

Integration of persons furthest away from the labour market

MEASURES OF THE TEP VORARLBERG FOR IMPROVING THE INTEGRATION OF PERSONS FURTHEST AWAY FROM THE LABOUR MARKET (ESF PRIORITY 3B)

Players	<p>Management: Provincial Government of Vorarlberg, Public Employment Service, Federal Social Welfare Office, Economic Chamber, Chamber of Labour, Austrian Trade Union Federation, Federation of Austrian Industries, Association of Municipalities of Vorarlberg.</p> <p>Support and implementation: ZWIST (Provincial Government of Vorarlberg), Pact Coordination Unit, Public Employment Service and social welfare system at provincial and district level, institutions responsible for the model projects (FAB, Caritas, Aqua Mühle, Offene Jugendarbeit Dornbirn)</p>
Project period	January 2008 – December 2009
Objectives	The overarching objective is to enhance the labour market integration of disadvantaged groups in Vorarlberg. In the framework of the overall project, a “soft” structural change is envisaged with a view to “optimising cooperation among the organisations involved” – first in the model district Feldkirch. The aim of the Priority 3b project for Vorarlberg is to support the transition of specific groups from the Public Employment Service / social assistance to the labour market or the “right” support system. As far as the level of participants is concerned, emphasis is placed on activating the defined target groups, rather than on administering poverty. In the school-work transition phase it is decisive to bring young institutionally disadvantaged people closer to the labour market through qualifying them.
Overall strategy	As the labour market is increasingly less able to absorb persons furthest away from the labour market, more measures supporting job placement have to be taken. In this context, the Pact Vorarlberg identified critical situations above all during the following transition phases: 1. school/labour market – target group: young people; 2. unemployment assistance/social assistance – target group: adults. The overall project focuses on these transition phases and target groups.
Model projects and target groups	The ALBATROS project is an e-learning project targeting the transition from school to the labour market. Its aim is to bring institutionally disadvantaged young people closer to the labour market through qualification. STEP by STEP Clearing is devoted to the comprehensive assessment of the working capacity of persons with health, mental and/or social impairments (older jobseekers and Convention refugees). The project STEP by STEP Employment focuses on organising training programmes (e.g. German language, training for metallurgical industry) combined with employment in the private sector or in existing employment projects.
Activities	Projects to optimise cooperation of the organisations involved, social welfare authorities and the Public Employment Service as well as three model projects are implemented. The projects were developed in a joint planning process. Workshops support the optimisation of cooperation between the Public Employment Service and social welfare system. Case conferences are held for the first time in a model district to improve the coordination of support to persons facing social assistance / unemployment assistance transition.
Results	In the framework of the project ALBATROS , three participants have obtained the leaving certificate of the lower secondary school (“Hauptschulabschluss”), 71 partial exams have been passed and other partial exams will be taken. However, due to the highly difficult target group, no other persons are expected to obtain leaving certificates of the lower secondary school. The capacity for work of about 160 persons was assessed comprehensively in the project STEP by STEP Clearing ; by the end of the project, the target defined will be surpassed. Thanks to the project STEP by STEP Employment , about 30 persons belonging to the target group are already working in an enterprise or in an employment project. More persons are expected to start working. Besides the person-related results, the project steering group regularly discusses structural issues from the perspective of sustainability. Upon project completion, the results of this discussion will become available as recommendations for the Vorarlberg region.
Financing and funding	The total budget amounts to approximately EUR 2,173,913. It includes co-financing of the Provincial Government of Vorarlberg amounting to EUR 576,956, of the Public Employment Service of EUR 576,956 and of the City of Dornbirn of EUR 20,000 plus funds of about EUR 1,000,000 granted under ESF Priority 3b, Operational Programme “Employment” for Austria 2007-2013.
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