

Restart partners held a very successful public dissemination event in Brussels; the event was well attended by Stakeholders, lone parent beneficiaries from each of the importing partner countries, as well as representatives on the European Parliament and The Equality Commission for NI who spoke at the event. Head of the ONIEB opened the session by welcoming everyone and handed over to Anne Sweeney who welcomed everyone and then chaired the event, and explained the background to the Restart TOI project and how it supported Lone Parents back into Employment and Education.



Martina Anderson, MEP. Martina spoke about the need for everyone in Europe to address the effects of the economic crisis on the most vulnerable families. She commended the work of Gingerbread and of the Restart project for the positive contribution that it was making to these families. This was followed by a short presentation from each of the partner organisations and project participants from each of the countries involved in the programme delivery.





Liudmila from Belarus, explains: *"In general the program has helped me to be ready to face the opportunities and also the difficulties, and taught me to have to rely on myself, reminding me of my worth. I understood that it was important to be presented to the employer and have the chance to show my skills and learn new things."* And she would suggest training from Restart to other people *"because we forget our value and it is important to remember it"*.

Lyudmyla said: *"I felt very uncomfortable, I didn't think I could work, I hadn't worked for a long time, actually I'd be able to work, but I didn't have much hope, but now I'm happy to meet new people and learn something"* and then at the end of the programme said: *"I'm very happy, because at first I did not think to be able to work again, for various reasons, but now I have worked and I feel I can do it. I learned you have to struggle to be able to change your life, but now I learned that you can change it!"*.

The Restart Transfer of Innovation Project was delivered through the EU's Leonardo da Vinci Lifelong Learning Programme. The aim of the project is to transfer the **Restart training programme, developed in Northern Ireland to Cyprus, Italy, Norway and Poland**. UK partners were Gingerbread, Possibilities, Department for Employment and Learning NI and Annesland College Glasgow.

The Restart programme offered vocational orientation for unemployed single parents, both mothers and fathers, by combining return to work preparation training with practical work experience, one to one coaching and confidence building. Restart is designed to empower lone parents who took part, raising their professional as well as personal competencies, and increase their opportunities in the labour market.

In order to achieve this aim, the partnership has researched the situation of lone parents in each partner country. This research will enable us to successfully adapt Restart to create a programme which is adapted for the situation in each country.

Project research served as an overview of the situation of lone parents in each Restart partner country: Cyprus, Italy, Norway Poland, and the UK (Northern Ireland). The partner organisations contributed information about lone parent demographics, modes and availability of childcare, social welfare benefits, employment and education levels of lone parents and poverty among one parent families.

More information at: <http://www.restartproject.eu/>