

DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities

EU-Learning Networks under the 2007-2013 ESF

Kick-off meeting ESF Learning Network Ex-Offender CoP
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Luca PIROZZI

DG Employment Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities

Unit B4: EGF (European Globalisation adjustment Fund), Innovation



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European Social Fund

Integration of (ex)-offenders as a dimension of employment and social policy

- Limited competence of Europe on prison matters
- However
 - ❑ giving a second chance to (ex)-offenders is a key element of the **European social model** based on the values of freedom, democracy, equality and solidarity
 - ❑ Given their important number – one out of 800 EU citizens is now in prison – the reintegration of (ex)-offenders is an issue of great relevance for the EU's strategy for growth and jobs, the "**Lisbon Strategy**"
 - ❑ The **current economic downturn** affects in particular broken societies. New forms of poverty appear and this gives rise to more violence and increased crime rates. Employment is key to reducing offending and re-offending



Integration of (ex)-offenders as a dimension of employment and social policy (II)

Three key employment priorities identified by the Spring Council and the three Employment Workshops – held in Madrid, Stockholm and Prague in April 2009 – to tackle recession and pave the way for sustainable recovery and growth:

1. Maintaining employment , promoting mobility
2. Upgrading skills, matching labour market needs
3. Increasing access to employment

This will only be achieved with stronger cooperation between all stakeholders, better policy coordination & mutual learning



The 2007-2013 ESF

can prove very useful tool to promoting employment opportunities

ESF is targeting the objectives of the Lisbon strategy through:

- reinforced links with the Social Inclusion Process & the European Employment Strategy (EES)
- funding concentrated in areas where it can have the greatest effect:
 1. increasing the adaptability of workers and companies
 2. improving access to employment
 3. reinforcing the social inclusion of disadvantaged people
 4. strengthening human capital



Capitalising on EQUAL experience under the 2007-2013 ESF

ESF is mainstreaming EQUAL approaches and lessons learnt, including:

- successful approaches for (ex)-offender re-integration
- addressing partnership at all programme levels
- developing and mainstreaming innovative approaches
- transnational cooperation (TC) - sharing information, experience, results and good practice, and working together towards common solutions

ESF Operational programmes (OPs) will finance (ex)-offender projects in most of MSs

Moreover, MSs and regions plan to use 2% of OPs budget for TC



Commission's support to Transnational Cooperation under the 2007-2013 ESF

- Commission has been main motor & resource for stimulating and supporting TC under ESF & making it work through EQUAL
- In 2007-2013 main responsibility assumed by MSs and regions
- new role backed by ESF Regulation -> transnational cooperation is an integrated feature: MSs and regions are invited to support TC, through their national and regional OPs
- Commission has committed itself to provide flexible support to TC activities by MSs and Regions through:
 - ❖ an Action Plan which aims at facilitating and strengthening transnational exchange and cooperation (network of contact points to share experience, practice and tools; IT toolkit to facilitate searches for partners, events, activities and results; validating and disseminating good practice and results)
 - ❖ Key vehicle to achieve the aims of the action plan is the establishment of **open and participative Learning Networks**



“Learning for change” Setting up learning networks under the 2007-2013 ESF

Objectives of EU learning networks

- improve the quality and efficiency of Structural Funds programmes and their impact on employment and social inclusion across the EU
- contribute to policy development at EU level

Expected results

- Developing synergies and complementarities at OP level
- Setting up networks of stakeholders that can contribute to and use the results of these networks
- Professional development of individual members of networks
- Capacity building of institutions and organisations



Applications approved September 2008 Deadline

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND
50 years investing in people

Theme	Lead partner	Partners
Inclusive Entrepreneurship (COPIE2)	Germany (Federal level)	BE (Flanders, Wallonia), CZ, DE-BW , ES (National level, Andalucia, Catalonia), LT, RO, PT, DE (Baden-Württemberg)
Migrants and Ethnic Minorities	Germany Berlin	DE (Bund), EE, UK (England, Scotland) ES, ES (National level, Aragon) SE, BE (Flanders)
(Ex)-offenders	Germany Bremen	DE (Bund), ES (National level, Catalonia), HU, IT (National level, Toscana, Emilia Romagna), NL, PT, RO, UK (England, Northern Ireland)
Partnership	Austria	BE (Flanders), PT, RO, IE (Pobal), HU (MA, IB), DE (Bund), PL



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Commission's role as partner, stakeholder and sponsor of the EU-learning networks

- I. The Support Teams
- II. The Network Coordination Meetings
- III. The Network of Transnational Contact Points
- IV. The Commission's technical assistance expert team



Ia. The Support Teams

In supporting transnational cooperation and networking within the ESF, Commission departments will cooperate closely to ensure that all aspects of network thematic or governance issues will be covered

The cooperation of Commission departments will be sought in the form of a **support team**

Commission departments to be involved in the support team for ExO-CoP:

- EMPL B4: EGF + Innovation
- other DG EMPL units (ESF geographical desks (B2, A3), related policy units (E2 Inclusion)
- policy units from EAC (B4), JLS (E3)

-> first step, a meeting on 28/4/2009 was held to discuss the role of support teams + internal working modalities for the 4 selected so far



Ib. Role of Support Teams

- monitor the work of the network, and provide relevant information and guidance, among other things, on
 - developing synergies with other networks
 - the strategy and work programme of the network
 - policy developments and actions at EU level
 - relevant actions, results and events under PROGRESS (EMPL policy units)
 - relevant strategies, actors and events in ESF programmes (ESF units);
- participate in exchange fora of the network, and promote the mainstreaming of their results
- assess the semester reports and final reports of the network



II. The Networks' Coordination Meetings

to facilitate the communication and synergies between networks

Commission will organize meetings of all approved networks in regular intervals.

Kick-off meeting held in Brussels on 07/05/09 with the participation of the four networks already approved

- EU policy context: Expectations from the networks' contributions
- Presentation of each of the networks
- Learning, dissemination & mainstreaming strategies at EU and national level
- Possible synergies between networks. Identification of areas/topics, suggestions of practical ways of cooperation
- Administrative and financial questions



III. The Network of Transnational Contact Points

National and regional level public official responsible for TN in the OPs

Objective: share experience, practice and tools

Role:

- provide services for contact persons from other countries and regions (information and liaison point; organise study visits, etc.)
- support ESF management teams at all levels, in particular Intermediate Bodies
- advise and support applicants and beneficiaries (by organising information events, support in partner search etc.)

Meetings organised 2/3 times per year - next meeting: 11-12 June 2009

also provide a forum for exchange and further developing the work of the learning networks



IV. The Commission's technical assistance expert team

European Association for Information on Local Development (AEIDL) will assist the Commission in supporting and capitalising on Transnational and Innovative action under the 2007-2013 ESF, through:

- monitoring, analysis, synthesis and dissemination
- pooling evidence, experience and expertise from relevant action

under four areas:

1. increasing adaptability of workers, enterprises and entrepreneurs, and enhancing human capital
2. enhancing access to employment and the sustainable inclusion in the labour market
3. reinforcing the social inclusion of disadvantaged people
4. good governance and capacity building

Monitoring the development of EU learning networks will be one of the tasks of the expert team

