

REPORT

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE IN TURKEY

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1.İŞKUR System in Turkey

In Turkey, the main responsible institution providing public employment services is the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MLSS) and its affiliated institution İŞKUR. MLSS is responsible for planning employment policies and programmes at national and local levels, monitoring changes in the labour market, determining necessary measures to increase employment. Additionally, its affiliated institution, İŞKUR has been established in 2003 in order to protect, develop and expand employment and to help activities for preventing unemployment.

The İŞKUR is a specific government entity with a variety of functions that support the promotion of employment, depending on national employment policy. The public employment services not only include labour exchange, counselling and job-search activity, which are indeed the most common functions of public employment services, but also other functions such management and administration of labour market programmes.

İŞKUR is an autonomous public agency in terms of administration and finance is subjected to the provisions of private law, having corporate body. The Law on İŞKUR (No. 4904), sets out the main responsibilities of the organisation as listed below:

- To help in activities for developing a national employment policy,
- To compile, analyse, interpret and publish labour market data on a local and national basis,
- To make job and occupation analysis and to provide consultancy and training services for job and occupation areas in order to increase employment,
- To carry out studies for regularising job search and worker demands,
- To provide training and consultancy service to organisations and institutions at national and international level,
- Follow up the decisions taken by the EU and other international organisations concerning labour force, employment and working life. ¹

İŞKUR also applies active labour market policies. One of the main aims of İŞKUR is to give services for matching the qualifications of individuals and the requirements of vocation or job; to support the individual to select the most appropriate vocation or profession according to conditions and desires of his/her; to support individuals' adjustment of job; and solution of problems related with placement.

¹ <http://www.kip.org.tr/en-us/theproject/aboutiskur.aspx>

İŞKUR psychologists, job counsellors and vocation counsellors make individual or group interviews, visit secondary schools, give seminars about job seeking skills and apply General Aptitude Tests.

Unemployed people (with or without disability) registers to İŞKUR system either via online system or personally at İŞKUR branch offices. After registration they can see and check open position announcements.

During the implementation phase in İzmir, Turkey we worked in cooperation with İŞKUR Konak branch.

2. Implementation phase

The implementation phase in Turkey has started at June 2014, right after the coaches' trainings and finished at the end of October 2014.

Six coaches from Konak İŞKUR have participated in the trainings sessions which were given by two Austrian trainers. Selected Turkish coaches were already working at the Konak İŞKUR branch as job and career counsellors and providing job matching and career advice services for people with or without disabilities. In their work routine they were already involved in helping people with disabilities to find jobs. However due to their heavy work load and rotation system among departments, each time PwDs were meeting with different coaches. This situation was preventing coaches to get to know PwDs better and understand their needs.

The specific aims of the coaching process in Turkey were:

- To increase the job placement chances for people with disabilities
- To increase the self-esteem of people with disabilities
- To provide people with disabilities career orientation and guidance for how to look for a job
- To help people with disabilities to make informed decisions
- To identify people with disabilities 'strengths, weaknesses and work abilities
- To prepare people with disabilities for job interview
- To make job applications together with people with disabilities
- To identify suitable job vacancies for people with disabilities
- To encourage people with disabilities to participate collective job interviews.

2.1. Selection of the beneficiaries

In order to find a job, people with disabilities need to register to İŞKUR database. This registration allows them see open positions at the companies (which are legally obliged to employ certain number of PwDs). All registered PwDs are assigned to a job and career coach (iş ve meslek danışmanı-IMD).

At Konak İŞKUR Branch, each job and career coach have at least 20 PwDs assigned to them. This matching system allows coaches to monitor and inform PwDs during the job application process. However, most of the time when a people with disability comes to Konak İŞKUR he/she meets with a different job and career coach. This is partly caused by the rotating job assignments of the coaches and also most of time PwDs do not make appointments with their own assigned coaches and meet whoever available at the time.

At the beginning of the T-EST implementation period, our SE coaches selected 3 PwDs each to include into the supported employment process. Coaches contacted with selected PwDs and had their consent thus coaching process started.

2.2. Coaching Process

Coaching process in Turkey covered four stages of supported employment, namely; client engagement, vocational profiling, job finding and employer engagement. Due to legal difficulties Turkish coaches could not give support on and of job support due to legal restrictions.

During the client engagement stage coaches meet with their clients (PwDs) regularly. The face to face meetings, support via phone and sms and e-mail exchanges used during the coaching process. First face to face meetings are dedicated to the getting to know the clients. The medical, educational, and vocational backgrounds of PwDs collected using standard forms. Coaches also help them to prepare their CVs if needed.

At vocational profiling stage coaches asked PwDs about their job expectations as well as abilities and limitations in order to identify their motivation, particular interests, work attitudes, resources and needs of support. Career and support strategies were decided based on this information.

Later, at Job Finding and Employer Engagement stages coaches informed clients about forthcoming collective job interviews and prepared them for these interviews. İŞKUR employer database which shows vacant positions was used in order to search appropriate positions. In

the end, 7 (seven) PwDs out of 19 (nineteen) have been recruited for permanent fulltime jobs. Remaining clients are still registered to İŞKUR database as jobseeker and coaches will continue to direct them to appropriate open positions.

At the end of the implementation period all participants (coaches and clients) received a certificate of participation. The certificate was issued in Turkish language and prepared by Konak District Governorship.



Picture of coaches' certification event

2.3. Collective Job Interviews

Collective Job Interview is process where a company representative interviews PwDs for one or more open positions in his company. Companies announce open positions via İŞKUR online system and İŞKUR coaches inform suitable disabled candidates about the positions via SMS and e-mail messages.

After a change on the Regulation on Domestic Employment Services it is now obligatory for companies to hold their 'collective job interviews' at İŞKUR premises. İŞKUR announce these job interviews via their web site. Companies that are legally obliged to employ disabled people send their HR representatives to İŞKUR branches to interview applicants. İŞKUR job and career coaches attend and observe these interviews. Applicants are informed about the results of the interviews either on site or within a week.

During the SE implementation phase in Turkey, coaches informed people with disabilities about collective job interviews, prepared them for interviews and encouraged them to participate in

as much as possible. At the end of the SE process **five** of the clients were employed via participating collective job interviews.

2.4. Review Meetings with Coaches

During the implementation phase in Turkey, Konak DG project team held 3 meetings with coaches in order to review implementation process. During these meetings coaches gave accounts of their support process as well as developments of their disabled clients. Furthermore coaches had a chance to ask questions regarding implementation of supported employment. Coaches also gave their opinions about the national toolkit for supported employment.

14 July 2014



13 August 2014



5 September 2014



Pictures from review meetings

2.5. Impact on the participants

Impact on the coaches: Job coaches from Konak İŞKUR came across with the supported employment model at the initial training activity. They realized what they are doing at İŞKUR has already been headlined under the 5-stage process for Supported Employment. Due to their job description, they are being engaged with the first 4 stages, however, the last one, on/off job support is lacking that requires legal arrangements. During the training, job coaches gained knowledge about the system in Austria while determining the situation in Turkey.

As said before, coaches have a rotation system, but during this project they dealt specifically with the same PwDs. They could understand their potential and satisfy their needs better.

Furthermore, job coaches read the T-EST Toolkit at the initial stage and reviewed the parts and gave their opinions for further amendments.

Impact on the İŞKUR Administration: During the process of T-EST project, the job coaches and İŞKUR administration have realized that specialization is very important and necessary for the effectively helping PwDs employment. The administration of Konak İŞKUR will inform top management at Ankara (Ministry of Labour and Social Security) about what needs to be changed in order to better deal with needs of people with disabilities.

Impact on the PwDs: People with disabilities were very pleased to be part of the T-EST project from the beginning. They got used to their coaches; they could either visit them at Konak İŞKUR building or have phone calls. They felt the continuous support of the job coaches. Some gained new skills and had new perspective to their careers. Being a part of an EU project had increased their overall motivation and they felt privileged. All the PwDs commented that job coaches were very helpful from the beginning, they were referred to several job opportunities and attended collective job interviews together with their coaches feeling their encouragement. They all feel grateful for the efforts. Last but not least, the 7 PwDs out of 19 have been recruited for permanent jobs. So far, they are all very satisfied with their new jobs.

Impact on the Employers: The company representatives appreciated the T-EST project very much. Due to quota system, they have to employ PwDs but they need the help of İŞKUR offices and job coaches. Company representatives who were involved in the collective job interviews with PwDs during project period, asked the continuation of the cooperation with Konak İŞKUR. They said interviews with PwDs were very efficient and effective, and they are very happy that job coaches encouraged PwDs to participate in those interviews and gave them motivation.

3. Recommendations ²

The following are the recommendations developed from the start of the project until the end of the SE implementation process with the collection of the views of target groups, stakeholders and coaches:

- Legal framework regarding employment of people with disabilities and İŞKUR legislation should be improved by including provisions to include Supported Employment services. Legislation should be developed by covering before, during and after employment process including job placement, job alignment, support, mobility within the workplace, career planning and on the job support.

² For more detailed recommendations RACE Project Policy Recommendations Catalogue: http://employdisable.eu/UserFiles/file/Policy_Recommendation_Catalogue_EN1.pdf

- In order to minimize job hopping or inactivity trap of PwDs there should be limitations on financial support of disability pension provided by the government e.g. cutting pension salary in case of declining second or third job offers.
- Some workplaces where PwDs cannot be employed due to non-suitable or inadequate infrastructure must contribute to a fund which the revenue collected by this fund should be used for contribution to employment and vocational training of PwDs.
- People with disabilities are usually employed in unskilled jobs. Employment of PWD is considered for low level of job positions and these positions don't require any skill. However, this type of approach does not increase the employment of people with disabilities because the number of unskilled job positions is limited. This has also negative effects on disabled people who feel that they're useless in the community. In the end people with disabilities rather get the disability pension instead of working on a low-paid unskilled job. Therefore it is very important to raise awareness of the companies (its hiring staff) regarding employment of people with disabilities.
- Another problem with the companies is that they tend to employ people with disabilities only because of legal obligation. It is important to encourage companies without legal obligation to employ PwDs and inform them about the financial incentives for doing so. Private sector organizations that employ over their quota or without legal obligation are encouraged by payments of insurance Incentives by the Treasury. This is one of the steps taken toward supporting employers through subsidies rather than the existing quota-penalty system.
- Education of the PwDs is done by public and private educational institutions which are monitored by Ministry of Education (MEB). Disabled people have quite inadequate early childhood education. Education of the people with disabilities in Turkey is provided via mainstreaming programs in public schools, private education institutions, VET courses for PwDs and higher education institutions. However, only 45 % of people with disabilities have only primary education that makes them highly vulnerable towards unemployment.
- At the moment, special education is provided for visually impaired, hearing impaired, mobility impaired and chronically ill children. Precautions and follow-ups are not sufficient for the people with disabilities to continue education until the stage of obtaining a profession. Employers face with difficulties to employ PwDs due to their inadequate training and/or education for open positions.
- İŞKUR procures vocational trainings for people with disabilities most of the time with a job guarantee. However, the number of such courses is not enough. Education and vocational trainings of PwDs need to be improved.