

Competencies for Labour Market- Ostrava Region- Czech Republic

General details

Organisation	RPIC-ViP- Regional Employment Agency
Name of Contact	Zdenek Karasek
Address	Vystavni 2224/8, Ostrava, 709 00, Czech Republic
Telephone no.	00420 596 616 795 (mobile: 00420 602 718 026)
Fax	00420 596 626 917
Email address	karasek@rpic-vip.cz

Details of activity

Background to the case study	<p>Aims and objectives:</p> <p>The Moravian-Silesian NUTS II region is located in the north-east part of the Czech Republic close to the borders with Poland and Slovakia. There are circa 1.3 million inhabitants and, among them, circa 95,000 unemployed. Since the early 1990s it has been a typical steel and coal region in the process of restructuring. Currently, the region is entering a new phase of dynamic development which offers a lot of opportunities. The industrial region of Moravia-Silesia has always been close to the beautiful mountains and nature. There are technically skilled and educated people who can use 4 universities and a lot of high schools and private education organizations. There are many fast growing companies both Czech and foreign investors.</p> <p>The Moravian-Silesian region has defined a development strategy for the years 2005 to 2008. A strategic goal of the high priority is to increase employability of the existing and potential labour force through a systematic support of key competencies development. Based on a series of demand surveys among employers of all sizes 14 key competencies for labour market have been identified. The EQUAL project “Competencies for Labour Market” is aimed to develop, verify and disseminate methods and tools for assessment and development of each of the following 14 key competencies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Competency for interpersonal communication 2. Competency for co-operation 3. Competency for entrepreneurship 4. Competency for flexibility 5. Competency for customer orientation 6. Competency for efficiency (performance orientation) 7. Competency for independence and decisiveness 8. Competency for solving the problems 9. Competency for organizing and planning 10. Competency for life-long learning 11. Competency for proactive approach 12. Competency for stress resiliency 13. Competency for exploring and orientation in information (including PC skills and internet)
------------------------------	---



14. Competency for communication in foreign languages

Besides, the project should help to develop, verify and implement the regional Labour Market Intelligence System (Regional Labour Market Observatory). This part of the project is trying to solve an “information and feed-back gap” from the regional labour market. The existing labour market information does not cover a substantial part of the relevant needs of employers (incl. potential investors), analysts, project developers, education and training institutions, regional and local public institutions etc.

Brief rationale

Development of transferable key competencies (soft skills) demanded by employers can increase opportunities of school leavers, unemployed and employees to succeed on the labour market. Key competencies, however, do not play an important role in the school curricula and in the training programmes for adults (unemployed and SME employees). The existing education system is focused mainly on development of general and profession related knowledge.

Implementing organisation

There is a Development Partnership (DP) “Competencies for Labour Market” including 22 partners and RPIC-ViP as a leading organization which plays a role of Regional Employment Agency (more information on www.rza.cz). Among these partners there are (a) Regional Government, (b) Public Employment Services in all 6 districts of the region, (c) education, training and consulting organizations – public, private and non-profit, (d) Regional Chamber of Commerce etc.

The DP co-operates with other 8 DPs in 7 countries of EU (Belgium, Germany, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Spain and U.K.).

Funders

The DP work programme has been funded within EQUAL Programme since 2005 to 2008. Pre-project activities (demand survey among employers plus identification and description of 14 key competencies) were funded by Moravian Silesian Region and by RPIC-ViP.

When activity started / end date?

The initial activities started in 2002. It was an **inspiration phase** based on discussions with (a) EU experts and partners during the conference “Life After Steel” and during the co-operation in the 1st round of Equal (since 2002) and (b) regional partners during informal meetings and, then, a series of seminars with employers and education organizations. The inspiration phase was followed by **initiation phase** in the years 2003 and 2004. The ideas had been confirmed by demand survey among 809 small and medium sized employers and 53 large sized employers in the region. Based on this 14 key competencies for the labour market were identified and described and, then, approved by the Regional Government under the name “Competence Model for the Moravian-Silesian Region”. Based on identification of potential funding within the 2nd round of EQUAL Initiative the Development Partnership has been set up and the Project Application prepared. Within the EQUAL period 2005 – 2008 we can speak about **development, verification and dissemination phase**. Concurrently, we would like to extend the activity and its results in the Moravian-Silesian region, in other regions of the Czech Republic as well and, perhaps, in other EU regions.



Description of activity	<p>The specific activities of the EQUAL project “Competencies for Labour Market” are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Development of 14 “competency toolkits” (one per each of the identified competencies) in 3 levels (Basic, Medium, Advanced) – incl. AC/DC tools, manual for trainers and users, interactive DVD programme, SW tools for assessment of competencies, internet applications for self-assessment) II. Verification of the tools with at least 420 representatives of the target groups (1 – unemployed, mainly 50+, long-term unemployed, 2 – SME employees, 3 – students, school leavers and school teachers) and further dissemination of already verified training programmes in the Life-Long-Learning courses for adults (employees, unemployed, students) III. Set up a Register of at least 50 certified trainers for assessment and development of key competencies, IV. Develop and verify tools and methods for an independent rating of AC/DC (assessment and development of competencies) training results, V. Develop and verify tools and methods supporting motivation of target group members to improve their competencies and employability VI. Develop, verify and implement Regional Labour Market Intelligence System. <p>Origins – how it came about – bottom up / top down, grew from previous initiative (if so what)</p> <p>As described above in the “When activity started / end date?” the project idea came from bottom and grew from previous initiative of the leading organization – RPIC-ViP – in the 1st round of EQUAL.</p> <p>Who was involved in the design, management and delivery of the programme:</p> <p>The programme of competence based development of employability was designed by 3 of the existing members of the Development Partnership (DP), i.e. RPIC-ViP (initial idea and design), Moravian-Silesian Region and its Regional Board for Human Resources Development (initial support of idea and funding of initial activities) and CEZ as one of the major employers. The first 3 organizations were joined by others throughout the development process managed by RPIC-ViP. Delivery of the programme in the region is based on co-operation of partners in the DP.</p> <p>Recognition – has the programme been recognised as good practice? If so, by whom?</p> <p>The programme has been in the process of implementation. Training programmes for the first two competencies (Communication&Co-operation) were verified and highly appreciated by the first 60 users from the target groups. There is a lot of interest in the results and further dissemination which gives a potential to receive recognition as good practice.</p>

Policy context within which the programme operates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there an explicit relationship between policy priorities / local activities? <p>There is an explicit relationship between the development of key</p>
--	--



	<p>competencies to increase employability and competitiveness in the regional (local) level of the Moravian-Silesian region and the policy priorities of the Czech Government (Strategy of Economic Growth) and European Union as well (Lisbon strategy). The local – national – EU relationship is confirmed through placement of the project in the Theme E (Life-Long-Learning) of the CIP EQUAL in the 2nd round.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the policy context supportive / prohibitive? The context is supportive. • Has the policy context changed during the life of the activity? No. • Which came first – local activities or policy priorities (i.e. is activity leading or following policy priorities)? On the national level this local activity came first.
Geographical focus of the case study	The programme has been initiated at the level of Moravian-Silesian Nuts II region. Nonetheless, there is a transnational cooperation at the EU level within EQUAL Initiative. Besides, there is a high interest in results among different institutions on the national level of the Czech Republic, e.g. National Institute for Vocational Education etc.
Impact	<p>Outputs – scale and scope of people reached through the programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Min. 420 participants of the competence based trainings – verification phase + min. 1,000 in the dissemination phase by the end of 2008 ➤ Min. 500 participants of the information seminars and conferences ➤ Min. 50 certified trainers of competencies ➤ Min. 80 experts involved in development of tools ➤ Min. 20,000 users of internet based applications by the end of 2008) <p>Outcomes: at local level – what difference at local level and at regional and / or national level – what difference made?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Local/Regional level – introduction of competence based trainings into education system + introduction of Regional Labour Market Observatory ➤ National level – an opportunity to introduce competence based trainings into education of adults and students as well <p>Any impact at European level?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ European level – an opportunity to compare and use verified tools for competence based education (results from transnational cooperation within EQUAL)
Partners' details	There are 22 partners of RPIC-ViP (Regional Employment Agency) in this programme - (a) Regional Government, (b) Public Employment Services in all 6 districts of the region, (c) education, training and consulting organizations – public, private and non-profit, (d) Regional Chamber of Commerce etc. More information on partners can be found on www.rza.cz . There are 8 DPs from EU regions – more information can be found on www.skills-equal.org and on www.eurodeco-equal.org



Theme-Specific Questions

Who was targeted by the programme?	1 – unemployed, mainly 50+ and long-term unemployed 2 – SME employees, 3 – students, school graduates and school teachers
Which levels of government were involved, informed or consulted?	Regional government – involved National government – informed and involved (through Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs as Managing Authority of EQUAL Initiative)
What actions resulted in mainstreaming?	This has not been done yet. The National Thematic Groups for EQUAL programme were set up in February 2006. They are focused on mainstreaming of good practices.
Sustainability	Sustainability of the results will be achieved through mainstreaming of the verified training programmes and their funding by (a) employers (for their employees), (b) public sector (for their employees, for unemployed, for students), (c) individuals (participants in training courses). The ESF co-financing of training programmes can be possible as well.
Successes / lessons learned	<p>The programme success is based on four fundamental sources: (a) demand driven concept based on a structured survey of demand by employers, (b) step by step extension of a group of key regional players informed and involved in the programme, (c) committed and experienced team within the Development Partnership and (d) existence of CIP EQUAL which supports innovative approaches/experiments and co-operation at the local/regional/national and transnational levels.</p> <p>What lessons have been learned:</p> <p>“Free movement of ideas” – a slogan of EQUAL initiative - is not an empty phrase. It works if you have a good idea and enough commitment to make it happen.</p> <p>If you could do it again, what would you do differently?</p> <p>We would do all crucial activities in the same way.</p>

