



**STROng**  
Motivation for employability

## Catalogue of Criteria – to support the integration of disadvantaged target groups into the labour market

A transnational product  
of the partnership STROng

schiFF-gmbH



Gemeinschaftsinitiative  
**Equal**



German Federal Ministry  
of Labour and Social Affairs



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Within the framework of the Community Initiative EQUAL, transnational co-operation is a key element of the development of partnerships, and, in addition to exchange in specialist areas and product-orientated co-operation, offers the opportunity of turning Europe into a lived experience. In this sense, transnational co-operation is a key component of the process of European integration.

These considerations formed the basis of the transnational partnership STRONG, which is an acronym of the initial letters of the development partnerships which are involved: STAGE from Germany, TREND from Italy, REM from France, and ON THE WAVE from Poland and also refers to the good working relationship between the partners.

The partnership helps to create a living Europe which is really owned by its citizens. For this reason all project levels are involved: management, tutors, trainers, special staff as well as participants and trainees.

During the project time, the STRONG partnership developed several trans-national products, of which the catalogue of criteria is one. This product is designed to identify possible problems and possibilities that may arise when different expectations from prospective employers and employees coincide, and offers a guideline for political implementation.

Kiel, December 2007  
Svenja Rast

# Introduction – Why a catalogue of criteria

STRONG is a transnational partnership under the roof the European Community Initiative EQUAL. Four Development Partnerships,

STAGE – Germany,  
TREND – Italy  
REM – France  
NAFALI – Poland,

joined together in order to form this partnership STRONG.

The common interest of STRONG is the increase of employment possibilities for disadvantaged target groups in the economic fields of tourism, the catering trade and the care sector as well as the support and strengthening of SMEs (Small and Medium sized Enterprises) in order to become a sustainable economic force in their respective regions. The different partners in STRONG face similar problems. All four projects are located in areas with high unemployment rates. The target groups addressed by the DPs are similar: on the one hand, young people with no or only little qualification, young women with children, women returners, unemployed people aged fifty or older and on the other hand, SMEs which need to adapt to changing market demands and customers. The service sector – tourism, catering trade and the care sector in the case of our transnational co-operation – suffers from a bad reputation in regard to salaries, working-hours and working-time, prospects of promotion and professional training and job security. Tourism and the catering trade are economic sectors highly dependent on seasonal work and offer only limited employment opportunities, if any, in off-peak times. In order to fully exploit the employment possibilities of the three economic areas and to turn labour market integration into a success story, it is necessary to focus on the involved parties and identify unmet needs.

## The Product

By experience the involved projects know about the difficulties which arise at the transition from training / qualification schemes and courses into the labour market. This is not only a problem of the job seeker but also of the employer, the advisor / case manager at the job centre and the training institute. All four parties need support, deeper understanding and comprising knowledge about each other and about the different problems which are at the centre of their concerns. Only when these are known, named and shared, it will be possible to develop successful strategies of sustainable labour market integration. The catalogue is supposed to be a working document which can be used as a reference frame by other European projects and which can be adopted, appropriated and changed. The document highlights problems which may be prevented and, as background information and reminder, may support project development.

## Objective

The catalogue of criteria aims at supporting the integration of disadvantaged target groups into the labour market. It looks, in particular, at phases of transition, for instance training – work, school – training, unemployment- employment, unemployment – training and it pursues the question: What is needed in order to make this transition successful and sustainable? The catalogue intends to point out similarities between Germany, France, Italy and Poland despite their historical, cultural, social and political backgrounds. On this basis of these similarities the document highlights the necessity to improve European politics and strategies for sustainable labour market integration. It illustrates structural problems as well as problems of the individual and allows the conclusion that these difficulties are central to insufficient labour market integration. Even though these conclusions are based on a very small number of interviews and must be treated with care, the question arises if a similar problem indication could be found in a larger number of member states. Within the STRONG community it was not possible to elaborate on this point, but at least STRONG intends to stress the relevance of more research into these matters and for the evaluation of European funded training schemes.

## Outlook

As different historical, political, cultural and financial roots shape possibilities of and access to education, learning, training and labour market integration, this document starts with a short overview of the education and training system in the four countries involved, considering implications for disadvantaged target groups on the labour market. A description of the four target groups follows. Then the structure of the interviews is laid out. The interviews form the information and data basis. A selection of data will be displayed and evaluated. The findings are summarised and suggestions to improve the current integration approach are presented.

## Germany

STRONG – motivation for employability - is the slogan of the transnational working group and its core interest. In four different countries Development Partnerships (DPs) concentrate on issues around labour market integration and employability. The DPs are grounded in different work fields such as training, qualification, schooling, life-skills, business consultancy, start-ups etc. and furthermore, they are targeted towards different economic branches such as tourism, gastronomy and care for the elderly. Yet they share a joint concern for the enhancement of transitional phases in working biographies and the improvement of product and service innovation of businesses in order to meet future challenges.

### Four Target Groups

The projects focus on disadvantaged target groups such as young people without or with a very low school qualification, young people without professional training and a clear view of their professional career, low skilled long-term unemployed people over fifty years of age and long-term unemployed people with good qualifications but no chance to return to the labour market in their trained job, young adults with a university degree but only limited labour market opportunities. The projects do not limit their approach to the groups who are excluded from labour market activities but also take the business side into consideration. Businesses in tourism, gastronomy and care for the elderly must meet the challenges of demographic change and need to revise, reorganise and restructure their products, services and training. In order to react in a competent way, the enterprises need to establish a culture of innovation and good working relationships with training institutes and job centres.

### Interviews

In order to display a picture of authentic voices, which reflect realities, experiences, expectations and demands concretely, STRONG decided to carry out a small number of interviews directed at four target groups: participants, representatives of job centre, training institutes and enterprises. The interviews are based on a set of questions, prepared for each target group, and guidelines for the interviewer, in order to create a similar interview situation. STRONG is fully aware of the fact that a sample of thirty-four interviews, by no means, offers a representative data base and that no universal conclusions can be drawn. Yet another source of distortion is to be seen in the translation from native language interviews into English as the agreed upon communication language in the transnational STRONG context. However, the interviews display similarities and trends articulated directly by different labour market actors which STRONG intends to use as illumination for suggestions directed towards the improvement of labour market integration efforts.

### Education and Training

In order to understand the different opportunities and options of integration into the labour market, it appears necessary to familiarise to a certain extent with the different educational paths and the particular situation of disadvantaged groups in Germany, France, Italy and Poland. For this reason short summaries of the respective countries follow.

### Formal Schooling

In Germany, children normally start their education at the age of six, the age may slightly differ in the several federal states. The school visit is compulsory for all children for at least 9 years, in some states this period is expanded with the visit of a vocational school.

The primary education in the „Grundschule“ (primary school) usually lasts for four years, then there are four different possibilities for a secondary education, the suitable school is chosen by the teachers of the pupils and is based on the individual abilities of the children. The secondary school forms to choose from are „Hauptschule“ (secondary general school), „Realschule“ (intermediate school) and „Gymnasium“ (grammar school), which usually leads to a higher degree and enables the study at an university. There are also „Gesamtschulen“ (comprehensive schools), but, unlike in other European states, this school form is still unusual in Germany.

Different degrees may be achieved, depending on the type of school. German school children are steered into different types of schools at an early age. It is possible, though, to change to another school form at a later stage in order to achieve a higher degree. This change is not particularly easy and therefore the German education system is often criticized for limiting educational chances for children by separating them into different groups at an early age.

### Target Group

The participants of the DP STAGE, which are still involved in the system of school education, are young people without a qualified degree. There are possibilities to achieve a degree outside of regular schooling, usually in evening classes. This requires a lot of personal motivation, especially after just having finished an unsuccessful school career.

The participants also have to invest a lot of energy in getting information about possible ways for further education to reach a basic degree, because information about qualification outside of formal schooling is not obtained easily. For young adults who are of age but without a degree, there is no responsible authority besides the jobcentre to give advice on this matter. Therefore it is necessary to provide a system of support for young people who are willing to improve their education.

### Labour Market Situation

The average unemployment rate in Germany in November 2007 is about 8,1%, there are vast differences between the several federal states. Unemployment is higher in the East and North of Germany, while the Western and Southern areas of the country are better off. In spite of nearly 3,5 million unemployed people, the German economy struggles with the lack of highly qualified personnel. This shows the importance of formal education and a proper degree as condition for success on the German labour market.

This also intensifies the problems for the target group of the DP STAGE since the participants have to overcome their educational deficits while also having the disadvantage of living in an economically weak region.

# Method – Four DPs in Four Countries

## France

### Formal Schooling

School education between six to sixteen is compulsory in France. The school system is composed of :

School degree	French name	Duration	Age
Nursery school	Ecole maternelle	3 years	From 3 to 6 years old
Primary school	Ecole primaire	5 years	From 6 to 11 years old
Middle school / secondary school	Collège	4 years	From 11 to 16 years old
High school	Lycée généraliste ou professionnel	3 years	From 16 to 18 years old

At the end of the “college”, there is a diploma called “Brevet des colleges”.

After middle school, there are two possibilities:

- to train for a diploma called “Baccalauréat” (general education) or for a “baccalauréat professional”. Shorter versions of professional education are “CAP” or “BEP” (after two years).

### Target Group – Job seekers

One group is made up of about 15 young people between 16 to 25 without professional experience. As part of a particular contract (“contrat de professionnalisation”), which the beneficiaries have agreed on, they spend two weeks in an enterprise of the catering sector and one week in training with the Infrep revolving continuously. Beneficiaries are paid by the employer. They are preparing a one year diploma called “CQP” or a two year diploma called “CAP”. These two diplomas are between the levels of “brevet des colleges” and the “baccalauréat” level.

A second group holds sixteen adults between 21 to 50 who are unemployed but have already professional experience of the catering sector or other sectors. The training is called “PIQ” is paid by the Picardie Region. The beneficiaries are alternatively in the enterprise for one week and in the training centre for two weeks. They are preparing the “CAP” diploma in just one year.

A third group are employees of the catering sector. This group participates in short training courses (1 or 2 weeks), focused on specific issues such as presentation of plates or cooking fish. These courses are paid for by employers.

### Educational options for the target groups

Young people (“contrat de professionnalisation”) finished their school education without any or a very low qualification.

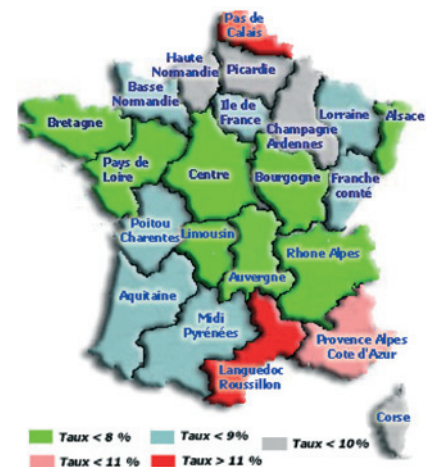
Most of them achieve better results in the professional training than in school because the training is more concrete and they are more motivated to train for a job.

It is possible, after reaching “CAP”, to prepare for a professional “baccalauréat”. But most of the beneficiaries are not interested in this opportunity. When employers are satisfied, they often recruit the beneficiaries after a successful “contrat de professionnalisation”.

Concerning the adults in “PIQ”, they are not interested in further education or training. They just want to improve their professional skills.

### Labour Market situation

The unemployment rate was 8,3 % in France in June 2007.



Map of unemployment rates by regions (in December 2006)

PS : “Taux” means “rate”

Beauvais is located in the region of Picardie, which has one of the highest unemployment rates in France (9,2 %, June 2007), but unemployment in the catering sector is low.

A survey of REM underlined the fact that employers of the catering sector are mostly satisfied with the professional skills of their employees. But they often complain that the employees are not motivated and do not behave professionally.

## Italy

### Formal Schooling

Italian Education System is made up of different levels:

#### 1. Primary School – 5 years

It's compulsory and free of charge for children between 6 and 10 years old.

#### 2. Middle School – 3 years

It's compulsory and free of charge for children aged between 10 and 13 years.

At the end of middle school, students choose between several types of High Schools:

- Humanistic school
- Scientific school
- Linguistic school
- Technical school
- Vocational institution

#### 3. Secondary school

It's divided into 2 cycles:

- 1° cycle- 2 years, it's compulsory and free of charge for those aged between 14 and 16 years. At the end of 1° cycle students have to decide either to continue their education in school or to attend a vocational course.
- 2° cycle – 3 years, it's not compulsory, aims at students between 16 and 19 years.

#### 4. Higher Education

- First level Degree – 3 years
- Second level Degree – 2 years

### Short description of the target group

TREND Project directed towards managers, entrepreneurs and tour operators who work in the tourist sector of Trapani. The reason for concentrating on this target group is the knowledge that the entrepreneurial structure of the Trapani area based on the touristic sector is subject to social alienation and exclusion. People who work in this sector don't have appropriate entrepreneurial skills and qualified competencies to improve their situation and to market their touristic products internationally and continuously (not seasonal).

### Educational options for the target groups

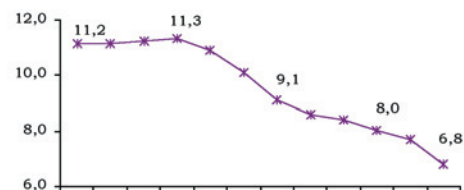
Beneficiaries of TREND are people who are already in the labour market. TREND tries to prevent and tackle the risk of discrimination and social alienation.

In order to give beneficiaries valid support, TREND implemented a training course aimed at ten young graduated people. The aim was to form a qualified group able to give professional advice. Support and consultancy for enterprises has been offered so far by two junior consultants of the training course.

Moreover, the project has realized an important and active network (website [www.lateradefenici.it](http://www.lateradefenici.it)) where entrepreneurs and tour operators can find suggestions for marketing strategies.

### Labour Market situation

The first graph shows the decline in unemployment in Italy.



Unemployment rate in Italy during 1995-2006

Regional differences are high and even more drastic if age is taken into account, too. The situation is particularly difficult for young people. In general, the rate is around 9,2% but it rises to 18,2% in the South and goes down to 2,9% in the North. The regional difference becomes less visible without the focus on age.

The service sector offers employment to 65,60% of all employees and is thus an important economic area.

If we focus our attention on tourism, a survey made by the Sicilian Region in 2004 clearly shows the situation of Sicilian touristic economy. In Trapani tourism is an important factor of the local economy.

Provinces	Beds	Citizens	Touristic function index
Agrigento	14547	456612	31,86
Caltanissetta	1373	275221	4,99
Catania	18866	1071883	17,60
Enna	1572	174426	9,01
Messina	38710	657785	58,85
Palermo	34171	1239272	27,57
Ragusa	11781	306741	38,41
Siracusa	13893	398178	34,89
Trapani	18610	432963	42,98
<b>Total</b>	<b>153523</b>	<b>5013081</b>	<b>30,62</b>

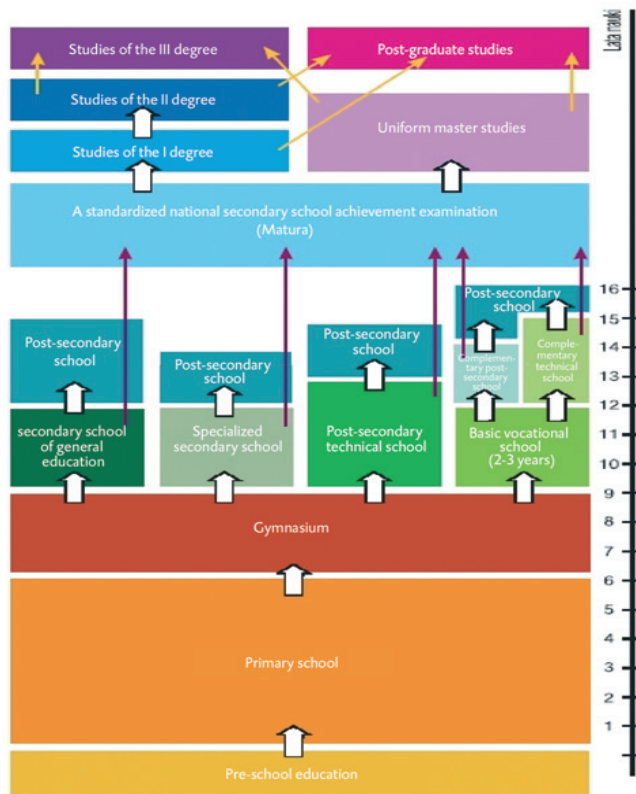
Table 1

Unfortunately Trapani doesn't use its territorial potentialities in an effective and sustainable way. This result was one of the reasons for TREND to be established.

## Poland

### Formal Schooling\*

Schooling is compulsory up to 18 years of age, but only primary and secondary schools have the status of compulsory institutions. The variety of educational offers begins at the upper secondary level. Students are allowed to choose from 2-3-year basic vocational schools, 3-year secondary schools of general education (liceums), 3-year specialized liceums and 4-year technical secondary schools (technikums). The education in liceums ends with a final examination called 'Matura.' Students who pass the exam receive a certificate which formally enables them to pursue higher education. Graduates from vocational and technical schools obtain a diploma which confirms their vocational qualifications. The graduation from technikum allows pupils to take the 'Matura' exam. Those with 2-year vocational education are enabled to take the 'Matura' exam after they graduate from 2-year complementary liceums or 3-year complementary technikums. Graduates from liceums and technikums may also attend 2,5-year post-secondary schools in order to gain additional vocational qualifications.



\* Sources:  
<http://www.buwiwm.edu.pl/sdd/schemat.htm>,  
[http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/System\\_o%C5%9Bwiaty\\_w\\_Polsce](http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/System_o%C5%9Bwiaty_w_Polsce),  
[http://www.wiedzaplus2.ae.wroc.pl/pliki/Raport\\_oferty\\_educacyjnej\\_szkoleniowej.pdf](http://www.wiedzaplus2.ae.wroc.pl/pliki/Raport_oferty_educacyjnej_szkoleniowej.pdf),  
[http://www.sciaga.pl/tekst/20119-21-system\\_educacji\\_potrzeby\\_rynku\\_pracy\\_kompatybilnosc\\_standardami\\_uni](http://www.sciaga.pl/tekst/20119-21-system_educacji_potrzeby_rynku_pracy_kompatybilnosc_standardami_uni)

The system of education in Poland – diagram  
 Source: menis.gov.pl

### Short Description Of The Target Groups

“On the Wave” targets long-term unemployed people (unemployed for at least 2 years) However, the unemployment period of those people who joined the project had often been much longer – up to 26 years. Two courses were carried out. Each course involved 40 beneficiaries, mostly women. They were between 21 and 60 years of age and had different educational backgrounds. Over 50% of the beneficiaries were secondary school graduates and approximately 10% did not pursue secondary education. 14% of the project’s participants had a vocational education. A relatively high number of the beneficiaries were higher school graduates (approx. 15%). Both groups had their particularities. The first group was more diversified in regard to their personalities. The second group was more conscious of their goals, had higher aspirations and were more open-minded.

### Educational Options For The Target Groups

The Polish educational system effectively prepares students for the job market both theoretically and practically. Of course it is target at young people who have not yet entered the labour market. For adults, who have been unemployed for over 2 years, it is necessary, though, not only to broaden their knowledge but also to find moral support. In response to their needs, “On the Wave”, provides beneficiaries with psychological care and a sense of security which could not be expected from public educational institutions. The beneficiaries also receive professional training. In order to improve the training, placements and internships in enterprises would be helpful in order to get familiar with real working conditions and surroundings. An increase in the number of thematic workshops (especially for the childcare path) and of the number of hours dedicated to vocational training (the “Symfonia” training for the office path) would also be worthwhile. Beneficiaries who finish our project successfully are well-prepared to enter the job market. The level of theoretical and practical knowledge of beneficiaries within the range of the chosen professional path is high enough, so that there is no need for additional outside training.

### Labour Market Situation

Characteristics of the Pomeranian province are shipyards, refineries, food, machinery, furniture, the transport industry as well as harbour services. The chance for a dynamic development lies in activating the service sector and in supporting development of small and medium enterprises.

Table. Unemployment rate

Cities with Poviat rights

Sopot - 5.6 %

Voivodship - 16.7 %

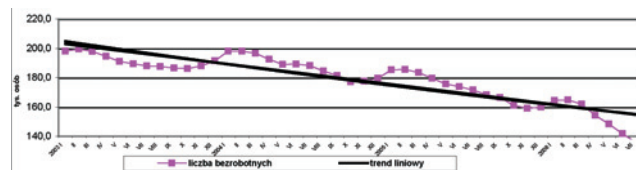
Poland - 15.7 %

Source: Voivodship Labour Office in Gdańsk

## Poland

Sopot has a leading position: for many years the service sector has been playing a dominant role (especially in tourism: overnight stays, catering, trade, "spa services" – since 1999 Sopot has enjoyed the status of a spa). The huge popularity of Sopot, particularly in summer (more than two million tourists a year) opens numerous opportunities to run one's own business. Therefore the professional paths of "On the Wave" beneficiaries, are regarded as fully justified as they fit the local market.

For several years Sopot has had one of lowest unemployment rates in the whole country (at the end of July 2006: Sopot - 5,6%, Pomeranian province – 16,7%, Poland – 15,7%). Despite this fact fighting unemployment is one of the main aims of social policy. It is a great challenge, as almost 80% of the relatively small number of the unemployed (618 people) include those who have been without work for more than 12 months (488 people). Half of the total number of the unemployed have not worked for over 2 years). Despite optimistic trends and prognoses it should be stressed that the recent decrease in unemployment in Poland is based to large extent on the emigration of Polish citizens who try to find better jobs abroad (especially in Ireland and Great Britain). In Sopot, as a typical resort, the decrease in unemployment is also greatly influenced by seasonal work.



Unemployed registered in Pomorskie Voivodship in the years 2003–2006

Source: Voivodship Labour Office in Gdańsk

# Results of the Interviews

## Interview Data

The total of thirty-four interviews was carried out between February and May 2007.

## General

	Enterprise	Training Institute	Job / Employment Centre	Participants	Total
STAGE	2	2	2	2	8
REM	2	2	2	3	9
TREND	2	3	2	2	9
NAFALI	2	2	2	2	8
Total	8	9	8	9	34

## Participants

	STAGE	REM	TREND	NAFALI
<b>Interviews</b>	2	3	2	2
<b>Age</b>	19,25	17,17,16	?	38,44
<b>Sex</b>	F,M	2F, 1M	2F	2F
<b>Status</b>	2 Single	2 Single, 1 with partner	married (no children) / single	married 2 children / single 1 child
<b>Health Problems</b>	None	Allergies, 2 none	none	none
<b>Education</b>	Hauptschule, 2x	collège (similar to secondary school), 3x	grammar school 1x, business economics studies (started) 1x	higher education / vocational school
<b>Professional</b>	Shop assistant / Carer for the elderly (started)	waitress 1x, / cook 2x (started)	none	kindergarten teacher / sales sector
<b>Work</b>	2 internships, Work / experience in 3 sectors	none 2x / 3 Intern- ships 1x	different work experience / none	work experience 2x

Nine interviews were carried out with participants. Whereas the interviewees of STAGE and REM are young adults, NAFALI's participants are adult people with life and work experience. TREND did not specify the age of their participants, but as one of them names business economic studies as educational background and the other one has work experience, they may be added to the age group represented by NAFALI. Out of nine interviewees seven are female and two male. Six interviewees are single and three live with partners (husbands/wives), two interviewees have children. Apart from one person, who has difficulties with allergies, none of the interviewees has health problems. The educational backgrounds are mixed and vary from basic schooling to higher education. Apart from TREND all interviewees possess a professional base or have just started their professional training. Six interviewees have work experience (former employment or internships).

The interviewees were asked if they had found their ideal workplace. To find an "ideal" workplace is as important as finding an "ideal" employee.

	STAGE	REM	TREND	NAFALI	Total
I found the ideal workplace	Yes, 1x	Yes, 1x	Yes, 1x	Yes, 2x	5
I did not find the ideal workplace	No, 1x	No, 2x	No, 1x		4

Five people answered yes, they had found their dream job and four responded with no, they had not.

What do the interviewees associate with an ideal workplace, how did they find their "dream job", how do they view their employer and what are their expectations?

<b>STAGE</b>	good job prospects, various sources for information about the training course and the job, intention to stay in this professional field, to qualify continuously
<b>REM</b>	job is not boring, found through internships as part of the school system
<b>TREND</b>	meets the professional expectations and desires, intention to stay in this professional field, to qualify continuously
<b>NAFALI</b> (2 Participants)	meets the professional expectation and desires, own initiative to find the training course, intention to stay in this professional field, to qualify continuously  good job prospects, project coordinator as information source about the training course, interested in further training, maybe change into a different professional field

# Results of the Interviews

It becomes apparent that the interviewees used different sources of information in order to find “their” job, none of them mentions the job centre, though, in order to find access to this job or training. The interviewees articulate their wish to qualify and to remain in the work field they have chosen.

	Employer	Incentives
<b>STAGE</b>	open, supportive, cooperative	positive feedback, sufficient pay and safe contract
<b>REM</b>	clear hierarchy, employer is the boss	better pay
<b>TREND</b>	available for employees	positive feedback from employer, recognition
<b>NAFALI, 2 Participants</b>	respect, acknowledgement, recognition respect, acknowledgement, recognition freedom of decision to employees	positive feedback, incentives such as gratification, a free trip etc.

The interviewees expect respect, acknowledgement, recognition from their employers. They want security, a safe work contract and sufficient pay for the work they are delivering.

Also those without “ideal” workplace express their desire to learn and to move on in life. Their “ideal” employer should show respect and have time for questions.

	Employer	Needs
<b>STAGE</b>	Should have respect, time for questions and answers	learn to learn, help with job applications, timely applications
<b>REM, 2 Participants</b>	employer should be a „pal“	No vision of ideal job, professional advice, more training
<b>TREND</b>	respect	intensive work experience, up-dating knowledge, lack of economic support for business start-ups – particularly difficult for women

What do the interviewees with and without “ideal” workplace wish for? What are their aspirations and their hopes for the future?

Interviewees with “ideal” workplace wish for their future:

<b>STAGE</b>	safe contract, sufficient pay, security
<b>REM</b>	to continue school qualification, to set up business
<b>TREND</b>	to grow into a managing role, work in this capacity
<b>NAFALI, 2 Participants</b>	to continue education, to set up business / to continue learning and training, more qualification, to earn a lot of money, change into a different area of work

And those without “ideal” workplace do not differ basically in their wishes for a secure and successful work life.

<b>STAGE</b>	to get work experience, continue schooling, more qualification
<b>REM, 2 Participants</b>	to work, to set up a business / successful exam, more training, find a secure job
<b>TREND</b>	to work, economic security

## Conclusions

Even though the interviewees find themselves in different life phases, it can be stated that they are all interested in learning and gaining or extending their professional qualification. Learning and qualification may have various expressions, perhaps it is more training, more work experience, or more education and schooling. With or without their “dream” job, the interviewees wish for a safe working contract, economic security, and an employer who shows respects, acknowledgement and recognition. The job centre does not seem to have any significance for the interviewees in advising or helping them to find the “right” employment.

## Job Centres

The representatives of job centres were asked to describe the disadvantaged target groups and what they consider necessary in order to improve their labour market integration.

	Disadvantaged Groups	Necessities
<b>STAGE</b>	10% of under 25 cannot be integrated into the labour market, 16 year olds with problematic socialisation, young trained people without work experience, very young mothers / migrants, Sinti and Roma, intellectually weak people, mentally ill people, homeless people	Low level offers for those without skills, lack motivation / everyday support, low level offers which cover a longer period of time, offers for minorities (Muslim women)
<b>REM</b>	Unqualified people / young people without qualification	awareness campaign on reality of working conditions, more work placements / information campaigns for youngsters in schools
<b>TREND</b>	Unemployed people / disabled people	Improve image of own organisation in order to motivate employers to recruit staff / internships
<b>NAFALI</b>	people over 50, secondary school leavers, people with psychological difficulties / long-term unemployed people, disabled people	Individual and group counselling, psychological tests, examination of professional dispositions, ICT

The identified target groups are similar in all four projects. It seems that employment and training schemes do not reach these groups. The necessities display a whole range of approaches, methods and instruments which need to be financed and main-streamed.

On the institutional level, it is interesting to map out the interfaces between training institutes, job centres and employers to see how and where they come together and which issues they are concerned with.

	Contacts to training Institutes	Contact to enterprises
<b>STAGE</b>	Yes, regular contacts about the training scheme and the participants / dito	Rarely, not on a regular basis / rarely, often prejudiced, emphasise soft skills, favour pre-qualification, salary subsidy
<b>REM</b>	Yes, not to discuss participants / dito	Yes, participation in meetings and round tables, bad perception of target groups, do not realise the necessity to reduce the distance between school and world of work, should have more contacts with young people / Yes, meetings and round tables, enterprises see target groups as potential employees after training, not inclined to offer jobs to young people
<b>TREND</b>	Yes, concerning courses, not to discuss participants / dito	No; enterprises regard target groups as instruments for tax reduction / yes, consider target groups insufficiently qualified and unprofessional
<b>NAFALI</b>	Yes, particularly when EU funding is involved / no	Irregular contacts, target groups are only employed when cheap manual labour is needed; unemployed are forced by labour office to contact employers, companies demand special qualifications, unemployed need more training – no money / no; enterprises are prejudiced, unemployed need preparation and encouragement to work.

These comments show regular contacts between job centres and training institutes but not focused on participants. Contacts to employers appear more stressful, particularly because employers seem prejudiced against the target groups with whom the job centres are working.

How do representatives of job centres see themselves, what is their role between unemployed people, training institutes and the economy?

Is the job centre a mediator between training and economy?	
<b>STAGE</b>	Yes / No, would be helpful, though
<b>REM</b>	No, between supply and demand, not including the training side / Yes, to point our career sectors, to inform young people about the world of work, to make training correspond with economic sector
<b>TREND</b>	No, no suitable tools, cannot achieve anything in this system / Yes, relationship between economy and education / training must be improved in order to establish an effective professional path for the employee
<b>NAFALI</b>	Yes, difficult to reconcile the needs of the unemployed and the enterprise, impenetrable maze of expectations expressed by companies and institutions, more funds are needed, no feedback from participants, economy on job centre's services / Yes, more contact to target groups and employers is needed, an agency gathering all information (employer, employee etc.) would be helpful.

The majority of answers show that the representatives of job centres see themselves as mediators between training and enterprises. They emphasise the difficulty to reconcile the needs of the unemployed with the demands of the enterprises and the necessity to improve the relationship between training and the economy.

## Conclusions

The identified disadvantaged labour market groups do not seem to differ dramatically between the four STROng projects and are also identified by many European studies and in European documents. Even though the representatives of the job centres see themselves as mediators between training and enterprises, the contacts between those three labour market actors appear to be fragmented and discontinuous. From the view point of the job centres, contacts to training institutes seem to be more regular, but not focussed on the participants. The relationship to employers is strained because of their negative attitude towards the target group and most probably also towards the job centres. Interestingly though, the representatives of the job centres hardly reflect their own role (data box above) when being asked about the relation between their target groups, training institutes and employers, but refer to the necessity to improve the link between training and the economy.

## Training Institutions

From the perspective of tutors in training and qualification institutes, the contacts to job centres are described in a similar way as above:

	Contact to Job centre	Contact to Enterprises
<b>STAGE</b>	Regular, stable contacts / not the tutor	Regular contacts, employers recommendations are integrated into curriculum, contacts in case of problems with participants / none
<b>REM</b>	Yes, irregular, focus on participants and recruitment / no	Yes, necessary in order to find placements and employment, recommendations go into curriculum, active involvement in mock exams, to help prepare for finals / no
<b>TREND</b>	No / yes, regular, about participants, admin and organisational matters / yes, irregular, focus on participants	Yes, active part in training / recommendations for curriculum, active in training, no contact because problems with participants / yes, irregular, director's responsibility
<b>NAFALI</b>	Yes, regularly, participants only in case of problems, more on organisation and finances / yes, formalities such as absences of participants, organisation and finance issues are discussed	Yes, regularly, particularly when training is designed for a company, recommendations for curriculum but training institute is responsible for syllabus, participants problems no issue with companies / occasionally, more intense when training is designed for company, recommendations if reasonable, problems of participants are no issue

Contacts of tutors with job centres concentrate on the actual delivery of the training course and matters associated with administration, organisational questions and recruitment of participants.

The contacts to employers focus on the training, in particular, when a course is designed in order to meet the specific needs of the employer. Employers are important partners when they are actively integrated in the delivery of a training course and their recommendations may be a valuable addition to the curriculum. The difficulties which participants may encounter during their internship, training or employment do not seem to have a place in this exchange.

# Results of the Interviews

When reflecting their work, the tutors comment on the perspective for the participants and the necessities in order to make labour market integration more successful.

	Perspective	Necessity
<b>STAGE</b>	No resources for support after end of project, job prospects for target group not bad because of demographic change / labour demand will increase, integration depends on personal capability, participants have potential for further qualification	No fees, adequate remuneration during training, more companies accept their responsibility for training/?
<b>REM</b>	No resources after end of project, good labour market prospects / no	Longer time for training, better training material / ? trainer has no contact to other institutions
<b>TREND</b>	No resources for support after end of project, good labour market chances / dito / no resources	None / more good will and initiative from participants and more opportunities from businesses
<b>NAFALI</b>	No resources, offer training in fields which are in demand, no feedback from participants / no support after project, individual mail contacts with tutors, no idea if course was useful, more than training is needed: communication, assertiveness, psychological training, auto presentation	Adequate measures and qualified staff, support groups with job counselling activities, psychological advice / feedback from participants and companies is missing, no idea if training was useful

The overall problem seems to be the lack of resources for any support once the project / training scheme has finished. Labour market prospects do not seem too bad for the target groups the tutors are working with, but the lack of support diminishes sustainability. The responsibility of businesses for training and employment opportunities as well as motivation and initiative from participants is described as insufficient. The training should be more adequate for the target groups.

## Conclusions

Contacts of tutors to job centres seem to focus mainly on organisational and administrative matters. Employers may appear as “customers”, when they buy tailor-made training courses for their employees, or as “partners”, when they are actively involved in the implementation of courses. Problems of participants in regard to their training or job placement are mostly not discussed. The most severe problem seems the lack of financial resources which prevents the support of participants or trainees after the end of projects. So even if labour market opportunities will improve, the integration may be jeopardized because of a missing support structure.

## Enterprises

How do enterprises recruit their staff? Do they communicate with job centres? Do they train their staff and are they in touch with training institutes for this reason?

	Recruitment	Training
<b>STAGE</b>	initial application by interested candidates, to entice somebody away, to take somebody over doing practical work experience / advertisement, work placement	Continuously / 2x
<b>REM</b>	mouth-to-mouth / mouth-to-mouth, train and employ afterwards	no / 2x
<b>TREND</b>	Advertisement, mouth-to-mouth / ?	Carried out by enterprise / No
<b>NAFALI</b>	Mouth-to-mouth, recommendations / newspaper, job centre	Yes / limited

Enterprises seem to recruit their staff mostly on the bases of mouth-to-mouth recommendations and by employing their former trainees. Only one enterprise mentioned the job centre. The training of staff appears to be a problem as the willingness of entrepreneurs to invest in human capital seems limited.

Disadvantaged target groups have difficulties to integrate into the labour market for various different reasons. Do employers have experience with disadvantaged groups – which are these experiences? And do employers have a vision of the “ideal” employee, which properties and attitudes are necessary to be an “ideal” employee?

	Experience with target group	Ideal Employee
<b>STAGE</b>	Employment possible, training on the job, no external support needed / yes, negative; insufficient work attitude and responsibility, lack of initiative	Does not exist, wanted: flexible, self-initiative, to leave traditional structures of the care sector behind / qualified, alert, high social competence, mindful of business management aspects
<b>REM</b>	Yes, helpful: less contribution / yes; did not stay; pre-condition nice behaviour and pass exam	? / Not possible, must find a compromise, nice honest, painstaking
<b>TREND</b>	Yes, training on the job, works well / yes, need better preparation, more training, training institutes should have experience with this target group	? / wanted: director
<b>NAFALI</b>	Yes, gap between actual skills and CV info, need to improve basic skills, willingness to work, raise qualification, need good preparatory training / yes, not good, no diligence, expectations too high, better basic skills, be creative, want to work, tax reduction, external training by specialists	Cannot be found, profile: do not know / cannot be found, wanted: salesperson, communicative, developed sales culture, good knowledge of sector

Most of the employers had experience with disadvantaged target groups and this experience was often disappointing. Better training and preparation is considered inevitable. Work attitudes such as diligence, reliability and responsibility must be strengthened. Employers seem to have a blurred vision of the “ideal” employee as they answer mostly with “no” or “don’t know”. Two answers directly point to vacancies which need to be filled.

## Conclusions

Enterprises seem to recruit their staff mostly without the help of job centres. Their attitude to training is hesitant. Employers complain about the lack of training and preparation in regard to disadvantaged labour market groups and their insufficient willingness to work. The “ideal employee” can hardly be described by the employers, or their efforts lead to a job description because of a concrete demand.

## The conclusions of the interviews may be summarized in the following statements:

Participants want a safe job with sufficient pay.  
Participants want respect, acknowledgement, recognition and feedback.  
Participants want to learn and to qualify.

From the Job Centres’ perspective  
Participants need better individual support.  
Participants need low level offers and work placements.  
Participants need more information about the world of work.

From the Tutors’ / Trainers’ perspective  
Participants need more motivation.  
Participants need more time for training.  
Participants need more than professional training: communication and self-representation skills, assertiveness, social competences.

From the Employers’ perspective  
Participants need better preparation and more training.  
Participants need soft skills, motivation and diligence.  
Employers have very high expectations or none of their ideal employee.

## An interview statement:

„There is no feedback and we do not know what happens to the target group; whether our services were useful in practice, who managed to find a job, whether the employer was satisfied and so on – it would be quite motivating and rewarding to know that we managed to help somebody.  
Labour market institutions refer people at random to us, trying to „force“ them into training. This type of training is ineffective and rarely useful to the target group. It often happens that the training is not backed up with any comprehensive psychological, motivational and professional counselling for the unemployed.“ (original comment)

## The conclusions of the interviews brought us to formulate a number of hypotheses

- Structured, continuous networking between job centres, training institutes and employers is needed.
- Effective networking needs professional facilitation.
- Job centres must identify with their role as mediators. They are the interface between disadvantaged labour market groups, training groups and the business side.
- Awareness raising, communication and cooperation is needed: promotion of a realistic picture of the world of work (participants), development of realistic and concrete expectations towards future employees (economy), design of tailor-made training courses reflecting economic demands as well as capabilities of trainees (training institutes), enhancement of finding training and employment possibilities (job centres).
- A permanently publicly subsidised labour market is needed for those who are not able to function according to the needs of the economy, and a transitional labour market for those who need particular support over a limited period of time.
- Labour market integration does not end with a working contract, a training agreement or an internship. Transition phases are stressful and must be professionally supported.
- This support needs financial resources and staff capacities in order to strengthen labour market integration and sustainability.
- Evaluation of European funded training and qualification schemes must include qualitative as well as statistical data.
- New generations of European funding programmes must be rooted in and display the lessons learnt from its predecessors in order to generate qualitative improvement.

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