

Kortrijk, Belgium

BACKGROUND INFORMATION	
PROJECT TITLE	SucceS Sustainable Uplifting Client Centred Employment Support 'Tackling the unemployment trap'
Beneficiary	The direct beneficiaries of the project are the 5 partner organisations, namely Medway Council in the UK represented by its Economic Development and Social Regeneration Department ; the Public Centre for Social Welfare (OCMW Kortrijk), greater Kortrijk district (Belgium); the Maison de l'Initiative of the municipality of Grande Synthe (France), and; 2 NGO's involved in community development and job seeker/employee support – Community Connections based in Great Yarmouth (UK) and Mentor vzw in Kortrijk (Belgium)
Duration of project	02/2010 – 06/2013: 43 months
Member State	UK, France, Belgium Medway (UK), Great Yarmouth (UK), Grande Synthe (Fr), Arr. Kortrijk (BE)
Geographic size	Medway (Unitary Authority): 249 488 inhabitants – 19 200ha Kortrijk (Arrondissement): 75 000 inhabitants – 8 000ha Grande Synthe: 21 031 inhabitants - 2 150ha Great Yarmouth: 47 288 inhabitants – 2 654ha District of Waveney (Suffolk): 112 342 inhabitants – 37 400ha Lowestoft: 57 746 inhabitants – 2 150ha
Funding	Total budget: 2 711 722 € ERDF contribution: 1 355 861 € (50%)
Operational Programme	INTERREG IVA ' 2 Mers Seas Zeeën' Cross-border Cooperation Programme: France-England-Flanders-Netherlands, Programme Priority 3 – Improving Quality of Life Operational Objective: a. Promote and allow for social inclusion and well-being of different groups in society
Managing Authority	Région Nord-Pas de Calais http://www.nordpasdecals.fr/europe/telechargement/programmes_europeens/IVA2mers.pdf http://www.interreg4a-2mers.eu/en/
Cohesion Policy Objective:	Competitiveness Territorial cooperation
Main reason for Highlighting this case	Improving social inclusion is the main motivating factor behind the SucceS project. As an outreach initiative to help jobless people living in difficult situations, to join or rejoin active employment, it is especially consistent with the goal of inclusive growth. Increasing and long term unemployment fuelled by the crisis, is prevalent among certain groups and in particularly deprived neighbourhoods of the partner areas. There has been steady realisation that traditional support structures and services are proving ineffective in connecting with and mobilising these specific out of work populations. It is also recognised that many people need preparation to enable them to even join the labour market. Therefore the SucceS approach represents an important effort to transform the way in which job creation, employment and welfare agencies deal with this problem in an attempt to turn around a chronic condition. The methods adopted to break through barriers to employment shall provide valuable information and experience for local authorities and service providers facing similar challenges.
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1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

<p>Overall objective / goals</p>	<p>In developing the project within the INTERREG framework the partners agreed on the key issues they jointly wished to address to counter the problems of localised, endemic and growing unemployment. The common goal of the project is to implement an innovative cross-border programme of effective employment support and skills development for unemployed people. This is supported by the development of activities programmed at the project level and planned within the local partner contexts.</p> <p>The objectives, agreed by the partners, focus on developing the capacities of people over 16 who are unemployed, long term unemployed with low incomes/low skills, particularly those living in deprived urban zones who have been traditionally harder to reach by mainstream services. The following key objectives determine the framework for the 3 cross-border activities initiated by the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve the mobility of the participants – physically, through improved transport and access to services; socially, in terms of the client's approach and mind set to working • To address a lack of soft skills and adverse personal circumstances, which prevent individuals progressing into employment – including working with people to build their self-esteem, interview and CV writing techniques, as well as support to overcome other personal barriers (financial, housing, health...) • To develop skills and qualifications so participants are better equipped to advance into employment – providing training and mentoring to upskill beneficiaries in response to employers' specific sector skills shortages, coordinating volunteering opportunities to provide work experience appropriate to their career needs
<p>Description of activities</p>	<p>In order to explain the initiative in detail the case will focus on the experience of the Belgian partners operating in the city of Kortrijk.</p> <p>Budget: OCMW Kortrijk share of project budget – 586 505 € Match funding (50%) – 87 975 € Province West Flanders + 205 277 € OCMW own funds (50%) Mentor vzw share of project budget – 246 603 € Match funding (50%) – 36 990 € Province West Flanders + 51 140 € Flanders Region + 35 171 € Mentor vzw own funds</p> <p>The core concept is based on outreach - to support job seekers and inactive population groups by improving their physical and social mobility, developing soft and vocational skills, and providing placement chances. Within this package a set of actions has been assigned to each of the 3 objectives. Each partner develops these activities within their local context (using their specific networks of service providers and social structures and facilities), benefiting from knowledge and experience of the other partners.</p> <p><u>Activity 1. Remedial action to improve social and physical mobility</u></p> <p>Action 1. Countering social isolation. This action targets the most excluded members of the unemployed population to encourage them to participate in the social life of the community. Action 1 includes: house visits, organisation of activities such as coffee mornings, soup deliveries. This activity is led by Public Centre for Social Welfare (OCMW) Kortrijk .</p> <p>Action 2. Engagement of target group in diverse neighbourhoods organised activities based on a calendar of events which includes: pizza-action (cooking and eating together); learn to run; children's afternoons; using computers; street breakfasts. Community Connections and Medway pilot the development of the events programme.</p> <p>Action 3. Developing capacities and skills which can build on the other two actions to help access employment: understanding transport opportunities; community sport;</p>

	<p>road safety training; job application workshops; voluntary work; driving lessons.</p> <p><u>Activity 2. Developing soft skills and countering personal barriers</u></p> <p>Action 1. Building self confidence and defining career targets: training sessions; project job applications testing the '10 steps to work' guide in Kortrijk</p> <p>Action 2. Improving attitudes to work: info sessions on child minding; healthy food; one on one coaching for job interviews (how to dress, learning to express oneself); computer lessons in community centres.</p> <p>Action 3. Personal development courses: cycling and driving lessons; 'do it yourself' training; individual coaching</p> <p>Action 4. Work groups to finalise the 10 steps to work guide – implementation and road map accompaniment</p> <p>Action 5. Development of a skills and capacities guide – self-confidence, motivation, team-building, (non) verbal communication.</p> <p>Action 6. Testing skills and capacities in the work place: mentoring; volunteering; work experience and apprenticeships</p> <p><u>Activity 3. Developing Capability and Qualifications</u></p> <p>Action 1. Full work experience placement: network child minding; accompaniment apprenticeships</p> <p>Action 2. Voluntary work as a step to full employment</p> <p>Action 3. Organisation of vocational training: hotel and restaurant sector, construction, health, administration, safety and transport.</p> <p>Action 4. Introduction to social economy and local service economy: organisation of visits to projects and workplaces</p> <p>Action 5. Production of cross-border study confronting (local) employers needs and expectations with job seekers skills and capacities</p> <p>Action 6. Evaluation of the training and coaching methods</p> <p>The learning and transfer process (INTERREG) is assured by the specificity of the way each partner approaches these tasks within their own framework of expertise, organisational structure (formal and informal), working culture and local situation (demographic, economic, territorial...). In this sense the global direction of the project is enriched by the reporting back and exchange of experience on how each partner is tackling the tasks set, including 1 to 1 support, coaching and training in social skills (self esteem course, cv writing courses...) 'back to or into work academies', organisation of volunteering and work experience opportunities, organising and accessing training courses (e.g. training modules for low-skilled people, basic computer, driving lessons), placements.</p>
Recipients	<p>The project aims to respond to the needs of clients with multiple barriers to joining the labour market by providing one-to-one support in the heart of their communities. Groups targeted are those over 16 who are either unemployed, long-term unemployed (over 6 months) or economically inactive, or they have low incomes/low skills - but specifically those living in deprived urban areas and who have traditionally been harder to reach through mainstream services.</p> <p>Kortrijk through its neighbourhood monitor system identified 5 priority neighbourhoods which are the focus of project activity. The approach is based on reversing the tradition of waiting on or bringing people to the office or job centre - rather to take officers out into the community, to individual homes, social centres, schools, neighbourhood events. All opportunities (formal and informal) are explored to raise the chance of making initial and meaningful contacts with 'client' groups. Outreach is here the key word.</p>
Mainstreaming of gender equality and non discrimination	<p>The project is attempting to reach those particular population groups experiencing greatest difficulties in joining the employment market. Therefore depending on the make-up of the neighbourhoods targeted, young female school leavers, young mothers, single mothers, migrant women (married, single, young, mature) will feature prominently in the pattern of actions to be implemented. In fact where particular opportunities are identified i.e. in child care (Kortrijk) then female target groups are</p>

	<p>actively approached. Focus on child minding is also an important feature in Grande Synthe where a win-win situation is promoted with 70 new independent child carers installed from the local population (putting people into employment) which in turn provides opportunity for parents to enter the job market.</p>
<p>Intended outputs and results</p>	<p>The Actions described for each of the 3 activities provide a sort of menu for the project partners but there is inbuilt flexibility to set their own emphasis and organise their own forms of activity and events. This allows partners to exploit local opportunities, use or expand existing networks or structures and ‘piggy-back’ on parallel community initiatives. The project set guideline targets for the action package which have been adjusted to the operational capacity of each partner but are generally adhered to.</p> <p>In the case of OCMW Kortrijk within Activity 1: Action 1, targets were set to make 1 000 house visits and 175 contacts to introduce unemployed people to neighbourhood centres (project target suggested 1 300 and 500 respectively). By December 2011 the OCMW had carried out 442 house visits, only succeeded in mobilising 9 people to contact neighbourhood centres but had identified 175 clients to participate in Activity 2. On a partner target of 20 (Activity 1: Action 3), 11 people have been motivated to take part in voluntary work as experience – particularly in daily child care. In Activity 2, 54 ‘clients’ have participated in initiatives to build self esteem, 98 have taken part in training sessions on how to behave in the work environment and 90 joined personal development programmes (partner targets 90, 90 and 50 respectively). In Activity 3, 11 people have been channelled into work placement opportunities, 3 into a training programme to gain qualifications for child care and 4 into formal further education (partner targets 20, 0 and 10). The training programme for child care illustrates the value of the flexibility at local level. Here there was no target set in Kortrijk but this was a sector which presented a concrete opportunity for particular target groups identified in the initial outreach activity – and so priority was adapted.</p> <p>OCMW Kortrijk works in close unison with Mentor vzw preparing the ground so that the NGO can use its specialist expertise in delivering coaching and training activities and workshops like pre-training for child care, basic PC and internet courses, ‘taking care of yourself’ chat sessions, social skills training, job application and ‘do it yourself’ workshops and the introduction and coaching of ‘wise guys’. This last initiative started in Kortrijk in 2012 and is intended to identify and mobilise local people as walking information and contact points at the heart of the community. They focus on learning and communicating on certain topical themes for their neighbourhood populations: leisure time activities; families and health; housing; training opportunities, and; work. The idea behind this is that people will be more likely to accept news and ideas from people they recognise as being in the same situation as themselves.</p> <p>At the project level the initiative has been taken to pilot solutions and to involve the others in compiling documentation or guidance. There is already a concrete result in this sense, previewed in Activity 2: Action 4, represented by the publication of a guidance booklet “10 steps to work” tested in the Kortrijk neighbourhoods as in the other partner areas. This document has been developed using unemployed people as a source of information on difficulties to be overcome and needs (‘developed by people who are looking for work, for people who are looking for work’) and is to be applied in all partner areas. It guides unemployed through questions like ‘What have I got to offer?’, ‘Who can help you?’, ‘How to sell yourself?’, ‘How to follow up your interview?’. The partnership is currently piloting a second joint publication, the ‘soft skills guide’ which will gather the successful practices and training methods applied through the project and present them so that other organisations can self train to use the same techniques.</p>
<p>2. POLITICAL AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT</p>	
<p>National and regional framework for</p>	<p>Participation in the project by the Kortrijk Public Centre for Social Welfare (OCMW) and Mentor vzw is a local initiative (instigated by the partners but backed by the Province of West Flanders) but completely in line with policy to improve access to</p>

<p>implementing ERDF funded urban development projects</p>	<p>the labour market for the unemployed at Province of West Flanders, Flemish and Federal levels.</p> <p>Work and employment is a shared responsibility between the Belgian Federal government and the Flemish Regional government. Simply explained the national level administrates unemployment benefit while the regional level takes charge of job seeking support and training initiatives. Both levels initiate job creation programmes. Organisations like the Kortrijk OCMW, local job centres etc. are responsible for supporting the unemployed at the local level within the global policy framework.</p> <p>Flemish employment policy targets EU 2020 objectives on improving employment levels (75% of population between 20-64 in work) and the dual educational goals – particularly the ‘New skills for new jobs’ flagship initiative. Flanders aims at 76% employment by 2020 and a reduction in early school leavers to 5.2% with a programmed 4.8% of 30-34 age group achieving a higher education diploma.</p> <p>Through the responsibility of Flemish Ministries for Employment and Social Economy there is also focus on engaging with specific target groups within the unemployment spectrum particularly the most underprivileged, young and long term unemployed.</p> <p>In Belgium the project should also be situated within the Regional Pact (2007-2012 RESOC) addressing ‘social and economic development of the region of South-West Flanders’ objective 4: to create employment opportunities for every inhabitant, and objective 6: to strengthen EU co-operation in the region.</p> <p>As a local initiative to participate in the INTERREG project the co-financing is built on a cooperation between the OCMW Kortrijk, Mentor vzw and the Province of West Flanders and the Flemish Region. The involvement of Kortrijk is strongly consistent with the policy framework set at higher governance levels. Through the cross-border dimension there is also influence from French and UK policy experiences, notably the evolution of policy towards the encouragement of the Big Society and government initiatives like the Work Programme and adoption of ‘Getting Britain Working’ measures operating in the United Kingdom.</p> <p>In the particular case of Kortrijk it is important to note that the city has a developed experience in transnational and cross-border exchange and co-operation. It is part of the Eurometropole Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai, the first European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) set up in 2008. A logical extension of its strong connection with the Lille Metropolitan area.</p>
<p>The planning context</p>	<p>In Kortrijk the project is consistent with the Management Plan of the OCMW Kortrijk ‘Mensen sterker maken’ (Making People Stronger). As a Public Centre for Social Welfare they have a clearly mandated task within the service delivery structure operating at the city level. SuccesS represents an extension to the existing activity organised through processes of ‘neighbourhood working’, career accompaniment, job centres, street workers and training institutions. The ‘neighbourhood monitor’ provides a clear setting for priority intervention. This document builds on the instrument ‘Extreme poverty analysis’ instigated by the Flemish Region and is produced by the Social Planning division of West Flanders Province (Kansarmoedeatlas West Vlaanderen 2011). It gathers most current data on conditions in 5 neighbourhoods, benchmarking against 2 other neighbourhoods in difficulty and the Kortrijk centre and greater Kortrijk district averages.</p>
<p>3. IMPLEMENTATION</p>	
<p>3.1. PROJECT DESIGN AND PLANNING</p>	<p>Project idea</p> <p>The project was initiated by Medway Council (with strong development support from Kortrijk partners) but inspired by ongoing contact between the partner regions, especially the experience of working together with Grande Synthe on the INTERREG IIIA project GAGNER. SuccesS looks to extend the work started by GAGNER, a cross border employability partnership which worked with local businesses to generate access to new employment opportunities. The development of a ‘Joint Skills Action Plan’ was one of the recommendations proposed in GAGNER. In this way focus is changed from the employer to the employee but exploiting the contacts and networking on both sides of the labour market.</p>

	<p>Needs Assessment or Analysis</p> <p>In Kortrijk the OCMW was responsible for scoping the deprived neighbourhoods and identifying target groups by initially using information derived from the 'neighbourhood monitoring' system in place for the city. From here contact with existing community centres and social workers on the ground was used to further define clients and key figures within the target group who could act as entry points to the community. No specific needs analysis was made.</p> <p>Selection by the Managing Authority</p> <p>The selection of the project with its constituent partners followed the standard procedure of an INTERREG 'Call for Proposals', evaluation and approval. The Call was organised to respond to Priority 3 of the Operational Programme 'Improving Quality of Life'. Evaluation was based on the criteria of: pertinence; coherence in the quality of the application; quality of results proposed; quality of management; quality of partnership and; coherence of budget. The Managing Authority also consults with the Regional Partners to ensure that the project fits National strategic Frameworks and Regional Policy objectives. An application can either be accepted, rejected or adjourned. Although SucceS was positively evaluated as a common priority, addressing a fairly unique topic for the 2 Seas programme, it was accorded an adjournment so that the project could detail further its intentions based on recommendations from the MA: to ensure durability of results; and to strengthen links to training institutions and employment providers.</p> <p>Risk Assessment</p> <p>There was no risk assessment applied by the MA to this project.</p> <p>Envisaged sustainability, results exploitation and transferability</p> <p>Because the project is conceived and developed within INTERREG IVA the question of transferability was a pre-condition from the very beginning. So results are designed to benefit local areas but also the cross-border partnership as a whole. There is also an ambition to achieve long term sustainability but the project is time and manpower intensive so it is not certain that the operational models developed will be continued in the same form when ERDF funding is no longer available. On the other hand the project is likely to confirm the value of certain interventions or activities which can be continued in a mainstream evolution of future approach patterns. Partners are now actively evaluating their options for the continuation of SucceS type action after 2013 through a variety of service delivery structures – public, private and voluntary.</p> <p>Role of EU support and added value</p> <p>The project would not have gone ahead in its intensity of partnership or in its comprehensive form even at local level without EU support. It is evident however that all partners were seeking to introduce new methods and responses to deal with a problem which has only become more aggravated by the impact of the crisis and where local authorities were already fighting an uphill battle (and not consistently winning). In Kortrijk the engagement of personnel essential to the operation of the project could not have been financed without the EU support and this could not have been sourced from national or regional level.</p> <p>Involvement of other EU funds</p> <p>There is no involvement of other EU funds in the project.</p>
<p>3.2. MANAGEMENT, MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM</p>	<p>Selection of Project Manager</p> <p>The overall project management by Medway Council was considered to be in a safe pair of hands with an authority which has both experience in developing cross-border exchange projects, but also complementary to the SucceS theme i.e. support to SMEs.</p> <p>At the project level the OCMW has a mandate as the frontline welfare service in Kortrijk and there is a logic in their role as coordinating scoping and implementing organisation, steering and exploiting the special expertise of Mentor vzw to develop training and coaching actions on the ground.</p>

Delivery of the project

In Kortrijk 76% of the total project budget of the OCMW is assigned to personnel costs. The funding has been used to engage extra personnel to implement the outreach activity (particularly house visits and contact). Initially 3 full time staff were appointed to work on Activities 1 and 2, and 1 full time and 1 half-time for Activity 3. In 2012 as activity intensifies another fulltime and half time appointment has been made.

Steering process

At the project level the initiative is managed by a steering group exclusively comprising representatives from the 5 partner organisations. Meetings are organised quarterly on a rolling programme of location in each partner area. To date 7 steering group meetings have been held. The Managing Authority is only represented if there is a request from the project in the case of difficulties or if the MA themselves consider that there is a problem or need to attend. The Managing Authority has designated local animators in each of the partner regions as a sort of external peer follow-up to the project. They are punctually invited and attend events and steering group meetings as required, not as a matter of course.

Monitoring and Evaluation

A six monthly reporting is made to the Managing Authority on financial progress (which forms the basis for reimbursement of eligible costs) and project progress. At the project level monitoring of the project is achieved by the production of quarterly (every three months) progress reports. These are produced by each of the partners independently and collated into a project level report by the lead partner. These generally comprise an assessment of progress on developing the 3 project activities (mobility, soft skills, capacity building and qualifications) as well as covering advancement on communication and dissemination, and management and coordination. Each partner produces a quarterly updated table of results achieved in relation to targets set by the project (i.e. number of house visits, or engagement in training course). The two Kortrijk partners organise together periodic 'Reflection moments' where the project teams and stakeholders assess actions and discuss future planning. These meetings revolve around a self-questioning exercise i.e. 'have our activities so far diminished social isolation? How have they been successful or why have they not been successful? What recommendations can be drawn for future action?'

Evaluation of results – targets and performance indicators

At programme level and therefore, because of the co-operation structure, also at project level one of the final actions determined from the outset in the project activity plan is to evaluate the methods and draw conclusions on what are good practices to be mainstreamed into local practice (see Activity 3 – Action 6 above). This will be strongly informed by the experience of the monitoring reports and evaluation of the project results compared to the statement of expected results set out in the initial project application form – some examples:

Activity1 MOBILITY

- 3 500 contacts through street and house approaches
- 600 people to engage with neighbourhood centres
- 70 people to start volunteering
- 60 people to gain a driving licence
- Guide about techniques to improve mobility...

Activity 2 SOFT SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- 4 000 people to participate in confidence building initiatives to boost self esteem
- 320 people to access training on how to behave in the working environment
- 340 people to access personal development programmes and complementary services designed to overcome social, personal and financial barriers to employment
- Guide on methodologies to address soft skills and personal circumstances issues

Activity 3 SKILLS and QUALIFICATIONS

- Evaluation of 200 people in terms of gained qualifications and competences
- 45 people participating in volunteering opportunities
- 1 training programme on child care provision
- 1 audit of employer skills needs

In Kortrijk for example the first 'wise guys' scheme started in 2012 with 16 volunteers from different walks of life (unemployed or temporarily unemployed, employed, pensioned) prepared to fulfil a role in the community. This represents already a third of the total project target for volunteer involvement, although perhaps not all of the 16 will continue to participate fully in the longer term.

The Managing Authority obliges the project to produce a final report (MA pre-templated 'Project Closure Report') where information is required on output indicators, result indicators and communication indicators. These are related to the Programme level objectives for each defined Priority (in the case of SuccesS – Priority 3: Improving Quality of Life). For instance the project will be asked to confirm that it has contributed to 'community quality of life, social inclusion and well-being of different groups in society' where as output indicator the programme set a target value of 64.

The result indicators include:

- N° of new measures jointly implemented improving community quality of life, social inclusion and well-being
- N° of joint public facilities and services developed
- N° of people participating in joint education or training
- N° of joint-cross border cultural activities developed
- N° of people benefiting from new joint events and recreational facilities during lifespan of projects

**3.3
GOVERNANCE:
PARTNERSHIP,
PARTICIPATION
AND
EMPOWERMENT**

Composition of the partnership

The partnership is established as a cross-border collaboration involving 5 partners: 2 from southern England, 2 from the Flemish Region of Belgium and 1 French Partner from the Region Nord-Pas de Calais.

Medway Council (UK):

Community Connections, Great Yarmouth (UK)

Maison de l'Initiative, Grande Synthe (FR)

OCMW Kortrijk, Kortrijk (BE)

The partnership is confirmed through the adherence to the INTERREG programme with the Local Authority, Public Body partners taking charge of both coordination and targeted implementation, while the NGOs operate on delivering assigned actions.

Roles of the partners

Medway Council acts as effectively lead partner and coordinating agency for the project. The mutually agreed activity pattern is structured around a strong framework of 'equal' partner co-operation. While local partners implement and test actions within their own territorial areas, using their specific expertise, support structures and tools there is also both an element of delegation as well as co-production of certain initiatives (i.e. the 10 step to work guide). Here partners are delegated to pilot particular initiatives within their operational specialisations which can then be developed through adoption and testing in other areas.

At the local level in Kortrijk the two partners collaborate on equal terms. The OCMW has responsibility for coordination of the local activity and engaging with the local community (scoping and identifying client groups and labour market, training opportunities, making contacts with other local support agencies and service providers). It also takes full responsibility for implementation of Activity 1 – Remedial action to improve social and physical mobility. The two other activities are organised in a joint operation between the OCMW and Mentor, with Mentor taking the lead on

	<p>organisation and implementation of training, support, guidance and coaching initiatives to help job seekers and employees. The relationship is very complementary. The end-user recipients are the unemployed 'client groups' reached in the local community.</p> <p>Involvement of the wider public</p> <p>The very nature of the project is to reach out into the local community of jobless and disadvantaged people. This happens literally by targeted knocking on doors, but also by using existing social events and community entry points to make contact with key client groups and individuals. The project organises both fringe and formal events and activities to draw people in to develop a new relationship towards job opportunities and (re)engagement with the labour market. The project works with local people (focus groups comprised of local unemployed) to test and develop initiatives such as the 10 steps to work guide. The project is firmly entrenched in the 'neighbourhood working' activity of the OCMW, so has a high level of visibility and connection with local community centres and events. The 'wiseguys' initiative to produce 'advocates' within communities will further increase links to local people.</p> <p>Role of the city administration</p> <p>As in all Belgian cities there is a strong relationship and cooperation between the OCMW Kortrijk and the City administration, and therefore in this project also with Mentor vzw as a key service provider. The City is responsible for policy encompassing the social economy and its own initiatives in respect of job creation and there is an agreed delineation of responsibilities with the OCMW. The OCMW takes responsibility for intervention in terms of activation, community development and neighbourhood working in this field. In this way the project Succes falls within the mandate of the OCMW. There is no formal dialogue with the city concerning the Succes project although relevant representatives are invited and do attend project organised events. On the other hand members of the Succes team are involved and sit on thematic committees and dialogue platforms organised within the city governance model.</p> <p>Steering of the study and implementation process</p> <p>At the project level there is a clear interactive participative structure lightly directed by the lead partner. This cooperation is cemented by joint events organised by the individual partner organisations, reporting back on local actions and transmitting information to local communities, stakeholders and target groups.</p> <p>At the local level in Kortrijk there is a strong, almost day to day collaboration between the partners to ensure that actions are developed and implemented. In this way both partners contribute to action design and use their specific networks and resources (knowledge, capacities and expertise) to maximise the effect of interventions in and engagement with target communities. The OCMW can be said to take the lead in preparing the actions and coordinating activity (although this is subject to intense dialogue), while Mentor vzw delivers concrete training and coaching opportunities. Both scope potential further opportunities for formal and informal training (educational institutions and courses) and placement (local firms and organisations). This task division appears to be a very strong and effective feature of partner co-operation.</p>
<p>4. INNOVATIVE ELEMENTS AND NOVEL APPROACHES</p>	
<p>4.1 INNOVATION</p>	<p>New approaches, management practices different from common practice</p> <p>The project has allowed the partners to explore new approaches which are not necessarily innovative in the wider context of applying outreach tactics. However the basic premise of the project - to take support services designed to help access employment into the communities and to client groups with most needs – is a new practice for the partner cities. The ongoing work of static services represented by welfare centres, job centres, citizens advice offices, interim offices are so complemented by an active approach to engage with their missing target groups. Outreach, activation and ongoing accompaniment are for the partners innovative ways of connecting with an excluded sometimes self-excluded population. Also the individual approach, one on one mentoring, soft skills coaching present new</p>

	<p>methods. The strength of the project is in the techniques and experience of tools and themes that the different partners can deliver and share. The concept of building guidebooks together with the target groups they are intended to help is a forward looking and innovative component.</p>
	<p>New approaches in exploiting and transferring the results</p> <p>The project has not produced or developed any particularly innovative ways of disseminating or transferring its message. There is however strong concentration on communicating results and engaging key stakeholders (i.e. the business community) through existing media, organisation of cross-border high-profile events, Succes market places, reporting and (press) publicity. The Mentor vzw website provides a very clear and user friendly access to information on the Kortrijk partner initiatives.</p> <p>The guideline documents are given a high degree of visibility and the project intends to produce a report which will gather good practice experiences - a reference, toolkit type support for other cities and agencies.</p>
<p>4.2. KEY IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES AND PROBLEM-SOLVING PRACTICES</p>	<p>Main challenges during project implementation</p> <p>The main challenge for the project and particularly in Kortrijk was to make contact with and actively involve people who did not necessarily wish to be approached by authority or who had mentally and physically disengaged from the day to day rhythm of work and even social contact. In this the option to visit households was a major and essential step. The European funding enabled the OCMW to engage additional staff to make this type of approach possible and to support and provide additional orientation for street and social workers already operating at neighbourhood level. However this does not guarantee engagement or continued involvement. The project therefore linked contact with target groups to social events organised in the neighbourhood, sport activities, cooking/baking clubs, film projects. Any activity which could potentially attract people to reconnect with a 'normal' daily life was used to piggy back an introduction to employment support.</p> <p>The diversity of clients with different needs (young, old, partially trained, untrained, migrant women, single mothers) was also a difficulty which could be more ideally addressed by the individual or small group approach which the project developed.</p> <p>Kortrijk was successful in getting a number of women interested in working with pre-school children, child minding etc. This seemed like a real avenue to insert people in useful and paid activity. Placements and work experience were fairly easy to arrange (see 1. Intended outputs and results) but ultimate employment in this sector still depended on training and qualifications – so there was no direct access to a new job future without taking the candidates a step further in an education and formal training trajectory.</p>
<p>4.3. THEMATIC FOCUS</p>	<p>EU2020 inclusive growth</p> <p>In all the territorial areas covered by the partnership there is a need driven ambition to support economic growth. In recent years, pre- and post crisis, much attention has been directed to generating economic activity and creating new jobs. In 2010 Kortrijk – Roeselare was one of the only sub-regions in Flanders where unemployment had significantly declined in global terms. In contradiction to this positive trend, in the most deprived neighbourhoods of the city the experience was that localised unemployment in neighbourhoods of multiple deprivation remained high and constant. This is a primary obstacle for “inclusive growth” in the sense that in the selected neighbourhoods (economic) growth does not reach the citizens, and target groups of the project remaining unemployed and far away from the labour market. The provision of welfare benefit represents a considerable drain on public funds while it remains insufficient as single measure in terms of keeping people out of social and employment isolation. The project is attempting to respond to this complex challenge as part of a developing synergy to couple appropriate opportunities (economic growth) to marginalised resources in terms of latent workforce. Therefore the project has a real contribution to make in helping to improve social inclusion, raising the well-being and self esteem of individuals and families, increasing purchasing power, while at the same time reducing the burden on public welfare funds.</p>

In this way the project clearly links to 'inclusive growth' aiming to foster employment and social cohesion in selected, deprived neighbourhoods, increasing participation of hard-to-reach groups in the neighbourhoods, improving employability through investing in skills, and fighting long-term unemployment and social isolation by an innovative approach of outreach activities.

5. FUNDING

ERDF funding and match funding

Total budget: 2 711 722 € ERDF contribution: 1 355 861 € (50%)

Medway Council eligible costs: 1 096 735 € - ERDF 548 367.50 €

Match funding: Medway Council

OCMW Kortrijk eligible costs: 586 505 € - ERDF 293 252.50 €

Match funding: OCMW Kortrijk, Province West Flanders

Mentor vzw eligible costs: 246 603 € - ERDF 123 301.50 €

Match funding: Mentor vzw, Province of West Flanders, Flemish Region

Maison d'Initiative Grande Synthe eligible costs: 580 242 €

ERDF – 290 121.50 € Match funding: City of Grande Synthe

Community Connections eligible costs: 201 637 € - ERDF 100 818.50 €

Match funding: Community Connections

There is no pre-financing of project activity from ERDF. Funding works on the basis of re-imburement of real costs incurred and reported in the 6 monthly partner reports (finance) to the Managing Authority.

Private sector leverage

There is as yet no private sector leverage component within the project. The Maison de l'Initiative, Grande Synthe however is actively seeking to involve co-financiers from private or semi-public stakeholders to ease the 50% match funding burden on the Municipality. This is also an issue for the other partners in particular Community Connections.

The project does aim at engaging exploitation and involvement of voluntary work and the voluntary sector as a real alternative in delivering service provision.

6. PROJECT ASSESSMENT

6.1. FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

The project is due to finish mid-2013. The ambition is that the methods developed and applied in the project will become standard procedure and practice within the partner organisations delivering support to the unemployed living in deprived areas of Norfolk and Suffolk, Medway, Kortrijk and Grande Synthe in the French Region du Nord. However the radical approach to go out into the communities in an attempt to reach the most disconnected sections of the unemployed population is both time and labour intensive. The outreach and one on one support techniques may not survive the anticipated cuts in public services, and therefore alternative options (private sector delivery, modified service structure, 'volunteering') are planned to be put in place to tackle the problems of this target group. However in Kortrijk the strategy is indeed to modify the way of working of the OCMW to use the outreach methods developed in the project as far as future budgets will allow. This is currently under consideration as a concrete reorganisation of activity for the agency. The OCMW will continue to have a coordinating and instigating role in this respect but is also seeking to continue or transfer certain responsibilities to adapt ways of working in other existing structures such as the neighbourhood centres but also to give a stronger role to voluntary organisation like A'kzie (an 'organisation where the poor take responsibility' 'Vereniging waar armen het word nemen'). This is also the case in other partner situations. In Medway for instance more emphasis will be placed on their subsidiary network organisations, organising through existing statutory agencies such as Employ Medway, Citizens Advice Bureau, Medway Adult Learning and church or community groups like the All Saints Community Project.

Continuity from previous funding periods

The project did not start in a previous funding phase

<p>6.2. TRANSFERABILITY</p>	<p>Mainstreaming The project did not start as a pilot action but is a conscious attempt to implement the type of Skills Action Plan conceived within the INTERREG IIIA GAGNER project.</p> <p>Transferability The very nature of the project as part of the INTERREG programme is designed to generate transfer of experience and tools. This is achieved by learning and adoption of new intervention techniques and practices but also by the co-production of common approaches. In both of these possibilities the project has already been successful. The project has been running since February 2010 and on the basis of the first of three project seminars (9 December 2010) has produced a “toolkit” (a 10 step guideline) linked to the sub-theme “Undertaking remedial action to improve the mobility of participants”. This toolkit has been applied and tested in 2011 in the 3 project areas in France, England and Belgium. On the other hand the dissemination of the approach to other cities and regions outwith the partnership is an aspect that until now has been less developed. Most actions developed within the partnership appear to be transferable. They do require certain adaptation to local conditions and habits, and there must be a conviction (political, officers and practitioners) on the outreach approach. Use of digital media and local television has been used to raise awareness and provide information to the wider local community.</p>
<p>6.3 ISSUES AND PROBLEMS</p>	<p>The difficulties and solutions vary in the different partner areas.</p> <p>At project level the language problem in relation to local staff is always an element in such an exchange initiative. This has not been insurmountable but does result in delays, dangers of misrepresentation and ‘more work’ particularly when translating down to the grass roots level.</p> <p>At the local levels there is a general challenge related to changing attitudes and convincing stakeholders to operate in a different way. Overcoming this potential barrier seems to be particularly helped by the exchange experience between the partners but also by the type of pressure such an international initiative can apply – in mobilising politicians, encouraging officers to participate.</p> <p>Making meaningful contact with client groups is still the prime challenge and different partners tackled this in different ways Kortrijk by house visits, Grande Synthe by using neighbourhood networks to bring people in to their structure of activities and events, while Medway put some reliance on voluntary organisations acting in the community. For all partners the figures suggest that this is producing results at least in making contact where before there was none. Kortrijk reminds the partners however that with these client groups it is not sufficient to accompany the process of improving employability to insertion in formal training or work placement (full-employment, work experience or apprenticeship) – there is generally also need for accompaniment in the new situation.</p> <p>It is also recognised that it is difficult to make a programme that will fit for everyone i.e. where there is diversity of cultures and diversity of language skills, so help actions need to be able to take account of this and adapt accordingly. This flexibility is also helped by the wide pool of experience which the partnership offers. Recognition of simple elements is important in building solutions i.e. that achieving driving licences may require 60 hours of intensive support in these target groups where a free 40 hours is a more normal average.</p>
<p>6.4 PROJECT OUTPUTS & RESULTS</p>	<p>Using Kortrijk as an example it is important to situate the fact that the determining factor is about improving employability in specific population groups, which is different to placing people in permanent employment.</p> <p>The most concrete results at this point in time can be linked to the activities being run by the NGO Mentor vzw in terms of self esteem and training courses, behaviour coaching, job application workshops and peer advocacy in the community. The last of these is only started in March 2012.</p> <p>By December 2011, 49 people have already passed through confidence building and</p>

	<p>social skills courses involving minimum 2 – 3 hour modules (target 90). 75 people have joined training on how to behave in the work place (target 90) and 7 individuals are following dedicated coaching on PC and internet. 'Do it yourself' training sessions are now also underway and 'Wiseguys' training is planned on Thursday mornings pre-summer 2012 (20 hours, 7 sessions and 2 reflection groups)</p> <p>At project level the '10 step to work guide' as a joint initiative has been explained but 2 more guides (mobility and social skills) are in preparation piloted by Maison de l'Initiative and Community Connections, and the good practice toolkit is in the planning phase.</p>
<p>7. CONCLUSIONS: KEY SUCCESS FACTORS AND LESSONS LEARNED</p>	
	<p>Collaboration and exchange of techniques, experience and areas of expertise between partners – co-production of both project and outputs</p> <p>A wide range of tested but also novel outreach initiatives, events and activities have been applied employed to give the project maximum chance of success in engaging with and mobilising its key target groups</p> <p>Involvement of end users in designing assistance material to help resolve the problems facing them and people in similar jobless circumstances</p> <p>Use of joint project partner events to involve other essential local/regional stakeholders across the labour market spectrum (businesses and employers, education and training, community projects, existing job creation and employment support services etc.)</p> <p>Recognition of barriers represented by social skills deficits and intervention to develop soft skills – also with one on one mentoring.</p>
<p>8. FURTHER INFORMATION</p>	
<p>Bibliography</p>	<p>http://www.kortrijk.be/nieuws/10-kleine-stappen-naar-werk-een-grote-stap-voor-succes</p> <p>http://www.medway.gov.uk/business/economicdevelopment/europeanaffairs/succes.aspx</p> <p>Buurt Monitor 2010: Lange Munt, Overleie, Veemarkt, Venning, V-TEX – City of Kortrijk, OCMW Kortrijk 2010</p> <p>Kansarmoedeatlas West Vlaanderen 2011 http://www.acw.be/regiokrt/attachments/article/522/Werkgroep%20armoede.pdf</p> <p>http://www.vzwmentor.be/search/node/Succes?page=1</p> <p>INTERREG IVA'2 Mers Seas Zeeën' Cross Border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013 Application Form: SUCCES Medway Council 2010 http://www.interreg4a-2mers.eu/en</p>
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