

# BACIKSTAGE

A look behind the scenes

## Dear ladies and gentlemen,

The STAGE Development Partnership with its seven sub-projects is focused on demographic and structural change in Schleswig-Holstein. The main objective of STAGE is to support the training of cross-qualified staff in the fields of tourism, catering and geriatric care in the light of changing consumer behaviour and shifts in the structure of demand. The focus of its activities is on improving and strengthening the employability of disadvantaged young people with poor qualifications and older long-term unemployed men and women in the three sectors mentioned above. To achieve these objectives STAGE has developed innovative and specialized qualification formats which are in some cases still being tested and in others are already in the practical implementation phase. In addition it is expanding employment opportunities in conjunction with small and medium-sized enterprises (SME's) active in the three sectors by developing innovative services which will open up access to the labour market for our target groups.

In doing so the Development Partnership aims to contribute to a sustained decline in unemployment among older workers and the young.

One of the sub-projects is focused on consulting and the regional business policy of companies involved in the tourism, catering and geriatric care sectors in order to prepare the ground for the other sub-projects. The aim is to sensitize companies to future tourism opportunities orientated to the old (including catering), create new services for the old and support the development of corresponding business models by the companies and enterprises in these sectors in Schleswig-Holstein. STAGE co-operates closely with the Chambers of Commerce and business associations in this endeavour.

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### What's new in STAGE's approach:

1. Consultancy is provided to SME's active in these three sectors, which will be important for the future economic and labour market development of Schleswig-Holstein, in relation to adapting their products and services in response to demographic change.
2. In parallel STAGE is developing a supply of labour to provide the qualifications which will be in demand in these sectors. STAGE focuses on two specific target groups on the labour market, who are currently lacking such opportunities.

The innovative feature of the Development Partnership is the way that it combines regional and economic issues with labour market issues in the interests of an integrated structural policy.

Against the backdrop of the EQUAL objective of "mainstreaming" this is the exciting aspect of this Development Partnership for us as evaluators. In the light of the current stage of development of the sub-projects this has the potential to generate a sustained impact in Schleswig-Holstein beyond the end of the EQUAL funding period.

Whether, and if so to what extent, this potential will be exploited by the relevant parties in Schleswig-Holstein is something we want to investigate with a survey of our strategic partners in autumn.

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Dr. Heinz-Rudolf Meißner

Evaluators of the DP STAGE

Gemeinschaftsinitiative  
**Equal**



German Federal Ministry  
of Labour and Social Affairs



EUROPEAN UNION  
European Social Fund

## Visit from a group from our Polish partner na fali from Sopot to BQM from 12 to 15 June 2007

After our German project partner DIAL (BALI Lübeck) and AWO Preetz had already received a visit from Poland last year, BQ Meldorf played host to an exchange group from our European neighbours in June 2007 for the first time.



Photos from left to right:  
Instruction in the use of industrial dishwashers with Mr Sanmann  
Tour of the mud flats in Meldorf Bay  
Practical day in the Westküstenklinikum in Heide

below:  
Lunch at BQ Meldorf  
A tour of the port in Hamburg



Like BALI Lübeck did last year, we organized a programme for the participants of the "Cleaning services" qualification group. In order to experience real everyday working conditions we held the practical part in a local enterprise. Mr Hammele, (head of the building cleaning company WestMed in the Westküstenklinikum hospital in Heide) generously provided his co-operation and organized a successful practical day with us.

**Arrival:** On the evening of 12 June Mrs Holtschneider was able to welcome the group leaders Katarzyna Smoczynska and Bernadeta Klein, six participants and the bus driver in Meldorf after their 900 km bus journey.

**Day 1:** After a warm welcome our managing director Mr Rausch and Mrs Holtschneider introduced the staff and the building along with our participants in the various job segments. Afterwards they were given a talk by our colleague Mr Spitzbarth on the topic of „Dangerous substances and safety in the workplace“. The talk was backed up by a video which can be used in every European country, regardless of language. The comments of the participants: "An amusing but very informative video which is more likely to sink in than any theoretical lecture on this topic!" In the afternoon all the

participants were instructed in how to use and maintain industrial size dishwashers in our catering area. Afterwards we took an exciting and enjoyable "transnational" tour of the mudflats of the Wattenmeer National Park, which enabled our guests to learn a lot about our region in a very short time and gave plenty of opportunity for personal interaction. We deepened this interaction at the barbecue in the BQM garden that evening. Our interpreter Andreas Loza, who accompanied our guests throughout the day, made sure that mutual comprehension was ensured at all times.

**Day 2:** The participants were met by Mr Hammele and five other staff at the Westküstenklinikum in Heide at 8am and changed into clinic uniforms to prepare for their practical day. As every participant was accompanied by someone who spoke some Polish, language problems were reduced and with intensive guidance the participants quickly immersed themselves in the daily work of a cleaner in the clinic. The accompanying personnel expressed their thanks at the end of the day for the energetic support they received. We ended the day with our guests with an enjoyable dinner in a Meldorf restaurant with Mr Rausch and colleagues.

**The final day:** Our visitors left Meldorf early in the morning in the company of Mr Spitzbarth, Mr Loza and Mrs Holtschneider to make their way to the cultural highlight of Hamburg where they planned to tour the city before heading home. The visitors took a boat tour of the port and made a brief foray into the city centre. In the afternoon our guests said their farewells. They regretted that their visit had been so short, but assured us that they would take a lot of new impressions and information with them and that their visit would continue to have an impact on them for a long time.



And from our side at BQM we can say that there was very positive feedback to our first transnational exchange.

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## Competence 50+

European conference on age management  
Gothenburg 18 – 20 June 2007

**The European conference on the topic of “age management” took place in Gothenburg in Sweden in the middle of June. Over 400 participants from the European Union and other countries came together for three days for an exchange of views and experiences on innovative projects. The conference continued the approach of the “AGORA” conference in 2005, at which the EQUAL networks presented the results of their projects.**

The Schleswig-Holstein Development Partnerships STAGE and SEPARTH joined forces with the Hamburg-based Development Partnership Potenzial 45plus and organized the workshop “economics go 50+” under the leadership of Ralf Kaufmann, the co-ordinator of SEPARTH. The background to this was the experience and insights gained at the northern German regional conference „Age management“, which was organised by the partners in Hamburg in the middle of May this year. This conference concluded that demographic change is first and foremost an economic opportunity.

However, the coordinators Rose-van Dijk, Meier-Ahrens and Sabisch-Schellhas agreed that these opportunities are not sufficiently recognized and exploited at the moment.

In the workshop “economics go 50+” the three Development Partnerships set out the new opportunities in terms of the development of this

business segment, education and training of older people and the focused placement of older workers. In a chaired discussion, which integrated the experiences of all three Development Partnerships, the northern German representatives presented their findings to an international audience and sparked a lively debate, which gave the participants an insight into possible future projects relating to demographic change. The international interest in the northern German experience was also evident at the networking event held on the previous day. Here the STAGE and SEPARTH partnerships were able to come up with an interesting starting point for a potential transnational follow-up project with partners from the UK, Sweden and France and to initiate a loose partnership.

The conference was characterized by a successful mixture of social event, European information and the exchange of a broad spectrum of views.

As a pan-European phenomenon the fact of demographic change is firmly on the EU agenda and the conference in Gothenburg can therefore only be seen as a curtain-raiser to further events on a European-wide basis.

As Sweden showed, demographic change is opening up a range of new developments and it gives us an insight into those ways in which societal phenomena are being dealt with by our European neighbours which are worthy of imitation and at the same time promotes the dissemination of our own „best practices“ beyond our national borders.

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