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Lifelong  
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Programme



# CHARISM

case management for unemployed youth

## **Case Management for Unemployed Youth – CHARISM**

Final Report

Public Part

## Project information

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Beneficiary organisation: BFI TIROL BILDUNGS GMBH

Project coordinator: Margit Kerschbaumer  
Project coordinator organisation: BFI TIROL BILDUNGS GMBH  
Project coordinator telephone number: 0043 / 512 59 660  
Project coordinator email address: [margit.kerschbaumer@bfi-tirol.at](mailto:margit.kerschbaumer@bfi-tirol.at)

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## Executive Summary

The main reasons for implementing the CHARISM project was to tackle youth unemployment at national and EU levels and find a common European solution and appropriate measures for how to promote the (re-)integration of young people into the labour market.

The goal of CHARISM was to develop a common European model to support disadvantaged young people while seeking a job or an apprenticeship and provide help during the application process based on the methodological approach of case management.

On the basis of their extensive experience in working with young people within various educational settings, the CHARISM project partners BFI Tirol (Austria), Hamburger Volkshochschule (Germany), BILSE (Germany), FUERM (Spain), KEK Kronos/TEC S.A. (Greece) and URI-SOČA (Slovenia) have developed practical tools to support unemployed youth who face an extremely challenging situation on the labour market across Europe. The results of the project have been assembled in the CHARISM Handbook, which has been published in five languages. The Handbook addresses youth practitioners (people working with job-seeking youth) such as professional youth organisations, social workers, case managers, teachers, professionals in job agencies and Employment Services and others who are working with young people in the transition period between their general education and their entry into a vocational training or a job.

The CHARISM project was chosen by ESSE, a European partnership aiming to identify, assess and validate best practice models for prevention, intervention and compensation in relation to early school leaving (see <http://www.esseproject.eu/awards.html> for further information), as a best practice model because it gives “youth practitioners [...] a practical instrument with a holistic and systematic method taking into account the individual needs and complex conditions of (vulnerable) youths”.

Details relating to the project and the results and products of the project can be found on the CHARISM website: [www.charism.eu](http://www.charism.eu), which is available in English, German, Spanish, Greek and Slovenian also after the official end of the project.

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# 1. Project Objectives

According to the European Commission, youth unemployment across Europe reached 5 million young people aged 15 and 24 in August 2014. The project CHARISM intends to develop a **common European concept to combat youth unemployment in Europe**. The youth unemployment rate in the European Union currently varies between 7.2% in Germany and 61.5% in Greece (Eurostat, as of December 2014). Both countries are participating in the project CHARISM. (*Spain 51,40%, Slovenia 24,10%, Austria 9%*)

The main objective of CHARISM was therefore to develop a practical European standardized model for youth practitioners (people working with job-seeking youth), which **supports the disadvantaged youths during all stages** until they finally have a job or training, considering all circumstances and individual resources of the youth.

The project CHARISM used the holistic and systematic approach of **Case Management** as the overall methodology and as practical solution to support the unemployed youth in finding employment. Throughout this document the approach is entitled “CHARISM Case Management”.

The project CHARISM is based on the following general goals:

- To assess the status-quo situation in the participating countries and regions regarding different aspects important for the idea behind the project CHARISM
- To develop a Case Management model taking into account the target group “Youths” and the intended type of support
- To develop a training for CHARISM Case Managers based on the CHARISM Case Management model and aligned with ECVET principles for the formulation of learning outcomes
- To conduct a pilot study of the CHARISM Case Management model with job-seeking youths and trained CHARISM Case Managers to practically evaluate and validate the concept
- To perform an extensive testing and implementation of the concept on a large study group in a daily routine in a real environment.

Another objective of the project CHARISM was to adapt the methodology to the **specific needs and frameworks of each participating country**, i.e., Austria, Germany, Greece, Slovenia and Spain:

- Case Management is a new and promising method in the field of vocational education and training. Practical applications with unemployed youth are scarce and differ from country to country.
- Case Management in the context of unemployed youth can relate to a broad and diverse group of practitioners having different backgrounds, such as teachers, social workers, trainers, educators, and counsellors of employment services.
- The practical experience with Case Management, the composition of the target group “Case Managers” (see above), the employment landscapes for and the needs of the target group “Youths” differ among the participating countries. Adaptions to the target groups and to local conditions are therefore crucial.

In order to concretely take into account the **European Dimension** within the aimed methodology, the objective for the development of the “CHARISM Case Management” will be the consideration of EQF, ECVET and EQAVET instruments according to the Copenhagen Process. Especially the developed training of youth practitioners is aligned towards the mentioned instruments.

Another objective of the project “CHARISM” was the consideration of **informal and non-formal competences** during the development of the CHARISM Case Management methodology. To meet this objective, the project consortium developed the CHARISM Passport, which is handed over to the young person as direct output figure of the individual Case Management Process visualizing informal and non-formal competences and soft-skills, which were individually elaborated and uncovered during the CHARISM Case Management Process.

The objectives concerning **exploitation and dissemination** include the distribution of project outputs to relevant stakeholder, the establishment of a network of interested parties who could need the project outputs and the expansion of the network during the project lifetime, so that project results will be used beyond the project lifetime. A main aim as result of the dissemination and exploitation activities is

that public employment services and training providers work with the CHARISM Case Management Concept, and that they offer trainings on “Case Management for unemployed youth” based on the CHARISM concept.

The project “CHARISM” served three target groups: the “Case Managers”, the “Youths”, and the “public employment services and training providers”.

The benefits for the target group “**Case Managers**” are

- ... the availability of a holistic and systematic method taking into account the individual needs and complex conditions of (vulnerable) youths
- ... the opportunity to exchange and discuss experiences related to Case Management of youths
- ... the participation at the CHARISM “Training for the future Case Manager” and the resulting qualification

The benefits for the target group “**Youths**” are

- ... the integration into the labour market
- ... the strengthening of their individual motivation, their self-awareness, their self-confidence and their ability to look at and to evaluate their skills and competences during various situations in life

The benefits for the target group “**public employment services and training providers**” are

- ... the availability of a tailored instrument perfectly matching the core of their work aims, which is supporting and training people to find a job
- ... the update of their knowledge about measures, tools and about the situation of youths in the respective regions

## 2. Project Approach

To reach the main and general objectives of the project CHARISM, the project consortium conducted following consecutive working steps:

- The analysis of the status-quo situation in the European Union, especially in the participating countries
- The development of a basic concept on CHARISM Case Management containing a definition of terms, the Case Management concept of the project, a description of the requirements of future CHARISM Case Managers, a detailed description of the CHARISM Case Management methodology for unemployed youth, and quality standards referring to EQARF indicators
- The development of localised CHARISM Case Management models, which means that each participating country used the previously developed basic concept as blueprint for the elaboration of a version that is adapted to the specific regional contexts such as socio-economic conditions, the different types of “Case Managers”, employment landscapes, and the needs of the youth.
- The elaboration of localised training concepts for the future CHARISM Case Manager, thereby defining the needed learning outcomes of the Case Manager analogue to the concept of ECVET
- The organisation of a local training of the CHARISM Case Managers according to the localised CHARISM Case Management concept and the training of future CHARISM Case Managers
- Preliminary evaluation of the developed basic materials, covering, inter alia, future CHARISM Case Managers and Case Management experts on the basis of a questionnaire (Case Managers’ training feedback through questionnaire from external evaluator)
- The development of a CHARISM passport serving as direct output figure of the individual Case Management Process visualizing informal and non-formal competences and soft-skills

- The creation of a “European Guideline – CHARISM Case Management for unemployed youth” (which also served as the basis for the preparatory study)
- The conduction of a preparatory study to test the phases of the CHARISM Case Management Concept and the CHARISM passport with young unemployed persons. The results of the preparatory study were incorporated by each project partner into localized Evaluation Reports (National Report I)
- The elaboration of an adapted version of the “European Guideline – Case Management for unemployed youth” according to the results of the preparatory study and the affiliated evaluations (incorporated into the Overall Implementation Report I)
- The elaboration of an adapted version of the CHARISM passport according to the results of the preparatory study and the affiliated evaluations (incorporated into the Overall Implementation Report I)
- The Roll-Out of the CHARISM Case Management Concept: the final implementation of the CHARISM Case Management methodology, serving as a phase of extensive testing and evaluating the concept and developed instruments in real environments and under real conditions with 98 young unemployed people and 25 Case Managers
- The evaluation of the CHARISM Case Management Concept Roll-Out phase presented in the National Implementation Reports by each partner (National Report II)
- The overall evaluation report of the CHARISM Case Management Concept (Overall Implementation Report)
- The publication of the CHARISM Handbook “Paths to Successful Integration of Young People into the Labour Market” addressed to youth practitioners working with young unemployed people and designed as practical instrument for their daily work

All in all, the developmental approach represents a systematic, reflective and quality-monitored procedure that takes into account the real and regional needs and circumstances of the target-group youths and case managers.

### 3. Project Outcomes & Results

The following section outlines the project outcomes and results according to the project's general and main goals:

- ✓ The Research Report (applicable and valid for each participating project partner in all consortium languages) gives an overview of the conducted research regarding the status quo in the field of youth unemployment throughout the European Union.

The Research Report served to meet the following objective:

- To assess the status-quo situation in the participating countries and regions regarding different aspects important for the idea behind the project CHARISM.

The Research Report (and a summarized version) can be downloaded from the CHARISM website in all partner languages.

- ✓ The Basic Concept and the Action Plan deliver the basic guideline, concept and references applicable and valid for each participating project partner.

The Basic Concept and the Action Plan served to meet the following objectives:

- The development of a Case Management model taking into account the target group “Youths” and the intended type of support
- The development of a training for Case Managers based on the CHARISM Case Management method
- The consideration of EQF, ECVET and EQAVET instruments according to the Copenhagen Process

The Basic Concept and the Action Plan can be downloaded from the CHARISM website.

- ✓ The Localised Concept and Training for the future Case Manager was separately elaborated by each participating project partner and served as adapted and localised concept, reference and training form.

The Localised Concept and Training for the future Case Manager served to meet the following objective:

- To adapt the CHARISM Case Management methodology and the training for the future Case Manager to the specific needs and frameworks of each participating country
- To offer youth practitioners working with disadvantaged job-seeking youth additional training based on the developed profile of an “ideal Case Manager for unemployed youth” and the training schedule

The Localised Concepts and Trainings for the future Case Manager can be downloaded from the CHARISM website.

- ✓ The European Guideline - Case Management for Unemployed Youth incorporates the developed outputs and findings to provide a guideline for the implementation of the CHARISM Case Management Procedure in real circumstances. It brings together the entire process in six steps and is adaptable to different countries, institutions and target groups.

The European Guideline - Case Management for Unemployed Youth serves to meet the main objective:

- To develop a practical European standardized framework for youth practitioners (people working with job-seeking youth), which they can use to guide and support young people through their job-seeking phase considering all circumstances and individual resources of the youth

The developed Guideline brings together the whole process in six steps

- ✓ The CHARISM Passport visualizes informal and non-formal competences and soft-skills of the young person and functions as direct output figure of the CHARISM Case Management Process.

The CHARISM Passport serves to meet the following objectives:

- The consideration and visualization of informal and non-formal competences during the CHARISM Case Management process
- The young person keeps record of the discovered individual soft-skills as well as his/her improvements over time

The above depicted achievements and results contributed to the implementation phase of the CHARISM project and delivered the baseline for the testing phase (Roll out). Within the implementation phase (Roll out), it became clear that the CHARISM Case Management concept is an innovative and promising method in the field of labour-market integration of youth across Europe.

However, circumstances and needs of the targeted youth and consequently of the practitioners working with the youth differ from country to country.

Whereas in Austria and Germany unemployment of youth is limited to the group of very disadvantaged and at-risk youth, in Greece, Slovenia and Spain unemployed youth can be found throughout different segments of the population, including, for example, both marginalized youth and qualified youth. In Slovenia, the concept was tested with disabled young people. Overall, the CHARISM Case Management is applicable for all unemployed youth under discussion, but as holistic, empowering and supportive method especially for disadvantaged or at-risk youth.

With the CHARISM Handbook “Paths to Successful Integration of Young People into the Labour Market” youth practitioners (people working with job-seeking youth) finally obtained a compact practical instrument with a holistic and systematic method taking into account the individual needs and complex conditions of (vulnerable) youths, which they can use in their daily work. The job-seeking youths benefit from an innovative individual supporting model while seeking a job or apprenticeship.

- ✓ The CHARISM Handbook “Paths to Successful Integration of Young People into the Labour Market” brings the holistic approach together. It provides persons working with job-seeking youth with a structured and widespread method to get through the process.

The CHARISM Handbook serves to meet the objectives

- To be a practical instrument for the daily work of youth practitioners working with young unemployed people
- To give a description of the “ideal CHARISM Case Manager” to provide an innovative and clearly defined picture of a new key figure in the European VET system

- To offer interested institutions a basic training concept for persons working in this field
- To explain the CHARISM Concept for Case Management including the two practical instruments “European Guideline” and the “CHARISM Passport”
- To demonstrate and underline the practical use of the CHARISM Concept by describing the positive aspects of the implementation of the Concept in real environments and present successful stories

✓ Dissemination and Exploitation Results:

The produced **CHARISM film “Europe’s new passport into the world of work”**, produced by EURONEWS, illustrates two of various success stories that originate from the CHARISM project.

The attractively designed **CHARISM website** <http://www.charism.eu/> provides all the results and products of the project for interested people and stakeholders and will be online for three years after the official end of the project. The design of the **CHARISM logo**, the texts and the photos were agreed on by all partners.

During the entire project period, the partners took great efforts to identify and contact several stakeholders and interested parties at regional, national and European level. Furthermore, several local, regional and national stakeholders have been involved throughout the developing and testing process. Beside the distribution of the **CHARISM leaflet and flyer**, the partners performed several targeted dissemination and exploitation activities to reach all relevant stakeholders and interested parties, thereby contributing to the distribution and use of project outputs and products beyond the project’s lifetime.

To present the results and outputs of CHARISM, project partners launched **national exploitation events in November 2014**.

✓ Quality demonstration record:

To measure the project’s progress regularly and to react immediately to potential problems or changes, internal and external evaluation mechanisms/architecture were installed. The external evaluator’s role was to give feedback at certain agreed times and to influence the process only indirectly by his feedback and

suggestions. The internal evaluator acted as an “authority” for quality issues in order to ensure that the high aspirations of the project were implemented on a high quality level. The evaluation focussed on both the management of the project and the outcomes. The detailed evaluation reports **attest the high quality of the project** and **the feedback of the target groups and stakeholders** underlines this. Experts in the field in all partner countries have given very good feedback on the products and are willing to use them / distribute them in their networks.

In order to guarantee a professional management and a continuous monitoring and controlling of the project’s work progress, the project coordinator installed several tools and methods. During the project’s lifetime, the partnership grew closer together and reached all aims of the project. The evaluation reports state that the efficiency of the project management, the cooperation and endurance of the partners as well as the well-connected organisations ensured the high quality of progress and products. Thus, the project achieved the aims and accomplished the objectives to full extent and with a very high quality.

## 4. Partnerships

The partners involved in this project formed a very cohesive group, and the skills they brought to the project and their contributions to it were complementary. The consortium was made up of six partners from five European countries: The BilSE-Institute of Education and Research Ltd, Güstrow, Germany; The Fundación Universidad Empresa of the Region of Murcia (FUERM), Spain; The Hamburger Volkshochschule, Germany; KEK KRONOS/Chalkida, Greece; TEC S.A./Chalkida, Greece; University Rehabilitation Institute, Republic of Slovenia – Soča (URI SOČA); and the coordinator BFI Tirol Bildungs GmbH, Innsbruck, Austria.

Three different types of organisations operating in the field of counselling, education/training as well as public organisations were involved. All partners have experience in European project work and are dealing with young, unemployed people.

Moreover, the partners covered a wide geographical spectrum. Although unemployment rates of youth are different, the problem the project addressed affects all of these countries. All partners faced the same problems - having a growing number of young clients in their trainings or counselling who have problems to enter the labour market. Existing national programmes are not sufficient anymore to solve this problem.

Bringing together all experience and know-how and developing, testing and evaluating a new, innovative case management concept for unemployed youth were the challenge and chance of the consortium.

Some partner organisations already had experience concerning the case management concept; however, not in the context of unemployed youth. All partners discovered the need of designing such a new and innovative way of dealing with the problem and regarded the Case Management method as suitable instrument to support unemployed youth and to combat youth unemployment. Therefore, each partner fulfilled specific tasks - according to each partner's specific expertise. All work packages had one leading partner who was responsible for the overall coordination of the work package. All partners were equally involved in the project and contributed actively to the working packages. The partnership was very fruitful and

complementary. Each partner organisation proved to be a team player with a focus on the common results and outcomes. Furthermore, each partner was able to set up a sustainable network of local, regional, national and European stakeholders dealing with the topic "unemployed youth".

## 5. Plans for the Future

The identification of the mainstreamers and multipliers in the field of youth unemployment as well as the dissemination and exploitation at local, regional and national levels with the focus on guaranteeing a sustainable use and a mainstreaming of the project results beyond the project's lifetime was a major task of the partnership.

One important factor for a sustainable exploitation of the project results was the high involvement of the target group and many relevant stakeholders into the whole development process.

The piloting results within the Roll-out implementation phase confirm the developed concept. The results show that the developed concept and instruments are very useful in the daily work of youth practitioners and the respective beneficiaries. Most of the participants in the exploitation events showed very high interest in the CHARISM Handbook and declared that they will definitely use the Handbook within their daily work in their organizations (at least by using the CHARISM tools as complementary means to the ones already used in their daily work) and spread it to other colleagues in other relevant institutions. Well-known representatives of regional employment services in all partner countries could be convinced that the CHARISM approach is highly valuable when working with young unemployed persons.

Based on the positive feedback, the partners are going to continue to disseminate the products also after the project's lifetime and convince further institutions and organisations in their network and beyond to use the developed material. Thus, the Consortium agreed that the website and the content will be available for use after the project period in order to ensure the project's results' sustainability after the project's end.

Moreover, the partners planned to integrate the results of the project in their own institutions. Three organizations will make use of the training or part of it and include it in their existing regular offers/projects. Two partner institutions are going to offer services with the CHARISM products to new clientele. Furthermore, the partners planned to include the products in new project applications.

These are promising conditions for a sustainable exploitation of the project results. It shows that the high quality of the products have already convinced different organizations and stakeholders to use them.

## 6. Contribution to EU policies

The project's global aim was to contribute to addressing and combatting youth unemployment in Europe by developing a common European model adapted to different national needs. Therefore, it is in line with the objectives of the LdV sub-programme and promotes the Copenhagen process. The still growing youth unemployment rates throughout Europe are a problem that affects all EU-countries and that cannot be solved with single national concepts and actions but needs to be tackled with a European solution. CHARISM presents such a common solution which can be used in different European countries. The CHARISM Concept and the developed instruments present a practical toolkit supporting recent initiatives (such as the Youth Guarantee) at EU and national level to tackle youth unemployment and social exclusion. In the context of an overall EU strategy against youth unemployment the CHARISM Concept forms part of the practical realization of these strategies. Thus, CHARISM complements existing EU-strategies to reduce youth unemployment. It also represents a major contribution in the field of innovative and experimental policymaking for addressing youth unemployment and implementation.

Nevertheless, Europe is challenged to invest in youth and provide high-quality, stable employment and educational opportunities for its young people. Short-term and reactionary measures are not enough. CHARISM presents a sustainable concept by contributing or even securing a long-term and lasting employability of the unemployed youth on the labor market as well as to strengthen self-esteem and work motivation of youths by identifying their individual needs and capabilities as well as competences.

In addition, the consortium applied ECVET to define learning outcomes of the future “ideal Case Manager for unemployed youth” within the developed training schedule, thus contributing to the objectives of the LdV sub-programme.

