and skills for their future insertion into the labour market. The programme is an intervention project that lasts 3 months (January-April) and this year celebrated its third edition. Okup'Alt Programme is a resource that interrelates in fluid contact with the diverse stakeholders from public and private sectors working in this field and the professionals involved in the participatory spaces for youth promoted by Alt Empordà County Council.

The study visit: work habits and communication strategies

The main aim of the visit was to

meet the instructors and the young people who were working there in a wooded area near the chapel of Santa Lucia. This group carries out deforestation, cleanliness and suitability of urban furniture in public spaces assigned by municipalities. They also arrange dry stone walls, natural water sources and stream areas. The youngsters explained to the group their experience not only relate to the job in itself but also related to work habits, schedules and work environment.

Participants were then introduced to the "Communication group", discussing with the instructors and the youth participating in this group. The visit allowed Labour



Plus partners to witness first hand the communication strategy that the young people themselves defined in order to spread their completed work through Okup'Alt Programme. They explained the main communication products they have worked throughout the Programme. This visit allowed the Labour Plus partners to exchange

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points of view and opinions with the young people involved in the programme and the instructors.

The coordinator of Okup'Alt Programme ended the visit sharing how the organization and methodology is used in the Programme and

presented the main outputs and outcomes of the three editions of this public resource. The financial issues, the participation of the companies and their engagement were also addressed as well as the difficulties and challenges of the Programme.

For more information:

<http://inclusioaltemporda.cat/portal/>

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Labour Plus Exchange of Experiences

What partners' say

“We want to continue!”



**Interview with Steffen Rink,
Middlehessian Education Association,
Marburg**

Steffen, you took part in the Study Visit in Alt Empordà. What was your most important impression?

To see that it works. We knew the concept and the setting of the programme, and I am a friend of this project on the social media. But to talk with the participants, to listen to their experiences, to discuss with the staff members, to look at the results and to “feel” the motivation of all persons who are involved - no Facebook, Skype or evaluation can replace the immediate contact and communication.

You do the transfer of the project in Marburg. Did you get new inspirations by your visit?

We just started the transfer before the visit and included some parts in an existing project of orientation on labour market and education for young people in a so called “production school”. By the transfer, we shortened the period of participation as it is in Alt Empordà, and had good results. We strengthened the combination of practical work, social competences and language training - we included young refugees in an existing group of Germans. But, the visit gave me other impulses: the combination of practical work as it is done in the forest group, the media group, and through this combination, the expression of the skills and experiences of the participants with the possibilities of social media.

What do you think is innovative in this subject?

Normally we have the standardized way to get a job: you write your curriculum vitae and try to find con-

vincing words on your motivation to get the job. With videos and new media you have means of expression beside the written culture, and you can show more of a person: his behavior, his creativity, his identity. You can communicate more and other information about yourself, your personality, your skills. I am convinced that we need such ways to apply for jobs, especially for young people, because the culture of communication changes. But I know that this needs on the other side the openness of employers.

Last question, back to your transfer project in Marburg: Will you continue?

Yes, we want to with the impulses we got by the transfer of Alt Empordà. At the moment we prepare an application for a project focused on refugees, and an orientation on jobs and education with the methods we applied with the transfer.

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Plural Views: Managing Diversity in Alt Empordà

Sharing good practices with local stakeholders

The exchange of methodologies and work materials, done through the identification of **Good Practices**, allowed the Labour Plus partners to gain experiences in training professionals on social issues at the local level.

As an example, Alt Empordà translated the principles and methodology from the good practice *Managing Diversity* of Nieuwegein (Netherlands) to its local reality, organizing a training day on the 4th of June 2014 addressed to more than 50 local professionals and stakeholders from different areas of intervention (labour market, education, social welfare, health, culture, participation and associations, sport and the media).

The training session was clearly oriented to *promote awareness about intercultural diversity management at local level*. This comprehensive view of how to manage diversity aimed to share principles, methodologies and challenges among local agents and promotes greater awareness among all citizens. An open conference about Managing Diversity highlighted key

concepts and demonstrated the basic principles of diversity management at the local level. The second intervention was focused on *the major challenges and lines of action for managing diversity at local level*. The last part of the training day was focused on *Talks on Diversity Management* and was attended by professionals from different fields and specialities. The issues chosen on how to deal with managing diversity were: education, leisure activities, as well as sports and media. In order to reinforce the contents addressed on this training day, the Alt Empordà team also presented the publication ***Plural Views: Managing Diversity in Alt Empordà***, in which chapters from the trainers of Alt Empordà and Nieuwegein are included, telling the experience of Nieuwegein and the 8 experiences from Alt Empordà on Managing Diversity. They also presented a video and the ending chapter which states the Alt Empordà team values the exchange of good practice and the opportunities opened by the Labour Plus project to strengthen local public policies in this area.



Over the training day, the video "[Plural Views: Managing Diversity in Alt Empordà](http://inclusionaltemporda.cat/portal/benvinguts/)" was presented to participants. This audio-visual resource involved various stakeholders in the region with the purpose of strengthening the comprehensive view of diversity: the High School of La Jonquera; Youth Service of the Castelló d'Empúries Municipality; Social Services from the Alt Empordà County Council; the department of Gynaecology and Paediatrics of the Figueres Hospital; the Ingràvid Festival of Contemporary Culture in Alt Empordà; the football club La Joncaria Figueres; the association Xarxa de Convivència de Roses and local television Tramuntana TV. More info:

<http://inclusionaltemporda.cat/portal/benvinguts/>

Download our [Good practices report!](#)



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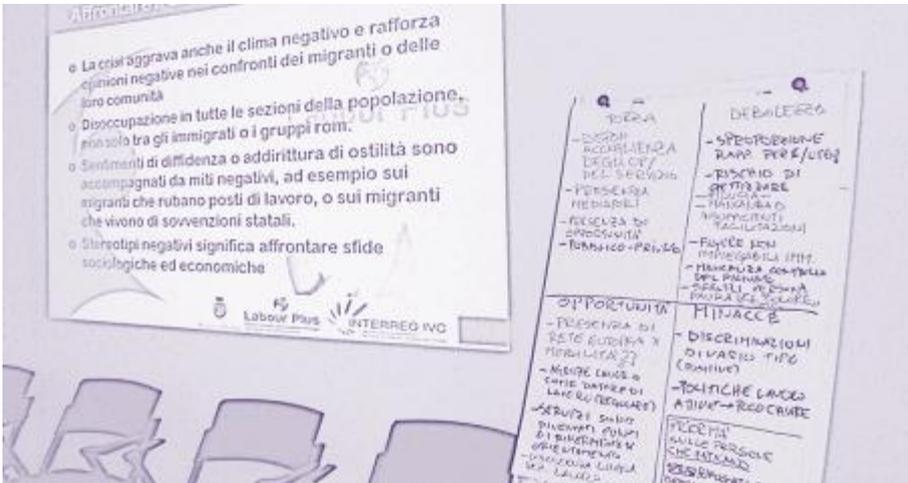
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Public Employment Services For A Multicultural Labour Market

Regional Consultation Meeting in Padua, Italy



Offering services to an ever-transforming society

As a result of globalization, higher human mobility and technological advances, local labour markets and the services operating for its smooth functioning have experienced changes. Local policy makers and practitioners are striving to provide need-based and effective services to an ever-transforming society.

This has been the main topic of discussion for practitioners who gathered at the headquarters of the Province of Padua for the Labour Plus Regional Consultation Meeting on June 27th, 2014.

In this phase of recession, Public Employment Services (PES) are called to find solutions that have heavy implications for social cohesion, individual rights and the overall welfare of resident citizens. The Meeting in Padua has therefore gathered a dozen representatives from the PES and from the local civil

society who, with different roles and expertise, are directly involved with the unemployed – not exclusively – of migrant background.

External factors for services delivery

The meeting was developed as an interactive [SWOT analysis session](#) where participants were called to contribute to the identification of the internal and external factors that positively or negatively affect the delivery of services - not only for migrants and other minorities - but also for workers in general.

The positive factors of the services have been identified in five groups:

1. *the human resources: front office officers dedicated to the quality of the service, available to listen and to collaborate;*
2. *the presence, especially in the reception phase, of intercultural mediators – who have received a formal qualification – that facilitate the relation between migrants and public services;*
3. *the integrated level of services, and*

the fact that PES often becomes a one-stop shop for issues other than employment-related;

4. *the fruitful collaboration of public services with some private employment agencies and other private actors such as training institutions, migrant association and NGOs;*

5. *the recognition of skills and competences acquired by migrant workers, which - when supported by good guidance and coaching - can facilitate the process of further mobility, in fact migrant workers are using PES more intensely than native workers.*

The negative factors mostly refer to structural weaknesses of the public and welfare systems but also to cultural and societal issues. The group ended the discussion with some recommendations for the future and for policy-makers. The following points were made: to leverage the positive factors, for example by taking stock and sharing good practice put in place by single offices and making it available to others; to adapt active labour policies to different needs; offering different and flexible levels of service according to the level of autonomy and focusing service delivery to people who require more attention. Also in social inclusion terms: to increase the resources (human, financial) available for labour inclusion for the weaker clients; to improve horizontal and vertical level networking with different stakeholders and policies and avoid overlapping of services.

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Integration Of Vulnerable Groups As A Common Task

Regional consultation meeting in Latvia, 11th of June 2014



The University of Latvia (UL) organized the Regional Consultation Meeting (RCM) together with the projects' international conference "Towards Labour Market Challenges for Inclusion, Equal Employment and Mobility". Best integration practices were presented to more than 40 participants of which 16 were representatives from public and local authorities – Ministry of Welfare, Ministry of Education and Science, State Employment Agency and eight municipalities.

Participants discussed main challenges of integration facing vulnerable groups, identifying common aspects among Latvian municipalities as well as common and different aspects with project's partners. Important target groups in all municipalities are unemployed young people as well as pre-retirement-age people. In many cases, challenges for young people are lack of experience, education and qualification while main challenges for pre-retirement-age people are necessity of re-qualification and adjustment to new, including technologically advanced, working conditions. As a result, tailor-made activities are designed for the integration of these social groups on both national and municipal levels. Since Latvia is a small country with a large concentration of business and population in Riga, most of the measures stim-

ulating employment are developed and implemented in a centralized manner. Thus, local municipalities work with different projects, initiatives and measures developed by Ministry of Welfare, Ministry of Education and Science, State Employment Agency and other centralized government and public authorities.

Provisional recommendation and best practices identified by project partners were presented by the UL project team. During presentations the following best practices and challenges were presented: State Employment Agency (SEA), Riga City Council, Burtnieki Region, City of Liepaja, City of Dobele, and City of Ventspils.

For Details of the six best practice and challenges all over Latvia see the complete report of the RCM [available online](#).

European Funds for Roma Inclusion

On 11 June 2014, Ile-de France Europe organized a [meeting in Brussels](#) about the new dynamics regarding the inclusion of Roma population inviting representatives from EU Institutions, local authorities, and various stakeholders. Today, national strategies are based on the political context for Roma inclusion adopted in 2011. This context is focusing on three core pillars. First, the political pillar regards the decisions adopted in 2011 and the national strategies of Member States. The second pillar consists of legal issues. EU Council has adopted a Roma's recommendation on December 2013 for the first time. The final pillar regards finances. The European summit, since April 2014 has identified two core priorities for funding: assistance of local authorities and raising awareness about the Roma population. A [website presenting the different funding opportunities](#) for project dedicated to Roma has been created by the European Commission. Director of ENTP, Pascaline Gaborit, participated in the discussions, presenting the Labour Plus project as an example of a EU funded project. She highlighted the need for collective actions responding to the complexity of the problem, presented the actions of Labour Plus project, and illuminated the difficulties faced during the implementation of the project.



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Labour Plus Agenda - Events To Come



➡ Seminar in Riga: 18th to 19th of September 2014

Labour Plus project partner from Latvia – University of Latvia, Centre for European and Transition Studies – is organizing a project's seminar in Riga, Latvia. This seminar will be the opportunity to visit several municipalities in Latvia where different local and national social inclusion projects and activities are being implemented and organized. These site visits will include social inclusion and employment integration practices oriented towards young people within the projects such as “Workplace for Youth”, “Youth Guarantee”, and “House of Youth”. Roma entities within the activities such as Roma mediators and teacher assistant of Roma background in the schools and through integration of other socially vulnerable groups, e.g., pre-retirement-age people and working-age long-term unemployed, will also be highlighted. It is planned that during the 2 day seminars, project partners will visit 3-4 municipalities in Latvia learning and sharing experiences of integration of different socially vulnerable groups.

Contact: Romans Putans, Researcher, [Centre for European and Transition Studies](http://www.lu.lv/cets/) <http://www.lu.lv/cets/>

← Labour Plus Final Conference 11th of December 2014



The Labour Plus **closing conference** will take place on the 11th of December in Antwerp (Belgium). The conference will focus on the results and achievement of the project. As one of the main components of Labour Plus being the exchange and implementation of each others good practices, the presentation of these exchanges will be a main part of the closing conference.

Keep an eye on the [Labour Plus Website](#) for the agenda to be released soon! If you wish to attend the event, contact Natasja Naegels from De8 [Antwerp Centre for Minorities](#)

Labour Plus Meeting on Youtube

The Social and Economic Approaches to Inclusion and Employment Strategies in Europe

On the 8th of May 2014, partners of the Labour Plus project met in Newry and Mourne for a seminar dedicated to the Social and Economic Approaches to Inclusion and Employment Strategies in Europe. A

video has been produced to collect the views and expectations of the partners involved in the project. Click [on this link](#) to watch it!

More info on the [Facebook](#) page



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