



- BRIEF PEER REVIEW REPORT -
Practices in Austria / Upper Austria:
“Active networking in the field of demographic change”
Vienna, 18 September 2012
(LP, Linz, 22 September 2012)

INTRODUCTION

Within the framework of the CE-Ageing Platform (<http://www.ce-ageing.eu>), a project co-funded by the Central Europe Programme, the second Peer Review was held in Vienna on 18 September, 2012.

The content of the Peer Review comprised programmes, activities and networks implemented at national as well as regional level for ageing workforce. Next to facts and figures on demographic change, an Austrian programme at national level was presented, followed by a networking initiative at regional level and a best practice example at company level.

The set of presentations included facts and figures on demographic change in Austria as well as Upper Austria presented by Dennis Tamesberger, Chamber of Labour Upper Austria, further the Austrian national programme “Fit 2 Work” a consulting service for secondary prevention of occupational diseases was presented by the programme coordinator Irene Kloimüller, Wert:Arbeit. Further, Mirna Prebanda from the Chamber of Labour Upper Austria informed about the Upper Austrian Network ‚Winning Age. Getting Future!’ which was established in 2004 and actually comprises 60 partners. Finally, an Upper Austrian good practice example “Bus driving – a job for a lifetime”, which is implemented at the busdriving company Sabtours Touristik GmbH, was presented by by Gabriela Vockenhuber. Moderation was provided by Petra Moser, Centre for Social Innovation, Vienna. With the Peer Review a valuable insight into activities in Austria was made possible for the CE-Ageing Platform partners.

Within the second part of the Peer Review, at the beginning the “burning issues” were collected, clustered and further discussed in two working groups. Further, recommendations and findings for Austria as well as the participating countries were gathered and key lessons learnt were collected.

BURNING ISSUES

The “burning issues” gathered from the Peer Review participants were clustered into the following areas:

- motivation for companies and unemployed, differentiation between programme and law
- interlink enterprises, healthy dialogues, cooperation between companies
- legislation, national support, national projects running are not linked to regional projects
- Workability, relation between companies, measurement of re-turn

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FINDINGS

Ideal model of programme

The following model was suggested by CE-partners:

- 1) Leader – Government (obligation)
Co-player (volunteering)
 - coalition
 - representative employers/employees
 - stakeholders
- 2) Vision and recommendation:
 - Strategy plan and application
 - Legislation
 - Programmes
 - Financing from public sector/business sector
 - Measuring of results
 - Evaluation after 2-3 years
 - Updation
 - Promotion of good practice
 - Show effectiveness of the programme
- 3) Business to Business
Business services shall help companies to implement measures and activities. (similar culture than companies)with co-financing of the public sector.
- 4) Assessment + Measures

Networking/Partnership

A network is basically a communication infrastructure where regular systematic dialogues are fostered and different actors come together. In that sense also the social dialogue can be forced. Nevertheless, a network has to have a good “promotor”, taking care of the network. Information transfer from bottom up to top down is possible and linkages between all actors e.g. companies, stakeholders is given and information, knowledge and best practice examples are exchanged. However, benefits (trade off) of the cooperation within the network shall be shown to employers and employees. One CE-Partner pointed out, that the best level for networking is said to be the regional level because problems, challenges etc. are similar.

Motivating/attracting employers and employees

It was further discussed how to motivate/attract employers in order to set measures and activities in order to face the demographic change and/or to join a network dedicating with these issues: The first thing is that employers have to be aware of the demand/need for setting measures and activities. Further, analysis of the company can be offered (e.g. Age structure analysis) and data and return on investment showed to

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companies. In addition, counselling, incentives and public relation can be provided to companies e.g. through network channels. Providing a structure for networking means also having a “promotor” of the network, who takes care of it. To sum up the following steps can be taken: demand/need, analysis/show data/return on investment, counselling, provide structure, incentives, public relation for company, provide structure for networking.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From side of the CE-Partners it is necessary to show **trade-offs** to companies and public authorities. If a company/public authority is investing in measures and activities there will be the understandable wish to have a profit out of this. The problem is that the benefit out of networking is hard to see at short-term, it has mainly a long-term effect.

It is important to understand that not **only building up a network needs time**, also the activities for its implementation and sustainability need time and therefore the recommendation is to give time to establish a network.

Building up trust between all involved participants of a network is crucial, networks are established for long-term cooperation and therefore trust shall be the basis.

LESSONS LEARNT OF THE PROJECT PARTNERS TO BE TAKEN HOME

At the End of the Peer Review, the project partners discussed what they will take home as lessons learnt in order to improve their own actions. The key learnings taken home comprise the following:

- CE-Ageing Platform partners from Austria:
 - systematic dialogue in companies
 - trust is the basis: we need time for a social dialogue
 - it is important that the management of a company is active
 - linking LLL with employment
- CE-Ageing Platform partners from Italy:
 - migration policies are missing in our projects
- CE-Ageing Platform partner from Slovak Republic
 - promote cooperation between stakeholders and exchange of information, there is a need for change

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- training of facilitators and incorporate “family” in policies (linking it)
- CE-Ageing Platform partner from Czech Republic:
 - the model of the House of Workability by Prof. Juhani Ilmarinen
- CE-Ageing Platform partner from Germany:
 - selection of examples for the Peer Review was done well
- CE-Ageing Platform partner from Hungary:
 - believe in partnership, a clear leadership is important
- CE-Ageing Platform partner from Poland:
 - smooth cooperation and dialogue between employers and employees is important



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