



Identification, Dissemination and Exchange of good practice in  
Local Employment development and promoting better governance

## Programme for Employment, Stockholm - Sweden

**Introduction** The programme started in year 2000 when Stockholm was facing a labour shortage in some occupational fields, especially in the elderly care services. At the same time the number of unemployed immigrants and refugees was very high. The Programme for Employment was designed to address the needs of refugees, immigrants and elderly care services. Today the programme also focuses on other trades experiencing labour shortages.

**Geographical focus** The project was originally located in two District Councils of Stockholm, but due to the good results and political support, the programme was introduced in all 18 District Councils of Stockholm.

**Partnership** The project partners are the Integration Department of the City of Stockholm, the local Employment office, Stockholm City Administration (department of personal policy) and different District Councils. The project management included heads of departments, directors of District Councils and Employment office. In 2001 the Swedish Integration Board and the European Refugee Fund supported the project.

**Activities** The Program for Employment contains 3 parts: Introduction, Apprenticeship and Evaluation. The programme provides training for 20 participants at the time.

The introduction includes vocational training and information about work etiquette, work culture and general advice on the labour market situation. The introduction period lasts for three to six weeks depending on the trade.

The apprenticeship period lasts for five to ten weeks, depending on the trade and it acts as an induction programme. During the apprenticeship period, the participants do their practical work placement and learn work routines and tasks by following their facilitator.

All administration connected to the program is handled by special project assistants who support both trainees and employers in a number of different ways and try to solve problems that participants or facilitators might be experiencing.

Most of the immigrants and refugees require intensive language training before they can start the programme. In 2001, *Specific Swedish Language Skills Training* was developed and introduced. The language training was tailored to match the language used in the elderly care services.

**Successes** Almost hundred percent of the participants who completed the programme achieved work after participating the Programme for Employment.

Some key factors to success:

- Careful analysis
- Structured project organisation
- Setting goals that participants can easily understand
- Strong engagement from the program staff
- Continuous evaluation and development work
- Timing.

### **Lessons learnt**

- Language is a key aspect of any project to ensure the integration of migrant groups into the labour market: after the first half year of the programme it became clear that language problems were affecting the delivery and success of the programme - many people couldn't start the programme because their Swedish was too poor. It was learnt that provision of tailored language training was essential for the success of the project.
- Local partnerships can be particularly beneficial in matching gaps in local services (for example elderly care services) with gaps in employment within the labour market.
- Domestic and personal services are particularly likely to become delivered within the informal economy. Providing regularised employment in these areas is one way of offering people a route into the formal labour market and away from un-regularised employment.
- Political support: the programme had two specific goals, to provide the elderly care service sector that was facing recruitment difficulties with trained labour and to integrate immigrants and refugees into the Swedish labour market. Since both of these issues were regarded as very important, the project received strong political support.
- The project experienced very few implementation problems due to careful analysis, good project organization and the fact that the project management included decision makers.

### **Tools and Transferability**

The Program for Employment is easily transferable method. The project has been transferred to match the needs of several other trades without any problems. Furthermore, the elderly care program has been introduced in other cities as a programme for ethnical diversity. The most important and innovative tool developed as a part of the project was the creation of the (tailored) *Specific Swedish Language Skills Training*. The rest of the project is a combination of well-known functions put together in an effective and appropriate manner.