

## Employability and Homelessness

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*Hátrányos helyzetű közösségek fejlesztése a vidék Magyarországon, a Magyar Máltai Szeretetszolgálat "Befogadó falu programja", Lantos Szilárd, program koordinátor, Magyar Máltai Szeretetszolgálat*

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## Editorial

This edition of *Employability and Homelessness* features more interesting employability initiatives for people experiencing homelessness and information resources related to this topic.

The first article looks at a Focus Ireland programme which provides individualised support in the areas of training, education and employment to homeless people. Services offered include drop-in services, one-to-one support and a range of accredited training modules and courses focusing on the life skills and social development of users.

The second article presents the Kofoeds Skole ("Kofoed's School") in Copenhagen. Since 1928 the school is working with long term unemployed and socially excluded people. At Kofoeds Skole "social clients" are students who are empowered through the participation in a comprehensive rehabilitation programme.

The third interesting example is from Hungary, where the Hungarian Maltese Charity Service is running a community development project for homeless families in a remote rural area. A social enterprise was set up that offers job opportunities to local inhabitants in the area of electronic waste dismantling.

More information about innovative models of work integration social enterprises can also be accessed through the resource pages of the recent EU funded WISE project.

In addition, this newsletter presents a new FEANTSA document on empowering ways of working in homeless services that highlights the important role of employment and training.

Your feedback is welcome. Simply write to the editor: [silke.paasche@feantsa.org](mailto:silke.paasche@feantsa.org) Enjoy the reading!

## Sharing Experiences

### The First Step on the Training, Education and Employment Pathway

Focus Ireland's programme

Sinead McGinley, Research Officer, Focus Ireland, Republic of Ireland

Focus Ireland - a housing and homeless charity in Ireland that works to prevent people becoming, remaining or returning to homelessness through the provision of quality services, supported housing, research and advocacy - recognises the critical role that access to education, training and employment can play in tackling homelessness. People in these circumstances typically have low levels of educational attainment, negative experiences of formal education and chaotic lifestyles that make it difficult for them to engage with mainstream labour market supports, even those targeted at the long-term unemployed.

In 2002, Focus Ireland established the Spokes programme to assist people to move on from homelessness by providing an alternative way of learning, through education and employment that is tailored to individuals' needs. Spokes recognised that training, education and employment can play a crucial role in tackling homelessness and ending social exclusion, and that for those most marginalised flexible responses which respond to complex needs are required.

Services offered to service users in Spokes included:

- A drop-in service and computer use for sourcing information on employment, education and training opportunities.
- Development of individual education and employment plans.
- One-to-one support with basic literacy and maths.
- One-to-one support with FETAC <sup>(1)</sup> modules.
- FETAC (Level 3) accredited courses including: Parenting, Health Related Fitness, Preparation for Work, Computers, Gardening, Self-advocacy, Arts & Design, Media studies, Maths, Drama, and Photography.
- Courses and activities that focus on the service user's life skills and social development.

- Career advice and support, which includes referrals to external training courses, employment training, and support in developing CVs and completing college applications.

The number of people that the Spokes programme worked with consistently increased since its establishment, with 357 service users accessing it in 2008 (this represents a 108% growth in the number of service users in just one year, i.e. 2007 to 2008).

Spokes staff estimated that approximately 50 individuals accessed the service each week (many of whom attended several days per week). The most frequent age category amongst Spokes' service users was the 18 to 25 years age group (40% on average), however there was an increase in the proportion of service users aged 41 years and over, from 10% in 2006 to 25% in 2008. On average, male service users out-numbered females by over two to one (in 2008, 71% of Spokes' service users were male). Most referrals for Spokes came from Focus Ireland services (63% in 2008), other voluntary homeless services (14%) and emergency accommodation providers (5%).

The education attainment of 105 Spokes service users that participated in the Back To Education Initiative (BTEI) in 2008 is presented in the table below. Over three quarters of the group (76%) had an educational attainment of lower second level or less.

Education Attainment BTEI Participants 2008		
	No.	% of total
Primary education only	44	42%
Lower second level/ FETAC level 3 or equivalent	34	34%
Upper second level/ FETAC level 4/5 or equivalent	22	19%
FETAC level 6 or above	5	5%

In 2009, Focus Ireland commissioned TSA Consultancy - one of Ireland's leading third sector advisory, research and consultancy services - to undertake an evaluation of Spokes, in order to consider how the programme was meeting its objectives and to

assess the effectiveness of its model of service delivery. An ethical and participatory research approach was adopted for this evaluation work, which included consultations with Spokes staff, key stakeholders (e.g. funders, referral organisations, training and education organisations, tutors etc.) and eleven current and previous service users of Spokes.

The evaluation of the Spokes programme found that the service has provided a safe and secure environment for people who may be apprehensive about returning to education. The approach has been informal and flexible, and succeeded in keeping the engagement of service users at different stages of personal education and training progression, and responding to their particular needs that may arise from homelessness. Spokes provided a range of supports from informal drop-in arrangements to FETAC Level 3 certification. A particular strength of Spokes was its capacity to underpin more formal FETAC course with life-skills and person development courses that break down social isolation. Spokes' model of service delivery prioritised a *client-centred approach*, and adopted a pathways approach. While the evaluation recognised the strength of the informal development of Holistic Individual Education Plans in Spokes, it recommended greater reliance on written plans to set milestones and review progress.

Spokes' level of one-to-one support and the programme's flexibility to accommodate service users who had dropped out (due to changes in housing arrangements, health issues, court cases etc.) to re-enter courses were cited as unique elements of its success. Service users reported very positive experiences and outcomes from the programme, but the evaluation found that there was a need for more effective capturing and tracking of progression beyond the programme to substantiate the positive impacts/outcomes of the service.

In order for services like Spokes to provide the most effective progression route out of homelessness into training, education and employment, stronger and more formal collaborations between education and employment service providers in the community/voluntary and statutory sectors (e.g. FAS <sup>(2)</sup>, the Vocational Education Committee etc.) as well as local development organisations and the Local Employment Services are required. Systematic collaboration could take place around developing and delivering services, and the sharing of resources. Furthermore, the potential role that

the social economy <sup>(3)</sup> could play in providing long-term progression and employment to people who are experiencing homelessness should be explored, as seen in the UK and EU. The homeless sector in Ireland is experiencing a significant reconfiguration of services based on a 'Housing First' model of service delivery, and this will have implications for training and education provision to those experiencing homelessness. In consultation with FAS, CDVEC <sup>(3)</sup> and a number of emergency accommodation providers, Focus Ireland identified the need to develop its existing education programme, Spokes, to provide assessments and support people experiencing homelessness by providing life-skills training with the dual purpose to prepare people for independent living and to support readiness to access a training, education and employment pathway. While the evaluation of the Spokes programme was being undertaken, Focus Ireland successfully applied for funding from the Dormant Accounts Fund under the category 'Funding to support Homeless People'.

Focus Ireland's new PETE (Preparation for Education, Training and Employment) programme opened in October 2009 and aims to enable people who are resident in emergency homeless accommodation to gain the skills and confidence to access a pathway to mainstream training, education and employment and to evidence the need for a life-skills approach as a first step towards independent living. This new service presents educational achievement as one option in blocking pathways to homelessness. There is an opportunity for PETE to lead the process of greater collaboration between training, education and employment service providers. The PETE programme is well placed to respond to current and emerging needs as the 'Housing First' policy progresses, as it proposes to establish clear pathways through existing services for people in emergency accommodation based on their identified needs.

The programme should be regarded as a progression route towards personal development, further education, work-based training and employment in the private sector or a social enterprise. Although every effort should be made to progress individuals to employment, some may not be in a position to re-enter the labour market or participate in third level education. Focus Ireland believes that they deserve every support and assistance to be in a position to lead more fulfilled lives, and in this context other progression routes such

as volunteering, mentoring or continued engagement in meaningful occupation may apply.

The 'Evaluation of the Spokes Programme' report will be published in March 2010. Please contact Sinead at [smcginley@focusireland.ie](mailto:smcginley@focusireland.ie) for a copy of this report.

- (1) Further Education Training Accredited Certification
- (2) FAS is Ireland's national training and employment authority.
- (3) The social economy is that part of the economy, between the public sector and the private sector, that

engages in economic activities to achieve social objectives, and usually functions through independent, democratic organisations.

(4) City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee

(5) Sources of funding and support for Spokes previously included: Local Drugs Task Force Initiative (from 2002-2007), the City of Dublin Youth Services Board, the Department of Education's BTEI funding, some private sector funding, and the placement of a FÁS CE participant in Spokes. The drop-in and informal elements of the service were funded through Focus Ireland's fundraising department.

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## Kofoeds Skole: Empowering People through Training and Education

Ole Meldgaard, Chief Consultant, Kofoeds Skole, Denmark

Kofoeds Skole ("Kofoed's School") in Copenhagen is working with long term unemployed people who are furthest from the labour market. In addition to unemployment, people in Kofoeds Skole are confronted with multiple social and health problems such as alcoholism, drug addiction, homelessness and mental problems. The school has developed a comprehensive social rehabilitation programme that promotes social inclusion as well as labour market integration for this group.

The school was established in 1928 with the aim of helping unemployed and poor people to find a job as well as a place in society. Since the beginning the school has provided training, education, counselling and basic services to its 'students'. By turning 'social clients' into students Kofoeds Skole wants to underline the importance of education and training when working with excluded groups.

Every day 500 students come to Kofoeds Skole on a full time basis. They are being trained in twelve well equipped production workshops and take part in various education programmes. The workshops include a building service, plumbing and electricity, graphic design, car repair, a laundry and a craftsman house with a joiner's shop and carpenter shop as well as a production workshop with low scale production for external companies. In addition, the school offers more than 150 classes in areas such as IT, languages, arithmetic, music, painting, video and theatre, sport, sewing, cooking, psychology, ethics and philosophy. For homeless young people Kofoeds Skole also has a shelter with 50 places. The 170 staff of Kofoeds Skole is professionally trained and includes instructors, teachers, social workers, job consultants, a lawyer and psychologists.

The activities are organised according to the needs, aspirations and competencies of the students. Kofoeds Skole's principle is to provide help to self-help. The school wants to empower its students to be able take their life back into their own hands and learn the necessary social as well as professional skills for this. A student can, for example, take part in a workshop and participate in treatment for addiction, go to a psychologist, do sports and get support from a social worker to improve his/her economic situation. In addition, the student can develop his/her basic skills by taking part in math or writing classes.

The workshops are the place for personal, social and professional training. Workshop training is tailored to the individual. It is organised in three different stages - activation, pre-rehabilitation and rehabilitation - and can be short or long term. Job consultants look into the students' possibilities of getting a job outside of Kofoeds Skole. For this they co-operate with a number of companies. Through individualised assessments the student and the consultant define the most realistic next step in the inclusion process. The consultant makes proposals for a job, either in the mainstream labour market or as a form of supported employment which matches the skills and aspirations of the person.

Kofoeds Skole receives funding from several sources. It is funded through the national budget by an agreement with the Ministry of Social Affairs which covers part of the expenses. In addition, the school is funded via contracts with the local governments concerning accommodation and training of young homeless in youth hostels, and assessments and activation of people who are



long-term unemployed. The education programme is partly funded through an agreement with the local government. A part of the activities also receives funding from national or international programmes, from private donations and from income from workshop production.

Kofoeds Skole is an open institution. The majority of the students participate in the activities on their own initiative. However, more and more students are referred to the school from jobcentres due to the contracts with the local governments. Kofoeds Skole is networking with many social institutions, hospitals and projects. They often visit the school and new students are referred to the school via these contacts.

Since the collapse of communism in Eastern and Central Europe, Kofoeds Skole has transferred its model and experiences to this region. Currently, there are Kofoeds Skoles or activities based on the principles of the Kofoeds Skole in nine countries, including

Poland, Estonia, Lithuania, The Czech Republic, Ukraine, Armenia, Romania, Slovenia and Bulgaria. The 'sister schools' are independent, self-governing institutions with separate statutes, boards and budgets. Their activities and facilities are adapted to the local context and targeted towards the needs of the local population.

The transfer of Kofoeds Skoles experiences from Denmark was facilitated through the cooperation of civil society organisations and training for social workers. Over the years hundreds of social workers have been invited to visit the school in Copenhagen for longer or shorter periods of time. Kofoeds Skole's staff travels regularly from Denmark to the different countries in order to provide advice and participate in the meetings of the boards. Every two years, an international seminar is organised for the schools abroad.

For more information visit  
[www.kofoedsskole.dk](http://www.kofoedsskole.dk)

**Hátrányos helyzetű közösségek fejlesztése a vidék Magyarországon, a Magyar Máltai Szeretetszolgálat "Befogadó falu programja"**

Lantos Szilárd, program koordinátor, Magyar Máltai Szeretetszolgálat

A hajléktalanságból biztos kilépési lehetőséget adó Befogadó Falu program megvalósítását a Magyar Máltai Szeretetszolgálat 2004 őszén kezdte meg a Budapeستől 120 km-re fekvő Tarnabod településen, ahol a helyi közösséget támogató szolgáltatások mellett 2006-tól 30 fő számára munkát biztosító elektronikai hulladékbontó üzemet is indított.

Egy hosszú éveken keresztül félkészben álló budapesti irodaházból kilakoltatásra kerülő család sorsát segítve-követve találtak rá a Szeretetszolgálat munkatársai a Heves megyei Tarnabodra, ahol a település polgármesterével szinte azonnal jó viszonyt kialakítva jutottak el ahhoz a gondolathoz, hogy alacsony áron kínált falusi porták megvásárlásával egy-egy összetartó hajléktalan családnak biztosítsanak tartós lakhatást – kiváltva ezzel a drága intézményi ellátást.

Külön falugyűlés szolt a program indításáról, és a helybeliek támogatásának köszönhetően - mára Erk településsel együtt – folyamatosan

**Developing disadvantaged communities in rural areas of Hungary**

The "Host Village Programme" of the Hungarian Maltese Charity Service

Szilárd Lantos, Programme Coordinator, Hungarian Maltese Charity Service, Hungary

In autumn 2004 the Hungarian Maltese Charity Service launched the so-called "Host Village Programme" in Tarnabod, a village 120 km away from Budapest. The aim of the programme is to provide a pathway out of homelessness for families. In addition to community services for the local population, the organisation set up an electronic waste recycling workshop which created jobs for 30 unemployed people.

The Hungarian Maltese Charity Service got to know the village of Tarnabod through a homeless family that was evicted from their housing in Budapest. In cooperation with the Mayor of Tarnabod, the organisation decided to buy cheap housing in the village and to transform it into permanent housing for homeless families; an alternative that is much cheaper than providing expensive homeless services in residential institutions.

The inhabitants of the village unanimously supported the project. Today 100 persons

mintegy száz befogadott személy lakik a program 21 lakóházában, amit szociális bérlakásként teljesen térítésmentesen használhatnak azzal a minimális elvárással, hogy műveljék a házat körülvevő konyhakertet, járassák a gyermekeiket óvodába, iskolába, illetve a családfenntartók lehetőség szerint vállaljanak munkát. A befogadott családok a nyugodt, biztos körülmények között átgondolhatták lehetőségeiket, így van aki már néhány hónap, fél év után tovább tudott lépni, ugyanakkor van aki már a kezdetektől a program résztvevője.

A családokat természetesen a befogadásukat követően sem hagyta magára a Szeretetszolgálat, beilleszkedésüket, életkezdésüket szociális munkás segíti. Az egyéni esetkezelés mellett azonban szembe kellett nézni számtalan, a települési élet minőségét erősen rontó helybeli problémával, kielégítetlen szükséglettel.

Az óvodába helyhiány miatt csak a kötelező utolsó évben vették fel a gyerekeket, az iskolában alacsony színvonalon és a kevés tanterem miatt délelőtt-délutáni rendben folyt az oktatás, ráadásul az étkeztetés egy leromlott állapotú, fűtetlen, vízellátással nem rendelkező épületben volt „megoldva”. Bölcsődei ellátás, az iskolásoknak napközi nincs a településen, illetve a társadalom a kistelepülés lakóit tulajdonképpen magára hagyva érdemben nem biztosította a máshol természetes olyan állami szervezetek szolgáltatásait sem, mint például a rendőrség, a védőnői szolgálat vagy a munkaügyi központ. A lakosok boldogulásának, munkavállalásának pedig talán mindig is legfőbb gátja volt, hogy délután fél ötör jelenik meg az utolsó távolsági busz a településen.

A munkába járást és a közeli városok, főútvonalak elérését szolgáló falubusz járatot egy 17 személyes járművel szinte a program indulásával egy időben állították forgalomba, melyet az eltelt évek során menetrendszerű járatként, munkásjáratként és iskolai kirándulások alkalmával egyaránt használtak. A közösségi élet fellendítésére több kisebb közösségi programot hívtunk életre (települési focicsapatot, mozit, Erken nevelőszülői, helyettes szülői képzéseket), melyek közül Tarnabod igen jó termőtalajának kihasználását támogató háztáji gazdálkodás program lett talán a legsikeresebb. 2006-ban sikerült megvalósítani az óvoda bővítését és szakmai fejlesztését, illetve egy

from former homeless families live free of charge in 21 detached houses in Tarnabod and in the second host village Erk. In exchange for the free use of the houses, inhabitants commit themselves to cultivating their kitchen garden, sending their children to kindergarten or to school and actively seeking employment.

One of the problems the inhabitants faced was the lack of public transport. This is why the charity established a village bus service with a 17 seat minibus. This bus takes the inhabitants to the nearby towns and main routes where better public transport is available. In addition, the Hungarian Maltese Charity Service set up community activities, such as a new football team, a cinema, training for prospective foster parents. In particular the farming skills training on the fertile soil of Tarnabod proved to be successful.

In 2006, the organisation enlarged the local kindergarten and contributed to its professional development. With EU funds for employment support, a village pub was transformed into a playhouse for children. It now also serves as a canteen for the school. EU funds also helped to establish an information centre for young people on useful leisure activities and other opportunities.

The improvement of the employment situation of the local people proved to be of key importance. The aim was to create jobs also at local level. But the Hungarian Maltese Charity Service could not find any company or contractor willing to invest in Tarnabod. Therefore it created its own non-profit social enterprise. With the financial support from the National Employment Public Foundation it transformed a massive stone building situated on a large property into a workshop, including leisure rooms, offices and work areas. The programme manager tried to find an industrial activity that was sustainable, easy to learn, well recognised and of acceptable quality. A solution was found in the dismantling of electronic waste. The main objective is to employ mainly unskilled people from the village while launching a self-sustaining non-profit enterprise that would operate in the open market without any financial aid.

150 people from the 900 habitants of the village applied for the 30 vacant jobs. The successful candidates started working in May 2006. As an enterprise competing in the free

Európai Unió foglalkoztatási programnak köszönhetően az egyik falusi kocsmá helyén létrejött az iskolai étkeztetést is felvállaló játszótér, amelyet most szintén Unió forrásból a fiatalok látókörébe, ismeretét bővítő, számtalan hasznos szabadidő-eltöltési lehetőséget kínáló ifjúsági információs ponttá fejleszthetünk.

A különböző közösségi-szociális programok mellett kulcskérdésnek tűnt a foglalkoztatási helyzet javítása, és amellett, hogy sikerült már 2006 során bővíteni a közfoglalkoztatottak számát, és hogy a közeli autópályán elhaladó munkásjáratokra a falubusszal már komplett brigádokat sikerült „ráhordani”, égető szükség volt helyben is munkahelyeket teremteni.

Hosszas előkészítő munkát követően sem sikerült azonban olyan vállalkozót, céget felkutatni aki Tarnabodon kezdett volna fejlesztésbe, ezért a Szeretetszolgálat egy erre a célra létrehozott szervezetten keresztül, az Országos Foglalkoztatási Közalapítvány támogatásával saját maga kezdett bele egy nagy területű telken elhelyezkedő masszív építésű kőépület üzemépületté történő átalakításába, a szükséges betonfelületek, szociális helyiségek, irodák, munkahelyek kialakításába.

A program vezetői a hosszú távú fenntarthatóság, a viszonylag könnyen megtanulható munka és az elfogadható minőségű, megbecsült tevékenység szempontjai alapján az akkoriban felfutó elektronikai hulladékbontást választották. Alapvetően fontos célkitűzés volt a településen élő túlnyomó részben képzetlen emberek foglalkoztatása, ugyanakkor önmagunkkal szemben támasztott elvárás volt egy nonprofit, de támogatások nélkül is önfenntartó, piaci körülmények között is helytálló vállalkozás indítása.

Az induláskor meghirdetett 30 munkahelyre a befogadott családokkal együtt mintegy 900 lelkes településről 150-en jelentkeztek, akik közül több mint 100-an a polgármesteri hivatalban gyakorlati vizsgát is tettek, majd a kiválasztottak 2006. május 1-jével léphettek munkaviszonyba.

Munkavállalóink megtartására folyamatosan különös gondot fordítottunk (például üzemi szociális munkás alkalmazásával), azonban mint a szabadpiacon szereplő üzleti vállalkozás a termelékenységét, a fenntarthatóságot is szem előtt kellett tartanunk. A kilépő, vagy valamilyen kirívó okból elküldött emberek helyére mindig bőven akadt helybeli jelentkező, a kezdeti stábból mára mindössze ötven maradtak meg. Fontos adat, hogy a

market, it has to find a balance between supporting and sustaining people in employment (with the help of a social worker) and ensuring productivity and sustainability of the business. The demand for the jobs in the workshops is high. From the people who started in 2006, there are only 5 left, and the vacant jobs were filled again with new applicants. From the people who left, half have found a better job or have started their own business. However, the other half has become unemployed again or found employment in another community service.

The workers have regular working hours between 7 am and 3:30 pm. A special rule in the enterprise is that the employees which are used to working outside have a 5 minute break every hour. Every year they are dismantling 500 tons of electronic waste that was collected piece by piece, mainly in Budapest.

The Hungarian Maltese Charity Service is confident that with a new economic upturn, the raw material market will pick up again. The enterprise aims to reach a minimum profit again, a “positive zero balance”, like they did in 2008 when state aid for the enterprise had ceased.

In Hungary the legal form of a non-profit enterprise is not well known. The staff often has to explain how they operate without any state aid, in a competitive open market and with the main goal of sustaining existing jobs and creating new jobs, instead of maximising the profit.

Since its launch, the Host village programme has operated without having a secure and stable budget. The organisation always has to rely on raising funds through lobbying activities and successful applications for tenders. The Hungarian Maltese Charity Service welcomed the establishment of an aid fund for the most disadvantaged micro-regions, such as Heves, by the Hungarian government. However, the aid from this fund is often irregular and paid in very large sums that need to be spent over the course of 2-3 years. These sums cannot be used in a useful way in the Host village programme if the organisation wants to remain flexible and be able to adapt to changing contexts. As a result, the Maltese Charity does not have time to implement the programmes for which they have received funding through the fund progressively.

kilépő dolgozók mintegy fele más jobb, vagy magasabban fizetett munkalehetőség, vagy saját vállalkozás indítása miatt hagyta el – bocsánatkérések mellett – az elektronikai bontóüzemet, illetve a kilépők mintegy fele esett vissza, és lett – sajnos – ismét munkanélküli vagy közmunkában foglalkoztatott.

Sajátosság, hogy a szabad ég alatti munkavégzéshez szokott emberek miatt óránként tartunk öt-öt perc szünetet, de szerencsére elmondható, hogy a település képéhez immár hozzátartozik a reggel 7 órai munkakezdésre igyekvő emberek látványa, illetve hogy az általunk kínált minimálbérért minden munkanapon délután fél négyig folyamatos, aktív munkavégzéssel bontják alkotórészeire az éves szinten 500 tonnányi, elsősorban a fővárosban darabonként összegyűjtött elhasznált elektronikai berendezést.

[A cikk teljes szövege](#)

The five years old programme in the village of Tarnabod showed that the social integration of homeless families can be achieved also in more remote areas of the country. This has strengthened the position of the Hungarian Maltese Charity Service in establishing a partnership with civil servants and public agencies. However, it also became clear that in the development of disadvantaged communities measurable, demonstrable and sustainable results will only be reached through long term planning, by continuously adapting the plans to the changing needs and on the basis of stable and secure funding.

## Information Resources

### The role of work integration social enterprises for promoting social inclusion Results of an EU funded project

Over the last two years, the EU funded “WISE project” looked at the role of work integration social enterprises (WISEs) for promoting the social inclusion of disadvantaged people.

WISE specifically aim at contributing to the community and integrate disadvantaged workers through a productive activity. The eight participating countries (Austria, Belgium, Finland, Italy, Malta, Poland, Romania and Spain) discussed different models of work integration social enterprises as well as policies that support their work.

A number of different information resources were produced in the context of the project:

- **Eight national reports and four regional reports** (Lombardy, Marche, Campania and Latium) which describe the different types of work integration social enterprises (WISEs), analyse the policies supporting them and identify policy good practices.

- **Four bilateral peer reviews** (Austria-Italy, Spain-Malta, Belgium-Finland and Romania-Poland) to compare WISE models, discuss national policies and identify elements of transferability.
- **Eight cross-cutting reports** from all participating countries to set out how WISEs could improve social and employment policies in the country.
- A set of ten European strategic guidelines which are addressed at European decision makers.

All information resources as well as further information about the project are available on [www.wiseproject.eu](http://www.wiseproject.eu)



## Employment as a tool for empowerment

### New FEANTSA document on empowering ways of working in homeless services

How to work with people experiencing homelessness in an empowering way? FEANTSA's new background document presents many practical examples of empowerment from the homelessness sector in Europe, and includes one section that explicitly deals with the role of training, education and employment for the empowerment of people.

The examples are structured around three dimensions of empowerment: respecting rights and principles of working, facilitating access to resources and creating opportunities. The document highlights that finding a job adapted

to the needs and aspirations of a person as well as participating in a meaningful activity or volunteering helps people to re-build their self-confidence and be aware and further develop their skills and competencies.

'Empowering ways of working' is based on contributions from the FEANTSA Participation Working Group, testimonies from staff and service users, as well as other information resources on the empowerment of homeless people.

The document is available on FEANTSA's website in [English](#) and [French](#).

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## Good practice examples of participation and employment

### FEANTSA Participation Conference outcomes now available

More than 300 service users and professionals from across Europe recently came together at FEANTSA's European Conference in Copenhagen on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2009 to discuss and share good practices of service user participation.

The conference featured 10 interactive workshops and two plenary sessions including one workshop that specifically looked at the link between employment and participation. One interesting example presented in the workshop was the Grow project, a service user employment scheme run by the organisation [Thames Reach](#) in the UK. Thames Reach has employed service users both through specifically targeted measures, such as traineeships, and by making it easier for

people to compete for all jobs across the organisation. Thames Reach is currently running a national consultancy programme for developing service user employment opportunities in the homelessness sector across the UK.

FEANTSA conference participants also had the chance to watch videos on homelessness and participation that had been produced or made available for the purpose of this conference.

All outcomes videos (including a video on the Grow project) and presentations of the European conference are now available on [FEANTSA's website](#).

## Events

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### European seminar on local homeless strategies – Save the Date!

4 June 2010, European Committee of the Regions, Brussels

How to develop effective local homeless strategies? This will be the topic of a seminar that FEANTSA is organising together with [HABITACT](#) in the European Committee of the Regions on Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2010. Like [previous European seminars](#), it will be open to local practitioners from across Europe who work on tackling and preventing homelessness in their towns. The aim of the seminar is to

provide practical information on challenges and opportunities for effective local policy-making on homelessness. The seminar will be an opportunity to network and meet people working on the design and implementation of homeless policies.

More information will be available soon on the FEANTSA website: [www.feantsa.org](http://www.feantsa.org)



This Newsletter is supported by the European Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity (2007-2013).

This programme was established to financially support the implementation of the objectives of the European Union in the employment and social affairs area, as set out in the Social Agenda, and thereby contribute to the achievement of the Lisbon Strategy goals in these fields.

The seven-year Programme targets all stakeholders who can help shape the development of appropriate and effective employment and social legislation and policies, across the EU-27, EFTA and EU candidate and pre-candidate countries.

To that effect, PROGRESS purports at:

- providing analysis and policy advice on employment, social solidarity and gender equality policy areas;
- monitoring and reporting on the implementation of EU legislation and policies in employment, social solidarity and gender equality policy areas;
- promoting policy transfer, learning and support among Member States on EU objectives and priorities; and
- relaying the views of the stakeholders and society at large.

For more information see:

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/progress/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/progress/index_en.html)

The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the European Commission.