

< **Perspektive 50Plus-Employment Pacts for the elder people in the regions-Germany**>

General details

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Details of activity

<p>Background to the case study</p>	<p>Aims and objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The federal programme “Perspektive 50plus – Employment Pacts for the elder people in the Regions” aims to increase the public awareness for the difficult labour market situation of long-term unemployed persons older than 50 years. • The second objective of the programme is to identify best practices for the re-integration of the above named target group in the labour market. • The third objective is to possibly mainstream the identified best practices into new federal law or programmes. <p>Brief rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the 80’s and 90’ in Germany a lot of older people had been dismissed before reaching the official pension age due to early retirement schemes. This policy was backed up by the politicians, the enterprises and the trade unions as an instrument to reduce the supply on the labour market. Meanwhile it is recognised that this policy is too expensive, that it is partly an instrument which enterprises use for downsizing jobs and that in the framework of the demographic change there has to be a policy shift in order to finance the social systems. The employment rate of the target group 55+ in Germany is 41%; the EU-target is to reach an employment rate of
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	<p>50% in 2010.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The programme with its above listed objectives is mentioned in the coalition treaty of the new German government (CDU/CSU and SPD). • Since 1 January 2005 in the framework of the German labour market reform (Hartz IV) 444 Jobcentres and communities are responsible for the long-term unemployed. The programme will be implemented in the framework of this new institutional structure. <p>Implementing organisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme level: Gesellschaft für soziale Unternehmensberatung (Social Business Consultancy), programme-development, -implementation and – management for federal, regional and local administration since 1991. • Project level: The Jobcentres or communities are responsible for the implementation of the projects on local/regional level. In general, the project implementation takes place in the framework of a regional network with the key actors concerning labour market policy, e.g. trade unions, employers associations and also training institutions responsible for the implementation of single actions. <p>Funders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The programme is funded by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS). • Some projects co-financed the actions by ESF or through their own budgets. <p>When activity started / end date?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The programme started in September 2005 and will end in December 2007.
Description of activity	<p>Outline of programme / activities and approaches used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the period of 2 years 62 model projects in all regions of Germany will be funded. • The main activities will be the building and development of regional networks/employment pacts and the development and implementation of instruments to improve the placement of the target group into the labour market. • At programme level, conferences and (thematic) workshops will be organised in order to improve the



	<p>knowledge exchange between the projects and to facilitate the identification of best practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Furthermore on programme level an evaluation will take place. <p>Origins – how it came about – bottom up / top down, grew from previous initiative (if so what)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the programme level it was a federal top-down initiative of the former German government (Social Democrats and the Green party). • At the level of the regional projects it was a bottom-up approach since different regional actors (politicians – administration – enterprises – society) were involved in the development of the concepts. <p>Who was involved in the design, management and delivery of the programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the design and management of the program the federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) was responsible. • For the programme delivery the BMAS contracted the gsub. • For the design, management and delivery of the regional projects the regional actors are responsible. <p>Recognition – has the programme been recognised as good practice? If so, by whom?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With this programme the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) targets directly the regional/local level and its specific potential and resources instead of the general German tradition to regulate labour market funding by federal law. • The identification of good practices is the expected outcome of the programme evaluation.
<p>Policy context within which the programme operates</p>	<p>Describe the policy context in which the programme operates: Is there an explicit relationship between policy priorities / local activities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The process of selection and approval of projects was organised in the framework of a “call for proposals” (“competition of best ideas”). The documents for the call clearly outlined the objectives of the programme. Therefore the projects with the best concepts for the placement of the target group were approved. Hereby the relationship between policy priorities and local activities is secured.



	<p>Is the policy context supportive / prohibitive?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since the mid of the 80's there is a trend in Germany towards an increasing regionalisation of the labour market programmes, e.g. "Learning Regions", "Local Social Capital". This includes an increasing awareness of the problem solving capacities of the local/regional governance level and regional networks. • Concerning the placement of long-term unemployed older than 50 years one has to recognise that this subject in the framework of the demographic change and the need to increase the employment rate of this target group means a paradigmatic change of the early-retirement-strategy of the last decades. <p>Has the policy context changed during the life of the activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The programme originally was designed by the former government of Social Democrats and Green party. Meanwhile a new government – the grand coalition – is in office. • The increase of the employment rate of older persons is a subject with high political priority. The program is mentioned in the coalition treaty. • Meanwhile the new government announced the plan to increase the pension age from 65 to 67. <p>Which came first – local activities or policy priorities (i.e. is activity leading or following policy priorities)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The federal policy activities with the design of the program came first. After the publication of the "call for proposals" the regional actors developed their project concepts. In some regions already specific organisations with a focus on the placement of older long-term unemployed persons existed before the federal programme was initiated.
<p>Geographical focus of the case study</p>	<p>At what level does the programme operate?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The programme itself is a federal programme. The 62 funded projects operate on the regional/local level, usually in the administrative districts of the Job Centres or communities. In some projects several Job Centres cooperate in order to be able to cover the needs of the whole regional labour market.
<p>Impact</p>	<p>Outputs – scale and scope of people reached through the programme</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since the projects started in September 2005 the focus of the activities up until now was to establish the project structure and organisation, to develop PR-material, and to organise an opening event. • Concerning the participants the projects started e.g. with the profiling, the training, the placement into jobs or practical trainings in enterprises. <p>Outcomes: <i>at local level</i> – what difference at local level and at <i>regional and / or national level</i> – what difference made?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At local/regional level expected outcomes are the establishment of sustainable networks/employment pacts, the organisation of know-how-transfer between the involved regions including as a result new regional innovations and the organisational development of the Jobcentres and communities in the field of the development and implementation of strategies for the counselling, profiling, training and placement of long-term unemployed persons older than 50 years. • One expected outcome at local, regional and national level is an increase of the awareness of the need to increase the employment rate of the older persons. In this context it is important to include in the regional networks actors from politics, enterprises/private economy and society. • The focus of the programme evaluation is to identify best practices for the re-integration of older long-term unemployed, to evaluate the added value of local/region TEP's in comparison the federal programmes and to make proposals for new instruments on the federal level. <p>Any impact at European level?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The expected outcome/impact relevant at European level is to reduce the gap to the target of 50% by 2010 of the German employment rate for older long-term unemployed.
Partners' details	<p>Name and briefly describe partner's contributions to programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gsub is responsible for the delivery of the programme on the federal level. The tasks include consultancy of the projects, organisation of know-how-exchange, workshops, conferences and programme evaluation in cooperation with a research institute.



Theme-Specific Questions

<p>Who was targeted by the programme?</p>	<p>Name target group / groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The specific target group of the programme are older long-term unemployed. • More general at the societal level the target groups are the public, the job centers and communities, enterprises, employers' associations , trade unions and other labour market policy institutions..
<p>Which levels of government were involved, informed or consulted?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the national level the federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) was responsible for the design of the programme. • In the development and implementation of the single projects the regional/local government levels were involved, e.g. local politicians, mayors, district administrators and the corresponding public administrations.
<p>What actions resulted in mainstreaming?</p>	<p>How did they do it? Serendipity / luck, contacts, drive, X factor? Where has programme been replicated?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mainstreaming is dependent on the results of the programme evaluation. The expected outcome is the proposal for new instruments on federal level.
<p>Sustainability</p>	<p>What achieved / how funded?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The expected outcome of the projects after the programme period is that the local pacts or rather the jobcentres and communities will fund successful instruments out of their own budgets. • The expected outcome at the societal level is the raise of the awareness in the general public and in enterprises for the needs of re-integration of older long-term unemployed or rather as a consequence the change in the internal human resource management (life long learning, work-life balance, health programmes).
<p>Successes / lessons learned</p>	<p>What contributed to the programme's success?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive factors are the political priority of the programme topic, the presence of the subject in the public discussion and the competitive approval process in the framework of the "call for proposals". <p>What lessons have been learned</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a surprising variety of strategies, approaches and instruments.



	<p>If they had their time again what would they do differently?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The period between the publication and the deadline of the “Call for proposals” was only 6 weeks.
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