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Supported Employment for people with disabilities in the EU and EFTA-EEA

good practices and recommendations in support of a flexicurity approach

COWI in association with

AFI ARBEIDSFORSKNINGSINSTITUTTET
WRJ WORK RESEARCH INSTITUTE

EUSE
European Union of
Supported Employment

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Executive summary

Purpose and introduction

The EU and EFTA_EEA consider participation in society as a fundamental right for all citizens. People with disabilities do face barriers in their daily lives, which impede their full participation. In line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, disability is considered a matter of rights and law. The EU disability strategy 2010-2020 aims at eliminating barriers, preventing discrimination and empowering people with disabilities to enjoy fully their rights and participation in society on equal terms with others.

The present study on Supported Employment for people with disabilities in the EU and EFTA-EEA has been initiated to enhance further the possibilities of people with disabilities to participate on the open labour market.

COWI and its partners, Work Research Institute, Norway and the European Union of Supported Employment (EUSE) were tasked with mapping the use of Supported Employment in 30 countries; undertaking an in-depth study of six selected countries on the look for policy recommendations; and producing a compendium of good practices. In addition, a directory of supporting services (an address book) was produced. The findings and recommendations were validated at an expert meeting.

What is Supported Employment?

For this study, Supported Employment is defined as a scheme that supports people with disabilities or other disadvantaged groups in obtaining and maintaining **paid employment in the open labour market**. Supportive measures must include assistance to the employee before, during, and after obtaining a job as well as support to the employer. Key to this is the job coach function.

The perspective of Supported Employment is the focus on people's abilities rather than disabilities. The emphasis is on employment and not on activation or subsistence.

Flexicurity in interaction with Supported Employment

Flexicurity is a strategy that attempts synchronically and in a deliberate manner to enhance the flexibility of labour markets, work organisations and labour relations, on the one hand, and to enhance security notably for weaker groups outside the labour market, on the other hand. Flexicurity can support transitions in and out of the labour market and thus be instrumental for Supported Employment.



Main findings

Mapping Supported Employment

Mapping of Supported Employment in 30 countries

Mapping the use of the application of Supported Employment in 30 countries has shown that there are a lot of practitioners, clients, employees and employers involved throughout Europe. It comes out clearly that much dedicated effort is made to improve the access to work or activation for people with disabilities. Some work under unitary systems others in ad-hoc conditions.

When studying the 30 countries, a wealth of approaches and incentives are found; all of which can provide inspiration for countries and actors wanting to initiate or further develop Supported Employment in their country or local area. This includes examples of actors, framework conditions and organisational set-up of the services, incentives for employers and employees, funding and monitoring.

The mapping of Supported Employment in 30 countries has revealed that the term Supported Employment takes many different forms and shapes in the different countries. A result of diverse interpretations is different practices for the individual's access to Supported Employment across the 30 countries. Another consequence is that comparison and exchange of knowledge and experience across countries become more complicated.

In-depth analysis of six countries

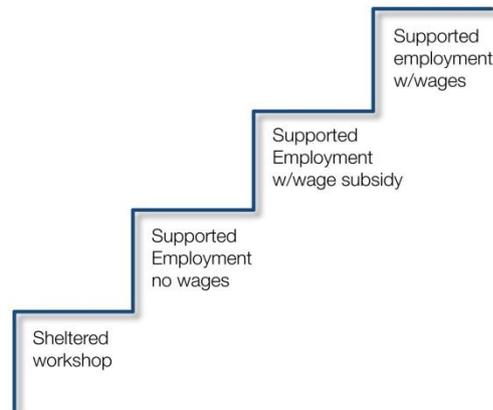
Six countries were selected for the in-depth study. These were Austria, the Czech Republic, Norway, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.

The main findings of these studies are centred on six issues:

- Definition and benchmarking
- Policy and legal framework
- Funding and monitoring
- Organisational set-up
- Incentives for employers and employees
- Flexicurity.

Definition and benchmarking

In the strict sense of the definition, only the top step of the figure presented below is considered genuine Supported Employment. However, a number of variants are named Supported Employment in the individual countries. A characteristic feature of these initiatives is that a person with disabilities is not primarily treated as a jobseeker in the mainstream system (even if with additional assistance), but rather as a person looking for an activity and/or subsistence coverage.



It is worth noting that the built-in method of Supported Employment allows for transitions between the steps illustrated in the figure above. Flexicurity measures can enhance these transitions.

The definitions, standards and methodologies referred to as Supported Employment differ considerably across the countries studied. The understanding, position and status of Supported Employment becomes unclear and funding unstable and unpredictable.

In three of the countries studied (Austria, Norway and Sweden), a formal framework for funding, guidelines and standards is in place. In the other three countries, where Supported Employment has developed from bottom up and is not the result of national policy design (Czech Republic, Spain and UK), a more informal approach is found in the absence of a national Supported Employment programme. Nevertheless, there are many Supported Employment projects and services on offer through a variety of funding from local, national and EU sources.

The importance of a national framework

Funding of Supported Employment projects from e.g. the EU (ESF) appears to have an important impact in countries where no specific national framework is in place (Czech Republic, Spain and UK). However, as long as there is no national framework, projects tend to lack continuity and predictability.

In many countries, Supported Employment is still conceived as some kind of experimental project or pilot project, or simply as individual projects, even if Supported Employment has existed for many years in a country. This is a strong indication that many countries have problems in institutionalising Supported Employment, or mainstreaming Supported Employment. Consequences are:

- Unclear position of Supported Employment
- Unclear understanding of what Supported Employment is (employment or subsistence)



- Unclear status of Supported Employment
- Unstable and unpredictable funding
- Lack of awareness and knowledge about Supported Employment on national policy level and in Public Employment Service
- Lack of monitoring and statistics
- Lack of financial and professional incentives for service providers.

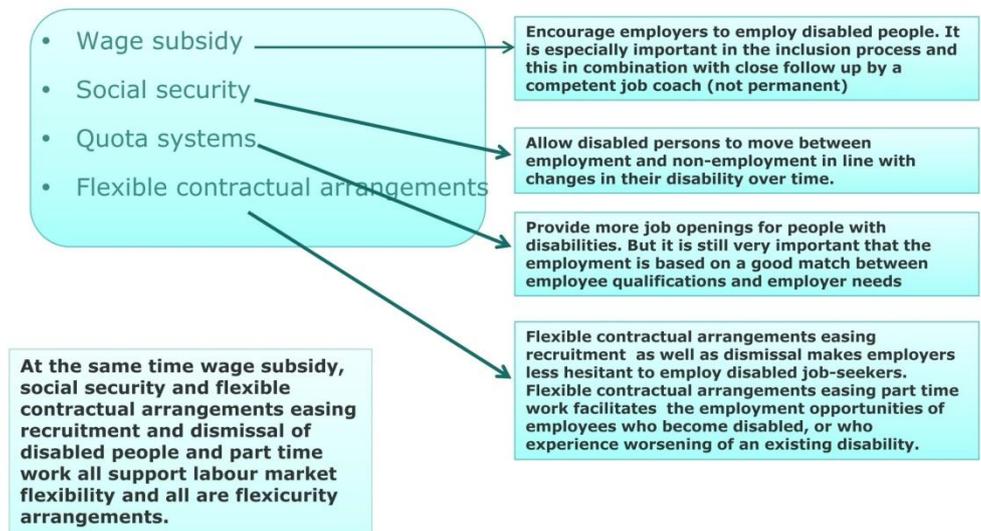
Funding	In many of the countries studied, funding of Supported Employment appears to be unstable and unpredictable. It is important how Supported Employment is funded and that conditions are attached to obtaining funding. Funding with no specific conditions attached can be useful in an initial phase of implementing Supported Employment, but the risk is that the concept is not institutionalised and that it continues to have pilot project character with a more limited impact.
Organisational set-up	<p>Some countries have set up national programmes and established a framework to enhance Supported Employment. Others have made legal room for exercising Supported Employment and have based the efforts on voluntary commitment of interested actors. This approach seems to result in islands of projects with no thorough institutional anchoring and ad-hoc character. This may divert focus from employment in the open labour market .</p> <p>While unemployed people in general receive support through the public employment services, disabled jobseekers tend to be referred to external agencies. Apart from the Swedish SIUS programme, all other Supported Employment services are provided by private or semi-private NGOs and other organisations. This indicates that disabled jobseekers are not being perceived as ordinary jobseekers. Another common consequence is uneven access to Supported Employment. In many cases, Supported Employment only plays a minor role in the total budget of a Service Provider, and therefore does not have top priority.</p>
Monitoring and statistics	In most of the countries studied, reliable statistical data relevant to Supported Employment are not readily available. This makes it difficult to assess the exact need for and impact of the method. In promoting Supported Employment, it is important that the 'business case' can be argued clearly based on proof of impact.
Employers' incentives	Different instruments are applied as incentives, e.g. wage subsidies, tax reduction. The instruments are important in facilitating transitions for people with disabilities into the open labour market. It appears that especially wage subsidies enhance job opportunities through Supported Employment.
Incentives for employees	As regards social benefits, all countries studied in the in-depth analysis (except the Czech Republic) reduce the social pension equivalent to the income earned when a person with disabilities take up paid employment. A concern to many people with disabilities is how to regain the social/welfare benefits if a job ends or does not work out. There is a need to ensure transitions in and out of social benefits. This will probably influence clients' motivation to enter Supported Employment.



Flexicurity in interaction with Supported Employment

A number of the countries studied apply various instruments as incentives for employers and employees respectively. These include wage subsidies, quota systems, flexible contractual arrangements and social benefits. The key issue in the interaction between Supported Employment and flexicurity is that a balance between the different instruments must be found in each national context. One of the balances to be stricken is that of promoting ways into the labour market for people with disabilities. Another is to support the retention of those already inside the labour market. This is illustrated in the figure below:

Flexicurity instruments which underpin Supported Employment schemes.



Compendium of good practices

The compendium of good practices is based on nine sets of interviews with job coaches, employers and employees. The main findings are listed below.

Job coach is key

In all the examples collected, the key area for success, and what made them particularly good examples, was the role of a Supported Employment agency and in particular the intervention of a Job Coach. The Job Coaches use their knowledge and experience of job development to address the client's job expectations and to coordinate various support measures that are helpful to both the employer and the employee. The Job Coaches provide professional guidance to the disabled jobseeker/employee as well as the employer, and several examples illustrate the importance of a competent Job Coach creating a setting of proper incentives and taking care that a well-functioning coordination between different services involved is in place.

On-the-job support

Several examples illustrate the importance of on-the-job coaching and training, including specialised training to co-workers and staff. The ongoing support and trusting relationship between the supported employee and the Job Coach for a longer period after the job was found appears to be crucial to the success. This is an important reminder that Supported Employment is not only about getting



a job, but also keeping the job; and providing support for career development and lifelong learning.

Job development/job carving	In most of the good practice examples, the jobs were specially created, demonstrating that job development is a very important aspect of Supported Employment. Some of the examples were actual job vacancies and some were retention cases; in all events, the Job Coach facilitated the final sustained, paid job outcome. It is very likely that in all these examples, the disabled jobseeker would not have secured the paid job outcome without the support given by the Job Coach.
Employer incentives	<p>Several examples illustrate that wage subsidies and other financial support schemes play an important role for increasing employers' willingness and opportunity to hire people with reduced work ability. However, this is not the only driver for employers.</p> <p>In all examples, some more than others, the employers were particularly receptive and proactive in the process. The main reason for their positive attitude was the assurance that the Supported Employment agency could give them that the Job Coach would take a proactive part in the inclusion process, so that the responsibility would not be left to the employer alone.</p>
National frameworks	The labour market policies in a number of countries have given Supported Employment high priority, and services are available nationwide - the examples of Austria, Norway and Sweden demonstrate evidence of a more long-term strategic approach to Supported Employment. The opportunity of getting intensive support to find and keep a suitable job by a personal and competent Job Coach for a longer period is one of the factors for success.

Recommendations

A set of recommendations have been formulated based on the study. The following highlights some of the main recommendations relevant to the national level, the EU, and the service providers respectively.

Recommendations relevant for national level

Resource approach	People with disabilities should be regarded as jobseekers belonging to the mainstream system. In the mainstream system, Supported Employment should then be on offer. This would shift focus from the disabilities to the abilities of people, which is conducive to implementing Supported Employment, since the purpose is to match competencies and skills with employers needs.
Access for all	To introduce and implement Supported Employment successfully, services should be constructed and distributed such that they ensure equal access to the services in question (in terms of geography and target group). Eligibility criteria based on personal motivation for obtaining a paid job in the open labour market should be formulated and consistency in services ensured.



Policy framework	<p>The existence of a legal framework that not only allows but also insists on the right for all citizens to participate on the open labour market, is crucial to Supported Employment. Countries wishing to initiate or further develop Supported Employment should pursue the establishment of a national framework, and preferably a national programme. Such top-down approach does not exclude the involvement of actors working bottom-up. A national framework will also ensure equal access for all in a country, as opposed to 'islands' of projects that may work well but will often have uneven coverage and be of ad-hoc nature.</p>
Organisational set-up	<p>Supported Employment should be placed under the auspices of employment (the Ministry of Employment) to ensure the emphasis on employment rather than on activity or subsistence. Further, it and should be implemented under the responsibility of the public employment services. Still the implementing agencies could be either private or public.</p>
Job coach	<p>The job coach is the key catalyst in making the market work flexibly and transparently – a 'matchmaker' between supply and demand. The job coach should ensure a good transition process and serve as a guide for employer and employee to the system and its possibilities.</p> <p>It is important to ensure certified, systematic training and upgrading of job coaches. The title should be protected to ensure quality.</p>
Funding and monitoring	<p>Stable and predictable funding is important to the development of Supported Employment. Funding of Supported Employment should presuppose an accountable institutional anchoring, including demands for monitoring of specific results based on a clear definition of Supported Employment. It should include conditions for equal access for all in order to comply with relevant EU principles and UN conventions.</p> <p>Statistics and quantitative data on Supported Employment are insufficient to make a clear business case. It is important to produce regular nationwide statistics and publish them. A setting of clear targets is important to enable systematic monitoring. This should include methods and job outcome.</p>
Flexicurity in interaction with Supported Employment	<p>A number of tools are available in support of the implementation of Supported Employment and the employment of disabled people, i.e. wage subsidies, quotas, social benefits, flexible contractual arrangements etc. Each country should seek to find the balance between flexibility and security, which best fits its framework. Due consideration should be given to securing transition mechanisms from social pension into work and back as well as from sheltered workshops and into Supported Employment.</p>
Lifelong learning	<p>The study has not found good examples of lifelong learning. Career guidance and development appears to be a challenge in Supported Employment. Concepts of lifelong learning and related methodology need to be introduced into Supported Employment.</p>



European funding
through ESF

Recommendations relevant for the EU

The EU has played an important role in facilitating Supported Employment through its funding of projects across Europe with European Social Funds (ESF). The EU should continue to promote ESF as an important financing instrument.

The EU could support the process towards better monitoring and data by supporting Member States in collecting statistics on Supported Employment and regularly publish Europe-wide statistics in e.g. the Monthly Monitoring Report. This would assist in producing the business case, i.e. the 'proof' of the impact of Supported Employment.

The EU could host or initiate a network for exchange of knowledge and best practices of Supported Employment. One aim of the network could be to adapt to common concepts, definitions and understanding of Supported Employment.

The EU could regularly collect and disseminate good practices and positive experience through existing channels. This could include collecting and disseminating training material related to methods of Supported Employment.

A corps of Supported Employment 'ambassadors' could be promoted and/or financed by EU. These 'ambassadors' would work proactively and on request with information and knowledge about Supported Employment.

Recommendations relevant for service providers

A list of very specific recommendations has been produced based on of the study. The recommendations can be found in a separate document: Compendium of good practices. The headlines include:

- Competence requirements for job coaches, e.g. to include knowledge of employers' conditions, preferences and challenges.
- Caseload of a job coach - the importance of an adequate caseload that allows the job coach to perform good quality assistance to employee as well as employer.
- Training of job coaches to perform good quality Supported Employment
- Main tasks of a job coach, e.g. to be the catalyst in making the market work flexibly and transparently; acting as matchmaker between supply and demand, between the jobseeker with disabilities and the employer.
- Reasonable remuneration of a job coach and related stable financing.



Sommaire exécutif

Objectif et introduction

L'UE et l'AELE-EEE ont un engagement très motivé pour les droits des personnes handicapées et considèrent que ces droits relèvent des droits de l'homme. L'objectif général de la stratégie de l'UE en faveur des personnes handicapées s'appuie sur ce fondement en vue d'éradiquer la discrimination et de donner aux personnes handicapées les mêmes droits qu'aux personnes sans handicap.

La présente étude sur l'emploi assisté pour les personnes handicapées a été lancée afin d'améliorer encore les possibilités d'accès des personnes handicapées au marché libre du travail.

COWI et ses partenaires, l'Institut norvégien de recherche sur l'emploi (Work Research Institute) et l'UE de l'Emploi assisté (EUSE) ont été mandatés pour faire la cartographie de l'utilisation de l'emploi assisté dans 30 pays, entreprendre une étude approfondie dans 6 pays sélectionnés en recherche de recommandations stratégiques et mettre au point un compendium de bonnes pratiques. De plus, un annuaire de services d'appui (un carnet d'adresses) a été produit. Les conclusions et recommandations ont été validées par une réunion d'experts.

Qu'est-ce que l'emploi assisté ?

Aux fins de cette étude, l'emploi assisté est défini comme étant un procédé d'appui pour les personnes handicapées ou tout autre groupe désavantagé, en vue de leur permettre d'obtenir et de garder **un emploi rémunéré sur le marché libre du travail**. Les mesures doivent inclure une assistance pour l'employé, avant, pendant et après l'obtention du poste, ainsi qu'un appui destiné à l'employeur. Un outil primordial à cette fin est la fonction d'accompagnateur d'emploi.

La perspective de l'emploi assisté est de se concentrer sur les capacités des personnes plutôt que sur leurs handicaps. Il s'agit de mettre l'accent sur l'emploi et non sur une activité ou le fait de couvrir ses frais de subsistance

Flexicurité en interaction avec l'emploi assisté

La flexicurité est une stratégie qui essaie de façon synchronisée et de manière délibérée d'améliorer la flexibilité du travail, de l'organisation du travail et des relations syndicales d'un côté, et l'amélioration de la sécurité notamment pour les groupes exclus du marché du travail de l'autre. La flexicurité peut faciliter la transition tant à l'accès qu'à la sortie du marché du travail et ainsi être un moteur de l'emploi assisté.



Conclusions principales

Cartographie de l'emploi assisté

Cartographie de l'emploi assisté dans 30 pays

En cartographiant l'utilisation et l'application de l'emploi assisté dans 30 pays, il s'est avéré qu'il y a beaucoup de participants, de clients, d'employés et d'employeurs impliqués dans toute l'Europe. Il ressort clairement que de gros efforts ont été faits visant l'amélioration de l'accès des personnes handicapées à un travail ou à une activité. Certains travaillent dans des systèmes unitaires, d'autres dans des conditions ad hoc.

En étudiant les 30 pays concernés, on découvre un grand nombre d'approches et de mesures d'encouragements, qui peuvent toutes être source d'inspiration pour les pays et les acteurs qui souhaitent commencer ou continuer à développer l'emploi assisté dans leur pays ou dans une région déterminée. On y trouve des exemples d'acteurs, de conditions structurelles, de mise en place de services, de mesures d'encouragement pour les employés et les employeurs, de financement et de suivi.

La cartographie de l'emploi assisté au sein de 30 pays a montré que le terme d'emploi assisté revêt des interprétations bien différentes d'un pays à l'autre. Un résultat de ces diverses interprétations apparaît dans les différentes pratiques quant à l'accès personnel à l'emploi assisté au sein de ces 30 pays. Une autre conséquence est que la comparaison et les échanges de connaissance de pays à pays se font plus compliqués.

Analyse approfondie dans six pays

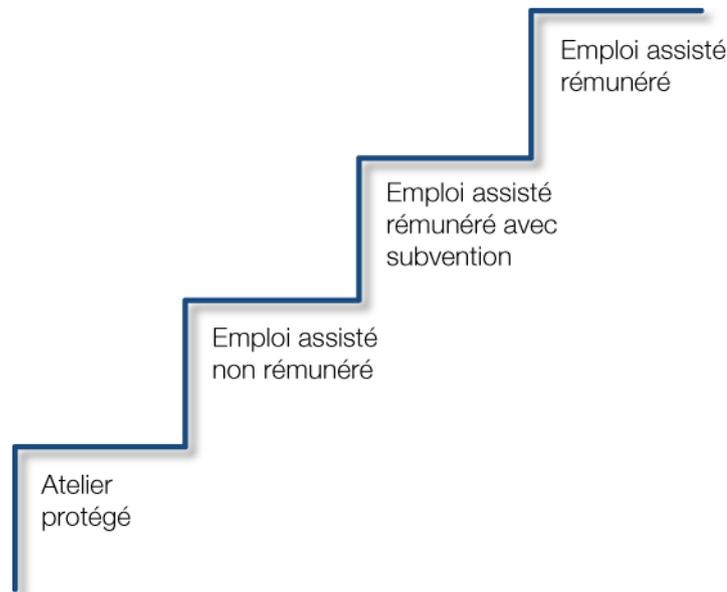
Six pays ont été sélectionnés pour cette étude approfondie : l'Autriche, la République tchèque, la Norvège, l'Espagne, la Suède et le Royaume-Uni.

Les conclusions principales de ces études se concentrent sur six sujets :

- Définition et repères
- Stratégie et structure juridique
- Financement et suivi
- Mise en place d'une organisation
- Mesures d'encouragement pour employés et employeurs
- Flexicurité.

Définition et repères

Dans le sens strict du terme d'emploi assisté, seul la première marche du schéma ci-dessous est considérée comme constituant un véritable emploi assisté. Cependant, un nombre de variantes portent le nom d'emploi assisté dans les pays en question. Un aspect caractéristique de ces initiatives est que la personne handicapée n'est pas traitée comme un chercheur d'emploi dans le système général (même avec une assistance supplémentaire), mais plutôt comme une personne à la recherche d'une activité et/ou voulant couvrir ses frais de subsistance.



Il convient de noter que la méthode intégrée dans l'emploi assisté ouvre la voie à une transition entre les marches illustrées ci-dessus. Les mesures de flexicurité peuvent améliorer cette transition.

Les définitions, les critères et les méthodologies auxquels il est fait référence quand on parle d'emploi assisté diffèrent considérablement parmi les pays étudiés. Ce que l'on entend par emploi assisté, la position et le statut qui l'accompagnent manquent de clarté et le financement est aléatoire et imprévisible.

Dans trois des pays étudiés (l'Autriche, la Norvège et la Suède), il existe une structure établie pour le financement, les lignes et les critères. Dans les trois autres pays, où l'emploi assisté s'est développé à partir de la base sans être le résultat d'une décision politique nationale (la République tchèque, l'Espagne et le Royaume-Uni), on constate une approche différente en l'absence d'un programme d'emploi assisté à échelle nationale. De nombreux projets et services d'emploi assisté sont néanmoins offerts, financés par une gamme de sources locales, nationales et européennes.

L'importance d'une structure nationale

Le financement de projets d'emploi assisté par exemple par l'UE (ESF) semble avoir un impact considérable là où il n'y a pas de structures nationales déterminées (en République tchèque, en Espagne et au Royaume-Uni). Par contre, comme il n'y a pas de structures nationales, les projets tendent à manquer de continuité et de prédictibilité.

Dans beaucoup de pays, l'emploi assisté est encore considéré comme un projet expérimental ou un projet pilote, ou simplement comme des projets personnels, et ce, même si l'emploi assisté est mis en place et opérationnel depuis de longues années dans le pays. Ceci indique clairement que beaucoup de pays ont du mal à institutionnaliser l'emploi assisté ou à le généraliser. Les conséquences sont les suivantes :



- position incertaine de l'emploi assisté
- manque de compréhension de la nature de l'emploi assisté (être employé ou couvrir ses frais de subsistance)
- statut incertain de l'emploi assisté
- financement aléatoire et imprévisible
- manque de connaissance et de conscience de l'emploi assisté au niveau politique national et dans les agences publiques pour l'emploi
- manque de suivi et de statistiques
- manque d'encouragements financiers et professionnels pour les prestataires de services.

Financement

Dans nombreux des pays étudiés, le financement de l'emploi assisté semble revêtir un caractère aléatoire et imprévisible. Il est important de savoir comment l'emploi assisté est financé et quelles en sont les conditions. Un financement sans conditions préalables peut être utile dans la phase initiale de la mise en place de l'emploi assisté, mais il y a un risque que ce concept ne soit pas institutionnalisé et continue de revêtir l'aspect de projet pilote avec un impact limité.

Mise en place

Certains pays ont créé des programmes nationaux et mis en place une structure pour améliorer l'emploi assisté. D'autres ont créé un espace juridique pour l'application de l'emploi assisté et basé leurs efforts sur l'engagement des intéressés. Il semble que cette approche produise des projets isolés sans ancrage institutionnel solide, au caractère ad hoc. Il s'ensuit un risque de ne pas suffisamment se centrer sur le marché du travail et de travailler à court terme.

Alors que les chômeurs reçoivent en général un appui des agences publiques pour l'emploi, les demandeurs d'emploi handicapés sont fréquemment dirigés vers des agences externes. À l'exception du programme suédois SIUS, tous les autres services d'emploi sont fournis par des ONG privées ou semi-publiques et par d'autres organisations. Cela indique que les chercheurs d'emploi handicapés ne sont pas d'ordinaire perçus comme des demandeurs d'emploi ordinaires. Une autre conséquence est que l'accès à l'emploi assisté est inégal. Dans bien des cas, l'emploi assisté a peu d'envergure dans le budget total du prestataire de services et ne se voit pas accorder la première priorité.

Suivi et statistiques

Dans la plupart des pays étudiés, les données statistiques pertinentes pour l'emploi assisté ne sont pas facilement accessibles. Il est donc difficile de faire une évaluation des besoins exacts et de l'impact de la méthode. Pour promouvoir l'emploi assisté, il est important que le dossier d'étude puisse être clairement établi et articulé autour de preuves d'impact.

Mesures d'encouragement pour les employeurs

Divers outils sont prévus pour encourager les employeurs, par exemple les subventions salariales et les abattements fiscaux. Ces instruments sont importants pour faciliter la transition des personnes handicapées vers le marché libre du travail. Il sembler notamment que les subventions salariales améliorent sensiblement les possibilités d'embauche par le biais de l'emploi assisté.



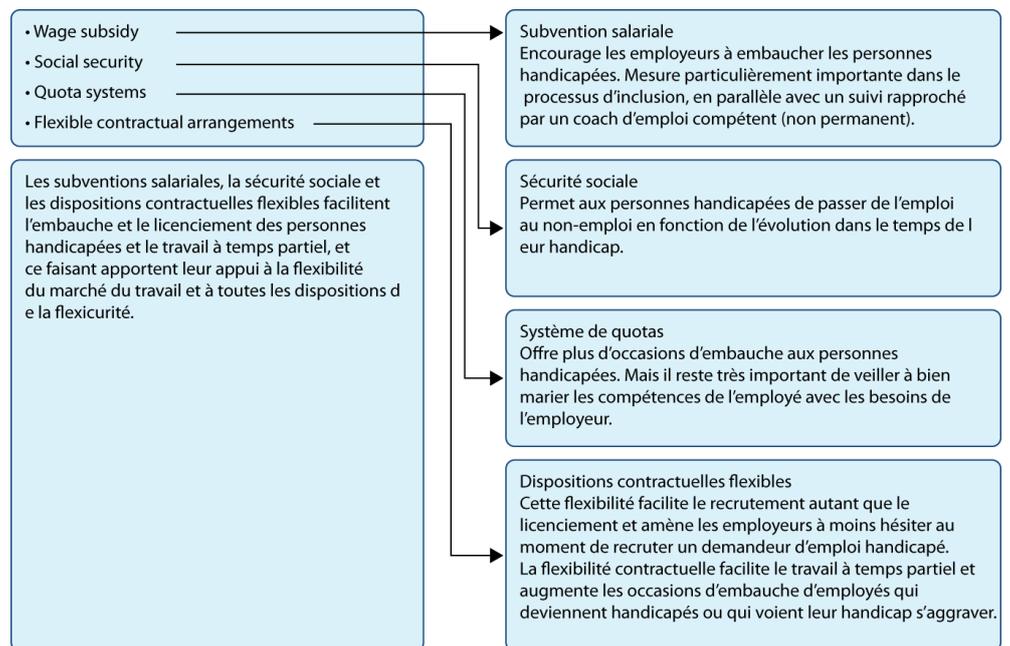
Mesures d'encouragement pour les employés

En ce qui concerne les prestations sociales, tous les pays soumis à l'étude approfondie (exceptée la République tchèque) réduisent les prestations à l'équivalent du revenu gagné lorsqu'une personne handicapée prend un emploi rémunéré. Une inquiétude exprimée par nombre de personnes handicapées est celle de comment récupérer les prestations sociales/le bien-être social au cas où l'emploi ne marche pas ou touche à sa fin. Il y a nécessité d'assurer la transition dans les phases de départ ou de réintégration dans le système de prestations sociales. Ceci ne manquera pas de motiver les clients à s'engager dans l'emploi assisté.

Flexicurité en interaction avec l'emploi assisté

Nombreux des pays étudiés se servent d'outils pour encourager les employeurs et les employés, respectivement. Il y a les subventions salariales, les systèmes de quotas, les dispositions contractuelles flexibles et les prestations sociales. Dans l'interaction entre l'emploi assisté et la flexicurité, l'aspect primordial est qu'il faut trouver un équilibre entre les divers outils dans chaque contexte national. Un des équilibres à rechercher est celui de promouvoir l'accès des personnes handicapées dans le marché du travail ou d'appuyer le maintien de ceux qui y sont déjà. C'est ce qu'illustre notre schéma ci-dessous :

Outils de flexicurité qui étayent les systèmes d'emploi assisté.



Compendium de bonnes pratiques

Ce compendium de bonnes pratiques est établi à la suite d'interviews avec des accompagnateurs d'emploi, des employeurs et des employés. Les conclusions principales sont présentées à la suite.

L'accompagnateur est décisif

Dans tous les exemples recueillis, la clé du succès et ce qui donne des exemples particulièrement réussis, c'est le rôle des agences d'emploi et notamment l'intervention d'un accompagnateur d'emploi. Les accompagnateurs mettent à profit leur expérience et leurs connaissances sur le déroulement du travail afin



de pouvoir répondre aux attentes professionnelles de leur client et de coordonner un certain nombre de mesures destinées à aider tant les employeurs que les employés. L'accompagnateur assure une orientation professionnelle auprès des chercheurs d'emploi/employés handicapés et des employeurs. Plusieurs exemples illustrent l'importance d'un accompagnateur compétent qui élabore une bonne structure de mesures d'encouragement et veille à une parfaite coordination entre les divers services impliqués.

Appui sur place

Un grand nombre d'exemples illustrent l'importance du suivi et de la formation sur place, y compris de la formation spécialisée offerte aux collègues et aux équipes. Pendant une longue période de temps après l'obtention d'un emploi, l'appui sur place et les relations de confiance entre l'employé et son accompagnateur sont indispensables à la réussite. Il faut garder à l'esprit que l'emploi assisté ne signifie pas seulement trouver un emploi, mais aussi garder son emploi et disposer de l'appui nécessaire pour développer sa carrière et recevoir une formation continue.

Développement / restructuration des emplois

Dans la plupart des exemples de bonnes pratiques, les emplois ont été spécialement créés, ce qui prouve que la création d'emplois est un aspect très important de l'emploi assisté. Certains de ces postes étaient des vacances réelles, et d'autres des postes maintenus ; dans tous les cas, c'est l'accompagnateur qui a permis l'issue finale d'un emploi rémunéré. Il semble fort probable que dans tous nos exemples, le chercheur d'emploi handicapé n'aurait pas pu obtenir d'emploi rémunéré sans l'appui de l'accompagnateur d'emploi.

Mesures d'encouragement

Plusieurs exemples signalent que les subventions salariales et autres mesures financières jouent un rôle important pour augmenter l'empressement des employeurs et les opportunités d'emploi pour les personnes à capacité de travail réduite. Ce n'est pourtant pas l'unique motivation des employeurs.

Dans tous nos exemples, certains plus que d'autres, les employeurs étaient particulièrement réceptifs et proactifs pendant tout le processus. La principale raison de cette attitude positive était que l'agence d'emploi assisté garantissait la participation d'un accompagnateur d'emploi qui prendrait part active dans le processus d'inclusion, pour que la responsabilité ne repose pas sur l'employeur seul.

Structures nationales

Les politiques du marché du travail de plusieurs pays accordant une haute priorité à l'emploi assisté et leurs services sont disponibles à échelle nationale. Les exemples autrichiens, norvégiens et suédois mettent en évidence une approche stratégique à long terme pour l'emploi assisté. La possibilité de profiter pendant une longue période de temps de l'appui intensif d'un accompagnateur pour obtenir et conserver un emploi adéquat est un des facteurs de réussite.



Recommandations

L'étude a donné lieu à l'élaboration d'une série de recommandations. Les points soulignés à la suite représentent quelques-unes des recommandations pertinentes à niveau national, européen et des prestataires de services, respectivement.

Recommandations pertinentes à niveau national

Ressources	Les personnes handicapées devraient être considérées comme les chercheurs d'emploi appartenant au système général. C'est ce système général qui devrait offrir l'emploi assisté. L'accent serait ainsi mis sur les compétences de chacun plutôt que sur les carences. Cette approche encouragerait l'inclusion dans l'emploi assisté puisque le but recherché est de conjuguer les compétences de l'employé avec les besoins de l'employeur.
Accès pour tous	Pour présenter et réussir à mettre en place l'emploi assisté, les services devraient être structurés et distribués pour que tout le monde y ait accès (du point de vue géographique et en termes de groupes cibles). Les critères de sélection basés sur la motivation personnelle pour obtenir un emploi sur le marché du travail doivent être formulés et suivis par les services adéquats.
Structures stratégiques	L'existence d'une structure stratégique favorable qui non seulement permette, mais de plus insiste sur le droit de tous les citoyens à participer au marché libre du travail, est primordiale pour l'emploi assisté. Les pays voulant inaugurer ou améliorer l'emploi assisté devraient mettre en place une structure nationale et de préférence un programme national. Cette approche directive du haut vers la base n'exclut pas les acteurs œuvrant dans le sens contraire. Une structure nationale assurera aussi l' accès égal pour tous à l'intérieur d'un pays, au contraire des projets isolés qui peuvent faire du bon travail mais avec une couverture inégale et un caractère ad hoc.
Mise en place	L'emploi assisté devrait être sous les auspices du Ministère pour l'Emploi afin de veiller à mettre l'accent sur l'emploi plutôt que sur une activité ou le fait de couvrir ses frais de subsistance, et sa mise en place devrait être de la responsabilité des services publics pour l'emploi. Les agences assurant la mise en place pourraient toutefois être publiques ou privées.
Accompagnateur	L'accompagnateur pour l'emploi est le catalyseur essentiel pour un marché qui opère avec souplesse et transparence, un "entremetteur" entre l'offre et la demande. L'accompagnateur doit œuvrer pour assurer une bonne transition et servir de guide à l'employé et à l'employeur, dans une parfaite compréhension du système et connaissance des possibilités. Il est important d'offrir aux accompagnateurs une formation permanente certifiée, systématique et actualisée. Le titre devrait être homologué pour en garantir la qualité.
Financement et suivi	Un financement stable et prévisible est important pour le développement de l'emploi assisté. Le financement de l'emploi assisté requiert un ancrage



institutionnel responsable, qui inclut les demandes de suivi de résultats déterminés basés sur une définition précise de l'emploi assisté. Le financement devrait aussi inclure des conditions d'accès égaux pour tous, en vue de satisfaire les principes pertinents des conventions de l'UE et de l'ONU.

Les données statistiques et quantitatives sur l'emploi assisté sont insuffisantes pour pouvoir produire un dossier d'étude clair. Il est important d'élaborer et de publier régulièrement des **statistiques** nationales. **Il faut définir des cibles précises** qui permettent d'assurer un suivi systématique, et y inclure les méthodes et les résultats du travail.

Flexibilité en interaction avec l'emploi assisté

De nombreux outils sont disponibles pour étayer la mise en place de l'emploi assisté et l'embauche de personnes handicapées : subventions salariales, quotas, prestations sociales, dispositions flexibles des contrats, etc. Chaque pays devrait rechercher, entre la flexibilité et la sécurité, l'équilibre qui s'accorde le mieux avec leurs structures. Il convient de prendre en compte et d'assurer les mécanismes de transition entre l'état d'assisté social et d'employé rémunéré et vice-versa, et de même entre l'atelier protégé et l'emploi assisté.

Formation continue

L'étude n'a pas trouvé de bons exemples de formation continue. Les conseils d'orientation de carrière semblent présenter un défi à l'emploi assisté. Les concepts de formation continue et les méthodologies doivent être inclus dans l'emploi assisté.

Recommandations pertinentes à l'UE

Financement européen à travers le FSE

L'UE a joué un rôle important pour faciliter l'emploi assisté à travers le financement de projets de par l'Europe avec le Fonds Social Européen (FSE). L'UE devrait continuer à promouvoir le FSE comme étant un outil de financement important.

L'UE pourrait étayer le processus d'amélioration du suivi et des données en aidant les états membres à recueillir des statistiques sur l'emploi assisté et en les publiant régulièrement à échelle européenne, par exemple dans le Rapport de suivi mensuel. Ceci serait utile pour la production d'un dossier d'étude, et, en ce cas pour prouver l'impact de l'emploi assisté.

L'UE pourrait accueillir ou créer un réseau pour l'échange de connaissances et de meilleures pratiques de l'emploi assisté. Un des buts serait d'adapter les concepts communs, la définition et la compréhension de l'emploi assisté.

L'UE pourrait réunir et ventiler les bonnes pratiques et les expériences positives et en assurer la distribution par les voies existantes. Ceci pourrait inclure le recueil et la distribution du matériel de formation concernant les méthodes de l'emploi assisté.

Un corps d'ambassadeurs de l'emploi assisté pourrait être encouragé et/ou financé par l'UE. Ces ambassadeurs pourraient travailler de manière proactive avec l'information et la connaissance de l'emploi assisté.



Recommandations pertinentes pour les prestataires de services

L'étude a permis d'établir une liste de recommandations très précises. Celle-ci fait l'objet d'un document séparé intitulé Compendium de bonnes pratiques. Les têtes de chapitre sont les suivantes :

- Qualifications nécessaires pour les accompagnateurs, par exemple l'inclusion de la connaissance des conditions, des préférences et des problèmes des employeurs.
- Charge de travail de l'accompagnateur, c'est-à-dire l'importance d'une charge de travail adéquate qui permette à l'accompagnateur de fournir une assistance de qualité à l'employé et à l'employeur.
- Formation des accompagnateurs pour fournir des emplois assistés de bonne qualité
- Tâches principales de l'accompagnateur, par exemple être le catalyseur pour un marché du travail qui opère avec souplesse et transparence, qui joue le rôle d'entremetteur entre l'offre et la demande, entre le chercheur d'emploi handicapé et l'employeur.
- Rémunération raisonnable de l'accompagnateur d'emploi et stabilité du financement qui s'y rapporte.



Zusammenfassung

Zweck und Einführung

EU und EFTA-EEA konzentrieren sich stark auf die Rechte von Menschen mit Behinderungen und sehen dies als eine Menschenrechtsfrage an. Das übergeordnete Ziel der Strategie der Europäischen Union zugunsten von Menschen mit Behinderungen besteht darin, Diskriminierung zu unterbinden und diesen Menschen die gleichen Rechte einzuräumen wie Menschen ohne Behinderungen.

Die aktuelle Studie über Unterstützte Beschäftigung (Supported Employment) für Menschen mit Behinderungen in der EU und der EFTA-EEA wurde ange-regt, um die Möglichkeiten für Menschen mit Behinderungen auf dem regulären Arbeitsmarkt weiter zu verbessern.

COWI und seine Partner – das Arbeitsforschungsinstitut in Norwegen und die European Union of Supported Employment (EUSE) – wurden beauftragt, die Anwendung der Unterstützten Beschäftigung in 30 Ländern zu untersuchen. Dazu wurden sechs ausgewählte Länder bezüglich politischer Empfehlungen und zur Erstellung eines Kompendiums über Good Practices detailliert unter-sucht. Außerdem wurde ein Verzeichnis unterstützender Dienstleistungen (ein Adressbuch) erstellt. Die Ergebnisse und Empfehlungen wurden durch eine Expertenkonferenz validiert.

Was ist Unterstützte Beschäftigung?

In dieser Studie ist Unterstützte Beschäftigung definiert als Konzept, das die Menschen mit Behinderungen oder andere benachteiligte Gruppen darin unter-stützt, **bezahlte Beschäftigung auf dem regulären Arbeitsmarkt** zu erhalten und zu behalten. Unterstützende Maßnahmen müssen sowohl Hilfen für den Mitarbeiter vor, während und nach der Anstellung als auch Unterstützung für den Arbeitgeber umfassen. Ein Schlüsselement dabei ist das Job-Coaching.

Unterstützte Beschäftigung stellt die Fähigkeiten der Menschen ins Zentrum und nicht ihre Defizite. Mit Beschäftigung ist dabei Erwerbstätigkeit gemeint und keine Beschäftigungsmaßnahme oder finanzielle Hilfe zum Lebensunter-halt.

Flexicurity im Zu-sammenspiel mit Un-terstützter Beschäfti-gung

Flexicurity ist eine Strategie, die synchron und durchdacht versucht, einerseits die Flexibilität von Arbeitsmarkt, Arbeitsorganisation und Arbeitsbeziehungen zu erhöhen und andererseits die Sicherheit vor allem für schwächere Gruppen außerhalb des Arbeitsmarktes zu verbessern. Flexicurity kann Übergänge in



den und aus dem Arbeitsmarkt unterstützen und daher als Instrument für Unterstützte Beschäftigung dienen.

Hauptergebnisse

Untersuchung der Unterstützten Beschäftigung in 30 Ländern

Untersuchung der
Unterstützten Be-
schäftigung

Die Untersuchung, wie Unterstützte Beschäftigung in 30 Ländern eingesetzt wird, hat gezeigt, dass in ganz Europa viele Praktiker, Klienten, Arbeitnehmer und Arbeitgeber involviert sind. Es ist deutlich zu erkennen, dass zahlreiche zweckbestimmte Anstrengungen unternommen werden, um den Zugang zu Arbeit oder Beschäftigungsmaßnahmen für Menschen mit Behinderungen zu verbessern. Einige funktionieren unter einheitlichen Systemen, andere unter ad hoc-Bedingungen.

Bei der Untersuchung der 30 Länder wurde eine Fülle von Ansätzen und Anreizen beobachtet; sie alle können als Anregungen für Länder und Akteure dienen, die Unterstützte Beschäftigung in ihrem Land oder ihrer Region einführen oder weiterentwickeln möchten. Dazu gehören Beispiele für Akteure, für Rahmenbedingungen und die organisatorische Einrichtung von Dienstleistungen, für Arbeitgeber- und Arbeitnehmeranreize sowie für Finanzierung und Überwachung.

Die Untersuchung der Unterstützten Beschäftigung in 30 Ländern hat ergeben, dass der Begriff Unterstützte Beschäftigung in den Ländern viele verschiedene Formen annimmt. Auf Grund verschiedener Interpretationen in den 30 Ländern gibt es beim Zugang des Einzelnen zur Unterstützten Beschäftigung unterschiedliche Verfahrensweisen. Das führt dazu, dass länderübergreifende Vergleiche und der Austausch von Wissen und Erfahrungen komplizierter werden.

Detaillierte Analyse von sechs Ländern

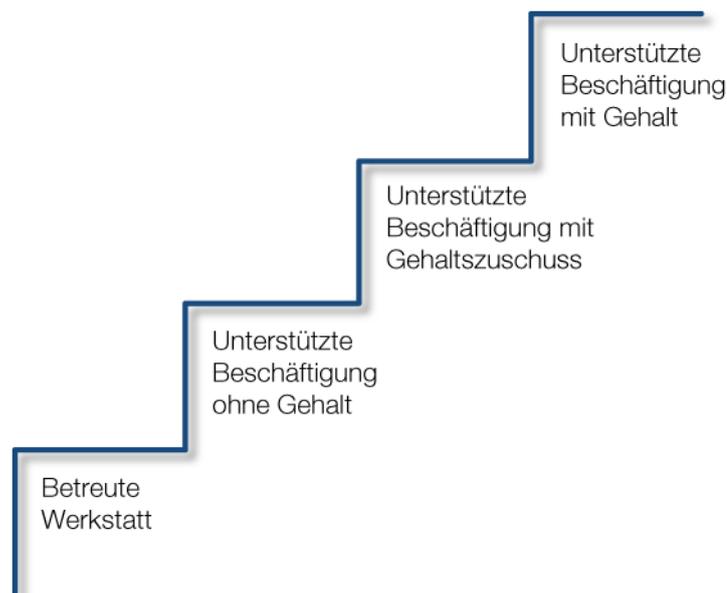
Sechs Länder wurden für die detaillierte Studie ausgewählt: Österreich, die Tschechische Republik, Norwegen, Spanien, Schweden und Großbritannien.

Die Hauptergebnisse dieser Studie konzentrieren sich auf sechs Punkte:

- Definition und Benchmarking
- Politik und gesetzlicher Rahmen
- Finanzierung und Überwachung
- Organisatorische Einrichtung
- Anreize für Arbeitgeber und Arbeitnehmer
- Flexicurity



Im engen Sinne der Definition ist nur die obere Stufe der nachstehenden Abbildung als Unterstützte Beschäftigung anzusehen. Dennoch werden in den einzelnen Ländern zahlreiche Varianten als Unterstützte Beschäftigung bezeichnet. Ein Kennzeichen dieser Maßnahmen ist, dass eine Person mit Behinderungen im üblichen System der Arbeitsvermittlung nicht in erster Linie als arbeitssuchend behandelt wird (selbst wenn sie zusätzlich betreut wird), sondern eher als Person, die eine Beschäftigungsmaßnahme und/oder finanzielle Hilfe zum Lebensunterhalt sucht.



Definition und Benchmarking

Zu beachten ist dabei, dass die integrierte Methode der Unterstützten Beschäftigung Übergänge zwischen den in der obigen Abbildung dargestellten Stufen erlaubt. Flexicurity-Maßnahmen können diese Übergänge fördern.

Die Definitionen, Standards und Methodik dessen, was als Unterstützte Beschäftigung angesehen wird, weichen in den untersuchten Ländern erheblich voneinander ab. Verständnis, Position und Status von Unterstützter Beschäftigung sind undeutlich und die Finanzierung ist nicht gesichert.

In drei der untersuchten Länder (Österreich, Norwegen und Schweden) gibt es einen formellen Rahmen für Finanzierung, Richtlinien und Standards. In den anderen drei Ländern, in denen Unterstützte Beschäftigung sozusagen „von unten nach oben“ entwickelt wurde und kein Ergebnis nationaler politischer Gestaltung ist (Tschechische Republik, Spanien und Großbritannien), findet man einen eher informellen Ansatz, da es kein nationales Programm für Unterstützte Beschäftigung gibt. Dennoch werden zahlreiche Projekte und Dienstleistungen für Unterstützte Beschäftigung angeboten, die aus verschiedenen regionalen, nationalen und EU-Quellen finanziert werden.



Die Bedeutung eines nationalen Rahmens	<p>Die Finanzierung von Unterstützten Beschäftigungsprojekten z. B. aus EU(ESF)-Mitteln scheinen eine wichtige Rolle zu spielen in Ländern, in denen kein spezieller nationaler Rahmen vorhanden ist (Tschechische Republik, Spanien und Großbritannien). Doch solange kein nationaler Rahmen besteht, neigen diese Projekte zu mangelnder Kontinuität und Berechenbarkeit.</p> <p>In vielen Ländern gilt Unterstützte Beschäftigung noch immer als eine Art experimentelles Projekt, Pilotprojekt oder einfach als individuelles Projekt, obwohl es sie bereits seit vielen Jahren gibt. Dies ist ein starker Beleg dafür, dass viele Länder Probleme bei der Institutionalisierung oder der Etablierung der Unterstützten Beschäftigung als Normalität haben. Die Konsequenzen sind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unklare Stellung der Unterstützten Beschäftigung• Unklares Verständnis, was Unterstützte Beschäftigung ist (Erwerbstätigkeit oder finanzielle Hilfe zum Lebensunterhalt)• Unklarer Status der Unterstützten Beschäftigung• Keine gesicherte Finanzierung• Mangelndes Bewusstsein und Wissen über Unterstützte Beschäftigung auf nationaler politischer Ebene und bei der öffentlichen Arbeitsvermittlung• Mangelnde Überwachung und Statistik• Mangelnde finanzielle und professionelle Anreize für Dienstleister
Finanzierung	<p>In vielen der untersuchten Länder scheint die Finanzierung von Unterstützter Beschäftigung nicht vollständig gesichert zu sein. Wichtig ist, wie Unterstützte Beschäftigung finanziert wird und dass für die Finanzierung klare Bedingungen gelten. Eine Finanzierung ohne definierte Bedingungen kann in der Einführungsphase von Unterstützter Beschäftigung nützlich sein, doch besteht die Gefahr, dass das Konzept nicht institutionalisiert wird und weiterhin einen Pilotprojektcharakter mit begrenzter Bedeutung hat.</p>
Organisatorische Einrichtung	<p>Einige Länder haben nationale Programme und einen Rahmen zur Förderung von Unterstützter Beschäftigung eingerichtet. Andere haben gesetzliche Voraussetzungen für Unterstützte Beschäftigung geschaffen und überlassen die Umsetzung dem freiwilligen Engagement interessierter Akteure. Dieser Ansatz scheint in Projekt-Inseln mit ad hoc-Charakter und ohne institutionelle Verankerung zu resultieren. Damit verbunden ist das Risiko eines unzulänglichen Fokus auf Anstellung auf dem regulären Arbeitsmarkt und einer kurzfristigen Perspektive.</p> <p>Während Arbeitslose allgemein Unterstützung von der öffentlichen Arbeitsvermittlung erhalten, werden arbeitssuchende Menschen mit Behinderungen meist an externe Agenturen verwiesen. Mit Ausnahme des schwedischen SIUS-Programms werden alle anderen Dienstleistungen für Unterstützte Beschäftigung von privaten oder halbprivaten Nichtregierungs- und anderen Organisationen angeboten. Dies zeigt, dass arbeitssuchende Menschen mit Behinderungen nicht als reguläre Arbeitssuchende betrachtet werden. Eine weitere Konsequenz ist ein oft uneinheitlicher Zugang zu Unterstützter Beschäftigung. In vielen Fäl-</p>



len spielt die Unterstützte Beschäftigung nur eine untergeordnete Rolle im Gesamtbudget eines Dienstleisters und genießt damit keine hohe Priorität.

Überwachung und Statistik

Zuverlässige statistische, für Unterstützte Beschäftigung relevante Daten sind in den meisten der untersuchten Länder nicht ohne Weiteres verfügbar. Damit ist es schwierig, den genauen Bedarf und die Bedeutung dieser Methode einzuschätzen. Um Unterstützte Beschäftigung voranzubringen, ist es wichtig, dass das „Geschäftsszenario“ klar dargelegt werden kann auf der Grundlage eindeutiger Fakten.

Anreize für den Arbeitgeber

Verschiedene Instrumente dienen als Anreize, z. B. Gehaltszuschüsse oder Steuererleichterungen. Diese Instrumente sind wichtig, um für Menschen mit Behinderungen Übergänge auf den regulären Arbeitsmarkt zu fördern. Vor allem Gehaltszuschüsse scheinen die Anstellungschancen durch Unterstützte Beschäftigung zu verbessern.

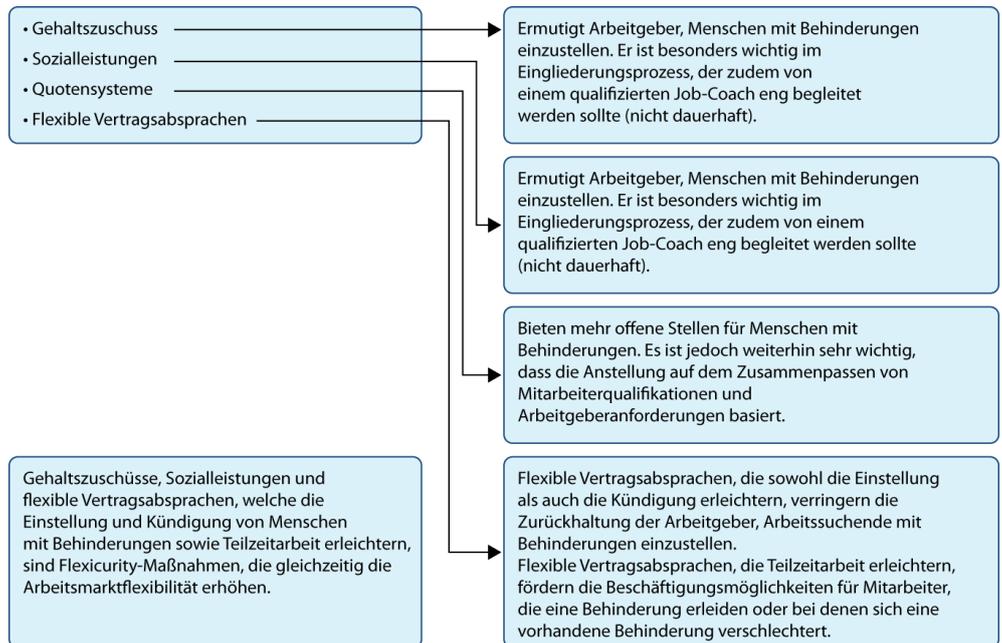
Anreize für Arbeitnehmer

Was Sozialleistungen anbetrifft, reduzieren alle von der detaillierteren Analyse umfassten Länder (außer der Tschechischen Republik) die Zahlung der Sozialleistungen entsprechend dem erzielten Einkommen, wenn ein Mensch mit Behinderungen eine bezahlte Beschäftigung annimmt. Viele Menschen mit Behinderungen haben die Sorge, wie sie die Sozialleistungen wieder in Anspruch nehmen können, wenn das Anstellungsverhältnis endet. Es besteht der Bedarf, die Übergänge in die bzw. aus den Sozialleistungen zu verbessern. Dies würde wahrscheinlich die Motivation, eine Unterstützte Beschäftigung anzunehmen, beeinflussen.

Flexicurity im Zusammenspiel mit Unterstützter Beschäftigung

Einige der untersuchten Länder setzen verschiedene Instrumente als Anreize für Arbeitgeber und Arbeitnehmer ein. Dazu gehören Gehaltszuschüsse, Quotensysteme, flexible Vertragsabsprachen und Sozialleistungen. Die Schlüsselfrage im Zusammenspiel zwischen Unterstützter Beschäftigung und Flexicurity besteht darin, dass in jedem nationalen Kontext ein Gleichgewicht zwischen den verschiedenen Instrumenten gefunden werden muss. Dazu gehören die Förderung von Zugangsmöglichkeit auf den Arbeitsmarkt für Menschen mit Behinderungen und die Unterstützung des Haltens derjenigen, die bereits im Arbeitsmarkt sind. Dies ist in der nachstehenden Abbildung dargestellt:

Flexicurity-Instrumente, die Maßnahmen für Unterstützte Beschäftigung stärken.



Kompodium über Good Practices

Das Kompodium über Good Practices beruht auf neun Interview-Runden mit Job-Coaches, Arbeitgebern und Arbeitnehmern. Die wichtigsten Ergebnisse sind unten aufgeführt.

Job-Coach als Schlüssel

In allen gesammelten Beispielen war die Rolle einer Agentur für Unterstützte Beschäftigung und insbesondere das Eingreifen eines Job-Coaches für den Erfolg ausschlaggebend. Die Job-Coaches nutzen ihr Wissen und ihre Erfahrungen im Bereich Job-Entwicklung, um sich mit den Arbeitserwartungen des Klienten zu befassen und verschiedene Unterstützungsmaßnahmen zu koordinieren, von denen sowohl Arbeitgeber als auch Arbeitnehmer profitieren. Die Job-Coaches leisten professionelle Anleitung sowohl für den Arbeitssuchenden/Arbeitnehmer mit Behinderungen als auch für den Arbeitgeber, und mehrere Beispiele zeigen die Bedeutung eines kompetenten Job-Coaches, der ein von passenden Anreizen geprägtes Umfeld schafft und sich darum kümmert, dass eine gut funktionierende Koordination zwischen verschiedenen involvierten Dienstleistern gewährleistet ist.

Unterstützung am Arbeitsplatz

Mehrere Beispiele illustrieren die Bedeutung von Betreuung und Training am Arbeitsplatz, zu dem auch die Schulung von Kollegen und Belegschaft gehört. Kontinuierliche Unterstützung und eine vertrauensvolle Beziehung zwischen dem unterstützten Mitarbeiter und dem Job-Coach über einen längeren Zeitraum nach der Anstellung haben sich als entscheidende Faktoren für den Erfolg herausgestellt. Das zeigt, dass es bei Unterstützter Beschäftigung nicht nur um das Finden, sondern auch um das Behalten des Arbeitsplatzes geht – und um die Förderung von Karriereentwicklung und lebenslangem Lernen.



Arbeitsplatzentwicklung/Arbeitsanforderungen verändern

In den meisten Beispielen für Good Practice waren die Arbeitsplätze speziell geschaffen worden, was zeigt, dass die Arbeitsplatzentwicklung ein wichtiger Aspekt der Unterstützten Beschäftigung ist. Bei einigen Beispielen handelte es sich tatsächlich um offene Stellen, in anderen um das Halten des Arbeitsplatzes; in allen Fällen war es der Job-Coach, der den endgültigen Erhalt des Arbeitsplatzes zustande brachte. Es ist sehr wahrscheinlich, dass in all diesen Beispielen der Arbeitssuchende mit Behinderungen ohne die Unterstützung durch den Job-Coach keiner bezahlten Arbeit hätte nachgehen können.

Anreize für den Arbeitgeber

Mehrere Beispiele zeigen, dass Gehaltszuschüsse und andere finanzielle Förderungsmaßnahmen eine entscheidende Rolle für die zunehmende Bereitschaft der Arbeitgeber spielen, Menschen mit reduzierter Arbeitsfähigkeit anzustellen. Dies ist jedoch nicht der einzige Anreiz für Arbeitgeber.

In allen Beispielen, in einigen mehr als in anderen, waren die Arbeitgeber besonders empfänglich und initiativreich. Der Hauptgrund für die positive Haltung der Arbeitgeber war die Zusage der Agentur für Unterstützte Beschäftigung, dass der Job-Coach eine aktive Rolle im Eingliederungsprozess spielen würde und die Verantwortung nicht alleine dem Arbeitgeber überlassen werde.

Nationale Rahmenbedingungen

Die Arbeitsmarktpolitik in einigen Ländern räumt der Unterstützten Beschäftigung einen hohen Stellenwert ein, und entsprechende Dienstleistungen sind landesweit verfügbar – die Beispiele Österreich, Norwegen und Schweden belegen einen längerfristigeren Strategieansatz bezüglich Unterstützter Beschäftigung. Die Möglichkeit, bei Suche und Erhalt eines passenden Arbeitsplatzes längerfristige intensive Unterstützung durch einen persönlichen und kompetenten Job-Coach zu erhalten, ist einer der Erfolgsfaktoren.

Empfehlungen

Als Ergebnis der Studie wurde eine Reihe von Empfehlungen formuliert. Im Folgenden werden einige der wichtigsten Empfehlungen, die auf nationaler Ebene, für die EU und die Dienstleister relevant sind, herausgestellt.

Empfehlungen für die nationale Ebene

Ressourcenansatz

Menschen mit Behinderungen sollten als Arbeitssuchende auf dem regulären Arbeitsmarkt betrachtet werden. Auf dem regulären Arbeitsmarkt sollte dann Unterstützte Beschäftigung angeboten werden. Dadurch würde sich der Fokus eher auf die Fähigkeiten der Menschen als auch deren Defizite richten, was förderlich für die Implementierung von Unterstützter Beschäftigung wäre. Denn das Ziel besteht darin Kompetenzen und Fähigkeiten mit dem Bedarf des Arbeitgebers zusammenzubringen.

Zugang für alle

Um Unterstützte Beschäftigung erfolgreich einzuführen und umzusetzen, sollten die Dienstleistungen so aufgebaut und gestreut sein, dass sie allen den Zugang zu allen Dienstleistungen ermöglichen (bezüglich geografischer Lage und Zielgruppe). Auswahlkriterien, die auf der persönlichen Motivation, eine



bezahlte Arbeit auf dem regulären Arbeitsmarkt zu finden, beruhen, sollten formuliert und die Kontinuität der Dienstleistungen sichergestellt werden.

Politische Rahmenbedingungen

Das Vorhandensein eines **fördernden gesetzlichen Rahmens**, der das Recht aller Bürger, am regulären Arbeitsmarkt teilzuhaben, nicht nur erlaubt, sondern auch verlangt, ist entscheidend für Unterstützte Beschäftigung. Länder, die Unterstützte Beschäftigung einführen oder weiterentwickeln möchten, sollten die Einrichtung eines nationalen Rahmens und vorzugsweise eines nationalen Programms anstreben. Derartige Top-Down-Ansätze schließen die Beteiligung von Bottom-Up-Akteuren nicht aus. Ein nationaler gesetzlicher Rahmen würde auch einen **gleichberechtigten Zugang** für alle Bürger eines Landes gewährleisten, im Gegensatz zu „Projektinseln“, die vielleicht gut funktionieren, aber häufig ungleichmäßig verteilt sind und ad hoc-Charakter haben.

Organisatorische Einrichtung

Unterstützte Beschäftigung sollte dem Arbeitsministerium unterstellt sein, um zu unterstreichen, dass es sich bei Unterstützter Beschäftigung um eine Erwerbstätigkeit und nicht um eine Beschäftigungsmaßnahme oder finanzielle Hilfe zum Lebensunterhalt handelt. Außerdem sollte sie unter der Verantwortung der öffentlichen Arbeitsvermittlung implementiert werden. Dennoch können die ausführenden Agenturen in privater oder öffentlicher Hand sein.

Job-Coach

Der Job-Coach ist der Schlüssel bei der Flexibilisierung und Transparentmachung des Arbeitsmarktes – ein „Ehestifter“ zwischen Angebot und Nachfrage. Die Aufgabe des Job-Coaches ist es, einen guten Übergang zu gewährleisten und – auf Grund seines Wissens über System und Möglichkeiten – als Orientierungshilfe für Arbeitgeber und Arbeitnehmer zu dienen.

Wichtig ist es, zertifizierte systematische Schulungen und Weiterbildungen für Job-Coaches sicherzustellen. Der Titel sollte geschützt sein, um die Qualität zu gewährleisten.

Finanzierung und Überwachung

Eine gesicherte Finanzierung ist wichtig für die Entwicklung der Unterstützten Beschäftigung. Die Finanzierung von Unterstützter Beschäftigung erfordert eine verantwortliche institutionelle Verankerung einschließlich der Forderungen nach Überwachung spezifischer Ergebnisse, die auf einer klaren Definition von Unterstützter Beschäftigung beruhen. Sie sollte Bedingungen für den gleichberechtigten Zugang für alle umfassen, um relevanten EU-Prinzipien und UN-Konventionen zu entsprechen.

Statistik und quantitative Daten über Unterstützte Beschäftigung liegen nicht ausreichend vor, um ein klares Geschäftsszenario zu erstellen. Es ist wichtig, regelmäßig landesweite **Statistiken** zu erstellen und diese zu veröffentlichen. **Formulieren Sie klare Ziele**, so dass eine systematische Überwachung möglich ist, die Methoden und Arbeitserfolg umfassen sollte.



Flexicurity im Zusammenspiel mit Unterstützter Beschäftigung

Es steht eine Reihe von Instrumenten zur Förderung der Einführung von Unterstützter Beschäftigung und zur Anstellung von Menschen mit Behinderungen zur Verfügung, wie z. B. Gehaltszuschüsse, Quoten, Sozialleistungen, flexible Vertragsabsprachen etc. Jedes Land sollte anstreben, das Gleichgewicht zwischen Flexibilität und Sicherheit zu finden, das am besten zu seinen Rahmenbedingungen passt. Gebührende Aufmerksamkeit sollte der Sicherstellung von Übergangsmechanismen gelten, von Sozialleistungen in eine Erwerbstätigkeit und zurück sowie von betreuten Werkstätten in Unterstützte Beschäftigung.

Lebenslanges Lernen

Die Studie hat keine guten Beispiele für lebenslanges Lernen gefunden. Karriereberatung und -entwicklung scheinen eine Herausforderung bei Unterstützter Beschäftigung zu sein. Konzepte von lebenslangem Lernen und entsprechender Methodik müssen in der Unterstützten Beschäftigung eingeführt werden.

Finanzierung durch den ESF

Für die EU relevante Empfehlungen

Die EU hat eine wichtige Rolle bei der Förderung der Unterstützten Beschäftigung gespielt durch die Finanzierung von Projekten in ganz Europa über den Europäischen Sozialfonds (ESF). Die EU sollte auch weiterhin für den ESF als wichtiges Finanzierungsinstrument werben.

Die EU könnte bessere Überwachung und Datenerhebung fördern, in dem sie die Mitgliedsstaaten darin unterstützt, statistische Daten über Unterstützte Beschäftigung zu sammeln und diese regelmäßig z. B. im Monthly Monitoring Report zu veröffentlichen. Dies würde bei der Erstellung von Geschäftsszenarien hilfreich sein, d. h. beim „Wirkungsnachweis“ von Unterstützter Beschäftigung.

Die EU könnte ein Netzwerk zum Austausch von Wissen und Best Practices bezüglich Unterstützter Beschäftigung gründen, wobei ein Ziel darin bestehen könnte, sich an gemeinsame Konzepte, Definitionen und das Verständnis von Unterstützter Beschäftigung anzupassen.

Die EU könnte regelmäßig Good Practices und positive Erfahrungen sammeln und durch ihre bestehenden Kanäle verbreiten, darunter Schulungsmaterial bezüglich der Methoden von Unterstützter Beschäftigung.

Ein Korps von „Botschaftern“ für Unterstützte Beschäftigung könnte von der EU angeworben und finanziert werden. Diese „Botschafter“ würden auf Eigeninitiative und auf Anfrage arbeiten, mit Informationen und Wissen über Unterstützte Beschäftigung.

Relevante Empfehlungen für Dienstleister

Als Ergebnis der Studie wurde eine Reihe sehr spezifischer Empfehlungen formuliert. Die Empfehlungen sind in einem separaten Dokument nachzulesen: Kompendium über Good Practices. Die Überschriften umfassen:



- Kompetenzanforderungen für Job-Coaches, darunter Kenntnisse über Bedingungen, Präferenzen und Herausforderungen des Arbeitgebers
- Die Fallanzahl eines Job-Coaches – die Bedeutung einer angemessenen Fallanzahl, die es dem Job-Coach ermöglicht, Arbeitnehmer und Arbeitgeber qualifizierte Unterstützung zu bieten
- Schulung von Job-Coaches, um qualifizierte Beratung bei Unterstützter Beschäftigung zu leisten
- Hauptaufgaben eines Job-Coaches, z. B. als Katalysator bei der Flexibilisierung und Transparentmachung des Arbeitsmarktes zu dienen, als „Ehestifter“ zwischen Angebot und Nachfrage zwischen Arbeitssuchendem mit Behinderungen und Arbeitgeber
- Vernünftige Entlohnung eines Job-Coaches und damit verbundene stabile Finanzierung



1 Introduction

1.1 Aim of study

Integrating people with disabilities into the open labour market ...

The EU and EFTA-EEA consider participation in society as a fundamental right for all citizens. People with disabilities do face barriers in their daily lives, which impede their full participation. In line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, disability is considered a matter of rights and law. The EU Disability Strategy 2010-2020 aims at eliminating barriers, preventing discrimination and empowering people with disabilities to enjoy fully their rights and participation in society on equal terms with others.

In this context and in the relation to the shrinking work force, it is essential to ensure a competitive Europe, and participation of all population groups of Europe, including people with disabilities in the open labour market. This will help build a more inclusive society all over Europe.

Flexicurity and Supported Employment are instruments that are designed to ensure that vulnerable groups of the workforce do not meet restrictions when seeking to enter the labour market. Therefore, it is to the benefit of the European labour market to study the level of introduced Supported Employment schemes and Flexicurity elements in each of the EU Member States and the EFTA-EEA countries, and based on that build strategies, action plans and policy recommendations for Supported Employment measures and the European labour market in the future.

... via supported employment schemes ...

The study analyses the existence and the benefits of supported employment schemes in all EU and EFTA-EEA countries. It goes into detail with a number of case study countries, and it identifies a number of good practices.

... within a flexicurity approach

The study also outlines the policy framework of the case countries and looks at how Supported Employment interacts with flexicurity

Recommendations

The study provides recommendations for:

- How Supported Employment schemes can be successfully introduced, their effectiveness improved, and their usage increased
- What role the EU level can play to increase the utilisation of Supported Employment in the Member States and EFTA-EEA countries (e.g. legisla-



tion, funding through Structural Funds, priorities for the new disability strategy etc.)

- How integrated flexicurity policies or specific measures can contribute to successful integration of persons with disabilities in the labour market
- How the EC can comply with its relevant obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in particular in Article 27, and how it can help the Member States and EFTA-EEA countries to comply with their obligations.

Structure of reporting

The study report is structured as follows:

- The remainder of this introduction presents the definitions of supported employment and flexicurity and briefly presents the methodology applied to reach the study results.
- Chapter 2 presents a mapping and analysis of national supported employment schemes and integrated flexicurity measures (and introduces the directory of supporting services).
- Chapter 3 presents the mapping study results from all EU and EFTA-EEA countries.
- Chapter 4 presents the case study results from the six selected countries (and introduces the compendium of good practice).
- Chapter 5 concludes.
- Chapter 6 provides recommendations.

A number of appendices are attached.

Furthermore, separate reporting from the study comprises:

- Compendium of good practice.
- Directory of supporting services (address book).
- A short expert meeting report including general information and the participant's contribution.



2 National Supported Employment schemes and integrated flexicurity measures

This chapter presents the definitions of Supported Employment and flexicurity respectively and elaborates on how they integrate. The chapter furthermore presents the framework for analysing Supported Employment in a flexicurity context to see how flexicurity can work to underpin Supported Employment.

2.1 Supported Employment in EU and EFTA-EEA

For this study, Supported Employment is defined as:

"Providing support to people with disabilities or other disadvantaged groups to secure and maintain paid employment in the open labour market"

The study tries foremost to identify actual/formalised Supported Employment schemes but also looks into schemes for including people with disabilities or other disadvantaged groups into the open labour market that resemble Supported Employment schemes or have many of their characteristics - but which are not denominated Supported Employment.

A Supported Employment scheme provides support to people with disabilities or other disadvantaged groups to obtain and maintain paid employment in the open labour market.

Supported Employment services are usually provided by a job coach or employment specialist, whose task is to help a client get a paid job in the open labour market. Part of the Supported Employment process is to engage clients in their own process as active jobseekers; help them identify their skills and preferences for work; and to match their profile to a suitable job. Supported Employment services make sure that the employee experiences successful integration into the job and the workplace, and provide on-the-job support to the employer and work colleagues.

Supported Employment is not:

- Work experience placement where payment is not received for work carried out
- Voluntary work where payment is not received for work carried out



- Vocational training before a paid job
- Sheltered employment or segregated employment
- Wage subsidy without support or close individual follow up.

The general process of Supported Employment consists of various stages such as:

- 1 *Client Engagement*: initial marketing of the service to identify potential jobseekers and engage them in the process. Assisting the potential jobseekers in making informed choices, deciding whether they want to participate in Supported Employment, and whether they want to find work through this particular Supported Employment service.
- 2 *Vocational Profile*: developing a personal and adequate profile, containing information useful for identifying a prospective employer. This also means helping the candidate identify skills and work preferences. The approach should always be client centred. Jobseekers should be assisted in developing personal career goals and meaningful and realistic career/employment plans.
- 3 *Job Finding*: effective matching of the profile to a suitable job, finding a suitable employer. Services should be able to deliver a wide range of effective job finding and marketing techniques (using both formal and informal job search methods), being able to communicate with employers in a business-like manner and assisting with the negotiation of terms and contracts etc.
- 4 *Employer Engagement*: working closely together with the employer, making sure that the jobseeker is also motivated and aware of his/her duties. Discussions with both employer and jobseeker of skills/experience required, workplace culture, working hours, wages, support available and accessibility issues.
- 5 *On/Off the Job Support*: making sure that the employee experiences successful integration into the job and the workplace includes providing support to the employer and work colleagues. In this last stage, attention can also be paid to the possibilities of career development for people with disabilities.

During the remainder of the desk study and in the work of detailing the questionnaire, we will further operationalise these definitions as needed.



2.2 Flexicurity in EU and EFTA-EEA

2.2.1 Definition of flexicurity

The definition of flexicurity was provided by the European Council in 2007, and this definition will apply in this study. It combines the following four components:

- Flexible and reliable contractual arrangements through modern labour laws, collective agreements and work organisations.
- Comprehensive lifelong learning strategies.
- Effective labour market policies that help people cope with rapid change, reduce unemployment spells and ease transitions to new jobs.
- Modern social security systems that provide adequate income support, encourage employment and facilitate labour market mobility.

To qualify for the label flexicurity, the strategy policy or programme in question must be synchronic (contain elements of flexibility and security at the same time), be deliberate (the actors must be conscious of and intent on this mutuality), and target weak groups (persons peripheral to or outside the labour market).

To qualify for the heading of flexicurity policies, the measures must give people with disabilities flexible access to employment (taking account of their specific disabilities), while at the same time providing some form of security (job security, income security, employment security or combination security)

In addition to this definition, the Commission has developed a list of eight common principles of flexicurity.¹ The common principles relate to the overall targets of the Lisbon strategy and stresses that the flexicurity approaches should be tailored to the specific national circumstances. They also point to the need to support gender quality and the balance between work and family life and stress the importance of trust and social dialogue. Furthermore, attention is drawn to the importance of maintaining sound public budgets and a fair distribution of costs and benefits.

Grouping the countries

For the purpose of presentation and analysis, the EU and EFTA-EEA countries are divided into groups in the following:

¹ Cf. Council of the European Union, Note from the working party on Social Questions: *Towards Common Principles on Flexicurity – Draft Council Conclusions*, Brussels, 23 November 2007. The following text builds on this document.



2.2.2 EU and EFTA-EEA countries with well-developed flexicurity profiles

The Nordic group: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, and the Netherlands (medium to high in flexibility, high in security).

In spite of some differences in the level of employment protection, these countries are normally grouped together due to high levels of income, employment in combination with security. The Netherlands is included with the Nordic countries following the classification of the European Commission.²

2.2.3 EU and EFTA-EEA countries with more limited flexicurity

The Baltic States: Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia (high in flexibility, low in security).

These are the fast-growing economies of the Baltic States. Labour market flexibility indicators in this group are relatively high, but social protection is significantly lower than in the EU overall.

The continental group: Austria, Germany, Belgium, France, Liechtenstein, and Luxembourg (low in flexibility, high in security).

This group consists of old EU Member States (plus Liechtenstein), which represent a continental model of social and economic activities. Social protection is relatively high in these countries. On the other hand, employment protection and tenure is rather high, which suggests a labour market with a low to medium numerical flexibility.

The Anglo-Saxon group: UK and Ireland (high in flexibility, low in security).

Low unemployment protection, high labour mobility and rather low levels of social protection characterize both countries. Ireland is placed in the Anglo-Saxon group following the classification of the European Commission.³

Mediterranean group: Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, and Spain. (low to medium in flexibility, low in security).

This group is characterised by rather poor labour market adaptability and low-income protection. Training and education indicators are also low.

New Central European Member States: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia. (low in flexibility, low in security).

² European Commission (2006): Employment in Europe 2006, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

³ Ibid.



Among this group of countries, labour market mobility is relatively low, and the long-term unemployment rate is high; these results indicate that labour market adaptability and social protection are also relatively low.

2.3 Interaction between Supported Employment and flexicurity

2.3.1 Background

Mainstreaming and inclusion

The EU and EFTA-EEA perceive disability essentially as the result of the dynamic interaction between a person with impairment and his or her environment⁴. This social model of disability also implies a gradual shift from disability-specific programmes, towards a more mainstreamed and inclusive approach.

Individual right to access to employment

It is also recognised and emphasised that access to employment is a right for all individuals (as it is clearly highlighted in the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities and in the Charter on Fundamental Rights). In practice though, persons with disabilities are far from being able to enjoy these rights.

Employment of persons with disabilities

Finally, the EU Disability Action Plan 2008-2009 calls for a comprehensive approach to increase the employment rate of people with disabilities through a combination of flexible employment schemes, Supported Employment, active inclusion, and positive measures complementing existing European legislation on non-discrimination.

Of special relevance in the present context is the principle that flexicurity should promote more open, responsive and inclusive labour markets overcoming segmentation. It concerns both those in work and those out of work. The inactive, the unemployed, those in undeclared work, in unstable employment, or at the margins of the labour market should be provided with better opportunities, economic incentives and supportive measures for easier access to work or stepping-stones to assist progress into stable and legally secure employment. Support should be available to all those in employment to remain employable, progress and manage transitions both in work and between jobs.

In addition hereto, it is mentioned among the common principles that internal (within the enterprise) as well as external flexicurity are equally important and should be promoted. Sufficient contractual flexibility must be accompanied by secure transitions from job to job, as well as between unemployment or inactivity and work. Social protection should provide incentives and support for job transitions and for access to new employment.

⁴ This implies the need to ensure that social constructions which lead to discrimination and stigmatisation are eliminated. Very often, it is the environment that is disabling rather than the nature of the disability itself. This approach is an inclusive one, not based on the need to identify separate categories of persons with disabilities but instead focusing on the needs of individuals.



It is therefore evident that Supported Employment fits well into the framework of these broader flexicurity principles and their emphasis on the inclusion of persons on the margins of the labour market into stable and legally secure employment. The common principles also support the focus of Supported Employment on transitions between different positions on the labour market both within and between companies.

With a focus on the interaction between Supported Employment schemes and the Flexicurity approach, this study will seek to assess:

- How the integrated approach and inclusive concept of Flexicurity can best be applied for the benefit of people with disabilities
- Where the application of Flexicurity principles contributes positively to the employment situation of people with disabilities
- Where and in what way national policies considered Flexicurity principles in adapting employment policies for people with disabilities in the recent years and what Flexicurity elements are applied in Supported Employment policies
- How such measures can be used to comply with the obligations of State Parties set in Article 27 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

In the following sections, the discussion of the concept of flexicurity is further developed drawing also on the academic literature on the subject. Finally, the application of the flexicurity principles on the employment of persons with disabilities is exemplified by a number of concrete policy arrangements.

2.3.2 Flexicurity – the conceptual framework

According to one of the leading scholars on flexicurity, Ton Wilthagen, Flexicurity can be defined as:

”A strategy that attempts, synchronically and in a deliberate way, to enhance the flexibility of labour markets, work organisation and labour relations on the one hand, and to enhance security – employment security and social security – notably for weaker groups in and outside the labour market, on the other hand.”

To qualify for the label Flexicurity, the strategy policy or programme in question thus must be synchronic (contain elements of flexibility and security at the same time), be deliberate (the actors must be conscious of and intent on this mutuality), and targeting weak groups (persons peripheral to or outside the labour market).



2.3.3 Forms of Flexicurity

According to e.g. Madsen (2009)⁵, flexibility and security are multi-dimensional concepts, which come in a variety of forms.

Thus, it is possible to distinguish between four different forms of flexibility: numerical flexibility, working time flexibility, functional flexibility and wage flexibility.

These four forms of flexibility can be linked with four forms of security. First, job security, which means the security of being able to stay in the same job, and which can be expressed via employment protection and tenure with the same employer. Second, employment security, which means security of staying employed, though not necessarily in the same job; here the general employment situation, active labour market policy and training and education policies play a key role. Third, there is income security, which relates to being secured income in case of unemployment, sickness or accidents, and is expressed through the public transfer income systems, such as unemployment and cash benefit systems. Finally, combination security, the possibilities available for combining working and private life, e.g. through retirement schemes, maternity leave, voluntary-sector unpaid work etc.

As illustrated in the figure below, there are sixteen potential combinations of flexibility and security. This matrix - also known as the Wilthagen matrix - is a heuristic tool, applicable for instance in characterising different flexicurity policies or combinations of flexibility and security in certain schemes, or in describing stylized relationships between flexibility and security in different national labour market regimes.

⁵ Madsen, Per Kongshøj (2008): "Flexicurity in Denmark - A Model for Labour Market Reforms in the EU", In Bienkowski, W. Brada, J.C. & Radlo, M (ed.) Growth versus Security. Old and new EU Members Quest for a New Economic and Social Model. Basingstoke: Macmillan, p 33-53.



Table 1: Configurations of flexibility and security (the Wilthagen matrix) with some examples of different flexicurity policies

	Job security (keeping your job)	Employment security (getting a new job)	Income security (when losing a job)	Combination security (work-life balance)
External numerical flexibility (hiring and firing)	Employment protection legislation	Active labour market policy	Unemployment benefits	Leave schemes
Internal numerical flexibility (flexible working time)	Short-time working arrangements	Part-time training schemes	Supplementary benefits	Part-time pension
Functional flexibility (workers being flexible between different tasks)	On-the-job training	Life-long learning	Wage-subsidies for training	Voluntary working time arrangements
Wage flexibility (or labour cost flexibility)	Reductions in social security payments	Wage subsidies for vulnerable groups	Flexibility in collective wage agreements	Voluntary working time arrangements

Note: The flexicurity policies mentioned in the cells of the table are only examples of the range of possible flexicurity arrangements.

Some of the combinations in Table 1 represent trade-offs in the sense that a higher level of for instance job security will imply less numerical flexibility and vice versa. In most other cases, the interplay between the various aspects of flexibility and security is more complex. There is therefore some debate concerning the interpretation of the matrix above. Sometimes it is seen as an illustration of different trade-offs between forms of security and flexibility, where the term 'trade-off' signifies that something must be traded for something else. Thus, more numerical flexibility can be balanced by providing some form of security instead, for instance increased income security. However, the flexibility-security nexus can also reflect mutually supportive or complementary relationships.⁶

2.3.4 Flexicurity and employment of persons with disabilities

Following along these lines, we will use the concept of the Wilthagen matrix to establish a framework for analysis of how the application of Flexicurity principles contributes positively to the employment situation of people with disabilities in general and the use of Supported Employment⁷ in particular - thus with a

⁶ For an in-depth discussion on these issues, see G. Schmid (2008): *Full Employment in Europe: Managing Labour Market Transitions and Risks*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

⁷ For the purpose of this study supported employment is defined as: *Providing support to people with disabilities to obtain and maintain paid employment in the open labour market.* It comprises *support in the five stages*: client engagement; vocational profile; job finding; working with employers, and on/off the job support. Supported Employment is not: a) Work experience placement where payment is not received for work carried out, b) Voluntary work where payment is not received for work carried out, c) Vocational training before a paid job, d) Sheltered employment or segregated employment, nor d) Wage subsidy without support or close individual follow up



focus on the interaction between Supported Employment schemes and the Flexicurity approach. Phrased differently, we will simply focus on how the application of Flexicurity principles contributes positively to the employment situation of people with disabilities in general and thus facilitates/eases the work of the Supported Employment provider (job coach). The approach is thus inspired by previous attempts to apply the Wilthagen matrix as a tool for organising various policy-arrangements reflecting different combinations of flexibility and security.⁸

A key to understanding the role of flexicurity principles in the present context is the concept of *protected mobility*, which is an integrated part of the flexicurity approach. By providing support to transitions from being outside the labour market to some form of employment, the persons with disabilities may gradually move towards regular employment. The term gradually is used to underline that a sequence of transitions may be necessary for a person with disabilities in order to get a firm foothold on the labour market. All these steps can be supported by some form of flexicurity measure. A first step may thus be sheltered work followed by support to further training and a wage subsidy for employment on the open labour market, which may in the end lead to paid employment in the open labour market. An important role of the job coach is thus to act as a guide to the various forms of support that can be provided to assist the person with disabilities, when making such a sequence of transitions towards the open labour market.

In addition to supporting 'good' transitions into employment, flexicurity policies can be in place in order to diminish the risk of 'bad' transitions out of employment and to support the rapid return to employment of persons, who lose their job due to disability. An example here can be support to retraining of persons allowing them to move to a different function in the company. Again, the job coach can play an important role as advisor to both the person with disabilities and the employer in question. As it is evident from the matrix below, it is possible to identify examples of flexicurity policies in all 16 cells of the Wilthagen matrix. In one form or another, they all combine two or more elements from the flexicurity principles adopted by the European Union and integrated into the European Employment Strategy.

While they may not all qualify for inclusion in the strict definition of Supported Employment, they are all relevant as instruments that will improve the flexibility-security balance for disabled persons by supporting their transitions into employment in the open labour market and by assisting them in staying in employment and thus reducing the risk of 'bad' transitions to inactivity.

⁸ See for instance European Foundation for working and living conditions (2007): Varieties of flexicurity: reflections on key elements of flexibility and security, Dublin, p. 4.

Table 2: Flexicurity arrangements supporting the employment of persons with disabilities

Security dimensions Flexibility dimensions	Job security	Employment security	Income security	Combination security
Numerical flexibility (external numerical flexibility)	Less flexible contractual arrangements e.g. making dismissal more difficult , facilitates the retaining of employees (insiders) who become disabled, or who experience worsening of an existing disability, and thus eases the work for the job coach (working with insiders)	Flexible contractual arrangements e.g. easing recruitment as well as dismissal , makes employers less hesitant to employ disabled job-seekers (outsiders), on whom they are unsure about their ability to work, and thus eases the work for the job coach. Retraining of people with disabilities to new job functions more in line with their abilities. Quota systems that provide more job openings for people with disabilities Job coaches that support the job search and recruitment of people with disabilities	Flexible social security systems, which allow disabled persons to move between employment and non-employment in line with changes in their disability over time.	Ensuring the access for disabled persons to leave schemes (including their right to return to employment after leave) with special attention to the specific needs caused by their disability (e.g. needs for special healthcare)
Working time flexibility (internal numerical flexibility)	Flexible contractual arrangements e.g. easing part-time work, facilitates the retaining of employees who becomes disabled, or who experience worsening of an existing disability	Flexible contractual arrangements e.g. easing part-time work, opens up labour market opportunities for disabled people (who experience limitations in their ability to work)	Modern social security systems e.g. supporting flexible disability benefits and/or supporting wage subsidies to compensate for lower productivity, at the same time secures income and encourages part-time employment	Ensuring the access for disabled persons to schemes for reduced working time (including their right to later return to full-time employment) with special attention to the specific needs caused by their disability (e.g. needs for special healthcare).
Functional flexibility	Supporting (re)training of employees, which become disabled, or who experience worsening of an existing disability in order to allow them to move to other kinds of work within the firm Sheltered employment	Lifelong learning strategies will in general be of particular importance to employees/people which become disabled, or who experience worsening of an existing disability in order to allow them to move to new job functions.	Income support that allows disabled persons to move to less demanding job functions, while keeping their previous income (or at least experiencing a smaller reduction in disposable income)	Ensuring the access for disabled persons to move to other job functions, which improve their opportunities to combine for instance work and family life.
Wage flexibility (labour cost flexibility)	Providing wage subsidies to employees, which become disabled, or who experience worsening of an existing disability in order to allow them to stay in employment within the firm	Modern social security systems e.g. supporting flexible disability benefits supporting wage subsidies to compensate for lower productivity, at the same time secures income and encourages employment	Modern social security systems e.g. supporting flexible disability benefits supporting wage subsidies to compensate for lower productivity, at the same time secures income and encourages employment	Economic support to employers for hiring substitutes during periods, where a disabled person is absent from work due to need for intensive care.



The above matrix establishes a number of examples of how different policy-related framing conditions related to the characteristics of Flexicurity principles/dimensions could be assumed to facilitate the employment of disabled persons (on the ordinary labour market) in general, and how they could in particular be assumed to underpin the use of Supported Employment (and thus ease the work of the job coach).

Furthermore, in our in-depth study and further our search for examples of good practices, we will use the matrix below as part of our analytical framework to investigate and explain where and why the possible use of Supported Employment works well, and where and why it does not.

In this, we will direct our attention to cases where arrangements for the employment of people with disabilities in general, and in particular the use of Supported Employment, in fact work well, and where general flexicurity characteristics of a country could be assumed to facilitate the employment of disabled persons.

In particular we will also focus on possible cases where the outcome falls short of expectations, either because employment of people with disabilities in general, and in particular the use of Supported Employment, does not work very well in spite of general flexicurity characteristics assumed to facilitate the employment of disabled persons, or because employment of people with disabilities in general, and in particular the use of Supported Employment, does work well in spite of general flexicurity characteristics assumed *not* to facilitate the employment of disabled persons.

This approach has been chosen to investigate if there are other factors more critical to the use of Supported Employment than flexicurity characteristics assumed to facilitate the employment of disabled persons.

The following table sums up this analytical framework:

		Degree of flexicurity	
		High	Low
Arrangements for Supported Employment are present	Yes	Supported Employment conforms with overall national flexicurity characteristics	Identify other factors promoting Supported Employment
	No	Identify other barriers for Supported Employment	Supported Employment conforms with overall national flexicurity characteristics

The term 'degree of flexicurity' in the table above refers to a broad assessment of a country's combined levels of flexibility and security. Thus countries, which score high with respect to both flexibility and security, will be associated with a high degree of flexicurity, while countries that score relatively low on either flexibility or security – or both – will be said to have a lower degree of flexicurity.



3 Mapping and analysis of national Supported Employment schemes and integrated flexicurity measures

This chapter contains the country reports for the mapping exercise of the 30 countries.

Information for each of the 30 countries is presented below. Generally, the information is based on responses from up to three different types of respondents from each country and from web-based information and reports. The respondents were promised anonymity, and accordingly there are no references to specific organisations or individuals. The text is referenced, when documents or web-based information have been used.⁹

For each country, the study sought information on whether Supported Employment exists in the country in a manner corresponding to the definition of Supported Employment for this study and on whether there are resembling elements and features. The study looks at the target group; the main characteristics of services and actors; how employer and employee needs are met respectively; the framework conditions; funding and monitoring and the advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the given context. The depth of the information depends on the degree of involvement with Supported Employment in the individual country.

3.1 Austria

3.1.1 Basic information

Supported employment is a national mainstream programme in Austria. It began in 1992 with two pilot projects, “Arbeitsassistentz”, which provided individual support for people with mental or physical disabilities. In 1994, this kind of service was incorporated in the Act on Employment of people with disabilities (Behinderteneinstellungsgesetz) and the service was extended to a broader target group, elaborated and made available nationwide. Recently, it was promoted as part of the Federal labour market programme for people with disabilities.

⁹ Information provided by respondents may come from non-referenced sources. COWI has no influence on this.



Key players/organisations

In total 45 different services (organisations) run 135 projects. NGOs provide the services.

Key players/organisations in Supported Employment in Austria are:

- AMS (Arbeitsmarktservice, the Labour Market Service)
- Bundessozialamt (Federal Office for Social Affairs)
- Dachverband berufliche Integration Austria (DABEI – national EUSE-Association)
- Begleitende Hilfen in Österreich.

Target group

The target groups are people with different kinds of disabilities aged 13 to 65: young people up to the age of 24 without a school leaving certificate or with a poor school leaving certificate, with social and emotional disturbances, grown-ups with the medical diagnosis of a disability of more than 50% disablement.

Figures provided by governmental reports and sources¹⁰ indicate that approximately 32,000 people with disabilities are registered as employment seekers. Approximately 13,000 people (1,500 new jobseekers each year) receive supported employment services (Arbeitsassistentz, Persönliche Assistenz & Sonstige Assistenz) in one year. Approximately 30% of them find employment in the open labour market during the first year.

3.1.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

There is a “Supported Employment” scheme, which is subdivided into specified programmes; “Employment Support”, “Job Assistance”, “Job Coaching”, “Vocational Training Assistance”, “Clearing” and “Individual Support at the Workplace” (Bundesminister für Arbeit, Soziales und Konsumentenschutz: Richtlinie begleitende Hilfen).¹¹

Supported Employment services include two types of employment specialists: the 'Arbeitsassistent' (employment assistant) and the 'Job Coach'. The former assists the client for up to 12 months. The latter gives a more intensive form of assistance with shorter duration aiming to support job retention. Typically, a Supported Employment team has five employment assistants per job coach. Each employment specialist has 15-30 clients. No formal training/education is provided specifically for job coaches/employment assistants.

¹⁰ www.bmask.gv.at

¹¹ Richtlinie begleitende Hilfen:
http://www.bmask.gv.at/cms/site/attachments/2/8/8/CH0292/CMS1220346918410/beilage_2_rl_begleitende_hilfen.pdf



The length of support time varies between six months and one year, in certain cases it can last 1.5 years. Individual support at the workplace has no time limit.

Projects providing Supported Employment are target group specific; each project serves one particular target group (diagnose-group) and the staff are specialists in dealing with their particular target group.

The Supported Employment programme provides support to the potential jobseekers to identify their skills and work preferences, as well as individual support to obtain and maintain paid jobs in the open labour market. The programme does not provide support to obtaining and maintaining unpaid jobs. It provides support to potential jobseekers by finding an employer and includes on/off job support (to the employee as well as the employer) to secure successful integration into the job and workplace.

Jobs are typically based on a regular work contracts (no time limit). However, Supported Employment is not the only scheme providing paid jobs in the open labour market. There is a “second labour market”, which refers to other social projects (“Gemeinnützige Beschäftigungsprojekte”) offering employment.¹² Work in such projects is limited to approximately two years. Placements with training fees also play a central role, since training is necessary for the open labour market and therefore an important part of the integration process.

Supported Employment programmes are in close contact with employers, supporting them to obtain financial aid from the public sector. There are two programmes for meeting employers’ needs:

- 1 The project “Service for Employers” (Unternehmensservice) was launched in June 2008 and lasted until end of 2010. The idea is that business consultants (who do work for the Federal Social Office) collaborate with all the regionally relevant actors to establish a net of central contact persons for employers.¹³
- 2 The project “Disability Flexicurity”, which started in 2009, should be the basis for developing a best practice model for temporary agency work. The aim is to secure people with disabilities temporary work.¹⁴

3.1.3 Meeting employees’ and employers’ needs

Accompanying measures for people with disabilities in Austria include transport support, technical aids, housing mobility benefits, special tax deductions or exemptions, personal work assistance, preferential access to job vacan-

¹²

http://www.bmask.gv.at/cms/site/attachments/3/2/3/CH0107/CMS1289832560842/sozialbericht_2010_web_01.pdf

¹³ <http://www.bundessozialamt.gv.at/basb/UnternehmerInnen/Unternehmensservice>

¹⁴ ANED-report Austria 2009: <http://www.disability-europe.net/content/pdf/AT-%20ANED%202009%20Employment%20Report%20Final.pdf>



cies, flexible work arrangements, employment quota system and dismissal protection.

Accompanying measures for employers in Austria include wage subsidy, financial support for workplace adaptation, tax deduction for employers and flexible work arrangements

The variety and scope of measures in Austria indicate a positive policy towards people with disabilities, and as such good framework conditions for Supported Employment.

Wage subsidies are measures that seek to increase the willingness among employers to employ people with disabilities, especially when the employer has no previous experience. Employers recruiting people with disabilities are entitled to integration subsidies (Eingliederungshilfe). The first three months, the subsidy covers 100% of the gross wage + 50% of additional expenses (Lohnnebenkosten: health and pension insurance etc). The next nine months, subsidies cover 50% of the gross wages and 25% of additional expenses. After this first year, the employer is entitled to permanent (year to year), financial support (IBH, Integrationsbeihilfe) from the social welfare administration (Bundessozialamt) for employees with disabilities. This covers extra expenses for circumstances related to the disability.

An employer with at least 25 employees in Austria is obliged to employ a registered, protected disabled person for every 25 employees. Some groups of disabled persons (i.e. severely disabled persons, disabled persons at a certain age) are counted double for fulfilment (system of multiple counting). Non-complying enterprises must pay charges. The quota system has the disadvantage that employers can 'buy out of the obligation instead of hiring people with disabilities.

Employees with disabilities officially registered as such according to the legal concept of the employment quota enjoy some dismissal protection. However, this can make employers reluctant to hire disabled people, which is why employment specialists sometimes advise their clients not to register in the quota system. From the employers' point of view, dismissal protection limits the autonomy of companies. On the other hand, maintaining a job is easier for people with disabilities because they are protected from dismissal.

3.1.4 Framework conditions

Recruitment and dismissal rules are more restrictive concerning people with disabilities than concerning the labour force in general: People with disabilities benefit from dismissal protection. They cannot be dismissed without governmental agreement. The possibilities for lifelong learning are poorer for people with disabilities than for the work force in general: there are more offers for employees without disabilities.



The labour market policy in general is seen as supporting adaptation to the changing labour market, reducing spells on non-employment and easing transitions to new jobs. It applies equally for people with and without disabilities. People with disabilities have equal access to social security and unemployment benefits, pensions and healthcare.

3.1.5 Funding and monitoring

Supported Employment is mainly financed at the national level via the Federal Social Welfare Office (Bundessozialamt) with around 40% of the funds coming from the national budget, 35% from the European Social Fund, and 25% from the Ausgleichstaxfond - i.e. the charges paid by the enterprises that do not fulfil their employment quota duties. Funding is a flat rate and on a year-to-year basis.

Supported Employment is monitored by a national board for social affairs through individual contracts and auditing. There has not been any independent evaluation/impact assessment of Supported Employment.

3.1.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

Supported Employment services are available at the same quality all over Austria, in both rural and urban areas. Individual pathways into the labour market are possible, and services are individually centred and need based. However, service providers usually specialise in particular target groups and not all kinds of services are located in all geographical regions. This means that the required Supported Employment service is not always available to people with certain kinds of disabilities in their local community.

Disadvantages to beneficiaries are that they are placed on waiting lists. The year-to-year funding system is dissatisfying to service providers. Other disadvantages to service providers are bureaucratic procedures for monitoring and controlling by funders and lack of consistency when new services are developed.

Other perceived disadvantages are creaming effects when those who are job-ready are in Supported Employment programmes whereas those with severe disabilities may fall out of the programme. The fear of losing benefits if people with disabilities try to work may be a barrier to entering the labour market. Furthermore, the support time – now between six and twelve months with a maximum of 1.5 years – is seen as too short.

Degree of mainstreaming

Supported Employment is integrated into the public employment services.

In general, social security schemes (unemployment benefits, pensions and healthcare) are not particularly aimed at encouraging people with disabilities to



seek employment. It is, however, to some degree an economic advantage to people with disabilities to get out of a welfare benefit and into a job in the open labour market: Even a low salary might be higher than welfare benefits. As a mainstream national programme, Supported Employment contributes to normalisation by providing beneficiaries the possibility to obtain a job in the open labour market where employers pay the wage. Jobs acquired through Supported Employment are equally based on regular and time-limited work contracts.



3.2 Belgium

3.2.1 Basic information

All Belgian regions have experimented with some form of Supported Employment, but there is no mainstream supported employment programme in any of them. Among the regions, Supported Employment is mostly found on offer in the public employment services in Flanders, and since the late 1990's also in Wallonia in a programme called “Employ Ability”.

Key players/organisations

Key players/organisations in Supported Employment in Belgium are:

- Public employment services: VDAB in Flanders, Le FOREM in the Walloon provinces, ACTIRIS in the Brussels-Capital Region, and ADG in the German-speaking community.
- ESF Agency Flanders
- GTB in Flanders (Gespecialiseerde Trajectbepaling en Begeleiding, specialising in guiding people with disabilities towards suitable employment)
- VAPH in Flanders (Vlaams Agentschap voor Personen met een Handicap) AWIPH (Agence Wallonne pour l'Integration des personnes handicapées) in the Walloon region, Service Bruxellois pour personnes handicapées in the Brussels-Capital region, Dienststelle für Behinderte for the German-Speaking community
- Non-governmental organisations and sheltered and social workshops
- Vocational Training Centres (GOB in Flanders).

Target group

The target groups of Supported Employment in Belgium are persons belonging to one of the four groups defined in Belgium's labour market policy. These are elderly (50+), ethnic minorities, low-skilled persons and disabled persons. They can also be unemployed, or figure on a waiting list for Sheltered Workshops, Social Workshops or companies with adapted work (ETA). There are also Supported Employment projects especially targeted at homeless people.

In total, approximately 380 persons are registered in Supported Employment projects. According to statistics on ESF-projects that lasted for two years, 65 persons found a job in the open labour market during the first year of being part of a Supported Employment project. In comparison, 20,000 people with disabilities work in sheltered workshops, of which 75% have intellectual disabilities.



There are also a number of enclaves of people with disabilities in regular working places.

Approximately 60% of people with disabilities do not participate in work.¹⁵ Of those at work, 10% work in sheltered or social workshops, the rest works in the open labour market, mainly with a wage subsidy (7,000 people with a wage subsidy currently in Flanders).¹⁶ It is likely that most disabled employees that have found a paid job through Supported Employment are among those with a wage subsidy.

3.2.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

While all regions offer some kind of Supported Employment, Belgium does not have a mainstream supported employment programme. Supported Employment is primarily carried out in the regions Flanders and Wallonia. Supported Employment projects are provided by disability organisations, Sheltered Workshops, Social Workshops and other NGOs.

The “Employ Ability” programme in Wallonia aims to integrate people with disabilities into mainstream employment through the provision of appropriate supports. The programme was established in 2001 under a National Pilot Programme for Supported Employment, which was funded and administered by a State Training Agency, and eight local disability organisations formed a consortium to set up the services. In Flanders, a very time-limited job-coaching measure is offered by the VDAB for all target groups. There have also been several consecutive ESF-projects in Flanders for disabled people and the target group of Social Enterprises (low-skilled persons who are long-term unemployed and present social and/or health problems) which were more intensive.

Supported employment services have been available in Flanders since 1999. The Pathway to employment service (GTB) is a private non-profit organisation funded by the VDAB (public employment service) in Flanders. GTB has the task to guide people through a process of vocational training, extra schooling, job analysis and solicitation and on-the-job training to a steady job in the open labour market. Vocational training is often organised through a training centre that is funded by social partners and specifically organised for people with disabilities. Supported Employment in Flanders is to a large degree focused on transfer from the social economy of sheltered workshops to the regular economy on the open labour market.

Disabled persons volunteering for Supported Employment have to be referred from the VDAB or GTB, be part of the workforce in a sheltered workshop, be on a waiting list for sheltered workshops or be registered as unemployed. There are also projects that select their own participants, e.g. in Social Workshops

¹⁵ Labour Force Survey 2009- Flanders

¹⁶ <http://www.disability-europe.net/en/countries/be/BE-2%20factsEN.jsp>



(WISE). Although limitations for participation vary between the regions, support time is normally limited to one year, with possibilities for a maximum of two years. There are also projects without any time limitation or limited to the period the project is funded. While the highest caseload mentioned is 30, the caseloads of job coaches vary in and between the regions. There is no formal training/education for job coaches.

In some cases, support is also provided to employers. When a client of Supported Employment gets a job contract in the open labour market, the wage is often subsidised by a wage subsidy. The jobs are typically based on regular work contracts.

3.2.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Through Supported Employment, disabled jobseekers receive support to identify skills and work preferences; they receive counselling and guidance and on/off job support (personal work assistance), to secure successful integration into the job and workplace. Support is also available for special adaptations to the workplace (equipment or clothing) and compensation for travel expenses. The public services and special agencies for persons with disabilities cover support to obtain and maintain paid jobs in the open labour market, and wage subsidies are used to secure the contracts. Assistance in finding an employer is also provided.

To some degree, it is an economic advantage to people with disabilities to move away from pension/disability welfare benefits and into a paid job in the open labour market. However, some might lose benefits they received when working in a sheltered or social workshop.

In cases of job finding, job carving and training on the job, there are many opportunities to take care of the employer's needs. Financial support for workplace adaptation is available, and there is a wage subsidy available for the private sector and in education and local authorities. The wage subsidy scheme in Flanders covers 40% of the wage during the first year, 30% in the next year, and 20% in following years. The scheme is evaluated after five years. It may be continued or discontinued. From October 2010, it is also possible to qualify for up to 60% wage subsidy. There are similar wage subsidy schemes in the other regions, but not as many as in Flanders.¹⁷

3.2.4 Framework conditions

Belgium is a federal state, composed of communities (French, Flemish and German speaking community) and regions (the Walloon Region, the Brussels-Capital Region and the Flemish Region). These entities have implemented the employment policies for people with disabilities differently. The extent and performance of Supported Employment is also different from one region to an-

¹⁷ <http://www.disability-europe.net/content/pdf/Belgium%20-%20ANED%20Country%20profile.pdf>



other. As Sheltered Workshops and Social Workshops are dominant in the field, active employment participation and labour market mobility is encouraged less for people with disabilities. However, job coaching and Supported Employment in relation to the idea of an active welfare state are topics that are in the centre of contemporary discussions.

As part of the National Reform Programme of 2005-2008, the Belgian authorities set out to develop a labour market policy to help people cope with rapid change, reduce the spells of non-employment and ease transition to new jobs. The reform also announced an increase in the rate of activity and the maintenance in employment of those who are at risk of leaving the employment market. The social partners are working together to increase lifelong learning by financing and managing ‘training centres’, and as part of the active labour market policies, a coaching plan for the unemployed has been developed.¹⁸

The policies for disabled people are based on the conviction that employers are willing to employ disabled people but that they need assistance. This assistance is delivered by a) increasing the workability of the disabled person through vocational rehabilitation, b) wage subsidies and work place adaptations, c) improving the match of the disabled person's skills and the employer's needs through information, mediation, counselling and guidance, and d) through sheltered training.

Another part of the activation policies in Belgium is the employment quota obligation put on the federal and regional administrations, and the obligations to provide special adaptations during the recruitment phase and when in employment. The quota obligations are not met, and there are apparently no sanctions, but the special adaptations are in place. (Devlieger 2007).

In the Walloon and Flanders regions, the Employ Ability programme and the Pathway to employment service (GTB) respectively aim to integrate people with disabilities into mainstream employment through the provision of appropriate support. A job coach supports both employers and employees, the aim being to meet the requirements of employers as well as the needs of people who have varying abilities. In the other regions, the active labour market policy for disabled people as well as supported employment projects is less visible.

3.2.5 Funding and monitoring

Since the end of the 1990's, service providers have tried to address the situation of specific groups through projects that have reinforced a process similar to Supported Employment in the different regions (“Missions regionales pour l'emploi”). These projects have been funded and monitored mainly by the European Social Fund.

¹⁸ <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn0803038s/be0803039q.htm>



The ESF Managing authority in Flanders monitors the projects through a central system in which actions per persons are registered. The system is run by the VDAB for all the unemployed and is called CVS (client follow-up system). Statistics are available at the ESF Managing authority in Flanders.

An evaluation/impact assessment was made by the ESF managing authority on the basis of the registration in CVS and on the basis of thematic group consisting of all organisations active in the various projects.

3.2.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

An advantage of Supported Employment is the support for empowerment of the target groups by being part of the regular economy in the open labour market.

Supported Employment projects, especially in Flanders, are typically focused on transfer from the social economy to the regular economy. An advantage of referring clients from Social and Sheltered Workshops to a Supported Employment agency is that the workshop staff know the clients very well. A disadvantage is the internal resistance of social and sheltered workshops to lose their best employees to Supported Employment and the open labour market.

In addition, there are no formal regulations or any kind of guaranteed return to social or sheltered workshops for the client if the Supported Employment process fails. Additionally, many people with disabilities may face an economic disadvantage when transferring from the social economy to the regular economy, as some lose benefits obtained through employment with a sheltered or social workshop.

ESF funding provides a good basis for projects that test the methods and subsequently adjusts Supported Employment experiences to the different regional policies. However, a disadvantage is that the duration of support to the client is limited to the duration of the Supported Employment project, which in many cases is only 24 months.

In Flanders, the further development of Supported Employment is one of the employment policy aims of the current government and will be part of a reorganisation of the whole set of employment stimulating measures, regional as well as federal (the latter depending on future devolution of competencies from the federal to the regional level). This is being developed by the Flemish Minister for Work and the Flemish Minister for Social Economy.

Degree of mainstreaming

While all regions offer some kind of Supported Employment, there is no regional or federal mainstream supported employment scheme. Supported Employment with a substantial impact predominantly exists in the regions of Flanders and Wallonia.



After years of debate, the Flemish government decided to move all initiatives concerning work for people with disabilities to the Ministry of Work, instead of the Ministry of Family and Welfare in former years. The employment services, including GTB, for disabled people in Flanders are therefore an integral part of the VDAB, while in the other regions such services are administrated by special agencies for persons with disabilities.



3.3 Bulgaria

3.3.1 Basic information

There are no clearly defined Supported Employment programmes or projects in Bulgaria. However, sheltered workshops, specialised enterprises and other forms of support do exist in the country.

Key organisations

Key organisations for supporting employment of people with disabilities in Bulgaria are:

- Ministry of labour and social policy
- Public employment service/labour office
- Centre for Independent Living.

Target group

No specific target groups are defined, as there are no Supported Employment programmes in the country.

According to the National Employment Service survey¹⁹, 7,470 disabled people were registered as unemployed in the employment offices. Among them, 900 people with disabilities were below 30 years of age.

Main characteristics of services and actors

There are no Supported Employment programmes or projects in Bulgaria. There are vocational training and unemployment programmes to support people with disabilities to access the open labour market. The high supply of labour resources and the low demand reduce the possibilities of people with disabilities to find jobs in the open market and limit the chances of successful support programmes and projects.

3.3.2 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Accompanying measures for people with disabilities include technical aids, special tax deduction or exemptions, flexible incapacity benefits/disability pension and employment quota system²⁰; however, the quota system is not enforced in practice.

Accompanying measures for employers include wage subsidy and financial support for workplace adaptation.

¹⁹ National Employment Service, survey Sofia 2000.

²⁰ A quota system, in the employment context, is a hiring system that gives preference to protected group members.



Accompanying measures have a positive impact on the access for people with disabilities to the open labour market. However, the poor economic conditions of the transition and the low labour demand result in negative impacts on employment of people with disabilities.

3.3.3 Framework conditions

Recruitment and dismissal rules are more restrictive for people with disabilities. Employers need to get permission from the Labour Inspection Office to dismiss a disabled person. The Labour Inspection Office is usually reluctant to grant the permission. If the employers are not satisfied with the rejection of the permission and choose to go to court, the court ruling is usually in favour of the disabled employee.

As mentioned, there is a quota system in Bulgaria. However, there are no enforced sanctions or penalties if companies do not or refuse to hire people with disabilities, with the result that many companies do not fulfil the quota requirements.

There are no provisions to support lifelong learning/continuous vocational training for people with disabilities.

Social security is higher for people with disabilities. Disability pension and allowance do not cease even if a disabled person gets a job. Disabled people do not need to claim disability benefits after losing their jobs while receiving unemployment benefits.

3.3.4 Funding and monitoring

There are no Supported Employment projects in Bulgaria. Any related services are financed by EU funding and national public funding.

3.3.5 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

The support for people with disabilities is limited due to the poor economic conditions and low labour demand.

People with disabilities receive a disability pension when they work either full-time or part-time. However, they can hardly earn more money when employed than when on disability pension. There is no incentive to look for a job given that no additional support is provided.

Service (not Supported Employment) providers are not able to deal with disabled persons with complex needs since they do not have adequate knowledge to assist them. There is a general understanding that people with disabilities have a pension and therefore do not need a job.



3.4 Czech Republic

3.4.1 Basic information

Even if Supported Employment is not a national programme, Supported Employment services provided by NGOs are available in all regions of the Czech Republic. As such, Supported Employment services provide people with disabilities support to secure and maintain employment in a mainstream environment. (Šiška 2009).²¹

Key players/organisations

Key players/organisations for Supported Employment in the Czech Republic are:

- Public Employment Services (PES)
- Service Providers that run projects on Supported Employment
- Group of experts within Government Board for People with Disabilities
- CZuSE (national EUSE organisation).

Target group

Target groups of Supported Employment in the Czech Republic are vulnerable people in the labour market in general. The most typical target group is people with learning disabilities. Other target groups are people with learning disabilities, mental health problems, physical disabilities, sensory disability; while others are (although quite rare) homeless people, people with a criminal record, drug addicts and Roma people.

In 2008, approximately 900 clients were provided with a service in the 19 Supported Employment projects that held a membership of the Czech Union of Supported Employment. This amounts to 1.5% of jobseekers with a disability. According to statistics, around 10-12% of the total population are disabled.²² There are no statistics on how many of these are in employment, but one indication is that over 70% of people with vision impairment do not work. According to data from the Ministry of Works and Social Affairs Statistics 2005-2008, disabled people make up 17.4% of the official unemployment. However, only 15% of disabled people use the services of a PES to search for employment (most rely on self-initiative or the help of families and friends).²³

²¹ Šiška, J (2009): Report on the employment of disabled people in European countries. Country: Czech Republic. ANED – VT/2007/005.

²² Figures from CZuSE.

²³ <http://www.disability-europe.net/en/countries/cz/CZ%202-factsEN.jsp>



3.4.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

Projects that have a job coach or employment specialist service provide individual support in order to obtain and maintain paid jobs in the open labour market. These services do not provide support to obtain and maintain unpaid jobs. There are 39 service providers of Supported Employment in total (8 in Prague), of which 19 are members of Czech Union of Supported Employment (CZuSE). All of these 19 providers apply to the Ministry (under provision for social rehabilitation) and ESF for grants. According to statistics provided by the national CZuSE organisation, of the 780 clients that entered Supported Employment projects in 2009, 546 clients secured a job during the first year of participation

A client is referred to Supported Employment projects from PES and from Social service providers, such as sheltered living, institutional care, and sheltered workshops. Job applicants who have a disability and who require additional, individualised assistance in the process of job seeking are not usually provided this extra support by the staff of PES due to time constraints. Therefore, an individual approach to these applicants is provided by PES through purchased services. Supported employment agencies devote sufficient time and provide a real individual approach to their clients focusing both on their motivation and on the assistance in the process of job seeking. In this process, job coaches contribute to creating jobs, job development and job matching, and the aim is an ordinary work contract. It is quite common that service providers have waiting lists for their services.

Persons with a disability are entitled to occupational rehabilitation and can apply for that in their respective PES where an individual plan of occupational rehabilitation is agreed. Based on the individual plan, the client participates in a variety of activities (forms of occupational rehabilitation) which focus on finding an appropriate job. These activities include counselling or preparation for a job, which is where Supported Employment comes in.

The typical caseload of a job coach is seven clients. The client is eligible for a Supported Employment service if his/her disability or disadvantage is so severe that long-term continuous support is needed both before and after a job is found. In addition, clients have to actively seek employment by themselves and be motivated to work in the open labour market. The client can receive support from a project for two (exceptionally three) years. There are particular eligibility criteria for clients with a special disability, e.g. those with learning disability or hearing impairment, and referrals to projects can also be made by schools in cases of early school leavers or by families in cases of learning disabilities.

Most jobseekers with disabilities obtain a part time job and a job requiring lower qualification. The jobs are typically based on a time-limited contract (fixed-term employment), and payment is normally paid by employers (in special cases there are also contributions from other sources).



Many job coaches attend a 200-hour course in Supported Employment run by the Czech Union of Supported Employment. This course was started in 2004; it runs twice per year and is certified by Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

3.4.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Accompanying measures for employers that employ people with disabilities include financial support for workplace adaptation, special arrangements for sick leave measures, flexible work arrangements and possibilities for special loans and grants when hiring disabled employees. Persons on disability pension are insured by the state, thus reducing the costs of the employer. It is easy for employers to utilise special contracts, such as temporary, seasonal and short-term contracts. Possibilities of wage subsidy exist formally, but are apparently not much in use, as it seems to be too complicated and binding for Supported Employment cases. Employers of sheltered workplaces (that have a share of more than 50% disabled employees) receive special financial support including easy access to wage subsidy.

The Supported Employment projects make it possible for individuals with moderate-to-severe levels of disabilities to become active, wage-earning members of the workforce. Accompanying measures that facilitate the Supported Employment process include transport support, housing/mobility benefits, special tax deductions or exemptions, personal work assistance, a flexible disability pension, and flexible work arrangements. In addition, the employment quota regulation - which claims that all companies with more than 25 employees must have at least 4% disabled employees - promotes the inclusion of people with disabilities in the open labour market.

3.4.4 Framework conditions

Although not explicitly mentioned in any legal enactment, it is still possible to provide Supported Employment under the current legislation. The framework is provided by the Social Services Act No 108/2006 that includes Social rehabilitation and to a certain extent by the Employment Act No 435/2004, which includes vocational rehabilitation.

Supported Employment can be provided under Social rehabilitation if the Supported Employment agency is registered as a social services provider. The decision whether the Supported Employment service is considered social rehabilitation and whether the Supported Employment provider receives funding on the basis of the Social rehabilitation depends on the decision of each regional authority. Supported employment can also be provided under vocational rehabilitation, which is performed on the basis of the request of the person with a disability registered at the PES. PES may buy Supported Employment services from an external institution.

The Ministry is aware of the fact that if they place Supported Employment under Social Services Act, then employment will not fit and vice versa. Currently,



this is not fully decided, as there is no specific legal provision for Supported Employment.

In 1996, a new act on pension insurance system was approved that introduced a new definition of disability. The definition implies that a person whose capacity to earn money has dropped below a certain stage can receive pension and also work. There is no ceiling on the amount of money that can be earned and no deduction is made in the pension.

Two projects are being implemented as a reaction to the current economic crisis, "Do Not Give up!" and "Training Is a Chance". Both projects focus on supporting employees in their jobs in parallel with supporting their education.

3.4.5 Funding and monitoring

Both social and occupational rehabilitation are financed by public resources. Projects involved with Supported Employment are mostly based on EU funded projects and social service grants from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, but there is also regional and local public funding available, as well as other private funding.

The two main sources of funding Supported Employment are Government and the EU through the European Social Fund. Several Supported Employment projects were implemented under the Equal programme, which has now ended. The projects were implemented by six large agencies/service providers. Now the question is how to continue the activities. Currently, ESF funding supports some of the Supported Employment activities.

From January 2007, there has been a legal obligation to control quality. Service providers must be registered as such based on quality criteria and inspection carried out by the Ministry to check compliance of criteria. The criteria applied include qualifications of staff, material and technical resources.

A software application, eEquip, is designed for providers and establishers of Supported Employment to evaluate the efficiency of Supported Employment provided to people with a disability. Approximately 50% of Supported Employment agencies use this software.

Since there is no legal provision for Supported Employment, the Ministry does not keep records and produce statistics of Supported Employment. The Czech Union of Supported Employment collects data and provides statistics on Supported Employment among their member services. The Association for Evaluation of Quality in the Czech Republic provides independent quality evaluations and audits in companies, organisations and authorities. The list of Supported Employment agencies that gained the Supported Employment Quality Mark based on the evaluation is available from the Czech Union of Supported Employment.



3.4.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment

The advantage of Supported Employment agencies is that they have dedicated and qualified staff that target their services to a vulnerable group of people in the labour market.

Supported Employment agencies devote sufficient time and provide a person-centred approach to their clients focusing both on their motivation and on the assistance in the process of job seeking.

There are Quality Standards, Methodology, and a Quality Evaluation System for Supported Employment. In many cases, the team of employment specialists have specific qualifications for a particular disability to achieve the following goals of the project.

On a general level, lack of funding and the absence of a nationwide system of funding Supported Employment is a disadvantage, as is the fact that Supported Employment is not explicitly recognised in Czech Republic legislation.

A disadvantage for the projects is the time-limited funding, normally on a year-to-year basis, which means that there is no guarantee for ongoing project activities. In some cases, there is not enough willingness on the part of the local PES to purchase Supported Employment.

Degree of mainstreaming

Disabled job applicants who require an individual approach, which cannot be provided to them by the staff of PES, are provided with support through purchased services, including Supported Employment services in all regions.

While there are several projects based on annual funding, the general picture is that Supported Employment is not explicitly recognised in the Czech legislation, and as such, there is a lack of funding and an absence of a nationwide stable system for funding, which limits the clients' access to Supported Employment services. As projects are regionally based, clients from outside the project region have difficulties in accessing the services.



3.5 Cyprus

3.5.1 Basic information

The national Supported Employment Scheme funded by the Department of Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities is the most important programme in the country. The programme includes 17 projects operated by voluntary organisations. The second largest Supported Employment programme is run by the Christos Steliou Loannou Foundation.

Key players/organisations

Key players/organisations for Supported Employment in Cyprus are:

- Department for Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance
- Christos Steliou Loannou Foundation.

Target group

The target group are mainly people with intellectual disabilities.

200 persons with disabilities work in the open labour market. The second largest Supported Employment programme supports about 50 persons with disabilities under the support of the Christos Steliou Loannou Foundation.

3.5.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

The first Supported Employment programme was established in 1994 supported by the government. The target group of the Supported Employment Scheme funded by Department of Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities is persons with disabilities (mostly intellectual disabilities).

The jobs are typically based on a regular work contract, which means that the contracts are not of a temporary nature.

On average, a job coach assists 10 clients during the support period. There is no formal training/education specially provided for a job coach/employment specialist in the programmes run by the government or NGOs.

3.5.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Accompanying measures for people with disabilities include transport support, personal work assistance, and employment quota system.



Accompanying measures employers are wage subsidy and financial support for workplace adaptation.

Wages are covered jointly by the employer and other sources. The proportion varies from project to project. In some cases 75% of the payment is covered by EU social funds through Supported Employment programmes, while in other cases, the employer pays the full wages.

3.5.4 Framework conditions

Recruitment and dismissal rules in Cyprus are the same for people with disabilities as for everyone else.

The possibilities of lifelong learning/continuous vocational training are lower for people with disabilities.

The social security is higher for people with disabilities. Unemployment benefits are, however, the same for people with disabilities as for everyone else.

3.5.5 Funding and monitoring

Supported Employment in Cyprus is mainly financed by national public funds and NGO funds.

National funding supports the largest Supported Employment programme, i.e. the National Supported Employment Scheme, which supports 200 active clients working in the open market. The department for Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities monitors 17 projects operated by voluntary organisations.

Voluntary organisations receive subsidies for job coaching salaries, which are monitored by the Department for Social inclusion of Persons with Disabilities through quarterly reporting. In addition, the Committee for the Protection of Persons with Intellectual Disability monitors the job coaches at regular meetings and discussions.

3.5.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

The programme provides evidence of social inclusion for the persons with disabilities as well as of the satisfaction of families concerned.

Most Supported Employment programmes provide services in urban areas. Only one Supported Employment programme supports people with disabilities in rural areas. Supported Employment services are of the same quality throughout the country.

A certain degree of 'benefit trap' is seen in cases where the level of the salary is lower than the social benefits that people with disabilities otherwise receive



from the government; people tend not to choose to leave the benefits for an unstable job.

There are several disadvantages of Supported Employment in Cyprus. The type of the jobs offered to the people with disabilities is often low-skilled jobs, such as assistant worker at supermarkets, warehouses, car laundries, garden cleaning etc. Parents are still hesitant to let their children with disabilities (often with intellectual disabilities) work in the open market. This aspect is not taken into account in the Supported Employment programmes. In addition, job coaches receive limited training and complain of low salaries, which may lead to inadequate coaching skills and poor motivation for assuming the work of a coach.



3.6 Denmark

3.6.1 Basic information

There is no national Supported Employment programme in Denmark, but two or more projects comprise several of the features known from Supported Employment. At the same time, legislation contains different kinds of initiatives aiming at increasing disabled people's possibilities of getting a job in the open labour market. One of the main actors in this field is the local job centres.

Key players/organisations

Almost every municipality in Denmark have job centres that deal with services related in some way to the definition of Supported Employment aiming at increasing disabled people's possibilities of getting a job in the open labour market.²⁴ Below is a brief list of some of the key players/organisations for Supported Employment in Denmark:

- Ministry of Social Affairs
- Ministry of Employment
- EUSE Denmark
- The Special Function Job & Disability (Specialfunktionen Job & Handicap), which is attached to the Job Centre in Vejle Municipality²⁵
- Danish National Centre for Employment Initiatives (CABI)
- Nextjob
- Work4You
- Fountain House
- House Venture
- Gallojob.

Target group

The target groups are disabled people with reduced ability to work, i.e. people with mental and/or physical disabilities, who experience difficulties in accessing the open labour market because of permanently reduced working capacity. Since there are no national Supported Employment programmes in Denmark, there are no common eligibility requirements for qualifying for Supported Employment services.

Figures provided by a recent government report show that there are approximately 330,000 disabled people in the age group of 16-65, who are registered

²⁴ "A Brief Overview of Supported Employment in Europe", EUSE report 2010.

²⁵ The Special Function Job & Disability was established in 2007 as a national special function for people with disabilities. The aim of the function is to maintain and integrate more people with disabilities in the open labour market. The function is located in Job Centre Vejle. (<http://www.bmhandicap.dk/>)



as unemployed or non-participants of the labour force.²⁶ Around 36,000 of the group of unemployed, disabled people are able to enter the labour market; of this group 21,000 could work full-time. Every year, between 20,000 and 25,000 disabled people participate in vocational and labour market training programmes, which offer services that in some way are related to the definition of Supported Employment.²⁷

A prevalent measure for people with permanent and considerably reduced working capacity, who cannot obtain or maintain a job on normal conditions, is "flex job" ("Fleksjob"). Disabled people employed in flex jobs get paid by the employer. The employer gets a wage subsidy from the municipality. The size of the wage subsidy depends on the degree of the disabled person's working capacity. If the disabled person is only able to work 20 hours a week, the municipality will supplement up to 37 hours, but a job coach or a mentor is not automatically involved in the arrangement, and the job centre can *choose* to use a mentor with the purpose of helping the disabled person maintain the flex job.

3.6.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

One of the local Supported Employment providers in Denmark that deals with services closely related to the definition of Supported Employment is the "NextJob" centre, which is a part of the Job and Activity Centre in the municipality of Gentofte.²⁸ NextJob offers a labour market training programme entitled "Job and Clarifying" for people over 18 years of age with different kinds of mental disabilities and/or learning disorders who do not receive early retirements. The aim of the labour market training programme is to provide individual support to potential jobseekers through job consultant services to identify skills and workability, as well as to provide support for obtaining and maintaining jobs with salary subsidies or flex jobs. The programme also provides support to jobseekers by finding potential employers and internships. Four job consultants are currently employed in the Job and Clarifying programme, where the average caseload of the job consultants is usually seven.²⁹

Another local job centre in Denmark offering various services in the field of Supported Employment is the "Work4You" centre in the municipality of Viborg. In cooperation with the local job centre in Viborg, the Work4You centre provides individual support to people with disabilities as well as other disadvantaged groups in the labour market, who experience difficulties in accessing the open labour market. The main aim of the Work4You centre is to help potential jobseekers identify their work abilities and work preferences in the form individual job coaching, rehabilitation activities and internships at local workplaces. The maximum length of support time for the jobseekers is 12 weeks, in

²⁶ "Disability and Employment: Developments between 2002 and 2008", No. 5, 2009 (report published by The Danish National Centre for Social Research)

²⁷ <http://www.disability-europe.net/content/pdf/DK%20-%20ANED%202009%20Employment%20Report%20Final.pdf>

²⁸ <http://www.nextjob.dk/>

²⁹ Information provided by Nextjob



which time the same job coach assists the individual jobseeker for the entire period. Up to 125 people are connected to the centre each year (including disabled people as well as able people), and the average caseload of job coaches is around 25.³⁰

Some of the other organisations in Denmark which offer services that to some degree are related to the definition of Supported Employment include the Fountain House (with six departments located in different cities of Denmark) and the House Venture and the Gallojob centre, located in the municipality of Aarhus. These organisations have many similarities with the local job centres, except that these mainly use sheltered workplaces and internships.³¹

3.6.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Accompanying measures for people with disabilities in Denmark include transport support, technical aids, personal work assistance, flexible incapacity benefits and disability pensions (allowing for part-time work), mentor, preferential access to job vacancies with public employers, preferential access to job vacancies with private employers, and flexible work arrangements.

Accompanying measures for employers in Denmark include wage subsidies, financial support for workplace adaptations, and flexible work arrangements. A special wage subsidy scheme exists for newly qualified, young, disabled people (Isbryderordningen).

Overall, the variety of measures in Denmark indicates a positive policy towards people with disabilities and as such good framework conditions for Supported Employment.

3.6.4 Framework conditions

Recruitment and dismissal rules are the same for people with disabilities and for the labour force in general. However, the possibilities for lifelong learning are fewer for people with disabilities than for the labour force in general.

The labour market policy is seen as particularly helpful to people with disabilities, e.g. helping them cope with rapid change, reducing spells of non-employment and easing transactions to new jobs. On the other hand, social security is the same for people with disabilities as for people without disabilities.

3.6.5 Funding and monitoring

The Supported Employment projects are mainly financed by national governmental organisations (ministries), regional and local governmental organisations (municipalities).

³⁰ "Offers Descriptions", Work4You report, 2010.

³¹ <http://www.fountain-house.dk/default.asp>



No statistics on Supported Employment services are available at the national level. Furthermore, no independent evaluation/impact assessment of Supported Employment has been conducted.

3.6.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

Social security in terms of e.g. unemployment benefits, pensions and health care may reduce the incentive of disabled people to seek employment in the open labour market. It is, however, often still the case in Denmark that there is an economic advantage for disabled people of getting a job in the open labour market. In this light, the local job centres in Denmark contribute to normalisation by providing services (related to the definition of Supported Employment) to disabled people so that they can obtain a job in the open labour market where employers pay the wage.

One of the disadvantages of many local job centres and the other organisations offering services related to the definition of Supported Employment is that the large group of people with severe learning disabilities may have low priority in the job centres because it can be very difficult to find suitable workplaces. As mentioned, one of the most used measures is flex jobs, or, if this is not a possibility, early retirement benefit.



3.7 Estonia

3.7.1 Basic information

There is not yet a national Supported Employment programme in Estonia, but there are more initiatives/pilot projects targeted at establishing a Supported Employment Service in Estonia.

The Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Centre operates a Supported Employment project in Estonia as part of a state project that aims to pilot the different employment services by using an individual approach methodology. The goal of the project is to create an employment scheme for disabled people and to demonstrate this using the supported employment model³². The goal of the project is also to ensure that the supported employment service should be underpinned by legislation. Until 2009, the project was carried out and implemented by the Ministry of Social Affairs. Since 2009, the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) has been responsible for implementing the scheme.

On 15 September 2010, the Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Centre started a pilot project on "Increasing the employment rate for people with disabilities by implementation of supported employment services development" (TTR-project). The project will run until 30 June 2012. The European Social Fund supports 86% of the project. In order to implement supported employment services, projects have been piloted in different organisations in different regions of Estonia: Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Centre in Tallinn, and Tartu and MTÜs Independent Living SA, Pärnu Hospital Center, Psychiatric Clinic Day in Pärnu.

The description below only concerns the first-mentioned project.

Key players/organisations

Key players/organisations for Supported employment in Estonia are:

- Ministry of Social Affairs
- Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund
- Ministry of Work and Labour
- Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Centre
- Tartu and MTÜs Independent Living SA Pärnu Hospital Center Psychiatric Clinic Day in Pärnu.

Target group

The target group of the initial initiative placed in Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Centre are students and graduates of the Astangu Vocational Rehabilita-

³² <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/areas/socialcohesion/egs/cases/ee002.htm>



tion Centre, which provides social and vocational rehabilitation to people with all kinds of disabilities. The aim is to support the client during the job-seeking process and also to offer support in maintaining their employment³³. The Supported Employment project mainly focuses on the registered unemployed with disabilities. The Social Insurance Board registered 115,354 disabled persons in 2007, or 8.6% of the population.

In 2010, about 4,000 persons were registered as unemployed in with disabilities, according to respondents. Only a very small number of jobseekers with disabilities, approximately 15 persons, receive Supported Employment services, according to the respondents.

3.7.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

On average, a job coach supports 10 people in a Supported Employment project. Jobs are typically based on a permanent work contract, which implies no time limit. There is no additional financial support other than regular wage support when a person with disabilities finds a job through Supported Employment project. Regular wage support is 50% of the payment from the State. The total wage support should not exceed the minimum wage which is EEK 4,350 (EUR 278) a month.

According to a study conducted by the Ministry of Social Affairs, disabled employees work normal working hours, which is eight hours per day although some would prefer to work less. Part-time jobs are not very common in Estonia.

3.7.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Accompanying measures for people with disabilities include technical aids, special tax deductions or exemptions, personal work assistance, flexible incapacity benefits/disability pension and flexible work arrangements.

Accompanying measures for employers include wage subsidy, financial support for workplace adaptation, tax deduction and flexible work arrangements although the awareness of the assistance that the State could provide, is still limited.

3.7.4 Framework conditions

The New Employment Contract Act and Equal Treatment Act entered into force in 2009. According to the new Acts, rules of recruitment and dismissal are stricter for people with disabilities. However, it is too early to draw any conclusions on the actual impacts.

The possibilities of lifelong/continuous vocational training are lower for people with disabilities. Although access for disabled people to vocational training is supported by different acts, in reality physical access to vocational training in-

³³ <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/areas/socialcohesion/egs/cases/ee002.htm>



stitutions is poor. Access to vocational training for people with mental health disabilities is better than for people with physical disabilities.

There is no particular labour market policy to help disabled people cope with rapid change, reduce spells of non-employment and ease transition to new jobs.

Social security is the same for people with disabilities as for the rest of the labour force. Unemployment benefits depend on previous period of occupancy. Registered unemployed disabled persons are covered by the national health insurance irrespective of length of unemployment and of incapacity pension and disability allowance.

3.7.5 Funding and monitoring

Supported Employment is supported mainly by national public funding and European Social Fund (ESF). The Supported Employment scheme run by the Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation is primarily financed by the ESF with 85% and the rest, 15%, is financed by the Estonian government.

The Ministry of Social Affairs (*Sotsiaal Ministeerium*) was responsible for the initiative located in the Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Centre until 2009. Since 2009, the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) has been responsible for implementing the scheme. The UIF is a legal entity in public law and has public employment services in every county. The UIF is free to pursue labour market promotion, as it does not serve the ministry, and the ministry is not entitled to intervene in UIF operations.

3.7.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

The project supports both people with disabilities and employers that hire persons enrolled in the project, which makes it easier for jobseekers with disabilities to enter the open labour market.

Supported Employment services are still very limited in Estonia. The number of people who are supported in the programme is limited.



3.8 Finland

3.8.1 Basic information

A total of 45 services run 135 Supported Employment projects. The involved services are mainly Public Employment Services, service providers and day centres in municipalities. There are also between 10 and 19 specific projects organised by the Labour Force Service Centre (LAFOS).

Key players/organisations

Key players/organisations for Supported Employment in Finland are:

- Public Employment Services
- Labour Force Service Centre (LAFOS). LAFOS consists of employment services (financed by the government), social services (financed by the municipality) and (vocational) rehabilitation services (financed by the governmental Social Insurance Institute).
- Municipalities' Social Service Department
- Day centres/Work centres in municipalities
- NGOs
- Social Insurance Institute
- Pension Insurance Companies
- VATES Foundation (an organisation that promotes employment and vocational rehabilitation of people with disabilities or other disadvantaged groups).

Target group

The proportion of people with mental illnesses in Supported Employment increased from 1% in 1998 to 37% in 2003, while the proportion of people with intellectual disabilities decreased over the same time (Saloviita & Pirttimaa 2007).³⁴

³⁴ Saloviita, T. & R. Pirttimaa (2007): Surveying Supported Employment in Finland: A Follow-up. Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities Volume 4 Number 4 pp 229–234 December 2007.



The target group of the Public Employment Service (PES) Job Coach programme is mainly non-disabled jobseekers with special needs who do not receive a permanent disability pension. LAFOS can buy Supported Employment services for long-term unemployed disabled people and others with special needs. People who already receive full or partial disability pension due to disability or long-term illness can receive Supported Employment services through their own insurance company or the Social Insurance Institution and in some cases through the municipality's Social Service department. A municipality's Social Service Department plays an important role in providing supported employment services for people with learning disabilities. Young people with disabilities usually receive job coach support into employment through special education institutions where they have received their vocational degree. One large and very heterogeneous target group is the group of clients served by various projects funded by the ESF or national organisations. Participants in these projects are people with all kinds of disabilities.

LAFOS buys Supported Employment services for long-term unemployed, and people in that group often have mental health issues. In addition to these numbers, there is a large number of people who receive Supported Employment service through various projects funded by the European Social Fund and nationally funded projects.

There are about 1000 persons with disabilities employed with a contract through the municipalities under the Social Welfare Act, and about 13,000 employed by the municipality without a work contract under the same Act.

3.8.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

There are several Acts stating how employment of people with disabilities and other people with special needs should be supported. During the years 1996 to 1997, funding from the ESF and the national SlotMachine Association (RAY) was used to start several pilot projects on Supported Employment for people with intellectual or mental disabilities. (Saloviita & Pirttimaa 2007). Today, Supported Employment is mostly implemented as part of a vocational rehabilitation service and targeted to all groups eligible for vocational rehabilitation services financed by Social Insurance Institution, Pension Insurance companies, Accident and Traffic Insurance companies and the Public Employment Service.

The national Job Coach programme performed by PES services is based on the Public Employment Act. Participation is limited to 60 days. The client may choose to use the service of 60 days in one period, or the days can be distributed over a longer period. More specific projects are financed by LAFOS and provided by LAFOS and the communities together; these project have time unlimited participation or LAFOS defines the time of support.

In the PES programme, a person is normally referred by a PES officer to job coaching, which is normally delivered by service providers. In projects aimed at people who are on disability pension, the municipality provides the service and in some cases, LAFOS works in co-operation with the municipality in or-



der to activate or find employment. Clients with learning disabilities are usually referred by a social worker or a counsellor at a municipality-based day or work centre, while unemployed clients are referred by LAFOS.

In many cases, LAFOS co-ordinates projects, and Supported Employment and job coaching services can be embedded into different initiatives such as vocational rehabilitation, employment and educational initiatives as well as social inclusion initiatives.

The jobs found for clients appear to be equally based on both regular work appointments and time-limited appointments. Wages to clients in the PES Supported Employment programme are paid by employer, sometimes with a State wage subsidy and sometimes purely by the employer. In the LAFOS projects, wages are usually paid by the employer and other sources, i.e. wage subsidy, but these projects also provide support to obtain and maintain unpaid jobs.

While the goal in general is paid work, payments are usually very small, and it is common that persons with learning disabilities have the lowest possible wages. Due to difficulties in combining disability benefit and wages, many people with learning disabilities do not receive wages at all, but get a small tax-free daily allowance if they work either in work centres or in a normal work place.

On average, job coaches have eight people on their caseload. The training/educational course “TRADES Diploma in Supported Employment” is offered to some job coaches. This is not an official job coach degree. However, the Finnish National Board of Education has accepted a degree in job coaching in which the first students can enrol in 2012-2013.

3.8.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Accompanying measures for people with disabilities in Finland include transport support, technical aids, housing/mobility, personal work assistance benefits, flexible incapacity benefits/disability pension (allowing for part-time work) and flexible work arrangements.

Accompanying measures for employers in Finland include wage subsidy and financial support for workplace adaptations. Without these accompanying measures aimed at employees and employers, it would be more difficult to carry out the job coach service. The job coach support is also extended to employers.

3.8.4 Framework conditions

Recruitment and dismissal rules are the same for disabled people as for the rest of the population. Possibilities for lifelong learning and vocational training are higher for people with disabilities outside the labour market than for people without disabilities as the vocational rehabilitation system provides specific educational services for disabled people. For those already working in the open



labour market, the possibilities are the same for people with or without disabilities.

The labour market policy aims at helping people with disabilities differently than others to adapt to the changing labour market, reduce spells of unemployment and ease the transition to new job(s). Finland does not have any particular social security for disabled people compared to the ordinarily employed. Employment and labour market mobility is encouraged to the same degree for people with disabilities. It is generally a financial advantage for disabled persons being in a job compared to receiving a disability pension, not least to due aspects of social inclusion and integration.

3.8.5 Funding and monitoring

The national Job Coach programme run by PES is funded by national public funding and by regional and local public funding. Insurance institutions are also involved as funders of vocational rehabilitation services in general. Some of the projects also receive ESF funding.

The PES programme is monitored by statistics of number of participants. Statistics are available at the Ministry of Employment and Economy. To date, no outcome studies or independent evaluation have been made of the PES programme or of the LAFOS funded projects. There is also no common definition on Supported Employment.

Annually, 1,500 new people move into the PES Job Coach service, 1000 with mental health problems and around 500 young people with special needs. Two studies from 2006 and 2007 suggest that approximately 200 people with learning disabilities receive support from job coaches while in paid work in the open labour market. Approximately 1,000 people with mental health problems have received a job coaching service through state employment agencies, and around 500 long-term unemployed and people with mental health problems have received a Supported Employment service from the Social Insurance Institution.

3.8.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

The advantage of Supported Employment is that a job coach can provide the employer with the support that is needed for the inclusion process. As employers often do not know how to make adjustments or adaptations to tasks and the working environment or how to apply wage subsidies from PES, a job coach is a valuable support.

The main pitfall of the Job Coach service in the PES is that 60 days maximum support is a too limiting factor of the services in terms of Supported Employment. It is also noted that projects that develop good practice and methods are difficult to sustain and develop because of financial limitations.



Degree of mainstreaming

A national Job Coach Service is performed by Public Employment Services (PES), but as the time period for support is extremely limited, questions about the quality of the service as a Supported Employment service must be raised. The target group of the PES service are those who already have some kind of work experience and do not receive disability pension. Those who receive disability pension can only receive job coaching services from PES if the Insurance Agency pays for the service. The Insurance Agency can also provide this service by buying it themselves. This means that people who receive disability pensions do not easily get access to the programme run by PES. There are several Supported Employment projects, and a lack of a common definition of Supported Employment, and a problem with project funding often leads to a situation where the good practices and methods developed are difficult to sustain when the funding is over.



3.9 France

3.9.1 Basic information

There are no national Supported Employment programmes in France. However, there are initiatives, which are related to the definition of Supported Employment, aiming at increasing the possibility of disabled people to get a job in the open labour market.

Key players/organisations

Key players/organisations for Supported Employment in France are:

- Pôle Emploi (National Job Centre)
- Cap Emploi network - a national programme.
- AGEFIPH (Association de Gestion du Fonds pour l'Insertion Professionnelle des Personnes Handicapées) -for the private sector- and
- FIPHFP (Fond pour l'Insertion des Personnes Handicapées dans la Fonction Publique) -for the public sector- is dealing with financial aids for employment.
- Centre de la Gabrielle - Mutualité Fonction Publique
- Les Maisons Departementale des personnes Handicapées (MDPH), which guides people with disabilities to different structures (sheltered workshops, day centres, housing etc.). MDPH administers the legal base for recognition of a disability.

Target group

The disability rate for people aged 15-64 is 4.6%³⁵. The employment rate of this group is 35%.³⁶

Figures provided by a report by the "Association de gestion du fonds pour l'insertion professionnelle des personnes handicapées" indicate that there are around 725,000 disabled people effectively working, including 581,000 employees in open labour market, 33,000 self-employed workers, and 111,000 workers in sheltered workshops. In this respect, the total number of priority

³⁵ People entitled to benefit from legal disability provisions and from the official quota scheme. ANED report VT/2007/005, 2009.

³⁶ Ibid



jobseekers (mainly disabled) was estimated to 264,000 (at the end of June 2009).³⁷

During 2008, CAP Emploi supported 58,500 employees getting a job, most of these are short-term jobs.³⁸

3.9.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

The Cap Emploi network offers support to unemployed people who have difficulties in accessing the open labour market due to different kinds of disabilities. Job coach services and job matching/profiling services are integral parts of the network, which provide support to jobseekers to identify their skills and workplace preferences. Furthermore, jobseekers receive access to different labour market training courses, continuing education and workshops on CV writing, interview techniques and other related skills at the Pôle Emploi.

The AGEFIPH (Association de Gestion de Fonds pour l'Insertion Professionnelle des Personnes Handicapées) administers the quota system³⁹, and finances education, technical aids etc. for the private sector, whereas the FIPHEP (Fond pour l'Insertion des Personnes Handicapées dans la Fonction Publique) does the same for the public sector. It is also the responsibility of this organisation to follow-up on the employment action plan for each person with a disability.

Les Maisons Departementale des Personnes Handicapées (MDPH) record and validate the official recognition of a disability.

The Centre de la Gabrielle - Mutualité Fonction Publique is privately owned and forms part of the Mutual Benefit Society. It was funded as a social initiative created by the Medical Insurers of civil servants. Centre de la Gabrielle assists 400 children and adults with development and learning disabilities through a medical and educational centre for children with disabilities, a centre for vocational training for teenagers and a special unit for people with autistic spectrum.

A project mentioned by respondents is CAP VAE Forum des Associés, which started in 2010. CAP VAE does mainly two things: it assists disabled people in obtaining a state-recognised diploma through training. Based on this, CAP VAE assists the jobseeker in gaining access to the open labour market. The jobseeker must work in a sheltered workshop to qualify for assistance from CAP VAE. The salary is typically paid by the employer and by another source in combination, and jobs are equally based on regular work contracts and time-limited contracts.

³⁷ <http://www.disability-europe.net/content/pdf/FR-9-ANED%202009%20Task%206%20Request-08B-Country%20update%20Employment%20-%20report%20final.pdf>

³⁸ <http://www.agefiph>

³⁹ A quota system, in the employment context, is a hiring system that gives preference to protected group members. (<http://definitions.uslegal.com/q/quota-system/>)



3.9.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Social security benefits in France are higher for people with disabilities than for everyone else. Once a person has been formally found to have a disability (at a minimum handicap rate), he/she can benefit from an allowance (Allocation Adulte Handicapée) of some EUR 980 per month.

Accompanying measures for the employee include transport support, technical aids, housing/mobility benefits, personal work assistance, flexible benefits/pension allowing for part-time work, preferential access for job vacancies with public employers and an employment quota system.

For the employer, incentives include tax reduction, financial support for workplace adaptation and flexible work arrangements.

3.9.4 Framework conditions

The work of Cap Emploi is based on the Act of 2005 on disability (Loi Handicap de février 2005).

Labour regulations are the same for everyone with no special rules for people with disabilities, including recruitment and dismissal rules. Similarly, it is forbidden to discriminate against disabled people in terms of recruitment or access to company training. The possibilities for lifelong learning are also the same for people with disabilities as for the labour force in general.

The minimum wage (Salaire Minimum Interprofessionnel de Croissance) applies to everybody. It is set at EUR 1365 per month (2011 figures⁴⁰).

In France, the national employment quota specifies that 6% of staff in private companies and public offices with 20 employees and above should be disabled people. If the employer fails to meet this requirement, a specific contribution to the AGEFIPH must be paid. However, according to respondents, figures show that number of people with disabilities actually employed is low, since employers are still more afraid of recruiting people with disabilities than of not meeting quota requirements.

3.9.5 Funding and monitoring

The main sources of funding in France are EU funding, national public funding, regional and local funding as well as private funding.

The AGEFIPH administers the quota system and gains an income from enterprises that do not fulfil the quota⁴¹; this gave an income to the AGEFIPH in

⁴⁰ From INSEE (National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies)

http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/tableau.asp?ref_id=NATnon04145

⁴¹ In 2009 90 % of the employers did not meet the 6% quota, and 32% had no disabled employees at all (<http://www.disability-europe.net/content/pdf/FR-9->



2008 of EUR 563 million. This money is spent on the purpose of the organisation, which does not receive public funding. Among other things, it can render financial support to employers for workplace adaptation, support education and provide advice.

3.9.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

The national network of CAP Emplois allows for wide action in geographic terms.

Though the quota system does not work as such, it appears to secure substantial income to the AGEFIPH to be spent on support of people with disabilities.

It is an issue in France that many disabled people do not have diplomas and certification of their skills, as many have left the educational system relatively early. The VAE system assists people with disabilities in obtaining state-recognised diplomas that will ease their way into the open labour market.

The AGEFPIH is often considered a 'tax collector', and its advisory and other services are less known.

Quite a number of employers (public and private) still fear recruiting or have difficulties in recruiting people with disabilities. This is particularly true for people with mental health disabilities.



3.10 Germany

3.10.1 Basic information

There are two main kinds of Supported Employment-services in Germany: the Vocational integration services (Integrationsfachdienste) for people with disabilities of all ages, and a Supported Employment service for young people.⁴²

Key players/organisations

Key players/organisations for Supported Employment in Germany are:

- Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit)
- Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales)
- Federal employment agencies
- The National Association for Supported Employment (Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft unterstützte Beschäftigung, (BAG UB),⁴³ a member of EUSE
- Nationwide vocational integration agencies (Integrationsfachdienste, IFD)
- The Federal Association of the Integration Agencies (Integrationsämter: www.integrationsaemter.de)
- Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Integrationsämter und Hauptfürsorgestellen (BIH)
- Private service providers.

Target group

The Supported Employment scheme provided by vocational integration services (Integrationsfachdienste, IFD, authorized by section 110 SGB IX) supported about 66,000 people with disabilities in 2008.

The new Supported Employment measure (authorized by section 38 a SGB IX) had approximately 2,300 participants in 2009. Annually, about 2,000 people enter into this service. The target group are young people with disabilities, who are not able to complete professional training in the regular system, but are

⁴² ANED report 2009: <http://www.disability-europe.net/content/pdf/DE%20-%20ANED%202009%20Employment%20Report%20Final.pdf>
http://www.bmas.de/portal/37338/2009_09_04_unterstuetzte_beschaefigung.html

⁴³ <http://www.bag-ub.de/>



considered too capable to work in a sheltered workshop. They should be able to work in the open labour market given the necessary support. Most of them have intellectual disabilities, but some have mental illnesses and physical and sensory disabilities. They need to have a rehabilitation status.

3.10.2 Main characteristics/Type of services and actors⁴⁴

Two main kinds of Supported Employment services provide individual support to obtain and maintain paid jobs in the open labour market:

1. Nationwide there are 238 vocational integration services (Integrationsfachdienste, IFD) authorized by section 110 Ninth Book of the Social Security Code (SGB IX). Their legal task is to provide Supported Employment to people of working age with all kinds of disabilities. Supported Employment is one of the tasks of the vocational employment services. The Supported Employment service includes individual workplace training in preparation for taking up a job and career support coaching for severely disabled employees to keep jobs. Individual occupational training is provided through the institution of vocational rehabilitation. Subsequent services of career coaching can be provided by the entities responsible for securing employment of severely disabled persons (Integrationsämter). Services are funded – and referred by – the Federal Labour Agency, the pension funds and the accident insurance at the individual workplace.

The duration of the vocational integration service is as follows: Finding a job may take six months, and a prolongation of another six months is possible. The duration of support for training at the individual workplace is generally 24 months. Support for maintaining a job can last as long as necessary. The period of support in career coaching is not limited.

2. A national, funded Supported Employment-programme has existed since December 2008: Supported Employment authorized by section 38a Ninth Book of the Social Security Code (SGB IX). This service targets young people who are not able to complete occupational training in the regular system, but are considered too capable to work in a sheltered workshop. The main referral agency is the national Agency of Labour, but clients can also be referred by other rehabilitation funding agencies. Each client should have his/her own job coach. The job coach will follow up towards both the employee and the employer. Clients may receive Supported Employment-services for up to three years (qualification: 24 months, 12 months' prolongation is possible; continuous support in regular employments if necessary).

There is no particular formal education required for job coaches. Some participate in a vocational qualification for Supported Employment (Diploma-

⁴⁴ Source: EUSE REPORT 2009: A brief Overview of supported employment in Europe:
<http://www.euse.org/resources/publications/Report%20Supported%20Employment%20in%20Europa%202009%20latest.doc/view>



courses), provided by the German Association of Supported Employment. Basic vocational qualifications, additional vocational qualifications (e.g. psychosocial qualifications, qualification in pedagogic of labour) or experience in Supported Employment are typical conditions for being contracted as service providers for Supported Employment.

The average caseload of a job coach varies from project to project, but is generally between 5 to 12 clients.

3.10.3 Meeting employee's and employers' needs

A wide range of accompanying measures aiming to ease vocational integration for people with disabilities are available: Preferential access to job vacancies with public and private employers, an employment quota system, flexible incapacity benefits/disability pension (allowing for part-time work), special tax deductions or exemptions, flexible work arrangements, personal work assistance, transport support, technical aids and housing/mobility benefits. These measures are helpful to get and maintain jobs.

Employers may be entitled to the following accompanying measures when recruiting/employing a person with a disability: wage subsidies, financial support for workplace adaptation, tax reduction and special arrangements for sick leave measures. Wage subsidies are a typical helpful measure to support a new job – but the amount and duration for wage subsidies in reality has been reduced in the past few years. The quota system and the special dismissal protection for people with disabilities are helpful provisions for people with disabilities who have a job, but create a barrier to those searching a job. It is no problem to receive lifelong support for a person in the sheltered workshop as well as transportation support, but it is difficult to receive job coaching, wage subsidies in a regular company and obtain transportation to a regular company on a long-term basis.⁴⁵

3.10.4 Framework conditions

According to the quota system, private employers with more than 16 employees are required to hire one disabled person for every 16 employees. There is also an accompanying fine for non-compliance. Rules for recruitment and dismissal are more restrictive for persons with disabilities.

According to law, people with disabilities should have the same possibilities for lifelong learning as anybody else. In practice, they often have few opportunities for lifelong learning and vocational training, because many of them get jobs in low-budget sectors where employers in general do not provide vocational training to their employees.

The special dismissal protection means that the integration agency has to be informed if a company wants to dismiss a person with a registered disability.

⁴⁵ http://www.bmas.de/portal/34614/a126_behindertenbericht_2009_englisch.html



The vocational integration service then tries to help the employer and the employee to maintain the employment. However, it is only in a quarter of all cases that these efforts result in job retention. Many employers falsely believe that a person with a disability cannot be dismissed at all. This myth creates a barrier to hiring persons with disabilities.

3.10.5 Funding and monitoring

Supported Employment measures are funded by the Federal Employment office and by other agencies such as insurances, federal integration agencies, social welfare agencies and other rehabilitation agencies (such as pension funds and the accident insurance at the individual workplace). The fact that the funding system is split into many different agencies creates relatively high transaction costs and may cause discrepancies between different agencies. People who are placed in sheltered workshops do not appear in unemployment figures and they receive their payment from the welfare office. The national agency of labour has no incentive to support their transition from sheltered workshop into labour market schemes.

There are different statistics on different measures by the funding agencies. For the Integrationsfachdienste, there is a quality system, KASSYS, operated by the Integration Agency. The extent to which a quality system is used differs very much from state to state. The supported employment training measure is monitored by the Agency of Labour. Monitoring seems to be mostly focused on formal requirements. The National Association for Supported Employment (BAG UB) took the initiative to keep records of the implementation of S.E. A number of evaluations have been made during the last decade (Doose 2007, Boban & Hinz 2001).⁴⁶

3.10.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

Supported Employment is applied in a way that disabled jobseekers can get a job in the open labour market even when they do not have any formal qualifications, because individual concepts for occupational integration can be applied. The individual approach, attitude to support individuals in their wishes, interests and needs, long-time experience, networking with all relevant stakeholders, long-term-contacts to many employers and to schools and sheltered workshops are widely seen as positive features.

⁴⁶ Doose, S. (2007). *Unterstützte Beschäftigung: Berufliche Integration auf lange Sicht. Theorie, Methodik und Nachhaltigkeit der Unterstützung von Menschen mit Lernschwierigkeiten durch Integrationsfachdienste und Werkstätten für behinderte Menschen auf dem allgemeinen Arbeitsmarkt. Eine Verbleibs- und Verlaufsstudie. 2. durchgesehene und aktualisierte Auflage.* Lebenshilfe-Verlag, Marburg.
Boban, I., Hinz, A. (2001). *Integrative Berufsvorbereitung- Unterstütztes Arbeitstraining für Menschen mit Behinderung.* Beltz GmbH, Julius, Berlin



The existence of a nationwide network of supported employment services and the new supported employment training programme for young people is seen as an advantage.

The fact that the job centres organise Supported Employment by tendering in each region is widely seen as problematic, because the cheapest provider who fulfils the requirement will be given the acceptance of the bid. The focus on price jeopardizes quality: experienced service providers are not accepted when they are 'too expensive'. As a result of the tendering system, service providers may change from one year to the next, which implies lack of continuity for clients and employers as well as other service agencies involved.

Another problem is that the vocational integration services do not receive funding to support people with severe disabilities and comprehensive support needs at the time when they leave schools or when they are in sheltered workshops.

Degree of mainstreaming

Both Supported Employment programmes, the vocational integration services and the Supported Employment programme for young people are public services and as such available nationwide. However, Supported Employment is not yet well known among the employers.

Supported Employment is not available to people who wish to leave sheltered workshops and enter the open labour market. This is why Supported Employment services are available only for a very small proportion of all employment seekers with a disability. Supported Employment prevents individuals from being placed in sheltered workshops, but it is not applied as a measure for transition into the open labour market.



3.11 Greece

3.11.1 Basic information

Greece has only a few Supported Employment projects and no national programme or central funding for Supported Employment.

Key players/organisations

The Key players/organisations in Greece are:

- Hellenic Association of Supported Employment (El.Et.Yp.E) is a member of EUSE⁴⁷
- OAED (National Manpower Employment Organisation) is part of the Hellenic Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, and the main institution for planning and applying government policy on employment.
- Theotokos Foundation, Ilion, a private NGO.

Target group

According to a survey carried out in 2001, 18.2% of the Greek population has health problems or disabilities, and 84% of disabled people or people with health problems are economically inactive, compared to 54% of the general population.⁴⁸

The target group for Supported Employment projects are individuals with learning disabilities and other disabilities. About 250 people are presently included in Supported Employment. About 20-30 people are annually admitted into Supported Employment and annually about 15-20 people find paid employment. In total approximately 5% of those who receive vocational training get a job.

3.11.2 Main characteristics/type of services and actors

In 2009, there were seven Supported Employment projects in Greece. Six of them operate in Athens and one in Crete.

Most projects for training and employment are organised by independent and private organisations. The projects aim to provide individual support to obtaining and maintaining paid jobs in the open labour market. The length of support time is unlimited.

⁴⁷ <http://supportedemployment.gr/indexuk.htm>

⁴⁸ Academic Network of European Disability experts (ANED) – VT/2007/005
(<http://www.disability-europe.net/content/pdf/EL%20Employment%20report.pdf>)



There is no formal training/education specifically provided for employment specialists/job coaches. The Hellenic Association of Supported Employment provided training for 20 job coaches under the Equal Programme.

The average caseload of one project is 35. Clients are referred either by the Health Services or by the Social Services.

Jobseekers receive support to identify skills and work preferences. They also get help finding an employer. The projects include on/off job support (to the employee as well as the employer) to secure successful integration into the job and workplace. There is little provision for continued support once in employment.

One example is the Theotokos Foundation, a private NGO operating in Ilion⁴⁹ providing Supported Employment service to people with learning disabilities, who are referred to the service by the social workers of the foundation. This organisation provides a number of services; job coaching, vocational training, family counselling etc. A team identifies possible employers and jobs, places and trains the employee, depicts the working environment, identifies cooperation and supports the person on a long-term basis. A second example: Eea-Margarita - Integration Through Work, a service that provides apprenticeships and work experience placements – which seldom result in a job, but may improve the participants' chances to enter the open labour market. A third example is KEKYKAMEA in Rethymnon, which is the first state-based service providing Supported Employment and the first that is located outside Athens.

3.11.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Accompanying measures for people with disabilities include transport support Technical aids Housing/mobility benefits, special tax deductions/exemptions, preferential access for job vacancies with public employers, preferential access for job vacancies with private employers and an employment quota system.

Accompanying measures for employers include wage subsidies for employing people with learning disabilities, financial support for workplace adaptation and special arrangements for sick leave measures. In some cases, employers get funding from the state to employ persons belonging to sensitive groups.

3.11.4 Framework conditions

Greece has a national labour market policy that aims to help people adapt to the changing labour market, reduce spells of non-employment, and ease the transition to new jobs. It remains, however, unclear if this policy at all eases access to the labour market/maintains a job for people with disabilities: labour market mobility is less encouraged for people with disabilities. Working time rules are not flexible enough to give people with disabilities a better chance of obtaining/maintaining a job. The Greek Manpower Organisation provides employers

⁴⁹ www.theotokos.gr



with subsidies either for full-time jobs (8 hours) or for part-time jobs (4 hours). There are no other flexible arrangements available. Part-time jobs are low-paid and may thus not be financially feasible. In general, it appears difficult to dismiss employees in the public sector, and people with disabilities have no additional protection. There are limited possibilities (access and funding) of lifelong learning/vocational training for people with disabilities and they usually do not end in a job. People with disabilities have small chances of improving their education or receiving additional training.

When a person with a disability starts working, he/she no longer qualifies for his/her parents' pension, and ultimately their benefits are cut. As a result, many people with disabilities do not seek employment.

According to a national report submitted by the Greek EIRO⁵⁰ correspondent, there is a lack of state policies directly aimed at increasing the employability of socially vulnerable groups of the population, such as people with disabilities, long-term unemployed and immigrants.⁵¹

The most important Greek piece of legislation in the field of Employment is the Act 2643/98 (Official Journal of the Hellenic Republic 220/A', published: 28/09/1998), which defines the quota scheme for the private and the public sectors: "Provision for the employment of special social groups and other clauses". According to this act, companies in the private and public sector must employ a certain percentage of individuals from protected social groups, via objective criteria of placement based on age, family status and economic conditions, formal qualifications and percentage of disability. In private companies with more than 50 employees, 8% of the staff should be disabled people. However, a survey conducted in 2007 showed that only 20% of the surveyed companies with more than 50 staff employed disabled people.⁵² The quota system is not controlled by the Government. It is statutory that the recruitment and dismissal rules are the same for disabled people as for the rest of the labour force.

3.11.5 Funding and monitoring

Supported Employment projects are financed by NGOs and other private funding sources. There is no state funding of these projects.

Supported Employment projects are not monitored, and no independent evaluation/impact assessment has been made. One of the projects (Theotokos Foundation) is certified by the EQUASS (European Accreditation) and the EKEPIS (Greek accreditation).

⁵⁰ The European Industrial Relations Observatory

⁵¹ <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn0803038s/index.htm>

⁵² Academic Network of European Disability experts (ANED) – VT/2007/005
(<http://www.disability-europe.net/content/pdf/EL%20Employment%20report.pdf>)



3.11.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

Supported Employment provides services as long as required. To some degree, it is an economic advantage to move into a job in the open labour market. A job secures participation and integration in society, autonomy, independence, financial independence, self-esteem and the acceptance of persons with disability in society. With Supported Employment, more persons with disabilities get the possibility to work. The focus of Supported Employment is the person and his strengths (and not his weaknesses).

The advantage is that people with learning disabilities are integrated into the open job market with standard wages and insurance cover. They integrate with the work environment.

The disadvantage is that there is no national Supported Employment programme or a central funding for Supported Employment. Funding is not stable and not provided by the state. There is no legal framework for Supported Employment in Greece.

Degree of mainstreaming

The small number of Supported Employment projects and the fact that six out of seven are located in the Athens area, show that Supported Employment-services are available only for a small fraction of those who would benefit from that kind of service. In general, policies for increasing labour market participation of people with disabilities or other vulnerable groups are either lacking or not implemented satisfactorily.



3.12 Hungary

3.12.1 Basic information

There are a number of ongoing supported employment projects in Hungary. The Salva Vita foundation is the leading organisation in Hungary in terms of hosting the programme of Supported Employment.

Key players/organisations

Key players/organisations for Supported Employment in Hungary are:

- Salva Vita Foundation
- “Viewpoint” Foundation – a vocational rehabilitation service provider for visual impairment persons
- Hungarian Autistic Society
- National Federation of Disabled Persons' Associations (MEOSZ).

Target group

The target group is the jobseekers who have the official certificates of disability, which are required to be entitled for the Supported Employment programmes.

According to respondents, about 1,200 new persons with disabilities move into the services in the country every year. Approximately 500 of these are employed in the open labour market. Currently, about 100 people are included in the supported employment services. About 0.1-0.2% of present jobseekers with disabilities receive Supported Employment services.

3.12.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

The jobs are typically based on a permanent contract.

On average, a job coach assists 10 to 15 clients during the support period. There is no formal training/education programme specially provided for job coaches/employment specialists in the programmes run by the NGOs.



3.12.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Accompanying measures for people with disabilities include housing/mobility benefits, flexible incapacity benefits/disability pension, and preferential access to job vacancies with private employers, and flexible work arrangements. The accompanying measures such as transport support, technical aids, special tax deductions, personal work assistance, preferential access for job vacancies with public employers and employment quota system are measures that are not implemented in practice.

Accompanying measures for employers include wage subsidy, financial support for workplace adaptation. Small companies with less than 20 employees are eligible for tax deductions when hiring people with disabilities.

The payment is covered jointly by the government and the employers. Employers can receive a maximum 75% of the salary in subsidies when employing a person with disabilities. This percentage varies depending on the jobseekers' qualifications and degree of disablement.

3.12.4 Framework conditions

In Hungary, recruitment and dismissal rules for people with disabilities are the same as for the public at large. The possibilities for lifelong learning and training are lower for people with disabilities as limited training is provided specifically for people with disabilities. It is very difficult for people with disabilities to access regular training courses.

There is no indication that the labour market policy helps people with disabilities cope with rapid change, reduce spells of non-employment and ease transitions to new jobs more than the public at large. Social security does not distinguish between people with disabilities and the public at large.

3.12.5 Funding and monitoring

Supported Employment services in Hungary are mainly supported by national public funding and European funding. There is an annual budget for people with disabilities and related support programmes. There are also EU-funded programmes, which often are jointly operated by the government, local authorities and NGOs⁵³.

Supported Employment services are monitored by government authorities (e.g. a ministry). NGOs, such as the Salva Vita Foundation, make a self-assessment exercise every year. The foundation also has a quality insurance system.

⁵³ EU financed projects are, for example, Rehabilitation Supply Project run national employment offices jointly with NGOs, and "First Step" carried out by government service providers and NGOs.



3.12.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

Supported Employment services help people with disabilities find jobs in the open market. The average ratio of successful placement is about 40%. It seems that Supported Employment is the only effective method for assisting people with disabilities enter the open labour market.

A number of accompanying measures are applied in practice to increase chances of employers and employees with disabilities meeting in an open market. However, some measures are not accessible to most people with disabilities. The coverage of Supported Employment is very limited, implying that only a small number of jobseekers with disabilities receive services from Supported Employment projects.

The disadvantage of the programme is lack of professional capacity and lack of general monitoring and general coordination at national level. The quality of Supported Employment services in the countryside is fairly poor. There are many funds in the area, but the money has not been used effectively due to lack of general monitoring and coordination among governments and NGOs.



3.13 Iceland

3.13.1 Basic information

The national Supported Employment programme in Iceland, Atvinna með Studningi (AMS), is available in eight of Iceland's Municipalities. It is organised either by the Regional Offices for Disability Services (SSR) or by the Municipality service. From 2011, it is organised by the Public Employment Services.

Key players/organisations

Key organisations in Supported Employment in Iceland are:

- Regional Offices for Disability Services (Málefni fatlaðra)
- Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Security (Félags- og tryggingamálráðuneytið)
- The Social Insurance Administration (Tryggingastofnun ríkisins)
- Directorate of Labour (Vinnumálastofnun)
- Public Employment Service
- National EUSE organisation.

Target group

Clients with a specific analysis of their handicap from the Insurance office can apply for a Supported Employment service from the Regional Offices. Where Supported Employment is part of the Regional Offices, all who need a special service may apply. Where Supported Employment is part of the Municipality service, everyone can submit an application. From 1 January 2011, Supported Employment will be part of the municipality services.

The most common target groups of the Supported Employment programme (AMS) are people with learning disabilities, brain injuries, autism, and people with mental or physical impairments. The number of job coaches in the AMS programme in 2010 was 16, and the number of clients entering the Supported Employment programme was around 355. Approximately 70-80% of clients of AMS find a paid job on the open labour market, normally with a wage subsidy.

3.13.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

The Supported Employment programme AMS (Atvinna með studningi) operates under the auspices of the state through the Regional Offices for Disability



Services. In 2011, AMS will be operated through Vinnumálastofnun, the Directorate of Labour.⁵⁴

Where Supported Employment is a part of the Regional Offices for Disability Services, all who have the right to the services provided by the Regional Offices can apply for Supported Employment. Legally, the Regional Offices are not allowed to provide services to people other than those who need special services. Only those who have received a specific analysis about their handicap from the Insurance office can apply to the Regional Office for Supported Employment services. Every application is evaluated by the Supported Employment staff.

There are fewer restrictions in the cases where Supported Employment is not part of the Regional Offices; in this case everyone may submit an application. From 1 2011, however, the Supported Employment AMS-programme will be part of the Public Employment Services.

A job coach service is part of the Supported Employment service, which aims to provide support to obtaining and maintaining paid jobs in the open labour market. Unlimited time support is given both to the employee and to the employer. The disabled employee is paid by the employer, normally with a State wage subsidy, and jobs are based on regular work appointments.

The caseload of job coaches differs between the services, from 20 to 50. There is no fixed standard for Supported Employment, which leads to uncertainty about the Supported Employment quality that is on offer from some service providers. There is no formal training available for the job coaches.

3.13.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Accompanying measures for people with disabilities include transport support, technical aids, preferential access for job vacancies within public employers, and flexible work arrangements. Wage subsidies are gradually reduced during seven years from 75% to 25%, which then can be maintained without any time limitation. The flexible disability pension is reduced when a person receives a monthly wage above ISK 3000, and if the disabled employee stops working, the disability pension will automatically come into use again.

The Supported Employment programme provides clients with individual support to obtain and maintain a paid job in the open labour market. Support is also extended to the employer. Accompanying measures for employers include wage subsidies, financial support for workplace adaptation, and flexible work arrangements.

⁵⁴ <http://www.disability-europe.net/content/pdf/Iceland%20-%20ANED%20country%20profile.pdf>



3.13.4 Framework conditions

The Social welfare legislation is the main regulatory instrument for people with disabilities. Act. No. 59/1992 (Act of the Affairs of People with Disabilities) aims to secure people with disabilities the same rights as others, and sections XI and XII concern issues on work participation, e.g. that people with disabilities should receive individual services to assist them securing a job. According to Act 32 under XII (Act of the Affairs of People with Disabilities), people with disabilities have a priority to available jobs in the public sector when applicants have equal qualifications.

In Iceland, social security is higher for people with disabilities, and the disability pension is higher than the unemployment benefit. The possibilities of access and funding of lifelong learning are lower for people with disabilities than for the labour force in general, and employment and labour market mobility is less encouraged for disabled people.

Rules and arrangements for wages paid to people with disabilities and their possibilities of obtaining and maintaining are the same for disabled people as for the labour force in general. The labour market policy aims to help people cope with the changing labour market, reduce spells of non-employment and ease the transition into new jobs.

In 2007, there were over 600 individuals working in the existing 24 Sheltered Workshops throughout Iceland, and according to 2003 figures, only 4.4% of disabled people in Iceland received vocational rehabilitation. In 2005, the employment rate of disabled people in Iceland was approximately 38%.⁵⁵

3.13.5 Funding and monitoring

Atvinna með Studningi (AMS) is funded by either the government or the municipality.

The Ministry of Insurance and Social Welfare monitors Supported Employment through annual reports provided by the Regional Offices for Disability Service and the local community service. Statistics are available on the extent of the use of Supported Employment. Statistics can be found at the Ministry of Insurance and Social Welfare and at the Directorate of Labour.

3.13.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

One of the advantages of Supported Employment in Iceland is that a full salary is paid to the employee from the outset. Another advantage is that support is not time limited. However, Supported Employment receives too little government support to be able to target a broader area of disabilities as well as to sustain and maintain integration for more severely disabled individuals.

⁵⁵ <http://www.disability-europe.net/en/countries/is/IS-2-factsEN.jsp>



A disadvantage of Supported Employment is the potentially very high number of jobseekers assigned to each job coach, which makes it difficult to ensure a high quality of Supported Employment service. Additionally, there are too many applicants and too few Supported Employment services. While some service providers offer Supported Employment services, there is uncertainty as to whether the services on offer are actually Supported Employment. This is a sign of lack of a coherent standard for quality Supported Employment.

The wage subsidy is important to jobseekers and to employers and enables people with disabilities to obtain a job on the open labour market. Employers are aware of this and are interested in Supported Employment services. People with disabilities will gain economically by accepting a job on the open labour market, which is seen as a good situation for further development of Supported Employment.

Degrees of mainstreaming

The AMS programme provides support to jobseekers in identifying skills and work preferences. Support is provided for job search and finding an employer and support is also extended to the employer. However, the national Supported Employment programme is a service on offer in only eight of Iceland's 79 municipalities, which means that there are a lot of disabled people without access to the programme. An eligibility criterion is a disability analysis assessment, and those without such assessment cannot apply for Supported Employment (i.e. those who have a 'low disability evaluation').



3.14 Ireland

3.14.1 Basic information

The FÁS (Ireland's National Training and Employment Authority) financed national Supported Employment Programme (SEP) is responsible for programme administration, monitoring and quality. SEP is operated by the Community Service Division of FAS.

SEP is delivered by 24 independent companies/sponsor organisations.

The key personnel involved in the actual programme delivery are the coordinators employed by the 24 sponsor organisations to implement the programme with front-line programme delivery being undertaken by job coaches who directly provide the specified range of supports to participants and employers.

Key players/organisations

Key players/organisations for Supported Employment in Ireland are:

- FAS - Ireland's National Training and Employment Authority
- IASE: Irish Association of Supported Employment (member of EUSE)
- HSE (Health Service executive).

Target group

The beneficiaries of the government funded SEP are people with a disability who are job ready, able to work for at least eight hours per week, and need a level of support to succeed in long-term and sustainable employment as eligible for the service. Job readiness is defined as "a person who has the necessary training, education, motivation, and ability to pursue work/career in the open labour market". The FAS Employment Officer and the job coach make evaluation of job-seekers' readiness. The FAS Employment Services have the final authority with regard to referral to Supported Employment according to FAS's Operational Guidelines.

According to a research report⁵⁶, the active clients on the SEP were approximately 2,200-2,500 in 2007. This figure varied from month to month, as clients left and entered the SEP.

During the years 2006 and 2007, 120 full-time equivalents job coaches were involved in the programme. The funding commitment to sponsor organisations for 2007 (April 2007 to end March 2008) was over EUR 8 million.

⁵⁶ "Research report on the operations and effectiveness of the supported employment programme", WRC Social and Economic Consultants, May 2008



3.14.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

All persons entering the SEP must register with FÁS. This is undertaken by Employment Service Officers who are also responsible for referral, where appropriate, of such persons to the sponsoring organisation.

The duration of the service is normally 18 months. However, this period can be extended subject to approval from FAS. An individual action plan is developed for each person to secure sustainability.

According to the WRC report 2008, on average, about 19-21 clients were supported in the FÁS funded programme by one full-time equivalent job coach⁵⁷. About 19% of active clients are repeat clients and one in eight had been on the programme for over three years. There was substantial variation in the proportion of repeat clients across the 24 sponsor organisations (from 6.0% to 61.4%).

3.14.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Accompanying measures for people with disabilities include technical aids, special tax deductions or exemptions, personal assistance, flexible incapacity benefits/disability pension, preferential access to job vacancies with public employers, flexible work arrangements and employment quota system.

Accompanying measures for employers include wage subsidy, financial support for workplace adaptation, tax reduction for employers, special arrangements for sick leave measures, and flexible work arrangements.

The accompanying measures can act as incentives for employers. There is a Wage Subsidy Scheme that is separate from the Supported Employment scheme. Private sector employers may also receive grants for workplace adaptation. Surveys show that many employers have little awareness of the range of employer supports available.

3.14.4 Framework conditions

Supported Employment is integrated into the public employment services, i.e. Community Service Division of FAS. Supported Employment services are available in both urban and rural areas.

The above accompanying measures assist employees and employers to take on people with disabilities, in particular the support to help disabled people get employment. Measures include interview interpreter grant, personal reader and workplace equipment/adaptation grant/wage subsidy scheme. Furthermore, grant aid encourages participation in the programme. People in Supported Employment typically receive a disability allowance equivalent to EUR 196 per week. This first EUR 120 of earnings does not affect this benefit, thereafter, for earn-

⁵⁷ <http://www.fas.ie/NR/rdonlyres/82676D0C-DB02-49F1-838B-D70AE2111706/384/WRCFINALREPORTSEP280508.pdf>



ings between EUR 120 and 350, the disability payment is reduced by 50 cents for every EUR 1 earned. However most participants stay below EUR 120 after which some benefits are withdrawn.

Non-FÁS funded Supported Employment services allow for the guarantee of long-term support, and there is no minimum number of hours that the individual has to work.

It is difficult to conclude that the possibilities (access and funding) of lifelong learning or continuous vocational training for people with disabilities are better. The reason is that people with disabilities typically have significantly lower levels of education or training than the public at large. They can participate with support in mainstream education or training, or avail of specialist training which takes two forms - specialist vocational training, or "rehabilitative training" - where the focus is on life skills. Participation in these programmes is generally time-limited.

The social security is the same for people with disabilities as for the public at large. There is no particular labour market policy to help people with disabilities cope with rapid change, reduce spells of non-employment and ease transition to new jobs.

Employment and labour market mobility is encouraged more for people with disabilities. For example, disabled people a Disability Allowance EUR 196 per week if they earn less than EUR 120 per week. This however only allows them to work for 12 or 13 hours a week and this discourages many employers.

People with disabilities experience significant labour market disadvantages due to underlying poor levels of education and training, but they do not generally participate in education or training on a scale needed to overcome this barrier.

3.14.5 Funding and monitoring

The national SEP is funded by national public funding. It has the capacity to increase participation and placement rates and to ensure increased client ratios and progression by implementing best practice across the programme nationwide.

The Employment Service officers refer persons with disabilities to Supported Employment. However, the Supported Employment personnel are not public sector employment officers, but hired by an organisation that is contracted by the State to provide the service. FAS is the body responsible for programme administration, monitoring and quality. The monitoring aspects of Supported Employment Programme are managed by the Community Service Division of FAS and delivered regionally by Community Service Officers.

The non FÁS- funded Supported Employment Services (i.e. HSE funded services) take a more holistic approach to improving the quality of life of the individuals.



3.14.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

The main advantage of Supported Employment in the country is that of assisting disabled persons who are motivated and need support to enrol in employment, with finding a job, securing and maintaining a job in the open labour market. The programme supports both people with disabilities and employers that hire persons enrolled in the programme. Supported Employment enables effective job matching and maximises the skills provided by employees and used by employer. The programme provides services to resolve problems when they arise, and practical advice and support on workplace and job design adaptations.

The attempt of marrying two programmes 1) the FAS National Programme and 2) HSE funded Supported Employment into one is one of main pitfalls of Supported Employment in Ireland. The programme is very effective in supporting with medium support the need to secure employment in the open labour market. It works fairly effectively. However, the programme is not geared for people with high support needs. The service is rather caring and rehabilitative than high levels of employment support. Another pitfall of Supported Employment is low levels of awareness of the programme and its benefits among employers, resulting in a small number of participating employers. The 'job-ready' criterion on the FÁS programme excludes those who most need the intervention. Furthermore, time limits to participation on scheme restrain clients and employers from participating. The setting of a minimum number of hours that an individual has to be able to work also prevents people from accessing the FÁS Programme.



3.15 Italy

3.15.1 Basic information

There are no national Supported Employment programmes available in Italy. However, there are many initiatives that can be related to the definition of Supported Employment, aiming at increasing the possibility of disabled people to get a job in the open labour market.⁵⁸

Key players/organisations

The most influential organisation for Supported Employment in Italy is the Associazione Italiana Del Supported Employment (AISE), which represent a large number of social co-operatives and other not for profit organisations dealing with employment of disabled people.

Schemes similar to Supported Employment programmes (called targeted employment) are delivered by the Public Employment Services, through special sections of the Job Centres. These centres are managed by the Provinces. The effectiveness of targeted employment schemes varies a lot depending on the abilities, commitment and resources of the single provinces and the different job centres. Excellence and good practices are exerted in some provinces, while in other cases, activities in this field are not very well developed. The job centres of the northern regions typically offer more extensive Supported Employment services than the job centres in the southern part of Italy.

Target group

The target groups are disabled people, who have trouble in accessing the open labour market due to different kinds of mental and/or physical disabilities. There is no national Supported Employment programme, but a number of local job centres that provide different employment services to disabled people. The system of targeted employment is targeted to people of working age with physical, psychic, sensorial, intellectual and relational disabilities and on people with civil disabilities of up to 45%, working disabilities of up to 33%, total blindness or with a blindness residual of no more than one tenth in both eyes with a correction, deafness at birth or before the age of learning to speak, war disability, civil disability of war and disability for service.

An enquiry must be submitted to the local ASL (Local Health Commission Agency) to receive recognition of a disability condition; the Health Commission will undertake special examinations and interviews in order to verify the disability condition.

⁵⁸ Information provided by Associazione Italiana Del Support Employment (AISE).



It is feasible to assess the number of disabled people working in Italy. Figures provided by the Italian National Institute of Statistics indicate that approximately 210,000 disabled people work in public and/or private companies and in social cooperatives.⁵⁹ According to the same source of data, the number of people with disabilities in Italy is approximately 2,609,000, i.e. 5% of the entire population.

3.15.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

In Italy, there are about 5-600 local job centres (PES) with provincial responsibility, scattered across the geographical territory and another 120 job centres in the region of Sicily.⁶⁰ There are wide differences in the services provided by these centres. In many centres, the provinces have set up different services devoted to serving disadvantaged groups of the labour market including disabled people. The aim of Supported Employment services is to support disabled people and give them better opportunities for accessing the open labour market. Supported Employment services include individual job coaching, sheltered workshops and vocational training.

Alternative programmes closer to 'Supported Employment' strategies are carried out by Work Integration Social Enterprises (WISEs), mainly social co-operatives, in co-operation with job centres.

Work integration social co-operatives do not employ disadvantaged people in 'normal' companies but in new enterprises, with the aim to train them and to employ them permanently. In Italy, there are approximately 7,000 such cooperatives.⁶¹

3.15.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Accompanying measures for people with disabilities in Italy include transport support, technical aids, special tax deductions or exemptions, personal work assistance, flexible incapacity benefits and disability pensions (allowing for part-time work), preferential access for job vacancies with public employers, flexible work arrangements and employment quota system.

Accompanying measures for employers in Italy include financial support for workplace adaptation, tax reduction for employers and flexible work arrangements.

Overall, the variety of measures and the many local job centres, offering support to disabled people, indicates a positive policy towards people with disabilities, and as such good framework conditions for Supported Employment.

⁵⁹ "A Brief Overview of Supported Employment in Europe", EUSE report 2010.

⁶⁰ "Ageing and Employment Policies - Italy", 2004 (report published by the OECD).

⁶¹ "A Brief Overview of Supported Employment in Europe", EUSE report 2010.



3.15.4 Framework conditions

Recruitment and dismissal rules are the same for people with disabilities and for the labour force in general. Similarly, the possibilities for lifelong learning are the same for people with disabilities as for the labour force in general.

The labour market policy is the same for people with and without disabilities. Social security is almost the same for people with disabilities.

Italy has a national quota system, specifying that companies with 15 employees or more have to employ disabled persons.

The Act on the employment of disabled people (Act no. 68 of 12 March 1999: "Regulations on the right to employment for persons with disabilities") is the main piece of legislation on disability employment in Italy. Based on the size of the workforce, both private and public sector employers are required to hire a certain percentage of disabled workers:

- Employers with more than 50 employees must meet a 7% disability employment quota
- At least two disabled workers must be hired in workplaces with 36 to 50 employees
- Workplaces of 15 to 35 employees must hire at least one disabled worker if they operate new intake.

Disabled workers hired on temporary contracts for a period of less than nine months cannot form part of the quota.

Employers in unfavourable economic situations may be exempted from meeting the target or paying the compensation fee until their situation improves. Otherwise, employers who do not meet the disability employment target must pay a compensation fee to a specific fund. This fund is managed at the regional level and endeavours to promote integration of disabled people in the labour market.

3.15.5 Funding and monitoring

The funding of Supported Employment initiatives and the local job centres vary between the centres and from region to region. In general, most job centres are financed by municipalities and local authorities, but also by private enterprises. In cooperatives, workers are considered 'members', and receive money as year-end dividend, however, most of the time they receive a 'monthly rate'.

3.15.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

Most of the Supported Employment services are conducted by local job centres in close cooperation with the municipalities, contributing to normalisation by



providing support and different benefits to the disabled people such that become more likely to obtain a job in the open labour market where employers pay the wage. However, there are major regional differences in the Supported Employment services provided to disabled people. In particular, job centres in the northern regions offer more extensive Supported Employment services than job centres in the southern regions of Italy.

The national system of an employment quota gives disabled people preferential access to the labour market. Another advantage is the geographical coverage of local job centres, which give the centres a better understanding of the economic backgrounds and of the needs of both employers and people with disabilities looking for jobs.

A disadvantage of the national system of employment quota is, however, that employers often hire disabled people only to fulfil the prescriptions, disregarding the possible contributions that disabled people can offer to the company.



3.16 Latvia

3.16.1 Basic information

There is only one Supported Employment project in the country, which is operated by SAULE. The programme started in 2000, but it is not currently active due to increasing unemployment and lack of funding since the financial crisis and following economic recession.

Key players/organisations

Key players/organisations for Supported Employment in Latvia are:

- “SAULE” - non governmental organisation for people with intellectual disabilities
- The Latvia Umbrella Body for Disability Organisations (SUSTENTO).

Target group

Supported Employment activities are very limited in Latvia. The target groups are people with intellectual disabilities.

Approximately 60 people with intellectual disabilities are included in Supported Employment. About 0.1% of jobseekers with disabilities receive supported employment services. According to the report, "Human Rights of Persons with Intellectual Disability"⁶², there were 1,977 unemployed persons with disabilities in 2002.

3.16.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

Typically, jobs are based on a regular work appointment, which means no time-limited contracts.

On average, a job coach assists eight clients during the support period. There is a formal training/education programme for job coaches/employment specialists. The training programme is a two-month programme that was developed based on an ESF project.

⁶² "Human Rights of Persons with Intellectual Disability", Inclusion The European Association of Societies of Persons with Intellectual Disability and their Families and Latvian Association “Rūpju bērns” “Saule” non-governmental organisation for people with intellectual disability, 2004



3.16.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Accompanying measures for people with disabilities are transport support, technical aids, and flexible incapacity benefits/disability pension.

Accompanying measures for employers include wage subsidy.

The subsidiary working programme consists of a two-year agreement with minimum salaries paid by the State. Employers cover only taxes in the first year, and 25% of the salary in the second year. After two years, the employers can decide to keep disabled employees or terminate employment. This accompanying measure provides incentives for the companies to hire people with disabilities.

3.16.4 Framework conditions

In Latvia, people with disabilities are entitled to a disability benefit and salary during employment.

The social security is the same for people with disabilities as for the public at large. There is no particular labour market policy to help people with disabilities cope with rapid change, reduce spells of non-employment and ease transition to new jobs.

Employment and entrance into the labour market is encouraged to the same degree for people with disabilities as for the ordinary labour force.

According to the Labour Act, recruitment and dismissal rules apply to all employees irrespective of disabilities. However, workplaces do not always act according to the Labour Act. This makes the working situation difficult for disabled employees. In addition, lack of information about the skills and knowledge of employees with special needs constitutes a barrier to working in the open labour market.

3.16.5 Funding and monitoring

Supported Employment is financed mainly by regional and public funding. There is no national, public support to Supported Employment.

3.16.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

It is difficult to develop services to people with disabilities on a project-financed basis. It makes support unstable and unable to change the situation in general.

The current, high unemployment rates and lack of funding have had a major impact on previous achievements. In 2008, only 49 persons with disabilities were employed in Riga and 82 in other regions. The SAULE concentrates on



helping people with disabilities retain existing employment rather than on recruiting any new people with disabilities.



3.17 Liechtenstein

3.17.1 Basic information

Liechtenstein does not have a specific Supported Employment service. Some projects/programmes comprise features known from Supported Employment, but there is no specialised service providing support to find an employer as well as on/off job support, or a service that focuses on a close working relationship to an individual employer.⁶³

Key players/organisations

Key players/organisations for Supported Employment in Liechtenstein are:

- The Vocational Training Office (Amt für Berufsbildung und Berufsberatung)
- The Public Employment service (AMS) has case managers who work with people with disabilities (people who receive an invalidity pension, IV-Invaliden Versicherung)
- Invalidity Insurance (Invalidenversicherung, IV)
- Heilpädagogisches Zentrum des Fürstentums Liechtenstein (HPZ) (<http://www.hpz.li/>)
- Disabled people's organisation: Liechtensteiner Behinderten-Verband (LBV, <http://www.lbv.li/>)
- Liechtenstein Equal Opportunity Office (Das liechtensteinische Büro für die Gleichstellung von Menschen mit Behinderungen).

Target group

There is no standard definition of the term 'disability' in Liechtenstein, and there are no comprehensive figures. The principality of Liechtenstein has approximately 35,000 inhabitants, and according to estimates based on the population in general, there are between 3,500 and 5,600 people with disabilities living in Liechtenstein. In general, it is regarded as almost impossible for people with disabilities to enter into employment in the open labour market (Marxer & Simon 2007).⁶⁴

⁶³ http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/missoc/2003/012003/licht_en.pdf

⁶⁴ Marxer, W., Simon, S. (2007). Zur gesellschaftlichen Lage von Menschen mit Behinderungen. Arbeitspapiere no. 15, Liechtenstein-Institut, Fachbereiche Politikwissenschaft/Wirtschaftswissenschaft.



3.17.2 Main characteristics/type of services and actors

The Public Employment Service (AMS) is available to all jobseekers. People with invalidity pensions (IV) can be allocated to case managers, who specialise in helping people with disabilities. These case managers provide assistance in identifying skills and work preferences, but give no support to obtaining and maintaining a paid job in the open labour market. The AMS does not provide on/off the job support to the disabled employees or their employers.

Heilpädagogisches Zentrum (HPZ) is the most significant service provider (NGO) for people with disabilities, offering a wide range of services both to schoolchildren and adults. About 135 adults with different kinds of disabilities work in six different sheltered workshops, temporarily or permanently. On behalf of the employment service for people who receive an invalidity pension (IV), the service provider also supports people with disabilities entering the ordinary labour market: it can arrange work ability assessments, sheltered work training, help find work experience placements – or ordinary employment – in the open labour market as well as provide on-the-job work training.

3.17.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Flexible incapacity benefits/disability pension can allow for part-time work. People with disabilities may get transport support and housing/mobility benefits if necessary for finding or keeping a job.

Fixed-term trial work experience placement, either in sheltered workshops or in ordinary work places, can be provided to people with a disability to determine their work ability. Employers may receive financial support for workplace adaptation, which includes vocational measures, technical aids and the reimbursement of expenses during integration measures and/or daily cash benefits. They can also get temporary suspension of pension payment on request.

For employees with at least a 40% degree of disability, the employer is entitled to a wage subsidy.

NGOs for people with disabilities, for instance the LBV, help members access services that may enhance employability, as transport facilities, deaf-interpreters and other assistance.

3.17.4 Framework conditions⁶⁵

The Invalidity Insurance Act comprises various integration measures, pensions, known as 'collective benefits'. This Act safeguards the vocational rehabilitation of disabled people. The spectrum of occupational reintegration measures includes professional measures, salary grants, suspension of disability pensions upon application, aids, daily allowances, and reimbursement of expenses (article 34, subsection 3 of the Disability Insurance Act, LGBl. 2001 No. 17). According to article 39 of the Act, the professional measures of disability insur-

⁶⁵ http://www.liechtenstein.li/en/cesc_04_english.pdf



ance include the following benefits and legal entitlements: professional and career counselling, job placement and employment attempts, vocational training, and capital aid for self-employed persons.

In addition, the 2006 Act on Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz, BGIG) aims to prevent discrimination of disabled persons in all aspects of life, including the labour market.

The Act on vocational education (Berufsbildungsgesetz, BBG) has particular provisions for people with disabilities, for instance granting the option of a State-supervised traineeship to young persons who are not able to meet the demands of an ordinary apprenticeship due to their conditions of health, development, or other disabling circumstances.

Recruitment and dismissal rules are the same for people with disabilities as for the rest of the workforce, but possibilities for lifelong learning are lower for people with disabilities. There is no labour market policy to help people adapt to the changing labour market, reduce spells of unemployment and ease transitions to new jobs.

3.17.5 Funding and monitoring

The vocational integration measures are supported by national public funding and private funding. The State provides subsidies for the special expenses arising from the vocational training or continuing training of persons with disabilities.

The legislation for disabled persons is anchored in a large number of benefit laws, according to different types and scope of disabilities. A variety of laws regulate funding and financing.

3.17.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

The circumstance that there is a variety of laws and agencies that regulate different areas of social integration and welfare of people with disabilities also implies that there is a broad division of responsibility between different funding and administrating agencies. This not only requires comprehensive coordination, but it also results in delays in processing benefit applications and implementing measures.⁶⁶

In spite of a wide range of laws, provisions and benefits, people with disabilities seem to have limited chances of finding ordinary employment.

The main disadvantage of Supported Employment is that it does not exist. For people with disabilities who are unable to find a job in the open labour market

⁶⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/missoc/2003/012003/licht_en.pdf



on their own, sheltered employment appears to be the only realistic employment alternative.



3.18 Lithuania

3.18.1 Basic information

There is no official Supported Employment programme in Lithuania. However, a national programme, Support for Job Creation, has some characteristics similar to a Supported Employment programme. The programme provides support for people with disabilities in finding a job in the open labour market.

Key players/organisations

Key players/organisations for Supported employment in Lithuania are:

- Ministry of Social Security and Labour, Equal Opportunity Division
- Lithuania Labour Exchange.

Target group

The target groups for Supported Employment programmes are registered unemployed people with disabilities within certain categories.

According to the Lithuanian Labour Exchange Information, about 19,600 people with disabilities were recorded by the Public Employment Service (PES) in 2009. Among those jobseekers, 944 persons with disabilities receive support and work in the open labour market through the Support for Job Creation Programme.

3.18.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

Supported Employment services are provided through the Support for Job Creation Programme, which is run by Lithuania Labour Exchange.

Wage subsidies are paid for a period of up to 12 months. Employers who hire disabled workers on permanent work contracts are entitled to a financial bonus. The Lithuanian government offers a bonus for every new position established to encourage new openings.

Wage subsidy schemes for employers are based on the amount of hours of worked in relation to the Lithuanian hourly minimum wage. Bonuses are also available to encourage new job openings and to facilitate adaptation of premises.

3.18.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Accompanying measures for people with disabilities include transport support, technical aids, and personal work assistance.



Accompanying measures for employers include wage subsidies and flexible work arrangements.

Wages are typically covered jointly by employers and other sources from either the government or other funds through the programme. The proportion differs within the programme depending on the level of disability of the employee. For example, 70% of costs of workplace creation for persons with disabilities (level 30-40%) are covered by the Job Creation Subsidies Programme.

3.18.4 Framework conditions

People with disabilities receive fairly good social support. Social security is higher for people with disabilities than for the public at large.

3.18.5 Funding and monitoring

Services provided to people with disabilities in finding jobs are financed by public funding and European Social funding.

The employment support measures specified in the Act on Support of the Unemployed of the Republic of Lithuania are financed by the Employment Fund, state and municipal budgets, the European Union structural funds and other funds, enterprises, agencies and organisations and other sources.

3.18.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

Support programmes provide services through 46 public employment services both in rural and urban areas. The quality of the services is the same throughout the country.

Although Lithuanian law guarantees the right of employment for all, it is not effective enough in encouraging the employment of people with disabilities. Moreover, the employment situation of people with intellectual disabilities is particularly grave; very few are thought to have any kind of employment. Official statistics underestimate the unemployment rates of people with disabilities, as those with no working capacity, including those with intellectual disabilities, cannot register as unemployed.

People with disabilities receive fairly good compensations, so many are not very motivated to seek a job. It is challenging to conduct Supported Employment programmes as the unemployment rate is very high, 16% in 2009.



3.19 Luxembourg

3.19.1 Basic information

There are two national Supported Employment programmes in Luxembourg aiming at increasing the possibility of disabled people to get a job in the open labour market.⁶⁷

Key players/organisations

The key organisations for Supported Employment in Luxembourg are the following:

- Administration de L'Emploi
- Ligue HMC (Ligue Luxembourgeoise pour le Secours aux Enfants, aux Adolescents et aux Adultes mentalement ou cérébralement handicapés)
- ATP a.s.b.l. (an association for persons with mental illnesses).

Target group

The target groups are people with mental health disabilities who have trouble in accessing the open labour market. The target groups are restricted to people with a positive recommendation from the psychosocial service of the ATP, and with a registration as employment seekers in the National Employment Agency.

Figures provided by the STH-service des travailleurs handicapés indicate that approximately 4,500 people are officially recognised as disabled workers. Of these, around 3,000 are employed in the open labour market, while 750 are in sheltered workshops and 750 are registered as employment seekers.⁶⁸

3.19.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

The two national Supported Employment programmes in Luxembourg ("Job coaching" and "Emploi Assisté") are delivered by Ligue HMC Ligue Luxembourgeoise pour le Secours aux Enfants, aux Adolescents et aux Adultes mentalement ou cérébralement handicapés and ATP a.s.b.l. respectively.

The two programmes offer support to unemployed people who have trouble in accessing the open labour market due to mental health disabilities. Job coach service is an integral part of the programmes, which provides individual support to the potential jobseekers to identify their skills and work preferences. In

⁶⁷ Information provided by Administration de l'Emploi (the Employment Administration of Luxembourg).

⁶⁸ <http://aned.humanconsultancy.eu/en/countries/lu/LU-2-factsEN.jsp>



addition to this, job coaches give guidance to the jobseekers and inform the potential employers about the measures and benefits they receive by hiring disabled people. There is no maximum length of support time for jobseekers, and the jobs are typically based on regular work appointment (no time limit). The average caseload of job coaches varies a lot between the different Supported Employment services, but can be up to 100 people during the support period.⁶⁹

3.19.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Accompanying measures for people with disabilities in Luxembourg include transport support, technical aids, housing and mobility benefits, special tax deductions or exemptions, personal work assistance, flexible incapacity benefits and disability pensions (allowing for part-time work), preferential access to job vacancies with public employers, preferential access to job vacancies with private employers, flexible work arrangements and employment quota systems.

Accompanying measures for employers in Luxembourg include wage subsidies, financial support for workplace adaptations, tax reductions for employers, special arrangements for sick leave measures and flexible work arrangements.

Overall, the variety of measures in Luxembourg indicates a positive policy towards people with disabilities, and as such good framework conditions for Supported Employment.

3.19.4 Framework conditions

Hiring and firing rules are the same for people with disabilities and for the labour force in general. However, the possibilities for lifelong learning are higher for people with disabilities than for the labour force in general. Furthermore, the social security is higher for people with disabilities than for people without disabilities.

The labour market policy is seen as particularly helpful to people with disabilities in adapting to the changing labour market, reducing spells of non-employment and easing transitions to new jobs. For example, by law, private companies with more than 25 employees must integrate at least one employee with a disability. For larger private companies, 2 to 4% of the labour force must be disabled. For state and all public companies, at least 5% of the labour force must be classified as disabled.⁷⁰

3.19.5 Funding and monitoring

The two national Supported Employment programmes are mainly financed by the Federal State and the EU. The programme called "Job coaching" is financed by the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Employment.

⁶⁹ Information provided by Administration de l'Emploi (the Employment Administration of Luxembourg).

⁷⁰ <http://luxembourg.angloinfo.com/information/73/disabled.asp>



There are no statistics on Supported Employment services available at the national level. Moreover, no independent evaluation/impact assessment on Supported Employment has been made.

3.19.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

Social security generally encourages disabled people less to seek employment than people in the labour force. However, it is still an economic advantage for many disabled people in Luxembourg to get out of an unemployment benefit and into a job in the open labour market. In this light, the two national Supported Employment programmes in Luxembourg are important contributions to normalisation as they both provide different benefits to the disabled people such that they can obtain a job in the open labour market where employers pay the wage.

Wage subsidies and flexible work arrangements providing strong incentives for the employers to recruit people with different kinds of disabilities are important accompanying measures for employees in Luxembourg.



3.20 Malta

3.20.1 Basic information

The Supported Employment section of the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) - Malta's Public Employment Service - supports and targets disadvantaged groups in enhancing their capabilities to integrate into labour market⁷¹. The section has a Supported Employment scheme called Bridging the Gap.

Key players/organisations

The key players/organisations for Supported Employment in Malta are the following:

- The Supported Employment Section within the Employment and Training Cooperation (ETC). ETC is the Public Employment Service (PES) in Malta
- The National Commission for Persons with Disability in Malta (Kummissjoni Nazzjonali Persuni b'Disabilita (KNPD)).

Target group

The target groups of the Bridging the Gap scheme are people with different kinds of mental health and/or physical disabilities experiencing difficulties in accessing the open labour market, and who are registered as unemployed with the National Employment Agency (PES).

Figures provided by the ETC indicate that around 300 disabled people are registered as jobseekers.⁷² Slightly more than one third of these people have a physical impairment, while the rest of them have different kinds of mental disabilities. 25% of the Supported Employment service receivers have succeeded in finding employment in the open labour market during the first year of participating in the programmes. This means that in 2007, 311 jobseekers with disabilities were registered with the ETC, of which 111 had a physical disability, 49 had psychiatric disability, 61 had an intellectual impairment, 26 had a sensory impairment, while the remainder either had more than one impairment or had no specification of their impairment.⁷³

⁷¹ <http://www.etc.gov.mt/site/page.aspx?pageid=2240>

⁷² Information provided by the National Commission Persons with Disability of Malta.

⁷³ ⁷³ Kummissjoni Nazzjonali Persuni b'Diġabilità (KNPD) (National Commission Persons with Disability of Malta), 2010, "National policy on Disabled Persons and Employment" (page 31)



3.20.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

Bridging the Gap is designed to support a client in the transition period from unemployment to employment. It allows the employer to evaluate the performance of the client in the workplace, prior to proper engagement⁷⁴. During this time, the employer will be free from obligations such as National Insurance contributions, wages and sick leave benefits while the person with disability receives an allowance equivalent to 80% of the National Minimum wage. Monitoring visits are carried out by the respective ETC Employment Advisors.

Thus, the scheme offers the client a period of work exposure with an employer to enable him/her to demonstrate the skills needed for a particular job. The employer and the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) enter into an agreement on the work exposure period, whereby a client is placed on the scheme with the prospect of employment. The client is considered as an unemployed registrant without the obligation to turn up for his/her weekly signing-up⁷⁵.

Through the Employment Aid Programme, which is an EU-funded project, the ETC subsidizes the person's with disability actual wage costs at 75% the first year of employment and 60% the second and third year up to three years or until September 2013 whichever comes first.

The scheme is based on job coaching services and personal assistance according to the needs of potential jobseekers. The scheme provides individual support to the jobseekers to identify their skills and work preferences. Furthermore, a job coach service is offered during work exposure schemes to assist jobseekers to achieve the required performance standard. The job coach service starts on a full-time basis and is then gradually reduced to secure as much independence for the individual jobseeker as possible. Typically, the same job coach assists the individual jobseeker during the entire support period.

3.20.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Accompanying measures for people with disabilities in Malta include transport support, technical aids, special tax deductions or exemptions, personal work assistance, flexible incapacity benefits and disability pensions (allowing for part-time work), preferential access to job vacancies with public employers, flexible work arrangements and an employment quota system.

Transport support provides an opportunity people with disabilities to retain their employment, but subsidised services have long waiting lists while private services are costly.

Technical aids offer the possibility of maximising potential in work and everyday life. However, while there is funding to support the purchase of equipment,

⁷⁴ <http://www.etc.gov.mt/site/page.aspx?pageid=2240>

⁷⁵ <http://www.etc.gov.mt/site/page.aspx?pageid=2240>



equipment may be costly and prove a disincentive to employers in case they have to provide disabled employees with such aids at their place of work.

There are special tax deductions or exemptions, which may be provided to employers as an incentive to employ disabled people. However, not all employers know of such measures.

Practical/physical assistance is provided mainly through the agency providing personal assistance services and some NGOs. However, the waiting lists are often long meaning that not all disabled employees are able to access such services.

There are flexible incapacity benefits/disability pension (allowing for part-time work), but they are only awarded on the condition that the part-time disabled employees do not earn more than the national minimum wage. Thus, disabled people may be discouraged to seek employment as the returns may be small compared to extra expenses involved in securing a job in the first place.

The Quota system means that enterprises and institutions that employ more than twenty workers should employ a quota (at present 2%) of disabled persons. However, this law failed to increase the number of disabled people in public or private employment, as it is difficult to monitor or enforce.

Overall, the variety of measures in Malta indicates a positive policy towards people with disabilities, and as such good framework conditions for Supported Employment.

In particular, wage subsidies provide strong incentives for the employers to recruit people with mental and/or physical disabilities.

3.20.4 Framework conditions

Hiring and firing rules are the same for people with disabilities as for the labour force in general. Similarly, the possibilities for lifelong learning are the same for people with disabilities as for the labour force in general.

The labour market policy is seen as particularly helpful to people with disabilities to cope with rapid change, reduce spells of non-employment and ease transactions to new jobs. For example, employers benefit from a three-year reimbursement of the National Insurance Fund in the employment of disabled persons. Social security is the same for people with disabilities as for people without disabilities.

3.20.5 Funding and monitoring

The Supported Employment scheme is financed by the EU, the Federal State and NGOs respectively. Both the funding by the EU and the national public funding support organisations to set up possible Supported Employment services that assist people with disabilities to enrol in the open labour market.



Compared with the budget of the EU determining the amount of Supported Employment services and the period of time that the Supported Employment services can be provided to disabled people, national public funding is a much more stable source of funding. The NGOs provide funding which helps the disabled people and their families, who are members of the organisations providing Supported Employment services.

3.20.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

The two Supported Employment schemes in Malta contribute to normalisation by providing different types of benefits to the disabled people such that they can obtain a job in the open labour market where employers pay the wage. The scheme is implemented by two Employment Advisors, whose main duties are to assist disabled people in their job searching. Occupational therapy is utilised in the formulation of an initial individualised assessment in order to achieve professional insight into capabilities and limitations of disabled people thereby making individual pathways into the open labour market possible.

An important advantage of the Supported Employment schemes is that they support people with disabilities through individual (one-to-one) assessments. The scheme encourages employers to consider carefully the employment of people with disabilities, while assisting disabled jobseekers in developing skills and potentials through individual support and training programmes.

A disadvantage of the Supported Employment scheme is, however, that it tends to focus entirely on the training and recruitment of disabled people, but provide limited support to the disabled people during their actual employment. In other words, the programmes do not continue providing sufficient support once the potential jobseekers obtain employment. Another disadvantage of the two Supported Employment programmes is that no, or only limited, funds are allocated for provision of adaptive equipment or in performing structural alterations to buildings.

Another disadvantage is that the agency does not continue providing support once the applicant secures employment. This can create problems for the employee in case other services and support are needed to sustain his/her employment.



3.21 Netherlands

3.21.1 Basic information

To deliver Supported Employment, the Netherlands operates a national system of service providers and job coach organisations funded by the Social Insurance (UWV).

Key players/organisations

Key players and organisations in Supported Employment are:

- UWV (the Social Security Institution and Public Employment Service integrated)
- Municipalities and Sheltered Workshops
- Private service providers (reintegration services)
- National EUSE organisation (NVS)
- Refrisk (a nationwide organisation for Job Coach Services).

Target group

People with a wide range of disabilities participate in Supported Employment. Clients must be able to work at least 12 hours per week with a minimum productivity rate of at least 35%. For new groups of younger disabled, productivity under 35% is also accepted. 90% of clients in Supported Employment are young disabled people.

In 2009, the UWV had 11,500 people registered with a job coach at work, which is an increase of 245% compared with 2005. There are no statistics on newcomers (if this is their first or second time in the service) and on employees where job coaching is ended (e.g. how many that lost their job or were no longer registered). There are 102,000 people with disabilities in the sheltered workshops. In 2009, 5,295 of clients in sheltered workshops found a job through Supported Employment.

3.21.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

There are two variants of Supported Employment:

- 1 The UWV hires Supported Employment companies/job coach organisations and other labour market reintegration services for their client and pays the costs of finding a job and the costs of job coaching. This is a national system and only focused on paid work.



- 2 Municipalities often delegate Supported Employment to companies in the sheltered sector.

Supported Employment has a job coach that provides support to obtaining and maintaining paid jobs in the open labour market. Wage payment is provided by the employer in combination with a dispensation to pay less than the minimum wage (the client gets a higher income subsidy in combination with the wage). Supported Employment provided by Sheltered Workshops is stimulated with wage subsidies. Jobs are typically based on regular work contracts and often time-limited contracts. The time of support for a Supported Employment client in a job is not limited in terms of time, but in terms of amount; maximum of 15% of the client's working hours the first year, 7.5% the second year, and 3% thereafter. Every six months, checks are made to see whether job coaching is still needed. As job coaches are often not able to be on the work spot every day and clients of Supported Employment often need extra support throughout the whole working day, new forms of 'natural support' has been developed, the so-called 'Harrie-role'.⁷⁶ There is yet no official compensation available for the co-worker support.

Due to the lack of specialised services to assist employers who want to hire people with disabilities, an experimental project on a job carving-advice for employers is presently carried out. Small companies have access to advice free of charge if there are work possibilities for people with disabilities in their company.

350 job coach companies have permission to offer job coaching. The job coaching costs amounts to EUR 61 million (2009). Job coaches often have an education from studies in applied sciences at university level. Refrisk, a nationwide organisation for Job Coach Services⁷⁷, offers a certificated training programme for job coaches.

3.21.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Accompanying measures for people with disabilities can include transport support, technical help, special tax reductions, personal work assistance, and flexible disability pension and income subsidy. Most of the measures support the integration of people with disabilities into work, but some measures are not readily available to persons that are already supported with social security pension or assistance benefit. An employee with a disability can claim a job coach if he/she cannot perform in regular work (normal jobs). This employee must at least work 12 hours weekly and have a 'wage value' of at least 35% of the official minimum wage. This will soon change to 20% of the 'wage value' of the minimum wage.

⁷⁶ <http://www.ikbenharrie.nl/>

⁷⁷ <http://www.refrisk.nl/>



Job coaching is a public measure, but the support to finding a job is available as a service via tenders. Disabled jobseekers may also arrange their own pathway to work and choose the Supported Employment provider they prefer. This creates incentives and specialisation among service providers that offer Supported Employment, but the tender system also creates much uncertainty among service providers in the Supported Employment area.

Accompanying measures for employers include wage subsidy, financial support for work place adaption, tax reductions and dispensation from minimum wage, special arrangement for sick leave measures, and flexible work arrangements. Small companies have access to advice free of charge if there are work possibilities for people with disabilities in their company. There are no measures to force employers to hire people with disabilities, as the policy idea is that it is better to stimulate employers than to force them.

3.21.4 Framework conditions

Access and funding opportunities of lifelong learning through vocational training for people with disabilities are the same as for other people in the Netherlands. The recruitment and dismissal rules are the same for disabled people as for the rest of the labour force; the consequence for disabled people is that employers hesitate to give people with disabilities a permanent job because of the difficulty of firing people in general. The Dutch labour market policy helps people adapt to the changing labour market, reduce spells of non-employment and ease transition to new jobs.

The social security aspects are complex, but in general social security is higher for people with disabilities. Benefits for young disabled are life long, but can be (partly) stopped after being in work for five years. Employment and labour market policy encourages to the same degree people with disabilities as others. On a general level, the framework conditions make it economically advantageous for people with disabilities to leave the benefit system and obtain a job. The consequences of the working time rules are the same for disabled people as for ordinary employees when it comes to the possibilities to obtain and maintain a job.

3.21.5 Funding and monitoring

Funding is based on the funds for pensions (in the social security system and Wajong⁷⁸). In addition, regional funding and EU funding are available, but not specifically for Supported Employment. The UWV (the social security institution) has contracts to find work with Supported Employment and can send a disabled person to a desired Supported Employment provider (the client can choose from a list of about five to six specialist providers on the particular disability). A disabled person has the right to obtain job coaching on the job and may choose a Supported Employment provider. Usually, the Supported Em-

⁷⁸ <http://www.uwv.nl/wajong/>



ployment provider in question is the same that finds a job for the person and the UWV funds the costs of job coaching.

The UWV monitors results (number of persons that get a job, number of job coaches and providers, budget figures), but no annual reports are prepared on the level of total Supported Employment measures. The Ministry of Social Affairs made an evaluation in 2007. Companies in the sheltered sector are monitored with special attention to the contributions of jobs on the open labour market through their Supported Employment services, and statistics are prepared annually.

3.21.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the Netherlands

Many job coach services offer high-quality Supported Employment; they obtain good results and focus on the work and on being innovative. Services are available throughout the country and maintain a very personal and specialised service to meet the needs of the clients. Other organisations with high-quality Supported Employment services have origins in the care sector and are specialists in addressing several target groups and experiment with new services. Politicians are positive about job coaching. Employers show an increasing interest in hiring people through Supported Employment services, something that is heavily stimulated by the government and the UWV.

A disadvantage is that companies in the sheltered sector are not very keen on the concept of Supported Employment because it is less interesting to their budget. Other disadvantages of the sheltered sector are differences in local measures leading to confusing information to employers and employees and the existence of waiting lists to Supported Employment services.

The advantage of Supported Employment is its focus on providing work in the open labour market. However, Supported Employment providers face an unstable situation as regional funding leads to different measures, and the Supported Employment services are not always of high quality. It is an advantage that job coaches have organised a professional association in order to guarantee a better quality of terms and conditions of work. A disadvantage is that the unstable funding situation causes much uncertainty in the Supported Employment area.

Another weakness is that job coaches often do not advise employers or clients, and too few disabled employees remain in work. Investment in research and development is inadequate.

Degree of mainstreaming

The Government and the UWV stimulate employers to hire people with disabilities and the national Supported Employment programme includes on/off job support to the employees as well as the employer to secure successful integration into the job and workplace. Jobseekers get support to identify their skills and work preferences. They also get help finding an employer.



The results of Supported Employment activities need to be improved. This does not only relate to the quality of the Supported Employment services, but also to the lack of cooperation from the care sector. In addition, the relationship with social and medical services is poor. Companies in the sheltered work sector in general do not focus on developing Supported Employment.



3.22 Norway

3.22.1 Basic information

Supported Employment in Norway started as a pilot project, which lasted from 1992-1995. In 1996, the project was transformed into a state-financed mainstream national Supported Employment programme (Arbeid med bistand). Recently, a more short-term support scheme has been added provided by the local employment and welfare offices (NAV), called “Follow up” (Oppfølging). The responsible organisation is the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV).

Key players/organisations

Key players/organisations in Supported Employment in Norway are

- The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV)
- Labour Market Enterprises and their branch organisation, Attføringsbedriftene - Association of Rehabilitation Enterprises
- Labour Market Co-operatives (sheltered workshops), Vekstbedrifter, and their branch organisation, ASVL - National federation for companies providing permanent jobs adapted to the individual
- Forum For Arbeid med Bistand (FAB), the Norwegian national EUSE organisation.

Target group

Target groups are unemployed people with any form of disability as well as socially disadvantaged persons where the service is seen as necessary and relevant to enable them enter the labour market. By December 2010, approximately 6,300 persons were enrolled in the Arbeid med bistand programme and additionally 2,000 participated in the “Follow Up” measure. In total, these two measures represent 14% of all persons enrolled in labour market measures for people with reduced work-ability.⁷⁹ Almost all Supported Employment services are available for people with all kinds of disabilities. There are, however, a few services specialising in specifically diagnosed groups, such as people with problems related to drug addiction or people with mental health conditions.

⁷⁹ NAV statistikk, tall og analyse.

<http://www.nav.no/Om+NAV/Tall+og+analyse/Arbeidsmarked/DDstidtikk/209626.cms>



3.22.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

Arbeid med bistand units are usually located within, and managed by, Labour Market Enterprises and Labour Market Co-operatives (sheltered workshops). These are service providers which also offer other state-financed labour market measures, and who are often organised as private limited companies in which a local municipality or county council holds the majority of the shares. Jobseekers have to be referred to a particular measure, for instance Supported Employment, by the local public employment and welfare service (NAV).

Due to provisions for Arbeid med bistand, jobseekers can receive support through an individual job coach/Employment Support Worker (ESW) for a maximum period of three years; although in certain cases, this period can be extended. For example, former psychiatric patients and prisoners can receive support through the programme for up to three to five years.⁸⁰ During this time, the ESW can give individual support throughout the whole process, from assessing the jobseekers' needs and abilities, finding a suitable job, to on-the job support to both employer and employee when the jobseeker has got an ordinary job. In Arbeid med bistand, the ESW has a caseload of a minimum of 12 jobseekers. There are no formal qualifications or educational requirements for becoming an ESW. The ESW may voluntarily attend specific job coach education, run by Akershus University College in cooperation with a service provider. Another course within the broader vocational rehabilitation education is run by the Association of Rehabilitation Enterprises in cooperation with Østfold University College; this course is also optional.

3.22.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Jobs acquired through Arbeid med bistand are equally based on permanent work contracts and time-limited contracts. Other labour market schemes that can be, and frequently are, combined with Supported Employment are wage subsidies and other financial support schemes, such as workplace adaptation grants. Special arrangements for sick leave measures and flexible work arrangements are possible, and NAV may permit a person with reduced work ability to combine wages and incapacity benefits/disability pension (allowing for part-time work).

Parallel support may be given by municipalities according to needs (technical adaptations and assistance, support for travel and housing expenses, childcare, medical, social welfare assistance etc). Persons with disabilities can receive financial support to retraining for another profession or education to secure them a new job. There is no lifelong follow-up.

The variety of accompanying measures available help the disabled jobseeker find and keep a job, and they also constitute a risk reduction factor to the employer.

⁸⁰<http://www.nav.no/Arbeid/Arbeidss%C3%B8ker/Arbeidsrettede+tiltak/Arbeid+med+bistand/888.cms>



3.22.4 Framework conditions

Norway has a generous welfare policy, which includes a comprehensive system of vocational rehabilitation providing funding, assistance, training etc. for people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups.⁸¹ There is an overall concern that persons with disabilities should have opportunities for personal development, participation and self-realisation on a par with other citizens. Everyone should have equal rights and be able, as far as possible, to decide over his or her own life.⁸²

Norway does not have any particular social security arrangements for disabled employees compared to anyone else. There are no specific rules for people with disabilities regarding wages or working time rules. Neither are there special recruitment and dismissal rules for people with disabilities. The possibilities for lifelong learning/continuous vocational training are the same for people with disabilities as for other employees. All these issues, as well as other work-environment and safety matters, are covered by a comprehensive general Work Environment Legislation that applies to all employees/employers. Furthermore, there is a three-partite agreement between the Government and the employer/employee organisations on Inclusive Work Life aimed at reducing sick-leave as well as providing better opportunities for disabled people to obtain and stay in ordinary jobs.⁸³

As concerns Supported Employment schemes, there are fixed regulations, national rules and general provisions as is the case with all other labour market schemes. Provisions are enshrined in the Labour Market Act (Arbeidsmarkedsloven) of 2004. The aim of the Act is to facilitate an inclusive working life through a well-functioning labour market with high levels of occupational employment and low unemployment. Among other things, the Act stipulates the basic services and rights disabled employment seekers.⁸⁴

In addition, there are local agreements between the public employment and welfare offices (NAV) and Supported Employment service providers as regards particular targets, objectives and expected results/deliveries.

3.22.5 Funding and monitoring

As all national labour market services, Supported Employment services are funded by national public funding over the State Budget, covering salaries of the ESW and running costs for the service provider.

Jobseekers with reduced working capacity by at least 50% due to illness, injury or defects receive Work Assessment Allowances. Work Assessment Allowances should cover living expenses and are normally granted to persons who par-

⁸¹ <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/aid/topics/welfare-policy.html?id=942>

⁸² <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/bld/Topics/disabled-people.html?id=987>

⁸³ <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/aid/topics/welfare-policy/inclusive-working-life/New-IA-agreement-and-stimulus-package-to-reduce-sick-leave-.html?id=594043>

⁸⁴ <http://www.nav.no/English/The+Norwegian+Labour+and+Welfare+Administration/Legislation>



ticipate in vocational measures to which they have been referred by NAV.⁸⁵ On employment, the salary of employees is paid by the individual employer, often in combination with wage subsidies or disability pensions.

As for all the national labour market schemes, Supported Employment schemes are organised and monitored through the Directorate of Labour and Welfare. For monitoring purposes, service providers must deliver reports to the referral organisation (NAV), who reports to the county level and the Directorate, which then prepares statistics.⁸⁶ The national authorities do not analyse these figures regularly. Data on the scope of Supported Employment are published regularly through NAV, whereas figures that show the job outcome rate are not published continuously, but they are available on demand through the Directorate of Labour and Welfare. In addition, there are a number of research reports providing various figures and statistics of labour market schemes. As regards evaluation, the national programme *Arbeid med bistand* has been assessed independently by research institutions several times since the early 1990's.⁸⁷ A recent review observes that *Arbeid med bistand* represents an example of development where the interplay between practitioners and researchers has played an important role (Hernes et al 2010).⁸⁸

3.22.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

An advantage of Supported Employment in Norway is the availability of country-wide services through the national mainstream programme. The national organisational set-up has the advantage of high availability connected to a legal right of access to the programme through the public referral system of clients to approved service providers. Funding through the state budget provides equal conditions in the entire country for service providers, allowing them a financially stable and predictable basis for planning.

Another advantage is that the main focus is on ordinary employment. Furthermore, job coaches have a relatively low caseload, and jobseekers may be granted up to three years of follow-up to find and keep a job through the service.

⁸⁵ <http://www.nav.no/English/Social+security/805317422.cms>

⁸⁶ <http://www.nav.no/Om+NAV/Tall+og+analyse/Arbeidsmarked/DDtstidikk/209626.cms>

⁸⁷

Blystad, R. & Ø. Spjelkavik (1997). *A Norwegian approach to supported employment*. Oslo, Work Research Institute.

ECON (2004). *Arbeid med bistand – hva skjer når bistanden opphører?* Oslo, ECON

ECON (2005). *Arbeidsmarkedstiltak i motbakke. En kvalitativ undersøkelse av Arbeid med bistand*. Oslo, ECON

Møller, G. & J. Sannes (2009). *Evaluering av arbeidsmarkedstiltak i skjermede virksomheter*. Bø, Telemarksforsking.

Spjelkavik, Ø., K. Frøyland, M. Evans (2004). *Supported employment in Norway: a national mainstream programme*. Oslo, Work Research Institute.

⁸⁸ Hernes, T., I. Heum, P. Haavorsen (2010): *Arbeidsinkludering. Om det nye politikk- og praksisfeltet i velferds- Norge*. Oslo, Gyldendal akademisk.



Some critics claim that there is little focus on career development and on maintaining the job, though the legal framework for Supported Employment permits continuation of the service also after achieving employment. The organisational dependency on private service providers, who often arrange traditional sheltered measures as well, may be another disadvantage, as there are few incentives for innovation. There are also few incentives for these service providers to develop close relationships with employers to help disabled people get an ordinary job.

Degree of mainstreaming

With *Arbeid med bistand* Norway has a national Supported Employment programme with a stable, predictable framework based on funding on a national level. The programme features a Job Coach service for finding a job as well as support for job retention.



3.23 Poland

3.23.1 Basic information

There are three to nine ongoing Supported Employment projects in Poland. The pilot programme “JOB COACH – Supported Employment for people with disabilities” has been implemented by Public Employment Services (PES).

Key players/organisations

Key players/organisations for Supported employment in Poland are:

- Public Employment Services (PES)
- State Fund for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons (PFRON)
- Polish Association for Intellectual Disabilities.

Target group

Every year, about 1,000 people move into Supported Employment services in Poland. Approximately 400 people find paid jobs in the open market during the first year. About 1,500 people are currently included in the Supported Employment services. 2% among all present jobseekers with disabilities receive Supported Employment services. No specific requirements have been identified in order to qualify for the services of the projects.

3.23.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

A wide range of services is available to jobseekers comprising job placement, occupational guidance, vocational information, as well as assistance in active search for jobs and training. The job coach supports a disabled person in securing and maintaining a job taking into account the individual needs of a person, including finding the most suitable job, providing the support to prepare the person to perform vocational tasks and duties and to adapt properly to the workplace, providing transportation assistance on the way to and from the work, on-the-job monitoring of the disabled employee to maintain the positive results of the support, and consultancy to the employer (as advice and consultancy).

There are 30 governmental institutions and non-governmental organisations participating in the programme. They may receive financial support for the cost of training of candidates for job coaches, including practical skills training, salary costs of job coaches, occupational advisers, psychologists and a project coordinator.

According to the *Act of 27 August 1997 on occupational and social rehabilitation and employment of disabled persons*, financial support for employers employing disabled people on the open or the sheltered labour market is provided.



An employer may receive partial reimbursement of the wage costs of disabled employees. Additional costs of adapting premises and workplaces to the needs of disabled workers and costs of employing staff for time spent solely on the assistance of the disabled employee may also be covered.

3.23.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Accompanying measures for people with disabilities include flexible work arrangements and employment quota system.

Accompanying measures for employers include wage subsidy, financial support for workplace adaptation and special arrangements for sick leave measures.

Employers usually cover the full costs of the salary beyond the regular wage subsidy that persons with disabilities would receive if in employment.

3.23.4 Framework conditions

Recruitment and dismissal rules in Poland are more restrictive for people with disabilities. The employer must prove that dismissal is due to other causes than disability.

Social security in terms of level and access to unemployment benefits, pensions, and healthcare is the same for people with disabilities as for everyone else.

3.23.5 Funding and monitoring

The projects are funded by the EU, regional and local public funding.

3.23.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

Supported Employment services in Poland are limited. The Supported Employment services are not integrated into the public employment services, but are provided on a project basis. Services are limited, also in terms of time, due to lack of funding.



3.24 Portugal

3.24.1 Basic information

The Portuguese labour market authorities and regional and local municipalities fund Supported Employment projects that offer disabled jobseekers support to obtain and maintain paid jobs in the open labour market.

Key players/organisations

Key players/organisations in Supported Employment in Portugal are

- The Institute of Employment and Vocational Training (IEFP), Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity.
- Public Employment Service (PES)
- Municipalities
- APEA - Associação Portuguesa de Emprego Apoiado (EUSE National Association)
- FORMEN (branch organisation for vocational rehabilitation centres)
- The National Institute for Rehabilitation (INR,I.P, <http://www.inr.pt/>)
- Portuguese confederation of organisations of disabled people (CNOD).

Target group

Target groups are people with any form of disability. Some services specialise on certain groups (for example Romani). There are apparently specific eligibility requirements for qualifying for the Supported Employment services, but these tend to vary from project to project.

In 2008, about 14,000 people with disabilities received support through labour market measures. There are no figures available on the number of people enrolled in Supported Employment.

3.24.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

The Portuguese labour market authorities fund Supported Employment projects through PES. These projects include job coaches providing support to the potential jobseekers to identify their skills and preferences for work, finding employers as well as individual support to obtain and maintain paid jobs in the open labour market. Services receive funding to arrange occupational and training courses including unpaid work experience placements (often referred to as a



'job'), which has duration of up to four years. Paid jobs are based on regular work contract and payment, although a regular wage is not necessarily entirely covered by the employer. However, Supported Employment projects do not always include on/off job support (neither to the employee nor to the employer).

Clients are referred from the PES or at least they must be registered with this service. The different services and projects offered vary in terms of duration of the follow up and availability of support. Typically, clients follow a four-year programme, but some projects or services have no time limit.

The average caseload of a job coach is 30 jobseekers/employees in the Supported Employment services. Some formal training/education is specifically provided for the job coach in the projects. Public employment service personnel are not specially trained to provide Supported Employment services.

3.24.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Accompanying measures for people with disabilities in general are technical aids, housing/mobility benefits and personal work assistance. Support from other parts of the welfare system whilst participating in a Supported Employment project is usually not available. Clients must then rely on family support.

The new Labour Code, approved by Act No.7/2009 contains a number of provisions with regard to employees with reduced working capacity, disabilities or chronic illnesses. The act sets out the duties of the employer to facilitate employment of employees with reduced working capacity, providing them with appropriate conditions of work (reasonable accommodation), in particular, adaptation of the job, equal remuneration, vocational training and professional progression.

Persons with disabilities may receive loans or grants when setting up their own business. There are also measures to support people with a certain degree of disability to work at home.⁸⁹

Accompanying measures for employers according to Decree Act No. 247/89:

- Public wage subsidies aimed at compensating employers for lower work productivity during the period of adaptation or re-adaptation to work.
- Grant for Job Adaptation and the Elimination of Architectural Obstacles
- Subsidy for Personalised Support to people with disabilities provided during the process of their integration in the company.

⁸⁹ Steinmeyer, Heinz-Dietrich (2003). Legislation to counter discrimination against persons with disabilities (2nd edition). Council of Europe



3.24.4 Framework conditions

There is a variety of labour market and social policies that can be seen as supporting the existence and development of Supported Employment and labour market integration of people with disabilities in general. However, there is a tense debate on various issues between employer associations and trade unions, and recent cutbacks on public expenses are seen as a major obstacle to improving social protection and security.

The active labour market policies in the framework of the European Employment Strategy (EES) have evolved towards a comprehensive concept addressing all forms of discrimination. Activation is a concept present in the basic norms for social protection, such as the act on protection against unemployment, the Social Insertion Income (Rendimento Social de Inserção, RSI) and the Social Security Act.⁹⁰

Act No. 45/2005 establishes the Social Insertion Income (RSI) scheme in force. All RSI recipients have register with the employment centres. According to the rules on social protection for unemployed (The Decree Act No. 220/2006) people, unemployment benefits are conditional on specific obligations, such as accepting a ‘convenient job’, a socially necessary work, a vocational training course, a personal plan for employment or any other type of active measure. Employment and labour market mobility are less encouraged for people with disabilities.

There is an employment quota system for the employment of people with disabilities within both the public (8%) and private (2%) sector.

Recruitment and dismissal rules are the same for people with disabilities as for the general labour force. Access to and funding of lifelong learning/ continuous vocational training is higher for people with disabilities than for the labour force in general.

The Decree -Act 290/2009, passed in October 2009, regulates the granting of technical and financial support for the development of employment policies and includes support for integration, maintenance and reintegration of people with disabilities into the labour market and Supported Employment.

3.24.5 Funding and monitoring

Supported Employment projects receive EU funding, national public funding and private funding. PES funds projects on an annual basis to deliver occupational training courses. Services receive funding also to arrange occupational courses and must ensure that clients complete these courses that may last up to four years.

⁹⁰ <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn0803038s/index.htm>



Support to job search and follow-up after hiring is financed by the Institute for the Employment and Vocational Training (IEFP). Some institutions also contribute with their own resources.

Monitoring and independent evaluation take place to some extent. Services have to report costs and results in detail every six months, particularly on clients' participation on courses and vocational training. Some are visited annually by the IEFP.

3.24.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

Funding through PES and municipalities, as well as private donations, secures the existence of Supported Employment projects that offer disabled jobseekers support to obtain and maintain paid jobs in the open labour market.

The combination of job wage and disability pension is not allowed in the Portuguese system. However, it is generally seen as an economic advantage to the disabled jobseeker to leave the benefit system and take on paid work instead. On the other hand, Work Experience Placements are used extensively, often defined as real jobs, and Supported Employment projects have few incentives to progress clients into permanent, ordinary paid jobs. Social benefits are suspended when the client gets a paid job. When entering an unpaid job, the person keeps the benefit.

Degree of mainstreaming

Concerning the employment of people with disabilities in general, there has been a shift from individual programmes to a more mainstreamed approach.⁹¹ Supported Employment projects are funded by PES, and there are employment opportunities for clients of Supported Employment both in the private and in the public sector. As concerns outcomes of Supported Employment, there is apparently no clear distinction between ordinary, paid jobs and jobs that are rather unpaid placements.

The government has presented draft legislation to reinforce the full integration of employees with disabilities in the regular labour force. The new law will shift from the protected employment system to the Supported Employment system.

⁹¹ ANED –Report on the employment of disabled people in European countries, Portugal: <http://www.disability-europe.net/content/pdf/PT-%20ANED%202009%20Employment%20Report%20Final.pdf>



3.25 Romania

3.25.1 Basic information

There are no national Supported Employment programmes in Romania. However, there are a number of initiatives (approximately 5-10 initiatives) which to a certain extent are related to the definition of Supported Employment, aiming at increasing the possibility of disabled people to find a job in the open labour market.⁹²

Key players/organisations

One of the most established initiatives in Romania is practiced at the "Pentru Voi" Foundation.

Target group

The target groups are disabled people, who have trouble accessing the open labour market. There are no common/national eligibility requirements in order to qualify for Supported Employment initiatives as the target groups of the different initiatives vary.

Figures provided by the Academic Network of European Disability experts (ANED) indicate that around 22,000 people with disabilities have a job (representing less than 4% of the total number of disabled people).⁹³ Of these, 2,431 were people with severe disabilities and 16,707 people with significant disabilities. No statistics on the number of disabled recipients of Supported Employment services are available for Romania. However, it is generally considered that the existing Supported Employment services offered to disabled people searching for jobs are quite limited.⁹⁴

3.25.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

In partnership with the Local Council in the municipality of Timisoara, the "Pentru Voi" Foundation offers community-based services in line with the definition of Supported Employment.⁹⁵ The "Pentru Voi" Foundation provides a variety of employment services for people with intellectual disabilities, who have trouble accessing the open labour market. The aim of the "Pentru Voi" Foundation is to work closely with potential jobseekers to identify their work preferences, and to build up their skills and work abilities through individual job coaching, rehabilitation activities and on-the-job training at local workplac-

⁹² Information provided by the "Pentru Voi" Foundation.

⁹³ <http://www.disability-europe.net/content/pdf/Romania%20-%20ANED%20country%20profile.pdf>

⁹⁴ <http://www.disability-europe.net/content/pdf/RO%20Employment%20report.pdf>

⁹⁵ <http://www.pentruvoi.ro>



es. There are currently 92 people related to the "Pentru Voi" Foundation, of which 32 people are employed in the open labour market and 61 people in social enterprises.⁹⁶

3.25.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Accompanying measures for people with disabilities in Romania include technical aids, special tax deductions or exemptions, flexible incapacity benefits and disability pensions (allowing for part-time work), flexible work arrangements and an employment quota system.

Accompanying measures for employers in Romania include wage subsidies, financial supports for workplace adaptation, tax reductions for employers and flexible work arrangements.

Overall, the variety of measures in Romania indicates a positive policy towards people with disabilities, and as such conducive framework conditions for Supported Employment.

3.25.4 Framework conditions

Hiring and firing rules are the same concerning people with disabilities and for the labour force in general.

The possibilities for lifelong learning tend to be much lower for people with disabilities than for the labour force in general. Although legislation prescribes that lifelong learning possibilities should be available for people with disabilities, there are only few opportunities in reality and these have a limited impact on the possibilities of disabled people to obtain and maintain jobs.

The labour market policy is seen as helpful towards disabled people in helping them cope with rapid change, reduce spells of non-employment and ease transitions to new jobs. For example, as from January 2007, companies with more than 50 employees are obliged by law to hire people with disabilities to cover 4% of the company's work force, otherwise companies must pay penalties. Furthermore, social security is higher for people with disabilities than for everyone else.

3.25.5 Funding and monitoring

There is no government funding of Supported Employment initiatives in Romania. Supported Employment initiatives are funded entirely by NGOs and private funding. Similarly, the initiatives are operated mostly by NGOs and private organisations for disabled people.

⁹⁶ <http://www.pentruvoi.ro/content/content/index/80/content/23>



3.25.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

Social security in terms of e.g. unemployment benefits, pension payments and healthcare may reduce the incentives of disabled people to seek employment in the open labour market. Nevertheless, it is still generally the case in Romania that it is an economic advantage for people with disabilities to find a job in the open labour market. In this light, the Supported Employment initiatives in Romania contribute to normalisation by offering a variety of services closely related to the definition of Supported Employment to disabled people such that they can obtain a job in the open labour market. In relation to this, however, large regional differences exist in the Supported Employment services provided to disabled people.

An advantage of the Supported Employment initiatives is that these support both the jobseekers and the employers to ensure a good match. In relation to this, the Supported Employment initiatives improve the probability of disabled people getting a positive reply to their job applications compared with the situation, where disabled people contacted the employer on their own.

A disadvantage of the Supported Employment initiatives is that they do not exist at the national level but only at the local/regional levels.

Finally, the national system of employment quota can work as an incentive for employers to recruit people with disabilities, if the rule is enforced.



3.26 Slovakia

3.26.1 Basic information

Slovakia has a number of services that are called 'Supported Employment', but they provide only a selection, and not all components that together make up the definition of Supported Employment used in our study.

Key players/organisations

The key players/organisations in supported Employment in Slovakia are:

- The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (MOLSAF).
- Slovak National Council of People with Disabilities.

Target group

According to Labour Force Survey (LSF) data, there were 263,500 people with disabilities aged 15 and above in the first quarter 2009. At the same time, the employment rate of the disabled population was 9.16% (for the non-disabled population aged 15 and over it was 52.5%).⁹⁷

People with disabilities are included in the wider group of 'disadvantaged applicants for employment'. Disabled and disadvantaged applicants for employment include not only those certified as disabled (40% loss of earning capacity), but also those whose earning capacity has been reduced by between 20% and 40%, who are also subject to protection in the labour market.

Disabled persons and long-term unemployed persons are eligible for Supported Employment.

3.26.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

In 2000, a Slovak-Austrian twinning project called 'supported employment of people with disabilities' was launched in order to investigate employment possibilities for people with disabilities in the open labour market. Four agencies for Supported Employment and two advisory information centres were established on an experimental basis. The experience gained has been embodied in new legislation on employment services. A new act was launched in 2004 (No. 5/2004 on Employment Services). Among the features that were introduced for the benefit of people with disabilities, were a number of new forms of support for the employment of people with disabilities, mainly for developing Support-

⁹⁷ ANED-report on the employment of disabled people in European countries, Slovakia: <http://www.disability-europe.net/content/pdf/SK-%20ANED%202009%20Employment%20Report%20Final.pdf>



ed Employment in the open labour market. This involves particularly the position of 'job assistant' and agencies for supported employment.

There is, however, no Supported Employment service which fits into the definition of our study. A number of agencies provide coaching to persons with disabilities once they have started working and in a period to follow to increase chances of job retention. In 2008, 43 agencies for 'Supported Employment were operating. These agencies provide coaching of persons with disabilities after their insertion into work and for some period after that, to increase chances of their retention in work. In addition, 138 personal assistant workplaces were established, which provide assistance for 443 disabled workers. Personal assistance at work is defined as an employee who assists an employee or to employees, who are disabled persons, in their execution of employment and personal needs during working time, or a person who assists a disabled self-employed person in operating or performing self-employment.

In May 2008, a new vocational training scheme called "Job preparation of a person with disability" was established. The scheme is a form of on-the-job-training aiming to enhance work performance in an ordinary workplace.

3.26.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

The following measures, intended mainly to promote the employment of people with disabilities, have been made possible through the Employment Act of 2004:

- work rehabilitation
- counselling
- training to enhance employability (vocational training, education and preparation for work)
- subsidised training
- support during training and preparation for work
- catering costs
- contributions to the establishment and operation of sheltered workshops and workplaces.

A compensation system for the social consequences of severe disability introduced in 2004 seems to have had a positive impact on the employment of people with disabilities.

In order to improve access of disabled people to employment, the Slovak Labour Code recognises flexible employment contracts, such as part-time employment, work at home and telework.



3.26.4 Framework conditions

Employment of people with disabilities is the subject of detailed legislation in Slovakia. The Equal Treatment Act (365/2004) is the main legislative instrument against disability-based discrimination in Slovakia. The Act № 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services contains measures that support the employment of disabled persons. For instance, it requires employers with more than 20 employees to hire at least 3.2% disabled persons of total staff. However, the required proportion can also be achieved by contracting out work to an external sheltered workshop or sheltered workplace. Fulfilment of the legal quotas on the employment of people with disabilities appears patchy. While some companies employ a higher proportion than required, others do the opposite.⁹⁸

An amendment of the Act № 5/2004 came into force on 1 May 2008 and introduced new labour market policy measures for employment support of persons with disabilities:

- Job preparation, skills training and skills development for persons with disabilities (also including personal assistance at work for a period up to one month; the person with disabilities is entitled to income during preparation period; legal or physical entity which guarantees job preparation or training for persons with disabilities receives a financial grant).
- Financial subsidy to employers to retain employees with disabilities (employers who employ more than 25% of persons with disabilities are entitled).
- Financial contribution to replace out-of-date technical equipment and property in sheltered workshops or sheltered workplaces.
- Legislative requirements to create social enterprises with the aim to employ disadvantaged groups of jobseekers or carry out volunteer activities, including persons with disabilities. The main objective of a social enterprise is to enable transition of disadvantaged groups to paid employment in the regular labour market by diverse types of support (training, work, counselling).

Another amendment of the Act on Employment Services that came into force on 1 March 2009, introduced new measures focused on avoiding the global financial and economic crisis' impact on employment. These measures are temporary (until the end of year 2010), and their objective is to support the maintenance of existing work places and the creation of new jobs. Some of the measures (such as the Employment maintenance subsidy) may also have a positive effect on employment of persons with disabilities.

⁹⁸ <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2004/10/feature/sk0410102f.htm>
<http://www.disability-europe.net/content/pdf/Slovakia%20-%20ANED%20country%20profile.pdf>



A new joint administration of employment and social services (since 2004) may also be considered a step in the right direction. A project entitled "support for the employment of people with disabilities" was launched following the National Action Plan on Employment 2004-6.⁹⁹

3.26.5 Funding and monitoring

The EU is providing financial support for a range of labour market projects through the European Social Fund (ESF). The project called 'support for the employment of people with disabilities' received funding from the ESF and the ESF is co-funding EQUAL, a programme that is fighting discrimination in the job market and providing training courses for disabled workers.

Statistical data on training placement and placement in paid jobs of disabled jobseekers are provided by the Centre for Labour, Social Affairs and Family (Ústredie práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny <http://www.upsvar.sk/>). According to these data, there were 8,614 employees in sheltered workshops in the first quarter of 2009, which is more than one third of all disabled people employed. There are no comparative data for sheltered and regular employment of people with disabilities.

In order to improve statistical data on disability, an obligation to keep a separate register of disabled jobseekers registered at the labour office was introduced in 2008.

3.26.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

The annual report of the social situation of the Slovak republic's population in the year 2008 published by Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family notes contradictory trends in the outcomes of active labour market measures in 2008 compared with 2007: a downward trend in the number of established sheltered workshops and sheltered workplaces and an upward trend in the number of work assistants for disabled persons.¹⁰⁰ However, the high inactivity rate of the disabled population suggests that the vast majority still remain outside the labour market and receive disability benefits.

There is no clear evidence-based explanation of this situation. According to the analysis provided by central office of labour, social affairs and family, stagnation is caused by complicated administrative procedures in applying for public supportive instruments (for different types of public employment services, by persons with disabilities and potential employers) and a preference to employ non-disabled persons.

According to the ANED report on the employment of disabled people in Europe, persons with intellectual disabilities, chronic psychiatric conditions and

¹⁰⁰ANED-report on the employment of disabled people in European countries, Slovakia.



multiple disabilities clearly experience the most serious barriers to accessing the labour market (not least because of strong prejudices in society) and are perceived by employers as potentially the most problematic. Research evidence suggests that employers, in maintaining their quota, prefer to hire people with lesser degrees of disability or those who are not distant from the labour market.¹⁰¹

Degree of mainstreaming

All major instruments to increase labour market participation of people with disabilities are embodied in national legislation. However, the incentive system for employers aiming to increase the recruitment of people with disabilities still appears weak, despite legal provisions that aim to improve the employment opportunity of people with disabilities. There are services providing support to enhance job retention of persons with disabilities by coaching them after their recruitment into ordinary paid work, and there is a trend towards reducing placements in sheltered workshops, but a mainstream Supported Employment scheme does not exist.

¹⁰¹ (ibid.)



3.27 Slovenia

3.27.1 Basic information

A labour market scheme called “Supported Employment” exists on paper, but according to recent figures¹⁰² published by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, this measure has not been applied at all.

Key players/organisations

The key players/organisations in supported Employment in Slovenia are:

- Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, The directorate for disabled.
- The Employment Service of Slovenia (<http://www.ess.gov.si/>)
- The Institute of Pension and Disability Insurance (<http://www.zpiz.si/src/>)
- The Slovenian Institute for Rehabilitation (Inštitut Republike Slovenije za rehabilitacijo)
- YHD – Association for Theory & Culture of Handicap (Slovenia) <http://www.yhd-drustvo.si/eng/index.php>.

Potential target groups

In 2008, 170,000 persons were officially registered as 'disabled persons'. In total, 33,891 persons with a disability were registered as 'employed'. Of the 33,891, a total of 6,400 persons work in special companies and 200 are in employment centres, the remainder is employed in the open labour market. Access to employment for people with disabilities, particularly those with intellectual disabilities and even more so with mental health conditions, is extremely limited. Only some individuals work in ordinary workplaces, but have no actual working contracts. People living in the long-term institutions are the most excluded group from the employment and work arena.¹⁰³

3.27.2 Main characteristics/type of services and actors

A new act on occupational rehabilitation of people with disabilities in 2004 led to the introduction of training workshops and enterprises to train people in the

¹⁰² Based on Eurostat's LMP methodology

http://www.stat.si/eng/novica_prikazi.aspx?id=3120

¹⁰³ ANED-report on the Employment of disabled people in European countries. Slovenia:

<http://www.disability-europe.net/content/pdf/SI-%20ANED%202009%20Employment%20Report%20Final.pdf>



workplace. In 2006, there were 263 people were included in 21 such programmes; half of them had a disability. There is, however, limited evidence of the success of the introduction of Supported Employment, as it was not much used by counsellors and rehabilitation workers (Fatur and Vidmar 2007).¹⁰⁴ A more targeted approach is lacking, especially in the areas of Supported Employment or job coaching and job retention schemes. The number of persons working in sheltered workshops has doubled since 2006 (from 1,587 in 2006 up to 3,016 in 2008). In 2008, 3,016 persons worked in sheltered workshops, which is a 15% increase compared with 2007.¹⁰⁵

3.27.3 Meeting employers' and employees' needs

The Occupational Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Persons Act of 2004 provides practical assistance for people who are employed, self-employed, or about to start a new job. This Act also provides schemes for subsidies to cover the additional disability-related costs of special equipment, adaptations to the workplace, personal assistance and travel to work. Eligibility is assessed by the Rehabilitation Commission. According to the 2009 ANED report on employment, there is no evidence that these provisions have been put into practice to some noticeable extent.

3.27.4 Framework conditions

One of the new features in the Occupational Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Persons Act of 2004 was a quota system for the employment of disabled people, employment companies and protected workplaces. Companies, which employ more than 20 workers, are obliged to employ persons with disabilities (the quota varies from 2-6%, depending on the kind of business). A fund for the collection of fines from companies that do not met the requirements of the act has been established.¹⁰⁶ The Act also details the possibilities of Supported Employment. It covers all the necessary technical and professional support to people with disabilities and to the employer as well as salary subsidies. However, it also favours sheltered employment over Supported Employment. The quota can be filled by outsourcing contracts to sheltered employment enterprises.¹⁰⁷

On 30 November 2006, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia adopted its Action Programme for Persons with Disabilities 2007-2013. One of the objectives mentioned is ensuring that persons with disabilities have access to work

¹⁰⁴ Fatur V.A., Vidmar, J. (2007) Evalvacija izvajanja zaposlitvene rehabilitacije v letu 2006 (Poročilo pilotske faze razvoja modela evalviranja izvajalcev zaposlitvene rehabilitacije in mreže). Ljubljana, Inštitut Republike Slovenije za rehabilitacijo.

¹⁰⁵ ANED-report on Social Inclusion and social protection of disabled people in European countries. Slovenia <http://www.disability-europe.net/content/pdf/SI-4-ANED%202009%20Task%206%20Request-9B-Country%20update%20SPSI%20-%20report%20final.pdf>

¹⁰⁶ (ibid.)

¹⁰⁷ ANED-report on the Employment of disabled people in European countries.



and employment without discrimination in a work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible (Objective 5). Among the actions related to this objective is "encouraging employment of persons with severe disability in the open labour market, in employment centres and companies for persons with disabilities" (5.14) and "promoting implementation of supported employment in practice" (5.15).

Apparently, a major proportion of disabled people are still excluded from entering the labour market on legal grounds. The Social Care Act stipulates that an adult who has been given the status of 'disabled' has the right to receive social benefits, but is automatically presumed unable to live independently or to be employed, regardless of actual abilities. If people with disabilities wish to work, they must renounce their 'disability status' and in so doing, they lose their eligibility for social benefits.¹⁰⁸

3.27.5 Funding and monitoring

After 2001, there was a series of projects for the employment of disabled people, co-financed by the EU, European Social Fund (ESF).

The Employment and Vocational Rehabilitation Act from 2004 provided an opportunity for companies to gain an award given by the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs for best practice in the area of employment of persons with disabilities. Up to 2010, the Ministry had not yet given any awards to companies.¹⁰⁹

According to the ANED experts, data on employment are generally provided by the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia and by the Employment Service of Slovenia,¹¹⁰ but these sources do not provide comprehensive data on disability and employment. Data are also available from the Institute of Pension and Disability Insurance, which has indirect implications for the employment issue, i.e. the number of people receiving disability pensions. ANED comments that there is will to monitor and evaluate both new and old features of the employment schemes, programmes as well as policies, but also that many governmental reports still present conflicting data or use an incomprehensive style of descriptive presentation of the facts and figures.

3.27.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

Apparently, there is not much emphasis at all on measures to enhance employment opportunities for people with disabilities in the open labour market. An obvious obstacle to establish appropriate support schemes is the fact that bene-

¹⁰⁸ Open Society Institute 2005: Rights of People with Intellectual Disabilities - Access to Education and Employment. Slovenia. (<http://www.soros.org>)

¹⁰⁹ ANED-report on Social Inclusion and social protection of disabled people in European countries.

¹¹⁰ From 2008 these data are systematised according to the Eurostat's LMP methodology.



fits for disabled people are awarded according to different laws as well as the disability status of a person and not according to the actual needs of an individual. Though the concept of Supported Employment is known and officially listed among other public labour market schemes, it has not yet been implemented in practice, and obviously there is no mainstreaming of this service.

Degree of mainstreaming

Pilot experience has been gained, but has not been transformed into more wide-ranging programmes. There is no evidence that the situation has improved substantially in the latest years. However, there is significantly more emphasis put on sheltered employment than on Supported Employment and adaptations at the workplace to meet the needs of disabled employees.



3.28 Spain

3.28.1 Basic information

In total, there are between 200 and 300 Supported Employment providers; services are mainly provided by private service providers.

Key players/organisations

Key players/organisations for Supported Employment in Spain are:

- Servicio Público De Empleo Estatal (Public employment service)
- Private service providers
- Asociación Española de Empleo con Apoyo (AESE, the national organisation of the European Union of Supported Employment)¹¹¹
- Comité Español de Representantes de Personas con Discapacidad (CERMI an umbrella organisation for different disability interest groups)¹¹².

Target group

Target groups of Supported Employment in Spain are people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups.

Employment rates for disabled people in Spain are lower compared with other EU countries.¹¹³ In total, 23.500 participate in a Supported Employment service. In 2008, approximately 7,500 persons were employed in the open labour market through Supported Employment services – of these approximately 5,000 are people with disabilities and 2,500 belong to other disadvantaged groups.

3.28.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

A Supported Employment scheme is defined by a regulation from the Central Government (Royal Decree 870/2007) of July 2007. Supported Employment programmes and projects are provided by local governmental organisations, private service providers, disabled people or their parent organisations, sheltered workshops (Special Employment Centres) and other NGOs.

After assessment at the Public Employment Service (PES), clients are likely to receive a disability pension and they can choose what service to use. Clients

¹¹¹ www.empleoconapoyo.org

¹¹² <http://www.cermi.es/en-US/Pages/Portada.aspx>

¹¹³ <http://www.disability-europe.net/en/countries/es/ES-2-factsEN.jsp>



may initiate the contact with a Supported Employment service provider themselves, but they will nevertheless have to register and be approved by PES.

Job coaching can be done by PES, but is normally delivered by private service providers, who can apply to PES for funding when a client has registered and is approved by PES. Supported Employment services also have other funding possibilities to deliver job coaching. Sheltered Workshops can also receive funding to deliver job coaching in the open labour market.

While some Supported Employment services cater for people with all types of disability, others have special eligibility criteria for people with particular disabilities and/or degree of workability (e.g. more than 33% disability) and some serve particular disabilities, e.g. people with Down's syndrome or people without any particular disability but who are in risk of social exclusion (e.g. immigrants and refugees).

The caseload of job coaches varies depending on the target group, from three (people with cerebral palsy, mental health problems, or intellectual disability) to 8-12 (physical or sensorial disabilities) or 15 for other target groups.

In accordance with Spanish Supported Employment regulations, there is a time limit follow-up fixed to 30 months, but many projects maintain contact with the client for as long as clients or employers feel the need.

According to Spanish regulations, job coaches must have a university degree. AESE, the Spanish national Supported Employment association, offers an internet-based course in Supported Employment.

3.28.3 Meeting employees and employers' needs

Accompanying measures available to meet employees' needs are technical aids, housing/mobility benefits, special tax deductions or exemptions, flexible work arrangements, a flexible disability pension that allows for combination with work/wages, preferential access for job vacancies with public employers, and a 2% compulsory quota system for companies with more than 50 employees.

Accompanying measures available to meet the employers' needs are financial support for workplace adaptation and tax reduction when hiring a disabled person and support to implement flexible work arrangements.

3.28.4 Framework conditions

The Royal Decree No. 870/2007 provides Supported Employment with a general financial budget for the state to pass on to the communities and gives strong support to the philosophy of Supported Employment.

The Royal Decree 1451/1983 regulates selective employment and measures to promote employment for disabled workers. It establishes grants to companies that hire disabled employees with permanent contracts. Act 43/2006 established



reductions in Social Security contributions to employers for the permanent hiring of disabled employees.

These measures are seen as helpful and conducive to the development of the Supported Employment model/process, concerning support to get a placement, a job contract and training and adaptations for job maintenance.

3.28.5 Funding and monitoring

Both public and private tender systems fund Supported Employment, mainly Supported Employment personnel and other project expenses:

The first source is the mainstream funding associated with the national regulation by the Ministry of Labour, which plays only a minor financial role. The second source is the public tender system through the 17 communities, which constitutes the most significant financial contribution to Supported Employment. The financial base for this funding is EU (50%), the Central Government and the communities. The third source is a private tender system by private companies with a social budget, such as banks and oil companies, and private donations. This source contributes with a significant amount of funding to Supported Employment. In addition, several projects have also (had) European funding through ESF, Leonardo and Horizon programmes.

Statistics of Supported Employment are available, but the quality is heavily dependent on reports from the communities. The Institute on Community Integration, INICO, at the University of Salamanca¹¹⁴ has conducted detailed and independent evaluations and monitoring of Supported Employment.

3.28.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

The main advantage is the recognition in policy documents of Supported Employment as a specific methodology for inclusion of people with disabilities in the open labour market.

The main disadvantage is the lack of a stable and clear public funding of Supported Employment and a restrictive framework. The funding system for Supported Employment appears weak and arbitrary in comparison to the well-funded and stable Sheltered Employment Centres.

Other disadvantages are that access to Supported Employment is dependent of type and degree of disability. There is a need to increase and improve Supported Employment services for people with mental illness and people with a learning disability.

¹¹⁴ <http://inico.usal.es>



Degree of mainstreaming

The inclusion of persons with disabilities in the workforce is governed by Royal Decree No. 870/2007 on the regulation of Supported Employment. However, what is on offer varies greatly between the local communities. The Council of Ministers has adopted a new action plan (2009 – 2012) for persons with disabilities, aiming to develop a policy on employment that is more suitable for people with disabilities, and where PES will have a more focused intermediate role and where all 17 communities of Spain will have the same on offer for people with disabilities.



3.29 Sweden

3.29.1 Basic information

There is a national Supported Employment programme within the PES called SIUS, Special Introduction and Follow-Up Support to and in jobs. Other organisations, i.e. Municipality Day Centres, have projects and their own version of Supported Employment and work especially with placements in the open labour market. There is a growing interest in Supported Employment for people with mental health issues.

Key players/organisations

Key players/organisations in Supported Employment in Sweden are

- Arbetsstyrelsen (PES)
- SIUS (Special Introduction and Follow-Up Support to and in jobs)
- Municipal day centres
- Private and public service providers and NGOs
- Svenska föreningen för Supported Employment (SFSE), the National EUSE organisation.

Target group

From 2000 to 2008, the proportion of disabled people with full-time employment decreased from 73% 65%.¹¹⁵

In principle, persons with reduced workability registered as jobseekers at PES, can participate in Supported Employment. Clients referred to the SIUS system are mainly people with mental health issues, intellectual impairments or with learning disabilities. One study shows that those that find a job through Supported Employment have had a long period outside the open labour market; they have been dependent on welfare benefits, and they have had problems to improve their life situation on their own. (Gustafsson 2010).¹¹⁶

The employment rate of people with disabilities is 51.7%. There are many organisations both inside and outside the PES system involved in Supported Em-

¹¹⁵ Danermark, B. (2010): Lowering the threshold to the labour market for people with disabilities. Presentation at Nordic Conference on Supported Employment 10-11 June, 2010, Copenhagen.

¹¹⁶ Gustafsson, J. (2010): Hållbart arbete. Arbetsliv för personer med nedsatt arbetsförmåga. University of Örebro.



ployment; a joint statement on Supported Employment does not exist, and there are no statistics available as to how many clients there are in the various projects and programmes. There are statistics for the SIUS programme: The job coach in the SIUS system is supposed to have 15 new clients every year. In 2009, there were 325 job coaches in the SIUS system and 51% of clients found a paid job on the open labour market.¹¹⁷

3.29.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

In the national SIUS programme, there is no fixed time limitation as such, but the client receives support for at least 12 months. The client is paid by the PES during this period.¹¹⁸

The recommended caseload of the job coach in the SIUS programme is 30 clients. PES has its own training programme for job coaches. For the job coach operating in the municipality day centre system, the caseload is 10-20.

The service provided by the job coach in the SIUS system is also extended to the employer, who can contact the SIUS consultant after hiring the disabled employee. The job coach does follow-up visits to the employee and employer to support job retention. The PES conducts an investigation to see if there is any need for additional support or technical aids for the employee that has received support through the SIUS programme.

The salary of the individual employee is paid by the employer, normally in combination with other sources, i.e. wage subsidy or disability pension.

3.29.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Accompanying measures for people with disabilities are transport support, technical aids, special tax deductions or exemptions, personal work assistance, flexible incapacity disability pension that allows for part-time work, flexible work arrangements and different kinds of wage subsidy. Among the measures for work-disabled persons, expenditure on wage subsidies has traditionally been very high in Sweden.

Arrangements are available to provide a disabled employee with specific training. Accompanying measures depend on the decisions of officials of different authorities. This means that the system is both arbitrary and dependent on the economy. Also, the particular rules of the various support schemes differ according to type of disability.

Accompanying measures for employers include financial support for workplace adaptation, tax reduction, special arrangements for sick leave measures and flexible work arrangements. Wage subsidies are widely used (Gustafsson

¹¹⁷ Arbetsförmedlingen's Annual Report 2009.

¹¹⁸

http://www.arbetsformedlingen.se/download/18.46ccfec5127ddccec778000574/sius_as.pdf



2010): A company can receive a maximum of 80% of SEK 16,700, but the exact amount depends on the degree of production of the disabled employee.¹¹⁹ A wage subsidy is normally given for four years.

Accompanying measures for employers depend on the productivity of the disabled employee. There is a lack of incentive for the employer to hire people with more severe disabilities and a higher degree of impaired working capacity.

The Supported Employment programme operated by PES provides individual support by job coaches to disabled people to help them obtain and maintain paid jobs in the open labour market. The programme also provides support to jobseekers to identify skills and work preferences. The role of the SIUS consultant is to concentrate on the relationship with the client and the employer. The employer can receive aids for the employee paid by SIUS, e.g. special equipment.

3.29.4 Framework conditions

In the Swedish public system, an unemployed person (with or without impairment) must register with the labour office; and the SIUS programme is a part of this public system.

Organisations that provide Supported Employment services are based in regional or local governmental organisations (e.g. municipalities, public employment services or other public service providers) and private service providers. Many services are located in the area of care or rehabilitation where the employer is not involved.

The social security system for disabled people is the same as for the rest of the population. In terms of recruitment and dismissal, the act states that people with disabilities may constitute an exemption in case of termination, but there are apparently many ways of bypassing the act. Employment and labour market mobility are encouraged to the same degree for people with disabilities

In general, people with disabilities enrolled in the PES have a lower educational level than other jobseekers have. This is one reason why people with disabilities have more difficulties finding a job. People with low work capacity who can only work for a few hours a day or week also have difficulties finding a job. Financially, it is advantageous for disabled persons to be in regular work.

The possibilities for lifelong learning, e.g. through vocational training are better for people with disabilities. As to equal possibilities to obtain and maintain a job in the open labour market, this is uncertain, as all people with learning disabilities, traumatic brain disorder, autism (and Asperger's syndrome) and other severe disabilities automatically have a right to work in a day centre.

¹¹⁹ Arbetsförmedlingen (2009): Faktablad till arbetssökande juni 2009.



3.29.5 Funding and monitoring

The national Supported Employment-programme run by the PES (SIUS) is funded by public means. In addition, regional and local public funding is applied, as well as ESF funding for projects. There is a tender system for state funding and funding by NGOs.

The PES collects statistics on the results of SIUS. Other organisations gather statistics, but these are not official, and no national summary has been made.

3.29.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

SIUS activities are provided by the PES, and as such Supported Employment is available all over Sweden and has a stable financial footing. The fact that the support of the job coach is not only provided to the employee but also to the employer is often expressed by the employers as key to their decision to employ a person with a disability.

It is an advantage that many different organisations are responsible for support activities. In this way, people can turn to organisations that provide services that specifically address their needs. The downside is that these organisations depend on public funds to perform activities. Policy decisions can quickly alter the conditions for these organisations. SIUS is a programme under the auspices of the PES. There are numerous rules for the unemployed, and these change quite often. When there are high unemployment levels, provisions are more generous. When unemployment rates fall, the possibility of obtaining financial aid is reduced. This also applies to those enrolled in the SIUS programme. The two-tier system of Supported Employment also lacks a common agreement upon the definition of quality standards.

A problem for clients of Supported Employment is a set of rules that can at times be rigid if the person receives financial support from other levels of government. Problems may develop as different agencies have different rules, i.e. there is no close follow-up during wage-subsidised employment. People who receive Supported Employment assistance in municipalities are not automatically entitled to additional support or technical aids.

Degrees of mainstreaming

In Sweden, the national Supported Employment programme is placed under the Ministry of Employment and implemented by Arbetsstyrelsen (PES) through its local offices. It is financed directly from the annual budget, and the budget is therefore earmarked for people with disabilities and cannot be transferred to other purposes. Also, private companies may be paid for undertaking Supported Employment services, and Supported Employment is offered in Municipalities.



3.30 United Kingdom

3.30.1 Basic Information

There is no specific Supported Employment programme in the UK, but there are several employment programmes for disabled people some of which contain many elements of Supported Employment.

Outside the UK government employment programmes for disabled people, there are more traditional Supported Employment services delivered mainly by local authorities, disability organisations and voluntary organisations. It is estimated that approximately there are 400-600 organisations delivering some form of Supported Employment in the UK.

Key players/organisations

Key organisations in the funding and delivery of Supported Employment and employment programmes for disabled people are:

- Department of Work and Pensions (PES)
- Jobcentre Plus (PES)
- Local authorities
- Scottish Union of Supported Employment
- Northern Ireland Union of Supported Employment
- British Association of Supported Employment
- Welsh Association for Supported Employment
- Disability Organisations.

Target group

Supported Employment is usually for anyone who declares that he or she has a disability.

Figures provided by the English, Scottish and Northern Irish Associations of Supported Employment estimate that around 30,000 people with disabilities participate in some form of Supported Employment service, and again it is estimated that 5-10% find employment in the open labour market. The UK Government's Workstep programme, which has similarities to Supported Employment, has around 14,000 disabled people receiving employment support services whilst in employment.

3.30.2 Main characteristics of services and actors

There are both Supported Employment services and Disability Employment Specialist services in the UK. The government-run Workstep programme has elements of Supported Employment, including that of providing support in maintaining paid jobs in the open labour market. Wages are covered either en-



tirely by the employer or in some cases by the employer in combination with other sources.

There is a specific informal training programme/education for job coaches, such a Diploma in Supported Employment, but it is optional and not extensively used. There are possibilities for both in-house and external training (NVQ, training in systematic instruction, qualification in information, advice and guidance, autism training, challenging behaviour, vulnerable adults, human rights, counselling etc).

The caseload for job coaches varies between 15 and 40 per job coach.

Jobs are typically based on regular work contracts, and in some cases there is no time limit for the support, while in other situations there is; this would appear to depend on who is providing the funding.

3.30.3 Meeting employees' and employers' needs

Supported Employment supports jobseekers in identifying skills and work preferences. Jobseekers also receive help finding a job with an employer. The Supported Employment projects include on/off the job support to both the employee as well as the employer to secure successful integration into the job and the workplace.

In addition to the large number of ad-hoc Supported Employment providers, there are government employment support programmes and accompanying measures specifically aimed at employees with disabilities and their employers;

Access to Work is a programme that offers financial assistance to the disabled employee or employer for any specialist equipment at work or adapting processes at work. It can pay towards the cost of getting to work if a disabled person cannot use public transport. It can also pay for a signer or a support worker.

Work Preparation is a programme to help prepare a disabled person to return to work. This is usually done through organising a short work experience placement, updating skills and building confidence. This programme ended in October 2010.

Workstep is an employment programme that contains several elements of Supported Employment. It provides funding for support to both the disabled employee and the employer. It can pay for a long or short-term wage subsidy or support through the provision of an Employment Support Worker/Job Coach. An employee on the Workstep programme can be employed either in the open labour market or in a Supported Business/Sheltered Workshop. This programme ended in October 2010 and will be replaced by a new programme called Work Choice. The Work Choice programme will not usually offer any wage subsidy or financial incentive to employers.



3.30.4 Framework conditions

The disabled person can usually self refer to employment programmes or Supported Employment services. In addition, a number of organisations can refer people with disabilities to services, i.e. community mental health teams, social services and Jobcentre plus. The referral process can be influenced by the funding sources.

The recruitment and dismissal rules are the same for people with disabilities as for the labour force in general although legislation under the Disability Discrimination Act offers some protection to disabled people.

The possibilities for lifelong learning/continuous vocational training are lower for people with disabilities, and participation rates are proportionally lower for disabled learners. In some parts of the UK, there is no difference, but there is limited support and funding to assist people with disabilities. The disability benefit regulations appear complex, and there is often uncertainty and discussions regarding the economic advantages of disabled people working more than 16 hours per week. However, there are financial incentives for disabled people to access paid jobs in the form of Working Tax Credits funded by the UK Government.

There are many variables within Supported Employment in the UK - different projects receive different funding under different conditions. There are UK employment programmes, and even though they are not specifically Supported Employment programmes, they contain elements of Supported Employment (especially the Workstep Programme but this ended in October 2010 and will be replaced by a new programme entitled Work Choice).

3.30.5 Funding and monitoring

Supported Employment services are provided through funding from Department for Work & Pensions, a local authority, European Social Fund, lottery or health service funds.

The Government funded programme Workstep is monitored by the national inspectorate, Ofsted (in England). Other local programmes/projects are not always monitored. There are no reliable statistics available on the extent of the use of Supported Employment. An independent evaluation of Supported Employment has been made in England, and various studies of projects have been carried out.¹²⁰

In some cases, monitoring and evaluations are produced, but this is dependent on who has provided the funding. In general, Supported Employment services are not monitored.

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http://medic.cardiff.ac.uk/archive_subsites// /medic/subsites/learning/disabilities/index.html



3.30.6 Advantages and disadvantages of Supported Employment in the country

Supported Employment is not a specific mainstream programme in the UK; however, due to a variety of potential funding streams, there are widespread Supported Employment services.

Advantages include Supported Employment is as an individualised, person-centred and holistic approach. It is often an economic advantage for the client to leave the benefit system and take on a regular job but the complex welfare benefit regulations mean that it can be a complicated process to determine the financial benefits of working. A job also means social inclusion, developing relationships, and feeling part of the local community. The Supported Employment projects provide paid employment opportunities for people with (significant) disabilities to find and stay in employment.

Disadvantages are that limited funding is seen as a problem as it does not allow for security and continuity of services. The possibilities for using wage subsidies have been greatly reduced; something which is seen as a disadvantage.

Some of the eligibility criteria for some programmes are not always seen as fair; i.e. the requirement that disabled persons have to work for more than 16 hours to be able to apply for Supported Employment or employment support in some circumstances.

Another disadvantage is the lack of monitoring, consistency and standards of Supported Employment; this is mainly because of the many different avenues of funding being used to finance Supported Employment.

Degree of mainstreaming

Supported Employment is not a specific mainstream programme in the UK; however, due to a variety of potential funding streams, there are widespread Supported Employment services.



4 Case studies

The six case studies focus in-depth on the framework conditions under which Supported Employment is implemented and on the interaction between Supported Employment schemes and Flexicurity, as relevant. .

In the selected countries, the interaction between Supported Employment schemes (or measures that resemble Supported Employment) and the flexicurity approach is explored, - including ways in which the application of flexicurity principles contributes positively to the employment situation of people with disabilities.

On that basis, this task will comprise an analysis of six national policies including the underlying funding and distribution of responsibility of involved services and other relevant organisations, and where relevant, analysed in the framework of Flexicurity that are addressing the needs or are inclusive of the needs of persons with disabilities.

Six sections will cover the following elements given in the specifications to the tender:

1. How the integrated approach and inclusive concept of Flexicurity best can be applied for the benefit of people with disabilities.
2. Where the application of Flexicurity principles contributes positively to the employment situation of people with disabilities.
3. Where and in what way national policies considered Flexicurity principles in adapting employment policies for people with disabilities in the recent years and what Flexicurity elements are applied in Supported Employment policies.

The findings presented below are mainly based on a number of personal interviews held with key informants. .



4.1 Austria

National policy and rules and regulations

A well-developed Supported Employment programme

Supported employment began in 1992 with two pilot projects, "Arbeitsassistenten", which provided individual support for people with mental or physical disabilities. In 1994, this kind of service was incorporated in the Act on Employment of people with disabilities (Behinderteneinstellungsgesetz, BEinstG §6 Abs. 1), and the service was extended to a broader variety of target groups, elaborated and made available nationwide. Recently, it has been promoted as part of the Federal labour market programme for disabled people (Bundesweites arbeitsmarktpolitisches Behindertenprogramm - BABE, 2010-11).

While the Bundessozialamt at the national level coordinates the Supported Employment programme, it is implemented by the nine Regional Social Welfare Offices (Länder Sozialamt offices). However, they contract the Supported Employment services out to 45 service providers. All of these 45 service providers are NGOs, mostly disability-specific NGOs such as the "organisation for the blind".

Containing all five stages

It is assessed (and also confirmed by the Bundessozialamt) that the Austrian Supported Employment scheme contains the five-stage process of the definition adopted by the present study.

However, Austria does also work with a somewhat wider definition of Supported Employment that also includes "Clearing", which comprises advice to disabled-pupils-soon-to-leave-school, "Berufsausbildungsassistenten", which is a three-year personal assistance programme to receive vocational education", "Persönliche Assistenten", which is more the practical help to the disabled; and "Technisches Ausstattung", which is more to do with help carrying out certain job functions.

Furthermore, Austria works with two types of Supported Employment assistants: the "Arbeitsassistenten" and "JobCoaching". The former can be seen as the normal job coach (in the terminology adopted by the present study) who assists the jobseeker for up to 12 months. The latter is a more intensive form of assistance, in particular offered to clients with intellectual difficulties (sometimes to keep them in their jobs) for a shorter period such as three to six months. It is often so that the JobCoach takes over from the Arbeitsassistenten who finds it difficult to offer intensive services to the client.

It is typical that a Supported Employment team (hosted by an NGO) has five Arbeitsassistenten for each Job Coach - although it is often difficult to draw the line between the two types of positions.

Synergies - or not - with other programmes

Austria has introduced a special employment dismissal protection for disabled people (Kündigungsschutz) which is acknowledged as having a negative impact on employers employing disabled employees - and thus making use of the Supported Employment facility. However, it must be emphasised that the dismissal protection is only for those people registered as disabled according to the legal



provisions of the employment quota scheme. A practical implication of these provisions is that some - mainly young disabled persons - choose not to register themselves with the scheme. Instead, they confine themselves to obtaining a "Behindertenausweis" (proof of disability), which is sufficient to become eligible for the Supported Employment scheme. In other words, some disabled persons bypass the system to be more attractive to the employer, but at the same time lose some rights. Older workers seem more concerned about being dismissed, so most formally register according to the provisions of the employment quota scheme.

An implication is that there is a relative over-representation of youngsters in Supported Employment. However, it can be argued that the Austrian Supported Employment scheme anyhow and from the outset in particular has been targeted at young disabled persons.

There is no evidence of synergies between the employment quota scheme and Supported Employment facility - on the contrary. There is also no evidence of employers making use of the Supported Employment scheme to employ disabled persons to fulfil their employment quota.

In contrast, the availability of a wage subsidy is important for the success of Supported Employment programme. It was found that in the absence of a wage subsidy, many employment outcomes would not have occurred - with or without Supported Employment. It has been assessed that wage subsidies could be reduced without changing the success rate of Supported Employment as it is believed that a good match between employee qualifications and employer needs is considered even more important. This said, wage subsidies have recently been reduced in Austria, and many employers have not been happy about it.

Monitoring and statistics

Around 10,000 users of Supported Employment

In 2009, the number of Supported Employment contracts amounted to 10,850 compared with 9,277 in 2007. This group of employees comprises thus only a small share of the around 4 million employees in Austria. The 10,850 contracts concern both "Arbeitsassistenz" and "JobCoaching", and they can be subdivided into the type of disability they support:

Universal/general	7,427
Blind/visually impaired	191
Mental illness	446
Physical disability	282
Intellectual disability	1,940
Deaf/hearing impaired	564

High success rates - measured as gross rates

The Bundessozialamt registers two types of success rates: getting jobs and retaining jobs where jobs are at risk. Both types of registered success rates are gross rates. There are no statistics of whether the jobs created or retained would have materialised without the help of Supported Employment. However, the Bundessozialamt is considering making estimates of such net success rates,



which would be feasible because there are waiting lists for getting into Supported Employment, and those who do get in are accepted fairly randomly. The registered success rates are as follows:

Universal/general	62.5%
Blind/visually impaired	67.5%
Mental illness	51.1%
Physical disability	55.9%
Intellectual disability	55.8%
Deaf/hearing impaired	60.1%

The Bundessozialamt sets the average estimate for the success rate of finding a job (i.e. excluding retaining jobs) to 40-50% - all of which are paid jobs in all kinds of enterprises - public and private (there are no reliable statistics for types of jobs). It should be emphasised that these success rates concern the up to 12 months Supported Employment period, while little is known about sustainability - i.e. what happens after the end of the Supported Employment period.

No statistics on dropout rates

Furthermore, there are no official statistics on dropout rates - i.e. on Supported Employment relationships that end before they were planned to end. In this context, it is assessed that there are differences between the Supported Employment providers in how they handle difficult cases - i.e. where it appears that the measure is not working for the client. Some providers continue the help - maybe on a low scale - not to distress the client, while others are stricter in the sense that they stop giving support to the client.

Roles of key actors

Support given by NGOs

As mentioned above, all 45 service providers contracted by the Bundessozialamt through its nine regional offices are NGOs, mostly disability-specific NGOs.

Referrals by labour market service

The labour market service (Arbeitsmarketservice, AMS) attempts to help the disabled jobseeker getting into employment. If this does not work, clients are referred to the Bundessozialamt. On their own initiative, jobseekers may also turn to the Bundessozialamt or employers may refer them.

Funding

National funding

The programme is funded at the national level through the Federal Social Welfare Office (Bundessozialamt) with around 40% of the funds coming from the national budget, 35% from the European Social Fund, and 25% from the Ausgleichstaxfond - i.e. the charges paid by the enterprises that do not fulfil their employment quota duties. Employers with 25 or more employees are obliged to employ one disabled person per 25 employees - i.e. 4%. If they do not fulfil this quota, they must pay EUR 226 per month (in 2011) for each missing disabled worker according to their quota numbers.

Some lack of funding



There appears to be some bottlenecks to enter the Supported Employment programme due to lack of funding, but more often it is due to a lack of Supported Employment staff in some regions regarding certain specific expertise.

Flexicurity

Flexibility

In the empirical literature on flexicurity regimes, Austria is generally characterised as a country with a high level of security combined with a low to medium level of flexibility. There is, however, a general trend in the Austrian labour market towards more flexibility - both regarding recruitment and dismissal, and with respect to flexible working hours etc. While the disabled in particular are struggling with being mobile between jobs (the former type of flexibility), they do seem to benefit from it becoming more acceptable with flexible and less common working hours etc. Furthermore, the focus on 'clearing' support to the young disabled - i.e. support to get from a school/education status to a job status - is a way of enabling more flexibility/mobility, because an integral element of this type of support is to expose the young disabled to several different job functions.

Security

Supported Employment is directly targeted at increasing the employability of disabled persons, and therefore improving their employment security in line with one of the forms of flexicurity arrangements outlined in table 2 in chapter 2. However, as also described above the specific job security of the disabled person due to the Kündigungsschutz can be said to work against employment security in the long run, as those disabled people covered by the employment dismissals protection can have difficulties getting into jobs and moving between jobs. This illustrates the dilemma found in forms of security arrangements focusing more on job security, which may protect the insiders (those presently employed), but on the other hand makes it more difficult for outsiders to become employed.

Meeting employers' needs

Focus on job match

Since Supported Employment in Austria focuses on establishing good matches between the disabled employee's qualifications/skills and the employer's needs - meeting these needs are central. Therefore, it is believed that the employment of disabled jobseekers is mainly due to their abilities, skills, and qualifications, even if a few employers may use it to show their Corporate Social Responsibility.

Need for communications skills etc.

However, employers are increasingly requiring that their employees have good communication skills and social skills. This makes it even more important for the Supported Employment to assist those with mental health issues or intellectual disabilities to gain a foothold in the labour market.

Meeting employees' needs

Mainly meeting the needs of young people

The Austrian Supported Employment programme primarily caters for the young disabled persons. The reason is at least twofold. Firstly, there is strong focus on the transition from the school/education system into the labour market.



Secondly, young people are less concerned about being covered by the dismissal protection provisions than older employees with disabilities.

Good Practice

Strengths

Overall, the Austrian Supported Employment programme is assessed to be well-developed and achieving good success - including providing a service to those with more significant disabilities. It is an example that a country, which is not regarded as having a very high flexicurity profile, still can develop well-functioning arrangements, if the appropriate political priorities are present.

An interesting feature is the quota system, which on the one hand forces the employer actively to decide whether to integrate people with disabilities or pay a fine. On the other hand, the quota system collides with Supported Employment in that the protection of the individual when approved for the quota system makes it less attractive to the employer to hire this person. The reaction from the younger disabled population, who chooses to avoid the quota documents and obtain a 'proof of disability' only, speaks for itself.

Weaknesses

A slight weakness of the working of the Austrian Supported Employment system is that the Bundessozialamt has not been good enough in communicating the achievements - in particular to the political level. Therefore, some opportunities for obtaining even higher funding and usage of the facility might have been missed.

4.2 Czech Republic

National policy and rules and regulations

Main characteristics

The Czech Republic does not have a nationwide Supported Employment programme, but a number of individual projects run by private operators. Some of these are organised through membership of the Czech Union of Supported Employment.

The Czech Republic is categorised as a country that does not apply flexicurity to a wide extent. As regards Supported Employment, the country does not have Supported Employment as a legal term, but it has been ensured that the relevant labour legislation (Employment Act of 2004) is phrased in a manner that leaves room for Supported Employment.

Supported Employment is not a legal term in the Czech Republic. However, the absence of a legal term does not mean that activities in this area cannot be financed. Because of the nature of Supported Employment, it falls within the responsibility of the social services and is considered social rehabilitation. The governmental financing comes partly from sources earmarked for employment purpose, and partly from sources earmarked under the social services legislation.

The Employment Act contains comprehensive provisions for assistance to people with disabilities (contributions to buy aids, work rehabilitation and other



instruments). Supported Employment is treated as counselling and work under the Employment act. Counselling is based on an agreement, and the service is purchased by the PES from a private agency.

In general, the Ministry of Social Affairs seeks to find ways of supporting people with disabilities and with other disadvantages at the labour market. Supported Employment is one of the ways of supporting people with disabilities. The EU-funded Equal Programme has provided funding for six large agencies (service providers), but that funding has ended. Now the question is how to continue the activities. Currently, most providers are using ESF sources to support some Supported Employment activities. The Ministry expects these projects to result in standard approaches for how to proceed in this area.¹²¹

It is currently being considered where to best place Supported Employment, as it is not unimportant where Supported Employment is placed legally. The Ministry is aware that if they place Supported Employment under the Social Services law, then the focus would be on supporting activities and if placed under the Ministry of Employment, the focus would be on employment and less emphasis will be given to the social aspects. Currently this is not finally decided.

One instrument in the legislation is vocational rehabilitation designed for people with disabilities and for people recommended by the social services. Eligible people can then apply to a local labour office for vocational rehabilitation where an individual plan is developed. As part of the plan, different measures and ways are chosen, e.g. retraining, job finding, counselling/job coaching. Here the Supported Employment agencies can cooperate with the local labour office when these wish to buy the counselling/job coaching services. People with disabilities can refer themselves through the agencies, or they can be referred by the labour offices.

There is a provision in the Employment Act that all companies with more than 25 employees must employ a least 4% disabled employees. In this context, disabled is defined as everybody who receives a social pension, and everybody who is assessed by social security to be disabled.

There are three ways for employers to fulfil demands:

- Employ people with disabilities
- Buy services or goods from companies w/over 50% people with disabilities (most companies prefer this method)
- Contribute a certain amount to the state (regarded by employers as a fine) - this is about 2.5 x average wage (CZK 60,000, approx. EUR 2,440) once a year for each person 'failing to reach the 4% target.

¹²¹ Interview with ministry staff from Ministry of Employment and Ministry of Social Affairs



Disability and employment policies are implemented quite well in legislation according to the Ministry of Employment; however, the implementation of the legislation in practice is a challenge.

The employers have developed a way to avoid the obligation through establishing an internal organisation within their own structure, where they buy for themselves. Employers organisationally place people with disabilities in a separate entity, and the 'bigger' company buy services or goods from this entity.

The competent Ministry has not yet assessed the effect of the measure. However, a project is currently under preparation in the Ministry to make a detailed analysis of how this motivates employers. The project will look at a reassessment of the system.

Monitoring and statistics

The Ministry of Social Affairs has a legal obligation to monitor and quality assure projects such as the Supported Employment projects. This is regulated by the Social Services Act. Any organisation wishing to provide social services must register, and meet certain conditions. The compliance of organisations is monitored by the competent Ministry. The inspection system was launched in 2007 and is still in its infancy. The criteria applied include qualifications of staff, material and technical resources.

No official statistics produced

Since there is no legal provision for Supported Employment, no records are kept at government level, nor are statistics of Supported Employment produced at national level.

The Ministry states that around 10-12% of the total population has a disability. It is not known how many are in work - but statistics indicate that more than 70% of people with visual impairment do not work.¹²²

The only data collected are produced by the Czech Union of Supported Employment. The figures represent the 19 service providers who are members of Czech Union of Supported Employment (out of a total of 39 service providers, so representing some 50%)

In 2008, the 19 service providers had 900 clients (including waiting lists) who had a contract with a service provider.

According to the Ministry of Employment and the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Czech Republic is currently considering how to move forward with Supported Employment also looking at how to fulfil the obligations of the UN Convention of Disabled People, and will shortly be launching a study to that effect.

¹²²Interview with representatives from Ministry of Social Affairs and Ministry of Employment



Roles of key actors

Supported Employment is driven by NGOs and agencies. The labour market partners are not very active in this field.

Currently, there are 39 service providers in total in the Czech Republic of which eight are found in Prague. Of the 39 service providers, 19 are members of the Czech Union of Supported Employment. They all apply to the Ministry of Social Affairs for funding (under provisions for social rehabilitation) and to the ESF for grants from EU.

Public Employment Services offer counselling based on the Employment Act. Counselling is defined as an extensive service to people with disabilities - it is an individual approach, including motivation, production of CV, learning to apply for jobs and help finding a job. This service can be purchased by the PES from Supported Employment agencies.

Funding

In general, service providers are funded from public funds or from EU funds. A detailed account of funding sources is only available for the 19 members of the Czech Union of Supported Employment.

The 19 agencies (mentioned above) receive their funding from the following sources:

- 51% from the Government funds
- 8.3 % from regional authorities,
- 4% from municipalities
- 31% European Social Fund
- 3.7% sponsorship
- 0.5 % from the Public Employment Service
- 1.5 % from other sources.¹²³

Therefore, the two main sources of funding are from the Government and the EU.

Flexicurity

The provision under the Employment Act, require that in companies with more than 25 employees 4% of employees should be disabled. This serves to highlight the possibility for people with disabilities to work. It provides them with enhanced employment security in line with one of the forms of flexicurity arrangements outlined in table 2 in chapter 2. The provision constitutes a path into the labour market that Supported Employment agencies can use in their dialogue with employers. Even if the legislation is not fully enforced, it offers leverage for people with disabilities. While it can be considered a sort of employment security, it represents also a loss of flexibility seen from the point of

¹²³ Statistics produced by National Union of Supported Employment



view of the employer, therefore shifting the balance between flexibility and security. To the extent that the scepticism of employers towards people with disabilities is caused by misconceptions and stereotypes, rather than reality, this kind of quota could lead to a change of attitudes among employers and make them conceive people with disabilities as a work resource. In the longer run, this could have a further positive impact on employment security for people with disabilities.

It can also be considered a positive element that a person with disabilities hired on an ordinary contract counts in favour of the quota. On the other hand, it does not ease access to the open labour market for people with disabilities, who can only work less than the given minimum for this kind of a contract.

Another conducive element is the possibility to contract people with disabilities for a reduced number of hours on a 'temporary' contract. This provides high flexibility, but a low degree of security for the employee as the contract can be terminated with a very short notice. However, this feature may create job openings for this specific target group.

The incentives for employers put more restrictions on the discretion of employers than quota arrangements. Incentives are market conform approaches, whereas quota systems are market interventionist approaches. These two forms are combined in the Czech Republic.

However, the general impression is that the existing arrangements for Supported Employment are limited in the Czech Republic. This is especially the case, when one looks at the actual implementation and monitoring of arrangements for Supported Employment. This is therefore in line with the general characterization made in chapter 2 of the country as having a rather low profile with respect to flexicurity.

Meeting employers' needs

There are several incentives for employers:

- Contribution to companies with more than 50% employees with disabilities. A wage subsidy of CZK 8,000 a month/person is granted (approx. EUR 325)
- Creation of jobs in sheltered work places - support to establishment of workplace and specialised equipment of up to 12 times the average wage per person (a one-off payment) this can be used e.g. to buy special machinery or equipment
- Transport provisions
- Various conditions favourable to companies with a number of people with disabilities - for bidding procedures the number is a competitive parameter



- Wage subsidy can be provided for jobs in the open labour market for employing people with disabilities - so-called socially purposeful jobs - for people who require special assistance/care up to 100% of wage for one year. Employers can also receive a wage subsidy for the creation of such a job or for persons who wish to become self-employed. (The employers complain that procedures are too cumbersome)
- Tax reduction - the employer (or the self-employed) is eligible for a decrease in the income base corresponding to a fixed amount of CZK 18,000 (approx. EUR 730) annually for less severely disabled, for severely disabled persons, a 60% tax reduction is given annually. In addition, employers may deduct CZK 6,000 year/person (approx. EUR 245) in contribution to social security.

Meeting employees' needs

People with disabilities can apply to their local labour office for vocational rehabilitation, where an individual plan is developed. As part of this plan, different options are chosen, e.g. retraining, job finding, or counselling (where Supported Employment and agencies become involved).

Disability pension

In 1996, a new act on a pension insurance system was approved. It introduced a new definition of disability: a person whose capacity to earn money has dropped below a certain level can receive pension and work at the same time. There is no ceiling on the amount of money that can be earned and no deduction is made in the pension, if the person earns a wage.

Good practice

Even if there is no legal mention of Supported Employment, the legal framework is drafted so that it is possible to work with Supported Employment. The work must be done in cooperation with the labour offices, and in some cases there is not enough willingness on the part of the labour offices.

In themselves, the agencies constitute a good practice for delivering Supported Employment - they appear to possess the specific competencies required to deliver Supported Employment.

Even if the effect of the quota system has not yet been assessed, the mere practice of the employers being very inventive to avoid the system, does not point to a full-scale impact. On the other hand, the service providers can use the quota system as a lever for getting the employers to recruit people with disabilities and potentially obtain a better understanding of the working potential of people with disabilities.

For the employer, several financial incentives are in place.

The Czech Republic has ratified the UN Convention on rights of people with disabilities, and so, according to the Ministry of Social Affairs, it can be expected that the country will have to do more in this area. There are several projects currently being funded by the ESF. The Ministry wishes to assess these to



identify the best way forward. Financial and economic considerations will be included.

4.3 Norway

National policy and rules and regulations

Supported Employment in Norway started as a pilot project, which lasted from 1992-1995. In 1996, the project was transformed into a state-financed mainstream national Supported Employment programme (Arbeid med bistand). Recently, a more short-term support scheme was added provided by the local employment and welfare offices (NAV), called “Follow up” (Oppfølging).

Arbeid med bistand (AB) provides support aimed at the inclusion of vocationally disabled jobseekers in the ordinary job market and is usually organised as units with two or more job coaches. Each job coach has an average caseload of 12 clients. These units are mostly located within, and managed by, Labour Market Enterprises and Labour Market Co-operatives (sheltered workshops). These service providers also offer other state-financed labour market measures, and are often organised as private limited companies in which a local municipality or county council holds the majority of the shares. They can also be entirely private or charitable organisations, municipal agencies or combinations of public and private agencies. The share of civil society welfare services is small, but in recent years NGOs and voluntary organisations have increasingly received targeted public funding for dealing with problems of social exclusion.

The Akershus University College offers specific Supported Employment training courses in co-operation with a local service provider. Another course within the broader vocational rehabilitation education is run by the Association of Rehabilitation Enterprises in cooperation with Østfold University College. All these courses are optional, as there are no formal qualifications or education required for becoming a job coach/employment support worker. Many employment support workers have competencies within care-oriented fields, social work and pedagogics. Additional knowledge and experience from other sectors, public administration, marketing or private industry is, however, seen as a valuable background for being an effective job coach, particularly as concerns contacting and co-operating with employers.

Almost all Supported Employment services are available for people with all kinds of disabilities. There are, however, a few services specialised for certain diagnosed groups, such as people with problems related to drug addiction or people with mental health conditions. In general, all clients must be registered at the referral agency, the local employment and welfare office (NAV). There they have to undergo a comprehensive work ability assessment, they must be informed about their options and agree to being referred to a particular labour market scheme deemed necessary and appropriate by the NAV. This may be Supported Employment.



There are about 150 local service providers for Supported Employment spread all over the country. Supported Employment initiatives mostly find employment opportunities in the private sector in small and medium-sized businesses.

The financial and administrative responsibilities for public welfare in Norway are divided between the state level and the municipalities: The central Government is responsible for the general labour market policy and the inclusion of vulnerable groups into employment through a variety of labour market schemes. The municipalities are responsible for primary healthcare, day care for children, primary and lower secondary school, and care for the elderly and persons with disabilities, social services and social assistance benefits.

There are fixed regulations, national rules and general provisions for Supported Employment as well as all other labour market schemes. Provisions are enshrined in the Law on Labour Market Services (Arbeidsmarkedsloven) of 2004. In addition, there are local agreements between the public employment and welfare offices (NAV) and Supported Employment service providers as regards particular targets, objectives and expected results/deliveries.

Due to provisions for “Arbeid med bistand, clients can receive support through an individual job coach/employment support worker for a maximum period of three years, although in certain cases this period can be extended. For example, former psychiatric patients and prisoners can receive support through the programme for up to three and a half years.¹²⁴

Other labour market schemes that can be, and frequently are, combined with Supported Employment (AB) are wage subsidies and other financial support schemes such as workplace adaptation grants. Parallel support may be given by municipalities according to needs (technical adaptations and assistance, support for travel and housing expenses, childcare, medical, social welfare assistance etc).

Monitoring and statistics

As in all the national labour market schemes, Supported Employment schemes are organised and monitored through the Directorate of Labour.

The national authorities do not analyse these statistics on a routine basis. For monitoring purposes, the service providers must deliver reports to the referral organisation (NAV), which also provides statistics.¹²⁵ Data on the scope of Supported Employment are published regularly through NAV, whereas figures that show the job outcome rates are not continuously published, but available on demand through the Directorate of Labour. In addition, there are a number of research reports providing various figures and statistics of labour market schemes. The national programme, the AB, has been assessed independently by research institutions several times since the early 1990's.

¹²⁴ <http://www.nav.no/Arbeid/Arbeidss%C3%B8ker/Arbeidsrette+tiltak/Arbeid+med+bistand/888.cms>

¹²⁵ www.nav.no



There has been a change in the definitions (labels) of different target groups supported by NAV, which may have changed the picture of statistical proportions between groups.

According to NAV statistics, around 6,000 people were enrolled in Arbeid med bistand, in August 2010, whilst the scheme "Follow up" had about 2,500 participants at the same time.¹²⁶

Figures reflecting the job outcomes of the through vocational rehabilitation programmes are generally unclear. Statistics from the labour market authorities indicate that 35% of participants of the AB employment programme found employment in the open labour market. However, evaluation has shown that many of the former participants lose their job within a year after the AB process has ended. Therefore, the main recommendation is to improve possibilities for a steady job by putting more effort in the support of disabled workers to maintain and retain their job.¹²⁷ Another outcome is the fact that services provided by the AB have lowered the perceived risk among employers of hiring a vocationally disabled person. Many employers stated that they would not have offered AB participants jobs without the services provided by the AB. In an evaluation, a total of 92% of employers reported that they did not experience any problems, or had only experienced only minor problems, in connection with the employment of an AB participant. Only 8% of employers had experienced major problems by employing disabled workers.¹²⁸

Roles of key actors

There is not a specific stakeholder forum for Supported Employment. The government has appointed a public committee assessing the sheltered sector (agencies delivering labour market services), and public hearings are held during the process of developing legal provisions and politics concerning people with disabilities and labour market integration. There are service users forums and service users organisations (NGOs) cooperating with public welfare agencies on national, county and local levels, and there is cooperation, regulated by agreements, between the welfare and labour administration (NAV) and service providers' trade organisations (the association of labour market enterprises, Attføringsbedriftene, and sheltered labour market companies, ASVL)

Funding

Funding for Supported Employment schemes is provided by the national Ministry for Labour through the annual state budget. There is overall consensus among all political parties to provide fixed funding of Supported Employment

¹²⁶ Statistikk:

<http://www.nav.no/Om+NAV/Tall+og+analyse/Arbeidsmarked/DDstidstikk/209626.cms>

¹²⁷ ECON (2004). Arbeid med bistand, hva skjer når bistanden opphører? Rapport 102. Oslo: ECON.; ECON (2005). Arbeidsmarkedstiltak i motbakke. Rapport 054

¹²⁸ Spjelkavik, Ø., Frøyland, K. and Evans, M., Supported employment in Norway – A national mainstream programme . Work Research Institute's Occasional Papers, No. 6/04, Oslo, 2004.



as well as all other labour market schemes through the state budget. This makes funding stable and predictable.

The economic crisis in the last few years has not had any particular impact on the resources made available for Supported Employment or other labour market schemes for people with disabilities. Funding for Supported Employment or other labour market schemes has been maintained.

Flexicurity

Norway has a comprehensive welfare state responsibility for providing income security and welfare services to its citizens and a universal and generous social security system based on individual rights and obligations. Active labour market policies and training, and the work first approach in welfare policies aims at high labour force participation and inclusion in the labour market. Norway has a tripartite system of cooperation at the national level between the state and well-organised social partners, in which macro-economic stabilisation policies in particular are important for employment, social distribution and living and working conditions.

The country is characterised by a high degree of social mobility, high productivity and virtuous circles between work and social welfare. Norway is also recognised by high participation rates in the labour market for both sexes. The labour force participation rate is 73% and the unemployment rate approximately 3%. On the other hand, a relatively high share of the working age population (18-66 years of age), approximately 25%, receive health-related benefits and disability pensions. The number of recipients has increased steadily from the mid 1990's. Social partners and the government see the number of persons outside the labour market as a major challenge. The high number of employees on permanent social security arrangements (mainly disability pensions) and the low labour market participation among the occupationally handicapped as well as other groups are seen as a problem both for the persons affected as well as for the economy.¹²⁹

During the last the last 10-15 years, Norwegian labour market policy has been characterised by a gradual shift towards more active measures and policies intensifying the work first approach in welfare policies. Increased labour market inclusion of vulnerable groups is the Government's main strategy for reducing poverty. At the same time, there has also been an increased emphasis on user involvement.

An important part of this stronger emphasis on the work-first approach is the national tri-partite agreement in 2001 between the state and the social partners on a more Inclusive Work life, aiming at reducing sickness absence, increasing employment of persons with impaired work capacity and raising the retirement age. There is, however, no particular agreement with the social partners concerning Supported Employment or other labour market schemes.

¹²⁹ White paper: Report no. 9 to the Parliament (2006-2007) Work, Welfare and Inclusion



Another important element of the overall strategy for a more inclusive society is the major welfare administration reform (the NAV reform) passed by the Parliament in 2005. The reform is a merger of the employment and national insurance administrations into a new employment and welfare administration, combined with more formal collaboration between this new administration and the local government social services administration (the NAV-administration).

It is recognised that measures to reduce the outflow to disability pensions and early retirement have not been as successful as anticipated. The focus today is therefore on improving policies and measures for bringing people back to the labour market as well as on reducing the outflows (mainly long-term illness, disability pensions and early retirement).¹³⁰ According to general politics, paid employment should always be the first choice and a person's workability has to be assessed by the public Employment and welfare office (NAV) before granting disability pension or vocational rehabilitation benefits.

In general, Norway is an example of a country with a high flexicurity profile, in line with the categorisation made in chapter 2. It has flexible and reliable contractual arrangements through modern labour laws, collective agreements and work organisation. Collective agreements are regulating rights and duties of employers and employees, wages, health and safety regulations, recruitment and dismissal rules etc. There are instruments for compensation, and there is a tripartite agreement on inclusive work life (mentioned above).

Norway also has comprehensive lifelong learning strategies grounded in collective agreements and the general work environment legislation.

The country has effective labour market policies that help people cope with rapid change, reduce unemployment spells and ease transition to new jobs. Support is available both for businesses and their employees under downsizing, as well as for vocational training of employees at risk of unemployment. During the financial crisis the government has changed rules for in-plant vocational training and education (extended the duration) in order to improve job retention through adapting to new work tasks.

Norway also has modern social security systems that provide adequate income support, encourage employment and facilitate market mobility. There is a comprehensive and generous universal welfare system, comprising a scheme for social welfare assistance and subsistence, different kinds of benefits and pensions and national programmes for particular vulnerable groups, such as unemployed, immigrants, long-term social assistance recipients.

This universal welfare system provides basic rights for getting assistance, benefits, support and schemes according to the individuals' needs. These instruments are frequently applied within the Supported Employment scheme and significant factors for success.

¹³⁰ <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn0803038s/no0803039q.htm>



On this background, it is not surprising that a number of arrangements can be identified that, in line with the options outlined in table 2 in chapter 2, support the employment of people with disabilities. This is mainly done through job coaches and mentors, who support the people with disabilities in getting and keeping a job and thus provides both employment and job security. To this can be added additional measures, especially wage subsidies that assist the disabled employees with retaining ordinary employment.

Meeting employers' needs

The Supported Employment model is designed such that a job coach/employment support worker constitutes a kind of safety net thereby meeting the needs of the employers to reduce and perceived risk of employing a person with a disability. The fact that Supported Employment can be combined with other labour market schemes, such as wage subsidy, adaptation subsidy (tilretteleggingstilskudd), constitutes important incentives for employers. However, research has shown that the availability and involvement of the job coach is even more significant for employers. The job coach can give advice and guidance; both in relation to the individual employee with a disability, for instance what kind of accompanying measures that are feasible and available for a particular employee as well as for general questions concerning health and safety of the work environment. As the Supported Employment programme has a duration of up to three years, it is possible to provide support for a relatively long period of time.

A challenge for Supported Employment service providers in Norway is to involve employers even more. There are examples of employers who show great engagement and promote their inclusion policies and corporate social responsibilities as a sales argument. There is no shortage of tools to support employers, but Supported Employment services need to establish closer co-operation with employers – which of course requires job competence in marketing and management, not only in social and care work.

There is a variety of support and benefit schemes that NAV can provide in combination with Supported Employment. Some require that the employer has entered into the three-partite agreement between the Government and the employer/employee organisations on Inclusive Work Life aimed at reducing sick leave as well as providing better opportunities for disabled people to obtain and stay in ordinary jobs (IA).¹³¹

Some examples

A “Facilitation Guarantee” (Tilretteleggingsgaranti) is a formal guarantee to ensure that the client/employee with reduced workability and their employer receive all necessary assistance from NAV. These services should be given rapidly and without delay and comprise: a dedicated contact person in NAV, who is responsible for following up with employee and employer, both before and after recruitment, assistance to make necessary work place adaptations etc. The

¹³¹ <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/aid/topics/welfare-policy/inclusive-working-life/New-IA-agreement-and-stimulus-package-to-reduce-sick-leave-.html?id=594043>



target group for applying for this scheme are employees/jobseekers with disabilities and employers who (intend to) employ them.

Facilitation Grants (Tilretteleggingstilskudd) are fixed daily rates that can be given for a limited period to the employer in IA registered companies as compensation for additional expenses to make necessary adjustments for an employee.

Time Indefinite (Tidsubestemt) and fixed-term wage subsidies: wage subsidies granted to employers as a percentage of salary reimbursement. Fixed term wage subsidies may not exceed 60 % of the salary and are available for up to three years. A time indefinite wage subsidy is given for an indefinite period. There is a maximum subsidy of 75% of the salary in the first year, reduced to 66% thereafter.

Other measures without a time limit provided by the NAV and applied at the work place can be a functional assistant, reading and secretarial help and an interpreter for a hearing-impaired employee.

In connection with the scheme “Follow up”, grants may be awarded to cover the cost of a 'mentor' (either in-work or external) to assist the employee in becoming familiar with the work tasks and enhance social integration at the work place.

Combining Supported Employment with formal education is also possible; there are pilot projects running at University/University College called “Supported Education” where students with disabilities receive individual support during and on completing their studies.

Meeting employees' needs

For jobseekers and employees with a disability, it is important that Supported Employment provides close individual follow up. The client in Supported Employment can choose from a variety of available support and can receive assistance at all stages in the process. An average caseload of 12 clients per job coach is viewed as a manageable number that enables the job coach to establish a good and close relationship to each of his/her clients and to provide close follow up.

Research conducted some years ago indicated that employees often combine their ordinary wage with different degrees of disability pensions. The opportunity for people with significantly reduced work ability to work in the open labour market without reduction of income is a positive incentive for entering the ordinary labour market.

The main challenge for Norway is that Supported Employment should be made available for many more people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, such as Down's syndrome. Clients with these particular types of disability have almost disappeared from Supported Employment (they constitute 1% of all Supported Employment participants), which is ironic as from the outset,



Supported Employment was developed particularly for people with intellectual impairments.

Good practice

The main advantages of Supported Employment in Norway are its nationwide availability, and a stable predictable framework based on funding on a national level.

The emphasis lies on a Job Coach Service, which supports unemployed disabled people in finding a job and offers support for job retention.

A standardised and comprehensive work ability assessment giving way for individual decisions and support is a tool for tailoring support to individual needs.

4.4 Spain

National policy and rules and regulations

Spain is categorised as a country that does not have detailed and developed flexicurity arrangements. While Supported Employment is relatively new in Spain, the country has Supported Employment as a legal term (“*Empleo Con Apoyo*”) and a Supported Employment programme is defined by a regulation from the Central Government (Royal Decree 870/2007) of 14 July 2007.

In Spain, Supported Employment was initiated through European funding, through Leonardo, Horizon and Helios projects, and by the European Social Fund.

Target groups are people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups registered in Public Employment Services (PES) as jobseekers. Also, disabled workers from Sheltered Workshops and Social Firms/Special Centres of Employment are eligible for Supported Employment services. To be considered as a person with a disability, a jobseeker has to be assessed by a public multi-disciplinary technical team and must have a disability degree of at least 33%. This team provide an official disability certificate. To be eligible for Supported Employment additional requirements should be met:

- Individuals with cerebral palsy, mental illness, or intellectual disability and a disability certificate with a recognised degree of disability equal to or higher than 33%
- Individuals with physical or sensory (visual) disability and a disability certificate with a recognized level of disability equal or higher than 65%
- Deaf and hearing impaired individuals with a disability certificate equal or higher than 33%

After assessment at the PES, people with disabilities are likely to become eligible for a disability pension and they can choose what service to use. Clients



may also initiate the contact with a Supported Employment service provider themselves, but they will nevertheless have to register and be approved and assessed by PES. Job orientation can be done by PES, but job coaching is normally delivered by private service providers, who can apply to PES and other public and private bodies for funding when a client is registered and is approved by PES.

Some Supported Employment services have special eligibility criteria for people with particular disabilities and/or degree of workability (e.g. > 33% disability). Some services serve only people with particular disabilities, e.g. people with Down's syndrome or autism with job coaches being specially trained for these particular groups.

The caseload of job coaches varies depending on the target group, from three (people with cerebral palsy, mental health problems, or intellectual disability) to 8-12 (physical or sensorial disabilities) or 15 for other target groups.

In accordance with Spanish regulations, there is a time limit for follow-up fixed to 30 months, but many Supported Employment projects maintain contact with the client for as long as clients or employers need it.

In 2002, a signed agreement was made between the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and CERMI on measures to improve employment opportunities for disabled people. Specifically, section III.2, was entitled "Facilitating transition to regular employment".

In 2005, the Committee of Labour and Social Affairs of the Congress of Deputies approved a change in the regulations to adopt the required measures to regulate Supported Employment.

Since 2007, the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the workforce has been governed by Royal Decree No. 870/2007 on the regulation of Supported Employment. The decree provides Supported Employment with a general financial budget for the state to pass on to the autonomous communities. While central policy level cannot dictate to the local communities how to do deliver the services, the decree gives strong support to the philosophy of Supported Employment and states as a general policy, the need to progress disabled people from Sheltered Workshops and Social Firms/Special Centres of Employment, but without abandoning them.

Royal Decree N° 364/2005 of April 8th on Alternative Measures introduced employment quota regulations that state that all businesses with more than 50 employees must employ 2% disabled employees. There are apparently many ways for an employer to escape the quota obligation, and sanctions are rarely used.

Royal Decree N° 290/2004 of 20 February on Labour Enclaves addresses enclaves of disabled people in the open labour market. Enclaves consist of six to eight people with disabilities from Social Firms/Special Centres of Employ-



ment that are working together as a group in businesses/organisations in the open labour market.

The Royal Decree 1451/1983 regulates selective employment and measures to promote employment for disabled workers. It establishes grants to companies that hire disabled employees with permanent contracts.

Act 43/2006 established reductions in Social Security contributions to employers for the permanent hiring of disabled employees.

These measures are seen as helpful and conducive to the development of the Supported Employment model/process, concerning support to get a placement, a job contract, training and adaptations for job maintenance.

Monitoring and statistics

The central policy level monitors Supported Employment via PES in the local communities. Data for detailed statistics are collected annually from the 17 communities, and service providers have to report to the PES for the same purpose. Statistics on Supported Employment are available, but the quality is heavily dependent on reports from the communities. It is generally acknowledged that the system for gathering information from the communities needs to be improved.

Additionally according to regulations, job coaches must have at least a level 1 of professional training degree, but actually most of them have a university degree. In addition, AESE, offers an internet-based course in Supported Employment for practitioners in Spain and Spanish-speaking countries of America.

The Institute on Community Integration, INICO, at the University of Salamanca¹³² has conducted detailed and independent evaluations and monitoring of Supported Employment.

Supported Employment services are provided by local governmental organisations, private service providers, disabled peoples' or their parents' organisations, various disability organisations/foundations, Social Firms/Special Centres of Employment (SCE) and other NGOs. In total, there are between 200 and 300 providers of Supported Employment in Spain. Private service providers provide the majority of Supported Employment services. In 2008, a total of 23,341 persons were employed in the open labour market through Supported Employment services – of these 14,159 were people with disabilities and 9,182 belong to other disadvantaged groups.¹³³

¹³² <http://inico.usal.es>

¹³³ Verdugo, M. A. and al. (2010) – Impacto social del Programa ECA CAJA MADRID de empleo con apoyo, p. 31-32. Caja Madrid Obra Social. Madrid.



Roles of key actors

In total, there are between 200 and 300 Supported Employment providers; mainly private service providers are providing the services. Key organisations for Supported Employment in Spain are:

- Servicio Público de Empleo Estatal (PES - Public Employment Service)
- Private Service Providers
- Asociación Española de Empleo con Apoyo (AESE, the Spanish national association of Supported Employment)¹³⁴
- Comité Español de Representantes de Personas con Discapacidad (CERMI, Spanish Committee of Representatives of People with Disability)¹³⁵
- Fundación EMPLEA¹³⁶
- Fundación ONCE¹³⁷.

There are several regional stakeholder forums on Supported Employment in Spain involving local communities/municipalities, public and private organisations – e.g. in the Balearic Islands, Catalunya, Basque Country, Tenerife Island. At the national level, the AESE and EMPLEA Foundation with the support of CERMI and National Disability Organisations contribute to raising the awareness of Supported Employment and to identifying the support needed from public authorities. At local level, service providers and various projects help raise the awareness of Supported Employment. The EMPLEA Foundation was founded by AESE in 2008 in order to develop Supported Employment, the idea being to attract more economic resources from employers and other powerful bodies. In October 2010, the ONCE Foundation agreed to cooperate with the EMPLEA Foundation to develop Supported Employment together and to fund the development of Supported Employment projects, starting in 2011.

Supported Employment programmes and projects are provided by PES, private service providers, disabled peoples' or their parents' organisations, Social Firms/Special Centres of Employment and other NGOs. Many of the private service providers of Supported Employment are members of AESE. Other significant actors are various EU programmes, private companies and private donors that financially stimulate Supported Employment activities.

Funding

Empleo Con Apoyo is a legal term in Spain, and the Ministry does in principle finance Supported Employment. The financial support covers wage and social security costs of eligible organisations when hiring job coaches. The amount of funding they receive is based on the number of clients and their types and level of disability.

¹³⁴ www.empleoconapoyo.org

¹³⁵ www.cermi.es

¹³⁶ <http://www.fundacionemplea.org/>

¹³⁷ <http://www.fundaciononce.es>



However, Supported Employment agencies are dependent on several sources for their funding. One source is the public tender system through the 17 autonomous communities, which constitutes the most significant single financial contribution to Supported Employment. The financial basis for this funding is the Central Government, the local communities and EU (50%). Another significant source is the contribution from private companies that hold a social budget, and can award private donations. The banking organisations have an obligation to fund social inclusion activities, which can include Supported Employment and as such, the banking sector in Spain is a significant funder of Supported Employment services. In addition, several projects have or have received European funding through the ESF, Leonardo, Helios, Horizon, and EQUAL programmes.

There is uncertainty if the financial downturn has had any significant impact on Supported Employment. According to statistics from PES (albeit incomplete) in the communities, there was no significant drop in Supported Employment activities from 2008 to 2009, but the situation since 2009 is not yet known.

The public funding situation of Supported Employment varies greatly between the 17 communities/regions as they have a very strong autonomy. It appears to be generally accepted that funding of Supported Employment through PES is not enough, and at central policy level there are plans to find ways to allocate more funding for Supported Employment especially to target the employment needs of disabled persons with special and significant needs.

Flexicurity

Legislative measures in Spain are often the result of bargaining processes between the main social partners at national level, the Trade Union Confederation of Workers' Commissions (CCOO), the General Workers' Confederation (UGT), the Spanish Confederation of Employers' Organizations (CEOE) and the Spanish Confederation of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (CEPYME).¹³⁸ Flexicurity policies in Spain have been based on two main objectives:

- Fostering stable employment, mainly through allowances to companies for social security contributions
- A series of measures aimed at improving the employability and activation of groups who find it difficult to integrate in employment.

Supported Employment and vocational training are regulated in the Royal Decree 395/2007, which also incorporate the Agreement for Training and Employment signed by the social partners in 2006. The Agreement has led to the creation of a single training system for lifelong training of employees. It also provides incentives for companies to implement training actions through subsidies and social security allowances.

¹³⁸ <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn0803038s/es0803039q.htm>



Supported Employment is relatively new in Spain, and its promotion is based on a number of instruments some of which have been stimulated by inspiration and financial support from the European Union. The lack of a coherent policy framework and the weaknesses in the implementation of some of the measures (e.g. the quota system) are well in line with the overall characterisation of the Spanish flexicurity profile presented in chapter 2.

However, at the more concrete level one can relate most of the specific instruments for promoting Supported Employment in Spain to the menu of flexicurity arrangements outlined in table 2 of chapter 2, although in the Spanish context, they are not conceived in a flexicurity perspective. This goes both for the providers of support to Supported Employment in the form of coaching and mentoring, for the quota system and for the other measures outlined below.

Despite the increasing concern of the social partners about employment security, these measures are part of the collective bargaining, even if their effects, apparently, have been limited¹³⁹; employers prefer to hire people without disabilities, and it is a drawback that Supported Employment is not very well known among employers.

The key objectives of the current policy strategy¹⁴⁰ state the importance of seeing the whole picture, including sheltered sector interests, training possibilities for disabled persons, trade unions' interests and employers' difficulties, as well as promoting Supported Employment, securing a minimum wage system and dictating to employers a specific quota of disabled employees. The aim is that these features are parts of a system that interact well together and develop a more action-oriented policy on employment that is more suitable for people with disabilities. The PES also has a more focused intermediate role and all 17 autonomous communities should have the same services on offer for people with disabilities.

Meeting employers' needs

There are several incentives for employers to promote permanent contracts for people with disabilities. These include grants to companies that hire disabled employees with permanent contracts and reductions in Social Security payments for employers that offer permanent jobs to disabled employees.

Financial incentive regulations aimed at employers have also been introduced, e.g. that employers receive EUR 3,907 for employing a disabled person in a full-time job, and half that amount for a part-time job. Employers can receive EUR 901 for physical adaptations for each disabled employee.

¹³⁹ <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn0803038s/es0803039q.htm>

¹⁴⁰ The strategy document for people with disabilities, "Estrategia global de acción para el empleo de personas con discapacidad 2008 – 2012"



The regulations allow a disabled person to combine the disability pension with an ordinary wage. Disability pension is EUR 300, and the minimum wage is EUR 650 per month. A disabled employee can earn totally EUR 700 per month without any reduction of the disability pension. If a disabled employee earns more, the pension will be progressively reduced.

Additional measures to meet the employers' needs are financial support for workplace adaptation when hiring a disabled person, special arrangements for sick leave, tax reduction and financial support to flexible work arrangements.

Meeting employees' needs

The Royal Decree 395/2007, regulating the sub-system of vocational training for employment, incorporated the Agreement for Training and Employment of 2006 signed by the social partners, has led to the creation of a training system to favour the lifelong training of workers, who may take individual training leave. It also provides incentives for companies to implement training actions through subsidies and Social Security allowances.

Other accompanying measures available to meet the employees' needs are technical aids, housing/mobility benefits, special tax deductions or exemptions, possibilities for flexible work arrangements, a flexible disability pension that may be combined with wages, preferential access to job vacancies with public employers, and a 2% compulsory quota system for companies with more than 50 employees.

Good practice

The first part of the Royal Decree 870/2007 is recognition and support for the Supported Employment philosophy of social integration through employment and that Supported Employment is preferential to sheltered employment or disability pension. In Spanish good practice, Supported Employment employees with disabilities are employed in the open market, with a permanent contract or a fixed term contract longer than six months; companies are entitled to financial support in the supportive regulations; and job coaches give ongoing support for a limited time period.

To enhance and develop good practice in Spanish Supported Employment, it has been acknowledged at policy level that there is a need to revise the regulations, offer more choice to clients, improve funding for job coaching, and also make the procedures less bureaucratic. The aim is to equal the incentives for Supported Employment to those incentives afforded to Sheltered Employment and to apply the same criteria of support services to both schemes in order not to discriminate against people with disability and to meet their rights and needs. To ensure a quality and high standard of service, job coaches must be trained and specialised; some regulations of the autonomous communities state at least a middle degree (one year) university level.

Good practice Supported Employment is for people with significant needs, and it is acknowledged at policy level that there is a need to establish more than financial incentives available to employers. Supported Employment regulations



exist for funding job coaches, but the bureaucracy has been complex and there has been uncertainty as to who is eligible for Supported Employment. Therefore, a more coherent system is under development, where providers of Supported Employment will have to work closer with the local PES, as all clients entitled for financial support will require a public assessment. The abilities and skills are to be assessed by a Specialist Assessment Unit at the PES, and a “capacity report” will state the disabled person's capacity and skills. A person must have > 33% disability to receive help through Supported Employment to find and maintain a job. The Assessment Unit will consist of multi-professional disability specialists, who will also know about vacancies in the open labour market. The Specialist Assessment Unit at PES will advise people with disabilities on appropriate job matches as well as provide advice and guidance to employers. The Unit will not offer job coaching or follow-up as that will be the role of Supported Employment services. Currently, the Supported Employment scheme is expanded to other disadvantaged groups of people such as ex-offenders, ex-prisoners, ex-substance abusers, immigrants/refugees, youth with special needs, women suffering gender violence, people under level of poverty, and ethnic groups.

4.5 Sweden

National policy and rules and regulations

In Sweden, Supported Employment is the responsibility of the Ministry of Employment, and the law is implemented by the Arbetstyrelsen (the Swedish Labour Market Board) through its local labour offices. A national programme, SIUS (Special Introduction and Follow-Up Support), was created in 1993 as part of the PES to implement legislation¹⁴¹.

In the Swedish system, an unemployed person - with or without impairment - must register with the labour office. The work capacity will then be assessed, and based on this it will be decided if support from SIUS is needed. People with disabilities can receive support from SIUS for a maximum of six months as introduction into the job, and for at least 12 months once they have secured a job (follow-up).

One act that *supports* Supported Employment in Sweden is 'Lagen om Stöd och Service' (LSS - law on support and service) from 1993¹⁴². The act states that it is the obligation of the state to find activities for persons with certain disabilities (i.e. learning disabilities (IQ below 70), autism, traumatic brain injuries and in some cases, severe disabilities of other kinds) so that they find themselves in a work-related situation. Work-related situations are often performed in sheltered workshops, but in recent years a growing number of external placements have been made influenced by Supported employment. Most often, the primary

¹⁴¹ Förordning (SFS 2000:630) om särskilda insatser för personer med funktionsnedsättning som medför nedsatt arbetsförmåga.

Förordning (SFS 200:628) om den arbetsmarknadspolitiska verksamheten.

¹⁴² Law1993:387



goal of the placement is not employment with regular salary but a placement on the regular labour market while retaining disability pension. The rationale behind the Act (81993:387) was to meet the challenge of assisting disabled persons into jobs and of enabling them to maintain these jobs. However, recent assessments of the activities aiming to find jobs according to the regulations in the Act found that less than 1% of the persons getting support from the Act find employment in the regular labour market.¹⁴³

Monitoring and Statistics

The SIUS programme is monitored as any other government programme, including visits from the Swedish Court of Auditors. The SIUS programme has internal controllers who monitor outsourced tasks.

The Supported Employment method has also been applied for integration of immigrant workers. To this end, an evaluation was made by the IFAU (institute of work life studies).¹⁴⁴

The Public Employment Office (Arbetsförmedlingen) collects statistics on Supported Employment initiatives in Sweden. However, no statistics are available at the national level. So far, no independent evaluation/impact assessment of Supported Employment services has been conducted.

The SIUS programme covers some 30% of the entire target group. A recent report from 2010¹⁴⁵ estimates the number of disabled people receiving Supported Employment services in Sweden to around 20,000 people annually. It is the goal of SIUS that 60% of their participants should have paid jobs in the open labour market. In November 2010, 52% of the participants had a paid job. The fact that SIUS did not reach its goal in 2010 is seen to be a result of the financial crisis, which has hit this group hard.¹⁴⁶

Roles of key actors

The main actor in Supported Employment is Arbetsmarknadsstyrelsen (the Swedish Labour Market Board) with a specialised programme in Support Employment SIUS (Special Introduction and Follow-Up Support). The programme is implemented through 68 local labour offices. About 3,500 persons are supported by SIUS annually.

Private organisations, cooperatives and municipalities are also involved in Supported Employment in Sweden in different ways and may be service providers for SIUS. Some examples are the Fountain House, which works primarily with persons with a prior connection to the psychiatric system, and MISA, which primarily operates in Stockholm and mainly focuses on persons with mental

¹⁴³ National board of Health and Welfare, 2010

¹⁴⁴ IFAU - Virtues of SIN - Effects of an immigrant introduction programme. Olof Åslund and Per Johansson. 2006.

¹⁴⁵ A brief overview of Supported Employment in Europe - EUSE 2010

¹⁴⁶ Interview with SIUS.



disabilities. The PES can buy places from other providers, and on average it buys some 25 places annually.

The target group of the SIUS Programme is mainly people with psychiatric, intellectual or learning disabilities. The SIUS programme has a total of 495 job coaches and also a number of specialists, e.g. social workers, psychologists, and occupational therapists. The programme covers some 35% of the total target group¹⁴⁷.

In practice, the SIUS programme gives priority to supporting persons with a certain level of workability, (perhaps around 50%). Thus, a certain creaming takes place, partly due to the performance criteria.

The SIUS system forms part of the public employment services and job testing, and mapping of the competencies of the person with disabilities is carried out by the mainstream labour offices consultants, whereas the SIUS consultants are specialised in finding jobs for people with disabilities. The SIUS consultant receives the person with disabilities only once the ability to work and health issues etc. have been clarified.

The target groups are disabled people with reduced ability to work, i.e. persons with different kinds of disabilities who have trouble accessing the open labour market because of reduced working capacity. In practice, the Supported Employment initiatives in Sweden include the following target groups:

- People with intellectual disabilities
- People with mental health problems
- People with physical disabilities
- People who are deaf or who have hearing impairment
- People who are blind or who are visually impaired
- People with social medical disadvantages (e.g. drug problems).

Currently pilot projects on IPS are being conducted in two cities (Malmö and Ömoe). IPS is an adapted form of Supported Employment targeted at persons in the psychiatric system. The purpose is finding jobs in the open labour market, and one of the variations to SIUS is that the individual can decide the length of time that support is needed.

Funding

The SIUS programme is funded by public funds, which are earmarked for Supported Employment and cannot be used for other purposes.

The municipalities fund the Supported Employment initiatives in the daily activities, according to the Law (1993:387). Private organisations and NGOs are often partially funded by the municipalities and/or offers Supported employment programmes as a service, which the municipalities can buy.

¹⁴⁷ Interview with SIUS representative



A growing part of the Supported Employment initiatives made in Sweden in recent years has been projects, most often supported by the EU social funds. Some of the projects have been successfully implemented into regular services but the implementation part has been problematic partly due to financial problems.

Flexicurity

The wage levels for the different sectors in Sweden are regulated by collective agreements. For Supported Employment, this means that people with disabilities who secure a job in the open labour market must be remunerated according to these agreements.

Along with the other Nordic countries, Sweden is characterised by high levels of income and employment security. It is therefore not surprising that the study identified a coherent and well-developed national framework for supporting the employment security of people with disabilities in this country. Security is provided through targeted assistance to people with disabilities in finding employment.

Flexibility

Flexible working hours is a tool used in Supported Employment to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities, and the measure introduces an important element of internal, numerical flexibility.

Security

When it comes to job security, a rather high degree of security for all employees is found in Sweden compared to other Nordic countries. The notice periods are fairly long (from three months up to one year); income security through unemployment benefits is provided after six months' membership, if a person pays to the unemployment insurance system. Hiring and firing rules are the same for people with disabilities as for the labour force in general.

Lifelong learning

However, possibilities for lifelong learning tend to be lower for people with disabilities than for people in the labour force in general as there are more offers for employees without disabilities. In the Swedish system, only unemployed people receive support from the SIUS consultants. This makes it difficult for employed people with disabilities to upgrade qualifications and secure career development.

Meeting employers' needs

As an incentive, the employer can receive a wage subsidy of up to a maximum of 80% of SEK 16,700 (approx. EUR 1,870). The exact amount depends on the degree of output reduction caused by the impairment. In this connection, the Labour Office must check that the employer does not have any public debts, since financing is provided by public funds.

Technical aids and adaptation can be provided by the PES and costs incurred can be covered.



Meeting employees' needs

As is the case with all employees, salaries paid to employees under the Supported Employment scheme must, follow the rules for minimum wages set as part of collective agreements.

If the person receives a social pension, any earnings will result in an equivalent reduction of this pension.

Good practice

As a national programme, Supported Employment is available to all people with disabilities. This is facilitated through the decentralised approach making the services easily accessible. A central, full-time coordinator is responsible for the ongoing development and quality assurance of the SIUS consultants.

The fact that funding for Supported Employment is earmarked in Sweden is a strength in that funds cannot be used for other purposes e.g. during a financial crisis. The potential weakness is that the budget is subject to approval every year.

The division of labour between the mainstream labour offices and the SIUS consultants allows the SIUS consultant to concentrate on the needs of the jobseeker and keeping in close contact with employers.

The fact that support is also provided to the employer is important to the success of Supported Employment. Through this means, the employers often change attitudes from being sceptic to the idea of employing a disabled person to being willing to give it a try. One of the decisive elements on the part of the employer is that the job coach can be present at the work place during the introductory period. Another decisive element is tailor-made support during a learning period, which remains, if and when needed, over a longer period of time. Support should be provided to meet the needs of the employees and the employers. Even more important to the recruitment decision is probably the availability of wage subsidies. This is especially true for small private firms, where the most persons, supported by Supported Employment organisations in Sweden find jobs¹⁴⁸.

One of the challenges is that the term job coach is not a protected title, which gives anybody the right to claim being a job coach. This challenge is most likely also present in other countries. Another challenge is that some organisations claiming to be working according to the principles of Supported Employment only do so partially. Often the principle of employment is absent, and organisations take the liberty to call every placement an employment even though the 'employed' person remains on disability pension with no regular salary. This renders it difficult to assess the quality of Supported Employment in Sweden. Different organisations working with Supported Employment make different

¹⁴⁸ Gustafsson, J. (2010) Hållbart arbete. En rapport om arbetsliv för personer med nedsatt arbetsförmåga (http://www.s-activa.se/upload/hallbart_arbete2010.pdf)



interpretations of the principles of Supported Employment. This may be due to different target groups and/or regulations, or in some cases, due to organisational culture and practices where expectations of what people with disabilities can manage are low¹⁴⁹.

A challenge for the people with disabilities is that career development is difficult, since support from SIUS is only provided to the unemployed. Once employed, support from Supported Employment organisations is often terminated due to PES regulations. This may affect the prospects of career development in ongoing employment as well as attempts to establish a career in the labour market in general.

4.6 United Kingdom

National Policy and Rules and Regulations

The main legislation is the Disability Discrimination Act (1995). However, from 1 October 2010, the Equality Act will replace most of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) even though the Disability Equality Duty in the DDA continues to find application. This piece of legislation does not specifically mention Supported Employment; it is rather a general legislative instrument to combat disability discrimination in any circumstance, including employment, education and access to goods, facilities and services. There was an employment quota system in the UK, but this ended in 1995 when the new Disability Discrimination Act was introduced.

There is no specific Supported Employment programme in the UK but there are several employment programmes for disabled people:

- Pathways to Work
- Access to Work
- Work Preparation
- Workstep (replaced by Work Choice - since 25 October 2010).

Pathways to Work is a programme run by Jobcentre Plus to help disabled people find work.

Access to Work is a programme that offers financial assistance to the disabled employee or employer for any specialist equipment at work or adapting processes at work. It can pay towards the cost of getting to work if a disabled person cannot use public transport. It can also pay for a signer or a support worker.

Work Preparation is a programme to help prepare a disabled person to return to work. This is usually done through organising a short work experience placement, updating skills and building confidence. This programme ended in October 2010.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid



Workstep is an employment programme that contains several elements of Supported Employment. It provides funding for support to both the disabled employee and the employer. It can pay for a long or short-term wage subsidy or support through the provision of an Employment Support Worker/Job Coach. An employee on the Workstep programme can be employed either in the open labour market or in a Supported Business/Sheltered Workshop. This programme ended in October 2010.

In October 2010, the Department of Work and Pensions began a new programme entitled Work Choice. Work Choice will in effect, replace the Workstep and Work Preparation programmes and will be delivered throughout the UK by a small number of providers. The Work Choice programme will offer preparation for work, support whilst in employment or help to find an unsupported job. This is a voluntary programme for jobseekers with disabilities, and a job outcome is classed as paid work for more than 16 hours per week. Service providers will be paid by results and there are elements of Supported Employment in the new Work Choice programme. The programme is modular and has three main steps:

- 1 Preparation and help to find work.
- 2 Short-term support (up to two years).
- 3 Longer-term support (two years +).

Apart from the UK government employment programmes for disabled people, local authorities, disability organisations and voluntary organisations deliver more traditional Supported Employment services. These Supported Employment services are provided through funding from a local authority, the European Social Fund, lottery or health service funds.

In addition to the measures described in the United Kingdom, there are specific activities relevant only to Scotland, England and Northern Ireland.

England

Employment is one of the three priority areas for the English learning disability strategy, Valuing People Now. A range of resources has been developed as part of the strategy. These include an agreed definition of Supported Employment, guidance on good employment support, and guidance on recruitment to the public sector. Work is underway on job coach standards and a qualification framework is being developed for job coaching and training in systematic instruction.

The focus around mental health is the development of “individual placement & support” services where employment staff are collocated with clinical health staff. Nine centres of excellence have been established.

There is increasing evidence that locally-funded provision is likely to be significantly cut as a result of local authority budget pressures.



Scotland

There is a Supported Employment Framework currently being developed by the Scottish Government. This framework encourages the adoption of the Supported Employment process and the potential development of quality standards and staff qualifications in Supported Employment. The Framework and its proposals do not actually intend to fund Supported Employment but instead promote the model and its activities.

The majority of the 32 Scottish local authorities deliver some form of Supported Employment service although this is not a statutory requirement. However, it appears likely that these services will be significantly reduced as there is an urgent need to make financial savings. Moreover, all Scottish local authorities have had their Workstep contracts terminated by the UK government, and this is likely to lead to further reductions in Supported Employment services.

Northern Ireland

Similar to the rest of the UK, there is no legislation or mainstream funding for Supported Employment in Northern Ireland. However, vocational training and employment is a devolved issue under the Employment and Training (NI) Act 1950, which means Northern Ireland governs and has the flexibility to develop their own policies and practices including provision for people with disabilities. Traditionally, however the NI Government replicates and/or modifies National UK Programmes, which do not always transfer across well into the NI structures and infrastructures.

Specialist employment programmes and services provided by the Department for Employment and Learning are very similar to those provided by the Department for Work and Pension. The main difference is that Department for Employment and Learning no longer provides a specialist Disablement Employment Advisor service unlike in England, Scotland and Wales.

Monitoring and Statistics

Figures from 2009 show that disabled people are significantly less likely to be in employment than non-disabled people. The trend shows that there has consistently been an employment rate gap. In 2009, 47.4% of disabled people were in employment compared to 77.3% of non-disabled people. Employment rates of non-disabled people have significantly decreased since the baseline. No other figures have significantly changed since the baseline year of 2005.

When these figures are broken down by full-time and part-time, data from 2009 show that 32.9% of disabled people were in full-time employment, compared to 58.9% of non-disabled people; and 14.4% of disabled people were in part-time employment, compared to 18.3% of non-disabled people. Both full-time and part-time employment rates of non-disabled people have significantly decreased since the baseline (2005). The data cover all working age adults (males aged 16-64, females aged 16-59) who report they are in employment (including self-employment). Figures are for Great Britain¹⁵⁰.

¹⁵⁰ Source: <http://www.officefordisability.gov.uk/roadmap-to-disability-equality/indicators.php>



The number of disabled people in employment with support/wage subsidy from the Workstep programme as at 1 July 2010 was 13,470¹⁵¹. As there are no Supported Employment programmes, any data is not reliable and tends to be localised. Estimates from the Scottish, English, Welsh and Northern Irish Associations of Supported Employment indicate there may be around 30,000 disabled/disadvantaged people in Supported Employment services although some of that number may be included in the Workstep figure mentioned above.

Roles of key actors

While there is no mainstream Supported Employment programme in the UK, there are many organisations delivering employment and disability services that contain many characteristics of Supported Employment. Additionally, it is estimated that there more than 400 organisations delivering Supported Employment or elements of Supported Employment and the key organisations are:

- Department of Work and Pensions (PES)
- Jobcentre Plus (PES)
- Local Authorities
- Scottish Union of Supported Employment
- Northern Ireland Union of Supported Employment
- British Association of Supported Employment
- Welsh Association for Supported Employment
- Disability Organisations.

The Department of Work and Pensions deliver employment services through Jobcentre Plus but increasingly more employment services are contracted out to the private or voluntary sectors.

The main stakeholders in the government funded disability and employment programmes are Jobcentre Plus and its numerous sub contractors. There are more stakeholders/actors to be found in more locally funded services where there are strong partnerships between local authorities, health services and disability organisations.

The UK government programme with most similarities to Supported Employment is Workstep where elements of Supported Employment stages 1-5 can be found. Workstep is delivered by more than 400 providers throughout the UK but the Workstep programme ended in October 2010, and the replacement programme will be delivered by eight providers or prime contractors, as they are officially known.

It is estimated that there are more than 400 organisations in the UK delivering some form of Supported Employment and are funded from a variety of local and national sources.

¹⁵¹ Source: http://campaigns.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd1/adhoc_analysis/2010/workstep_oct10.pdf



Funding

The funding of the main UK employment and disability programmes (Pathways to Work, Work Preparation, Workstep and Access to Work) is from the state. The state also employs Personal Advisers and Disability Employment Advisers at most branches of Jobcentre Plus, although these advisers do not usually deliver any stages of the Supported Employment process.

There are several hundred organisations of varying sizes delivering some form of Supported Employment, and they are funded from a variety of sources including local authorities, European Social Funds and health service funds. There are also funds available occasionally from the separate Scottish and Northern Irish devolved parliaments, although there are no funds specifically for Supported Employment.

The impact of the current economic climate is likely to lead to a reduction in Supported Employment services as local authorities and health authorities need to make significant financial savings. Moreover, the funding available from the European Social Fund has been gradually reduced over the past several years.

Flexicurity

In the comparative literature, the UK is generally described as a country with a high level of flexibility on the labour market, but with a level of security that is lower than the one found in the Nordic countries. The absence of a coherent national framework for Supported Employment in the UK is in line with this general characterisation of the UK. One must, however, note the existence of instruments to provide support to the employment of people with disabilities, e.g. in the form of wage subsidies or equipment, but there is no policy taking the form of a fully integrated programme having all the elements of Supported Employment as described in chapter 1. The barriers for setting up such a coherent programme are difficult to assess based on the available evidence, although the present economic crisis of course acts as an actual obstacle.

The newly created Work Choice programme will contain several key elements of the Supported Employment. Jobseekers will be provided with a range of services to assist them prepare and secure paid jobs in the open labour market. Moreover, depending on the needs of the individual, follow up and on-and-off-the-job support is available for up to two years. In certain circumstances, long-term support may be available for employees with significant disabilities.

Meeting employers' needs

The Workstep programme offered employers a short or long-term wage subsidy for the employment of certain people with disabilities. However, this programme ended in October 2010 and its replacement programme, Work Choice, no longer offers any financial incentive although it does offer support to both the employer and employee in the work place.

The Access to Work programme can fund equipment, aids or adaptations in the workplace for a disabled employee. Access to Work can also pay for an inter-



preter, a personal reader, a support worker and travel fares if the employee cannot use public transport. Access to Work pays 100% of the costs if a disabled person is unemployed and starting a new job, self-employed or working for an employer for less than six weeks. If a disabled employee works for an employer for more than six weeks and needs special equipment or adaptations to premises, an employer with less than nine employees does not need to contribute to the cost. Employers with 50 to 249 employees will pay the first GBP 500. Those with more than 259 employees will pay the first GBP 1000. Aside from these amounts, the Access to Work fund pays 80% of costs up to GBP 10,000.

Supported Employment organisations financed outside central government (i.e. local authorities, disability organisations) do not usually offer financial incentives to employers but do provide support and guidance to employers in line with stages 4 and 5 of the Supported Employment process.

The employment quota system ended in 1995 with the introduction of the Disability Discrimination Act and in any event, there was little or no monitoring of the quota system when it was in operation and failure to recruit 3% registered disabled employees was never enforced.

There are no perceived financial incentives for employers who employ a person with a disability. In the change from Workstep to Work Choice, there is a cultural shift from subsidising employers to the support provided by the Work Choice programme.

Good Practice

Within the funding of employment and disability programmes, good practice can be found in the fact that the UK Government funds long-term support to both employees and employers through the new Work Choice programme. This is in line with stages 4 and 5 of the Supported Employment process.

4.7 Summing up

In the following, we present the findings of the in-depth study across the six countries, focusing on the main characteristics of the countries in terms of funding and organisation, monitoring and statistics, and incentives for employers and employees to assist the inclusion process and flexicurity. This allows for easy comparison across the countries.

Organisation and funding

Austria

Austria has a national Supported Employment programme (Begleitende Hilfen) funded under the national budget. The programme is the responsibility of the PES who buys places from service providers (NGOs). The service provider must be a qualified provider. The legal framework is administered by the Ministry of Employment and is the daily responsibility of the nine Regional Social Welfare Offices.



The government funding for Supported Employment constitutes some 40%, with 35% from ESF and the remainder from the income from the quota system (Ausgleichstaxfund).

All five steps of Supported Employment are included in the programme. The maximum duration of the support is 6-12 months for getting into a job and in principle unlimited once in a job.

Czech Republic

The Czech Republic does not have a specific Supported Employment Programme, but does provide funding for Supported Employment activities.

Supported Employment is not a legal term, but legal room has consciously been provided under the labour legislation to allow for Supported Employment activities. Supported Employment is implemented by service providers (NGOs and private). The service providers obtain funding for their activities through ESF, national funding and private funding.

The legal framework is administered by the Ministry of Employment.

Supported Employment is delivered by service providers to assist the jobseeker/employee to obtain and maintain a job. The duration of the support is normally two years.

Norway

Norway has a national Supported Employment programme (Arbeid med bistand) funded under the national budget, which covers all five stages. The programme is the responsibility of the PES who buys seats from pre-qualified service providers (semi-private). The legal framework is administered by the Directorate of Labour and Welfare and its PES (NAV).

Support is rendered for a maximum of three years for the jobseeker/employee to obtain and maintain a job.

Spain

Spain does not have a specific Supported Employment programme but does fund Supported Employment services through the 17 independent regions.

The legal framework for Supported Employment is entitled 'Empleo con apoyo' with national funding channelled through the 17 regional authorities/independent regions/Communities. This is provided as budget support, and the use of funds is up to the 17 regions. The PES in each of the 17 regions makes funding available for service providers by application. In addition, service providers use the ESF and formerly other EU funding as wells as private funding.

Support is rendered to the jobseeker/employee to obtain and maintain a job. The follow-up period is fixed at 30 months, but many projects maintain contact with the employees and employers for as long as needed.

Sweden

Sweden has a national Supported Employment programme (SIUS) funded under the national budget and earmarked for Supported Employment. In addition to this, there are a number of projects with elements of Supported Employment,



but without follow-up in jobs on the open labour market. These projects are primarily funded by local authorities.

The SIUS programme is delivered under the PES. The PES can and does buy places from service providers. The legal framework is administered by the Ministry of Employment and its PES. Support is rendered for the jobseeker/employee to obtain and maintain a job for a maximum of 18 months.

United Kingdom

UK does not have a specific national programme for Supported Employment, but there are several employment programmes for people with disabilities with elements of Supported Employment. In addition, local authorities, disability organisations and voluntary organisations deliver more traditional Supported Employment services .

Government employment programmes are delivered under the PES, whereas other employment programmes are delivered by service providers.

Funding for these measures come from a variety of public sources (ESF, government, municipalities).

The legal framework for government funding is under the Department of Work and pensions.

Under the Work Step programme, support was provided to maintain a job, but not to obtain a job. With the new Work Choice programme, funding will now be available for obtaining and maintaining a job. Accordingly, with both programmes long-term support (in excess of two years) is available to employee and employer.

Other service providers usually maintain contact with the employee for as long as the employee and employer need it.

Monitoring and statistics

Austria

The Supported Employment programme is monitored by a national Board for Social Affairs. The Bundessozialamt registers success rates: obtaining jobs and retaining jobs.

Czech Republic

Since the term Supported Employment is not a legal term, no statistics on Supported Employment are produced by government bodies, however, the Czech Union of Supported Employment produces statistics for its 19 service provider members, constituting 50% of total service providers in Czech Republic.

Norway

In Norway, Supported Employment is monitored by the Directorate of Labour (NAV) and statistics are produced by this directorate.

Spain

In principle, the Ministry monitors Supported Employment via the PES of the 17 regions, but not all regions report, which is reflected in the statistics.

Sweden



For the SIUS programme, statistics are produced. The programme is monitored as any other government programme.

United Kingdom

The Department for Work and Pensions monitors the Work Step/Work Choice programme and produce statistics for this. For other Supported Employment initiatives, there are no reliable statistics available.

Incentives for employers and employees to assist the inclusion process

Austria

To increase the prospects of employment for people with disabilities, Austria has a quota system, which is enforced and therefore has an impact. Fees for non-compliance go back into the funding of Supported Employment. Another incentive is a wage subsidy.

Czech Republic

A quota system is in place but not being enforced. However, an impact is that the system works as a tool to encourage to employers to recruit people with disabilities and serves as an entrance for service provider to enter into dialogue with employers. Tax reduction measures are in place for employers. Wage subsidy is also a possibility for the employers, but the procedures are said to prevent extensive use of this mechanism.

If a person receives a pension, any earnings will be an additional income.

Norway

Wage subsidies are an important incentive in Norway. The exact amount is determined by the work ability of the individual. Work place adaptation grants are also available to employers. For the employee it is possible to combine a pension with wages.

Spain

In Spain, tax deductions are available (reductions in social security contributions). There are grants available to companies who hire people with disabilities for permanent employment, and there is a quota system, which is not systematically being enforced. The impact of the financial incentives is unsure.

For the employee, it is possible to combine a pension with wages.

Sweden

Wage subsidies are important incentives to employers. The exact amount is determined by the work output of the individual.

For the employee, it is possible to combine a pension with wages.

UK

There are no perceived financial incentives for employers who employ a person with a disability.

For people who work less than 16 hours a week, it is possible to combine wages with pension.



Flexicurity

In chapter 2, we established an analytical framework for the degree of flexicurity and the arrangements for Supported Employment. Based on the findings of the six in-depth country studies, we have sought to place each country into this framework. This is presented below.

		Degree of flexicurity	
		High	Low
Arrangements for Supported Employment are present	Yes	Supported Employment in line with overall flexicurity characteristics: <i>Norway</i> <i>Sweden</i>	Identify other factors promoting Supported Employment: <i>Austria</i> <i>Spain</i> <i>UK</i>
	No	Identify other barriers for Supported Employment	Supported Employment in line with overall flexicurity characteristics: <i>Czech Republic</i>

For **Austria**, the assumption made was that given the low degree of flexicurity and the emphasis on (job) security, Supported Employment would not stand strong, unless other determining factors were present. In the case of Austria, Supported Employment is indeed present. This is probably due to political priorities that have resulted in well-functioning arrangements for Supported Employment. So, the mechanism here has been top-down.

For **the Czech Republic**, the assumption would also be that due to the low degree of flexicurity, the arrangements for Supported Employment would be limited, and this is the case when looking for central initiatives and arrangements, which are limited to primarily financial support. A combination of a market interventionist system (i.e. the quota system) and the market conform incentives of wage subsidy are found in the Czech Republic.

Nevertheless, due to the insistence of NGOs and private actors, Supported Employment is present and political lobbying from this group has played an important role in creating legal room for performing Supported Employment in the Czech Republic. This is thus a bottom-up approach to Supported Employment.

Norway belongs to the group of Nordic countries with medium to high flexibility and with a high degree of security. The assumption is thus that Supported Employment arrangements will be found, which is the case indeed.

Spain is placed in the Mediterranean group of countries with low to medium flexibility and low security, which leads to the assumption that only limited Supported Employment arrangements, would be found. Nevertheless, Spain has a legal term for Supported Employment, but the concept is relatively new.



There is not (yet) a coherent policy framework for Supported Employment, and the measures do not appear to be enforced, e.g. the quota system.

Sweden is another Nordic country with high flexibility and with a high degree of job, income and employment security. The assumption was thus that Supported Employment arrangements would be found, which is the case.

United Kingdom is grouped with the Anglo-Saxon group characterised by high flexibility and rather low security compared to the Nordic countries. This is assumed to result in limited Supported Employment arrangements. On a central level, the hypothesis can be said to be confirmed even if programmes, such as a Work Step, were in existence until October 2010. On the other hand, the initiatives from municipal and private actors have resulted in quite some Supported Employment activities, but they exist in spite of national arrangements and not primarily because of these.

4.8 Compendium of good practice

It has been part of the study task to identify and collect a compendium of examples of good practice in the field of Supported Employment. The full compendium is produced as a separate document.

4.8.1 Summary of the Compendium of good practice

In the compendium of examples of good practices of Supported Employment, ten positive employers' and ten positive supported employees' experiences with Supported Employment schemes are presented. The experiences of the job coaches involved as well as national policy that underpin the Supported Employment process are also presented as part of the examples.

In all the examples, the key area for success and what made them particularly good examples was the role of a Supported Employment agency and in particular the intervention of a job coach. In most of the good practice examples, the jobs were specially created, showing that job development is a very important aspect of Supported Employment. In most of the examples, a short-term Work Experience Placement was beneficial to the employer and prospective employee. Some examples demonstrate the effect of a long-term strategic approach to Supported Employment. While political regulations are obviously important for the mere existence of Supported Employment in a given country, the main reason for the positive attitude of the employers in these examples was the assurance to employers that the job coach would take a proactive part in the inclusion process, so that the responsibility is not left to the employer alone.

However, the examples also show that a variety of accompanying measures, notably wage subsidies, may assist Supported Employment to facilitate the inclusion process as they can play an important role for increasing employers' willingness and opportunity to hire people with reduced work ability. In these examples, wage subsidy is always used in combination with the close follow-up of a competent job coach to secure the inclusion process. Close co-operation



between the Supported Employment services and external services, as well as individual and personal support to the employer and the employee, are decisive factors to find and maintain paid work on the open labour market for the clients of Supported Employment.

4.8.2 General observations

Coordination

In all the examples, the key area for success and what made them particularly good examples was the role of a Supported Employment agency and in particular the intervention of a job coach. The job coach of the Supported Employment agency coordinated and orchestrated the whole process and managed and addressed all issues that were important to secure a good inclusion process. Supported Employment played a coordinating role between Public Employment Service, the employer, the disabled jobseeker/supported employee and any other relevant agency, such as welfare benefits office, and health specialists.

In most of the good practice examples, the jobs were specially created, showing that job development is a very important aspect of Supported Employment. Some of the examples were actual job vacancies and some were retention cases; in all events, the job coach facilitated the final sustained, paid job outcome. It is very likely that in all these examples, the disabled jobseeker would not have secured the paid job outcome without the support given by the job coach. The UK example demonstrates how the Supported Employment model also can be used in retention situations for employees who have to return to their work place but for a modified or different job with the same employer.

In a majority of the examples, a short term Work Experience Placement (WEP) was beneficial to the employer and prospective employee. It was also of benefit to Supported Employment as the job coach was able to determine how much support would be potentially required, and to observe if the particular work place and job tasks actually constituted a good job match.

Employer satisfaction

In all examples, some more than others, the employers were particularly receptive and proactive in the process. The main reason for their positive attitude was the assurance that the Supported Employment agency could give them that the job coach would take a proactive part in the inclusion process, so that the responsibility would not be left to the employer alone. '

Employer incentives

Although political regulations obviously are important for the mere existence of Supported Employment in a given country, employers in these examples were not being cooperative just to meet a quota or just to receive a wage subsidy. In one of the Czech Republic examples, the supported employee did not count towards the quota system, and the employer was not interested in a wage subsidy due to bureaucratic procedures. In both the examples from Spain, the employers were naturally inclined to employ a person with a significant disability. The examples show that in many situations, employers genuinely want to accommodate a disabled person(s) - they simply need practical help and guidance, which is where the availability of Supported Employment is essential. It is also important to notice that wage subsidies did become and were a persuasive fac-



tor in several cases. The examples show that a variety of accompanying measures may assist Supported Employment to facilitate the inclusion process as they can play an important role for increasing employers' willingness and opportunity to hire people with reduced work ability.

Policy frameworks

A number of countries' labour market policies have given Supported Employment high priority, and services are available nationwide - the examples of Austria, Norway and Sweden demonstrate evidence of a more long-term strategic approach to Supported Employment. The opportunity of getting intensive support to find and keep a suitable job by a personal and competent job coach for a longer period is one of the factors for success. While not having a labour market Supported Employment programme, financing of counselling through the social rehabilitation legislation provides possibilities for the Supported Employment agencies in the Czech Republic to perform good practice Supported Employment with fully qualified job coaches. The UK Government's Workstep programme provides funding for wage subsidy and in part to the funding of Supported Employment service providers. Furthermore, the payment of Working Tax Credits to supplement the client's income played an important part in motivating the client to enter the labour market and give up his disability welfare benefits.

All best practice examples were not necessarily due to a national labour market policy that supported good practice in Supported Employment. In fact, good-quality Supported Employment is performed even if Supported Employment service providers in some countries must spend much of their valuable time to secure the financing of job coaches. That does not mean that a policy framework or a particular scheme is without any significance. In both Spain and the Czech Republic, there are quota systems, which are apparently not enforced. Nevertheless, the mere existence of the quota system provides a tool for the Supported Employment service providers to approach the employers. It gives them an opportunity to inform employers of the support rendered to both the client/Supported Employment employee and the employer.

Many of the examples illustrate that wage subsidies and other financial support schemes play an important role for increasing employers' willingness and opportunity to hire people with reduced work ability. While there have been many instances where the wage subsidy system fails to recognise the importance of follow up, the examples from Sweden, Norway and Austria are good illustrations of how the Supported Employment provider supporting the client and the employer during the process in combination with a wage subsidy. These examples show how framework conditions are conducive to getting disabled clients of Supported Employment into the open labour market with the competent assistance of a job coach with the relevant knowledge and skills.

Whilst there is no mainstream Supported Employment programme in the UK, there are employment and disability measures and programmes that can assist a person with a disability to access employment. The employment programme, Access to Work in Northern Ireland, provided funding for a Support Worker to follow on from the assistance and guidance provided by the Supported Employment service provider. The Supported Employment provider is funded



through various employment and health measures of both the UK and Northern Ireland governments.

Pro-activeness

The key aspect of these good practice examples was the pro-activeness and commitment of the Supported Employment provider and the willingness and cooperation of the employer to employ a person with a significant disability. Close cooperation between the Supported Employment services and external services, as well as individual and personal support to the workplace and the employee, are decisive factors to find and maintain paid work on the open labour market for the clients of Supported Employment.



5 Conclusions

This chapter summarises the main conclusions that have been derived from the mapping exercise, the in-depth country studies and from the good practice compendium.

5.1 Conclusions from the Mapping exercise

Activities in the 30 countries

Mapping the use of the application of Supported Employment in 30 countries has shown that there are a lot of practitioners, clients, employees and employers involved around Europe. It comes out clearly that much dedicated efforts take place targeted at improving the access to work or activity for people with disabilities. Some work under unitary systems, other under ad-hoc conditions.

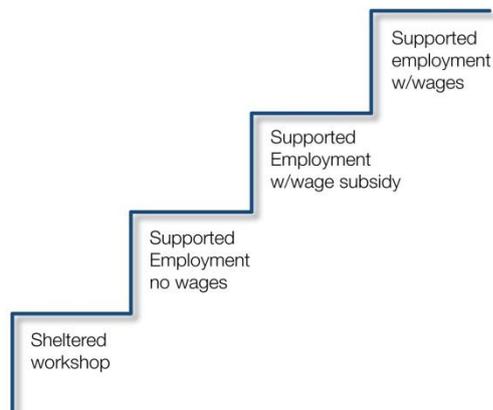
When studying the 30 countries, a wealth of approaches and incentives are found; all of which can provide inspiration for countries and actors wanting to initiate or further develop Supported Employment in their country or local area. This includes examples of actors, framework conditions and organisational set-up of the services, incentives for employers and employees, funding and monitoring.

Few genuine Supported Employment programmes

This study has shown that a number of countries have a clearly defined policy for Supported Employment and related activities.

When applying the definition of Supported Employment used in this study, there are only very few Supported Employment programmes and projects which fully comply with the definition. A number of countries have or are developing initiatives with elements of Supported Employment.

In the strict sense of the definition, only the top step of the figure presented below is considered genuine Supported Employment. However, a number of variants are named Supported Employment in the individual countries.



A characteristic feature of these initiatives is that a person with disabilities is not primarily treated as a jobseeker in the mainstream system (even if with additional assistance), but rather as a person looking for an activity and/or subsistence coverage. Across the 30 countries mapped differences are found as regards target group for Supported Employment, the length of the support rendered, the financing mechanisms (though with European Social Funding as a strong element) and the organisational set-up. Few countries have national programmes and many have ad-hoc financing resulting in islands of projects.

Pilot character

Nevertheless, Supported Employment projects and even programmes in a number of countries still have a pilot project character, including in countries where Supported Employment has been in force for several years.

One reason is that in most countries people with disabilities are not treated as mainstream jobseekers. Most measures are designed to support and assist the disabled people in a number of ways but to obtain and maintain employment in the open labour market. It appears that activation is seen to be more realistic than jobs on the open labour market and that sheltered workshops thereby oust Supported Employment.

Other reasons for this could well be that monitoring and statistical analysis is insufficient, and therefore the cost-benefit of Supported Employment is unclear.

Unclear definition

The definition of Supported Employment is very unclear within and between countries. Too many measures, whether good or bad, are being connected to the term Supported Employment or claimed incorrectly to be Supported Employment. This blurs the concept and weakens its impacts and its prospects.

Part of the problem is that many Supported Employment initiatives appear to define the term employment to include 'activities' with no wages attached.



5.2 Conclusions from the in-depth country studies

Definition and benchmarking

The definitions, standards and methodologies of Supported Employment differ considerably. This complicates comparison and exchange of knowledge and experience across countries. The position and status of Supported Employment becomes unclear and funding unstable and unpredictable.

In three of the study countries, we find (e.g. Sweden, Norway and Austria) a more formal framework for funding, guidelines and standards, whereas in the other three countries, where Supported Employment has developed from bottom-up and not through any national policy design (Czech Republic, Spain and UK), we see a more informal approach where no specific Supported Employment programmes exist. Nevertheless, there are many Supported Employment projects and services through a variety of funding from local, national and EU sources. In these countries, there is lack of consistent and reliable data.

The importance of a national framework

Funding of Supported Employment projects from e.g. the EU appears to have an important impact in countries where no national framework is in place (Czech Republic, Spain and UK). However, as long as there is no national framework, these projects tend to lack continuity and predictability.

In many countries, Supported Employment is still conceived as some kind of experimental project or pilot project, or simply as individual projects, even if Supported Employment has been going on for many years in a country. This is a strong indication that many countries have problems in institutionalising Supported Employment, or mainstreaming Supported Employment. Consequences are:

- Unclear position of Supported Employment
- Unclear status of Supported Employment
- Unstable and unpredictable funding
- Lack of awareness and knowledge about of Supported Employment on national policy level and in Public Employment Service
- Lack of monitoring and statistics
- Lack of financial and professional incentives for service providers.

Funding

In many countries, funding of Supported Employment appears to be unstable and unpredictable. It is important how Supported Employment is funded and if conditions are attached to obtaining funding. Funding with no specific conditions attached for Supported Employment can be useful in an initial phase of implementing Supported Employment, but the risk is that the concept is not institutionalised and that it continues to have pilot project character with a limited impact.



Monitoring and statistics	Reliable statistical data relevant to Supported Employment is not readily available in most of the countries studied. This makes it difficult to assess the exact need for and impact of the method. In promoting Supported Employment, it is important that the 'business case' can be argued clearly based on proof of impact. ¹⁵²
The role of (public) employment services and that of other actors	While unemployed people in general receive support through the PES, disabled jobseekers tend to be referred to external agencies. Apart from the Swedish SIUS programme, all other Supported Employment services are provided by private or semi-private NGOs and other organisations. This indicates that disabled jobseekers are not being perceived as ordinary jobseekers. Another consequence is an often uneven access to Supported Employment.
Employers' incentives	Different instruments are applied as incentives, e.g. wage subsidies, tax reduction. It appears that especially wage subsidies seem to enhance job opportunities through Supported Employment.
Incentives for employees	As regards social benefits, all countries studied in the in-depth analysis (except the Czech Republic) reduce the social pension/benefit equivalent to the income earned when a person with disabilities take up paid employment. A concern to many people with disabilities is how to regain the social/welfare benefits if a job ends or does not work out.
Equal access	In many countries, access to services is not equal to all (in terms of geographical coverage, target group and choice of services available).
Flexicurity in interaction with Supported Employment	It appears that the overall flexicurity profile of a country does influence the employment of people with disabilities through Supported Employment. Some countries have a well-developed tradition for supporting transitions on the labour market through protection of mobility. They give a high priority to active labour market policy and training of persons in unemployment or at risk of marginalisation from the labour market. In such a national policy context, there is also a higher probability of developing policies that support the transition to employment of persons with disabilities and diminish their risk of leaving employment – including Supported Employment.

However, some factors are more critical to the existence (and success) of Supported Employment, such as political and a strong non-governmental and/or

¹⁵² This has been done in other countries e.g. the USA. See:

Burns, T., J. Catty, T. Becker, R.E. Drake, A. Fioritti, M. Knapp, C. Lauber, W. Rossler, T. Tomov, B. J. van, S. White og D. Wiersma (2007). "The effectiveness of supported employment for people with severe mental illness: a randomised controlled trial". *Lancet*, 370:1146–1152.

Cimera, R. E. (2008): The cost-trends of supported employment versus sheltered employment. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation* Volume 28, Number 1, 2008

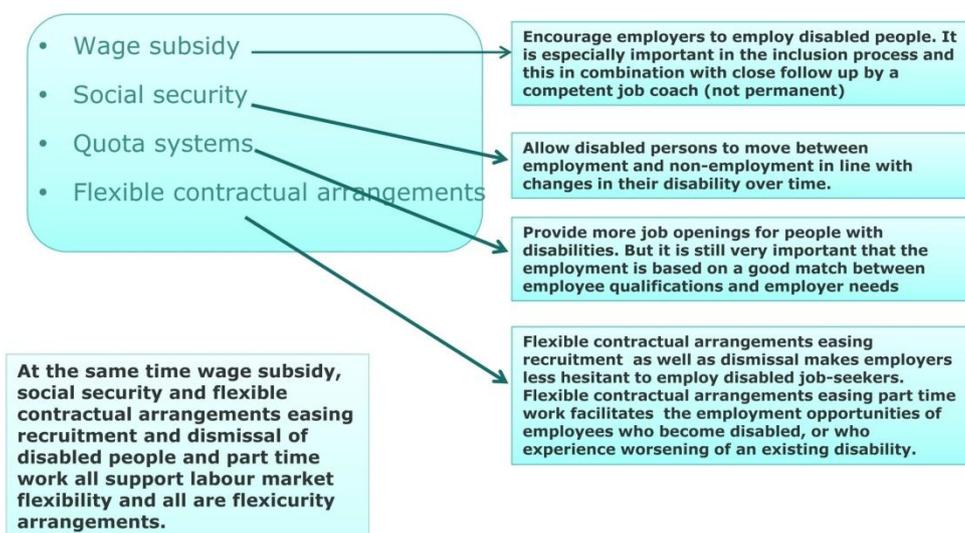
Cimera R. E. (2009): The national costs of supported employment to Vocational Rehabilitation: 2002 to 2006. *Vocational Rehabilitation* Volume 30, Number 1, 2009



private interest. Nevertheless, it is clear that a conducive national framework is of importance to the potential of Supported Employment. The issue for each government must be to find the balance between flexibility and security which, given the individual circumstances, is more conducive to the implementation of Supported Employment.

The study has shown that applying flexicurity can underpin Supported Employment and produce the relevant transitions, as illustrated below.

Instruments that underpin Supported Employment schemes:



5.3 Conclusions from the good practice examples

Coordination

In all the good practice examples, the key area for success and what made them particularly good examples was the role of a Supported Employment agency and in particular the intervention of a job coach. The job coach of the Supported Employment agency coordinated and orchestrated the whole process and managed and addressed all issues that were important to secure a good inclusion process. Supported Employment played a coordinating role between Public Employment Service, the employer, the disabled jobseeker/supported employee and any other relevant agency, such as welfare benefits office, and health specialists.

Employer satisfaction

In all examples, some more than others, the employers were particularly receptive and proactive in the process. The main reason for their positive attitude was the assurance that the Supported Employment agency could give them, that the job coach would take a proactive part in the inclusion process, so that the responsibility would not be left to the employer alone.

Frameworks

The opportunity of getting intensive support to find and keep a suitable job by a personal and competent job coach for a longer period is one of the factors for success.



Many of the examples illustrate that wage subsidies and other financial support schemes play an important role for increasing employers' willingness and opportunity to hire people with reduced work ability.

Pro-activeness

The key aspect of these good practice examples was the pro-activeness and commitment of the Supported Employment provider and the willingness and cooperation of the employer to employ a person with a significant disability. Close co-operation between the Supported Employment services and external services, as well as individual and personal support to the workplace and the employee, are decisive factors to find and maintain paid work on the open labour market for the clients of Supported Employment.



6 Policy recommendations

This chapter presents the recommendations based on the findings and analysis of the entire study.

First recommendations relevant to actors at national level are presented including recommendations relevant to the interaction between flexicurity and Supported Employment. Then recommendations relevant to the EU level, and finally recommendations relevant for services providers are presented. Specific recommendations for how to introduce and enhance Supported Employment and how to comply with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (article 27 on Work and Employment) are integrated across the three levels.

6.1 Recommendations relevant for national level

Resource approach

People with disabilities should be regarded as jobseekers belonging to the mainstream system. In the mainstream system, Supported Employment should then be on offer. This would constitute a focus on the abilities of people rather than a focus on deficits, which is conducive to implementing Supported Employment, since the purpose is to match competencies and skills with employers' needs. This principle would assist in complying with article 27 of the UN Convention.

Access for all

To introduce and implement Supported Employment successfully, services should be constructed and distributed to ensure access for all to the service (in terms of geography and target group). Eligibility criteria based on personal motivation for obtaining a paid job in the open labour market should be formulated and consistency in services ensured. This measure would also contribute to fulfilling the relevant UN Convention.

Policy framework

One of the prerequisites for the successful introduction and/or implementation of Supported Employment is the existence of a supporting legal framework, which is enforced. Even if Supported Employment can exist through a bottom-up approach where NGOs and private actors succeed in implementing projects, the existence of a national framework supports the issue of common standards, equal access, existence of incentives for employers and employees as well as one entrance for the jobseeker with disabilities.

The existence of a legal framework that not only allows but also insists on the right for all citizens to participate on the open labour market is crucial to Sup-



ported Employment. Countries wishing to initiate or further develop Supported Employment should seek to establish a national framework, and preferably a national programme. Such top-down approach does not exclude the involvement of actors working bottom-up.

Organisational set-up

Supported Employment should be placed under the auspices of employment (the Ministry of Employment) to ensure the emphasis on employment rather than on activation or subsistence, and should be implemented under the responsibility of the public employment services. Still the implementing agencies could be either private or public.

National anchoring will underpin mainstreaming and give the job coach the necessary authority and understanding of the system to act as a catalyst. In this manner, the job coach is placed in the mainstream system. Placing the Supported Employment scheme with a national institution will ensure national responsibility for monitoring, statistics and benchmarking as well as evaluation.

Job coach

The job coach is the key catalyst in making the market work flexibly and transparently – a 'matchmaker' between supply and demand and is as such indispensable. The job coach can act as safety net for employer and employee and contribute to breaking down attitudinal barriers.

The job coach should act to ensure good transition and serve as a guide for employer and employee that understands the system and knows the possibilities. An important task for the job coach within the framework of Supported Employment is thus to act as a guide for the person with disabilities. This can be done by drawing the map of transitions that will lead to the final desired position of getting and keeping a paid job in the open labour market. For some persons with disabilities, this may only involve a single transition. For others, a series of transitions will be required to move them gradually towards the open labour market. Here the role of the job coach as a guide is crucial. The Supported Employment scheme must therefore be set up to accommodate this.

Training and title or job coach

Many job coaches working in Supported Employment come from care-oriented professions, and many are skilled social workers. However, there is limited training available to ensure that Supported Employment staff develop the skills and competencies required for job finding, job development, on-the-job support, and cooperating with employers. It is therefore important to ensure certified systematic training and upgrading of job coaches. The title should be protected to ensure high quality support from job coaches to people with disabilities. A formal education would be recommendable, e.g. like the Finnish TRADES diploma in Supported Employment or similar.

To ensure that Service Providers offer good practice Supported Employment, local and national policy levels must take the responsibility for allocating resources to employ Job Coaches who are competent to perform Supported Employment of high quality.

Funding and monitoring

Stable and predictable funding is important to the development of Supported Employment. Funding of Supported Employment should require an accounta-



ble institutional anchoring, including demands for monitoring of specific results based on a clear definition of Supported Employment. It should include conditions for equal access for all in order to comply with relevant EU principles and UN conventions.

It is important how Supported Employment is funded and that conditions are attached to obtaining funding. Funding with no specific conditions attached can be useful in an initial phase of implementing Supported Employment, but the risk is that the concept is not institutionalised and that it continues to have pilot project character with a more limited impact. Earmarking of funds for Supported Employment is beneficial for stable funding in times of crisis, where funds cannot be reallocated for other purposes.

To secure job retention and career development the financing of Supported Employment services should include financing of on-going support for as long as necessary in the individual case after a job contract is established. It should also foresee funding for training and upgrading of job coaches.

Monitoring and statistics

Reliable statistical data on scope and results of Supported Employment are not readily available in most of the countries. This makes it difficult to assess the need for and impact of Supported Employment. Independent specific monitoring and statistics on Supported Employment that monitors explicit methods and defined results should be maintained. A system should be set up at the outset to allow for the specific monitoring of the impacts of Supported Employment. This would include the task to produce regular nationwide statistics and publish them based on clear targets so that systematic monitoring is possible. This should include methods and job outcome.

Care should be taken when determining employment outcome targets and funding by results. Evidence has shown that such approaches often imply that Supported Employment providers will 'cherry pick' the most able/less disabled jobseekers to boost results and job outcomes. On the other hand, one should be aware of lack of incentives to support clients to enter the open labour market.

Incentives

Incentives for employers play a role for the success of Supported Employment; however, employers are also driven (especially large companies) by Corporate Social Responsibility. It seems that e.g. wage subsidy is of greater importance to smaller companies. Quota systems do not always work as intended and are often not enforced in all countries where they exist. Nevertheless, they appear to have an important side effect, which is that they can be used as a door opener to dialogue with an employer. This should be considered when designing the package of incentives to be applied in the individual country.

Employers are bound to have a focus on minimising risks involved in hiring people with disabilities, and the assistance of a job coach is crucial in this connection. Therefore, incentives alone will not provide results. In the paragraphs below on flexicurity, more recommendations for incentives are provided.



Keep it simple

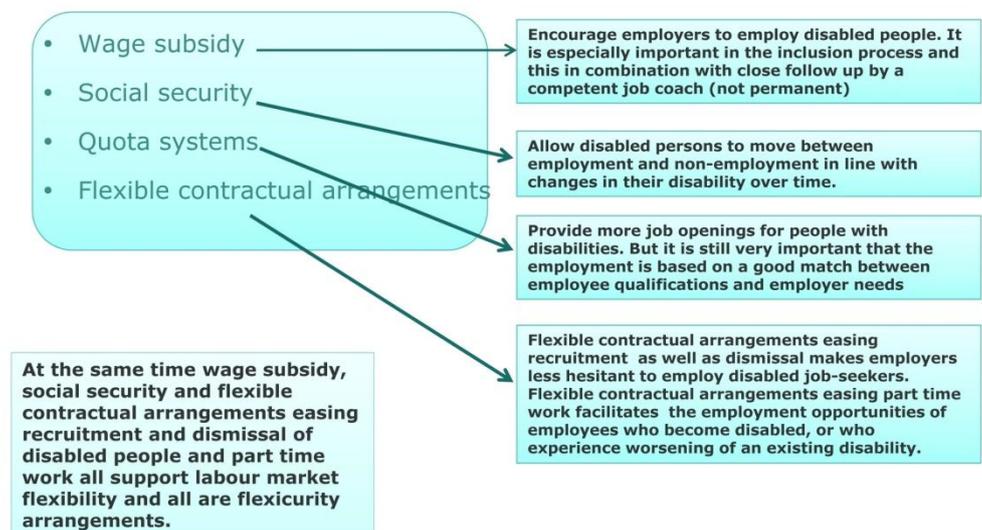
Incentives for employers must be designed so that the administration and bureaucratic measures attached hereto are kept at a moderate level. Otherwise, the employers are not likely to take advantage of the option.

Flexicurity in interaction with Supported Employment

Looking at the countries with national Supported Employment programmes, their overall flexicurity framework has been conducive to the successful implementation of Supported Employment. It is thus evident that an overall awareness of and tradition for implementing flexicurity policies by creating arrangements for protected mobility is beneficial to the introduction of Supported Employment. The specific elements of a flexicurity policy depend, among other things, on the welfare state model.

From a flexicurity perspective, there is a wide range of policies that can successfully combine the different forms of flexibility and security, and which are in line with the overall principles for flexicurity. Such policies can all support the series of transitions that a disabled person normally will have to make in order to gain a foothold in the open labour market and diminish the risk of transitions out of employment. They can also reduce the risk of 'bad' transitions from work to inactivity. The illustration below highlights the interphase between flexicurity and Supported Employment:

Instruments that underpin Supported Employment schemes:



Presently, not all of these policies are implemented in the individual countries, but they are recommended anyway as inspiration for future policy innovations. Examples of policies that can support transitions to employment or diminish the risk of leaving the labour market are:

- Ensuring the access for disabled persons to leave schemes or schemes for reduced working hours (including their right to make the transition to employment after leave or to full-time employment) with special attention to the specific needs caused by their disability (e.g. needs for special healthcare).



- Flexible contractual arrangements, e.g. easing part-time work, facilitating the employment opportunities of employees who become disabled, or who suffer aggravation of an existing disability.
- Modern social security systems, e.g. supporting flexible disability benefits and/or supporting wage subsidies to compensate for lower productivity, at the same time secures income and encourages part-time employment.
- Supporting (re)training of employees, who become disabled, or who suffer aggravation of an existing disability in order to allow them to move to other kinds of work within the firm.
- Income support that allows disabled persons to make the transition to less demanding job functions, while keeping their previous income (or at least experiencing a smaller reduction in disposable income).
- Ensuring access for disabled persons to move to other job functions. This improves their opportunities to combine for instance work and family life.
- Providing wage subsidies to employees, who become disabled, or who experience worsening of an existing disability in order to allow them to stay in employment within the firm or ease their transition to a new job.
- Economic support to employers for hiring substitutes during periods, where a disabled person is absent from work due to need for intensive care.
- Flexible social security systems, which allow disabled persons to make transitions between employment and non-employment in line with changes in their disability over time. Such systems will thus reduce the risk that social security systems act a one-way roads leading out of the labour market.

Concerning the use of less flexible contractual arrangements, e.g. making dismissal of persons with disabilities more difficult, such arrangements may facilitate the retention of employees (insiders) who become disabled, or who experience deterioration of an existing disability. However, stronger job protection of disabled people may also make employers more critical, when they screen potential employees, and employers may try to avoid persons with disabilities. This may thus diminish the employment opportunities of those persons with disabilities, who are at presently outside the labour market.

On the other hand, flexible contractual arrangements, e.g. easing recruitment as well as dismissal, make employers less hesitant to employ disabled job-seekers, where they are unsure about their ability to work, and thus facilitates the work for the job coach. However, at the same time, the lower job protection makes it easier for the employer to dismiss employees, who acquire some form of disability.

The same arguments may apply to employment quota systems. On the one hand, employment quota systems (if enforced) are likely to be conducive to creating job openings for people with disabilities, but if these openings are sup-



plemented by too much security, then it may prove difficult to convince the employers to recruit people with more severe disabilities.

There is no easy way out of such dilemmas. One strategy could be to overcome stereotypes of the reduced work capacity of disabled people by campaigns of various forms pointing to good employment practices and examples of successful employment of disabled persons. This would thus tip the balance in favour of employing people with disabilities and soften the dilemmas related to the flexibility of the labour contract or quota systems. Other strategies involve the use of supplementary incentives such as wage subsidies or other support measures as outlined above, which in turn could make employers more positive towards employing people with disabilities.

The job coach model may provide a mediating mechanism to such dilemmas. A competent and pro-active job coach may find ways to reduce anticipated barriers and risks and to inform about and utilise relevant support tools in a way that benefits both the employer and the supported employee.

Transitions

One should also be aware of how the interplay between different institutions may promote the transition of persons with disabilities into Supported Employment. For persons with disabilities, it could make a large difference, whether they are in special educational institutions or are integrated into the mainstream education system. In the latter case, transition to Supported Employment would be easier for persons with disabilities.

Most of the countries studied reduce the social benefit when a person with disabilities goes into a paid job. A concern to many is losing the right to social benefits if the need should arise to re-enter into social benefits. These transitions do not always work, and it is as if Supported Employment has not developed beyond the first job of a person with disabilities. There is a need for reversible transition.

The mechanisms should be set up to avoid that disabled employees are financially disadvantaged if giving up welfare benefits/pension for access to the open labour market. Guarantees in some form should be given so that a participant in Supported Employment can return to previous benefits if the job does not work out. Administrative procedures for this should not be overly cumbersome.

From sheltered workshop to Supported Employment

In order to enhance transitions from sheltered workshops and into Supported Employment, staff at sheltered workshops should inform about and encourage persons with disabilities to consider Supported Employment and the possibilities in the open labour market. Access to services would also include access to information, e.g. that the staff at sheltered workshops and Social Firms are aware of Supported Employment possibilities and have an obligation to inform the person with disabilities of this possibility. Sheltered workshops and social firms should have strong incentives to help clients enter Supported Employment. The staff should be capable of offering the relevant information to potential jobseekers among their clients.



Instead of categorising access to Supported Employment based on diagnosis and workability level, a categorisation that takes the support need as an eligibility criterion is recommended. Furthermore, the individual support needs should be regularly reviewed and support continuously adjusted by the Supported Employment provider.

Incentives to move from sheltered workshops into the open labour market should be developed in a comprehensive way in accordance with the national context.

Lifelong learning The study has not found good examples of lifelong learning. Career guidance and development appears to be a challenge in Supported Employment. Concepts of lifelong learning and related methodology need to be introduced into Supported Employment.

6.2 Recommendations relevant for the EU

European funding through ESF The EU has played an important role in facilitating Supported Employment through its funding of projects across Europe with European Social Funds (ESF). The EU should continue to promote ESF as an important financing instrument.

Collect and publish statistics The EU could support the process towards better monitoring and data by supporting the Member States in collecting statistics on Supported Employment and regularly publish Europe-wide statistics in e.g. the Monthly Monitoring Report. This would assist in producing the business case, i.e. the 'proof' of the impact of Supported Employment.

Good practice network The EU could host or initiate a network for exchange of knowledge and best practices of Supported Employment, and where one aim could be to reach a common understanding of common concepts, definition and understanding of Supported Employment. The network should consist of national actors and service providers.

Dissemination of results The EU could regularly collect and disseminate good practices and positive experience and disseminate this through existing channels. This could include collecting and disseminating training material related to methods of Supported Employment.

Ambassadors of Supported Employment The EU could host and fund a small team of Supported Employment specialists and 'ambassadors' whose role would be to develop Supported Employment and provide assistance and training interventions. These 'ambassadors' would work proactively and on request. This approach would ensure some degree of consistency across Europe as well as perhaps offer a means of monitoring how Supported Employment develops and is delivered in individual countries.



6.3 Recommendations relevant for service providers

A list of very specific recommendations for service providers have been produced as a result of the study.

Competence requirements	<p>Service providers should formulate clear competence requirements for job coaches. These should include knowledge of employers' conditions, preferences and challenges as well as vocational profiling and career guidance. Service Providers must take care that job coaches have the competence to perform professional guidance to both the disabled jobseekers/employees and their employers.</p> <p>A professional association of job coaches in a country can guarantee a better quality of terms and conditions, as has been done in the Netherlands.</p>
Training	<p>Training of job coaches to perform good quality Supported Employment should be ensured. This should include training on employers' conditions, preferences and challenges. International exchange of job coaches to expand knowledge should be considered.</p>
Main tasks	<p>The main tasks of a job coach should include the following: to be the catalyst in making the market work flexibly and transparently; acting as matchmaker between supply and demand, between the jobseeker with disabilities and the employer. The job coach should be proactive in his/her dialogue with employers and with other relevant actors.</p> <p>Service Providers must make sure that the job coach is able to establish a good job match according to clients' needs and abilities, including suitable work tasks and a proper work environment through trial periods or job tasters.</p> <p>Service Providers must take care that a competent job coach makes proper utilisation of Work Experience Placements that includes on-the-job support, e.g. task analysis and workplace adaptation, to enhance job success.</p> <p>Service Providers must ensure that the job coaches are well informed about available accompanying measures that create proper incentives to employees/jobseekers and employers.</p> <p>Service Providers must take care that the job coach involves relevant external services, such as health care agencies, family support, social welfare agencies and others, and take care that these services are coordinated to support the individual's job inclusion process.</p> <p>Service Providers must give job coaches opportunities – and make sure they have skills - to perform proactive follow up that aims at job development, job match and a work contract.</p>



Service Providers must ensure that the job coach continuously supplies sufficient and relevant information to all involved actors, including clients, clients' colleagues at the work place and the employer.

Service Providers must make sure that the support of a job coach includes methods and interventions for job retention and career development by ongoing support after achieving employment.

Service Providers must make sure that the job coach develops natural support at the workplace by teaching colleagues and employers the necessary skills for continued job retention.

Caseload

The caseload of a job coach is important. Too many clients for each job coach will put the quality at risk, and too few are not beneficial from a cost-benefit perspective. Each scheme must strive to find an adequate caseload that allows the job coach to perform good quality assistance to employee as well as employer. One of the criteria should be the distance of the individual jobseeker from the labour market, so that the caseload considers the challenges of making the match.

Remuneration

Service providers should ensure a reasonable remuneration of a job coach and related stable financing.



Appendix I – Methodology

This appendix describes the methodology used in connection with the mapping study, the in-depth study, the selection of good practice, and in connection with producing the address book.

The two last mentioned products are found in two separate reports:

- Compendium of good practice
- Directory of supporting services (address book).

The Mapping study

As a first step to collecting the information for mapping Supported Employment in the 30 countries (EU and EEA-EFTA), a **desk study** was carried out. This provided the basis for conducting a relevant **e-survey** in the search for information about the 30 countries.

The desk study

At the outset, Internet search engines were used intensively to get an overview of the situation in countries that did not have a national European Union of Supported Employment (EUSE) organisation or where COWI, WRI and EUSE had no contacts from earlier projects. By that, we have especially tried to identify organisations related to disability and people that apparently were or had been involved in the field of Supported Employment in one way or another. Search terms such as 'supported employment', 'individual placement and support', 'job coach', 'normalisation' and 'disability and work' were used. When names were identified, we used search engines to get more background information and to identify a possible way to establish contact.

We used the WRI (Work Research Institute) network from various international/European research and development projects to identify relevant researchers and practitioners in the field of disability and work in general and supported employment in particular.

Through the ANED (Academic Network of European Disability Network), we identified potential contact persons, and we traced authors of specific countries in ANED's publications. We also identified researchers in references of publications, also including references to authors outside ANED's publications. A list of contact persons produced by ECHIM (European Community Health Indicators Monitoring) proved especially useful, providing names of researchers and persons at policy levels that were helpful in guiding us on to the relevant contact persons for the study.

In countries where we were not able to identify any names at all by the methods described above, we directly approached policy institutions, especially national ministries for labour and social issues.



Having identified a relevant person, we sent an inquiry by e-mail in most cases and followed up by telephone in case of no response. The results of the desk study were an initial mapping of the information available regarding Supported Employment in the 30 countries and a preliminary assessment of the existence of Supported Employment in each country.

The E-survey

A questionnaire to collect the more detailed information for the 30 countries was drawn up, approved by DG EMPL, tested and launched. A number of reminders were sent out and follow-up telephone calls were made to secure the collection of information and the quality of the answers.

A number of activities were undertaken to identify the best respondents in the 30 countries. It had been agreed to identify from one to three respondents in each country covering the three types of respondents identified, i.e. policy contact, research contact and NGO. In addition to building on the Desk Study, the exercise included activating the EUSE network and the relevant contacts as well as applying the *snowball sampling method*¹⁵³.

The questionnaire was tested during February 2010 and launched in March 2010. During the entire study period, the exercise has been a constant process in order to ensure the best possible information.

During the Process of acquiring responses to the questionnaire, several reminders were sent to respondents and substantial telephone follow-up took place to ensure responses and quality of information. The EUSE network was also activated for this purpose.

It has not been the aim to obtain a representative set of information/views from respondents - but to procure sufficient information to get an overview of the existence of Supported Employment and flexicurity.

The in-depth study

Prior to selecting the six case countries for further analysis, a careful selection was made. This selection built on the findings of the mapping exercise of the 30 countries. A set of criteria was formulated and a long list of potential countries was made. After this, a recommendation was submitted to support the European Commission's final approval of the selection.

The set of criteria developed for selecting the six case study countries included:

- Supported Employment Programme
- Supported Employment projects
- Likelihood of existence of good practices and their transferability
- Population size

¹⁵³ Snowball sampling is a technique for developing a research sample where existing study subjects recruit future subjects from among their acquaintances. Thus the sample group appears to grow like a rolling snowball. As the sample builds up, enough data is gathered to be useful for research. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Snowball_sampling)



- A certain geographical spread
- Public and private financing represented
- Different welfare models represented
- EU as well as EFTA-EEA countries represented
- Old as well as new MS represented as relevant
- Different features of flexicurity.

These criteria were approved by the Commission as were the selection of the following six countries:

- Austria
- Czech Republic
- Norway
- Spain
- Sweden
- United Kingdom.

Interview guides for the policy studies under the in-depth study were drawn up and tested. Likewise, interview guides for interviews with employers, employees and service providers were drawn up and tested, and an analysis was made.

Selection of good practice

The activities to collect information about good Supported Employment practices took place within the same selected countries as the ones selected for the in-depth study: Austria, Czech Republic, Norway, Spain, Sweden and UK. The in-depth country studies of Supported Employment provide information about the national framework of these examples of good Supported Employment practices - and as such, this collection of good practice of Supported Employment should be understood as a natural continuum of the in-depth studies. The in-depth country studies provide information on both national and local policy, labour market policies, and legal framework, funding conditions and support structures. This information sheds light on what constitutes the framework for the practices of Supported Employment – e.g. practical methods in use in the Supported Employment process, its practical outcome, aspects of user involvement and satisfaction both for the disabled employee and for the employer.

The method to collect good practice examples of Supported Employment related to employers' and employees' experiences involved face-to-face interviews with the actual, supported employees and their employers at their work places. The interviews were facilitated with the practical help of local experts of the network of EUSE.

The examples

Identification of good practice examples of Supported Employment was made with the help of national and local experts of the network of EUSE. The minimum prerequisites for good practice examples of Supported Employment to be taken into consideration were:

- The disabled employee found the job through a Supported Employment service



- An identifiable job coach was involved
- The disabled employee had attended the job for at least six months,
- The job was in the open labour market,
- There is a legal job contract and payment according to regulatory standards.

It was an aim to ensure that the examples of good practices of Supported Employment covered a variety of cases such as different kinds of impairments, age, gender, different company sizes, different company branches, different geographical regions and different regulatory policy frameworks for Supported Employment (flexicurity pathways).

All informants were promised complete anonymity. It should therefore be noted that in order to safeguard the anonymity of people involved in the presented examples, certain identifications (e.g. gender and age) might have been altered.

The good practice cases are presented in a separate document.

The address book

The address book contains contact data on relevant services within the field of Supported Employment in each of the 30 countries. The output of this task will be a directory of supporting services, which will be a stand-alone document, and can be useful for the general public and for instance be published on a website. The directory will be sorted by country.

The directory of services includes the following information for each service:

1. Name of service:
2. Description of the mission and aim of the service (5-10 lines):
3. Description of the functioning of the service (5-10 lines):
4. Address:
5. Link to website:
6. e-mail:
7. Telephone no.:

The address book is presented in a separate document.



Formulation of recommendations

The recommendations are based on the findings and analysis of the separate studies. On this basis, draft recommendations were formulated and put to test in an expert workshop held at the Commission premises in December 2010. The invited experts discussed and enriched the recommendations.



Appendix II – Literature (Mapping study)

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Appendix III – Literature (In depth study)

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