

Return to employment of long-term unemployed persons

Country: Sweden

Project Name: Work

Total budget: 1 223 777 Euro

ESF support: 491 512 Euro

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Individual career plans and professional counselling helped 75 persons return to the labour market after a long period of unemployment or sickness. A project under a simple name “work” opens new perspectives in a region of Sweden known for a high unemployment. Nordanstig is one of the least densely populated communes of Sweden. In this region, where unemployment is high and population decreases, large distances between groups of people are an additional difficulty in job finding.

Utilising its previous experience with the European Social Fund, Nordanstig Business Association started in 2001 “Work” – a project addressed to long-unemployed persons and persons who receive benefits due to inability to work. “One of the participants of our project was unemployed for 15 years, and seven or eight years of unemployment is nothing extraordinary among our clients” says Marga Edenstahl, the project coordinator.

As the project name suggests, there is only one objective – assistance in finding a job. Every unemployed persons specifies what kind of job he/she would like to find and then, with the counsellor’s help, develops an activity plan which will allow him/her achieve the goal. Undertaken steps may include a practice in the workplace, additional training, visits to plants and research of professional possibilities. Assistance is provided for a period of one year.

“Local authorities and social care, in co-operation with the labour office, achieved a lot” says Ms Edenstahl. “We invited all interested parties for a meeting with a client from time to time. This allows us to provide a comprehensive and personalized support”.

So far, 151 persons have taken part in the project, 75 of which have found a job and 29 have decided to continue education. The result is much better from the originally assumed one, particularly since most clients remained unemployed for a long time.

As a continuation of the project co-financed by ESF, Nordanstig Business Association concluded an agreement with local social care and labour office which guarantees a possibility of further support of the long-term unemployed for a period of two years and nine months.