



WORKSHOP SUMMARY REPORT

Workshop Title: Labour Market Know-How-Exchange in the Danube Region

Date: 30th October 2014, 9.30 – 11.00

Panelists / Facilitators:

Speakers:

Gábor Balabán, Ministry for National Economy: **EURES-T Pannonia**

Walter Reiter, L&R Social Research: **Construction Academies in Southeast Europe: Pilot Projects in the Field of Dual Vocational Training**

Uroš Pešec, Employment Service of Slovenia (ESS): **EXPAK AT.SI and Employment Service of Slovenia**

Moderator:

Barbara Willsberger, L&R Social Research, on behalf of Roland Hanak, Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection

Summary of the session (max. 200 words)

The experiences of long-term projects show that networking and learning from each other are relevant instruments to be successful and assist progress to decrease the unemployment rate. Therefore different types of networks and good practice projects were presented and discussed at the workshop:

- EURES-T Pannonia is a partnership of public employment services, social partners and vocational training institutions from Austria and Hungary. The general objectives are balancing regional labour market supply and demand, supporting labour mobility, contributing to the comprehensibility of the vocational and advanced training systems and to its joint development.
- The Austrian-Slovenian Academy of Experts (EXPAK AT.SI) was a cross border project of private organisations, which supported the Public Employment Services in the border region to create a common core of knowledge. The aims were to develop innovative measures to foster the network, to create control instruments and to establish a sustainable basis for cooperation between labour market policy actors.
- Construction academies are pilot projects to show how dual vocational training works in practice. They focus on professions in the building sector because this part of the economy lacks to a considerable extent skilled workforce. The main objectives are a better harmonisation of theoretical and practical elements in vocational trainings and the support of the construction sector by qualifying needed skilled workers as well as the support of the employees to upgrade their skills.

Key messages / lessons learnt (max. 200 words)

Networks are crucial for the know-how-exchange and for the development of new instruments and measures in the field of (un)employment. The experiences of the presented networks attest that there are many advantages for the involved actors, e.g.:

- Personal cross-border and transnational contacts to foster the cooperation
- Improving knowledge of planning, managing and implementing of projects
- Access to best practices and recent research studies
- Better knowledge of the labour markets in the whole border region enhances the counselling process

Furthermore networks need broad partnerships, e.g. public employment services, responsible political institutions, municipalities, social partners, research institutes etc. To be successful it is helpful to embed the network on different levels: local, regional and national. These networks have all relevant actors “on board”, from the local project manager to the decision makers in the political institutions.

Last but not least the activities of these networks should not solely focus on the know-exchange, but also include counselling instruments to adopt existing good practice projects to the regional needs.

Next steps / recommendations (max. 200 words)

The aims of the workshop were the exchange of good practice projects and to enhance the networks between existing and future initiatives and actors. The discussion impressively demonstrated the need of information and know-how exchange and the necessity of building up networks.

Recommendations are:

- Because of many different activities within the field there is a need of coordination (network of networks)
- Networks have to evaluate the needs of their target groups and develop the instruments based on these results
- Networks should not be a one-way street, all partners have to benefit
- Financial support (especially for cross-border-networks) is crucial, because this activity don't have a high-priority in the day-to-day work of the public employment services – but there are also innovative solutions possible, e.g. public-private partnerships
- Commitment of local, regional and national authorities/institutions is essential
- Changes in the legal framework are necessary to reduce the burden of legislation within the field of cross-border activities
- Development of cross-border qualification measures because of the high number of commuters
- Check the transferability of existing approaches to other regions

Appendices:

- PPT Presentations are already online
- Useful links / other relevant information:
<http://www.eures-pannonia.hu>
<http://expak-at.si/expak/display/start>