

# Borderless solutions

WORKPLACES LEARNING THROUGH INCLUSIVE EUROPE – A GUIDE

**We wanted to know more about how violence against disabled people can be prevented.**

*... what was perhaps most exciting was getting to meet Romani counsellors.*

As a direct result of this initiative, we are starting an expert network for further exchanges between our countries.

Few countries in Europe have made as much progress with microloans as Italy.

*EU funding is an extremely important component of the development work.*

*They were relatively uninterested in the individual's diagnosis, and were instead more focused on his/her abilities.*

**The authorities view social enterprises as a way of creating jobs.**



# Learn from the study visits of others!

**Do you want to develop in your work** together with colleagues in another EU country? To gain new insights into how you can work with young people who have dropped out of school? In Germany, overseas practical training is arranged for such young people. Do you want to experience new ideas about the integration of new arrivals to a country? In England, social services are being provided at a pub. Do you want to know how microloans have assisted the development of new businesses in Italy?

Then an exchange programme through the EU could be worth trying! In this document you can read about the experiences gained from the EU project Inclusive Europe, which has been carried out during 2012–2014.

**In brief, the participants have:** Reflected about the challenges in their own work in which they would like to receive new impulses; attended a course about how a transnational exchange programme can be arranged, and how to find a suitable business partner; arranged study visits on their own, and planned how to make the most of the experiences gained within their own workplace.

This document contains descriptions of 15 study visits, practical advice and a summary of the experiences gained during the project.

I hope it will be of use to everyone who is planning to arrange new study visits through various initiatives such as EU projects or other measures where an exchange with other countries is a possibility or a requirement.

**Anne-Marie Flood**, Project Manager, Inclusive Europe

**Do you want to develop  
in your work together  
with colleagues in  
another EU country?**

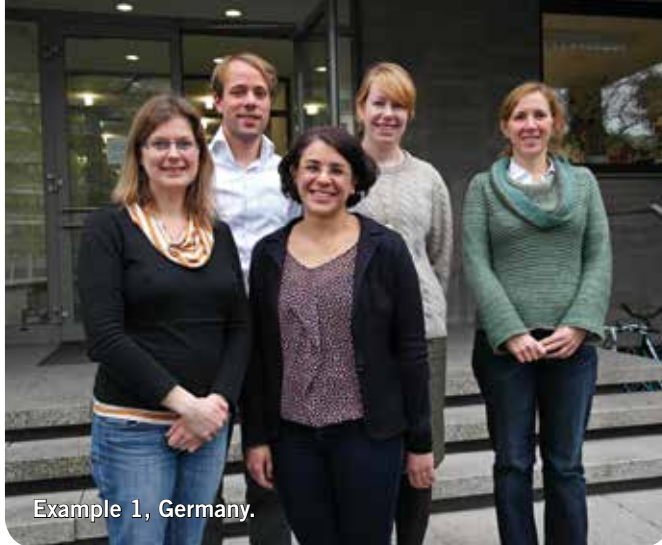
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Example 4, Italy.



Example 1, Germany.



Example 7, Denmark.

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**“Exchange broadens  
our perspective”**

Around 75 per cent of the study visits led to the participant's own job and organisation being developed. Anne-Marie Flood, Project Manager for Inclusive Europe, summarises the project's two years of transnational exchange programmes.

**A key to success is** identifying an issue about which you believe that others could have new ideas. You also need to invest sufficient time in the preparations and get the most out of your experiences when you return, says Anne-Marie Flood, who has been the Project Manager for the EU project – Inclusive Europe.

The aim has been to be able to exchange experiences with colleagues in other countries for those who work with the labour market and social issues in Sweden. But do we really have anything to learn from colleagues within the EU? Don't we already know best, considering how well-developed our welfare state is?

“It is a fairly common and somewhat self-righteous perception that we in Sweden should above all else be teaching things to the other countries in the EU”, says Anne-Marie Flood.

There are many ideas in other EU countries from which we can benefit. Sweden has come a long way in terms of

### Facts about Inclusive Europe

- **PROJECT PERIOD:** June 2011–April 2014.
- **COST:** Just under 9 million SEK.
- **SEMINARS:** 370.
- **PARTICIPANTS:** 500 people from 32 organisations. 148 people did exchange visits to other countries: 81 took part in exchange programmes, and 63 did customised trips with exchange programmes. The project enabled 204 trips in total.

issues like equality and equal treatment, but we are not as good when it comes to things like school results, unemployment levels among young people and rehabilitation measures, she says.

**“We may be one** of the world's most advanced welfare countries. But we have become stuck in certain systems and are unable to see new possibilities.”

She names Italy as an example. Social enterprises have become much more com- >>

## Apart from providing new insights into how one can work more successfully, borderless meetings are also part of the EU's peace work.

>> mon in Italy, and they often offer successful work measures to, for example, disabled people. The church also has long experience of social measures and possesses interesting knowledge.

“In the new democracies in the East, much of the social safety net has been removed in conjunction with the transition to a market economy. In these countries the non-profit organisations are passionate about finding solutions, they think very innovatively and they get close to the people who are in need. Through contact with such organisations we can see our own problems from a new perspective.”

**Our social insurance agency** (the Swedish Försäkringskassan) as a format doesn't exist in other EU countries, and nor do they really have the same number of people on long-term sickness benefits as we have in Sweden, she says. They are classified as job-seekers and are provided with money in other ways.

“There are many other ways to organise things than those we simply take for granted.”

An exchange through Inclusive Europe is thus a sort of training course in how the participant's own work could be able to be carried out differently. For example, we can

get ideas from Germany about how measures can be undertaken to help young people who neither study nor work.

“They had some really difficult cases and, what's more, the young people are difficult to find, since no one registers them. They quite simply had to look for them on the streets. With the help of EU funding, significant measures were implemented which meant, among other things, that the young people got to take part in practical training on their own abroad. A number of them had never travelled anywhere before.”

The results were very successful, with around 60 percent now re-established in society. Germany currently has significantly lower unemployment levels among young people than in the past.

Apart from providing new insights into how one can work more successfully, borderless meetings are also part of the EU's peace work, says Anne Marie Flood. Through collaboration across borders, people develop an increased understanding for one another and gain new insights into cultural similarities and differences.

**So how do you get started** with collaboration? Inclusive Europe has arranged courses about how to initiate an exchange in practice. It begins with an insight into the fact



## Why is transnational cooperation important?



**Ingmar Paulsson, Regional Manager, ESF Council:**

“International contacts have

always been a guiding light in Sweden and even more important due to globalisation. The labour market is international and we have large numbers of immigrants coming to Sweden so it is important for the Swedish Employment Agency, for example, to participate in initiatives like Inclusion Europe. People’s mobility these

days means that new knowledge is required.”

### **Can you give an example of a difficulty with the project?**

“It has been difficult to get the participants to realise that participation is a long-term undertaking. You have to be prepared to invest long-term in competence-enhancing measures. We have noticed an increasing level of disinterest from some of the government authorities to provide participants to the project.”

### **Name some of the successes.**

“We have received feasibility

studies for new applications.

The experiences we have gained leave us well prepared for the new programme from the European Social Fund.

We have gained a knowledge base on which we now stand and from which we can continue to move forward.”

“We can see that the majority of participants have gained new contacts and the workplaces new ideas. It must be viewed as a success that the authorities have invested resources with the aim of working transnationally.”

that you face challenges in your work. Is there someone who might have interesting experiences to share? It has to do with clarifying the purpose of the study trip, thinking about what you yourself have to offer and considering how to make the most of new knowledge and spread it to others when you return home. Interested parties also receive helpful tips about how to find a suitable business partner.

**148 people have** carried out visits to other countries during 2012 and 2013. On page 9 you can read about 15 examples of exchanges with other countries.

Not surprisingly, one conclusion is that it is necessary to take measures before the trip in order for the results to be successful.

The idea is that the participants themselves should get involved, arrange the trip and gain new contacts and experiences, and plan for how to use their new knowledge and experiences in their work when they return home, which the majority of participants have done. Learning by doing.

**Another obstacle** to overcome is the fact that the preparations must be allowed to take time, something difficult in a stressful situation, says Anne-Marie Flood.

“But once people realise that it has to do with business development that can lead to smarter ways of working, it is normally easier to justify the measures required.”

It is also important to gain a certain level >>

>> of understanding for cultural and other differences, for example how the authorities function in the country you will be visiting.

Language differences mean that people need to be extra clear about what they are saying. It is a good idea to try to repeat and summarise things to ensure that you have correctly understood what the other person means.

**It is Anne-Marie Flood's** assessment that around 75 per cent of the collaborations have resulted in an impact.

“One experience is that we have everything to gain by getting “inside the walls”. In other words, holding a course in-house at the organisations, because that’s when things really happen. When people who

make decisions see the EU exchanges as a business development.”

**The results also show** many organisations have gained inspiration for new ways of thinking. Some examples:

- Better inclusion for the elderly and disabled with I-pads (Municipality of Södertälje).
- The creation of an innovation hub for young people in Astra Zeneca’s old premises (Municipality of Södertälje).
- Development of training programme for unemployed young people to find work at airports (collaboration between Berlin and Arlanda airports).
- Development of college course in entrepreneurship (collaboration between the region and Finland).

## Why is transnational cooperation important?



**Christian Råbergh,**  
**National**  
**Coordinator at**  
**ESF Council:**

“It is

Sweden’s obligation, as a member of the EU, to work with these issues. This is important for all of the member states, since it leads to a greater degree of learning than if you try to solve your problems on your own.”

**Can you give an example of a difficulty with the project?**

“There have been a number

of difficulties, including difficulties of a technical nature, and how to find a partner with whom to collaborate, for example. Projects like Inclusive Europe have an important role to play when it comes to helping authorities, among others, to learn how to work transnationally.”

**Name some of the successes.**

“City of Stockholm has had a good collaboration with other countries regarding elderly care.

In Sweden there is a high proportion of employees with poor language skills. They are

in need of competence development, and it is valuable to find out about the experiences that have been gained in other countries.”

**How can the exchanges appear?**

“It could be a good idea to develop common projects and then compare their success in each country, to see if the results are different. Another way is to import good work approaches from other countries and modify them to suit Swedish conditions. A third model is to study how colleagues in other countries work.”





**15 study visit reports**  
– exchanging ideas! >>

*We were impressed by the focus on international collaboration regarding the work with young people in Germany.*

# 1

## How Germany works with youth issues



Focus on international exchange and a strong role for NGOs are parts of Germany's work with young people.

- **WE TOOK PART** Eva Theisz/Idah Klint, the Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs.
- **WE VISITED** Actors who work with youth issues in various ways, including the government ministry, NGOs and municipal organisations.
- **WE WANTED TO** Learn more about how people work with youth issues in Germany.
- **WE LEARNED** How youth policy is organised at different levels in Germany.
- **THIS HAPPENED LATER** We have a continued dialogue with the parties we visited, and we have submitted a feasibility study for an EU project.

“ In Germany they often talk about youth work when it comes to discussions on youth policy. There are, however, many similarities with Swedish policy, including focus on the transition from school to working life, formal and non-formal learning and young people's participation in society. There are also differences, such as the process for how to collect points of view and determine policy orientation. In Germany, the public sector and NGOs work closely with each other in order to resolve the challenges faced by young people.

**Collaborations and** common decision-making processes at all levels are features of the work in Germany. At a local level the NGOs get to participate in the decision-making process, which is not the case in Sweden, where they are instead invited to have points of view.

In Germany it is the NGOs that carry



Kerstin Wondratschek, IJAB, Andreas Kalbitz, AGJ, Eva Theisz, Idah Klint and Katrin Schauer, IJAB.

out the majority of the work with young people, based on public financing. For us here in Sweden, the civil society is more of a complement to public services. In Germany there is an element of mistrust of the state as a strong actor in relation to youth issues, something that has its background in the Hitler Youth's earlier strong position.

At municipal level the work is conducted on a more inter-sectorial basis, and issues that concern children and youths, for example recreational activities, preschool and social services are gathered together in what is known as a youth office. At national or

federal level the structures are more specialised. Our hosts, IJAB, worked solely with international youth work.

**Through the transnational** exchange we found potential partners for future collaborations.

There is a very interesting project called "The municipalities are becoming international", and another one called "Jive".

We were impressed by the focus on international collaboration regarding the work with young people in Germany, and it is something we want to take home with us in relation to our own work."

# 2

## Danes have a method for treating offenders



The visit to Copenhagen produced exciting discussions and new perspectives regarding violence in close relationships.

- **WE TOOK PART** Amphi Produktion, Stockholm – an organisation that supports and develops norm-critical change processes with training, films and other materials.
- **WE MET** Dialog Mod Vold, an NGO within the Askovgården Group, which conducts professional operations within the social and health sector in Copenhagen. Dialog Mod Vold is one of their treatment organisations with the focus on people who have practised violence against their close relatives.
- **WE WANTED TO** Know more about how violence against disabled people can be prevented.
- **WE LEARNED** To treat offenders with the focus on the violence. A seminar day is a good way to meet.

*One of the things we learned is that Denmark in general, and our host in particular, has come a long way in involving the treatment of offenders.*

“ At the end of February, staff members from Amphi Produktion travelled to Copenhagen to meet our business partner Dialog Mod Vold in order to arrange a seminar together on violence against people with disabilities.

During the day we presented our training material called “There are moments”. The participants came from many different organisations, such as social services, the police and correctional care for offenders.

It was interesting to compare how we work with violence in close relationships in Sweden and Denmark and how the discussions regarding this matter are formulated.

One of the things we learned is that Denmark in general, and our host in particular, has come a long way in involving the treatment of offenders who practise violence in close relationships. They have a distinct method where the focus is placed on the violence. In Sweden we need to improve the expertise in relation to this area, and above all else we need to start operations that specialise in the treatment of offenders.

One piece of advice to future participants in transnational collaborations is that it is effective to work together on distinct activities, like the planning of a seminar day. This makes the collaboration more concrete.”

# 3

## Spain invests in effective social enterprises



Companies are encouraged to employ people with disabilities, where focus is on their abilities, not their diagnosis.

- **WE TOOK PART** LFC Nyköping-Södertälje, the Swedish Social Insurance Agency.
- **WE MET** Representatives from three social enterprises in Madrid.
- **WE WANTED TO** Know more about social enterprises and adapted work duties.
- **WE LEARNED** Another view of people with disabilities, how the legislation differs from the legislation in Sweden, and that you have to expect another view of times and punctuality.
- **THIS HAPPENED LATER** The study visit has led to a feasibility study for the Coordinated Association Södertörn, which was submitted in September 2013, to gain the opportunity to start working with these work approaches in a more focused manner.

*You have to expect another view of times and punctuality.*

“ We formed a group during the first training course, and we agreed that we would try to see how people in Europe work with individuals who are in need of rehabilitation with adapted work duties on account of medical conditions.

A concept that exists in most European countries is that of “social enterprises”. The need for adapted work has increased in Sweden, but unfortunately the number of social enterprises has not. The question is – why?

**We decided we** wanted to take a closer look at how people work with social enterprises within the EU.

Our mapping process showed that the countries that had made the most progress

in this area were Great Britain, Spain and Germany.

In Madrid in Spain there were a number of actors – at several levels – within a relatively small distance of one another, all of whom had come a long way in their development.

**We studied facts about** the various organisations in Madrid and decided to visit three of them. We initially contacted them via email, and all three were very positive about the idea of our visit. Our contact person decided to accompany us as an interpreter.

Like the Swedish public officials we are, we had prepared a thorough and ambitious programme for our three days in Madrid. >>

>> Times were set “to the minute”, and we booked a centrally located hotel so that we would easily be able to get around by train and on foot.

By lunch on the first day, our timetable had already gone out the window. Spaniards don't normally start their working day until about 10 am, and they have lunch around 3 pm and dinner around 10 pm. We, on the other hand, wanted to start at 9 am and eat lunch around noon and dinner around 7 pm so that we could be in bed by 10 pm ...

**Our wonderful hosts** agreed to these plans and, albeit somewhat drowsy, they kindly collected us from our hotel at 9 am, and ensured that we got to eat lunch as “early” as 2 pm! When I realised that we were so eager to pack as much into our schedule as possible that we had forgotten to consider the Spaniards' normal daily rhythm, it felt a bit embarrassing. But during lunch, which

lasted for three hours, we were able to compare our different cultures with a lot of laughter as we realised how very differently we allocated the hours of the day.

So as not to lose focus completely, we decided to re-plan our programme and instead adapt our planning to the country we were visiting, and everything turned out great in the end, although we did have to bite our tongues a few times. But the enthusiasm and joy that our hosts demonstrated when they talked about and showed us their operations cannot be described in

words, and there was absolutely no chance that we could have interrupted them with the words “we need to move on to the next item in our programme ...”.

Spain has different legislation regarding individuals with disabilities. The Swedish welfare system means that everyone has the right to our social system. In Spain, however, such a right is not as clear-cut. The organisations we visited are financed to some extent by taxes, although their greatest source of funding is via donations from private donors.

We received in-depth and interesting information about the laws that control social enterprises in Spain. For example, in 1982 a law was passed that 2 per cent of Spanish companies' employees should be disabled. Poor compliance with this law led to it subsequently being amended, and at present it is not mandatory, although companies who do employ disabled people can receive a reduction in their statutory social expenses.

**Spain focuses more on** the individual's performance. The social enterprises charge full price for their services, in other words the work is carried out with the same high quality demands. They compete on the same terms as “ordinary companies” in public procurement processes. They were relatively uninterested in the individual's diagnosis, and were instead more focused on his/her abilities, since they really only have systems that compensate ability and performance.”



# 4

## Italy has come a long way with microloans



The people to whom the banks don't want to lend money are being given an opportunity to create their own jobs.

- **WE TOOK PART** Bengt Lyngbäck, the Swedish Public Employment Agency.
- **WE MET** Eight actors involved with micro-financing in Rome, Milan and Turin. The visits were arranged by Italia Lavoro.
- **WE WANTED TO** Know more about how Italian actors work with microloans.
- **WE LEARNED** Microloans could work as a measure by the Swedish Public Employment Agency.



Mr Corrado Ferreti,  
president, PerMicro.

“ The Italian programme for microloans has two points of focus: to support the starting of new businesses by low-income earners, and also to support the same by organisations and cooperatives, etc. I visited eight different actors, to find out more about the best method for reaching disadvantaged groups with microloans.

The aim of the study visits, which were arranged by Italia Lavoro, was to study the importance of running one's own business as a means of getting a job, to study the various lending terms & conditions that were applied, to evaluate whether microloans contribute to lifting people out of poverty, and to investigate which groups are granted the microloans and for what

purposes. For example, EVTLD in Turin undertakes active measures aimed at counteracting the crisis in the area, which has been caused by major cutbacks. People who are not deemed by the banks to be creditworthy are granted microloans aimed at enabling them to create their own jobs.

Few countries in Europe have made as much progress with microloans as Italy. There is a lot that Sweden could learn from them, and whether microloans could be used as a measure by the Swedish Public Employment Agency.”

*Few countries in Europe have made as much progress with microloans as Italy.*

# 5

## Poland supports social enterprise in the care sector



Polish citizens can direct one per cent of their taxes to social enterprise.

- **WE TOOK PART** Bertil Lidfeldt, the Swedish Employment Agency, Irene Bergqvist, the Swedish Social Insurance Agency, Marie Nilsson, the Swedish Employment Agency.
- **WE MET** The Work and Social Ministry in Warsaw and the Com-Com-Zone cooperative in Krakow.
- **WE WANTED TO** Know more about social enterprise in Poland.
- **WE LEARNED** EU funding is important for social enterprise.
- **THIS HAPPENED LATER** The group has concluded that it is necessary to create legal conditions for social enterprise in Sweden as well as a clear definition of what a social enterprise actually is. Encouraging social enterprises through prioritisations in public procurement processes and other financial advantages could be a model that could also be applied in Sweden.

*Social enterprises are encouraged within child care and elderly care as a complement to the public sector.*

“ We travelled to Poland to find out more about the conditions for social enterprise. Our aim was to broaden our knowledge, since we work with issues that concern social enterprise in Sweden.

We wanted to study how the issue is dealt with in Poland at a national, regional and local level. Our first study visit was therefore to the Work and Social Ministry in Warsaw. After that we continued to Krakow in the Lesser Poland region, which has a high level of ambition to develop and support the growth of social enterprises. While there we also visited the Com-Com-Zone cooperative, which is part of Siemacha.

Social enterprises are encouraged within child care and elderly care as a complement to the public sector. The enterprises' construction and provisions regarding loans and grants automatically means that more people from disadvantaged groups have an opportunity for increased employment.

We brought that EU funding is an extremely important component of the development work and that Poland has an interesting tax system; the citizens can direct one per cent of their taxes to social enterprise. Collaboration with the banks has been initiated that will facilitate the granting of microloans to new social enterprises.”

*The advice to future participants in study visits: learn about the companies/organisations you plan to visit.*

# 6

## How entrepreneurs can meet in Berlin



To gain feedback about innovation ideas and to be able to rent a desk are things that are worth considering.

- **WE TOOK PART** Mats Alkeskog, Emma Norman, Natalia Zuljevic and Annika Almén, all from Jobbtorg Stockholm.
- **WE MET** We visited Betterplace, Betahouse, IQ Consult and CAP in Berlin.
- **WE WANTED TO** Know more about entrepreneurship and social innovations.
- **WE LEARNED** Berlin has made more progress than Stockholm when it comes to new entrepreneurs.

“ The learning exchange took place in Berlin and the theme was entrepreneurship and social innovations. All of the participants work at Jobbtorg Stockholm. Jobbtorg supports people who are on livelihood benefits and job-seekers.

The common factor for the visits to the companies Betterplace, Betahouse and IQ Consult is that they represent a large common meeting place for entrepreneurs to meet, discuss and receive feedback about new innovations. The entrepreneurs have the opportunity to rent a workplace, either

for one-off occasions or on a permanent basis, with alternatives ranging from a single desk to complete office premises.

CAP is a company with food stores at a number of locations, and it is their policy to only employ people with some form of disability.

The advice to future participants in study visits: learn about the companies/organisations you plan to visit, as well as the political conditions that apply. Why has Stockholm not made more progress with similar types of enterprises?”

# 7 How to make the most of young people's ideas

Passion drives people to want to work together, but you need to build a platform that facilitates meetings.

- **WE TOOK PART** Eva Helén, Campus Telge, Department of Trade and Industry.
- **WE MET** Copenhagen Impact Hub, Copenhagen.
- **WE WANTED TO** Visit a hub/a network where people get together to create positive change.
- **WE LEARNED** How to provide a hub/network with conditions to function successfully.
- **THIS HAPPENED LATER** We hope to be able to use the things we have learned in this project in the EU feasibility study that we hope will be approved. It has to do with creating an idea and innovation arena for young people, among others.



They founded Copenhagen Impact Hub.

“ In Södertälje there is a major need to get more people into employment, to motivate young people to study or start their own business, and above all else to find new business opportunities and to learn to see things from a new perspective.

I started by mapping the organisations that give young people in Södertälje opportunities to meet companies and create innovations. There are a number of embryos for projects and a number of good initiatives, for example Sommarlovsentreprenörerna, Drivhuset and Telge Tillväxt. I decided to visit an Impact Hub where people get together because they want to create positive changes in society, and I made contact with such an Impact Hub in Copenhagen.

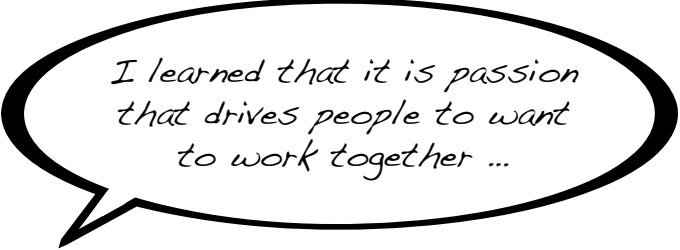
**I flew to Copenhagen** and made my way through the city to Nørrebro, the district that is in the process of developing into a creative centre with artists, a multicultural population, small stores, etc. It felt like a very inspirational environment. It was there I found Copenhagen Impact Hub. I talked with the founders, Nilas Fogde and Peter Froberg, about the challenges and opportunities associated with the Hub, which has been operating for four years.

I also took part in a member's lunch with the participating companies, and spoke with various companies and associations, including a guy from Holland who developed a micro payment system connected to water supply in Kenya. Two other people ran an

association that supplied 500 households in Copenhagen with organic food.

I learned that it is passion that drives people to want to work together, but you need to build a platform that facilitates meetings. Networks are important, and Copenhagen Impact Hub is part of a network with 40 actors in 25 different countries.

**The laws are different** in Denmark, and the opportunity for and willingness of the municipality and the state to finance not-for-profit projects varies, which is something that needs to be taken into consideration.



*I learned that it is passion that drives people to want to work together ...*

Another insight was also the necessity of collaborating with other organisations and the fact that it takes a long time to build up a Hub. It is difficult to have a municipality as the principal, since a Hub is largely based on personal dedication and flexibility. The municipality does, however, need to go in and support the operations in different ways.

It is important to have a person or persons who are responsible for the operations on a daily basis, although this can be organised in different ways.”

# 8

## Job-seekers received help at a British pub



Visit job-seekers where they spend their time, such as, for example, the pub or the church!

- **WE TOOK PART** Shadi Larsson, Jobbtorg Stockholm, Kista.
- **WE MET** Chris Stanton and Patricia Hastings, Guildford's Job Club, Surrey, Great Britain.
- **WE WANTED TO** Know how people in Great Britain work with equality, equal treatment and availability issues when supporting job-seekers.
- **WE LEARNED** Job-seekers received help where they spend their time, for example the pub. The registration forms contained information about ethnicity. Age is a greater obstacle to getting a new job than gender.
- **THIS HAPPENED LATER** I will share this with my organisation and will illustrate the new ideas through documentation.

“ This was new compared with Sweden:

- Job-seekers received help and support where they spend time (for example at the pub or open preschool or in church). At the open preschool the parents, most of them women, could receive help with writing their CVs, finding jobs via the computer. Almost everyone received individual help.
- Former criminals and mentally ill job-seekers came to the pub to receive help and support.
- The most highly prioritised groups were single parents, women and people over the age of 50.
- It was possible to participate as a volunteer at various workplaces during the time you were looking for a job. Knowledgeable job-seekers helped other unemployed people at each meeting.
- The registration forms for course participants and job-seekers for courses contained information about ethnicity.
- I found out that many people think that age (over 50) is a greater obstacle to getting a new job than gender.
- The kindergarten fee is too high, and many women feel that it is not worth working, since a large part of their wage goes to the kindergarten fee, which is around 25 pounds per day.”



Chris Stanton and Patricia Hastings, Guildford's Job Club, and Shadi Larsson.



# 9

## Innovative German ideas get young people into work



Vocational teachers are mentors for other teachers when helping unemployed young people into work.

- **WE TOOK PART** Christina Erenvidh, Department of Education, Municipality of Järfälla.
- **WE MET** Employment offices focused on unemployed young people in Hamburg and Berlin.
- **WE WANTED TO** Know more about measures that can help young people who have dropped out of school.
- **WE LEARNED** We must improve how we use EU funding for youth measures.
- **THIS HAPPENED LATER** Our feasibility study application for a Social Fund project has now been submitted to ESF, and the transnational element has been realised through this visit.

*My analysis is that we must also improve how we use EU funding.*

“ My exchange was to know more about school drop-outs. I went to Hamburg and Berlin to see how they work, and to try to find out why they have such a low level of youth unemployment.

The activities are the results of political decisions, partially financed by EU funding and aimed at offering school drop-outs different types of measures. A double focus is applied, which means two days in school and three days at a workplace. There is a significant labour shortage, so young people need to be trained quickly in order to be employable. Interestingly, vocational teachers have been involved to act as mentors for general subject teachers when it comes to getting young people into work. Why? Because vocational teachers have a lot more experience of contacting companies and

being part of networks, and they know what it takes to succeed in getting students into work or trainee positions.

The next visit was in Berlin, at NNB, which was located in an area with many socioeconomic problems. NNB is an activity centre where many different supportive activities are organised under one “umbrella”. Activities were underway throughout the entire centre, including job-seeking assistance and social support.

Both of these cities have used EU funding to reduce the proportion of young people who are unemployed and/or victims of exclusion. My analysis is that we must also improve how we use EU funding.

Our situation in Järfälla is different than in Hamburg and Berlin, where there are available jobs and a shortage of labour.”

# 10

## Collaboration with Italian rehab centre



San Patrignano is the world's largest rehabilitation centre. A "sub-organisation" has started in Croatia.

- **WE TOOK PART** Kristina Blixt, Project Coordinator for Basta, a social enterprise in Nykvarn.
- **WE MET** The organisations MOST and San Patrignano in Split, Croatia. MOST works for homeless people, while San Patrignano provides rehabilitation for addicts.
- **WE WANTED TO** Develop a collaboration with MOST and San Patrignano.
- **WE LEARNED** We gained increased knowledge about how San Patrignano Split and MOST work, a better understanding of the challenges Croatia is facing, and new insights and ideas for future collaborations.
- **THIS HAPPENED LATER** Basta uses transnational work as an important part of its development work. Parallel to its participation in the exchange programme, Basta has also applied for a "Transfer of Innovation".

*Basta is not a copy, although both organisations use work as a tool for rehabilitation.*

“ According to Siniša Panić, Split was the heroin capital of the Balkans. It is hard to believe that as we sit on the boardwalk after our meeting and sip a cappuccino. Siniša Panić told me how hundreds of drug deals used to take place on this very boardwalk.

“The thing that saved me was coming into contact with San Patrignano in Italy. They offer four years of rehabilitation free of charge, and during those years you work in their various business operations. I was part of the carpentry team. When I finally returned to Split I felt I could help people in the same way. By starting a San Patrignano in Split I can help people travel to Italy for rehabilitation and work and then, when they return, they receive support from a network that I have established.”

San Patrignano in Italy is the world's largest rehabilitation centre and it was also a source of inspiration when Basta was started in 1994. Basta is not a copy, although both organisations use work as a tool for rehabilitation.

**The idea is to develop** Basta's EU work through larger projects and also developing a more in-depth collaboration with a handful of partners.

San Patrignano is one of the organisations with which we would like to work



Visiting the organisation MOST: Dordana Barbaric, Manager, Marina Elez Urlic and Danijela Peric, social workers at the city's centre for social care, and Kristina Blixt, Basta.

more closely, which is why the visit to Split was so important. It was interesting to see how their work approach has developed and how the collaboration between Split and Italy functioned.

I also visited MOST, an organisation that helps homeless people and young people with problems. It seems like everyone in Split is familiar with MOST, perhaps due to the fact that they arranged a concert last year at which Croatia's President was present. Or perhaps it is because of their football team for the homeless. Or perhaps it has something to do with the fact that they have a successful approach to supporting young people who have left school early.

There are many reasons to work together

with MOST, and after this visit we at Basta are hoping that the new programme period will present new opportunities to finance a collaboration aimed at further developing the relationships with MOST and San Patrignano.

**In summary the results** of this learning exchange were threefold: increased knowledge about how San Patrignano works, a better understanding of the challenges Croatia is facing, and new insights and ideas for future collaborations.

As Siniša said: "We still have a lot to learn about projects and project financing. Did you know that San Patrignano's network in London collaborates with Jamie Oliver's restaurants?"

# 11

## Demands on German companies to employ disabled



Do as they are doing in Germany – demand that companies employ disabled people!

- **WE TOOK PART** LFC Sollentuna, the Swedish Social Insurance Agency.
- **WE MET** Actors within the German social insurance system, including AOK Northeast.
- **WE WANTED TO** Know more about the German social insurance system, including the preventive measures being employed there.
- **WE LEARNED** The law regulates the rights of people with disabilities. In Germany there are more stringent demands on companies to employ disabled people than is the case in Sweden.
- **THIS HAPPENED LATER** The Swedish Social Insurance Agency has submitted applications regarding feasibility studies prior to the upcoming programme period.

“ Within the framework for Inclusive Europe, I and my colleagues from the Swedish Social Insurance Agency, along with a representative from Jobbtorget Skärholmen, took part in a transnational exchange when we visited Berlin. The aim of this learning exchange was to gain an understanding of the German social insurance system and to have an opportunity to discuss leadership issues, in particular in relation to preventive measures.

During the learning exchange we visited AOK Northeast, Bundesagentur für arbeit and Deutsche Rentenversicherung. It was very interesting to find out more about the German social insurance system, and it is our conclusion that there are both advantages and disadvantages with the German system. For example, the rights of people



Kjell-Åke Gärdh, Majvor Sandberg, Karin Daun, Nils Carlsson Lundbäck and Werner Mall, AOK Northeast.

with disabilities are regulated in the legislation, which also places demands on employers to have a certain number of disabled employees.

I feel that this is something that should also be regulated in the Swedish legislation.”

# 12

## Social enterprises in Great Britain do a lot



Social enterprises do what the other sectors don't have time to do or don't deem profitable.

“ We chose to visit Northampton University because we were aware that the university has chosen to focus its operations on “social enterprises” in relation to teaching, student support and research. Wray Irwin commented: “There is no generally accepted definition of, nor special legal form for, a “social enterprise”.

The focus of Wray Irwin's work is two-fold: how to move young people who are far away from the labour market closer to it, and what to do about the structural unemployment in industries that are now “dying”. Many people lack formal education but are very knowledgeable – and very unwilling to try something new or something else.

**The university has been** running two programmes where social enterprise is part of the concept.

- For young people: Education and a safe environment in which to try new things. Changing identity from criminal to entrepreneur. Practical training, etc.
- For older people: Education and a chance to try working in social enterprises. Two years with a total of around 350 people.

The programmes have often not succeeded due to problems with the various programme requirements (ESF and Work Programme). These are problems with

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*Social enterprises can make a difference for the people that have the most difficulty of all on the labour market.*

- **WE TOOK PART** Bertil Lidfeldt and Ingmarie Ottosson from the Swedish Employment Agency, and Linnea Ax and Eva Johansson from the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth.
- **WE MET** Wray Irwin and Simon Denny, among others.
- **WE WANTED TO** Gain more knowledge about the regulations and practices that are used in Great Britain to create more social enterprises and more jobs in them, and to find out more about the development of not-for-profit suppliers within the care and healthcare sectors.
- **WE LEARNED** That a lot of things are fundamentally the same when it comes to problems and attempts at solutions, both in relation to creating jobs and restructuring the public sector.

>> which we are familiar: the short project time for the people involved, and too much focus on getting people into work – any sort of work, which makes it difficult to create long-term solutions.

Despite these problems, around 80 per cent found jobs, and a several found the type of job they wanted. It was not successful to start social enterprises financed solely by grants. Getting an enterprise up and running requires more time.

The government has decided to invest in a measure called Work Programme, whereby results are paid for retrospectively. This doesn't work for social enterprises, since the majority of the costs are incurred at the start of a "rehabilitation".

The state can't cope with the provision of all "services" – there is quite simply not enough profit available. Wray Irwin means that social enterprises are now expected to take over – without getting paid for it.

#### **Two interesting case studies:**

- Community Theatre Group – taught stand-up comedy. 70 per cent of the people on anti-depressants stopped taking their medicine. A socioeconomic calculation was performed, and they now receives money from the municipality to continue the work.
- Body-App to increase self-confidence. Low-intensity cognitive therapy. Was started by an enthusiast who had positive personal experience of the product.

Simon Denny, Director of Enterprise, Development & Social Impact, is responsible for the university's strategy for social enterprise. There are perhaps 1,000 social enterprises in existence. Some of them are more social in nature than others.

The authorities view social enterprises as a way of creating jobs – but it works poorly with the contract model (Work Programme), and too many social enterprises are not financially stable.

**One positive example** is the transportation company Goodwill Solutions – Logistics. It was started with self-funding from a former private contractor who wanted to do some good. The aim is to employ the people that no one else wants, often criminals. He uses the profits to operate a "back to society programme", after which the participants are given jobs in his company or perhaps find a job somewhere else. Around 50 men now have jobs and pay tax rather than living on benefits. Social enterprises can make a difference.

A lot of things are fundamentally the same in our two countries. The differences have to do with:

- Earlier focus on "social value".
- Collective responsibility of the government + regional and local structures to collaborate (public-private-NGO).
- The development and adaptation of the toolbox and regulations takes place retrospectively (financing, company form, procurement, etc.)."



# 13

## Finland – a model example for minority issues?



Exciting to meet the Romani counsellors who build bridges between the Roma and Finnish society.

- **WE TOOK PART** Karin Skoglund, Labour Market Administration, Stockholm.
- **WE MET** Representatives for the state, municipalities, NGOs and Romani counsellors.
- **WE WANTED TO** Meet representatives for minority work in Finland.
- **WE LEARNED** How the minority issues in Finland are organised and how the municipalities can work together with the Roma to achieve Romani inclusion.
- **THIS HAPPENED LATER** We have a feasibility study for an EU project connected to input from the study visit. We have begun working in a different manner and we will be commencing collaborations with others – for which interest has increased, thanks to the visit. Our organisation has opened up to the idea of working with EU projects.

“ As a coordinator for national minority issues for the City of Stockholm, there are many new issues to struggle with. Having the opportunity to meet various representatives for the minority work in Helsinki, Finland provided both a confirmation of the difficulties involved with such issues and a new perspective on my own work. Finland has had two national languages in its constitution since 1902.

It takes time for rights issues to gain an impact. The work of involving politicians and public officials and influencing the majority of society and the minority groups is a long process. Be proactive instead of simply responding to fires was the advice of Folktinget, a



**Unelma Bollström, social officer, City of Helsinki.**

statutory interest organisation that works with the Finnish-Swedish rights.

I was also advised of the importance of action plans when the legislation in itself is insufficient, regular follow-ups and finding the right people with responsibility in the various organisations. But the most important message of all was: be patient!

All in all, my visits covered the national and municipal levels as well as a meeting with an NGO. But the thing that was perhaps most exciting was getting to meet Romani counsellors who talked about their work and what it means to be bridge-builders between Romani families and Finnish society.”

PHOTO: MIRJALIIISA LUKKARINEN KVIIST

# 14

## How job-seekers are supported in Germany



Women want to get out of the house, and wearing a veil is no obstacle for unemployed women.

- **WE TOOK PART** Shadi Larsson, Jobbtorg Stockholm, Kista, City of Stockholm.
  - **WE MET** SBB Kompetens GmbH, Hamburg, a company that focuses on Muslim women, among others.
  - **WE WANTED TO** Find out how they work
- in Germany with equal treatment and availability issues when supporting job-seekers.
  - **WE LEARNED** Muslim women are provided with an opportunity for education and practical work training.

“ The aim was to visit Hamburg to see how they work with women with a foreign background in order to support them in relation to further studies or access to the labour market.

In Germany they worked proactively with Muslim women by contacting mosques and various municipal districts and offering the opportunity to attend a course specially adapted for Muslim women, with a female teacher. The women were able to attend the course and learn more German

and receive vocational training. The women also received an opportunity to undertake practical work training in schools and preschools where they could read books in German to the children and gain valuable work experience and even earn a little money.

The project shows that women want to get out of the house and that wearing a veil isn't an obstacle. The course ran half days so that the women still had the possibility to drop off and collect their children at/from kindergarten or school.

In another programme for women, the courses were long (two years) and provided the job-seekers with good education and training to make them attractive to employers. All vocational courses were offered to women and men alike, and they have worked with language aspects by giving all occupations both a feminine and masculine ending, for example “Kaufmann/-frau”.

*The courses were long and provided the job-seekers with good education and training.*

# 15

## German visit resulting in expert network



The foundation has been laid for an expert network from the learning exchange.

“ The European labour market requires collaboration in order to function well. A transnational exchange took place between the Swedish Employment Agency and our German counterpart. Focus for the meeting was on how Bundesagentur für Arbeit works with strategically important customers, and what services they can offer organisations with major and sometimes complicated recruitment requirements.

The political systems endeavour to find flexible tools, and together we will attempt to create projects aimed at reducing unemployment among young people. Many new ideas have been brought back to Sweden, and a number of them will be tested.

As a direct result of this visit we are starting an expert network in order to facilitate further exchanges between our countries. We will exchange information about our projects on an ongoing basis (with the aim of thus making it easier for our job-seekers to, for example, conduct practical work training or take part in apprenticeship programmes abroad).

In order to succeed abroad, it is necessary to carry out a thorough review of which strategically important partners to work together with.”

### ● WE TOOK PART

Robert Nyholm, Industry Strategist, the Swedish Employment Agency.

- **WE MET** The German employment agency, Bundesagentur für Arbeit, as well as German companies with the focus on project management and representatives for complementary actors.

- **WE WANTED TO** Find out how the German employment agency works with strategically important customers and builds long-term relationships.

- **WE LEARNED** The authorities in Sweden and Germany are similar to one another, although there are major differences. It is important to invest sufficient time in preparations for the visit, to identify key persons in advance and to set your own goals regarding what the results of the visit should be.

- **THIS HAPPENED LATER** This visit has led to a collaboration between the Swedish Employment Agency and local projects in Berlin that in one or several ways work with practical work experience, training and development in airport regions.

*Many new ideas have been brought back to Sweden.*



# 10 advices about borderless meetings



### 1. Why take part?

The idea behind transnational exchange is to bring people and organisations together across borders so they can learn from each other. This is necessary for Europe to become even stronger in the future and is part of the EU's requirements and strategies.

By being able to utilise each other's competencies, innovations and solutions, many more individuals and organisations become stronger than they would be if left to develop on their own. People who work transnationally gain new ideas and can use them to further develop their own operations.



### 2. Who may take part?

Through the European Social Fund's programme for competence development, employees who work with social and labour market issues can enhance their competence in relation to the EU and the opportunities that transnational work entails.



### 3. What can be done?

It could have to do with a study visit in order to exchange information about a good way of working or solving pro-

blems, or commencing a collaboration aimed at identifying common solutions.

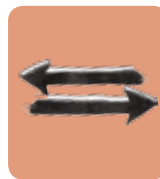
On page 9 you can read about 15 examples of study visits.



### 4. How does it work?

Transnational collaboration must occur with a party from at least one other EU country, for example a workplace, an NGO or an authority. You should share challenges or problems and a desire to learn from each other.

You should be able to gain something from an exchange. In other words, there should be reason to believe that your partner is able to share useful experiences that you do not have.



### 5. How should an exchange be structured?

Be prepared for the fact that an exchange requires dedication and time. It is entirely up to you to ensure that your first experience is so good that you can derive benefit from it and will thus want to continue working with this approach as a method for the further development of your operations.

It is easier to succeed if you can apply for financing via one of the funds in order to realise the development work. Consequent- >>

## Think carefully about the objectives you have with your transnational exchange. The more clear you are, the easier it will be to find the right business partner.

>> ly you need to gain a certain basic understanding of the EU's strategy for the next few years, and in particular an understanding of our region's (the countries around the Baltic Sea) strategies for collaboration. You can find this information on the websites about the EU (<http://ec.europa.eu>) and the Baltic Sea region strategy ([www.baltics-ea-region-strategy.eu](http://www.baltics-ea-region-strategy.eu)).

The starting point is the assumption that the EU's countries are facing the same sorts of challenges: unemployment, exclusion, equality issues, etc. Many solutions can be found by learning from each other, and the transnational approach is a good way of resolving common issues.

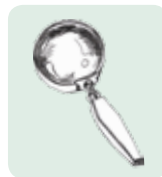
**There are a few things** you should initially consider:

- What are the development requirements for your organisation/operation, now and in the future?
- Are you facing challenges that are related to the EU's Baltic Sea region strategy and/or Europe 2020? This strategy includes, for example, working for the integration of the many unemployed people in society, young people, new arrivals, disabled people and others who are out of work due to some form of discrimination.
- Can a transnational collaboration project-

contribute to solving these challenges?

Can you concisely describe such a project?

- Think carefully about the objectives you have with your transnational exchange. The more clear you are, the easier it will be to find the right business partner.
- What, in concrete terms, do you want to do? Do you want to exchange experiences, find new methods or commence a more in-depth collaboration?
- Where can you find a good potential business partner? The Internet is a fantastic source of information when it comes to finding experts within the area that is of interest to you.



### 6. What search paths are available?

National Supporting Institution – [www.kiv-pokl.org.pl](http://www.kiv-pokl.org.pl) – is a Polish support organisation

for structure fund projects in Poland. One of this organisation's primary objectives is to stimulate transnational collaboration, and they have arranged a number of partner search forums in Warsaw, at which several hundreds of projects have met up and found collaboration opportunities. Many Swedish projects have taken part on each occasion along with other projects from the Baltic Sea region above all else.



All of these forum meetings have resulted in the creation of a large databank containing details of projects and project owners who are interested in or who work with development within various areas. Their database is called the Fishing Pool and enables you to search for partners based on various criteria that you can specify.

**The EU's various** information sites also contain a large number of reports and seminars where you can read about experts are referred to within various areas. This could then be your link to additional contacts within particular areas. Please go to [www.europa.eu](http://www.europa.eu) and search in your particular area – target groups or policy areas.

Eurofund ([www.eurofound.europa.eu](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu)) is an institute under the auspices of the EU that carries out a large number of surveys, in particular regarding people's living conditions and working conditions. Here you can read reports about, for example, youth unemployment, work environment or social conditions in various countries. This is a good way to learn about and understand the similarities and differences between various countries. Their source references often contain details of organisations from which information has been collected – references that could help you to identify good contacts within your area of interest.

If these search paths are insufficient, we suggest that you conduct a search on your area of interest and then add "Europe" to your search. You are bound to find networks

and organisations that work within the relevant areas, as well as a selection of articles and reports.



## 7. Where can I find more information about Europe?

Our experience shows that the belief that one will derive most benefit from an exchange with countries that are most similar to us is incorrect. It is often when we go outside our usual systems and frameworks that we are best able to grow and develop. Many times, organisations that are completely different to our own – but work with the same issues – have very different solutions and ideas that can significantly enhance and enrich our own operations.

On the EU's website ([www.europa.eu/about-eu/countries/member-countries](http://www.europa.eu/about-eu/countries/member-countries)) you can read the most fundamental information about the various EU countries, such as their size, population, currency, when they joined the EU and some brief facts about the most important events in each country's history. Then there are also links to more information about the following:

- The EU Commission in each country
- The European Parliament's offices in the country
- The country's government
- Tourist information

If you then go to Eurofund at [www.eurofund.europa.eu](http://www.eurofund.europa.eu) you will find a lot of information about various countries' conditions in relation to the following areas:

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- >> ● EIRO – where you will find information about developments within various industries/sectors in Europe as a whole and in individual EU countries.
- EMCC – where you will find information about developments on the labour market.
- EWCO – where you will find information about working life, working hours, further developments, etc.

Sweden is one of Europe’s leading countries when it comes to equal treatment issues, diversity and anti-discrimination. You can read more about this if you visit the website for EIGE – which is the EU’s agent for supporting the process of better equal treatment in the member states – please see <http://eige.europa.eu/content/about-eige>.



### 8. How can I best deal with the formalities regarding EU applications?

On the Swedish site for EU issues ([www.europakontoret.se](http://www.europakontoret.se))

there is also a tab called “Grants and support” that contains a very good document – EU information about how to apply for EU grants. Here you will find a description of all EU programmes with references to where you can find more information and there are many templates and web-based application portals where it provides guidance about how to formulate an application.

Each programme has calls for applications or procurement processes regarding EU projects. These calls for applications can have

varying periodicity, so you must understand each programme’s cycles in order to be able to monitor these calls.

It is extremely important that you carefully read and understand the text in these calls for applications, because it is these calls that specify what must be included in an application and what should be included.

The calls for applications often contain thematic tracks or priorities regarding the areas it is desired that applications should be focusing on. Sometimes these priorities are mandatory.

It is also common for the organisation that is responsible for the programme in question to arrange information meetings for interested parties in conjunction with calls for applications. We recommend that you attend these meetings, at which you will receive valuable information about ways to proceed, etc.



### 9. How is my application dealt with?

Each programme application specifies when a decision regarding the approval (or not) of the application will be made. The normal processing time for applications are 2–3 months.

If your application gets approved, it is often possible to commence the project relatively quickly. Consequently, you must be prepared for this so as not to risk losing valuable time.

- The most common situation is for the financing to be paid in arrears against

## Many people dread EU projects, but once you have been involved with one, you will find that it is not as troublesome as you might have feared.

reporting of the costs actually paid by the project. This means that the organisation must have good liquidity at the start of the project.

- The reporting of EU projects takes place in the form of project reporting, and each programme has its own process, which is why it is also important to allocate time and resources to the administrative and financial handling of your project. Help is available in the programme's instructions regarding financial reporting. Many people dread EU projects, but once you have been involved with one, you will find that it is not as troublesome as you might have feared.



### 10. How can I avoid common mistakes?

One very common mistake is to underestimate the amount of time you need to spend on planning the project. Furthermore, many people don't recruit a project team until after they have received confirmation that the application has been approved, thus creating a gap that leads to the unnecessary loss of project time. It is also a common situation that the person who has written and prepared the application is no longer

part of the project once it actually starts. Consequently, you should try to create a transition and a transfer of ideas and background information to a new project team.

Another common mistake is failing to properly provide information about and receive approval and support for your project within your own organisation. This process should really be started as early as the idea stage and is extremely important to your chances of achieving sustainable development. Ideally the project should be clearly "ordered" by the organisation as part of its development work. Such a formal order ensures strong ownership of the project. This strong ownership must then be maintained throughout the entire project, so that both the "client" and future users of the project's output become involved with the project during its ongoing process.

Furthermore, it is at least as important to also plan at an early stage how the project's results can best be implemented into the regular business operations.

For these reasons, communication and dissemination are very central elements of the project. It is important to provide information and to create a dialogue regarding what needs to be done at the start of the project, as well as what results are being achieved as a result of this work.

**“Borderless solutions” provides you with answers to questions like: What can I learn from colleagues in other countries? Where can I find details about a relevant workplace to visit? What should I do with my new knowledge when I return home from my study visit? This document also contains 15 reports from employees who have conducted study visits to other countries in Europe.**

This document has been produced by Arbetsmiljöforum i Norden AB through the project Inclusive Europe, which is financed by the European Social Fund. It contains a summary of Inclusive Europe and provides examples of some of the measures that have been undertaken within the project. Please also see [www.inclusiveeurope.se](http://www.inclusiveeurope.se).

Arbetsmiljöforum, which has been responsible for running Inclusive Europe, is a media and training company. Arbetsmiljöforum is behind the Swedish publication Du&jobbet (“You and your job”) and arranges seminar days on working life (for example WorkingLife), training courses, networks for people involved with work environment issues, etc. Please see [www.arbetsmiljoforum.se](http://www.arbetsmiljoforum.se) for more information.

The Social Fund is the EU’s most important tool for the creation of more and better jobs in Europe. In Sweden the Social Fund is represented by the authority Swedish ESF Council. Please see [www.esf.se](http://www.esf.se) for more information.

