

RÉSEAU OBJECTIF PLEIN EMPLOI (OPE)

General details

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Details of activity

Background to the case study	<p>Aims and objectives</p> <p>OPE is commissioned to implement local and long-term development projects of general interest, and to create at the same time jobs for unemployed people, whose personal and professional development is enhanced through continuing vocational training.</p> <p>In short, OPE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fills gaps in local services; • Delivers public service contracts; • Implements active labour market policy actions; and • Contributes to the personal development of unemployed and disadvantaged people. <p>Rationale</p> <p><i>Coming from civil society:</i> Emerging from the real needs of the society, OPE integrates idealism and strategic reflections, innovation and tradition. Our action is based upon 20 years of experience. Our claim is the result of a profound understanding of the malaise relating to the development of our society:</p> <p>“A democratic system in which each person can assume his or</p>
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	<p>her responsibility as a fully-integrated citizen and contribute to a long-term, fair local development.”</p> <p><i>Local roots:</i> OPE is rooted at a local level through the foundation of non-profit-making organisations. Thanks to the collaboration with local officials, the organisations identify the needs of the population and find appropriate solutions.</p> <p>Implementing organisation The OPE network is working in favour of an economic system showing more solidarity and equality. It comprises the “Moulin Bestgen” resource centre and thirty non-profit-making organisations (Centres d’Initiative et de Gestion / Centres of Initiative and Management / CIG), active in numerous economic domains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment services • Community care and social cohesion services • New communication technologies • Education and training • Culture and tourism <p>Each CIG has the legal status of a non-profit-making organisation. The law stipulates that these associations must have a governing board, the members of these boards are often local residents and representatives of local actors. These voluntary collaborators put a lot into their work and they ensure the smooth running of “their” CIG.</p> <p>Funders Prior to 2000, OPE received funding from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESF (37.5%) • National Government (37.5%) • Local authorities (25%) <p>Now, OPE receives funding from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracts from public and private organisations (85%) • Additional money from delivering private services (15%) <p>When activity started OPE was formed in 1999, but built on 15 years of activity of Action Sociale pour Jeunes.</p>
Description of activity	Outline of programme / activities and approaches used



	<p>OPE's ambition is to develop the concept of solidarity economy on a national European level. It does this by focusing on the key areas of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local development: OPE forms partnership with different local actors, in order to meet, <i>new needs</i> (environment, local community-based services, new technologies, culture and tourism), neglected by the market or by the public services, and thus create jobs, improve quality of life and promote social integration and equal opportunities. • Partnership at local level: Each project, realised by former local jobseekers, fits into the local policy, so that the continuity between the territorial requirements and the projects is ensured • Partnership at national level: OPE is always to collaborate with ministries, public services, federations and bodies of the pluralistic economy. • Europe: Besides a necessity and a financial opportunity to implement the first important projects of the future OPE network, this European strategy integrates the basis of the local development that we undertake. It also takes into account national realities such as the cross-border aspects of Luxembourg's labour market; and • continuing education: a wide range of vocational and social training not only improves the employability staff, but also creates a climate of confidence and motivation, in which each individual is supported in his or her development, for example careers advice with technical and social training cycles, which are less stereotyped and more adapted to their needs. <p>Origins After 15 years of activities in the socioeconomic domain, the people in charge of the "Action Sociale pour Jeunes" decided, in collaboration with the OGB-L, to create a body that should be able to tackle the problem of unemployment; by virtue of its political dimension, the strategy of this body should be applied systematically and at a national level. This led to the creation of Objectif Plein Emploi asbl (OPE) on January 1st, 1999.</p>
Geographical focus of the case study	Objectif Plein Emploi asbl is made up of the resources centre "Moulin Bestgen" and of 30 local organisations (Centres d'Initiative et de Gestion / Centers of Initiative and Management



	/ CIG) associated by agreement. It covers the entire territory of Luxembourg.
Sustainability	OPE relies on a model of <i>mixed-financing</i> , consisting of local authority funding for activities that meets local needs, national ministry funding to deliver active labour market policy actions, public funding to provide services, private revenue from the provision of neighbourhood, domestic and personal services, and volunteer time. EU funding provides additional money for developing special projects, e.g. new and innovative activities. But OPE is no longer reliant on EU funding to be sustainable.
Successes / lessons learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a philosophical gap to overcome between the ‘solidarity’ approach of OPE and the Ministry’s active labour market policy. But each can serve the other’s purpose. • The national Ministry needs to operate within the broad framework of EU policy, so changes takes time. • But discussions with the ministry <i>can</i> influence the national legal framework to facilitate a more local approach in line with OPE’s objectives. • Be subversive! European and national frameworks are not necessarily designed to help local partnerships; but local partnerships should be creative in identifying and exploiting every possibility <i>within</i> these frameworks. • The grand aims of the Lisbon process (and policies that result such as Active Labour Market Policies) are valid – but they have to be matched to the grass-roots realities at the local level. • Idealism at the local level is important, but it has to confront (and work with) the hard reality of national and European policy.

