Knowledge platform for innovative jobs, tailor made for migrants and youth

Transnational Co-operation Agreement (TCA)

1 DESCRIPTION OF TRANSONATIONAL PROJECT

1.1. NAME OF THE TRANSONATIONAL PROJECT
Knowledge platform for innovative jobs, tailor made for migrants and youth

1.2. RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES

1.2.1. Problem addressed, common interests, methodology

While on the long-term labour market prospects look positive, there still is an increasing group of adults and youngsters with only limited access to job opportunities – a large part consisting of migrants and/or newly arrived. This is mainly due to social problems and exclusion, mental ill-health and disabilities – leading in turn to long-term unemployment, continuing sick leave and absence from work. It is moreover a common fact that employers are not inclined to hire people with this social background. Only when this challenge is tackled, sustainable solutions for increasing the job opportunities of the mentioned target group are possible.

The aim is to create awareness on the target group’s skills, both towards future employees and employers. And to promote the competences already during education. For (future) employees this will shorten the period between leaving school and getting a job position, as well as create a feeling of well-being which will lead to less absences from work. Industries with many open vacancies and a shortage of labour will be guided towards groups of people with the right competences. More and more authorities support people with disabilities, or suffering from a low well-being, social problems and language backlogs. But cooperation is often hampered by the fact the people, due to private matters, do not want or cannot communicate on these issues with public officials. Integration will be another important social issue since studies have revealed major differences in unemployment rates of the autochthonous population and allochthones, especially for women. Sweden, for example, has a migrant population of about 18% on the total number of inhabitants.

In this project we focus especially on two groups: migrants and youth

Migrants, such as refugees, newcomers, out comers
The inflow of migrants (not EU) to the European Union has dramatically increased in 2015 mostly due to the civil war in Syria but also due to other conflicts in Africa and in the Middle East. The inflow has decreased since 2016. Now, the challenge is to foreseen shelter/asylum and sustainable integration of these people. Education (e.g. language, integration courses, vocational training) and especially work is necessary for this integration.

While the inflow of migrants (not EU) to the European Union constitute a challenge to the cooperation within EU there are at the same time Member States struggling with the demographic challenge with an aging population. These Member States are in fact in need of this inflow of migrants. Several countries also have an imbalance in the labour market with a deficit of skilled workers in key sectors such as manufacturing and healthcare. It may here be noted that in particular refugees from Syria are young, 90% are under 40 years and 50% over 20. Many of them are well trained and ready to take jobs in our countries.

In Northern Europe, the population density is relatively low and many smaller cities suffering from the effects of many years of urbanization. These cities and regions welcome migrants and will do whatever it takes to get the
newcomers to feel at home, to find housing and employment. The labour market is changing: some jobs are taking over by robots, there's the rise of industrial culture, there's a lack of employees in the care sector, ... . The future labour market will need employees with special kind of skills, such as creativity, entrepreneurship, persistence, ... . Skills that a majority of migrants do have.

In many countries from EC - in Belgium and Bulgaria, as in Finland, Sweden and others, are examples of an open mind to refugees and a welcoming approach as well as the opposite. In any case a smooth integration will not just help the individual refugee but public opinion and the society as a whole. The increase of refugees calls for more co-operation between the people and organisations entrusted with the responsibility of integrating them. A lot of initiatives have been launched. Besides learning from each other there is much to gain from developing new methods and new organisations together with others, across borders.

Youth
Youth and youth migrants have different thresholds to have a place on the labour market in the four participating countries. We give a brief overview:
- lack of skills needed in the changing labour market
- need to support for developing their self-esteem and self confidence
- insufficient social and interaction skills
- new forms of work (entrepreneurship, virtual environments) requires different approach
- lack of encouraging
- less ability to adapt to changes
- difficulties to find their own strengths

1.2.2. Common transnational objectives of the partners

1.2.2.1. Exchanging, testing and dissemination of methods
The common goals of the partners are to exchange best practice for smoothening integration of migrants and youth, that have a high distance to the labour market.

1.2.2.2. Mutual learning activities, database, LinkedIn group
The structured learning and development of new methods will take place in mutual learning activities. The project will document the outcome of these processes in a database and publish it in a transnational LinkedIn group. It is the most effective and efficient medium for sharing, learning, development and creating a network Members of the target group will be invited to become members of the LinkedIn group.

1.2.3. Target group
- Migrants, (high educated) migrants, (migrant) youth: they are participants in transnational pilot projects,
- Staff involved in integration of migrants, (high educated) migrants, (migrant) youth: such as organizations for (vocational) training, local authorities, ... : they are participants in training programs and members of the LinkedIn group
- Employers: they are participants in training programs and members of the LinkedIn group,
- Experts and policy makers providing expertise relevant for the integration of migrants (not EU) and youth into the labour market.

We invite all of them to participate active in the “Appreciative Inquiry Learning Network”.

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1.2.4. Products, outputs and deliverables

**KNOWLEDGE PLATFORM.** The platform will consist of two thematic working groups where experts will gather for structured dialogue, learning from each other’s and joint development of new methods.

The thematic working groups are:

1. **New jobs: guidance and support for migrants and youth to take new kind of jobs** that are tailor made for them, such as ‘green jobs’, ‘energy-jobs’, ‘circularly economy’ (not limitative list).

2. **New skills and coaching approaches**: new skills, based on the strengths of migrants and youth, that will be needed on tomorrows’ labour market and new approaches for guiding them towards this labour market.

Each partner will invite members of the target group in his country to participate in the thematic working groups. The thematic working groups will be coordinated by one of the partners, also a member of the project team. The groups will take place during the mutual learning activities.

This coordinating partner is also responsible for sharing the results in a transnational LinkedIn group.

**TRANSNATIONAL PILOT PROJECTS.** Three transnational pilot projects will be developed (adjusted) and tested in the project. The pilots are:

- **Developing and testing methods**: each partner will develop and test his product (method/approach) in cooperation with the national partnership. Elements of this methods will be also tested in the transnational partnership. Each partner will share and present the results of the development and testing in the knowledge platform and in the LinkedIn group, and incorporate it in the staff training.

- **Staff training**: a joint training for key functions about the products (methods/approaches) will be developed and tested with 100 participants from respective Belgium and Bulgaria. Training can include lectures, workshop, study visits, project work etc. In a preparation phase a survey will be made to define the key functions, the features that are unique to the receiving organisations. It can be teachers, life coaches, mentors and other staff who work directly with migrants and youth, employers, policy makers, ... . Thereafter a competency analysis provides answers to the training that is needed.

- **‘Appreciative Inquiry-Learning network’ (involvement of all the target groups – see 1.2.3):** Appreciative Inquiry, a “method for change”, is also a change philosophy and involves representatives of all the target groups in a co-creative process as a starting point for discovery, storytelling and exchange of experiences that express the power of the system. We are very well trained in process guidance of “Appreciative Inquiry-learning networks”. It’s a strengths based method and very well working method for exchanging knowledge and point of views, networking and creating common sense on a theme. It generates involvement and ownership (instead of consumption) from the very first beginning. So, it’s a perfect approach to facilitate the mutual learning activities. In the project we will use and evaluate this learning method. We will gather and share principles that make this approach work in a transnational setting. The Belgian partner, Stebo, will take the facilitator role.

1.2.5. Added value of the activities and planned results for each partner

**Partner 1 Stebo**

Stebo is a social profit organisation, based in Genk, Belgium. The Stebo organisation is comprised of a group of engaged, enthusiastic colleagues, who work together with the common goal of creating and promoting a fairer society in which every person has equal opportunities. Our diverse group of colleagues consists of coaches, consultants, supervisors, project developers, community workers ... We are particularly proud of the make-up of our personnel who reflect the social and ethnic diversity of the communities which we serve.

Our areas of expertise also reflect both the needs and opportunities present within our communities. Our areas of expertise are situated and employed within a broad range of community based initiatives which include community and neighbourhood development, housing advice, job and career guidance, support for local entrepreneurship, socio-cultural training and education, renewable and sustainable energy management as the main areas of TCA – Knowledge platform for innovative jobs, tailor made for migrants and youth – 2018-05-08
activity. We have developed talents and skills in communication and coaching, process management and project development, building cross-sector orientated networks. We aspire to connect up our talents in ways that enable us to respond to new needs and challenges through creativity and innovation.

Stebo also works in close partnership with initiatives of local residents and with organisations in the Limburg Mining Area.

Central to our approach is to seek and encourage cooperation and connectedness, always aspiring to push back the frontiers of organisations and their functions, belief systems and institutions, in all freedom and with a shared responsibility. We also invest in the development of dialogue with policymakers, public services and other stakeholders within our communities and region.

A main goal of our organisation is to create sustainable change and improvements to the social and physical fabric of our society, with lasting results for ourselves and for our offspring.

Limburg (Flanders-Belgium) is our biotope, but our vision embraces a broader engagement in Flanders, Europe and the world. Where we can, we seek connection in order to inspire and to be inspired.

Stebo participates in the TCA with ‘UPGRADE (WORKING TITLE) – TPI 1841’. Stebo has developed several micro-practices in guiding migrants to the labour market. These micro-practices are very promising. They are successful to. We succeed in guiding a lot of them to the labour market. For example: in our project ‘Loopbaanatelier+’ 50% of the people we guided already found a job opportunity. That’s a success because the guiding trajectory stops in December 2018.

Nevertheless, we strongly believe we can do better. That’s because we didn’t find effective answers yet on the following challenges:

1. How can we let participate migrants optimal in the making of the content and approach of the guiding trajectory?
2. How can we explore and translate in the guiding trajectory successively survival skills of migrants (and especially refugees) into skills needed on our recent and future labour market?
3. How can we deal effective with the migrants’ psycho-social problems (especially refugees) in the guiding trajectory?
4. How can we involve employers effective from the very first beginning of the guiding trajectory? How can we support employers with thresholds in recruiting and giving job opportunities for migrants (job or traineeship)? How can we support employers with thresholds for integration of migrants on their work flor? Which instruments and other kind of support is needed?
5. How can vocational training fits more to the migrants’ needs on our labour market today and tomorrow?
6. How can we effectively guide migrants, who show entrepreneurship skills and ambitions during the guiding trajectory, to entrepreneurship?

In UPGRADE (WORKING TITLE) we want to work out answers on these questions via our Flemish and Transnational partnership. In this way, we will enrich our approach and expand it to a methodology. We want elements of the methodology enriched and tested by our transnational partners. So, the methodology will be a construction kit wit 6 tested components. We have participated in several ESF projects. For the moment, we participate on the transnational project PLAI 2.0.

In this TCA we will be project co-ordinator (inclusive project communication) and co-ordinator of the transnational platform (working groups). We will use and test the method ‘Appreciative Inquiry learning network’.

These role fit with our DNA: to create sustainable change and improvements to the social and physical fabric of our society, with lasting results for ourselves and for our offspring.

Partner 2: Popovo Municipality

Popovo Municipality is located in Targovishte Province, Northeastern Bulgaria.

They participate in the TCA with the project ‘Municipality of Popovo Project’ – TPI-1940. The goal of this project is to create a permanent international network to act as a knowledge bank to develop and promote the international mobility of people, interested in environmental protection and green jobs and to raise awareness of the internal market for the unemployed and inactive, looking for innovative work in EU countries.

The municipality is ready to find new green jobs, wants to exchange experience, create networks, good practices, tools and methods for the target group, such as unemployed people and youth.

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1.2.6. Incorporation of horizontal aspects (gender, CSR, ...)
In the project we will pay attention at the incorporation of horizontal aspects in the project planning, monitoring, communication and organisation.

Each partner declares that both men and women will have access to administrative tasks and more senior tasks. Partners of this project ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities both for activities for the target group and project's management. The equality between the genders and people from different backgrounds will be taken into consideration. We will also take in consideration: equality in groups underrepresented in education, like youth and migrants, will be enhanced so that it will support integration. Its according to sustainable development that everybody can improve their skills and access to the labour market.

We know that some employers may also be perceptions towards people who are far from the labour market. This is specially the case if the person have some kind of disabilities. Different values and jargon at workplaces can also affect people from the target group, both in terms of well-being and work environment. There are many different "prejudices" today against both ethnic and/or mental health sufferers.

Bearing the above written in mind, it is very important that all the different activities within this project take the horizontal aspects into consideration when doing the project tasks. No-one shall be excluded just because of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status when the different activities are carried out.

1.3. WORK PROGRAMME AND WORKING METHODOLOGY

1.3.1. Planned transnational activities
To realise our outcome/ deliverables we will plan the following steps/activities:
- Sharing and analysing good practice and innovative approaches (social innovation) through the organisation of seminars, workshops and training to promote exchange of experience, information, good practice and innovative approaches (social innovation) between partners.
- Adapting and validating social innovations that may be based on innovative models, practices, services, products from other countries, and/or pilot implementation of developed innovative approaches and models.
- Activities for the assessment of results, achieved in terms of applicability of its innovative elements.
- Activities for the dissemination of results (positive and/or negative).

1.3.2. Methodology for sharing information, results and working tools
The topics and specific issues mentioned above will also be a common transnational target for the partners. We will gather the result of each activity by the "Appreciative Inquiry - learning network" method. Appreciative Inquiry is a "method for change". It is also a change philosophy and involves all stakeholders and representatives of all the target groups in a co-creative process as a starting point for discovery, storytelling and exchange of experiences that express the power of the system. These "best ever" stories serve as leverage to imagine the future together, to further shape and develop it with all stakeholders.

The results will be shared in the information (working groups) platform and in the LinkedIn group. The thematic working groups will be coordinated by one of the partners, also a member of the project team. This will secure the information flow internally. In the development and implementation of a joint training programme all partners will be involved.

Dissemination will mainly take place by the joint staff training program, the knowledge platform (working groups) and the transnational LinkedIn group.

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Learning from each other (mutual learning) is a very important part of our transnational project. Stebo is very well trained in process guidance of “Appreciative Inquiry-learning networks”. This strengths-based method is a very well working method for exchanging knowledge and point of views, learning, networking and creating common sense. It generates involvement and ownership (instead of consumption) from the very first beginning. So, we propose we will design, prepare and guide the mutual learning activities in the transnational meetings in co-operation with the TCA-coordinator. We now also have this facilitator role in the INTEREG-project in which we are partner: in-ducult 2.0. The participants are very enthusiastic about this method. The say it’s the first time they have the feeling that they are really learning and working together. Above this, we also strongly believe that every transnational partner can use this method “Appreciative Inquiry -learning network” in your own (local) projects. In 2012 we organised the 4th World Conference Appreciative Inquiry in Gent with 600 participants from 50 countries. We are strongly committed to this “A.I.” network.
1.3.3. Time schedule for milestones, outcomes and events
We plan to have live meetings on a 3 to 6 months regular scheme. In between we will have zoom sessions. The scheme below is with some reservation. At the start of the project we will schedule the days and the months we will have this live and online meetings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone/event</th>
<th>Outcome/activity</th>
<th>Deliverable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meeting online</td>
<td>Zoom sessions</td>
<td>Update project agreement and planning preparing start meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live meeting 1</td>
<td>Start meeting Belgium</td>
<td>Update sharing and analysing good practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live meeting 2</td>
<td>Meeting Bulgaria</td>
<td>Working groups (knowledge platform): Assessment of results in terms of applicability of its innovative elements - Project group meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live meeting 3</td>
<td>Meeting Belgium</td>
<td>Working groups (knowledge platform): - Dissemination of the results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project coordination, communication and evaluation</td>
<td>LinkedIn Group Project website Regular Zoom-sessions, introduced by the project co-ordinator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutual learning activities by ‘AI-Learning network’</td>
<td>AI-learning Method</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.3.4. Dissemination strategy
We will disseminate the results of the transnational project during the project time via a LinkedIn group and project site. We will at the end of the project organise a joint staff training. Each partner will disseminate the results on their local organisation website or project website.

1.3.5. Evaluation
Each partner is responsible to ensure they achieve the milestones, outcomes and events. They make their own evaluations. These evaluations are shared in the project group during the mutual learning activities and the zoom sessions. The project co-ordinator will introduce and facilitate these meetings.
1.4. ORGANISATION AND DECISION-MAKING

1.4.1. Contribution and responsibilities of each partner

Each partner:
- will be responsible for his own project activities and outcomes
- will participate on the transnational platform (working groups) (= part of the international meetings); sharing and analysing good practice and innovative approaches, adapting and validating social innovations, activities for the assessment of results, activities for the dissemination of results (positive and/or negative).
- will invite representatives of the target group from their country for the knowledge platform (working groups) (= part of the international meetings)
- will participate in the project group (= part of the international meetings and zoom sessions, introduced by Stebo)
- will participate on the joint staff training
- will disseminate the result on their local organisation website or project website
- will facilitate and recruit members to a LinkedIn group from their country for sharing the results of the transnational activities
- will explore the possibilities in their country for upscaling products and services delivered by the partnership

Partner 1: Stebo
- will be project co-ordinator (inclusive project communication)
- will be co-ordinator of the transnational platform (working groups)
- will design, prepare and guide the mutual learning activities in the transnational meetings in co-operation with the TCA-coordinator by using the method “Appreciative Inquiry Learning Network”

1.4.2. Role and tasks relating to the co-ordination of the TCA
Stebo is project coordinator, promotor of the project. Each partner is responsible for delivering his contribution. The thematic working groups will be coordinated by Stebo as well. This will secure the information flow internally. In the development and implementation of a joint training programme all partners will be involved.

1.4.3. Arrangements for decision-making
Each partner is responsible for planning and implementation of the mutual activities and the database. Each partner has a well-defined role in the project. See 1.4.1.
The project group will be appointed with one project manager from each partner organisation and a back-up person. This group will handle questions of strategic character and daily operation as well.
The project group has contact via the mutual learning meetings and zoom sessions in between, introduced by the promotor.

1.4.4. Working language
English, German

Partners in the Stebo Project and Popovo Municipality take full responsibility to analyse and share their experience in countries Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland and Sweden with consecutive analysis and Assessment of results in terms of applicability of its innovative elements.
1.5. BUDGET FOR TRANSNATIONAL WORK
*(Please analyse budget by activity and partner, in €)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Partner 1</th>
<th>Partner 2</th>
<th><strong>Total budget</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project co-ordination (inclusive project communication)</td>
<td>20000 €</td>
<td>25000 €</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 1. Exchanging and analyzing the good practices and innovative approaches between partners by mutual learning</td>
<td>20000 €</td>
<td>32000 €</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 2. Validation of the good practices and innovations</td>
<td>20000 €</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 3. Assessment of results in terms of applicability of its innovative elements</td>
<td>15000 €</td>
<td>15000 €</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 4. Disseminate the results (positive and negative) by staff training and local initiatives</td>
<td>15000 €</td>
<td>18000 €</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 5. Process guidance “Appreciative Inquiry Learning Network”</td>
<td>20000 €</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>110000 €</td>
<td>90000 €</td>
<td>200000 €</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Where the project is working with simplified cost options, this should be explained and appropriate detail given, e.g. the total amount.
1.6. SIGNATURES OF PARTNERS
- TCA Knowledge platform for innovative jobs, tailor made for migrants and youth

Each partner undertakes to carry out the tasks and fulfil the duties set out above as part of the transnational project, on the condition that they are granted ESF funding set out in 1.6 above.

If for whatever reason any of the partners is not granted this support, this TCA must be amended or cancelled. Subject to the agreement of their respective Managing Authorities, the resulting ‘orphan’ partners may amend the TCA, optionally including new partners, and explore with their Managing Authorities how the grant contracts can be amended.

Signed by all the partners:

Partner 1 Stebo

Name of organisation
Stebo vzw

Address
Windekestraat 1- 3600 Genk - Belgium

Website
www.stebo.be

Place and date of signature
Genk, 2018.05.09

Name of representative
Erwin De bruyn, director

Position of representative
Managing Director

Telephone
0032 89 32 95 30

E-mail
Erwin.debruyn@stebo.be

Signed by legally authorised representative
[signature]
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Signed by all the partners:

Partner 2 Municipality of Popovo

Name of organisation
Municipality of Popovo

Address
‘Al. Stambolijski’ str. 1, 7800 Popovo - Bulgaria

Website

Place and date of signature
Popovo, 2018.05.08

Name of representative
Lyudmil Vesselinov

Position of representative
Mayor

Telephone
+359 608 40021

E-mail
dani.popovo@gmail.com

Signed by legally authorised representative
[signature]