

ASSISTING EMPLOYERS IN THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS (SOCIAL ACT)

The Social Act project was developed in 2001 and 2002, at a time when Flemish companies were unable to fill all of their vacancies. Under pressure from the shortage of labour, many companies opened their doors for the first time to groups like immigrants, semi- and unskilled workers, long-term unemployed and people with disabilities. The Social Act wanted to perpetuate the participation of these groups in the labour market and to give companies the tools to make a virtue of necessity when there were more people on the labour market as a result of increased unemployment.

The Social Act:

- *Measures* - the project offered a free, user-friendly online [self-screening instrument](#) that enabled companies to determine the extent of their social commitment in their staffing policies. This test was called Sokratest, because according to Socrates, perception (of self and others) is the only true form of knowledge;
- *Supports* - the helpdesk gave an analysis of strengths and weaknesses and identified points that could be improved in the future. Together with the companies and external experts, the project aimed to develop action plans that improved the firms' social commitment. Companies could choose between two skills programmes: "Influx & Flow" and "Training & Education" and two motivation programmes: "Health & Welfare" and "Qualitime";
- *Distributes* - following the successful implementation of the action plans, the Social Act placed good practices in the spotlight. Such companies were recognised for their efforts and this also prompted and inspired other companies to follow these examples of good practice.

These good practices were highlighted on the communication platform www.socialact.be, via the monthly review of the East-Flanders Chamber of Commerce and through testimonies given at the *Impulse Days* (study days). HR managers and directors attached much importance to this exchange and to the sharing of knowledge in 'soundboard groups' that were groups of believers and innovators.

The promoter Voka, (the East-Flanders Chamber of Commerce) and the wide 'Ghent, city at work' partnership, provided a broad platform for increasing awareness in the province. Also, as a result of collaboration with one of the project's transnational partners, Sokratest was made available in the Netherlands on the website of the Dutch national CSR network, 'Samenleving & Bedrijf' (www.samen.nl).

In its "Triple P Viewpoint" (Planet - Profit - People), the Social Act developed progressive ideas, innovative actions and tools that strengthened the 'People' pillar. By promoting individual reflection and the development of a communication platform on socially committed entrepreneurship, it urged enterprises to take action either within the company itself or in regard to external stakeholders, such as the families of employees or future employees.

The project point of view *"Diversity is a fact and this implies that all the workers in a company should no longer approach mutual differences as shortcomings or risks, but as talents and opportunities."*

Contact

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