

Report – community engagement event

Multiplier event / 15.03.2024 / OZARA d.o.o., Ulica Heroja Šaranoviča 27, 2000 Maribor

The main focus of the Multiplier event was on presenting the developments within the project that happened in the last year as a lot of new material was developed. In the beginning the project main information was presented:

- Name, Aims, Partners, target groups, foreseen and already developed project results.

This introductory presentation was followed by showcasing main similarities and differences between project countries on the matter of employment situations and transitions / inclusion to the labour market from the perspective of each partner country. Main similarities and differences have been put to the forefront in order to clarify what already works best and what challenges appear throughout the countries.

Independent living concept was emphasized as a prerequisite for inclusive planning, counselling, career guidance and supportive service for people with disabilities. This concept can be considered as an important part of future labour and education policies that comprises many different public and private actors outside of (solely) the labour market inclusion.

With the latter emphasized, we continued towards presentation of policy documents developed and focus groups implemented in the partner countries. Among the gathered results, the presentation included the main results of the focus groups that included key takeaways: Dispersion vs. cooperation of services and stakeholders, Vocational training/rehabilitation/maintenance of working ability, Independence / independent living The importance of individual planning, Assessment and evaluation tools (different purposes / different services), Interdisciplinarity, Connectivity / Network The study case / video (Slovenia case) was also presented to showcase a real-life scenario development and once more widen the scope of understanding different entities, important to each individual in the course of labour market orientation/counselling and training and as per national settings.

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The event was concluded with opening debate about the first outline of Include3 method curriculum and focus on specific thematic. The debate among participants focused on general clusters of feedback that can be summarised as follows:

- Employment and/or returning to labour market: depending on many factors outside (availability of supportive environments, non-discriminatory practices, understanding the meaningful contribution of target groups to the labour market, shift of perspective that does not happen only on societal level but also on systemic level – i.e. recently regained right of voting).
- The network of rehabilitation services needs to be strengthened for offering more space and especially time for individualised approach.
- Independent living concept that includes service and promotion of living outside of institution to foster independency (living as such than connects to all aspects of life including labour market transition).

All together 20 external participants joined the event with participants from public and private sphere: Employment centres, Center for reuse social business, Institute for development of alternative practices social business, Local Higher education school, Employment office, Private business entities and media counselling organisation. The event was also open for participants to Social inclusion programme of OZARA d.o.o.

Most important conclusion taken out of the feedback received can be connected to national or systemic shifts that are notably happening or taking place in recent years (especially since 2018, when the Resolution on the National Mental Health Program 2018–2028 has been developed). Employment, the right to work even if under supported conditions is one the most important elements of independent living. The so called “having a say” from the most vulnerable societal groups needs to be taken into account within decision making process within different services. Rehabilitation process remains and was communicated as one of the most important processes to bring together employers and potential employees as adaptation of workplace is a necessity, a right and offers services that enables both parties to find best possible solution. One of the remaining challenges currently and in the future is the reality of employment market as such and flexible job opportunities – the mismatch in needs from specific business sector skilled labour force, working day structure and task’s structure being adaptable to people with disabilities. The typology of work that is adaptable to people with intellectual disabilities and also mostly available to their ability is more feasible in employment centres since there is much more flexibility to adapt also the work procedures to individual ability of each employee that is facing limitations in this sense.