



Education and Culture

Leonardo da Vinci

**INCLUSIVE MODULES
MOVING YOUNG PEOPLE ON**

MODULE

**SOCIAL INCLUSION IN
GERMANY, BELGIUM, DENMARK,
PORTUGAL, ROMANIA AND UNITED
KINGDOM**

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1 Introduction

Due to the technological development, a higher degree of specialisation in industry and the demands on increased flexibility and an enhanced knowledge base in the work force, it has become increasingly difficult to enter the labour market and establish a decent earning of living without having a qualification at upper secondary level. However, many young people have problems completing an education programme at this level and, therefore, they are at risk of social exclusion. The political concern in many European countries is how to ensure that this group of young people, often categorised as “disadvantaged”, “marginalised” or “residual”, is included into society. The strategies vary from country to country, but in most countries education (especially vocational education and training) has come to play a major role as an inclusive factor, road to employability and active citizenship. The third country reports in the Modules project focus on various strategies for the social inclusion of “disadvantaged” young people in Belgium, Denmark, England, Germany, Portugal and Romania.

2 Germany

2.1 Methodology

The information used in this paper, was gained through three different approaches:

1. An extensive desktop research was undertaken. In particular, websites of social and vocational institutes and associations as well as vocational schools, dealing with the integration of disadvantaged young people, were the main focus of interest. The concepts of integration schemes were systematically reviewed, analyzed and interpreted.
2. Articles and new publications on the topic were collected and analyzed. Particularly recent research reports with some key findings on the state of cooperation in the field of work with disadvantaged young people were taken into account, namely:
 - A study published by Heike Förster on the effects of the recent reforms of the employment sector and the social support system (Hartz IV). Those reforms had a deep impact on the reintegration approaches of the target group, specifically aiming at disadvantaged young people who depend on social welfare. One focus of the study was the cooperation between employment agency, job centre and social youth work associations.
 - Two studies published by Beate Kramer and Carolin Pless who conducted a research throughout Germany on qualification bricks, the only official modules in pre-vocational education and training in Germany so far.
 - A survey conducted by Günther Pätzold and Judith Wingels focused on cooperation in the field of social and vocational integration of disadvantaged young people. All

relevant stakeholder groups were interviewed for this study and extensive quantitative and qualitative data were collected.

3. Additionally, phone interviews were organised with experts and professionals who are involved in the process described above; such as social workers, teachers or trainers as well as planners of integration schemes and social youth work associations. A field manual was drawn up and used for the interviews. Due to a rather limited number of interviews these findings are not representative but they do support the findings of the studies mentioned above.

2.2 General approaches in the country for the inclusion of disadvantaged young people

From the 80s onwards, support for disadvantaged people increased in the form of a consistently growing number of (re-) integration schemes. In parallel with the existing educational and vocational systems, a new educational area for disadvantaged young people developed without being planned and without an overall concept. Training schemes for disadvantaged young people exist in two different forms: (1) school-based, carried out at vocational schools and (2) in the form of a pre-vocational training programme supported by the Federal Office of Employment and carried out by diverse educational institutions (see First Country Report Germany). Since 2005, the number of people attending pre-vocational classes is higher than the number of people who take part in regular vocational training. This shows that support for disadvantaged young people becomes more important and will need specific attention in the future.

It is important to note that the whole sector of re-integration schemes for disadvantaged young people developed randomly, which means there are no general quality or efficiency standards or a special concept for it. As a result, there is a lack of structure and cooperation within the field, so that it is difficult to achieve the objectives. Furthermore, a survey has shown that, teenagers complained that their training was too job-specific with too little social components which indicated that the social education was neglected. Thus, the teenagers do not learn how to solve their everyday life problems, which inhibits their scholastic success. (Bickmann/Enggruber, 2001: 49). One reason for this is that there is a traditional focus on vocational topics, that often neglect social and life skills. This is especially the case with the pre-vocational courses taught at vocational schools, for example so called BVJ whereas the pre-vocational training programmes supported by the Federal Office of Employment traditionally have a stronger focus on professional and social attendance. Here the reason for the lack of social care results from the working conditions of so called “educational mentors”, who are responsible for 50 to 70 disadvantaged young people in different training schemes and see them only sporadically. Therefore it is almost impossible for them to build up a deeper relationship to the teenagers and young adults and support each of them socially. Anyhow, there is a tendency towards focusing on only one education segment instead of supporting the teenagers in their whole biographical development (Bojanowski, 2005: 61).

Nevertheless, employment is a key issue for the social inclusion of young people, since they face particular difficulties in entering the labour market and accessing sustainable employment and social protection. To guarantee employment or at least to support people for whom it is hard to get a qualification, it is an important aspect of creating a socially cohesive society. This highlights the need to invest in human resources, and create participatory forms of social protection that lead towards employment. For young people in particular, guidance is supposed to help reduce non-completion rates in education and training, promote closer matches between individual and labour market needs, and expand individuals' awareness of civic and leisure opportunities as well as learning and work (Pätzold/Wingels 2006: 17ff).

2.3 State of (social) inclusion of disadvantaged young people

Employment is central to social inclusion – both because of the necessity of income to participate in society, and the necessity of employment that contributes to a positive identity and to feeling as part of the community. Anyway, the „inclusion” results of pre-vocational training schemes are not satisfactory, since only 30 % of the attendees find their way into working life. Up to 2004 when the practice changed, 55% could attend additional three to six courses to finally get on the right track. (Dietrich, 2001: 18). This could cause a delay of an average of three more years to achieve a vocational qualification. What is more, most of the young people who need such a long time to get an apprenticeship and finish it, did not get an employment at all, or only got temporary employment contracts. If there are no apprenticeships available or the training courses they have previously experienced have not given them a possibility to find work, then less motivation is there to attend or to work hard on another course. Another danger bears the continuity of training scheme careers, which brings a risk of social exclusion and stigmatisation with it (Hiller 2002: 208). In general, the BVJ and the other pre-vocational training schemes are rated as being only a temporary solution and as keeping the young people on hold.

However, the general policy changed in 2004 and ever since young people get only ten months of pre-vocational training altogether, which is far from enough for many of them, who suffer multiple problems and need special attention. Many youth training courses for employment have extremely limited success rates and the consequences of a person's continued failure to obtain work is not only social exclusion but is very damaging to their self-esteem. Moreover, it is proved that the training schemes sponsored by the Federal Labour Office in most cases only help to get an external traineeship, although traineeships in the dual system include higher chances to get a job (Schulte, 2004: 12). In his dissertation a German researcher even states that the capital invested in the field of reintegration schemes for disadvantaged young people was a „waste of billions”. The study focuses on the transition from school to working life from 1970 onwards and shows that since schemes like the BVJ have been introduced, general conditions got worse. Higher expectations and social changes made it more difficult for young people to find and complete an apprenticeship. According to interviewed teachers, only 12% of their pupils get an apprenticeship after finishing pre-vocational training, whereas at the beginning, when the BVJ was introduced, 55% did (Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg 2008: 1). The overall number of young people without

any qualification, apprenticeship or training is increasing. Whereas it has been stable by 15% in the years 1995 to 2004, it grew to 17% in 2005 and 2006 (BIBB 2008:3).

2.4 Approaches in the field of social work

As education conditions and demands become more complex, socialisation instances like family and schools need an additional outer familiar and non-scholastic support. Such an instance is the social work for young people, which has the task to open access to education, no matter which gender and social or national origin the person has. The main aim is to try to retrieve a connection to schools and vocational training.

In Germany the field of youth work is featured through non-formal education and support, focusing on autonomy, participation and integration. Whereas the primary task of youth work is to make a contribution towards personal self-fulfilment and towards greater freedom and justice by developing and strengthening young people's personal development and ability to play a responsible part in state and social life. The target group is all young people as well as disadvantaged and socially excluded groups of an age between 14 and 27 years. It is a highly professionalised sector, which is legally regulated and administrated by youth welfare departments at municipal level. Nevertheless, this sector could not survive without the help of volunteers and the benefit of the cooperation between these volunteers and professionals (Bohn 2007: 34).

Part of the general youth work is the social youth work, which is of high importance in Germany. Social youth work takes care of those young people who don't have any motivation at all and can't even be reached by the reintegration schemes for disadvantaged young people. It supports a certain group of people with special programmes to help them get out of their disadvantaged situation. For example social youth work helps disadvantaged individuals, like early school leavers to get a second chance. Since education is necessary and scholastic qualifications are essential to be accepted and integrated in social and occupational life, the disadvantaged pupils are dependent on social youth work. Apart from that, they prepare the teenagers for a life without a continuous labour biography and possibilities to be integrated in society besides working life (Speck 2008: 25).

Moreover, in most cities social youth work includes several offers with low access obstacles such as street work to help the disadvantaged part of society. Very often a project is started to provide a perspective for a certain target group. One example is a container that was build up in a disadvantaged neighbourhood of Hamburg where young people from Eastern Europe can meet if they want to. Most of them have some sort of criminal career already and are tired of school. The offers of the social worker who has an Eastern European background himself are well accepted. Most young people like going there because of the company they can enjoy and the fact that they have something to do, as the street worker gives them little jobs to do, like cleaning the container, doing some garden work etc. (Eickhoff-Jung 2008: 253). Other examples are drug buses that cruise through specific areas and offer help and something to eat to drug addicts. Yet another example is the formation of sport teams and clubs (football etc.)

especially for disadvantaged young people. These offers give them the feeling of being part of something and of achieving something they can be proud of.

2.5 State of cooperation between social workers, vocational teachers/trainers and teachers in general education

Education is more than just school, it goes far beyond and a good working cooperation between different bodies of the schemes could be a key to success. Unfortunately, the current state of cooperation is far from being helpful in the process of inclusion of disadvantaged young people, instead it is complex and hardly comprehensible. There is a lack of transition between social actors, educational actors and labour market policy, as well as a lack of transparency. To guarantee vocational integration of young people a cooperation between the Federal Labour Office, the Social Welfare Office, the supervisory school authority, the Chamber of Industry and Commerce, guilds, trade unions, vocational training centres, centres for young people and social work as well as the centre of business development is indispensable. In short: A mixture of education, social work care and pedagogical upbringing is urgently needed. Besides, a trans-regional cooperation would be of interest. With the creation of a permanent network, instrumentality and consultation would be easier and more successful (ZWH 2006: 25).

This issue has been taken into account by making cooperation a legal duty. The need for cooperation has been recognised and the existence is wishful, but the implementation seems to be difficult and that is why the reality looks quite different: Although cooperation between the Youth Welfare Office and the local job centres is a legal duty, it is hard to find it in most areas or it is a neglected issue (Kleffner-Zimmermann 2008:18ff).

The recent labour market reforms (Hartz IV) brought a lot of changes for those disadvantaged young people depending on social welfare: the employment agency is still responsible for their vocational counselling process, but when it comes to their inclusion into job market or an apprenticeship, it is the job centre or county council they need to consult. However, in case it turns out they need to attend an integration scheme it is again the employment agency that is responsible. Therefore a good cooperation between those stakeholders is essential. However, the reality looks quite different here as well (Förster 2008: 87ff), but there are by all means examples of a good cooperation between social youth work, job centres and other relevant participants. Some draw up cooperation contracts which state the activities of participating partners as well as additional necessary social educational offers of youth work institutions (Haller, 2008: 33). Still, these examples build a minority. There is no systematic cooperation yet: neither on the practical level, nor on the level of planning and policy making (Pätzold/Wingels 2006: 87ff).

The current cooperation between schools and social work institutions for young people is also limited, as bilateral contact with single actors and institutions does exist, but no exhaustive, conceptual, general strategy of cooperation. Furthermore, as a result of bad communication or even a lack of communication, some measures of different institutions are not combinable or connectable (Rauschenbach, 2008: 6).

The structures in the systems of the different cooperation partners can vary a lot, especially when different kinds of organisations are involved in one course or scheme. This may concern the institutional culture, the way how professionals work, the aims and guidelines, the mission, the conformance with rules, the hierarchical structures, etc. In Germany for example, the time for discussions between social workers and teachers is very limited since the teachers have lessons to give and other duties to deal with afterwards so that they leave the building immediately after class. This fact complicates the cooperation with the social workers and trainers simply for organisational reasons.

When diverse occupational groups with different professional background are involved, competition and rivalry may occur: Since the different professional groups who work within the aid system for disadvantaged persons have different focuses and professional contents, their vocational backgrounds, careers and occupational self-esteems are consequently different from each other too. Examples are the variations between vocational school teachers, social workers and vocational trainers. Thus, the intersection of commonalities between different professional groups is relatively small and along with it the knowledge of the other professions and the mutual understanding. As a result, the opinions of how to support the disadvantaged young people in an optimal way differ enormously which makes the respective professional groups look at each other with disregard and distance. The consequences of that scenario can be observed in the work and the dealing with disadvantaged young people. In extreme cases, those young people have to experience different approaches in different „worlds“, which have no common ground (Schreier, 2006).

With the introduction of a child and youth support law in 1990/91, legal security and a school related commitment of cooperation were established for social youth work. This positive introduction has soon been accused of stigmatising schools and pupils and of disagreeing with a modern way of preventive and offensive youth support (Speck, 2008: 23).

Similarly pessimistic is a considerable scepticism towards a cooperation of social work institutions and the established educational system. Caused by a fear of losing identity, social work institutions keep distance to the actors of the educational system. This tendency is enforced by an increasing number of all-day schools that increasingly integrate children into their leisure facilities and thus keep them from joining the activities offered by youth work institutions. Consequently they are rather considered as competitors than as two groups which should cooperate to improve the young people's situation. As a result cooperation is little although it seems logic that the stronger the network, the better the profit from the other's potentials (Rauschenbach 2008:6).

2.6 Existing modules combining vocational and social contents

Modules

The only existing official modules in pre-vocational education and training are the „qualification bricks“ developed by ZWH (Central Office for Continuing Education and Training in Crafts), ZDH (Central Association of German Crafts) and BIBB (Federal Institute

for Vocational Education and Training). The „qualification bricks” are closely linked to vocational skills and qualifications and refer to the appropriate parts of the technical training for approved professions (see First Country Report Germany). It is not the aim of the concept to focus on social or personal competences within the „qualification bricks”. This is left to the framework programme of the pre-vocational courses. Even though many integration schemes employ teachers and trainers as well as social workers and social pedagogues, the social workers and pedagogues are not involved in the process of developing and carrying out „qualification bricks” (Kramer/Pless 2006b:7ff).

However, in many pre-vocational schemes financed by Federal Office of Employment these official qualification bricks are not used. Instead, the institutions develop modules on their own. Among those are modules focusing on life skills such as handling a bank account, dealing with household chores, hygiene, responsible handling of sexuality and parenthood and others. The social content of these modules tries to make the young people feel more comfortable and independent in everyday life. Unfortunately, the modules are not systematised yet and the cooperation between the responsible institutions is not satisfactory.

Courses

As mentioned above, there is a need for a differentiation between those courses in pre-vocational education and training carried out by vocational schools and those financed by the Federal Office of Employment. The courses taught at vocational schools have their main focus on vocational and general education and, as a rule, do not include social training, life skills and social mentoring whereas these are integral parts in the courses financed by the Federal Office of Employment. Analyzing the different concepts for the BVJ, it is remarkable that very few lessons deal with social themes. The timetables for the BVJ comply with guidelines of the ministry of education (Evangelische Heimstiftung 2007: 1), which means that the schools are not responsible for the lack of social content in the BVJ. At least, some offer some kind of cooking course for female attendants, which anyway is not satisfactory. More social elements are needed in the training.

3 Belgium

3.1 Methodology

The information used in this paper, was gained through a number of sources:

1. A desktop research was carried out. Several websites were systematically read, in particular the ministry of Education of the Flemish community website and the websites from several centres for part-time education and centres for out-of-school education that deal with disadvantaged young people. When analyzing these websites, the focus was on the approach that is used to include disadvantaged young people.

2. Recent articles and publications on the topic were read and analyzed. These articles and publications dealt with (one of) the existing programmes for the inclusion of disadvantaged young people in (part-time) vocational education and in general education, describing their purpose, their target group and their approach, and/or they discussed the state of the social inclusion of disadvantaged young people.
3. Also phone interviews and face-to-face interviews were undertaken with professionals who are involved in one of the programmes dealing with disadvantaged young people and with experts on this subject.

3.2 General approaches in the country for the inclusion of disadvantaged young people

Pupils who opt to be in part-time education¹ follow a part-time programme, which in principle consists of part-time learning and part-time working. In Flanders, the part-time learning can either be training in part-time vocational education, in a so called centre for part-time education or a centre for out-of-school education, or it can be an entrepreneurship training, which can be followed in one of the centres of 'Syntra' (formerly called the Flemish Institute for Entrepreneurship). This training is compulsory, since at least part-time education is compulsory in Belgium from the age of 16. A pupil that follows the entrepreneurship training is also obliged to be part-time employed. He or she has to have a part-time working contract before registering at Syntra. At the centres for part-time vocational education, in theory, part-time learning should be combined with part-time working too (a job that corresponds with the training), but before 2008 this was not compulsory. In practice, about 50% of young people in part-time vocational education were unemployed. To tackle this problem, prevocational education was developed for young people who do not have the necessary attitudes and/or motivation to enter the labour market.

In Flanders, several approaches for the inclusion of disadvantaged young people were developed in the education system. In part-time secondary vocational education, prevocational education was developed gradually in three systems: bridging projects, pre-paths and personal development projects (Samyn, 2008).

In the early 90's, bridging projects were created. A bridging project is intended for young people who are not able to find or keep a part-time employment because they lack attitudes that are indispensable for the labour market. In the bridging project, they receive individual guidance and support to prepare them for the labour market. For some young people, these bridging projects are too demanding because they lack even basic skills, because they're confronted with multiple problems, because they have more problems in making choices, etc. For these disadvantaged young people, there is a second alternative in prevocational education, namely pre-paths, developed in 1997. Pre-paths intend to guide and prepare young people to the labour market, by working on their basic skills and attitudes that are necessary

¹ Since 1983, education is compulsory in Belgium for young people until the age of 18. Full-time education is compulsory until the age of 16. From the age of 16, only part-time education is compulsory.

for permanent employment. So, bridging projects and pre-paths both have the purpose of guiding young people to the labour market. The third and most recent system in prevocational education is the personal development project, introduced in 2008. Personal development projects are meant for young people with multiple problems who are not capable of following a project that leads them to labour market, like a bridging project or a pre-path. The purpose of a personal development project is to work on young people's problems so they will be able to move up to a bridging project or a pre-path (Samyn, 2008).

In 2008, a decree on part-time learning and part-time working (Ministerie van de Vlaamse gemeenschap, 2008) was introduced which, among other things, created a new framework for these three systems. One of the most important reforms of the decree was the introduction of personal guidance from a personal coach for every young person in part-time education. This personal guidance aims at matching every young person with the most appropriate trajectory in part-time education. A thorough screening, guidance and monitoring of every young person aim to make it possible to decide whether one should be in one of the systems of prevocational education or one is suitable for part-time working. The measure to give every young person personal guidance is linked with another important measure from the decree on part-time learning and part-time working, namely that every pupil in part-time education has to take on a full-time engagement. This means he or she combines part-time learning with either part-time working or one of the programmes of prevocational education (i.e. a bridging project, a pre-path or a personal development project) (Samyn, 2008).

Besides the systems in prevocational education, there are also time-out projects. Contrary to the systems mentioned above, time-out projects are not only for young people in part-time education but also for young people in full-time education (general as well as vocational education). Time-out projects are meant for those young people get into trouble at school, especially those who play truant regularly, or young people who have lost all motivation to attend school. Young people who participate in a time-out project don't attend school but attend an alternative programme for several days or several weeks. This gives them the chance to take a break from school and in addition, the school gets a break from the troublesome situation with the pupil. Time-out projects intend to prevent early drop-outs from school by trying to return balance in the young person's life and to get them motivated again for school (Deceur, Decraene & Vettenburg, 2005).

3.3 State of (social) inclusion of disadvantaged young people

Statistics prove that part-time employment for young people in part-time education is important for their employment and career afterwards. In 2006, some 2636 young people finished part-time education. After one year, in 2007, 38% of school leavers from part-time education who didn't combine their education with part-time working were unemployed, while only 23% of the young people who did combine part-time education with part-time employment were not employed. Of the young people who did not combine their part-time education with part-time work, 9% did not have at least one work experience after one year,

while only 4% of the young people who were part-time employed during part-time education did not have at least one work experience after one year (VDAB, 2008).

The importance of combining part-time education with part-time working is also proven by the statistics on young people who finish an entrepreneurship training (see above). Young people in this type of education are obliged by Syntra to be part-time employed: pupils that are not part-time employed can not follow the entrepreneurship training. When we look at the employment numbers from school leavers of Syntra, we see that only 7, 8 % of them are unemployed after one year, but a vast majority of them has at least one work experience after one year (VDAB, 2008). The low unemployment numbers of school leavers from the entrepreneurship training compared to those from part-time education can not only be explained by the effect of part-time employment during education. Also the fact that pupils in this system are obliged to be part-time employed makes that more motivated young people follow the entrepreneurship training, while disadvantaged young people more frequently end up in centres for part-time vocational education.

These numbers prove that for young people in part-time education, part-time working is important for their perspectives on the labour market afterwards. With the decree on part-time learning and part-time working, policymakers aim at raising the number of youngsters in part-time education with work experience or with experiences that advance their further chances on the labour market. Given that this decree only became valid from September 2008, it is too early to evaluate the effects of its measures, like the personal guidance for every young person in part-time education and the full-time engagement (as mentioned above). Early results show that the decree has caused a raise in the number of young people that are full-time engaged. In October 2007, 58% of young people in part-time education were full-time occupied. In October 2008, this percentage rose to 68% (a total of 6053 pupils were registered in part-time education in Flanders at that moment). It is important to note is that this raise in full-time engagement is mainly caused by a higher participation in the programmes of prevocational education and not by an increase in part-time employed young people (Vlaams ministerie van Onderwijs en Vorming, 2008a).

Regarding time-out projects, research shows that the activities and the guidance bring about positive effects on the behaviour of the young people, on their motivation to attend school and on their performances. Also the break the pupil gets from school relaxes the situation, both for the pupil as for the school. Moreover, Deceur et al. claim that time-out projects do prevent young people from dropping out of school. A vast majority of young people that have followed a time-out project still attend school one year after finishing the project, although many of them have to repeat their year or change their subject (Deceur et al., 2005).

3.4 Approaches in the field of social work

The approaches towards disadvantaged young people in prevocational education depend on the kind of programme (i.e. bridging project, pre-path or personal development project) that is followed and on its purposes. The different programmes in prevocational education are situated in social work and youth work. They have one purpose in common, namely

increasing the chances of employment of these young people. However, every system is different in the specific goals it sets and in the demands it makes for the young people. Also the approaches that are worked with in the projects can differ between the several promoters (the providers) of these projects. In Flanders, an important role in the inclusion of disadvantaged young people is played by the several centres for out-of-school education. A considerable amount of programmes for disadvantaged young people, especially pre-paths, personal development projects and time-out projects, is provided by centres for out-of-school education. The fact that the approaches of the different programmes vary between several providers will be illustrated with some examples.

The goal of bridging projects is to offer young people a bridge to a job in the regular labour market. Besides the programme in the centre for part-time education, young people in bridging projects gain practical training in a more protective but meaningful environment outside the regular labour market, where they're being individually guided and supported. An example of a bridging project is VELO, a social economy enterprise in the city of Leuven where bicycles are rented and repaired. At VELO, every pupil who participates in a bridging project is individually mentored, which means the mentoring is adapted to the individual's capabilities, attitudes and motivation. This mentoring concerns the learning of technical skills on the one hand and working on social skills and attitudes that are necessary to enter the labour market on the other hand (Fripont, Van Valckenborgh & Douterlungne, 2004). At Jongerenatelier vzw in Kortrijk, young people can follow workshops in construction, woodcraft and metalworks. The skills they obtain are used in projects to lay out and maintain town parks, playgrounds and centres for youth work. "Youth working for youth" is the basis of Jongerenatelier's philosophy and aims at raising the youngsters' respect for town facilities. The focus of this project also lies in gaining technical skills on the one hand and social skills and attitudes to enter the labour market on the other hand. Every young person is guided and evaluated by a personal coach, but also gets the opportunity to reflect on his/her own behaviour in an assessment every two months (Flament, 2007).

The goal of pre-paths is for young people to obtain basic labour market skills and competences and gain insight in their skills and competences. Besides the programme in the centre for part-time education, young people in pre-paths participate in a variety of structured activities that can be situated on a continuum between leisure activities and labour. These activities are in any case not without engagement and eventually are all related with integration in the labour market. In a pre-path, a young person receives individual guidance from a personal coach but is also supported through a group process by participating in group work (Ruelens, De Rick & Douterlungne, 2004). For example Groep Intro, a centre for out-of-school education, approaches pre-paths as modules. Every module has its own specific content and objectives. The following modules are used by Groep Intro (Moreel, 2008):

- development of a labour identity and mobility
- basic skills and attitudes
- labour ethics
- learning how to learn and how to work

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- job club
 - communication skills
 - assertiveness
 - social skills and guidance to society
 - assessment

JES, a non-profit organisation in Brussels, organises its pre-paths around three central topics: mobility in an urban environment, urban culture and youth culture, and gender (activities challenging sex stereotypes). While training participants in labour market and career skills, this organisation tries to combine the methods of youth work and street work with elements from out-of-school education and projects that lead people to the labour market (Sierens, 2007).

The goal of personal development projects is to help young people with multiple problems to work in their own pace on a number of skills and to deal with their problems, so they will be able to step into a further system in prevocational education that can lead them to a qualification. Personal development projects are supposed to offer young people fulltime activities that allow them to deal with their problems and work on their motivation (Vlaams ministerie van Onderwijs en Vorming, 2008b). For young people in part-time education there is a clear distinction between part-time learning on the one hand and part-time working or a trajectory that must guide them to the labour market on the other hand. For young people in a personal development project, this distinction becomes more blurred, since the project occupies these young people full-time. Nevertheless, the young people remain tied to the centre for part-time education, since the purpose is to move him or her up to a pre-path or a bridging project as soon as possible. As in pre-paths, young people in personal development projects receive individual guidance from a personal coach but are also supported through a group process by participating in group work (Vlaams ministerie van Onderwijs en Vorming, 2008c). For example Groep Intro organises a personal development project, @ctief, in Ostend and Bruges, and uses a variety of methods to help young people with multiple problems. On the one hand the young person gets individual counselling, on the other hand the young person participates in group activities, like sport activities and activities where the young people have to work together to realise something (like cooking, doing a hiking trip). The organisation also works together with vzw Amazon, a non-profit organisation that works on personal growth riding horses and taking care of horses (Groep Intro, 2008).

The goal of time-out projects is to give the pupil and the school a break from each other and from the troublesome situation that was created and to make time for the pupil to deal with his or her problems, to restore his or her motivation and/or to re-establish the ties with the school. In a time-out project, a pupil participates in a number of activities that can be quite diverse: leisure activities, activities that stimulate learning attitudes and general education, activities that intend to increase their labour market skills... These can be individual activities as well as group activities. During and after the time-out project, the pupil is individually guided by a social worker with whom the pupil tries to agree on the activities and the goals for the programme (Deceur et al., 2005). An example of a time-out project is On@Break, a project of

a centre for out-of-school education called De Werf in Ghent. This project offers a mix of individual activities on the one hand and group activities on the other hand. During the individual activities the pupil is guided to deal with a number of issues: analyzing the crisis situation, thinking about his or her future, gaining an insight into certain social skills, keeping in contact or restoring the contact with the school, parents, going through subject matters that the pupil missed out and, if necessary, dealing with other problems. During the group activities, the pupil is involved in the programme of De Werf, namely woodcraft, and he or she participates in sports and other leisure activities to learn how to spend his/her leisure time in a meaningful way (Vettenburg & Vandewiele, 2004).

3.5 State of cooperation between social workers, vocational teachers/trainers and teachers in general education

The decree on part-time learning and part-time working from 2008 introduced a partnership between several actors involved in prevocational education: personal coaches from the centres for part-time vocational education (educational actors), assistants from the Centres for Pupils Counselling ('Centra voor Leerlingenbegeleiding') and promoters from the prevocational programmes (social work). As mentioned above, every young person in a centre for part-time education receives guidance from a personal coach. Moreover, assistants from the Centres for Pupils Counselling are involved in this personal guidance. In prevocational education, i.e. a bridging project, a pre-path or a personal development project, young people are supervised by a social worker from a centre for out-of-school education. The decree prescribes that frequent consultation between these actors should take place for every young person in part-time education. If desired, the Flemish Public Employment and Vocational Training Service ('Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling en Beroepsopleiding') can be involved in this consultation (Ministerie van de Vlaamse gemeenschap, 10-07-2008).

When a pupil participates in a time-out project, a partnership develops between the school (educational actor), the parents, assistants from the Centres for Pupils Counselling, social workers from the centre for out-of-school education that organises the time-out and in some cases, external social workers who are familiar with the pupil and his/her situation (social actors). A joint consultation between these actors takes place at the beginning of the time-out project (intake), while the pupil participates in the project (intermediary evaluation) and at the end of the project (follow up). Furthermore, individual consultation between these actors takes place in the different phases of the time-out project and at an ad hoc basis (Deceur et al., 2005).

3.6 Existing modules combining vocational and social contents

In Flanders, the existing modules in part-time and full-time education strictly do not combine vocational and social contents. The aims of these modules are defined by the government. Each module contains basic competencies, key competencies and auxiliary basic education, but in theory social competences are not included. It is up to the schools to make the learning programme, to choose the teaching and evaluation methods, to choose the didactical material,

etc. However, the government also defines final attainment levels which should be worked on by all pupils during secondary education. A number of these final attainment levels contain social competences, like responsibility, respect, adopting a critical attitude, etc. How, where, by who and during which courses is worked on these final attainment levels are choices to be made by the school and is influenced by the teachers, the pupils, the school's environment and current events. In other words, social competences can be worked on in several courses hence they can also be combined with vocational contents in modules. Other final attainment levels are about physical and mental health and socio-relational development, environmental and sustainable development, and the political-legal, socio-economic and socio-cultural society (Creemers & Maes, 2008).

As mentioned above, some pre-paths in centres for out-of-school education are approached as modules. These modules merely focus on social competences and aim at preparing pupils for the labour market, but they are not combined with vocational contents.

4 Denmark

4.1 Methodology

The report is based on desk research and data from ongoing projects in which the author is or has been involved. Focus is primarily on the role of the education system in inclusion strategies and on strategies which aim at a bridging between educational and social institutions. Other policy areas which are of importance in inclusion strategies, i.e. housing policies, crime prevention, health care, labour market policies, etc. are not covered in the report.

In the report, the term of "disadvantaged" young people is used although the term is analytically and conceptually problematic. First of all, it raises the question of who can be termed "disadvantaged" and by whom. Within this project, the disadvantage lies in not acquiring a vocational qualification and hereby be able to enter the labour market and make a decent earning of living. Secondly, it raises the question of the power of concepts. The moment a group of people is termed "disadvantaged", a negative value is given to this group of people. The term "disadvantaged" is a measurement against culturally and socially determined standards. The group is assessed against a standard of the "normal" which in this case is young people who go through the education system without causing too many problems. Finally, it may create the perception that "disadvantaged" young people are a homogenous group of people. This is not the case. The groups of young people who are categorised as disadvantaged cover a wide spectrum of young people ranging from young people who oppose the formal education system (for different reasons) and who seek alternative ways of living to young people with severe handicaps.

4.2 General approaches in the country for the inclusion of disadvantaged young people

In Denmark, a major political goal since the 1990s has been to make 95% of a youth cohort complete a youth education programme at upper secondary level. In the 1990s, the main mechanism was to create alternatives to the existing education programmes. Thus a number of individualised schemes were established in 1993/1994 (basic vocational training, (*erhvervsgrunduddannelse*) (EGU) and individual youth training programmes (*den fri ungdomsuddannelse*) (FUU). The aim was to give young people who fell outside the formal education system a chance of completing a training scheme at upper secondary level. The main principles of the alternative programmes were mainstreamed in 2000 where the ideas of individualisation and flexibility were introduced into the vocational education and training system. Hereby, the vocational education and training system (or more precisely the basic course – see below) became a major key in the inclusion of disadvantaged young people.

The vocational education and training system was reformed in 2000 (Reform 2000) and this reform introduced the principles of flexibility, individualisation and modularisation in the basic course of the vocational education and training programmes. The basic course can be seen as a pre-vocational path into a specific vocational specialisation. The aim of the basic course is to give young people an introduction to a trade or a number of related trades and hereby make it possible for young people to have a “taste” of the trade(s) which they want to enter. The basic course is variable in length and can last from 10 weeks to 116 weeks (Cort, 2008) depending on the individual needs of the student. The course is (to be) modularised – although it has proven difficult to many of the smaller vocational colleges to offer optional subjects. In the Reform, the main course was maintained more or less intact and it is still a precondition that the vocational education and training student has entered an apprenticeship contract with a company in order to continue in the main course.

Moreover, the Government has introduced a number of auxiliary schemes such as

- mentoring schemes involving both teachers and students as mentors;
- setting up youth guidance centres and making youth guidance compulsory (when a young person is not reported to have started in a youth education programme three months after leaving basic schooling);
- strengthening the bridging between different educational institutions;
- establishing a basic course for school tired and more practically gifted young people based on the apprenticeship principle instead of school-based training;
- making vocational education and training more practical in scope and reducing the general subjects (i.e. Danish, math, social science).

In the discussion of social inclusion of “disadvantaged” young people, it is necessary to decentre the concept and look at what groups are included. One of the main problems in the Danish vocational education and training programmes is the drop out of young men with

another ethnic background.² Consequently, many of the initiatives are targeted young people with another ethnic background and these initiatives include mentoring, the use of “role models”, buddy schemes (older ethnic students becoming responsible for younger students), adapting teaching to the specific needs and requirements of young people with another ethnic background, language courses, etc. (Shapiro, et al., 2005).

As part of the 95% policy objective, all vocational colleges are to draw up quality plans for reducing drop out rates and are measured on a number of indicators among others the ability to make a growing number of young people complete a vocational education and training programme.

Besides vocational education and training as a primary element in the Danish inclusion strategy, the municipalities are also responsible for offering activation schemes for young people below the age of 25. The Danish employment/social policy is based on the principle of activation. This implies that young unemployed people below 30 without a qualification has to be activated (either in an enterprise, in a municipal activation scheme or in a vocational education and training programme) after a maximum of six months of unemployment (from September 2009, 13 weeks). At municipal level, the production schools play an important role as an activation and bridge-building scheme into the vocational education and training programmes. From 2002, the production schools have been legally bound to cooperate with vocational colleges on providing bridging schemes for disadvantaged young people.

4.3 State of (social) inclusion of disadvantaged young people

As mentioned above, the main strategy for the inclusion of disadvantaged young people has since 2000 been based on making the education system more inclusive and in particular making vocational education and training the primary element in integrating disadvantaged young people into education, and subsequently including them into the active part of the labour force. Since 2000, many new initiatives have come into the world. However, at the annual conference for the vocational colleges, the Ministry of Education reported that the effects of the many initiatives are not yet showing ("FoU-konferencen 2009," 2009). From a purely statistically point of view the results of the many initiatives seem disappointing: the overall completion rate has declined since 2000 (from 85% in 2000 to 80% in 2008).

However, looking into the various elements of the inclusion strategy, some of these elements seem to be successful – at least locally. Mentoring is one of the strategies which has been reported to have had a positive impact on inclusion and it is also one of the strategies which politically receive high attention. As to the discrepancy between statistics and local success, this can be explained by the fact that 1) impact cannot be measured on the short term, 2) not all vocational colleges are active in implementing schemes for the inclusion of disadvantaged

² In general, the male population is of major political concern. Since the recession sat in, unemployment in the age cohort of 16 to 24 years has doubled and especially, unskilled young men are hit by the recession. In this cohort, unemployment has tripled.

young people, 3) the colleges have an interest in promoting success stories in order to attract extra funding, and 4) other factors such as the economy and the business sectors' capacity to employ apprentices have an impact on completion rates, etc.

The political sharpening of the social dimension of vocational education and training has been criticised by teachers and school leaders at the vocational colleges. First of all, the vocational colleges and the teachers are not geared to handle the group of disadvantaged young people, who have severe personal, social and/or psychological problems. Secondly, many disadvantaged young people require extra resources and the policy is based on a no-rise cost strategy. Thirdly, the parity of esteem which the Government is also striving to establish for vocational education and training tends to be undermined by making vocational education and training sector the primary solution to social problems. The policy is in other words not unproblematic.

4.4 Approaches in the field of social work

Since the end of the 1980s, the social (employment) policy in Denmark has taken a turn towards activation instead of support (Torfing, 2003).³ The policy is based on the principles of rights and duties. For young people below the age of 30 this has meant that they have a right to receive social benefits and at the same time have the duty to be actively engaged in finding a job or entering an education and training programme. The Danish activation policy was influenced by the British policies initiated by Thatcher and was a means by which to make a break with the "Nanny" state and avoid passive support, which had been the case in the late 1970s and early 1980s where the youth unemployment soared due to the economic crisis. However, compared to Britain the Danish activation policy has put emphasis on providing public training and competence development instead of using economic incentives to motivate unemployed people for jobs.⁴ Today, the rules for young people who are below 30 and who have no formal qualification are that they have three options: 1) to participate in education and training (in this case, they will no longer receive unemployment benefits but students' grants), 2) to enter the labour market (with the possibility of wage subsidies) or 3) to enter a municipal activation scheme.

As to the latter, there was a proliferation of activation schemes, both municipal and private, in the late 1980s and 1990s. Some of these schemes have proven efficient in improving the possibilities of disadvantaged young people. Other schemes have functioned more as "containment" projects than real offers. Evaluations have shown that inclusion through job schemes are more successful and in general, in regard to disadvantaged young people (i.e. between 16 and 25) the main strategy is to include them through the formal vocational education and training system, as described above. However, in the major cities there are

³ Social policy is here defined as the active social policy i.e. the municipal labor market policy targeted uninsured unemployed people (see also Bredgaard, 2004).

⁴ Since 2001, the use of economic incentives such as lower benefits and economic sanctions in case of non-compliance with the activation rules has been introduced.

schemes where street workers approach young people and provide a framework for moving these young people on – to education. One such scheme “Wild Learning Processes” was followed and evaluated by Langager (2001). The scheme was targeted towards “marginalised” young people in Copenhagen and it aimed at developing untraditional projects for marginalised young people between 14 and 18 who had dropped out of school and who had only sporadic or negative contact to the education system, the labour market, guidance counsellors and case workers. Lanager’s evaluation showed that the pedagogical approaches that worked were to build trust and enter a dialogue with the young people, provide support and back-up, and work collectively with the group and look at their resources (instead of deficiencies) and internal interaction.

4.5 State of cooperation between social workers, vocational teachers/trainers and teachers in general education

The boundaries between education, social, integration and employment policies have become increasingly blurred in recent years. The various institutions working within these fields have been encouraged and seen it necessary to cooperate and make crossovers. Many vocational colleges have started employing guidance counsellors, social workers and psychologists in order to strengthen their strategy against drop-out. Cooperation between production schools and vocational colleges is not only encouraged through ad hoc projects, which was the case in the 1990s; production schools are legally bound to cooperate with vocational colleges providing combination courses for disadvantaged young people. Folk high schools cooperate with vocational colleges on providing bridging courses, cooperation between guidance centres and vocational colleges is encouraged, and in general a lot of initiatives are taken in order to promote cooperation among the various actors. Many of the initiatives are ad hoc funded by the Ministry of Education and their special initiative fund (*satspulje*).

However, research undertaken by the Danish Institute of Governmental Research (AKF) shows that although a lot of cooperation is going on, it is often unorganised and unsystematic. In the study, AKF focused on the cooperation among vocational colleges, the guidance centres and the municipalities aimed at establishing common initiatives for disadvantaged young people. The AKF recommended that cooperation should be laid down in cooperation agreements in order to ensure that the roles and responsibilities were distributed among the actors to the benefit of the individual young person (Jensen, 2009).

Furthermore, there is a tendency to the vocational colleges developing their own schemes for disadvantaged young people alongside the formal vocational education and training programmes. The explanation is the decentralisation of the Danish education system which has taken place since the early 1990s. As part of this decentralisation, the colleges are funded through taximeter rates, i.e. they receive funding per student. This implies that if a student is referred to another educational institution, the vocational college loses out on funding. This is one paradox in the Danish system which impedes cooperation. Another impediment is the division of responsibility between the state and the municipalities, which can cause sub-

optimising strategies where economic considerations become more important than the overall 95% policy objective.

To conclude, cooperation is increasing among the various actors in the education and social sectors: vocational colleges cooperate with youth psychology centres and employ their own social case workers, guidance counsellors and coaches. Combination courses have become more commonplace – between production schools and vocational colleges and between folk high schools and vocational colleges, although the taximeter rates act as an impediment for cooperation.

4.6 Existing modules combining vocational and social contents

As described above, the Danish vocational education and training programmes have become an important element in the efforts to include all young people in the education system and later in the labour market. As a consequence, the basic course in the vocational education and training programmes has been added a distinct social profile. The vocational colleges are measured on their ability to reduce drop-out and consequently, the colleges have had to adapt the courses to a target group which in many ways is more demanding than the target groups which formerly entered a vocational education and training programme. At many colleges, initiatives have been taken to create tailor-made courses. Mentoring, counselling, social work have become part of the practice at the vocational colleges. The basic course has in other words been given a distinct social profile as well as a vocational profile. Besides the basic course, combination courses are offered in cooperation between production schools and vocational colleges and folk high schools and vocational colleges. The aim of the combination courses is to prepare the young people to enter a vocational education and training programme and focus is often on developing their personal and social skills so that they will be able to cope with a daily life on a – often big – vocational college (see also report on modularisation in Denmark for examples on modules which combine vocational and social contents).

5 Portugal

5.1 Methodology

The methodology used in this report includes primarily desk research about what exists for disadvantaged young people and which are the mechanisms and instruments that enable their social inclusion and as well as actors involved in this process. The methodology also includes, as follows:

- data analysis of the documents and desk research.
- and informal interviews with three of the four satellite partners:
 - EPRAL - Escola Profissional da Região Alentejo (Professional School of the Alentejo Region)

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- ALIENDE - Associação para o Desenvolvimento Local (Association for Local Development)
 - Escola E.B. 2,3 Conde Vilalva (School E.B. 2, 3 Conde Vilalva)

5.2 General approaches in the country for the inclusion of disadvantaged young people

The concept of inclusion has been undergoing some changes: in the past it mostly applied to handicapped people, however more recently the use of the concept has extended to other vulnerable groups that face various kinds of problems. The term of inclusion is related to equality, democracy and human rights.

In Portugal, there are many young people who abandoned school: so-called early school leavers constitute around 36, 3%. Only Malta presents a higher school dropout rate than Portugal - 37, 3%. In order to keep up with the other UE countries, to decrease the school dropout rate and to improve the qualifications of young people entering the labour market, the government has implemented a number of measures. In governmental terms, there is a National Action Plan for Inclusion (PNAI - Plano Nacional de Acção para a Inclusão), which is a planning instrument and a coordination strategy, it is constituted by a core of policies with the aim to prevent and fight the poverty exclusion and situations that Portugal faces. The last plan known (2006-2008) presented a national strategy of social inclusion which is based in socio-economic context analysis. One of the priorities it is to correct the disadvantages in education and training/qualification. Therefore, the priority is to increase the training offers for young people in order to target the learners/students with learning difficulties through putting at their disposal several options in education/training thus increasing their competences and facilitating their transition for active life and giving them opportunities to finish the secondary school or even the compulsory school.

The Portuguese PNAI is introduced into European strategy of social inclusion, in the frame of Social Inclusion European Process, although it has to be seen as a national instrument of strengthening of Portuguese policies of reinforcing national cohesion.

In 2005/2006, a programme called New Opportunities Initiative (Iniciativa Novas Oportunidades) was launched by the government. The main objective of the programme was to raise the qualification level of the Portuguese - young people and adults. In relation to young people, the aim of New Opportunities Initiative Programme is to diminish the early school abandonment - through technical and professional courses.

The purposes of the initiative is to give the young people the opportunity to return to school/education through more attractive offers, in particular, in the professional education.

According to the Lisbon Strategy, the education is a means of social promotion and integration and an indication of social and economic growth of a country, and every government should focus on this issue. An educational success among young people is necessary in order to create conditions and instruments to fight the school dropout and early

school leaves, consequently the practitioners and policy makers should guide the young people in the educational system and help them to go through for active life.

The present government has been promoting the social inclusion of the disadvantaged young people for example, the Ministry of Education launched in the school year 2008/2009- Education Territories of Prior Intervention of second generation (TEIP2- Territórios Educativos de Intervenção Prioritária de 2ª Geração). These are kinds of programme-contract between the Ministry of Education and schools to support promotion and development of educational projects that seek to raise the improvement of quality of educational success, the transition for active life as well the integration in society. The chosen schools for these contracts are those that have a high number of students at social risk and are affected by the educational exclusion. In order to identify the schools that could have benefited from the TEIP2, it is necessary to look at obtained results and at relevant social indicators. For these to work, partnerships with public and private entities, health centres, cultural associations, protection commission of minors are required. Thus, some of the priorities include facilitating success of children and young people in order to prevent absenteeism and school dropout through the variety of the training offers such as curricular alternatives, a recovery plan through vocational education and training and vocational courses.

5.3 State of (social) inclusion of disadvantaged young people

Presently, there are several programmes and approaches in the educational system developed in line with the government policies, (some have been revealing more effective than others). This report will only point out those that are developed by our satellite partners or are considered relevant for the disadvantaged young people.

The schools have the autonomy to put in practice measures in order to deliver different curricular offers taking into account the student's needs to ensure that they will complete the compulsory school and fight the social exclusion. One of the programmes is Alternative Curricular Routes (Percursos Curriculares Alternativos). In order to be considered for these routes the young people should demonstrate educational underachievement, integration problems in the scholar community, threat of marginalisation or early school dropout which could also relate to the lack of self-esteem and motivation.

The school itself organises the curricular programmes according to the guidelines of the Ministry of Education to constitute classes for disadvantaged young people. The curricular programmes are adapted according the young people characteristics that will attend those courses. The classes for these young people have to be small and the maximum age is 15 years old. After reaching this age the young people are guided into educational and training system in order to proceed with their education and training.

One of the work approaches, and it was already referred in First Country Report, the Education and Training Integrated Programmes (PIEF-Programas Integrados de Educação e Formação) is a measure of a large Programme, The PETI-Programme for the Prevention and Elimination of the Infantile Exploration and scholarly abandonment (Programa para a Prevenção e Eliminação da Exploração Infantil e do Abandono Escolar), which is considered

a social inclusion measure for the young people which is made through the individualised Education and Training Plans, these point to compulsory school accomplishment. Although, they are divided into two components: one for vocational occupation and guidance, and other for education and citizenship with the aim of promoting the development social, communitarian and solidarity activities. In case of the young people with age equal or higher than 16 years old, the Education and Training individualised plans, besides having a scholar component to accomplish the compulsory school, it integrates a work context training.

There are several options in terms of education and training that promote the inclusion of the young people:

- Education and Training Courses for young People (Cursos de Educação e Formação para Jovens): give the possibility to complete the compulsory school according a flexible route that has been adjusted to the need of the young people. With these courses it is possible to obtain a scholar and professional certification (These courses already referred in the First country report).
- Professional Courses (Cursos Profissionais): these courses are routes for the secondary education with a strong connection with the professional world, where the development of competences is valued for the performance of a profession in articulation with local business sector.
- Learning Courses (Cursos de Aprendizagem): are mainly developed by the Institute of Employment and Vocational Training (IEFP-Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional) in their Employment and Vocational Training Centres. These courses are addressed to young people over the maximum age. These courses aim to facilitate the inclusion in the active life through the reinforcement of the academic, personal and social development, with qualification levels that goes to the 1st Basic Education to Secondary Education.

5.4 Approaches in the field of social work

The approaches in social work aimed at disadvantaged young people are diverse and developed for several institutions either public or private, associations for young people among others. In this topic, it will be referred approaches that presuppose the social work.

Choice Programme (Programa Escolhas) is a governmental programme that promotes social inclusion and it was created in 2001, aimed at children and young people aged between 6 and 24, who belong to disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds or contexts. The Programme seeks to promote equality of opportunities and to reinforce social cohesion.

This programme has been implemented through 3 stages:

- 1) Programme for Crime Prevention and Youth Integration in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods of the regions of Lisboa, Porto and Setúbal. About 50 projects were implemented during this period, targeted to 6,712 people.
- 2) The 2nd generation Choice Programme initiated in 2004 and ended in 2006- September- there funded 87 projects. The target group was the same as of the 1st stage, but was extended

to young people between 19-24 years old, families and others members of the community such as teachers and educational assistants. According to the revised model, local institutions (schools, training centres, associations, civil society) were in charge of designing, implementing and evaluating projects.

It was during this phase that the Programme redirected its activities from crime prevention to social inclusion, and redesigned its model, moving from a centralised model to a programme that focused on projects that were planned locally and based at local institutions (schools, training centres, associations, civil society organisations). These local organisations were presented with the challenge of designing, implementing and evaluating projects.

3) In 2007, Choice Programme has extended its activities and was renewed until 2009, with the objective of promoting the social inclusion of children and young people between the ages of 6 and 24 from the most disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. The greater risk of social exclusion among descendants of immigrants and ethnic minorities is also taken into consideration, seeking to promote equality of opportunities and to reinforce social cohesion.

During this third phase, 121 new projects are being run in 71 districts throughout Portugal. Each project involves one coordinating institution and various partners (schools, training centres, associations, civil society organisations, among others), thus forming a consortium.

The Choice Programme involves around 770 institutions. Each consortium develops and implements activities in one of the following areas: Measure I – School Inclusion and Non-Formal Education; Measure II – Professional Training and Employability; Measure III – Civic and Community Participation; Measure IV – Digital Inclusion a) Educational play activities.

In the scope of the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity, a programme to improve areas of social exclusion and poverty, has been developed. It was called a programme for Inclusion and development (PROGRIDE- Programa para Inclusão e Desenvolvimento), which appeared to accomplish the objectives defined by the PNAI. Although, the PROGRIDE refers in general to groups and to disadvantaged areas, there are included in these, the young people, because they are affected by environment, context and background where they are inserted. The entities that are eligible to take part on this programme are non-profit organisations which act in social solidarity area, non governmental organisations and local autarchies.

So, in the frame of the mentioned programmes above, several entities, associations, schools, city council, social institutions are developing projects in order to promote the social inclusion of young people through schemes, activities to develop and improve personal and social competences. It is presupposed that the social workers are involved and participate in these entities as well in the working of young people integration.

5.5 State of cooperation between social workers, vocational teachers/trainers and teachers in general education

Through the informal interviews, we could draw on some assumptions about what is happening concerning the cooperation among the several actors and practitioners involved in education and training. For example, the development of PIEF courses requires the

involvement of four entities (see First Country Report, 2.1 Methods, Items and Interviews Partners). For this kind of programme, the cooperation among the entities and the people involved in it was necessary. The Aliende's technicians cooperate with a psychologist that keep up the young people of the classes and even with teachers that are the responsible for the curricular part of the courses for the young people. The school E.B. 2, 3 Conde Vilalva, also have Alternatives Curricular Routes. These programmes allow the school to constitute classes for disadvantaged young people in order to enable them to complete the compulsory school and to avoid the social exclusion these students are identified by the school personal (teachers and psychologist) and guided them to these types of classes. In the Alternatives Curricular Routes developed by the school in question, there is cooperation, in particular with IEFP-Institute of Employment and Vocational Training, in order to enable the young people to proceed with their vocational training and find the vocational courses that suit them or even to make the bridging between school and labour market.

All of our satellite partners work with the disadvantaged young people and since the familiar and social context that these young people come from do not have the instruments nor the possibilities to cope with them, It has to be the schools and the associations/institutions to undertake the task of helping and supporting their social inclusion.

In the case of EPRAL-Professional School of Alentejo Region, the teachers/trainers, sociologist/ social workers and psychologist work together to give support and provide social inclusion of the disadvantaged young people which for some reason are at risk of social exclusion, due their family, economical or social context. For each young person who comes to the school for the first time, a profile is being developed with the purpose to identify his/her abilities and background. And if the young person is coming from another school, the bridging and communication between schools it is essential.

Consequently, the cooperation has to prevail inside and outside of institutions to help and support the students to be better integrated at school and even at the society. Thus, the school has a fundamental role in life of the young people, it can identify problems and contexts where they live and try to find alternatives that better fit in their social personal profile.

The cooperation degree or its extension is difficult to determine only with this brief study about what exists for the social inclusion for young people, and which professions are involved. Since some of the mentioned projects and programmes are articulated between public and private entities, it is presupposed that in order to assure the success of them, a qualified team of professionals in human and social sciences should be responsible for promoting the citizenship and social inclusion of disadvantaged young people.

5.6 Existing modules combining vocational and social contents

As we could see from this report, there are several kinds of programmes and different courses that young people could attend in order to accomplish a higher qualification level or evolve in their education and training, and, consequently, they will have better chances of integration in society and in labour market. The young people that did not have the opportunities to finish

education or even obtain professional competences have presently several alternatives for doing it.

So, most of all courses aimed to disadvantaged young people have a combination of vocational and social contents. The social topics are an integrating part of the learning courses, education and training courses for young people, vocational courses, and PIEF courses.

Besides these courses give to young people the possibility to acquire knowledge, competences, learning and even skills to practice a profession/occupation; they also give the basic guidelines for how to live within the society.

In this, most of the courses for young people have a socio-cultural component, where the subjects/modules of citizenship and present world are an integrating part. Its designations differ from course to course, but the meaning is the same, for example in some they are designated by present world and personal and social development, the number of hours could also differ some have 200 hours, others less, these factors are related with the type of course, as well as the scholar and professional level that it corresponds. The content in these social modules consists of such topics as for example, the citizen's role, his rights and duties, the environment, consumption, the spare times, the human development and industrialisation among others. What is most important regarding these social modules is that they intend to promote the social skills, namely the values, rules and duties that the Man should have towards society.

6 Romania

6.1 Methodology

The report is based on the research of data from different projects and country reports, recent publications and it is oriented towards the analyses of the role of education in inclusion strategies, models and practices. What is important from an overall perspective is that at present, after almost 20 years of reform processes in education it is explicitly stated that the scope of the educational system is to better integrate the young people into the society, the quality of the educational system being measured according to this.

The term disadvantaged groups in Romania refers to young people who do not cope with the highly theoretical approaches of the educational system, who belong to social groups in areas that lack resources, that is the rural areas, mountainous regions, regions that are not well connected with means of transportation or children who belong to specific ethnic groups such as the Roma community that have a different understanding of what education should be targeted at. Just like in other countries, the typology of the young people that belong to what is called groups at risk is pretty heterogeneous since the lack of integration could be either the sign of lack of life skill, lack of basic knowledge, lack of interest, lack of resources, lack of support.

Although there have been almost 20 years since the events in 1989, the social policies in Romania are still incoherent, ineffective, offer unsustainable solutions, lack of vision, strategic approach as they do not rely on evidences such as social indicators. The presidential report published underlies the fact that the young people that belong to vulnerable groups, homeless people, poor families with many children, long term unemployed people, victims of domestic violence have been only superficially protected through activities in many national and international projects, some of them being examples of good practices which have not been approached by the state as sustainable solutions. This is the case with The Second Chance Project as well. It was a successful project that was taken over by the educational system but not at the most of its sustainable potential.

Besides a lot of projects financed by the World Bank, the European Commission, after 1997 many national strategies have been written, for social inclusion, eradication of poverty, labour market improvement, National Plans for Development (2004-2006), (2007-2013). Most of the official documents had been the result of similar European models which were to be applied through imitations but which also remained at the stage of diagnosis and not valid plans for implementation, monitoring and evaluation were put into action.

The only powerful, resourceful events were the research materials produced by universities, research institutes and NGOs, materials used as valuable data for the present report. As conclusion it can be stated that the social inclusion of the disadvantaged young people is under the custody of the social protection system that has characteristics that block the developmental stage because of the lack of integrated planning of the social policies.

6.2 General approaches in the country for the inclusion of disadvantaged young people

In order to analyze who belongs to the vulnerable groups in a society under the pressure of changes and socio-economical crises there is the need to analyze the general economic and financial background of the country.

In 2007 9 % of the Romanian population was under the poverty risk, a figure about 3 times smaller than in 2000 when there were 32 % of the population, a rate of poverty as high as in the United Kingdom, Greece, Italy, Spain and the Baltic countries. These figures are relevant as the most exposed categories are the young people, those living and working in the rural areas mainly in the North -East, South-East and South West regions in the country. In 2007, a quarter of the population between 0-15 years old used to live in families under the poverty scheme mainly in the rural area. It is the highest rate if compared to the countries in the European Union (with the exception of Italy).

Recent researches show that the vulnerable groups are formed of people who have a large exposure to 5 major risks on the labour market:

- those who work on the informal market;
- those who work in their own household,(garden and piece of land);

- people who face long unemployment that is 12 months and more, because of the lack of capability to enter the formal labour market;

The major risks are faced by young people with low level of instruction, 27% in the urban area and 30% in the rural area, those who work in the informal market that is about 56% of the Roma population, 15% of the Romanians and 12% of other ethnic groups.

Major risk 1: vulnerable groups (1.3-1.5 million people) who work in the informal market.

- low level of education
- young people between the age of 15 and 24 who live in the rural area.
- unqualified workers
- Roma community
- rural areas and towns in the North Western and South Eastern regions of the country.

Major risk 2: people who work in their own household with no other financial support.

- 42-46 % of the rural population.
- young people between the age of 15-24
- North East, South West, Southern area.

Major risk 3: Long term unemployment (12 months and over)

In comparison with the other European countries Romania does not have a lot of people who suffer from unemployment because of the first two risk situations. Among this category 15.2% of the young people between 15 and 24 are exposed and most of them are vocational school graduates.

Major risk 4: people discouraged to enter the labour market

People who do not know where and what to look for, mainly the young people (15-35), rural area.

Major risk 5: the poverty of the working people.

Studies show that a substantial number of those who work, and/or live in poverty may suffer from social exclusion. Among the 3 million people who are affected by poverty, only 1 million of them are in some kind of employment. .

A cross analyses show that most of the people exposed to risks are vocational school graduates, 11% belonging to Roma community, 85% Romanians. The factors that continue to generate this situation could be listed as such:

- underdeveloped market flexibility
- rigid law at the basis of work relations
- underdeveloped social protection

6.3 State of (social) inclusion of disadvantaged young people

All these conditions show the particularity of social inclusion in Romania at present. It is true that in terms of solutions in 2007 there was developed the first National Occupation Plan for the Socially Marginalised People, a document that has as main objective the social inclusion of the young people belonging to the above described vulnerable groups. As an example, in 2007, 2212 solidarity contracts have been signed and about 1976 young people integrated in the labour market.

The strategic directions targeted could be summarised as follows:

- the necessity to create new jobs on the labour market
- a better education and vocational training for the young people.

At present the national educational system is concerned, as the country report on social exclusion shows, with:

- the development of the occupational standards
- the improvement of the link between the input given in schools and the requirements of the labour market.
- reduction of the percentage of the early leavers who stay without an occupation.
- the development of an integrated and coherent vocational training.
- giving support to continuous education and training to change or get new qualifications.
- an accessible vocational training system (trainers in the rural area to adjust the training courses to the specific needs in the rural area according to real needs)
- new, updated accreditation procedures and support plans.
- taking off the barriers and facilitate the getting back on the labour market.

As consequence, the recent research shows that the social risks associated to the educational services instead of being diminished at present it is increased due to the low performance in schools, lack of resources and other variables that contribute to the growth of inequities, access to education and equality of chances. There are at least three major indicators that show the state of social inclusion of disadvantaged young people:

- the level of occupational integration that shows a lack of coordination between the training offered in schools and the needs of the labour market.
- low quality training for vocational occupations.

The rate of unemployment up to the age of 25 is one of the highest in Europe, 20.1 in 2007 as compared to 15.3 that is the average rate in Europe (one of the best performances in Denmark 7.9). This situation is caused by the early school abandon that shows deficiencies in the inclusion and maintenance of the young people in the educational system and labour market.

- An increased number of lower secondary school leavers (4 times bigger in 2008) that are caused by:
 - financial difficulties

- lack of resources
- disorganised families
- low orientation capability

How do the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation respond to the state of social inclusion of the disadvantaged young people?

The answer is that the ministry continues to promote the inclusive education through a series of projects implemented in the benefit of the vulnerable groups but the everyday practice is far behind the average European tendencies mainly because of the lack of qualified personnel, migration, teacher training and the school management. As strategic priorities there is the vision that there should be developed the institutional capacity of integrated school units in the rural micro regions in the idea that they should have the possibility to offer after school programmes, counselling, and specialised on going training.

Anyway, the report on Partnership for the Inclusive Education that was published in 2009 as an outcome of a research accomplished by Centre Education 2000 Romania, The Foundation for Abilitation Speranta, financed by Open Society Institute Budapest shows that the orientation towards the inclusion of the young people belonging to vulnerable groups is organised around international principles in the vision of the international community in the idea that education should be the right ensured for all. As consequence there have been a lot of projects, models, success stories that show actions towards the integration of the above mentioned group, which unfortunately have not been taken over by the national education system but partially in the luckiest of cases.

According to the report the most relevant pilot projects were the following:

- to sustain the education of the disadvantaged groups, Phare Programme, access to education for the disadvantaged groups and the Second Chance Programme
- re-launching the education in the rural area through the World Bank projects.
- projects of the Ministry of Education in partnership with non governmental organisations to fight against the drop out phenomena, violence in schools, so on.
- the rehabilitation of schools and the empowerment of the local inspectorates to run projects to sustain the vulnerable groups.
- there have been founded Centres for resources for social inclusion through Phare funded project, as well as Centres for psycho pedagogical assistance (2006).

Through all the projects and initiatives the following lines of action were envisaged:

- Social inclusion through training and employment
 - a social pedagogy for vocational education & training
 - constellations of disadvantage in school-to-work transitions
 - legislation to integrate youth into the labour market
- Social inclusion through formal education
 - 'integration' of minority ethnic pupils

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- Social inclusion through non-formal learning
 - impact of social policy on youth work
 - NGO activities against gender violence
 - Social inclusion, young people and citizenship
 - European indicators for active citizenship

There have been lessons learnt but the results as the latest report on risk groups shows 2009 there is still a lack of capacity to be content about the state of social inclusion of the disadvantaged young people.

Over the past years the Romanian economy continued to experience a dynamic growth that allowed the Government to enforce generous social policy measures in order to contribute to the improvement of the standard of living. In addition, the labour market has had a positive evolution, as the unemployment rate has reduced. It is worth mentioning that the migration of the labour force had a positive evolution since a significant percentage of the labour force chose to look for a job outside the borders of Romania. This caused a labour force deficit, which needs to be covered by emergency measures to attract and stimulate workers in returning to the country.

One of the main elements of the social policy to be developed over the next years continues to be the consolidation of efforts in the fight against poverty and social exclusion and in the promotion of inclusion for vulnerable persons by means of active inclusion measures. The reduction of poverty is the main element of the policy which Romania sets for the next cycle of programmes and in this sense it will focus its efforts and resources in increasing the degree of employment of vulnerable groups by implementing measures to invest in the development of personal skills, in promoting equal opportunities and in developing an adequate social protection system.

Romania shall continue to adopt measures regarding the development of the social benefits system that does not create system dependence and that encourages the return to activity.

Providing support to the most vulnerable members and to those encountering difficulties in the integration on the labour market and in society by rendering adequate and accessible services is an important step in promoting social unity. At the same time, measures shall be taken with regard to the consolidation of equal opportunities on the labour market between men and women and to enabling the harmonisation of the professional life and the family life.

In the light of the recent demographic changes, Romania needs to take the necessary measures in order to ensure the financial sustenance for the development of the social services system.

The social assistance system in Romania set out, by means of the implementation of minimum income schemes as a means of preventing poverty and social exclusion to prevent extreme material devaluation firstly and secondly to ensure a long-term integration of the person in difficulty. The major challenge lies in what is known as “the guaranteed minimum income” and there are continuous endeavours as to be able to distribute the resources on

specific categories of beneficiaries and to develop an assessment and monitoring system for the efficiency of its granting.

Families with children (especially single parent families and families with several children) are the most affected by the risk of social exclusion, according to the available statistic data. Taking into account the multidimensional aspect of social exclusion causes, a proper response to contribute to the prevention of this phenomenon among families with children can only be constituted by means of developing complex strategies and of setting up a coordination between all levels of decision, in order to facilitate its implementation. An effective and at the same time efficient solution is given by maintaining an adequate income within the family and focusing on developing a prevention system for this kind of situations on the long term.

Identifying and developing a person's skills can only lead to increasing their chances to improve their standard of living, to find an adequate job that ensures them a decent life. As a consequence, "a good life" and "a better-paid job" can only be obtained if the individual has an adequate education and a set of accumulated skills. Thus, the Romanian educational system reform focuses on decreasing the phenomenon of dropping out of school and on maintaining individuals in the educational system for as long as possible but also on avoiding the "production" of future unemployed individuals.

The main actions taken into consideration refer to the development of a facility system for children facing the risk of dropping out of school, as well as to ensuring children's access to an adequate and quality preschool education system. In addition, resources shall focus on ensuring the necessary conditions for eliminating the phenomenon of dropping out of school, at least in the case of grades 5 – 8.

The main objective of the Romanian Government regarding the field of social inclusion refers to the continuation of efforts as to the development of an inclusive society based on providing integrated social inclusion services whose development is based on a genuine assessment of an individual's needs by developing the tertiary sector and by ensuring equal opportunities for all, with a particular focus on vulnerable persons. At the same time, solutions shall be sought in order to increase the involvement of individuals, families or communities in the decision-making process, as well as in the measure-implementation process, which is one of the flaws of the Romanian system.

The main challenges over the next reference period, namely 2008 – 2010, focus on:

- the prevention of social exclusion, the continuation of efforts to improve the access of citizens to their social rights;
- the development of multidimensional prevention programmes in order to avoid putting citizens into exclusion situations;
- the implementation of customised measures by means of aimed interventions when a potential risk is identified and could lead to an impairment on living conditions;
- improving the access to resources for families who are in social exclusion situations, which may contribute to increasing the level of well-being in the society;

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- monitoring programmes developed by the responsible authorities and developing a reference system with a well-established periodicity regarding the progress being made;
 - organising continuous sensitivity and awareness campaigns for citizens regarding their rights.

The main objective of the Romanian Government regarding the field of social inclusion refers to the continuation of efforts as to the development of an inclusive society based on providing integrated social inclusion services whose development is based on a genuine assessment of an individual's needs by developing the tertiary sector and by ensuring equal opportunities for all, with a particular focus on vulnerable persons. At the same time, solutions shall be sought in order to increase the involvement of individuals, families or communities in the decision-making process, as well as in the measure-implementation process, which is one of the flaws of the Romanian system.

In order to deal with all these challenges, public authorities must focus their measures to ensuring the access of various institutions/bodies/authorities/public or private natural persons to the best and most efficient absorption possible of structural funds. The implementation of the commitments of this report benefits from the advantages of Romania's first cycle of access to structural funds.

6.4 Approaches in the field of social work

The approaches to social work in Romania have been included in a national strategy in 2005. The need for this type of strategic clarifications was because of the fact that there is no consensus regarding this term in the European countries. Each member country developed its own system of social protection. Terms like social services, social welfare, social care, personal social services, social work or social assistance are being used Europe wide to refer to similar concepts in relation with the social services.

As the scope of the social services is to offer support to sustain the integration of different groups, the Romanian reality determines the particularities of the approaches in social assistance. In Romania the main categories of persons identified as target groups for social services are the young people belonging to vulnerable groups, persons with severe handicaps, drug or alcohol addicted, victims of domestic violence, families with low or no income, immigrants, members of Roma community, so on. Accordingly, the social services were created as an active form of support and professional assistance for the individual person in need, families and communities.

The social services as the component of the social protection system are a main objective in the process of social inclusion. In Romania, the social services started to be developed only in the last few years. Most of the services have been developed by the nongovernmental organisations that introduced models according to the co-financing country. Consequently, the social services were given according to different methods and procedures. The central institutional coordination very recently influenced the development of the first regulations to name categories of beneficiaries.

At the local level, the structures created to manage the social services were fragmented as well and oriented towards different categories of beneficiaries. A huge confusion was created starting from the different concepts and models used both in legislation and in the procedures followed.

Therefore, a first necessity was to establish a unitary Romanian vision on social work. In 2003 the Ministry of Labour, Social Solidarity and Family in its quality of coordinator of the social work established the following directions that stand at the foundation of the approaches Romania has at present in this field:

- there is encouraged the coordination of the different policies concerning the social service
- it is also sustained the cooperation with the different organisations who offer social services in the non- profit sector.
- of a main interest is the development of a series of national programmes in the field, information campaigns, training, technical assistance for the development of the communities.
- to support the non-governmental organisations through state budget financing.

At present all these directions are at a beginning in the process of reforming the social work and services.

Basically, social services are being offered to all disadvantaged categories. At this stage there have been defined the types of services, categories of beneficiaries, social service providers, principles of accreditation, stages in the allocation of services, criteria according to which the services could be approached, conditions to externalise the services, lines of financing, so on. The social services are being classified into two main categories: primary social services and specialised social services. In accordance with the difficulty of the situations encountered they can be administered in an integrated system that is by associating it with the medical services, educational services, so on. The social services are being organised in a decentralised way, at the community level according to the needs identified, the number of the potential beneficiaries, the complexity of the situation and the degree of social risk.

At the beginning of the implementation phase a number of weak points have been identified in what the social work and services are being concerned:

- a non-unitary distribution of services
- overlapping of responsibilities
- huge differences among regions in terms of the social work distribution
- lack of material resources
- lack of community planning
- weak development of services for the disadvantaged young people.
- lack of a efficient management, reduced number of personnel
- lack of experience of the personnel
- no financial sustainability of the projects

Besides these there are a number of opportunities that could contribute to the development of a coherent set of approaches to social work:

- political willpower
- a better cooperation between the central authorities and the social service providers
- the explicit interest of the local authorities in the community development programmes
- the increase number of personnel involved in social work
- the encouragement of the different forms of cooperation in the field.

6.5 State of cooperation between social workers, vocational teachers/trainers and teachers in general education

It is a conclusive statement that expresses the lack of institutional capacities when it comes to the cooperation between the social workers and the vocational teachers and trainers in general education. Being at the beginning of this complex reform process fragmentation is the word for all the separate approaches to social work and strategic orientation to introduce into the educational system the good practices in the domain of vocational education and training.

It has been a pretty demanding task to analyze what is happening in the Romanian educational system from such a modern holistic perspective and at the same time a privilege to uncover the large number of projects, small initiatives, local financing, international funding that went over in the last couple of years in the field of social inclusion of a category of people that has increased in the recent years sometimes quite because of the service providers at central or local level.

Institutions responsible for continuing vocational training in Romania are at the national level the Council of Ministers, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, The Employment Agency, The National Agency for Vocational Education and Training, The Ministry of Culture, The Ministry of Health, The National Council for Employment Promotion, The National Advisory Council for Vocational Qualifications of the work-force, The Branch Ministries, The representative employers' organisations and the national level organisations of workers and employees

Regional level – The “Regional Employment Office” Directorates, The Regional Educational Inspectorates, The Standing and Interim Employment Commissions with the District Councils for Regional Development, the district administration, the Municipalities, the “Employment Office” Directorates, the Co-operation Councils with the “Employment Office” Directorates of the Employment Agency.

As of 2003 the vocational institutions network in the country comprises 470 schools, secondary schools and colleges. Continuing professional training takes place in 179 vocational schools, secondary schools and colleges. The enterprises carry out non-formal continuing vocational training of their employees (29%). Employers can also deliver, under certain conditions, vocational training to unemployed persons.

Overall, the above system of continuing vocational training is impressive but at the same time faces very big challenges today:

- need of improving the information openness and feedback mechanisms
- improving the quality of training and closing the gap to the competencies required for access to the European labour market
- creating mechanisms to motivate both the users of qualifications related services, and the organisations investing in continuing vocational training
- joining the efforts of all social partners, local authorities, and non-governmental organisations, concerned with the development of the human resources and the economic progress of the country

Taking the above under consideration, difficulties encountered, possible solutions and resources/preconditions needed there could be pointed out several key issues to be in focus for further developments:

- the lack of system for acknowledgement of qualifications/competences acquired through non-formal education/learning/experience
- need of developed system and programmes for career consulting: career centres, well-prepared consultants, career consulting programmes and activities integrated in the school educational system or/and as additional activities for the teenagers, a set of key social competences, which are needed for the successful professional realisation to be developed in the children, etc.
- qualitative and quantitative disequilibrium of the labour market. The demand for jobs considerably exceeds the supply. At the same time, the qualitative characteristics of the unemployed workforce do not match the qualitative structure of the job vacancies. The negative demographic situation aggravates both this disparity and the undesirable effects in the demand for and supply of jobs
- inadequate expectations and attitude of the young people towards the labour market and their confrontation with the requirements and needs of the employers/business sector

6.6 Existing modules combining vocational and social contents

As described above, the Romanian vocational education programme has a national planning that incorporated social contents in different ways according to the theoretical framing that stands behind. The conception over curriculum in VET system most probably best shows the way in which the existing modules combine vocational and social contexts:

- it is based on the occupational standards (elaborated by COSA) and on the vocational education standards (Phare VET), built up on the integrated competency principle (knowledge, occupation and social development);
- it is pre-determined by the studies on the economic market and on the mobility of the labour resource force;

- it was modular at the level of the vocational school regarding the distribution of the knowledge areas, a tendency to integrate the disciplines in learning areas which should express the specific way of the VET knowledge development through intuition and experience and competencies based at the level of technological high school;
- it is spirally developed-starting from field observation and practice in order to generalise the experience and to enable the abstract approach;
- it is centered on "technological modules" (from the levels of the vocational standards) or competencies, depending on the type and performances of the related field technology;
- it is influenced by the curricula development in VET in the European context;
- it is a target of specialisation on the levels of qualification and specialisation, as a response and training to the qualification need on both the internal and European market;
- it is developed within the social partnership with the social agents (economic agents, authorities, experts).

7 United Kingdom

7.1 Methodology

The methodology is based on the following:

- a desktop research has been carried out. Particular attention has been given to documents that outline current policies/progress/approaches related to the issues of social inclusion of disadvantaged young people (please see bibliography for further details)
- data analysis
- preliminary interviews and discussions with expert circles

7.2 General approaches in the country for the inclusion of disadvantaged young people

The Labour government made social exclusion a key policy issue in 1997. The Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) was set up to provide a cross-departmental approach to the complex problems of specific groups, initially focusing on rough sleepers, truancy and school exclusion, teenage pregnancy and young people not in education, employment or training.

The SEU defined social exclusion as:

[...] a shorthand term for what can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown (Levitas et al, 2007).

Helping the most vulnerable might be seen as an early pre-occupation of the SEU: its early reports focused on particular groups – rough sleepers, those truanting from or excluded from

school, pregnant teenagers, young people not in education, or training. In May 2006 the issue of social exclusion was given Cabinet-level priority with the appointment of a Minister for Social Exclusion. This was followed with the announcement in June 2006 of the closure of the SEU itself, with its work being transferred to a smaller task force in the Cabinet Office responsible for trying to persuade Whitehall departments to focus on the most severely excluded. The aim of the Social Exclusion Task Force is to extend opportunity to the least advantaged so that they enjoy more of the choices, chances and power that the rest of society takes for granted.

The dominant strategy to tackle social exclusion has been based on a social integrationist approach (SID), in which employment is central. In this model, paid work is seen as important not just as the most effective route out of material poverty but as an integrating factor in its own right (Levitas et al, 2007). In the UK context, the government has aimed to tackle social inclusion through education and training, thus offering better learning and employment opportunities for people who were previously excluded (Coffield et al, 2008).

Disadvantaged young adults

Research undertaken by Atkinson and Kersley (1998) suggests that these target groups may experience the following common types of disadvantages:

- suffering from some kind of disability or long-term illness
- experiencing deficiency in basic skills, and as well as lacking in life skills
- being economically inactive
- experiencing lack of self-confidence (the major factor that was significantly holding them back in getting a job)
- experiencing lack of formal qualifications.

The period of transition from childhood to adulthood is becoming increasingly complex, difficult and risky. Most young people, supported by parents, friends and school, manage the transition successfully. But for some young people the process is fraught with difficulties. Without effective intervention, social exclusion in youth can continue long into adulthood and be passed down to the next generation. The transition to adulthood is more difficult if you also have to deal with one or more of the following issues: poor housing; homelessness; substance misuse; mental health issues; poor health; poor education or long-term unemployment (Levitas et al, 2007).

Recent years have witnessed an increasing recognition of the problems of youth social exclusion among policy makers and practitioners. This policy agenda was first laid out in the SEU's *Bridging the gap* report (SEU, 1999a) and in the subsequent Policy Action Team report on young people (SEU, 2000), and is reflected in the development of various programmes and schemes that aim to engage young people, specifically those who are disadvantaged/disengaged. Social exclusion in New Labour terms is achieved through economic inclusion. The government evidently sees exclusion being tackled primarily through education, training and employment opportunities (Coffield et al, 2008). Youth

policies for young adults are usually geared towards employability and training schemes, to help with job search, interview and personal skills, and ultimately, move them into employment.

7.3 State of (social) inclusion of disadvantaged young people

In 2006 the government published *Reaching out* setting out its action on social exclusion. This document highlighted five key guiding principles concerned with tackling social exclusion. These are, as follows:

- better identification and earlier intervention;
- systematically identifying ‘what works’;
- promoting multi-agency working;
- personalisation, rights and responsibilities;
- supporting achievement and managing underperformance.

Reducing the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) is one of the key priorities of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). The latest figures show that 189,500 (9.4 percent) 16- to 18-year-olds were NEET at the end of 2007, a reduction from 210,000 (10.4 percent) at the end of 2006. When broken down by age, the proportion of 16- to 17-year-olds NEET fell from 8.2% to 7.2% in this period, and 18-year-olds NEET from 14.7% to 13.7%. In November 2007, the Department published the NEET Strategy: Reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training (DCSF, 2008b). This document set out the key steps to support local authorities and delivery partners to prevent young people from becoming NEET and to support those who are NEET to re-engage in education, employment or training. In May 2008, the DCSF published the NEET Toolkit (DCSF, 2008a). Based around the same key themes as the Strategy, this sets out the role of each delivery partner, good practice tips and case studies to support delivery. There is no one agency that holds all the keys to reducing NEET. Connexions services have played an important part in helping young people to re-engage in work or learning, but schools, colleges, training providers and youth services also have an important role. This partnership approach is at the heart of the reforms to bring about radical changes to the way in which education and support for young people is organised locally, and to bring a renewed collective focus on the prevention of poor outcomes (DCSF, 2008b, e.g.). The following partners have been identified:

- local authorities (including Children's Trusts and 14–19 Partnerships);
- connexions providers;
- targeted youth support services;
- schools;
- learning and Skills Councils;
- post-16 learning providers (schools with 6th forms, sixth form colleges, FE colleges and work based learning providers);
- Jobcentre Plus.

The DCSF strategy for reducing NEET is based on the following:

- careful tracking – to identify early those young people who are NEET, or who are at risk of becoming NEET;
- personalised guidance and support – to make sure young people know how to access education, training or employment and to enable them to overcome barriers to
- participation;
- provision of a full range of courses to meet demand – to engage young people through sufficient provision at every level and in every style of learning;
- a new emphasis on rights and responsibilities – so that there is a clear set of incentives on young people to re-engage as quickly as possible if they drop out.

These core elements of the NEET strategy – tracking, support and provision – have to work together seamlessly to meet the needs of young people. The September Guarantee is an initiative that ensures that these elements come together so that every young person is offered a suitable place in post-16 learning by the end of September after they leave compulsory education. (www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/ete/neet/). The offer must be one of the following:

- full or part-time education in school, sixth form college, independent learning provider, or FE college;
- an apprenticeship or programme-led apprenticeship. This must include both the training element and a job or work placement;
- entry to Employment (E2E);
- employment with training to NVQ level 2.

The guarantee was implemented nationally in 2007. This is an important element of the Department's strategies for reducing the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), increasing participation, and attainment at age 19. Local Authorities - through their Children's Trusts and 14-19 Partnerships - have the lead strategic role in ensuring the Guarantee is delivered to all young people completing compulsory education in their area. Schools, Connexions Services and the LSC (Learning and Skills Council) area partnership team need to work together to ensure that the relevant processes are in place, and that each has a clear understanding of its responsibilities. (<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/1419/index.cfm?go=site.home&sid=42&pid=347&ctype=TEXT&ptype=Single>).

As noted by the DCSF report, young people do not become NEET by choice – the majority simply cannot find a learning opportunity or job that meets their needs. A choice of provision that is attractive to young people is crucial if they are to achieve the skills they need for life and work. Finding appropriate provision can be particularly difficult for young people with individual needs – such as teenage mothers, young people with learning difficulties or disabilities (LDD), or Gypsy, Roma and Traveller young people. Various strategies and initiatives have been developed and implemented in order to tackle these problems (DCSF, 2008).

One of the most important initiatives, the Connexions strategy, proposes a national, universal and holistic support service for 13- to 19-year-olds delivered through a network of Personal Advisors who are to ensure that young people engage with learning and have their diverse needs met through partnerships with the range of specialist agencies (for more info please see <http://www.connexions.gov.uk/>). Connexions providers maintain client databases to track young people's progress which meet the requirements of the CCIS (Client Caseload Information System) specification issued by the DCSF. CCIS, like any database, is only as good as the intelligence put in so it is essential that data are shared between partners and recorded promptly. If authorities do not know what young people are doing, there is a risk that they may be NEET. And if they have not been identified, they will not be getting the support they need to help them return to work or learning. Maintaining robust databases is critical not just for reducing NEET, but also for other strategies including raising participation, attainment and implementation of the September Guarantee (DCSF, 2008, p. 6).

7.4 Approaches in the field of social work

The targeted youth support (TYS) reforms provide a good example of social work with young people. The aim of YYS is to provide packages of support, coordinated by trusted practitioners called lead professionals that respond to the emerging difficulties in some young people's lives quickly and effectively, so that fewer young people experience serious problems (TYS, 2008).

Targeted youth support aims to ensure that the needs of vulnerable teenagers are identified early and met by agencies working together effectively in ways that are shaped by the views and experiences of young people themselves. There are seven key elements of targeted youth support (DCSF, 2008a, p.4):

- identifying vulnerable young people early, in the context of their everyday lives.
- building a clear picture of individual needs – to be shared by young people and the agencies working with them – using the Common Assessment Framework (CAF).
- enabling vulnerable young people to receive early support in universal settings
- Helping all agencies to draw in extra help on behalf of young people through better links with other agencies and organisations.
- ensuring vulnerable young people receive a personalised package of support, information, advice and guidance, and learning and development opportunities, with support for their parents or careers as appropriate. This should be coordinated by a trusted lead professional and delivered by agencies working well together.
- providing support for vulnerable young people across transitions, for example, moving on from school or from the support of one service to another as their needs change.
- making services more accessible, attractive and relevant for vulnerable young people.

Effective targeted youth support addresses the risk factors that may result in poor outcomes and helps build vulnerable young people's resilience. In particular, it aims to (DCSF, 2008a, p. 6):

- develop young people's social and emotional skills, enabling them to make positive choices, manage change and navigate risk.
- raise young people's aspirations and help them to achieve and feel positive towards learning. This includes helping them to be engaged, and stay engaged, in the wider range of learning opportunities becoming available for 14–19 year-olds.
- help foster supportive and positive families, communities and peer groups.

7.5 State of cooperation between social workers, vocational teachers/trainers and teachers in general education

One of the objectives of the TYS (Targeted Youth Support) is to bring local services together, helping them to develop common ways of identifying and assessing the needs of vulnerable young people early on, and of intervening to help them.

Led by Children's Trusts, working closely with partners such as Connexions, schools, health services and voluntary and community agencies, the TYS multi-agency, early intervention and prevention approach tackles the root causes of poor outcomes such as teenage pregnancy, substance misuse and youth offending - all key aims of the Youth PSA target which focuses on increasing the numbers of young people on the path to success (TYS, 2008). While the key stakeholders for targeted youth support vary depending on local circumstances, choices and models, there are a number of services and organisations that are essential to the successful delivery of targeted youth support in every area (DCSF, 2007, p. 10):

- schools, including extended services in and around schools
- youth work providers
- connexions/information, advice and guidance
- housing/supporting people
- voluntary and community organisations
- youth justice services
- post-16 education providers/Jobcentre Plus
- voluntary and community organisations
- social services
- police
- parenting support

A recent DCSF report emphasised that the successful implementation and operation of targeted youth support needs to be underpinned by multi-agency structures and workforce development that support early intervention and flexible collaborative working (DCSF, 2007).

7.6 Existing modules combining vocational and social contents

ASDAN (Award Scheme Development & Accreditation Network) offers various programmes combining both vocational and social contents. ASDAN is a pioneering curriculum development organisation and an internationally recognised awarding body, which grew out of research work at the University of the West of England in the 1980s. ASDAN offers a wide range of curriculum programmes and qualifications for all abilities, mainly in the 11-25 age group. ASDAN is a successful initiative that has been developed and managed by teachers and lecturers, alongside a dedicated and highly efficient administrative team. ASDAN was formally established as an educational charity in 1991. The stated purpose of the charity is "to promote the personal and social development of learners through the achievement of ASDAN Awards, so as to enhance their self esteem, their aspirations and their contribution to the community".

ASDAN programmes and qualifications blend activity-based curriculum enrichment with a framework for the development, assessment and accreditation of key skills and other personal and social skills, with emphasis on negotiation, co-operation and rewarding achievement. The programmes are learner centered, offering opportunities for a negotiated curriculum which is modular and activity based. The aim of the programmes is to enable young people to understand themselves and others better and to become more prepared for making the transition to adult life. The world they are entering needs adults who are not only capable of acquiring and applying the necessary academic and occupational knowledge and skills, but flexible enough to adapt to the rapid changes taking place and equipped to make active and creative contributions to local, national and international community life. Personal and social competence is seen as a crucial factor in maximising opportunities for life-long learning and in becoming an effective member of adult society. Such competence may be developed through the negotiation and completion of ASDAN challenges. The emphasis is on co-operation and collaboration, rewarding achievement and assisting progression of learning; these principles apply to both students and staff involved.

Concluding remarks

The reproach has shown that various programmes and initiatives (e.g. Connexions, TYS, E2E) have significantly facilitated young people social inclusion. However, it has been noted that individual experience maybe complicated, often unpredictable and plays out over an extended period. For examples, the following problems have been identified in relation with the Connexions scheme (JRF, 2000):

- providing much needed support to young people at crucial points in their lives (e.g. at times of family crisis), Personal Advisors will need to possess a detailed and sensitive understanding of the young people under their care. In providing such support they will need to draw upon a wide range of partner agencies in the statutory and voluntary sector and, at times, may feel it necessary to act as advocates for young people when they face difficulties (e.g. infringement of benefit regulations through 'cash-in-hand' work). This may

not sit comfortably with the legal and formal demands of some partners (such as the police, social services and employment services).

- some of the young people in this study had, from the age of 12, virtually no contact with formal agencies outside of locally-based peer networks (that is, until they eventually collided with the police and criminal justice system). Reaching such young people, winning their trust and developing productive, long-term relationships with them is likely to demand patience, resources and considerable skill. The philosophy and method of detached youth work may prove the most effective approach.
- a longer period of support service might be justified. Some young people are likely to have had experiences prior to 13 that define the context within which they make decisions and perceive formal agencies and structures. Similarly, a complete transfer of responsibilities from Connexions to the New Deal programme beyond 19 may disrupt the ongoing support that will be necessary for some people.
- Whilst Connexions pledges to ensure locally relevant qualifications and training, this may be largely irrelevant in areas with a chronic lack of decent employment opportunities of any sort for young people.
- Finally, the research suggests that youth policy faces a paradox. Though Willowdene is one of the most structurally deprived localities in Britain, its young residents do not all experience or respond to the problems of social exclusion in the same way. If youth policy is to be effective it needs a clear, sociological understanding of the local conditions and cultures that generate the different ways in which young people get by in socially excluded areas.

It has been highlighted by the UK National Action Plan (DWP, 2008) that the long-term planning is essential and funding needs to be sustained to ensure that projects continue to deliver and to be around for customers in the long term. Placements on employment programmes should only be offered where there is a certainty of them becoming available. Withdrawal can lead to great disappointment and confusion. There is often a lack of good and flexible child care, which is essential to parental involvement in the labour market (DWP, 2008).

Further research will be undertaken within this project in order to draw on the issues of social inclusion of disadvantaged young people.

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