



CAPACITY BUILDING
IN THE VOCATIONAL
TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL
INTEGRATION OF ADULTS
AT RISK OF INSECURITY:

A CAPABILITATION APPROACH

Périne Brotcorne

september 2015

Study carried out by the Fondation Travail-Université as part of the lifelong learning programme – Grundtvig multilateral projects.

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Capacity building in the vocational training and professional integration of adults at risk of insecurity: a capability approach

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Introduction

This document constitutes the final report of a study carried out by the Fondation Travail-Université (FTU) as part of the "T-Cap" European project, which is funded by the Lifelong Learning Programme - Grundtvig Multilateral Projects. The overall aim of the project is to analyse/assess training and integration projects for adults at risk of insecurity, using the capability approach initiated by A. Sen (2000). This project was made possible thanks to a partnership between training and research organisations from five European countries - Belgium, Spain, France (Corsica), Italy and Slovakia.

This report is an intermediate stage in the on-going project. Its central goal is to provide actors in the field with tools for comprehension and action, in order to enable them to contribute to developing enabling vocational training actions for a target group finds itself in precarious circumstances. It constitutes a tool to support the work during the second phase of the project, in which the participating training centres will be accompanied in testing the implementation of the recommendations set out in this study in their training practices.

In order to do this, the study seeks to identify the capacity of the training bodies under observation to develop pedagogical, organisational and institutional practices aimed at improving the capabilities of individuals who are removed from the world of work. In other words, it is about grasping the "enabling" dimensions of the training schemes, by exploring to what extent the centres provide the kind of support that boosts the capacity for action for their beneficiaries (adapted socio-educational support and accessible socio-economic opportunities), whilst still respecting their leeway for making decisions about the direction in which to take their social and vocational integration pathway. To what extent and with what conditions do the training schemes contribute to genuinely broadening the opportunities for social and vocational integration of individuals, while respecting their freedom to complete a training pathway that they value? This is the central question in the study. To answer this question, the report is made up of five chapters.

The **first chapter** (The capability approach: a new model for assessing vocational training schemes) aims to first give a brief introduction to the capability approach for a new way of assessing schemes for social and vocational integration. It then goes on to explain the main concepts that underpin this theoretical outlook.

The **second chapter** (A field study on a European scale) begins by presenting the aim of the field research carried out on 16 vocational training centres in various European countries. It then lays out the concrete dimensions of the analysis based on the concepts of the capability approach. Finally, it presents the methodological approach that guided the development of the research.

The **third chapter** (Providing learning and social support that is adapted to those in receipt of training) exposes the results of the empirical analysis relating to a first fundamental component of the capability approach: what the training centres do to strengthen the individual and collective capacities of the beneficiaries in order to equip them to deal with the requirements of the world of work and social life in general. In particular, it sets out to highlight the conditions under which the socio-educational mechanisms employed effectively support an increase in the individuals' capacity for action, whilst encouraging them to make their choices in an independent and autonomous way.

The **fourth chapter** (Opening up the field of social and economic opportunities to those in receipt of training) presents the results of the empirical analysis on a second fundamental aspect of the capability approach: the action of the training centres on their socio-economic and institutional surroundings in order to broaden the social and vocational opportunities open to the trainees. In particular, it highlights the operators' initiatives that are aimed at increasing, in a more or less direct manner, the available opportunities for training or employment, as well as means of institutional resistance that they deploy in order to defend the specificity of their mission.

The **fifth chapter** (signposts for action) offers three general directions for the implementation of actions in training and insertion practices for adults at risk of insecurity that improve the beneficiaries' capabilities. These constitute the synthesis of all the key actions formulated in the different chapters of the report.

This final report is conceived with a view to fostering the exchange of best practices between training bodies. it is therefore aimed, above all, at the professionals operating in those organisations, to help them develop the necessary instruments to push forward a training and social and vocational integration pathway that improves the capabilities of adults at risk of insecurity.



This chapter aims firstly to give a brief presentation of the contribution brought by the capability approach to update the classical approaches to assessing vocational training and integration schemes. It then goes on to explain the main concepts that underpin this theoretical outlook.

This approach envisages training as a freedom aimed at the fulfilment of individuals rather than just adapting their competencies to the needs of the market.

In the current context of activation policies, vocational training appears as a key public instrument for improving the employability of unemployed workers and responding to mass unemployment. Using this perspective, the success of training programmes is assessed on the rapid (re)integration of jobseekers into the labour market, with the notion of activation being closely tied to that of employability.

The capability approach (Sen, 2000, 2004) provides new3 perspectives for examining the relevance and effectiveness of public policies, such as those linked to the activation of jobseekers and the training programmes set up to achieve this. It enables us to go beyond the widespread view, which instrumentalises vocational training. By adopting an opposite position from the dominant economic discourse, this approach enables training to be seen as a "freedom" aimed above all at the fulfilment of individuals and their vocational development, and no longer merely adapting their competencies to the needs of businesses.

From this standpoint, while the economic aspect is not stripped of importance, it does not constitute the sole benchmark for assessing the success of training schemes; the issue of human development - fulfilment and the professional wellbeing of individuals - necessarily needs to be taken into account, and even come before purely commercial considerations. Reintegration into the labour market should therefore not be done at any cost; it must take place through quality employment that meets the expectations of the person or, to take up A. Sen's recurrent phrase, the person has "reasons to value". In this framework, activation should no longer be seen in a restrictive sense as a synonym of employability, but in a broader sense as the activation of individuals in an activity that they value (Bonvin, 2013). The capability approach therefore enables us to develop a conception of training that aims to link the necessary integration of jobseekers into the labour market with their professional fulfilment. In other words, it is a guestion of not just paying attention to equipping individuals for the labour market, but to equip the market for the individuals (Gazier, 1999).

1.

INTRODUCING THE CONCEPTS

The capability approach initiated by Amartya Sen is a major contribution to contemporary theories of justice. It presents a concept of freedom as the foundation for both human development and for social justice. To begin with, A. Sen's work was in the field of development. However, his theoretical approach was gradually mobilised by researchers in other disciplines to study different areas of society. Recent work in human and social sciences has made use of the capability approach to assess actions carried out in various areas of social policy, in particular those of employment and training. This research follows in their footsteps.

The main aim of the work of A. Sen is to "rethink equality" (Sen, 2000). In order to do this, the author proposes to go beyond two major theoretical approaches: the "utilitarian" theories of wellbeing and the "resourcist" approaches centred on equality of rights or the means to freedom. A. Sen's critique bears on the information that those conceptions muster in order to gauge inequality in individual and social situations. This leads him to propose an alternative to those approaches, which he calls: "the informational basis of judgments of justice", that is to say, the rules, facts and information on which public action is based for the assessment of individual and social situations in terms of social justice. The way in which public authorities assess the situation of individuals determines the way in which the goals of public action are defined and implemented.

This new perspective thus enables researchers and policy makers to make a finer assessment of the justice of social situations resulting from societal choices, such as the implementation of a public policy on employment, for example.

1.1.

Capabilities and functionings

The capability approach suggests that the assessment of individual wellbeing and of social arrangements start from what individuals are really free and able to do (Farvaque, 2008). Thus, it proposes to evaluate individual and social situations starting from the space of genuine freedom that people have to chose and carry out projects that they value -- in terms of training and integration pathways for the purpose of this research.

A. Sen calls the extent of real individual freedom as a basis for evaluation "capability". It makes up the central notion in his theory. However, this real freedom is not an end in itself: its goal is human fulfilment. As J. de Munck (2008) notes, the potential for fulfilment is a fundamental dimension of capabilities.

The main aim of this approach is to rethink equality by evaluating it according to the real freedoms that individuals enjoy.

Capabilities are the extent of real freedom that a person has to carry out life projects that they value.

The notion of capability sits alongside another fundamental notion in the approach, that known as "functionings", that is to say what a person actually achieves; their choices and their actions. The notions of capability and functioning are closely linked. In fact, a person's capabilities are the total of the accomplishments or achievements that a person has a real possibility of reaching in the course of their life. In other words, their capability is their real freedom to realize one of those available achievements. To illustrate this, let us say that "undertaking a vocational training course" is an achievement, that is to say the result of an action. When we use the capability approach, what we are trying to grasp foremost is the extent of real freedom (or the aggregate of available alternatives) that the individual had at the time they made the choice, in this case to start this particular training course. The question here is to know how many quality alternatives this individual really had at the time the choice was made. They could certainly choose to take this particular course, but did they have other quality options such as remaining in, or returning to work, or look after the children, or start another type of training course, etc. They finally chose the "training course" option. If the chosen training course is the achievement, the capabilities here are the extent of the opportunities, the alternatives that this individual had upstream of the choice that was made. This is what is called the space for individual freedom. An individual's capabilities will therefore be all the greater, the greater is this space of actually available alternative options.

At first, this distinction may seem pointless, but it is actually fundamental. It means we can insist on an individual's freedom to act. Two people who undertake the same action (a training course, for example) have not necessarily enjoyed the same degree of real freedom, of the same set of opportunities. As M. Bonvin and N. Farvaque (2008, p.51) point out: "following a vocational training course by choice or through lack of opportunities (being obliged to take the course in order to continue to receive benefits, employer-imposed retraining, etc.) do not lead to an identical result in terms of capabilities".

This approach thus insists on the importance, when assessing policies and measures for public action from the angle of social justice, to keep as an indicator the real freedom to achieve — capabilities — and not to focus solely on results or actual achievements.

1.2. Conversion rates and freedom of choice

This approach therefore proposes a conversion rate based on a person's real space for freedom in choices and actions. This framework for analysis needs to be contextual: real freedom for the person depends on the situation in which they find themselves. Insisting on this space for real freedom enables us to highlight the fact that two individuals with the same amount of resources at their disposal (the same amount of unemployment benefit, for example) do not necessarily have the same "capabilities" or real freedoms to use those resources and transform them into an attainment, an achievement that they value, and this because of the differing personal and social situations in which

they find themselves.

We note that for A. Sen, the notion of "resources" is to be understood in the broad sense of the term, that is to say all of the goods and services that a person has at their disposal, whether they are produced and distributed on the market, the non-profit sector or the public sector (i.e. incomes, social transfers, goods, services on offer, such as training schemes and programmes for example). We may also include formal rights granted to individuals, that is to say rights that are written down in legislation and other legal conventions, such as, for example, the right to education, the right to social security, the right to training as a jobseeker without loss of benefits, etc.

This difference between people in the capacity to effectively make use of their resources and formal rights (e.g. the right to training for jobseekers) in order to realize a project, carry out an act of their choice (undergo training in order to realize their professional project) is therefore down to inequalities in individual and social circumstances. By starting from the person's real situation, this approach pays particular attention to human and social diversity and, therefore, to the constraints and handicaps facing individuals.

This attention paid to the variety of personal and social situations leads A. Sen to point out the limitations of an approach to equality that is based on redistribution of resources to ensure real freedom for individuals. He criticises this "resourcist" approach for "basing itself on means to freedom rather than on the extent of that freedom - that is to say what individuals may really achieve or obtain utilising those means" (Sen, 1990, p. 115) in the context of their own lives. In other words, he criticises it for not providing any information on how the individuals are in a position or not to use those resources to achieve actions that they value.

In order to go beyond these limitations, A. Sen proposes to analyse directly what individuals are in a position to choose and achieve with those resources and the opportunities they are given within the context of their lives. To do this, he introduces two further fundamental theoretical dimensions, namely: (1) conversion rates and (2) the extent of real freedom of choice between two options that have value.

Faced with a same set of material goods, resources and formal rights, two individuals will not necessarily attain the same "capabilities" due to differences relating to what A. Sen calls "conversion rates". These are what will either facilitate or hinder the conversion of those resources into an achievement that the individual values. M. Bonvin and N. Farvaque identify three major types of "conversion rate": strictly personal factors (intellectual ability, gender, age, physical characteristics), social factors (social and religious norms, roles and status, discriminatory social stereotypes, etc.) and also external or environmental factors (geographical, institutional political or cultural opportunities) (Bonvin and Farvaque, 2007; Bonvin and Farvaque, 2008).

Thus, the sole equalisation of resources and formal rights is insufficient to ensure the enhancement of real freedoms for individuals, if the necessary con-

The variety of situations explains that two people with access to the same resources do not necessarily have the same possibilities of converting them into a project that they value.

The attention paid to the variety of personal and social situations enables us to point out the limitations of an approach based on the means to freedom rather than on its extent.

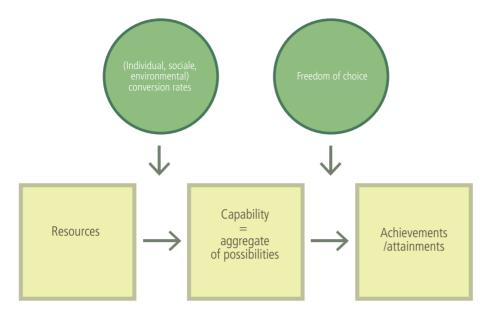
version rates (individual, social and environmental) are missing. The effective transformation of those resources into real freedom for individuals therefore supposes the presence of those conversion rates, which shape an individual's real capacity to act in a given context.

From this perspective, public policy centred on the development of capabilities has to be concerned not just with action on resources and formal rights, but also on the multiple factors and "equipment" needed for each to convert this set of means into attainments/achievements of their choosing. Thus, a person's "capacity" to find a job depends both on their individual aptitude or competencies, and on the opportunities and concrete support that are available to them (Orianne, 2011). In this sense, it becomes a matter of collective responsibility.

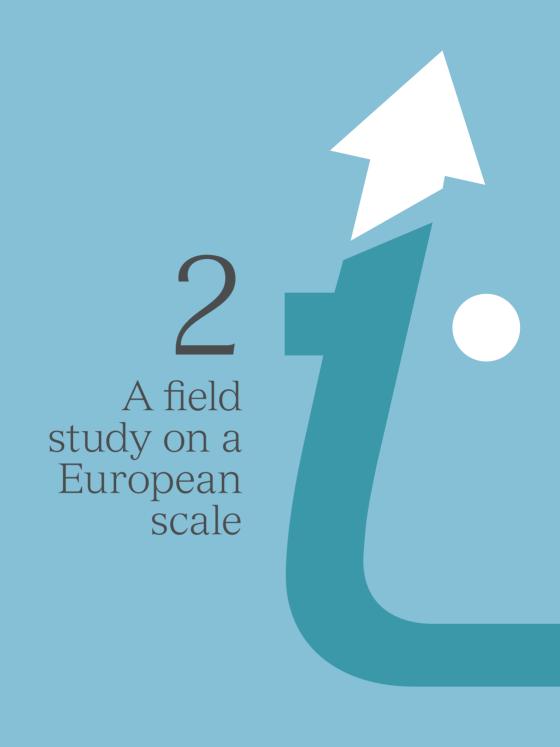
A person's effective range of Nevertheless, according to the model formulated by A. Sen, just to take into account multiple conversion rates remains insufficient. Between a person's "capability set" and their actual achievements, another dimension comes into play, which A. Sen approaches from the notion of freedom of choice; "the freedom of individuals to choose between different options for lives that they can really lead and which they have reasons to value" (Sen, 1993, p. 216-218). This effective range of choice must be assessed according to two complementary and inseparable aspects:

- ▶ "the opportunity aspect": which refers to the range of genuinely accessible opportunities for individuals. These available opportunities are, in a sense, the pillars of freedom of choice. There can be no real freedom of choice and achievement without the prior existence of real opportunities for success. This is the "social justice" dimension of freedom.
- b "the process aspect": this refers to the process of real freedom of choice and decision for a person between different available opportunities. This implies a genuine autonomy in individual choices and effective participation of individuals in decisions that affect them. Expressing one's point of view and having it heard supposes that the person is in a position to challenge demands that are imposed on them and possibly to refuse them. This aspect constitutes the democratic participation dimension of freedom of choice.

Finalement, comme l'indique à juste titre B. Zimmerman (2011), l'approche par les capabilités prend à la fois en compte ce qu'une personne est capable de faire et/ou de développer (ses compétences) les possibilités qui lui sont concrètement offertes pour accroître ses compétences (les opportunités et les supports sociaux individuels et collectifs) ainsi que la possibilité d'exprimer ses préférences et le faire valoir.



The dimensions that make up the capability approach (Source: adaptation from Verhoeven, Orianne, Dupriez, 2007)



This chapter's will concern itself first with formulating the objective of the research carried out in the field of 15 European vocational training centres. It then goes on to present the concrete dimensions of the analysis made using concepts from the capability approach. Finally, it presents the methodological approach that underpinned the development of the research. Amongst other things, it highlights the two main difficulties that were encountered: that attached to putting a theoretical approach such as capability into empirical operation, on the one hand, and, on the other, that attached to making a comparative analysis of European vocational training organisations with sometimes very different purposes or institutional constraints.

1. THE AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the field study consists in identifying the capacity of the 15 centres providing vocational training to jobseekers to develop and implement training and social and professional support practices aimed at improving the capabilities of individuals.

The question underlying the empirical analysis can be summed up as follows: to what extent and under which conditions do the actions of these training provders act as conversion rates that may broaden the range of opportunities open to their beneficiaries, whilst also supporting their freedom to choose and complete a training scheme that contributes to their social and professional development? The conversion rates must be thought of as "means", or "support" (personal, institutional, organisational, pedagogical) put in place by the centres or their immediate environment to enable those in receipt of training to transform resources - rights and formal access to a training system - into effective apprenticeships within a training pathway that they value.

The empirical study thus seeks to grasp the enabling character of the centres' practices and their effect on the individual training pathways, by exploring the issue of available opportunities and available support for beneficiaries to construct an integration project that contributes to their social and professional development. This latter must be understood in a broad sense of personal wellbeing. It is not reduced to the development of knowledge and skills. It includes considerations of personal fulfilment and balance between the occupational (training in this case) and the private spheres. This implies that the person has the possibility of constructing a social and vocational integration project - in which the training course is one stage - that does not correspond solely to the immediate needs of the labour market, but also to the purpose that they personally ascribe to it.

The study aims to identify the enabling dimensions of training and integration schemes for adults at risk of insecurity.

2.

THE DIMENSIONS OF THE ANALYSIS

As a reminder, the capability model aims to broaden the range of real possibilities for individuals to choose and achieve a training and integration project which they value, knowing that those possibilities are anchored in specific institutional, organisational and individual circumstances.

The capability model aims to increase the actual possibilities for individuals to choose and complete a training pathway that they

From this perspective, developing these capabilities rests on two complementary and inseparable dimensions of freedom: increasing individuals' ability to act by providing adequate opportunities and support measures on the one hand and, on the other, respect for their real freedom of choice and action.

Nevertheless, developing the capabilities of individuals is not an end in itself. The end purpose of the extension of this freedom is human fulfilment, in this case the professional and, more broadly, social development of the beneficiaries, not just their rapid return to employment. Each of the dimensions in this approach is developed below, as is the way in which they have been operationalized into concrete indicators for the empirical study.

2.1.

Support measures for increasing the capacity to act

Paying attention to the diversity of life circumstances makes it possible to explain why, faced with an identical set of resources, different individuals will not have the same capacity for seizing the formal opportunities they are given - in this case in terms of training and social and vocational integration pathways - to convert them into an actual achievement. Hence the importance given to the support that is necessary for developing this actual capacity to act.

In order to enhance the trainees' capacity to act in a free and autonomous manner within the framework of their social an vocational integration pathway, it is above all necessary that the individuals have adequate means at their disposal that they can grasp to increase their power to act. There could be no genuine freedom if the means to freedom are not provided first (Bonvin, Farvaque, 2007).

Above all, it is necessary that the individuals have suitable means that they can utilise to increase their power to act.

These supports for the capacity to act are the institutional, organisational, and personal opportunities and support measures put in place by the training centres or their immediate environment to enable the beneficiaries to transform the resources - rights and formal access to a training system - into effective apprenticeships within a training pathway that they value and which contributes to their social and professional development.

The supports are of different kinds. They need to enable action both on

individual and on environmental factors. In this sense, while it does not absolve individuals of a duty to train in order to improve their chances of social and vocational integration, this approach also gives a central importance to collective responsibility, which is charged with an equal sharing out of the opportunities and the means to act. In this analysis, we distinguish between:

- 1. action on individual factors, i.e.: the learning and social and vocational support mechanisms developed over the different stages of training to enhance the personal capacities of the beneficiaries (vocational and social skills, self-confidence and self-esteem, etc.) in order to "equip" them to face the requirements of the labour market;
- 2. action on environmental factors, i.e. the means deployed by the training centres to act on the social and economic opportunities in order to "equip" the labour and training market to meet the needs of individuals (in terms of training, jobs), on the one hand, and on the institutional environment to assert their educational specificity, on the other.

2.1.1.

The training centres' actions on the support available to beneficiaries

The mission of the vocational training centres is, above all, to develop mechanisms centred on support to the person in order to best equip them to enter the labour market. These various collective and individual "equipments" are therefore geared towards enhancing the various individual competencies of the beneficiaries (professional, social, confidence, self-esteem, etc.), to support them in achieving their training pathway and, in fine, to seize the opportunities available on the employment and training market.

It is a question here of analysing the nature of those support mechanisms and the way they are deployed during the different stages of training in the organisations taking part in the study.

Beyond the intention of most training centres to put tools at the service of the beneficiaries' professional project, analysing the actual modalities for their implementation enables us to identify to what extent and under which conditions those mechanisms actually support the extension of the power to act for the greatest number of beneficiaries.

This analysis revolves around three axes that constitute key aspects and moments of the training pathway:

- ▶ the support at the beginning of the training course to reduce the inequalities in access to training and extend the possibilities given to the beneficiaries most removed from employment to join in this pathway;
- ▶ the support for the acquisition of skills, whether social, vocational or in citizenship, through mechanisms to provide educational and psychosocial support;

What are the different mechanisms put in place by the training centres to equip the beneficiaries to face the labour market and social life in general?

support for the transition between training and social and vocational integration, whether it is a transition towards employment or another, more qualifying training pathway.

2.1.2.

The action of the training centres on the creation and development of social and economic opportunities

What actions are the centres implementing to broaden the social and vocational opportunities available to their beneficiaries? In order to open up the range of possibilities for integration and social and vocational development for the trainees, it is therefore necessary to give them the tools to compensate for various personal shortcomings that hinder this integration. However, these actions centred exclusively on the person often remain insufficient if they are not accompanied by actions aimed at increasing the quantity and quality of available vocational integration opportunities. It is true that such actions on the labour market are largely the remit of employment policy, on which actors in the field of training have little or no influence.

Nevertheless, the training centres have the capacity, at their own level, to act on their immediate economic and social environment. Notably, they can act on the training and employment markets to ensure they are better integrated, notably by building partnerships.

On this level, the analysis aims to identify what actions the centres are carrying out to extend either the employment opportunities, or the possibilities of further training that the beneficiaries may have access to on finishing their course

2.1.3.

The action of the training centres on their institutional environment

As already highlighted above, a major feature of the capability approach is that it is anchored in a context. If the actions undertaken by the training centres to develop the capabilities of their beneficiaries are a central component of the analysis, they nonetheless take place within an institutional context that circumscribes the day-to-day practices of those centres.

The fact is, that the training centres are not organisations that are closed in on themselves; they operate in a specific institutional environment which, through policy decisions, legislation, collective action etc., frames their activity.

This environment determines a specific set of constraints and opportunities that mark out a training scheme within a given territory and sector (for example, the nature of the training on offer, the permitted target groups, the maximum duration of training permitted, controls on jobseekers undertaking training, etc.). These therefore place limits on the effective possibilities that

What bargaining power do the centres have with respect to the political and institutional constraints that frame their activities?

the training centres have to act on the social and economic opportunities within their sector, as well as in terms of developing socio-educational support mechanisms that are adapted to the beneficiaries during their training.

However, it is possible that the training centres attempt to modify certain rules of the institutional game in order to put forward the social and educational specificities of their training schemes for target groups that are alienated from the world of work.

Here, the analysis aims to ask to what extent the training centres are able to carve out a certain margin of manoeuvre and develop a bargaining power in terms of some of those institutional constraints, notably in terms of standardisation of pathways for training and activating jobseekers. One example that springs to mind here is the capacity to be independent in selecting the target groups to avoid ranking and exclusion, or the independence to adapt the training on offer to the needs of the beneficiaries. The issue of power relationships is often overlooked in the capability approach (Zimmerman, 2008).

This possibility for negotiating certain institutional constraints is also linked to the capacity of the centres and their immediate environment to act collectively to defend their specific positions within the field of vocational training. The analysis will therefore make sure to identify the possibilities for the training centres to join recognised institutional networks that are capable of altering the power relationship and influence public policy on training and employment.

2.2. Freedom of choice and action

The capability approach is more than the issue of the capacity or power to act; it also includes the dimension relating to the process aspect of freedom "whereby people remain in charge of their choices and actions" (Bonvin et al., 2011, p.24).

From this perspective, it is certainly necessary to develop opportunities and support for action, but this in insufficient if we do not also ensure that the individual is given real freedom to decide on the direction of their pathway towards integration. As M. Bonvin (2013, p.51) highlights: "providing the means for action without the freedom to use those means equates to a paternalist conception of action, whereby everybody would be equipped to act, but nobody would have the freedom to use or not to use those means in the way they see most fit".

In other words, it is a matter of providing the various supports necessary for the beneficiaries to extend their power to act, while respecting their freedom of choice and action at the different stages of the training process, in order not to predetermine, on their behalf, the field of possibilities open to them. The importance afforded to this freedom implies giving the beneficiaries a real possibility to express and assert their points of view within the various

Providing the means to enhance individuals' capacity to act is necessary, but not sufficient if they are not also given the freedom to express and assert their points of view on their pathway.

socio-educational schemes in existence.

How do the centres concretely implement the participation model for beneficiaries in their day-to-day practices?

The need for an active participation on the part of the beneficiaries in defining their vocational integration project has become a leitmotiv which most training centres formally adhere to. However, beyond this agreed discourse, it is interesting to ask how the participating centres put into practice this "involvement model" for beneficiaries in the course of their day-to-day practices. To what extent are the beneficiaries placed at the centre of these schemes, and are they really able to negotiate the modalities of their training and integration pathway?

2.3.

The results obtained

Training should be aimed at social and vocational fulfilment According to the capability approach, the question of achievement is fundamental. Training is not an end in itself, but must aim for an "opening up of possibilities" in terms of vocational, as well as social development and fulfilment. The approach insists on the plurality of dimensions for human fulfilment. While vocational integration is certainly an important dimension for the fulfilment of individuals, it is not the only one. Social emancipation, active citizenship and political participation and family life are also fundamental aspects of this human fulfilment.

From this perspective, training should not only contribute to opening up possibilities in terms of (re)entering the labour market, but also in terms of social and vocational development in the broad sense of personal and social fulfilment within a process that the beneficiaries value.

If insertion into employment is not the only result expected of a training course, we must consider the other ends to which training actions may be aimed, as well as the more subjective appreciation of the beneficiaries as to their effects on their social and vocational fulfilment¹.

While the issue of fulfilment is fundamental to the capability approach, one of the major difficulties for the analysis resides in the possibility of grasping the genuinely enabling aspect of this return to a vocational project. As highlighted by Bonvin and Farvaque (2007), we must avoid the trap of adaptive preferences, whereby individuals declare that they have chosen and completed a social and vocational integration project because they value it, while, in reality, they are adapting their preferences according to the actually accessible possibilities (for training, employment). A choice made by default can rapidly be transformed, with hindsight, into an achievement/attainment that they value.

As indicated for example by the results of the study carried out by P. Vendramin (2014) among unemployed people, the value ascribed to work is all the higher, the lower their qualifications are and the further removed they

Given the relatively short amount of time granted to carry out this research, it is unfortunately not possible to assess the impact of the training courses in terms of insertion into employment. As we did not have the opportunity to meet persons who had com-

are from employment. Among the groups of beneficiaries of training courses considered in this research, there are many poorly qualified people far removed from employment whose only aspiration is to work, sometimes at any price. Praiseworthy as their wishes and intentions may be, the viewpoints they express on this matter therefore only allow us to partially grasp what would be a training process that really increased their freedom to be able to choose from among several achievements that are of value.

Despite this difficulty, the analysis is intended to be cross-cutting. It aims to bring to light the beneficiaries' perception of the impact of the support received from the training centres on the development of their vocational skills and other skills that are useful in their daily lives (social, citizenship), as well as on their self-confidence and, more generally, on the feeling of control over their life pathway.

Overall, the study aims to analyse the extent to which the training schemes contribute to expanding the possibilities for social and economic integration of the beneficiaries and to provide them with appropriate support to enable them to grasp those opportunities, whilst also respecting their freedom of choice and action.

THE METHODOLOGY **FMPI OYFD**

3.1

The difficulties encountered

Putting the concepts into operation as concrete indicators for the empirical analysis is a difficult and delicate exercise, as the concepts arising from this approach both a theoretical and a general scope. Over the last years, researchers have been working to apply the capability theory in the sphere of public intervention in training and employment. Among them are B. Zimmerman (2008) and M. Bonvin and N. Farvague (2007), who highlighted the methodological challenge in using this theoretical framework for social science analyses. The main difficulty resides in the gathering of data that inform the extent of a person's capabilities in order to obtain an indicator of their space for real freedom of choice and action and the values that underpin it. In the absence of ideal indicators for the space for real freedom, N. Farvague (2003) proposes, as a practical compromise, to start from existing data informing on the persons' opportunities for choice, the means that they are given to effectively transform the chosen opportunity into action, as well as the contextual constraints acting on those training activities. It is then a matter of interpreting this data using the capability analysis grid.

This empirical study was carried out in 16 vocational training centres: five in French-speaking Belgium, three in Italy, two in Slovakia, three in France (Corsica) and three in Spain Catalonia).

In order to grasp the complexity of the interaction between the different factors which, within a given training environment, shape the opportunities and support provided by the training centres to broaden the beneficiaries' real capabilities, a qualitative and comprehensive methodological approach appeared moist appropriate.

While the organisational level is the main focus of the study, it is an intermediate level between the institutional context and the individual level on which it is acting. Thus, the qualitative study seeks to analyse the organisational contexts of the training centres while, wherever possible, factoring in some institutional aspects on the one hand, and some individual aspects on the other.

We must highlight the major methodological difficulty presented by comparing actions and practices implemented by training course operators that may have very different end-purposes and operate in very different political and institutional contexts. It then became a question of identifying the "enabling practices" in these varied contexts, whilst ensuring, as far as possible, that certain political and institutional constraints that circumscribe the training ptroviders possibilities for action were taken into account. This includes:

frameworks.

- constraints imposed by the regions or the state relating to the official accreditation of the training course and/or its subsidy; for example: the obligation to standardise training courses in terms of content and duration, strict enforcement of the specifications brief, which limits the possibilities for personalisation of the courses according to the needs of the beneficiaries;
- constraints imposed by certain training sectors recognised at the regional or national linked to the eligible profiles of the target groups for training (long-term unemployed and/or poorly qualified, socially vulnerable groups). Having to deal with a target group that is removed from the world of employment implies having to deploy social integration activities alongside the vocational insertion activities;
- constraints imposed by the legislation that governs regional or national policies for activation in employment and training, relating to the requirements to monitor the attendance of the beneficiaries an reporting back to the controlling bodies.

3.2.

Method for gathering information in the field

For the collection of empirical data, the qualitative methodology rests on gathering the information from a series of semi-directive individual and group interviews carried out with the various stakeholders in each participating training centre – the beneficiaries, the professionals and the managers of the training centres. For each type of interview, an interview guide was developed, as well as methodological instructions for the conduct of the discussion.

The empirical data useful for analysis at the institutional level was gathered from semi-directive interviews with the managers of each centre. The interview guide was structured around various questions relating to the political and institutional constraints that the centres are subject to, and to the impact these constraints had on their actions and practices. The guide also contained questions relating to the degree of autonomy the centres had and to their margins for manoeuvre in relation to those external constraints. The interviews were supplemented by a compilation of information relating to the national and/or regional political and institutional framework marking out the activities of the training centres. These were carried out by each of the European partners and provided to the researcher. In some cases, this information was supplemented by documents gathered using information and analysis supplied by the Eurydice network.

The empirical data required to make possible the organisational analysis (opportunities and means deployed by the training centres to support the development of the beneficiaries' capabilities) were gathered through a group interview carried out with 4-6 team members in each participating centre (education manager, trainer, social worker, etc.). The interview guide was structured around various themes relating to the activities of the centres in

The empirical data was collected via individual and group interviews carried out with the beneficiaries, staff and managers of the training centres.

terms of developing social and economic opportunities for the trainees (internships, employment, further training), as well as in terms of individual and collective support mechanisms (social and educational, psycho-social, etc.). The interviews with the centre managers and the beneficiaries of the training courses were used to inform and complete this level of the analysis.

The empirical data required for the analysis of the individual level was gathered by means of a group interview carried out with 6-12 trainees near or at the end of their courses in each of the training sectors selected for the research. The interview guide was structured around various questions relating to the trainees' prior background, the way in which they grasped the support measures, and the way in which they perceive the effects of the actions of the training centres on their vocational development and their personal well-being (self-confidence, sense of control over one's career path, etc.).

One of the original features of this empirical investigation resides in its European dimension. However, as mentioned above, this also represents a major methodological difficulty that had to be overcome.

In order to ensure the maximum degree of comparability of the empirical data gathered in each participating training centre, a common methodological framework was established:

- 1. a relatively standardised interview guide for each type of interview. These guides contained an array of questions that attempted to cover every aspect of the centres' lives or the situations likely to be encountered by the beneficiaries. These questions could then be adapted according to the realities on the ground at the local level for each training situation.
- 2. each interview guide was accompanied by a methodological note that provided those tasked with organising and leading the interviews some guidelines to enable them to carry out the different stages of collection of the empirical data.
- 3. instructions were also supplied for carrying out the written reports of the interviews, in order for them to follow a relatively identical narrative thread.

Collecting the empirical data was carried out in three successive waves. The group interviews with the beneficiaries coming to an end of their training was carried out between June and October 2014. The group interviews with training centre staff were carried out between October 2014 and January 2015. Finally, after a first draft analysis, the individual interviews were carried out with the centre managers during the first half of 2015.

Carrying out the group interviews involved the participation of two people: one to lead the discussion, while the other took notes on the content of the discussion. The individual interviews were carried out by one person. The interviews lasted for between one and a half hours and three hours, depending on the country and the interviewees.

A more or less detailed written report on each on the group and individual in-

L'originalité de l'enquête empirique réside dans sa dimension européenne. terviews was produced using the instructions provided. These reports constitute the basic empirical material for the analysis. The latter's quality is therefore dependent on the measure of exhaustiveness of the reports provided by each of the project partners.

The sample of centres and training sectors involved in the project was determined at the national level by each of the project partners. This was worked out according to certain realities on the ground that needed to be compatible with the timing of the phases of empirical data collection. This could be whether or not certain training sectors are open or not, or the timing of the start and finish of training cycles. In Belgium, an effort was nonetheless made to select training sectors that dealt with more or less diverse groups in terms of their social exclusion and distance from the world of employment.



Belgium

- ► CID, Verviers qualifying training course "healthcare assistant"
- ▶ Alterform, Liège qualifying training course "healthcare assistant"
- ➤ AID, Court-Saint-Étienne non-qualifying training course "graphical communications"
- ▶ Perron de l'Ilon, Namur non-qualifying training course "catering"
- Mode d'Emploi, Charleroi training course for guidance towards employment

Spain

- ▶ Escola l'Esperança
- ▶ UEC Santa Coloma
- Programma Incopora

France

- Sud Concept, Corsica nonqualifying training course "support for career choice and pathway to employment"
- CDE Petra Patrimonia, Corsica non-qualifying training course "support for business creation"
- ▶ ID Formation, Corsica nonqualifying training course "support for career choice and pathway to employment"



- CSG, Udine shortened adult qualification "graphical operator"
- ► FOSF, Pordenone 3 shortened qualifications for adults "butchery, bakery, accounting"
- Opimm, Bologna shortened qualification for disabled adults "accounting technician" "tourist services technician" and "Web data"
- ▶ Red Cross qualifying training course "carer"
- ▶ M-Promex qualifying training course "preparation for business creation"



In order to enhance the autonomous power of individuals to act, it is essential that training bodies develop various social and educational mechanisms that are adapted to their circumstances in order to "equip" them to meet the demands of the world of employment and social life in general. The priority mission for the training centres is to act on those individual conversion rates in order to give the jobseeker the correct tools to deal with various social worlds, those of employment and work being the foremost.

This chapter deals with the analysis of the support mechanisms put in place by the operators for the benefit of their beneficiaries. In particular, it aims to highlight the conditions under which these training, social and vocational support actions effectively support the broadening of individuals' power to act, while also enabling them to make free and autonomous choices.

1.

REDUCING THE INEQUALITIES IN ACCESS TO TRAINING

This section deals with the practices put in place by the training course operators to reduce the inequalities at the point of access to training in order to give the opportunity to the greatest number of candidates to embark on the training pathway they have chosen.

1.1.

Non-discriminatory access practices

Setting up various candidate selection mechanisms at the point of access to training is a widespread practice in all of the training centres studied. While they may be useful and even necessary, the way in which some of them are set up could present a real obstacle for access to training for those furthest removed from employment.

The intention here is not to argue that this type of mechanism should not exist. However, it is possible to design access and selection processes that are not based on a unilateral logic of matching the candidate to the training on offer, but on a more balanced logic that probes the added-value of the training on offer in the candidate's pathway to social and vocational integration.

This supposes that access and selection are centred above all on the candidate's aspirations and integration project, and not just on their "willingness" to join the proposed training pathway. In other words, the process should seek to ensure that committing to training does not lead to another failure for the candidates. Setting up interviews on access should enable them to be informed of their commitments and the requirements linked to them.

In certain training organisations, while the intention is not to prioritise entry into training and excluding the most poorly qualified, the way in which the practices are implemented do, however, lead to this perverse effect.

This is notably the case in two training schemes for the support of business creation. In theory, these are accessible to any type of target group, whatever their level of qualifications. In fact, however, the setting up of a cumbersome and lengthy selection phase based on submitting a solid application file has the effect of eliminating candidates that are not sufficiently able to justify the feasibility of their project.

This is not to suggest that any selection process should be eliminated, but to highlight that some of those modalities can lead to driving out or discouraging people who are not able to defend their project in writing without help. Despite having potentially worthwhile projects, candidates with less educational capital find it difficult to take this chance to access training which, in theory, is open to them.

The access and selection process must ensure that committing to training does not lead to a further failure for the candidate.

Some selection processes have the effect of discouraging the candidates with less "educational capital", even though they might have a high quality career project.

Other operators find themselves under pressure from the funders of the training in terms of vocational insertion results at the end of the course. Even though they are organising training schemes for a group that is removed from employment, the funders' expectations in terms of hiring have the effect on the professionals in charge of access that they are conditioned to choose the candidates according to their potential for employability. This pressure leads the training organisations to implement practices that serve the interests of the funders over those of the beneficiaries. The priority objective becomes employability rather than the enablement of people furthest removed from employment.

Motivation interviews: are they relevant?

Probing the determination and the motivation of candidates at the point of access as part of individual interviews is a widespread practice in most of the vocational training bodies studied. However, some studies, notably in behavioural psychology, consider that motivation is a fluid concept; it largely depends on the context and cannot be considered as an explanatory factor in itself for human behaviour without taking their environment into consideration.

With this in mind, R. Darquenne (2013) warns against the ineffectiveness of the use of this notion as a criterion for selection at the point of access for training and integration schemes. Brandishing motivation as the sole condition for access to training without examining any lack of motivation more deeply seems to be ineffective, particularly when working with people who are most poorly qualified. The latter often do not have the necessary language skills to rally express their "motivation". Therefore, when working with this kind of target group, it is more effective to probe this "motivation" in action. These words echo some of the access practices used in some operators.

In Belgium, for example, an enterprise providing training through work in catering enterprise decided to get rid of the motivation interview at the point of access in order to avoid the trap described above. The professional working for the centre believe that this type of process is too formal and that it is not appropriate for gauging the real motivation of their highly socially vulnerable target group. This is why they have chosen to evaluate this motivation during the training process on the basis of attitudes at work. We should note that this operator benefits from an administrative and regulatory framework that makes this type of selection possible; this system permits regular access to the training all thorough the year whenever someone drops out of training. The professionals in charge of training can therefore more readily take on someone who is at risk of not completing the course.

Other operators are subject to more binding administrative rules that do not give them the flexibility in terms of entry into the course. They are very often

Using motivation as the sole condition for access to training without working on why it may be absent is ineffective when one is working with people who are alienated from employment.

faced with too many potential candidates compared to the number of places available per training session. This means that they cannot dispense with the selection process at the point of access; the individual motivation interview is one of its main tools.

Using motivation as a working horizon rather than a criterion for elimination

However, in some of the centres studied, these mechanisms worked according to a philosophy that differs from the "matching" approach described above. Motivation is used more as a working horizon than a criterion for elimination. It is used to detect aspects of the training scheme that seem to raise the interest and enthusiasm of the candidates and which meet their social and vocational aspirations.

In Italy and in Belgium, two operators in the multimedia and graphical communications sector operate a training scheme for poorly qualified jobseekers. Their intention is to ensure access to training for those whose education and work background has been chaotic in order to give them a second chance. With this in mind, the individual motivation interview is used to make sure that the candidates are interested in the course and that they have a feel for the future job, regardless of their prior path. The purpose of the access process is therefore the same for the two operators. They are seeking to ensure that the training course has a meaning in the candidate's life and that it brings added value to their pathway. As a Belgian trainer reports: "the aim is for people to feel good during the training course and that they get something out of it on the professional or personal level, otherwise we are not doing them a favour and everybody is wasting their time". From this perspective, selection has but one goal: "respond to those who want to undertake the training in the most appropriate way in order to avoid further failures" (Italian training course operator). In any case, the philosophy behind those access and selection processes has a positive effect on the candidates. There are many who told us they felt welcome, that they were listened to, and thus were relaxed during the selection interview despite initial anxieties.

To sum up, these mechanisms for access to training are centred on the development of the individual; they attempt to decode what the person really wants to do and are conceived, above all, as a tool that is at the service of their projects and aspirations.

KEY ACTIONS

The access and selection process must above all be seen as an instrument at the service of the individual's project for social and vocational integration. It has to decode what the candidate wants to do and gauge the added-value of the training on offer for their integration pathway rather than seek to test whether their profile matches the training scheme under consideration.

- ensuring that modalities for access and selection that do not discriminate against the candidates with the least schooling from the outset, despite them having a quality career project (avoiding, for example, selection processes that are solely based on tests of written expression);
- avoiding using the concept of motivation as the sole criterion for selection and condition for access to the training. Motivation may, however, be a subject for discussion and used as a working horizon. In this case, it is a question of detecting the aspects of the training course that generate the candidate's interest and enthusiasm or, inversely, to seek to understand the reasons for a lack of motivation, of reticence in relation to training;
- ▶ making sure, when this is possible, to gauge the candidates' motivation in action during the course on the basis of their attitude at work rather than orally judging their motivation in a formal selection interview.

1.2.

(Re)orientations tailored to the beneficiaries' realities

When the selection procedure ends in failure, the individual interviews can be a useful tool for pointing the candidates towards training and/or support schemes that are more in tune with their integration project and their life situation.

Inclusive support at this stage consists in giving the individuals the information necessary for them to be able to make free choices in relation to their lives and their integration.

In Belgium and in Italy, the access practices of training providers working with people who are alienated from the world of work are based on the principle of "leave no one behind". As a Belgian trainer says: "The selection procedure never ends with 'no, sorry, you're on your own, there is nothing we can do for you". The professionals in charge of access and selection are careful to offer reorientation tailored to the needs of each candidate by giving them personalised information.

The need for personalised information implies having a clear knowledge of the existing training schemes and/or other possibilities for training that are available in the region. Hence the importance of being part of a network.

What some operators do is to organise 'taster' modules for a trade lasting within their organisation, lasting a few weeks. Setting up this kind of pretraining module, with a gentler rhythm and lighter workload, is another useful way of giving the beneficiary the possibility to make an informed choice about their future occupation. This arrangement allows the candidate to ascertain whether the chosen trade actually suits them, and the training centre to evaluate their motivation "in action".

This trial presents a further advantage for beneficiaries who are jobseekers subject to the constraints imposed by activation schemes. It gives them some latitude for decision by giving them the possibility of disengaging from the training at the end of the module without running the risk of being sanctioned by the public employment authorities. This is not always an option. Some of the training providers studied do not offer such modules; the trainee's binding commitment begins when the training starts, with sanctions enforced if they quit. This possibility for the trainee to reverse their choice broadens their field of opportunities; engaging in a choice does not determine a definitive direction and makes it possible to experiment and come back on the initial decision at a cost that is bearable.

Organising 'taster' modules for the trade enables more informed vocational choices to be made.

KEY ACTIONS

When the training on offer does not match the candidate's social and vocational project, it seems of particular relevance to use the individual access interviews as a tool for redirecting the candidate towards schemes for training and/or support that are more suited to their career project and/or their actual life situation.

- ▶ giving the candidate personalised information rather than drowning them in a flood of complex information that is disconnected from their current reality. This shows why it is important to have an access process that is centred on understanding the candidate's personal situation and their life/integration project;
- providing information that is of direct use to the candidate, i.e. that is concrete and practical in terms of the steps to take to join another form of training or support scheme;
- ensuring that the professionals dealing with this stage have a detailed knowledge of the available orientation schemes and/or possibilities for training in the region. This requirement highlights the relevance of networking with other players in the field of vocational training and social action.
 - To foster optimal orientation for the candidate, it is relevant and useful to set up pre-training modules lasting a few weeks before formally entering a training course. This option has two advantages:
- ▶ the candidate has the opportunity to make a more enlightened vocational choice before a final commitment to training. Furthermore, their choice is reversible, which broadens their field of opportunities;
- b the professionals have a chance to assess the candidates' motivation on the basis of attitudes at work, which gives the latter the chance to demonstrate in practice what they are able to do.
 - Generally, it is essential, at the access and selection stage, to foster a redirection that is enabling. This consists in giving candidates the information necessary for making informed and free choices in relation to their integration.

1.3.

Making accommodations

Several different personal hindrances can complicate access to training for many beneficiaries. Problems of mobility and insufficient childcare provision are the most common.

Some accommodations in the scheduling of training courses can make them more compatible with the beneficiaries' personal constraints and help to broaden the possibilities of access to training. Some providers have chosen to do this given the absence of existing external alternatives.

In Corsica, several trainees living in rural areas are faced with mobility problems linked to public transport timetables. Two operators providing non-qualifying training courses in guidance towards employment have taken this issue into consideration by, wherever possible, adapting the training timetable to the constraints facing the beneficiaries.

In Italy, a training provider in Bologna deploys similar practices. The schedule for each training session is adapted according to the beneficiaries' constraints. For example the final training cycle was programmed for a duration of four hours per day so that it would be compatible with the timetables of the public transport used by the participants.

The testimony of many Corsican and Italian beneficiaries concurs that this flexibility in the organisation was decisive in them taking up and continuing in the training: "Without this flexibility in timing, I could not have undertaken training, nor carried out my work placements, because I do not have a driving licence" (...) "if my referrer had not proposed this solution, I would have had to give up the training course".

There are many such testimonials. They illustrate the fundamental role played by these accommodations in opening up training opportunities.

There are also other barriers relating to the individuals themselves that can hinder or even prevent access to training for those furthest removed from employment, even for training that is, in theory, aimed at them. It may be insufficient command of the language, difficulties in using information technology or weakness in numeracy, all of which are skills required in some training sectors.

Some training providers choose to encourage the beneficiaries to join the course in spite of those difficulties. They offer "enhanced" training actions t50 help them overcome these obstacles. These are carried out through collaborations with different training providers. Each takes on a trainee or group of trainees, according to their specialism.

In Corsica, for example, the operators who offer guid-

Making accommodations in the timetabling of the training course that are compatible with the trainees' personal constraints helps to broaden the possibilities for access to training.

Setting up enhanced training actions integrated into or in parallel with the main course makes the course accessible to individuals who would not otherwise have been able to join or pursue it.

ance towards employment pathways organise "proficiency assessments" on entry. These assessments are carried out for French, mathematics and general knowledge. They are not intended to be selective, but to detect difficulties the trainees might have in order to offer them remedial measures that are tailored to their needs.

In Belgium, some training providers working with socially deprived groups also offer remedial classes to those that need them. These remedial measures are integrated into, or complementary to, the training pathway, and are organised in various subjects, such as literacy, French, numeracy, digital technologies or even speech therapy.

Setting up such schemes that are integrated into or in parallel with the common component of the training course enables the course to become accessible to individuals who would not otherwise have been able to join or pursue it.

It is, however, important to point out that many providers of certifying courses with a standardised pathway are not in a position to set up such enhancement modules in some subjects in their curriculum. The providers are obliged to meet specified requirements, which strongly delineate the content and duration of training courses, thus making it difficult to personalise the course. Nonetheless, it may be possible for those providers to set up collaborations with other training providers to be able to offer this support.

KEY ACTIONS

To lower some of the barriers that are hindering access to training, it is useful to offer candidates realistic opportunities for training, which are concretely accessible to them, taking account of the difficulties they face at various levels.

On the organisational level, it is wise, as far as possible, to accommodate the training schedules so that they are compatible with the beneficiaries' personal constraints.

For apprenticeships, it is worth setting up "enhanced" training actions for people who have difficulties in certain subjects. These actions can either be integrated into, or run parallel to, the main training course. This has the advantage of making the course accessible to individuals who would not otherwise have been able to join or follow them.

This implies coordinated networking between different training providers, who take on the beneficiary according to their respective specialism.

2

FAVOURING HOLISTIC SUPPORT FOR THE BENEFICIARIES

The recent tendency for vocational training schemes to focus on a rapid return to the labour market for jobseekers has led them to centre their work solely on developing skills that are useful for employment. This approach based on improving employability misses an essential point, particularly when working on (re)integrating poorly qualified people who are alienated from the world of work: the need to also – above all – rebuild their relationship with activity and work. As Santelman (2015, p.13) rightly says: "the vocational training and integration schemes for poorly qualified adults are faced with a dual challenge: simultaneously rebuilding a positive relationship between the individuals and knowledge, as well as with work and employment". We may also add a third challenge - that linked to rebuilding a positive and at-ease self-image, which are essential to successful and lasting vocational integration and social emancipation. For many people distanced from employment, having a chaotic prior background has often led them to doubt their own potential and have a devalued image of themselves. Training actions therefore need to be deployed that go beyond insertion into employment and set themselves a "wider goal of rebuilding identity, collective and social and cultural reference points" (Fevres-Limonet, 2015, p.107).

The tendency of vocational training courses to focus on improving employability forgets an essential point when working to reintegrate people removed from employment: the need to, above all, rebuild the relationship with activity and work.

At the same time, the current specificity of vocational training courses for the least qualified is that they are closely linked to various support and social and vocational insertion schemes. The learning aspects are often diluted in the minutiae of support, which are more properly the remit of social work. While this linkage is necessary, the issue is to find the right balance so that the training activities are not relegated to simply functioning as a support to the re-socialisation and remediation of the shortfalls of the most vulnerable.

From this perspective, training providers that deal with a poorly qualified target group cannot avoid reflecting on both their pedagogical practices and on their activities to provide support into employment, with a view to reclaiming identity.

Taking these multiple dimensions into consideration implies a holistic approach to working with the beneficiaries. In other words, the professional have to set up support measures that are comprehensive and systemic (Labbé, 2012) by paying attention to the real-life situations in the various spheres of the beneficiaries' social lives and on the way those experiences impact on their training pathway and, more generally, on their social and vocational integration.

In brief, it is essential to link the "vocational" component to the "social" component in the training and support process, with a view to empowerment². This delicate linkage is a major condition for the success of training and integration schemes for people who are poorly qualified and removed from employment.

Taking into account the multidimensionality of experiences and how this affects learning implies a more holistic approach to working with the beneficiaries.

The empirical analysis confirms this observation. In practice, there is a very strong permanent interconnection between work on vocational skills and work on social skills.

In Italy, as part of a qualifying training course in graphic design and multimedia aimed at a highly deprived target group, the operator has set up a "tutoring" system. Each trainee receives individual accompaniment from their adviser throughout the course. These tutors, who are originally educators, are taught some aspects of the training course (graphic design software used in the lessons) so that they can intervene during the training course to provide help for the beneficiaries. This guidance enables personalised and multidisciplinary support to be given to each person on the course to maximise the chances of success.

In Corsica, in the orientation towards employment courses, psychosocial support is formally provided externally from the centre and outside training hours. It is the remit of partners from the world of social work. Nonetheless, in practice, the individual interviews relating to the vocational project are also a chance to take stock of the personal difficulties that are hindering a return to work. When working with people removed from the world of employment, the trainers insist on the importance of building a relationship of trust in this space for social and professional reflection. Working on the different facets of life experience, in a secure space and with someone who is trusted, is fundamental in order to regain self-confidence.

The trainees who benefited from this dual accompaniment speak of the determining part that it played for their self-confidence and self-esteem, as well as on their motivation to complete their course at times of discouragement or difficult moments. Some even add that the social dimension of this accompaniment helped them to get their lives back on track and give them back a will to work.

² *Empowerment* may be defined as the social construction of the power of an individual or group to act on their social, economic or political position, condition or situation. This notion is the subject of a more detailed discussion in section 6 of this chapter.

KEY ACTIONS

When working with people removed from the world of employment, it is essential to closely link the "vocational" and "social" components of the training and support process with a view to empowerment.

- developing a holistic approach to working with the beneficiaries by taking into account the multiple dimensions of their experiences, including those lived outside of the employment sphere, and to consider how these may influence their relationship to training and work;
- developing regular collaborations with actors in the fields of social work, who can take charge of the outside-of-work dimension of the accompaniment, in cases where the mission of the professionals tasked with training only relates to the vocational aspect of the integration process.

AN APPROACH TO TRAINING AND SUPPORT "WITH THE OTHER"

In order to provide training and support work that is multidisciplinary and enabling, some aspects of the approach are inseparable.

the training and support practices to the needs of the process. First, it is essential that the training and support schemes are adapted to the needs and interests of the beneficiaries. Correctly calibrating those practices implies taking into account both their difficulties and their wishes in order to construct a training goal that is realistic and sparks their motivation. This implies placing the beneficiaries at the centre of the process. The training project for each participant must be constructed jointly by the professionals and the trainee in a spirit of negotiation, that is to say matched with the user (Labbé, 2012). As highlighted by F. Dubet (2002, p.356): "contrary to the socialisation imposed on children, socialisation with a supported adult necessarily has to be voluntary, since it is considered that to have those choices, the adult is expected to have and to exercise a minimum of power".

3 1

Supporting autonomy and the exercise of free choices

Adopting this stance as a professional mean taking the beneficiaries' aspirations and opinions relating to directions and decisions concerning them seriously. The training and support practices that increase capabilities are those that lead the trainee towards goals they have set themselves by advancing the exercise of free choices.

This freedom of choice and decision granted to individuals means, as indicated by R. Darquenne (2013, p.27), not imposing a "predefined normative horizon" on them. It is about moving away from a prescriptive logic according to which the professionals assert the claim that they know better than the trainee what is good for them or not.

trainee towards by supporting the exercise of their free

When the social and vocational goals are not imposed but chosen, it must be the beneficiary who leads the project, not the staff tasked with training them. The corollary to this freedom of choice and action is autonomy. An enabling vocational training and integration project is therefore one that also aims to give the individual autonomy. It is important that the educational and support practices do not amount to taking charge of the person in an infantilising manner. It is not about making decisions or acting in the beneficiary's stead, but on the contrary, to support and accompany them in building their autonomy. This involves providing them with the tools to make them understand the demands implied by choosing the option under consideration, the levers that can be used, the obstacles that may be faced and the effort required in meeting those goals. This accompaniment should enable the beneficiary to engage in pursuing a career and social life project that they have chosen with full knowledge of the implications and, in other words, to take up their responsibilities.

3.2.

Equipping the beneficiaries to face the "social worlds"

The training does not take p0lace in a cocoon insulted from reality. Its aim is to give the beneficiary the means to move closer to the world of employment and the other spheres of social life. Providing them with support to give them more power over their situation therefore means facing social worlds, particularly the world of employment.

From this perspective, support towards social and vocational integration is seen as a relationship that helps equip the person to make them able to face the different facets of reality. While this stance encourages the beneficiaries to take up their responsibilities, it is to be seen as a tool at the service of the person and not as an instrument for the apportionment of blame (Darquenne, 2013).

The corollary to freedom of choice and action is autonomy.

The different aspects of this stance towards social and vocational accompaniment draws from the ideal type of "working with the other" put forward by D. Laforgue (2012). It is characterised by an accompaniment that aims to support a person in finding for themselves the internal resources to push themselves further within a personalised relationship conceived of as a tool for social emancipation.

This stance differs on "work on the other" which is an asymmetric relationship between the professional and the beneficiary. It can take two opposed forms. Either the institutional actor aims above all to take care of the beneficiary, by aligning their action with the latter's point of view, it is thus the beneficiary who defines the action to undertake; or, the institutional actor considers that they know what needs to be done to support the individual and defines alone how they will be taken in charge. This interpretation echoes what actors on the ground are saying.

In Corsica and Belgium, professionals in charge of training and accompaniment insist on the need not to act "in the place of" the beneficiaries, which risks fostering "infantilisation" or an attitude of dependency. On the contrary, it is a matter of encouraging autonomy at every stage of the training process, of supporting the beneficiaries in making free and informed choices; ultimately, it is about Il suggesting that they take charge of themselves, but in a safe way, by giving them the means and "safety nets" needed in case of difficulties.

An enabling training process is one that aims to support the beneficiary in the construction of their autonomy and equip them to take up their responsibilities.

KEY ACTIONS

It is essential that the professionals in charge of training see their carry out their work with an approach of support "with the other". This stance is based on the principles according to which it is the beneficiary who leads the training project; they must be at the centre of the process.

- ▶ listening to, and take seriously, the vocational aspirations of the beneficiaries, as well as their points of view on the directions and decisions that concern their own pathway;
- ▶ not imposing social and vocational goals on the beneficiaries but, on the contrary, for these to be the jointly constructed by the beneficiary and the professionals, in a logic of negotiation;
- encouraging the beneficiary to become autonomous and take up their responsibilities at the various stages of the training process, in a safe manner, by giving them the necessary support if difficulties arise. This means moving away from an infantilising conception of accompaniment according to which one knows better than the beneficiary what is good or not for them. It is about not taking decisions or acting in their place;
- conceiving de conceiving the use of responsibility as a working instrument, not as one for apportioning blame. This means providing the beneficiary with the correct tools for taking up their responsibilities, notably by giving them the correct information on the consequences of their decisions and actions, while supporting the exercising of their free choices.

4.

TRAINING SCHEMES THAT ARE CONNECTED TO THE REALITY OF THE WORKPLACE

There is nothing new in stating that the linkage between knowledge acquisition and placement in work situations are a key factor for success for those undergoing vocational training. Learning by doing establishes permanent bridges between knowledge and work. Many observers and actors on the ground say this. Some even suggest putting work back at the centre of vocational training activities, as the workplace is recognised as the main place for learning, especially in the case of training for poorly-qualified adults.

4.1.

Obvious educational advantages

A close linkage between training and work first of all enables a group that is often doubtful of the use of training to see it as a concrete means of accessing a trade. By being placed in a working situation, the beneficiaries are contributing to the making of a "work", which has a valued social usefulness (Tilman, 2011). This gives a concrete meaning to their apprenticeships and enables them to take on a role in which they can get recognition and gratification. As P. Santelman (2015, p.16) says: "Foremost, it is interest in a trade, a type of activity, a work environment that are the cornerstone for engagement in a vocational training course".

Furthermore, training people who are alienated from employment with a view to bringing them closer to the world of work implies not keeping them in a cocoon insulated from the world, but to give them support in placing themselves in a real-life situation and facing the demands of the sphere of employment.

Many testimonies from trainees in several of the sectors analysed agree. There are many statements such as the following: "Thanks to the workplace placement, I felt close to the actual realities of the carpentry trade and it also helped me to find work, since the firm kept me on". (Beneficiary, orientation centre, Corsica).

"The advantage of this scheme is the mix of theory and practice; I loved the practice during my placement because in enabled me to get noticed by the manager of the hairdressing salon. Without the placement, I couldn't have convinced her to take me on". (Beneficiary, orientation centre, Belgium).

An approach to training that is centred on placement in real work situations also enables the beneficiaries to become aware that they are developing skills linked to a trade, the "knowledge of action". This is "built and acquired in a given social context and is linked to a specific occupational activity, it is a

The linkage between training and work enables a group that is doubtful about the usefulness of training to see it as a concrete means for accessing a trade. social practice taking place in a circumscribed universe (...) it is the heart of work" (Tilman, 2011, p.18). This learning can only be acquired on the job. It is by giving concrete experience of work to the beneficiaries that the trainers have the greatest chance of building learning that is solid and lasting. This is confirmed by beneficiaries: "I especially enjoyed the workplace placements, because i really felt like an employee of the business. I got very involved in what I was being asked to do and, in spite of my shyness, I always dared to ask questions to learn how to better carry out the tasks I was assigned to perform" (Beneficiary, training centre, Italy).

Connecting the apprenticeships to the realities of the job has the advantage of preparing the trainees to integrate a working collective.

Connecting apprenticeships more closely to working reality presents a third undeniable advantage: preparing the trainees to enter into a work collective. Training for a trade is also learning how to join an occupational community, with a collective identity, common rules and values, as well as a certain conception of work. Developing this consciousness of being part of an occupational community enables the beneficiaries to build a social identity that is shared by all those who exercise the same trade, this leads to acquiring a social status that is recognised and valued.

The role played by training in the re-appropriation of occupational cultures and identities is often underestimated (Fevres-Limonet, 2015). Yet, this dimension has its importance for training schemes aimed at those removed from employment, since one of the major challenges is precisely to (re)build a positive relationship with work. The words of this Italian trainee undertaking a qualifying accounting assistant illustrate this well: "Despite my lack of experience in accounting, I was able to do two placements in an accounting firm. It gave me a real boost and I was therefore disappointed when I stopped because I felt so good there, I felt as though I was part of the team. I had integrated really well and felt really valued" (Beneficiary, training centre, Italy).

These considerations tend to recommend the setting up of learning approaches based on alternating between learning and work. This pedagogical principle is not new and many of those involved in vocational training recognise the added-value it brings. This joint observation does not, however, lead to unanimity on the way of implementing this alternation. In practice, it refers to a broad range of heterogeneous practices. It is implemented in ways that range from more or less regular alternation between theory and practice within the centres to alternation in the place of training that is variable in its effectiveness.

4.2.

The conditions for an enabling implementation of alternation in training

Alternation should foremost be in the setting, not just the form of the training. Beyond a simple declaration recognising the importance of alternation, this section deals with bringing to light the conditions that need to be met for this educational approach to be implemented in a way that favours the empowerment of the beneficiaries of training.

First and foremost, the alternation should be in the setting – training centre and workplace – not just in the forms of training (alternation between theory and practice during training hours at the centre) (Tilman, 2011). While the latter may well be useful for putting theoretical learning into practice, it is not sufficient for providing a real opportunity of integrating into an occupational collective and testing oneself in real work.

The importance of alternation in the setting compared to that in the form is underlined by the centre managers in Spain, for example. However, they also stress the increasing difficulty in finding businesses willing to provide placements for trainees who are removed from the world of employment. This observation is also true in other countries.

A second essential condition is the regularity of the alternation between periods spent at the centre and those in a work setting. Whether it is taster sessions in trades as part of orientation modules or longer placements as part of (pre)qualifying training schemes, it is important that the immersion sequences take place several times and in several workplaces over the course of the training process.

Being faced with different occupational realities is necessary in order to progressively validate the relevance of the career project. Furthermore, it enables several options to be trialled and therefore broadens the scope of possibilities to make more informed choices.

In Corsica, in the training schemes aimed at accompaniment in making an occupational choice, alternation between training and placements is used as a genuine means of educational guidance to support trainees in defining their project. The scheme provides for several work placements. These job-tasters during the course of the scheme are one of the educational strong points of this type of scheme. Many trainees who have taken part in these orientation schemes confirm the usefulness of multiple taster sessions in order to make an informed career choice, as illustrated by this testimony: "I tried several jobs in placements. Hairdressing first, as this was the choice from my heart, I then went on to sales of cosmetics, then of flowers (...) While I really enjoyed all three jobs, the experiences confirmed for me that I really wanted to work in hairdressing". (Beneficiary, Bastia training centre, Corsica).

Nonetheless, for these periods on the ground to be of educational use, they have to be closely linked to socio-educational support at the training centre. This linkage is essential if we want the occupational experiences to be put at the service of the beneficiaries' learning, i.e. that they really serve in the acquisition of knowledge, knowhow and social skills, rather than just being simple occupational placements with no educational goal. This support or guidance must take place before and after the immersion sequences. In order for alternation not to be a mere series of disjointed undertakings with

The regularity of occupational immersion sequences is essential in order to progressively validate the relevance of the career project and enable a more informed choice to be made.

In order to put the occupational experiences at the service of the learning outcomes, they have to be linked to socioeducational support prior to and after the placement. no coherence between themselves, those training professionals need to become "experience coaches" (Darquenne, 2013). Prior to the immersion, this coaching role consists in giving the trainees support in preparing to face the experience and after the placement, in helping them evaluate the experience, identify the difficulties encountered, areas for improvement, as well as the learning acquired and that still to develop.

Accompaniment in the occupational immersion will be most effective if it is a space for listening to the beneficiaries aspirations, as well as their fears and doubts in the face of the world of work.

This accompaniment in the occupational immersion will be most effective if it is a space for listening to the beneficiaries aspirations, as well as their fears and doubts in the face of the world of work. At this stage as at others, it is important for the trainees to be able to express their point of view and for this to be listened to: "Before and after each placement, we were given individual support that enabled us to express our needs and our problems in terms of the progress of our career project (...) With my adviser, we worked on my project together and, each time, I was able to express my wishes, my difficulties. We did not always agree, but I was never pushed aside, quite the opposite". (Beneficiary, training centre, Corsica).

As already well-documented in section two of this chapter, although it is the case that this support is part of a vocational training course, the educational work on strictly occupational issues will benefit from being linked to social support aimed at breaking down personal barriers that may hinder progress in occupational apprenticeships. After the field immersion sequence, it is indispensible to have a debriefing session at the training centre in order to analyse the progression in the acquisitions and the subjective lived experience of this occupational exposure.

The accompaniment is aimed at advising the beneficiary whilst also leaving them the freedom to choose their placements in an informed manner.

This approach to accompanying the trainee must be supportive whilst also fostering autonomy. This means encouraging them to find the future occupational placements themselves, rather than doing it in their place. This empowerment goes hand-in-hand with control over their vocational choices. With this in mind, it is about giving the trainee careful advice on their placements, whilst leaving them the freedom to make the final choice in an informed manner.

In Corsica and in Belgium, several training providers deploy practices in terms of the search and choice of placements that are clearly intended in a logic of empowerment for the beneficiaries. In doing this, they are going against the dominant practices in this matter in most other training schemes studied.

In Belgium, for example, in a training-through-work enterprise, this accompaniment stance is an explicit pedagogical choice. The professionals in charge of this support recognise that this option puts the trainees in an uncomfortable situation: many of them ask for this undertaking to be done for them. The trainers believe that they do not help them as they should be the actors in their own social and vocational rehabilitation. This philosophy goes hand-in-hand with the latitude given to beneficiaries in terms of their choice of placement. The

trainees are given pointers and advice in their choices, but make the final decision.

To sum up, an enabling approach to alternating training should combine a broadening of vocational possibilities by providing a multiplicity of "taster" placements with appropriate support prior to and after each placement in order to serve the learning outcomes whilst also fostering autonomy and freedom of choice for the beneficiaries.

KEY ACTIONS

In order for the beneficiaries to see the train as a concrete means to access a trade as much as possible, it is essential to favour training schemes that are closely linked to placements in real-life work situations.

- encouraging a maximum of alternation in the settings for learning – workplace and training centre – above alternation between learning modes, over the duration of the course and not just towards the end;
- ▶ prioritising the setting up of an intensive mechanism for facing real-life work situations, by multiplying the periods of occupational immersion during the various stages of the course. This is essential in order to broaden the range of work opportunities for the beneficiary, progressively validating the suitability of their career project and enabling them to make a more informed choice;
- closely linking these occupational experiences to a social and vocational accompaniment before and after each immersion sequence so that the latter can genuinely serve the learning outcomes.

The professionals in charge of training will benefit from seeing their mission from a "coaching" perspective. Their role consists in putting the beneficiaries in real-life work situations, whilst providing a safety net.

- ▶ prior to the immersion, accompanying each beneficiary in the preparation of their field experience and, afterwards, helping them in their evaluation of this experience by identifying the difficulties encountered, areas for improvement, the learning acquired and still to be constructed. The function of this accompaniment is to provide a meaning to the experience and the learning;
- > supporting the beneficiary's autonomy by advising them on their placements, whilst also encouraging them to find them for themselves by giving them the final freedom to choose that or those they prefer.

5.

TEACHING METHODS THAT ARE PARTICIPATORY AND ENHANCE SELF-WORTH

While alternation in the setting is fundamental as part of learning through doing, alternation in the modes of learning within the training centres is inescapable. For them to have a concrete meaning, it is best that the theoretical contents of the course are closely linked to practical cases or simulations of real-life situations. Practice illuminates the theoretical contents and enables them to be systematically connected to the practice of the trade. This permanent connection between theory and trade gives a meaning to the training and reminds the trainees that it enables them to learn the desired trade.

The principle is similar in many of the training providers whose practices were analysed: putting the trainees in a situation that is as close as possible to the occupational reality during training lessons at the centre. Nevertheless, not everything is learnt in action and in practice. These simulations rest on phases of diffusion and demonstration to begin with. They also benefit from being consolidated afterwards by phases of exchange and reflection on the practice. These moments of reflexivity by the learners on their learning is an important element of appropriation and anchoring of the knowledge and knowhow acquired (Souchet, 2015).

Simulations of reallife work situations gain from being consolidated by phases of exchange and reflection on the practice.

5.1.

Giving value to the beneficiaries' experiential knowledge

When training groups of people who are removed from employment, it is best to approach the theoretical phases of transmission and reflection as much as possible through the use of active teaching methods. These are generally aimed at imparting knowledge, knowhow and social skills to the learners by calling on their experiences. The goal is to transform these experiences into skills that are useful for employment.

While taking into account the experiences of individuals during their training courses is a common preoccupation in learning schemes, their prior experience – in both occupational and personal acquisitions – is more rarely considered. Yet, the attention paid to the trainees' experiential knowledge is essential because it contributes to developing their sense of competence. This is an important benefit when training poorly-qualified people, who often have a low self-image. By starting from their potentials and aptitudes, the trainers therefore work on reinforcing the beneficiaries self-esteem. Furthermore, starting from the individuals' own knowledge and experiences enables more meaning to be given to the teaching practices and the training course in general.

The attention paid to the learners' experiential knowledge is essential because it contributes to developing their sense of competence. Being attentive to who the learners are and what they know is an attitude that must be generalised among training professionals. Generally, paying attention to the learners, what they are and what they know, is an attitude that needs to be generalised among professionals in the training organisations analysed. Some teams of educators have already grasped this pedagogical principle. In Belgium, it is a basic principle within most of the training centres, even though it may be put into practice in sometimes very different ways.

Among other training course operators observed, such as in Spain and Italy, this pedagogical approach is not set out as explicitly. Nonetheless, analysis of the statements of professionals and trainees show that the pedagogical principle underlies most of their day-to-day practices.

5.2. Eavouring collectiv

Favouring collective learning by and with peers

From this perspective, collective learning by and with peers is favoured in many of the training schemes studied. The aim is to rest on the group to foster learning through a dynamic of interaction and cooperation. This collective approach to learning is particularly useful and relevant after the occupational immersion sequences, during the phases of reflection on the experiences undergone in the work situation. These exchanges give the trainees an opportunity to locate their experience compared with those of others and discover different responses brought by others to the same problems. This dynamic of joint reflection enables the trainees to take a step back from the problems encountered in order to work out more appropriate future responses.

In Italy, one of the training providers operating qualifying courses in butchery, bakery and catering for poorly qualified people favours this kind of collective learning approach downstream from the placement periods. A systematic collective return to the training centre after each workplace placement during the course is aimed at clarifying and deepening some of the learning acquired on the job, as well as formalising the progression those acquisitions. The trainers insist on the importance of pooling the reflections on the occupational experiences in order to look afresh at their practices and their attitudes at work.

The sense of belonging to a collective is fundamental for the trainees' motivation and commitment to training.

In a general sense, these collective learning mechanisms are fundamental in preparing the learners to integrate into workplace collectives. Inasmuch as most occupational activities take place within a team, this exercise enables them to learn to decode and manage group dynamics, the relationships lived out therein and the parts in it played by each. This learning also enables the development mutual support and exchange skills that foster the emergence of a sense of belonging to a collective, by creating a link between persons. This social link is fundamental for the trainees' motivation and commitment during training (Souchet, 2015).

5.3.

Favouring assessments that are at the service of the beneficiaries' progress

Assessing the learning acquired is an unavoidable element in any training course. Nonetheless, it can be designed to be part of a pedagogy of success, which aims promote the assessment of the progression of the learning process of the beneficiaries over the duration of the training course, and not just the certification of their achievements at the end of the course. Assessing training in this way is part of an approach of support for learning. Instead of merely sanctioning the learners' shortcomings and weaknesses, it seeks to value their achievements, whilst also informing them of the learning that still needs to be consolidated.

For the beneficiaries whose educational background is chaotic, assessment should be thought of as an ally to their learning, not as a sanction

Although this approach cannot be substituted for certificating assessment, particularly in the case of qualifying training course, it should be favoured within the framework of vocational training for groups of people that are socially and vocationally belittled in their relationship with knowledge. They very often have a chaotic educational background made up of failures. At this stage, it is important that they may consider assessment as an ally to their learning rather than a sanction.

For this approach to assessment to have a meaning and be effective, it must be regular, throughout the various stages of the training process. Whatever concrete form they may take, it is essential to organise a time for feedback on the results with an emphasis on the causes of the problems encountered.

The importance of this educational approach to assessment has been high-lighted by several trainers in the Corsican, Italian and Belgian training centres. Few concrete tools for carrying out this sort of assessment were presented however, except that recently developed by a Belgian operator. It seems appropriate to present it as an illustration of this worth-enhancing assessment practice.

In Belgium, as part of a non-qualifying training course in catering, an original assessment system has recently been put in place. The training goals are broken down into a series of micro-skills. All of these micro-skills are explicitly set out in a file given to each trainee at the beginning of the course. This gives them a clear view of the skills to work on at each stage of the process. Based on this file, the progression of their achievements is assessed at several key moments during the course (before and after each work placement). The assessment begins with a self-evaluation phase during which the trainees are asked to rate their level of command of the skills already worked on during training according to a progress chart that is formulated in a language that is understandable and clear. This is followed by a discus-

Some professionals highlight the need for regular worth-enhancing assessments centred on the beneficiaries' progression and on understanding their failures.

sion with the trainers, in which actual progress in learning objectives is reviewed and the new goals are defined. This assessment tool enables the trainees to take stock of their achievements in a positive and realistic manner, and learn how to critically appraise their learning pathway and therefore have more control over it.

KEY ACTIONS

The professionals in charge of the training course should play the role of "development tutor".

With this in mind, they should ensure that they:

- ▶ value what the learners are and what they know, and aim to transform their experiential knowledge into skills that are useful for employment and social life in general;
- ▶ use the group as a driver for motivation and commitment in the training process, by favouring collective and participative peer learning as mush as possible;
- design regular and worth-enhancing assessments of the training progress in the spirit of a pedagogy of success. These assessments should be aimed at highlighting the achievements and the progress made by the beneficiaries, rather than pointing out their "flaws" and their shortcomings;
- ▶ promote self-evaluation as much as possible, coupled with regular feedback from the trainers so that the beneficiary understands the reasons for differences between their own assessment and that of the trainers.

6.

LONGER AND MORE FLEXIBLE TRAINING COURSES

An enabling training course is one that is adapted to the needs and interests of the beneficiaries. It should be set up in a flexible way that allows it to be adjusted as much as possible to the realities of each For the beneficiaries, personalising the course is also a way of giving more meaning to the training.

To respond to the difficulties facing some beneficiaries, supplementing the training activities through partnerships with other operators represent a first sort of personalisation of the course. These have already been identified in section 1.3 above as a means of lowering barriers to entry into training.

In addition, varying the duration of the training course according to the level the beneficiaries are at and the difficulties they face is another way of personalising the training pathway. Such adaptation is only possible in cases of schemes where the duration of the courses is not set. The possibility of adjusting the setup in this way is open to several operators who provide orientation or pre-qualifying courses. However, an Italian training centre providing a qualifying course in graphic design provides an example of an exception to this.

In Italy, in the case of a training course leading to qualifications and thus held to official standards in terns of content and duration, the operator was able to obtain an exemption from the authorities. Trainees facing difficulties in completing the course in the officially allotted time can obtain an authorisation to complete it over two years instead of one. For those beneficiaries, the provider can also request supplementary support measures thanks to ad hoc funding. Furthermore, the operator can also set training goals that are lower than the standard set by the regional authorities for participants facing difficulties. In this case, they are awarded a statement of skills acquired, rather than the official qualification.

When it is not possible to extend the duration of the course, varying its content can be an alternative way of providing more flexible and personalised pathway. In this case, the beneficiaries follow a common training module, alongside which they can choose from among specialisation modules according to their own specific needs or interests.

In Belgium, an operator offers a course in graphical communication aimed at groups alienated from employment. As part of a recent reform in educational practices in response to rapid changes in the subject, the operator has put in place a more flexible and modular training course. After completing a common initial module,

For the beneficiaries, personalising the course is a way of giving more meaning to the training.

the trainees choose from among a range of specialisation modules that reflect the different facets of the trade. This educational arrangement enables the beneficiaries to follow the modules in an independent manner. They can choose to stop after one cycle of modules and possibly return to the course at a later date.

Generally, developing modular training arrangements gives the scheme more flexibility. The course can be organised into different stages and levels that are independent from one another. This facilitates mobility for the trainees who can leave the course and return to it at a later date.

It should be noted, however, that some certifying schemes with standardised courses are not in a position to set up personalised pathways as described above. The operators are obliged to stick to a list of specifications setting out both the duration and the content of he course, making any personalisation difficult. Nonetheless, some training providers manage to carve out some room for manoeuvre to adjust their offer to the requirements of the participants.

In Slovakia, one operator has chosen to act on the margins of the standardisation constraints it is subject to. It informally adjusts the contents of some of its modules to the needs and interests of the beneficiaries. The operator also occasionally offers supplementary advice and support services not included in the official programme.

There is therefore little scope for personalising training courses with a view to adjusting them to the needs, difficulties and/or interests of the beneficiaries in the case of standardised short courses aimed at a rapid return to employment. Yet, this flexibility is particularly important in training schemes aimed at target groups distant from the world of employment, which attempt to ensure that the support given is comprehensive and multidisciplinary. Such a holistic approach to training involves spending time on people in order to achieve the best results in terms of integration and empowerment. A certain length of time is often necessary in order to resolve related problems that are obstructing the path back into employment and to give confidence back to people who often doubt their own abilities. Generally, such people need time to construct a (re)insertion project that they value and that has meaning for them. As indicated by O. Mazade (2015, p.105), "For jobseekers, time is at the heart of the construction of their space for opportunities".

Setting up training modules that are independent from one another facilitates mobility for the beneficiaries who can choose to temporarily interrupt the process without losing what they have acquired.

For people who are removed from employment, long training times are necessary to build a (re)insertion project that they value and that has meaning for them.

KEY ACTIONS

A training pathway that has meaning for the beneficiaries is one that is adapted to their needs and their interests. It is therefore worthwhile to be able to personalise the training on offer in order to provide a suitable response to the beneficiaries' projects and their actual possibilities. Providing bespoke schemes for individuals also makes it possible to offer them training that is realistic in terms of their abilities and increase their chances of success.

- ▶ ensuring the training schemes are more flexible by making them as modular as possible. Setting up modules that are independent from one another increases the trainees' mobility. They have the possibility of temporarily interrupting their training without losing what they have acquired. They can thus choose from between different possible options, which broadens their scope for decision and action;
- ensuring that the duration of the course can be extended if necessary in order to achieve the best results in terms of lasting social and vocational integration. Providing comprehensive support to people means allocating the time necessary to resolve problems that are hindering a return to work and to rebuild a project that is social as well as vocational and that has meaning for the beneficiaries.

DEVELOPING PRACTICES FOR INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE **EMPOWERMENT**

As a reminder, according to the capability approach, vocational training is not an end in itself, but should be aimed at "opening up possibilities" in terms of vocational and social development.

training should aim to develop not skills, but also With this in mind, developing vocational skills that are useful for insertion into employment should not be the sole goal of a training course. An enabling and empowering training course is one that also aims to develop more transversal skills at the personal (self-esteem, self-confidence) and social levels. These increase the capacity to act in other spheres of daily life (cultural, citizenship, political). Promoting the acquisition of these broader skills involves deploying approaches and practices aimed at the individual and collective empowerment of the beneficiaries.

Empowerment is a dynamic process that enables individuals and collectives to increase their capacity to act to change their social, economic or political conditions and thus increase their control over their environment (Bacque and Biewener, 2013). Thus, it is a dual process of acquiring and/or increasing the power to act, at the individual and collective levels. These two dimensions reinforce each other. Learning to use this power to act first requires the persons to become conscious individually of their lack of control over the means necessary for their wellbeing, then through the development of their self-confidence to increase their control and ability to act on various aspects of their lives.

7.1.

Actions for empowerment at the individual level

On the individual level, empowerment is the power to act on themselves that a person can acquire to regain self-confidence and self-esteem, as well as their capacity for self-determination in terms of carrying out the projects they have chosen.

Within the training practices analysed, this individual process of acquiring power is worked on as part of the psychosocial support provided by the operators themselves, or by partners from the social work sector. As already discussed in section 2 of this chapter, one of the major conditions for successful work on the development of emotional and social skills rests on this being closely linked into work on vocational skills.

The added value in this comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach to working with the beneficiaries emerges from the testimony of many trainees from diverse training courses. Beyond the development of occupational skills, they also mention that one of the major effects of receiving this kind of accompaniment is a sense of having been supported and valued as real people. This has increased their self-esteem and their confidence in their social and vocational future. Others say that the training course enabled them to get back on their feet socially and increased their sense of control over their career path and, more broadly, over their lives.

On the individual level, work on empowerment is aimed at increasing the person's power over themselves to increase their self-confidence and self-esteem.

7.2.

Actions for empowerment at the collective level

Recognising the need for measures for individual empowerment is not to oppose a more collective approach to problems encountered by people in the course of their journey towards integration. On the contrary, the training process can provide spaces for collective gathering, discussion, even mobilisation. These are ideal spaces in which to teach individuals to collectively develop the power to negotiate and act on issues of common concern within the framework of their training and integration pathway or, more broadly, in other areas of society, such as culture, economics and politics, for example.

At the collective level, empowerment refers to the development of a group of people's power to act on common social realities in order to improve the condition of their lives. The capacity of individuals to develop the power to act on their environment is possible thanks to collective strength. The actor in such changes is the collective, not the individual (Tilman 2011).

The training process is the social reality that the beneficiaries of a same course have most in common. A first way of teaching them to develop collective empowerment practices is therefore to ensure that their views about the course are heard and taken into account. The experience of having one's point of view being given worth is fundamental to increasing self-confidence and a sense of control over one's immediate environment.

On the ground, most training providers say they provide a certain amount of space to the learners for them to express their points of view on the different aspects of the course. This also emerges from the testimonies of many trainees, particularly those in training schemes aimed at vulnerable groups removed from the world of employment. However, it is less frequent for there to be a formal place for collective discussion within the curriculum itself. Such regular meeting spaces can be found in one Italian provider's qualifying course in graphic design and multimedia, as well as in all Belgian schemes, for which it is a specific feature.

In Belgium, the training providers studied are part of the 'CISP' sector - Centres for Social and Vocational Integration -that aim to provide training to a target group that is removed from traditional vocational training. One of

At the collective level, work on empowerment aims to develop the power of a group of people to act on common social realities in order to improve their life situation.

The experience of having ones point of view being valued is essential for increasing self-confidence and a sense of control over ones immediate environment.

the main pedagogical characteristics of this sector is to seek to give a sense of worth to the trainees by, amongst other things, giving them the opportunity to express their views on different aspects of their pathway. With this in mind, regular times for discussion are formally programmed into the course timetables and are an integral part of them. These spaces - known as cooperative councils - are an ideal place for expressing their problems and their suggestions about the way the course is progressing, but also to learn to construct jointly-articulated demands to bring to the centres' management. The main condition for success for these mechanisms for collective negotiation is for their suggestions to be genuinely considered in any modification in the curriculum. If this is not the case, the trainees feel used and that it is a waste of time.

A second way of implementing collective empowerment practices during training is to teach the beneficiaries to address societal issues that may be beyond the immediate framework of vocational training. These may however be linked to their issues relating to employment (such as stigmatisation of the unemployed, exclusion measures in terms of access to unemployment benefits) or other areas of their lives (questions around access to housing or culture, for example).

Setting up initiatives aimed at empowering individuals on the collective level is part of training practices intend to link up work on social empowerment with that on occupational insertion. According to the capability approach, this linkage is necessary for increasing the wellbeing and the fulfilment of the individuals undergoing training.

However, in practice, few of the training course operators involved have the explicit aim of linking their occupational integration mission to a wider goal of social empowerment through practices of collective action³. Most of the operators work only on the individual dimension of empowerment through psychosocial accompaniment measures. In Belgium, the CISP sector is an exception in this area, its dual mission being historically specific to the sector.

In Belgium, collective actions carried out within the centre are varied. They range from meeting other people in similar circumstances, with a view to exchanging experiences of problems in order to better understand them, to activist mobilisation over political issues, passing through the setting up of collective cultural or artistic projects that go beyond the setting of the centre. As an example let us relate the collective analysis and mobilisation work organised by a Belgian centre for guidance

One way of developing practices for collective empowerment in training is teaching the beneficiaries to address social issues that are outwith the immediate framework of the scheme, whilst still being linked to their day-to-day concerns.

³ The term is meant here in a broad sense. It refers to mobiloisation activities carried out within a training centre with the learners that goes beyond the strict framework of training to act on common social realities in the field of employment, housing, culture, etc. On this matter, see: F. Konstantatos, (2013). L'action collective, mission fondamentale des EFT-OISP, Note d'éducation permanente, SAWB.

⁴ Ce terme est entendu ici dans un sens large. Il fait référence à un travail de mobilisation réalisé au sein d'un centre de formation avec les apprenants qui dépasse le cadre strict de la formation pour agir sur des réalités sociales communes dans le champ de l'emploi,

towards employment with a group of trainees in the run up to the national day to combat poverty and the demonstration taking place as part of it. Within the centre, the trainees worked on better understanding the issues behind this mobilisation in order to be able to act in an informed manner. As part of the "social life" component of their course, which is intended to deal with citizen participation issues, hours were spent preparing any demands they might have in the matter, in order to raise them collectively during the demonstration. Another citizen participation initiative was carried out within a scheme providing training in graphical communication. The learners took part in a socially-engaged film festival on the theme of locally-produced food. To begin with, they engaged in a reflection process on the theme, outside of training hours. Each trainee then created a poster illustrating their thoughts. The activity ended with an exhibition of their work, during which they were able to explain how their collective project had evolved.

Deploying activities aimed at teaching the beneficiaries how to mobilise collectively around social issues provides many benefits. Firstly, individuals are placed as actors in their lives, they are considered in their entirety and not as mere consumers of a vocational training course.

Another aspect is that these spaces for collective discussion and action enable people who are facing difficulties to become aware that the problems encountered in their occupational or personal lives are not due to their own personal incompetence, but to a certain dysfunction in their environment. These spaces therefore also provide an opportunity to search for and constructively formulate appropriate collective responses to problems that are, foremost, societal in nature.

Finally, providing individuals with the possibility to organise themselves to take part in collective projects around societal issues gives them a chance to develop more cross-cutting social skills. These can be called upon in their lives as citizens, but also in their occupational lives. One example that comes to mind is the ability to construct an articulate collective demand, to collectively assert a point of view and, in general, to be able to cast a critical eye on one's working environment and life situation. These aspects are all skills that enhance the versatility of individuals, a quality that is appreciated in the world of work.

Proposing collective empowerment activities to the beneficiaries enables them to develop transverse social skills that enhance their versatility, a quality that is valued in the world of work.

KEY ACTIONS

In order to provide vocational training that is enabling and empowering, the training practices should foster the development not just of occupational skills, but also personal, social and citizenship skills. This empowering work benefits from being put into practice in several complementary directions.

Psychosocial mechanisms aimed at increasing the beneficiaries' self-esteem and self-confidence should be used widely. As part of this, the professionals should be encouraged to adopt a benevolent attitude to the individual, in order for the latter to feel that they are a person in the full sense. This first stage is indispensible for the beneficiary to feel able to commit fully to a training project that they value.

This work on emotional and social skills benefits from being closely linked to the work on occupational skills so that it is not disembodied from the realities of the training and the demands it imposes.

Mechanisms should also be put in place that enable the beneficiaries to experience their capacity to act collectively on their environment to improve their life situation. In order to do this in practice, it appears essential to:

- ensure that there are formal places and/or times dedicated to allowing the beneficiaries to express their points of view on the ongoing training course, as part of the actual curriculum. The major condition for the success of this participation mechanism lies in genuinely taking into account their suggestions for improvements to the training course;
- ▶ running collective action workshops with the beneficiaries to teach them how to mobilise around societal issues connected to their concerns in terms of employment or other areas of their lives.

8.

SUPPORTING THE TRANSITION BETWEEN TRAINING AND SOCIAL AND VOCATIONAL INTEGRATION

Overall, the analysis of field data brings to light a relative segmentation of the missions of different actors in the field of training and insertion. The vocational training schemes are often quite disconnected from those that take charge of the integration of people post-training. The training providers offer a classic range of support activities for finding employment: help in preparing a CV, information about further training or employment, organising meetings with former trainees in employment, etc. However, relatively few means are deployed to implement more sustained activities for the social and occupational integration of the people emerging from their courses.

This compartmentalisation between the services impedes the development of a coherent and integrated pathway to social and vocational integration that would provide continuous support throughout the process, particularly for the least qualified. It could be an offer of support in entering employment, or also to undertake further training, or take part in socially worthwhile activities if the prospect of employment is provisionally too remote.

Such post-training support mechanisms, closely linked to the training course itself, are all the more necessary when the operator provides training in sectors that are less promising in terms of available jobs and/or if the target group of trainees has been remote from the world of work.

Setting up partnerships between the different actors in social and vocational training and integration is indispensible for optimising the insertion pathways as part of an integrated approach. This added value brought by collaborations between different actors in the insertion process is discussed in chapter 4. As we will see in more detail, such partnerships are a particularly effective means to widening the field of social and occupational opportunities for the beneficiaries. Nonetheless, alongside the setting up of partnerships, it is also important for the operators to develop forms of support adapted to the needs of the beneficiaries, so that they may really avail themselves of the transition opportunities presented to them.

Despite this not very encouraging general observation, some training providers from our sample have risen to the task. Over the last few years, they have set about developing or strengthening their post-training support mechanisms.

In Belgium, a training-through-work enterprise in the catering sector has developed a new bridge towards certifying training thanks to a partnership established with an operator whose diplomas are officially recognised, in order to enable the beneficiaries to take advan-

The fracture between training schemes and the services tasked with returning the beneficiaries into work is harmful to the development of a coherent and integrated insertion pathway providing continuous support to the beneficiary.

tage of this opportunity, the centre offers educational support for one year to prepare for the exam that gives direct access into the third year of this certifying training course. Such a mechanism linked to the opportunity to undertake certifying training is a way of providing support to the participants' pathway to social and vocational integration.

In Italy, two operators providing training aimed at socially vulnerable groups of people have received ad hoc funding from the provincial authorities to set up a supplementary programme of accompaniment in the search for employment. This support on offer includes help in CV preparation, help in making contact with temping agencies, job interview preparation and even sometimes the placement of the trainees in a business after training has been completed.

In Belgium, as part of a non-certifying vocational training course in graphical communication, the operator has recently strengthened its post-training support mechanism. Based on the observation that it was increasingly difficult for trainees to enter into employment after their course, a specific "springboard to employment" module was developed. Over a two-month period after the end of the course, this module combines personalised and collective workshops providing coaching for finding or creating employment. As part of this, meetings with business incubators, visits to co-working spaces and presentations of innovative business projects are all organised for the trainees.

It is a matter of supporting the transition not just towards employment or further training, but also towards intermediate services that offer izenship activities that are socially rewarding and recognised.

To sum up, successful social and vocational integration amounts to more than following a training course for a few months, particularly for poorly-qualified and socially vulnerable people. The journey towards employment often remains long. It is thus necessary for the training centres to develop actions that are aimed at easing the transitions between the different stages of the social and vocational integration process and make the progression more consistent and coherent.

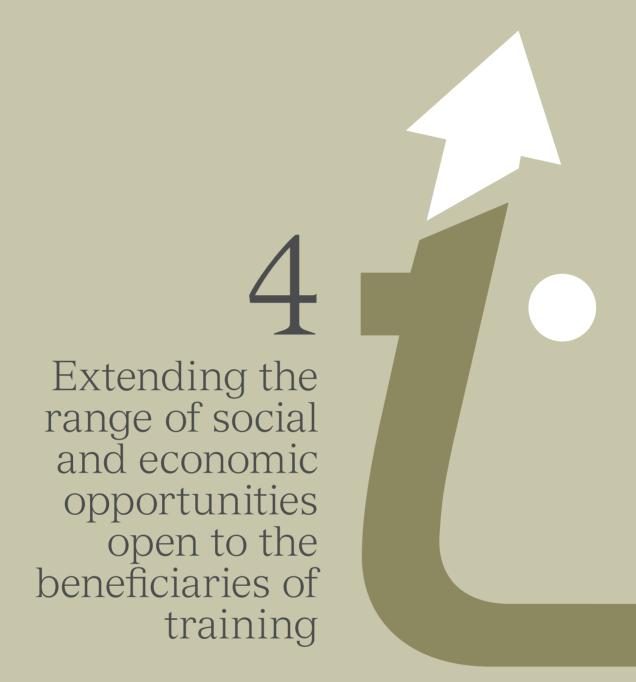
From this perspective, the notion of integration has to be understood in a broad sense. It can be the setting up of mechanisms to accompaniment towards employment or another training course, but it can also be the development of intermediate services between training and employment that enables people for whom employment is too distant a prospect to get involved in socially rewarding and recognised citizenship activities.

KEY ACTIONS

In order to counter the dominant trend towards the compartmentalization between the schemes and professionals that intervene in the course of the beneficiaries' integration pathway, as well as the segmentation of their respective missions, the training providers must develop actions aimed at facilitating the transition between the different stages of the integration process.

The approach used should be an integrated one that fosters a greater continuity in the training and insertion pathway and increases its coherence. In practice, this means:

- paying increased attention to the setting up of post-training support mechanisms by giving the beneficiaries an effective access to help in finding employment entering into further training, but also into citizenship activities that are socially valued and recognised;
- ▶ fostering the building of partnerships between the different actors in training and insertion in order to optimise the beneficiaries' trajectory as part of an integrated approach. This recommendation is the subject of more detailed discussion in the next chapter.



IPn order to increase the beneficiaries power to act autonomously in the labour market and in social life in general, the priority mission for training organisations is to equip the individuals in a way that mitigates the personal "shortcomings" that are hindering their social and vocational integration. Nonetheless, while these socio-educational actions focusing on "equipping" the jobseekers are necessary, they remain insufficient in a situation where employment opportunities are not available to everybody. As summed up by Bonvin and Conter (2006): "Outside of a situation of full employment, the ability of policies and mechanisms to increase the opportunities for employment by acting on the supply of labour (incentives, training, etc.) remains of very limited effectiveness".

To provide access
to genuine
opportunities for
social and vocational
integration, the
training actions
have to be linked
to initiatives aimed
at increasing the
quantity and the
quality of the
possibilities for
employment.

Given this fact, in order to provide access to real opportunities for occupational and social integration to jobseekers, these training actions need to be linked to initiatives that seek to increase the quantity and the quality of the available possibilities for social and vocational integration. These actions on the socioeconomic environment are not directly within the remit of training providers. The latter are not completely deprived of levers for action in this domain, however. They can put themselves in a position to develop initiatives aimed at extending, in a more or less direct manner, the opportunities for social and vocational integration open to their beneficiaries, by acting on several levels. This chapter presents the results of the field analysis in this respect.

Within this chapter, we will distinguish three types of action that may be carried out by training providers in this respect:

- actions relating directly to developing employment opportunities open to the beneficiaries at the end of their courses in the relevant sector of activity;
- more indirect actions aimed at increasing the chances for integration and social and vocational empowerment of the beneficiaries, through offers for further training or any other project with a social or citizenship dimension;
- ▶ actions of institutional resistance by the centres aimed at influencing the political and institutional rules with a view to defending a certain latitude in autonomy in their training practices and the specificity of their missions, in tune with the needs of their target group.

Before presenting the analysis of the practices in the field, it is worth making it clear that the importance of acting on the creation of economic and social opportunities depends on the sector in which the training providers operate and/or the profile of their target group(s).

The fact is, that the training centres' action on this level is all the more essential, the more the training they provides is in sectors that are less promising in terms of jobs and/or they deal with beneficiaries alienated from the labour market, for whom it is often necessary to provide extra support in accessing socio-economic opportunities.

ACTING ON THE DIRECT OPPORTUNITIES FOR EMPLOYMENT ACCESSIBLE TO THE BENEFICIARIES

In order to maximise the beneficiaries' chances of accessing occupational opportunities after training, the centres must first seek to multiply and diversify the concrete possibilities for employment available after the course. The empirical analysis enables us to identify some exemplary actions undertaken by some of the training providers studied.

A first major element is the attention paid by the centre to positioning the training offered in sectors that are promising in terms of employment - trades where there are shortages, jobs in growth sectors, such as sustainable development and eco-construction, for example.

In practice, however, it is not always possible to consider a complete overhaul of the existing training offer without throwing into question the very existence of the provider. In such cases, the ability to update the training on offer to match it to the needs of the relevant employment sector is important. This requires that the professionals at the training centre develop a detailed knowledge of the realities of the employment market in that sector and that they act in that direction.

Un Belgium, a training course operator offers a non-certifying training course in graphic communication for a target group removed from employment. This highly competitive sector is undergoing constant technological changes; the operator led a reflection with a view to adapting its offer to this reality in order to increase the trainees' chances for occupational insertion whilst maintaining a scheme that was adapted to their needs. This led to an in-depth pedagogical reform with a view to empowering and enabling the beneficiaries. In order to assess the realities of employment in the graphic communication sector and the vocational skills required, the operator, among other things, organised a close consultation with employers in the sector. The aim was to determine both the specialisation "niches" that were promising in terms of employment and the associated skills required. This collaboration with actors from the world of business is essential in schemes aimed at increasing the opportunities for employment for the beneficiaries.

Another way for the operators to directly increase the possibilities of employment for their beneficiaries consists in being able to offer them assisted employment contracts at the end of the course. This is made possible through collaborations with actors in the world of employment and/or social work,

The centre's ability to adapt its training offer to the evolving demand for skills in the relevant employment sector is an important element.

Assisted employment contracts must be linked to mechanisms that extend the accompaniment of beneficiaries towards insertion in order to genuinely increase their chances of lasting and quality integration.

who benefit from state and or regional financial support to hire - usually temporarily - jobseekers who are having difficulties in insertion.

Many criticisms have been levelled as this sort of measures to support employment, which are often regarded as traps in employment that has no emancipating vocational prospects. Far from being a panacea for lasting quality social and professional insertion, these schemes for temporary insertion into employment need to meet certain conditions in order to genuinely contribute to increasing the beneficiaries' opportunities for occupational emancipation.

While it is not the aim of this report to analyse those conditions in detail, it is worth mentioning that one of the essential aspects of such schemes id to ensure that, alongside "assisted employment", there is the possibility of extending the accompaniment given to beneficiaries in social and vocational insertion. This means ensuring that they have various support measures at their disposal to enable them to complete a successful pathway to integration, whether it is an assisted transition towards lasting employment or towards further training⁵.

Two training providers - one in Italy, the other in Corsica - offer assisted employment contracts after the training course. Other than the differences in the sectors of training on offer⁶, what the operators have in common is that they provide training to a target group that is very far removed from employment. In Belgium, such contracts enable the centre providing on-the-job occupational training in catering to hire those completing the course as assistants for a two-year period. The latter take on some of the day-to-day production work of the employees engaged in training, in order to free them up to devote more time to providing learning support to the trainees. At the same time, the assistants have the opportunity to perfect the skills learnt and are encouraged to engage in further, certifying, training.

Some centres that offer training in business creation provide the possibility of trialling the entrepreneurial activity in real-life conditions without taking a financial risk.

In some cases, the financial support provided by public employment and training authorities to the training centres enables the latter to offer their beneficiaries who wish to start their own business a chance of testing this in real-life conditions at an "affordable cost", i.e. without taking a financial risk.

Two operators - one in Corsica, the other in Slovakia - offer a training course in business creation. As part of this, they provide project carriers thee possibility of launching their entrepreneurial activity in a risk-free manner, notably through a partnership with the public

⁵ For an assessment of the added-value of assisted employment schemes for benficiaries in France using a capability approach, see for example Klein T and Le Clainche C (2007), "Les contrats aidés: quelles marges de manœuvre pour les bénéficiaires?", in Formation Emploi, n. 98, p. 77-92.

⁶ The Italian training centre provides a certifying course in multimedia; the Belgian centre is a training-through-work enterprise that provides a non-certifying course in catering.

employment and training authorities in the respective countries. In Slovakia, it comes in the form of a subsidy provided by this public body to jobseekers who have successfully completed the course for them to start up their activity. In Corsica, the activities and employment cooperative offers jobseekers, during the training course, the possibility of legally hosting their entrepreneurial project in order to test its viability without them losing their status and therefore access to unemployment benefits. Furthermore, once the training course is completed, the scheme also offers the possibility for project holders who so wish, to join the activities cooperative by creating their own salaried position within the organisation. While there are differences in the organisational and funding modalities, both of these schemes to support business creation have a similar feature: broadening the range of employment opportunities by offering the possibility of launching an entrepreneurial activity in financial safety.

Another way of directly creating concrete possibilities for employment for employees finishing the training course is to develop alternative activities within the social economy, as is the case for the Corsican example above: the activities cooperative that organises the training offers the new project holders to join the organisation to pursue their activity. Other statutory forms drawn from the social economy help foster the occupational insertion of beneficiaries. We can cite the example of the insertion enterprise (EI), in Belgium. The EI is set up by the training provider and it offers the possibility of hiring the centre's trainees in stable, quality jobs. The field experience within the centre means that it is able to adapt the training on offer to the local economic realities.

An innovative way of creating concrete employment opportunities for those having completed the course is to develop alternative activities in the social economy sector.

KEY ACTIONS

In order to provide access to genuine opportunities for social and vocational integration to the beneficiaries, training providers need to expand initiatives aimed at widening the range of employment opportunities accessible to the people completing their courses. Whilst increasing the quality and quantity of available jobs is not directly their responsibility, there are levers they can activate at this level.

In practice, this means:

- adapting the training on offer according to the evolving demand for skills in the employment sector in question, or positioning their training offer in sectors that are promising in terms of employment (trades in which there are shortages, or growth sectors).
 - For the professionals, this means developing a detailed knowledge of the employment realities in the sector linked to the training course:
- ▶ ensuring that the various measures for support in employment or training or for parallel accompaniment to insertion are all linked up;
- boosting the development of alternative employment initiatives in the social economy sector, whether it is broadening employment opportunities for the most insecure beneficiaries within insertion organisations adjoining the training centre or giving them an opportunity of trialling their self-employment activity in conditions that are financially and educationally safe. The advantage of this kind of initiative is that they couple the acquisition of skills with paid employment.

2.

ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Training providers can also set up a series of initiatives that help to maximise the chances for social and vocational integration of their beneficiaries in a more indirect and/or more long term way.

This requires that the professionals working at the centre develop a good understanding of the different social "worlds", in particular those of employment and training. It involves the creation of collaborations and partnerships with local players with different backgrounds: the worlds of business, training, social action.

Developing and maintaining a network of actors from different professional spheres is a determining asset for widening the field of occupational and social possibilities for the beneficiaries of training.

2.1.

Building a network of players in the world of business

The vocational training and integration schemes are often characterised by a lack of articulation between the training and psychosocial support on offer on the one hand, and services for access to employment on the other. Yet, establishing contacts between the jobseekers and potential employers enables the training providers not just to play a role of accompaniment for the unemployed, but also to take on a genuine role of support towards employment (Moreau, 2013).

In order to establish contacts between the jobseekers and the world of business, the first stage is to build a lasting network of relationships with targeted local employers. This access also helps them to develop a sense of belonging to an occupational community that has status socially. This sense of belonging to an occupational collective is a fundamental element in order to construct a social identity that is valued (Tilman, 2011). Such a strategy chimes with the practices of some training centres in the study.

In most of the training centres analysed, a common practice used for putting the beneficiaries in contact with people working in the relevant trade is to have the latter intervene regularly in the training course. By calling on active professionals in the field to provide some aspects of the training, the providers are thus ensuring that the content is matched to current requirements in terms of skills and knowledge in the target trade.

However, limiting oneself to this sole role of establishing contacts, as do some

Creating a lasting network of contacts in different occupational fields provides the beneficiaries with resources and supports that they can draw on when needed.

Establishing contacts between the jobseekers and potential employers enables providers to take on a real role of accompanying individuals towards employment.

of the providers sampled, is to take an adaptive approach, aimed at matching the beneficiary's profile to the requirements of the employer. This approach is certainly indispensible, but it is also insufficient if the aim is to link up the action of the jobseeker to that on the employers. Thus, a second useful way of establishing contact between the beneficiaries and potential employers is the practice of putting the former in real work situations through workplace placements.

The key is to establish collaborations with businesses that may offer placements and, if possible, employment at the

Opportunities for placements that are adapted to rhythms and abilities of the beneficiaries will be all the more frequent, the more extensive is the network of employers built by the training provider. The key here is to set up collaborations with businesses that may offer placements or internships with, if at all possible, employment opportunities attached. In this way, the beneficiaries are brought face to face with the realities of their future employment in a "secure" setting. This experience can be a real springboard to employment, while also having the benefit of providing access to the business that does not involve having to pass through the usual competitive process of selection interviews, which are often discriminatory towards those people furthest from employment.

Most of the training centres examined offered placements to their beneficiaries during or after the training cycle, thanks to more or less established and formalised collaborations with network of employers in the sector.

However, not so many of them are able to establish genuine partnerships based on a relationship of trust with the employers. Yet, the quality of the partnership relations is a priceless asset in order to work both with the beneficiaries and with the businesses. The professionals in the training centres are able to develop a detailed understanding of their partners' requirements as well as those of their trainees, which enables the latter two to understand each other better and work together. For the training and insertion professionals, it is about not just working using an adaptive approach, but using a more symmetrical approach that shares responsibility between the trainees and the businesses (Darquenne, 2013).

We will highlight three interesting cases of training providers who deploy this networking dynamic to inform their practices.

the partnership relations between the centres and local employers is an essential asset in order to work with both the trainees and the businesses.

In Italy, a training centre in Bologna organises a non-certifying training course in Web communications for people who have sensory or motor disabilities and are removed from employment. Establishing a relatively large network of businesses that are favourable to receiving interns with these atypical profiles enables the professionals running the course to select the "right" employer according to the characteristics and needs of each beneficiary. This "matching" process also represents an opportunity for the business to find "the right person and thus increase the possibility of the placement to transform into an employment contract in due course" (trainer, Italy, Bologna).

In Corsica, one of the operators organises courses for career guidance and accompaniment towards employment. As part of this, the professional involved take a proactive approach to building a network with employers. Their regular attendance at various events linked to employment (forums, conferences, etc.) has but one purpose: to meet the employers in the region with a view to developing a lasting network of partners who might receive the beneficiaries in placements and, perhaps, in due course, in employment, "these partnerships are essential for building links and working together on our respective requirements" (trainer, Corsica).

In Belgium, finally, there is the case of a provider of certifying courses for healthcare assistants that deserves mention for its ability to build many close ties to the hospital and care home sectors. These partnerships are built and maintained on a daily basis as part of a relationship built on trust. For the employers, the training centre is seen as a genuine partner. As the centre manager says: "the employers trust us and recognise the quality of the training we provide. These partnerships are very rich, as they provide real opportunities for placements and then employment for our trainees". He insists on the "win-win" aspect of this dynamic of partnership by highlighting the fact that it makes it possible both to calibrate the course to the employers needs according to the evolution of the sector, as well as to guide the beneficiaries towards organisations that match their needs and interests.

Establishing a positive dynamic of partnership enables the training to be calibrated to the employers needs in terms of evolutions in the sector, as well as the beneficiaries to be guided towards organisations that match their interests.

2.2.

Establishing collaborations with other actors in the world of training

At the end of a training course, some beneficiaries do not wish to go directly into employment, but want to pursue their vocational development by undertaking further training. Providing the beneficiaries with a transition towards a complementary or more qualifying training course enables the pathway to social and vocational integration to be optimised.

Establishing links and collaborations with other actors in the world of training is an essential initiative for the training providers to put in place in order to open up the field of opportunities for their beneficiaries.

At a basic level, knowledge of the other providers of training enables the centre's professionals to develop an awareness of the choices of training on offer for their beneficiaries, as well as the conditions for access, the way the function and their requirements. In this way, they can accurately inform and

Providing the beneficiary with a transition towards a further training scheme optimises their training trajectory and extends the range of opportunities open to them.

guide their beneficiaries towards appropriate and accessible schemes.

Many studies have highlighted the place that information has in the construction of opinions and the possibility to make choices. Having the right information is therefore an initial way of expanding the range of informed choices (e.g. Darguenne, 2013).

In Slovakia, the practices of one of the training centres illustrate this benefit of networking. The centre provides certifying courses in business creation. The links established with other actors in the field of training enable them to keep each other informed about their activities. Maintaining these relationships gives the trainees direct access to up-to-date information relating to the activities of other operators. This is highly valuable for trainees who want to choose further training options.

Similarly, in Corsica, a training provider that also organises a course in business creation uses its network of relationships in the sector of training for the building trades to attract trainees who are in their final year of their technical training courses into their own training cycle. In order to do this, the operator organises information and awareness meetings aimed at the final-year trainees, so that they can present their own training activities and the added value for their sector of activity.

On a more formalised level, networking provides the training providers the possibility of developing pathways and bridges towards more qualifying training courses, or complementary courses if theirs is already certifying. An essential component of this setting up of pathways and bridges is the automatic recognition of prior learning outcomes. It is essential that the work done by one operator is recognised by the others. This involves that the operators recognise their respective specificity and their complementarity.

In Belgium in a training-through-work enterprise in the catering sector, the bridge system has been a reality for a number of years. Thanks to a partnership established with a training provider whose diplomas are officially recognised by the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, those trainees wishing to pursue further training have the opportunity to directly access the third year of a qualifying course in catering and the restaurant business if they pass an entrance examination. On top of this opportunity provided by the centre, it also organises courses to prepare for this examination in order to maximise the trainees' chances of success.

In other cases, the partnerships between providers of certifying and noncertifying training courses have led to the creation of complete qualifying training pathways that are accessible to target groups insufficiently qualified

to access them directly. Among the practices of the training centres considered, this example is specific to Belgium.

In Belgium, this concerns two training providers who offer a qualifying healthcare assistant course. Thanks to the establishment of a joint diploma with a partner providing qualifying training courses, these training providers offer the possibility of accessing a certification that is recognised by the Wallonia-Brussels Federation. The way in which the partnership is implemented is determining for individuals to be truly able to grasp this opportunity. In one of the two cases, the partnership is designed in such a way that the trainees undergo the whole of their course within the same centre; they therefore do not have to split their training time between two operators, as may be the case elsewhere. Organising it this way provides the trainees with continuity in their socio-educational accompaniment and gives consistency to their pathway. The centre professionals in charge of the course are in regular contact with the certifying training partner to ensure that the course content meets the requirements of the certification. The latter only intervenes during the final assessments to officially validate the qualification.

In general, this integrated approach to the training pathway enables the beneficiaries' social and vocational training and insertion trajectory to be optimised, by guaranteeing them real access to the services offered by various operators; this opens their field of possibilities and facilitates their free choice.

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Establishing links with actors in the field of social work

Providing opportunities to progress towards employment is in itself sometimes not sufficient, especially when dealing with beneficiaries who are poorly qualified and removed from employment. The fact is that these beneficiaries are often people in insecure situations whose problems, linked to their social situation, hinder or block their progression towards employment. While the professionals in charge of the training course are not experts in social work, they nonetheless have to provide their target group with resources and support in this area.

With this in mind, it is necessary for training providers to develop close collaborations with actors in this field in order to provide the beneficiaries with access to a network of services and contacts that can be mobilised to improve their social situation and thus increase their power to act. This networking with actors in the field of social work echoes practices developed in some of the organisations analysed.

In Italy, a training provider organises a qualifying course

Partnerships between providers of certifying and non-certifying training courses can lead to the creation of complete pathways that are accessible to target groups that are otherwise not qualified enough to join.

Providing opportunities to progress towards employment is, in itself, sometimes not sufficient when dealing with individuals at risk of insecurity.

in graphic design and multi media aimed at a deprived target group. As part of this, it has developed stable collaborations with many social services in the Region, This de-compartmentalised social work network enables the professionals in charge of the training course to work closely with those from the field of social work whilst recognising their own field of expertise. Over the whole duration of the training course, each trainee is accompanied by a small team of professionals from the worlds of training and social work. This accompaniment makes it possible to provide personalised and multidisciplinary support for each person in training in order to maximise their chances of success.

In Belgium, all of the operators surveyed were from the social and vocational insertion sector (CISP). The particularity of this sector is that it works with target groups removed from employment. It is therefore common practice for them to establish stable and lasting relationships with actors from the field of social work in order to provide social support for their beneficiaries during the training.

2.4. Conclusion

Generally, it should be noted that it is essential for training providers to ensure that they develop collaborations with local actors, whether from the worlds of business, social work and/or other actors in the field of training.

The importance of the linkage between the vocational training schemes and the other actors is now widely recognised by many researchers and professionals in the field. These practices in themselves are therefore not particularly innovative. However, recognising that the effectiveness of vocational training and insertion depends on such linkages does not necessarily mean that they are implemented in the same way.

To create a support network that is genuinely beneficial to the beneficiaries, the centre needs to mobilise its "weak links" by multiplying the relays and partnerships. Such an approach demands time and the building of mutual trust between actors in the fields of training, the economy and social work. In practice, these bridges are not always easy to build and maintain, as the approach requires overcoming competing compartments and institutional wagon-circling, in order to recognise one another's complementarities.

In summary, developing this fabric of partnership relationships of trust is a paramount condition for genuinely expanding the beneficiaries' prospects for social and vocational integration. Networking in an enabling and empowering manner should be aimed at providing the individuals with access to quality information in order for them to be able to form their own opinions and exercise informed and free choices.

Partnerships with a variety of local actors are not easy to build; the task involves overcoming competing compartments and to recognise the complementarities of each one.

KEY ACTIONS

In order to broaden the field of social and vocational opportunities for beneficiaries at risk of insecurity, it is essential that the training providers establish lasting and effective co-operations and partnerships with the different actors intervening in the training and insertion pathway.

Creating such a framework of relationships of trust enables the responsibility for the social and vocational integration of the most vulnerable to be shared.

In order to do this, the training providers are concretely asked to:

- ▶ strengthen the involvement of actors from the world of business and, in particular, employers in the sector the training relates to in at least two ways. On the one hand, by encouraging their regular intervention in the training curriculum in order to put the beneficiaries in contact with potential employers, as well as to ensure that the course contents match the requirements of the target trade. On the other hand, by developing and maintaining a network of partner businesses that can offer training placements with a real possibility of employment afterwards;
- ▶ strengthen cooperation with other players in the field of training in order to facilitate the beneficiaries' transitions between different training schemes while keeping their learning outcomes. This integrated approach ensures that the individuals have real access to the services on offer from different operators, which extends the range of their own choice;
- pursue or strengthen close collaboration with actors in the field of social work in order to provide the beneficiaries with "social" supports and services that can be mobilised if needed.

3.

ACTIONS OF INSTITUTIONAL RESISTANCE AIMED AT INCREASING THE AUTONOMY OF THE TRAINING PROVIDERS

The training providers are not organisations that are closed in on themselves. They operate in a political and institutional environment that signposts and delineates, on a day-to-day basis, their administrative, organisational and educational practices.

The framework for action imposed on the vocational training sector can have serious repercussions on the centres' practices and their ability to act. The professionals in charge of providing the socio-educational accompaniment to the beneficiaries are therefore in a paradoxical position: while they are tasked with fostering the autonomy of their trainees, they are often themselves faced with constraints on their autonomy in carrying out their functions. Yet, this freedom of action is an important lever for broadening the field of social and vocational opportunities for the beneficiaries and for providing them socioeducational support that matches their needs.

The training providers are not, however, completely deprived of the ability to act on the matter. They may choose to develop strategies for influencing some of the institutional rules and, in this way, seek to extend their power to act autonomously. This more or less great ability to develop a margin for manoeuvre with respect to the imposed institutional framework is linked to "process aspect of freedom" thanks to which the centres can remain, relatively, in command of the direction of their socio-educational actions, consistent with the needs of their target group.

In this report, the attention has so far been focused on the space for freedom of choice and action given to the beneficiaries in relation to the proposed training course. Here, it is a question of examining the freedom of decision and action that the professionals working for the training centres can carve out for themselves relative to the political and institutional framework imposed. In other words, faced with policies for activating the unemployed that aim for increased standardisation of training courses for jobseekers, what are the strategies deployed by the professionals to resist the directions put forward and make the socio-educational specificities of their schemes for groups removed from employment prevail? Freedom to decide is built through negotiation, and therefore brings into play the power relationships between the representatives of vocational training organisations on the one side, and the political and institutional actors in the field of training on the other.

The possibility of developing a power of negotiation with the other actors on this question is linked with the capacity for collective mobilisation of the staff of the centres and of the sector of which they are part. Therefore, for the training centres, the opportunity to belong to a training sector that is institutionally recognised at the regional and/or national level is an undeniable asset in defending their missions and values. In Belgium, the way in which the sector of Social and vocational insertion centres (CISP) is organised illustrates this capacity to form alliances at the community and sub-regional levels.

In French-speaking Belgium, vocational training organisations that intervene on target groups that are poorlyqualified and removed from employment are federated within a sector that has benefited from being institutionally recognised for close to 10 years. Beyond this joint legal framework, the centres have expressed their willingness to develop a capacity for collective action to defend their specific goals. In order to do this, they have organised themselves into five federation; these are further grouped into an interfederation, which is the body that organises and represents the whole sector at the level of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation. This official body enables the sector to develop its actions of institutional resistance to the political orientations formulated in the field of training and integration that go against its ends and values. This federating body creates a balance of forces that is favourable to sector during negotiations, which makes it more able to orient legislation in favour of the realities and needs of its target group. In order to formulate demands that are in step with the realities on the ground, the sector has also organised itself into subregional platforms. The latter are a space for meetings and exchanges between the managements of the centres within a same administrative area. These platforms play several roles. Firstly, they provide a chance for training providers to get collectively involved in projects for reflection or action in response to the various specific local needs. Furthermore, the exchange of observations concerning the sub-region enables the communication with the interfederation to be more consistent; the latter can exercise its political lobbying role in an appropriate way, based on what is concretely observed at the local level. Having a representative of the platform on the joint consultative and advisory body in matters of employment and training at the sub-regional level enables the sector to make its voice heard. This political presence at the sub-regional level is essential for negotiating a degree of autonomy in terms of the centres' decisions and actions.

La possibilité
de développer
un pouvoir de
négociation avec
les acteurs politicoinstitutionnels est
liée à la capacité
de mobilisation
collective des
opérateurs de
formation.

The possibility of developing a power of negotiation with the political and institutional actors is linked to the training providers' capacity for collective mobilisation.

⁷ The interfederation represents the whole of the sector of training-through-work enterprises (EFT) and the social and vocational insertion organisations (OISP) in Wallonia et à Brussels. In doing this, it is recognised and subsidised by the Wallonia region and the European Social Fund.

The institutionalisation of a vocational training sector and its organisation into various territorial federations and platforms is, in itself, a practice that is neither innovating nor exemplary. In other European countries, such as France and Italy, the training providers are also members of national and/or regional vocational training networks. The specificity of the Belgian case resides in the determination to use those institutionally organised and recognised settings as spaces for collective mobilisation and resistance. Inversely, in France, the manager of a centre providing guidance towards employment recognises that they do not use the professional federations to which his organisation belongs as a place for collective action to seek to extend the centre's ability to act.

Constructing training to the to see their work political context. Generally, the effectiveness of this ability to form alliances and engage in collective resistance implies a strong coherence within the sector. To achieve this, a collective consciousness and a common identity have to first be developed among the actors in the sector, at every level. This involves ensuring that training in collective action is provided to all workers in the sector, and that the latter are encouraged to see their work as taking place within a political framework. Building this collective consciousness is an indispensible precondition to developing consistent joint practices and discourse.

Developing a coordinated collective discourse and action implies de-compartmentalising, as much as possible, the practices of workers in the sector and, more broadly, across all players in the social sector who are confronted with the same issues. It is a question of fostering moments for meetings and exchanges between the different partners working on those same social issues. The impetus gathered from shared initiatives for reflection and action, which go beyond the formal compartmentalisation of the institutions, enables observations to be shared and to consider appropriate joint responses. The initiative to provide training for collective action, led by actors in the field of social and vocational insertion in Belgium provides a fine example in this area.

In Belgium, as a result of an observed increase in the institutional violence experienced by the professionals working in the field of social and vocational insertion, various actors from the sector in on of the provinces of Wallonia set up a training initiative on collective action for their staff. The aim was to mobilise their collective intelligence to reflect on the position to take in the face of this institutional "violence", as well as the professional and political responses to bring in order to resist this drift and retain some power to act.

a key step towards visibility of the credibility of its Building a coordinated collective voice is a key step towards increasing the visibility of the sector and the credibility of its demands. This work to build coherence within the sector enables the training organisations to more readily establish a favourable balance of forces in negotiations with the political and administrative authorities in charge of training and employment policies. This visibility for the sector facilitates relationships based on consultation in order to better put forward their demands.

Thee power of this ability to negotiate also provides training bodies an opportunity to establish more balanced relationships within the framework of prescribed institutional partnerships, notably with public bodies operating in the field of training and employment at the national or regional level. When this power of collective resistance of the centres is weak or non-existent, as is the case in some of the countries analysed, the framework of the partnership is imposed without consultation. Training providers are then seen as mere subcontractors with no margin of autonomy concerning various aspects of the training they dispense - such as the obligation to take on claimants sent by the public employment authorities, the obligation to undertake training actions where the themes, the methods and the duration are imposed by the prescribers, notably.

This imposed cooperation demonstrates a tendency to instrumentalise the training providers, which leads to a unilateral relationship between them and the prescribers. This lack of autonomy is harmful to their ability to provide training actions that are matched to the real needs of their target groups.

Inversely, the capacity for collective resistance by the sector in which the training providers operate enables them to develop bilateral partnership relations based on a spitit of greater consultation and respectful of the interests and aims of all parties. This is the case in Belgium and in Italy.

In Italy, a training provider that runs a course in graphic design was able to negotiate adjustments of some aspects of the course for certain candidates facing great difficulties with the public certifying and funding bodies. This concerned lengthening the duration of the course and/or lowering the aims in relation to the vocational standards set by the regional authorities. In the latter case, the beneficiaries of the course are awarded a certificate of skills, rather than the official qualification awarded by the Region.

KEY ACTIONS

In order to strengthen the capacities of the professionals in the field for autonomous action, and to teach them how to resist in the face of the political and institutional ordinances that go against the interests of their target group, the development of new professional skills linked to the capacity for collective mobilisation and action should be fostered.

In practice, this means supporting the setting up of training activities for the centres' staff at every level (from the management to frontline trainers), aimed at developing the political dimension of their work - constructing a collective voice, setting up spaces for discussion and exchange with other actors in the field of insertion facing the same issues.



This study, which was carried out within the framework of the «T-CAP» European project, had the general aim of providing the professionals working in training and insertion with tools and pointers for the development of enabling vocational training schemes aimed at a target group made up of adults at risk of insecurity.

In order to do this, it aimed to analyse the educational, organisational and institutional practices of 16 training bodies from five European countries, using the capability approach developed by A. Sen (2000).

Over the course of the study, it was a matter of making observations, identifying good practices and, were made, good practices identified and, *in fine*, within each section of the two empirical chapters (chapters 3 and 4), formulating proposals for concrete actions aimed at improving the capabilities of jobseekers removed from the labour market. The people involved in providing training for a target group that is at risk of insecurity will therefore, over the course of the pages, find a basis for reflection and action for adopting a professional posture that is aimed at the enablement and empowerment of individuals.

At the end of this work, it is a matter here of drawing out three main pointers that provide guidance on the implementation of training and insertion practices aimed at enabling individuals. These general guidelines summarise the key action points formulated in the different chapters.

Respectively, they concern the development of the individual and collective capacity for action of individuals in order to «equip» them to face the demands of the labour market and social life, strengthening collective responsibility to broaden the range of opportunities for social and vocational integration for the beneficiaries, and increasing the operators' ability to weigh on the public decision-making processes in order to increase the freedom of action of local actors in performing their function.

1.

INCREASING THE INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE CAPABILITIES OF INDIVIDUALS: PROVIDING SOCIOEDUCATIONAL SUPPORT THAT IS ADAPTED TO THE UNIQUENESS OF THEIR SITUATION

The heart of the mission of bodies set up to provide training for adults at risk of insecurity is to provide their target group with social and educational support that is adapted to their reality. In order to do this, these schemes should be centred on the persons and their specific needs, rather than on procedures, which are often disconnected from the realities on the ground.

Comparing different training schemes has enabled us to bring to light several conditions that are indispensible for designing training schemes that foster the development of capabilities.

In order to respond to the needs, the interests and the real possibilities that people have, personalising the training course is a condition that is central for developing enabling training practices. This need for personalisation has several implications.

The training providers must first ensure that they give themselves the means to develop access, selection and guidance practices that are inclusive and do not discriminate against the most vulnerable. This means that the schemes will benefit from being designed in such a way that they serve the beneficiaries' social and vocational project, by making sure that the offer of training is realistic in relation to their possibilities and that it is concretely accessible to them.

The operators will also benefit from seeing their training and support activities as part of a comprehensive approach towards the beneficiaries. Outside-of-work considerations need to be taken into account, as do the subjective variables that hinder their social and vocational (re)integration. This involves setting up mechanisms for recognising and valuing what individuals are, their experiences, their skills, their potentialities, both within the framework of the learning process and that of accompaniment towards insertion.

These individual empowerment actions contribute to the construction of a positive self-image, which is a precondition for successfully undertaking an insertion project that is desired. To recognise the need for this individual work is not, however, to oppose to a more collective approach to the problems encountered by the individuals in the course of their pathway towards integration. On the contrary, the individual approach benefits from being linked to collective empowerment work that teaches the beneficiaries that their opin-

ion has worth and that they have the capacity to act collectively on common issues that affect them.

Alongside the development of skills strictly related to employment, improving social and citizenship skills, which are more crosscutting, is a sine qua none condition for a training course aimed at extending their capabilities. Developing those skills helps emancipate the individual and increases their versatility, a quality that is valued on the labour market.

The operators must also give themselves the means to favour the development of training courses centred on the acquisition of skills through regular immersion in real work situations throughout the course. Alternation between the place, rather than the mode of learning is an essential condition for the beneficiaries to be able to make sense of the training and for them to see it as a concrete means for accessing a trade. In order to fully serve the learning outcomes, it is best for such immersions to be accompanied by regular socio-educational support and a triangulation of the employer-intern/employee relationship.

Personalising the training pathway therefore involves placing the beneficiaries at the centre of the scheme. This means taking seriously their aspirations and their views on issues that affect them. It is neither a matter of imposing a social and vocational project, nor of carrying out processes in the place of the individuals. On the contrary, it is about recognising them as fully-fledged actors in their own integration and working *with them* in the construction of their project, by providing them with correct advice and information about the outcomes and consequences of their decisions.

Consequently, fostering autonomy by encouraging the exercising of free and informed choices constitutes a central pillar for a training course aimed at improving the capabilities of individuals. It is about the co-construction of a training pathway that they agree with. Freedom here does not mean the absence of some constraints. When the beneficiaries freely consent to the experiences they are being offered, they will more readily accept a binding framework (administrative rules, organisational constraints, timetables, etc.) linked to the path they have chosen. Constraints can also be a lever, if they makes sense to the individual and enable them to achieve the goals they have freely set themselves.

2.

TAKING COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY
FOR THE TRAINING OF POORLYQUALIFIED PERSONS: STRENGTHENING
THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL
MULTI-PARTNER MECHANISMS
TO BROADEN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL
AND VOCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
OPEN TO THE BENEFICIARIES

While it is important to act on the persons in order to «equip» them to face the labour market, they should not be the ones who carry the full responsibility for their integration, especially in a situation where employment offers are not available to all. It is also important to simultaneously act on the social and economic environment, in order to increase the effective possibilities of social and vocational insertion for the beneficiaries in more or less direct manners. A useful way of doing this is, to use the words of A. Franssen et al (2014), to act with the persons on the systems (and not just on the persons), by favouring inclusive and cooperative strategies.

The task is to build lasting and effective partnerships, based on trust, with the different local actors in the world of insertion: the professionals in the fields of guidance and social work, actors from the world of business, as well as other actors in the training sector.

Setting up local multi-partner networks make it possible to broaden the range of opportunities for integration open to the beneficiaries, in the sense that it gives them access to effective resources for guidance, further training, psychosocial support, as well as resources in terms of work placements and, especially, employment.

For the training providers, a first major challenge is to be able to involve businesses in the training course and that the employers take more responsibility in it.

A second challenge consists in further securing the training and insertion pathway for each beneficiary by ensuring a greater continuity between its different stages. This requires establishing partnerships between different training providers in order to take advantage of the complementarity of schemes by recognising learning outcomes, through a system of pathways and bridges. It is also a matter of setting up more coordinated actions between actors in the field of training on the one hand and, on the other, with those tasked with ensuring a return to work, with a view to increasing the coherence of transitions between training and work, including in socially-valued citizen activities. A third challenge consists in maintaining or strengthening a close

collaboration with the actors in the field of social work, in order to provide the beneficiaries who may need and want it with access to social support and services.

Consequently, the training providers are invited to take on more of a function as an intermediary, by fostering the creation of bridges between the different «social worlds» of insertion (Franssen et al, 2014). Establishing partnerships anchored in the local fabric enables them to play a real role of accompaniment of individuals towards occupational and social integration (rather than just accompaniment for jobseekers).

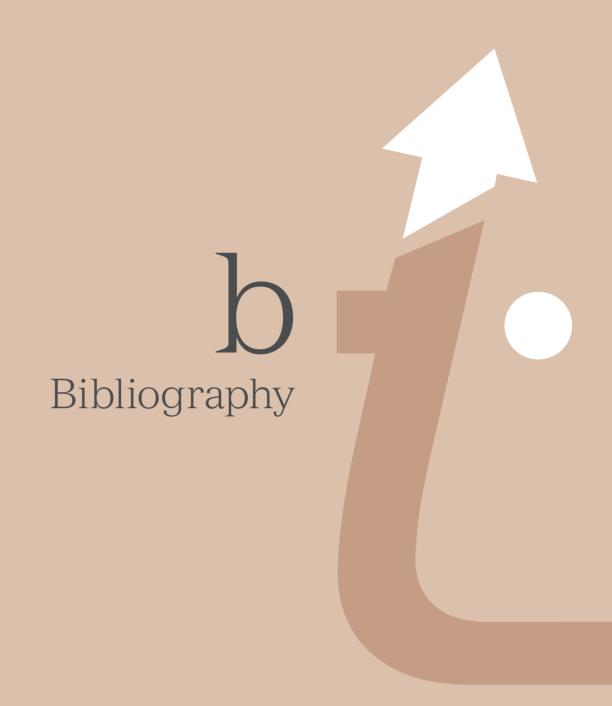
3.

STRENGTHENING THE TRAINING PROVIDERS' CAPACITY TO WEIGH ON THE PUBLIC DECISION-MAKING PROCESS IN ORDER TO EXTEND THE FREEDOM OF ACTION FOR ACTORS IN THE FIELD OF TRAINING IN CARRYING OUT THEIR FUNCTIONS

The imposed organisational and institutional framework in which training providers operate has important repercussions on their professional practices and on their ability to act. With this being the case, local actors in the field of training are often faced with a paradox, which consists in trying to foster autonomy for the beneficiaries, while themselves experiencing a lack of autonomy in carrying out their function. Yet, broadening their scope for action is an essential element in order for them to be able to develop the socioeducational supports adapted to the realities of their target group.

Training providers and the institutional sector that represents them are therefore encouraged to devise strategies for collective action aimed at extending their institutional negotiating power an thus increase their weight in the public decision-making process.

This capacity for institutional resistance and negotiation gives local actors the means to take part in defining public policies in the sphere of training and insertion. This more equitable access to the levers of power enables a redefinition of the balance of forces that governs the way public policy is constructed, and to establish a greater equality between the partners in the imposed institutional partnerships. By working towards a power relationship that is more transverse, based on co-construction of public policy and action, this mobilisation strategy is, in fine, an essential factor in providing local actors on the ground with greater possibilities for autonomy and room for manoeuvre in carrying out their functions, a sine qua non condition for developing training practices that are genuinely enabling.



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Chapiter 1
THE CAPABILITY
APPROACH: A NEW
MODEL FOR ASSESSING
VOCATIONAL
TRAINING SCHEMES

- 1. Introducing the concepts
 - 1.1. Capabilities and functionings
 - 1.2. Conversion rates and freedom of choice



Chapiter 2 A FIELD STUDY ON A EUROPEAN SCALE

- 1. The aim of the study
- 2. The dimensions of the analysis
 - 2.1. Support measures for increasing the capacity to act
 - 2.2. Freedom of choice and action
 - 2.3. The results obtained
- 3. The methodology employed
 - 3.1. The difficulties encountered
 - 3.2. Method for gathering information in the field

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Chapiter 3 PROVIDING EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL SUPPORT THAT IS ADAPTED TO THOSE IN RECEIPT OF TRAINING

- Reducing the inequalities in access to training
 - 1.1. Non-discriminatory access practices
 - 1.2. (Re)orientations tailored to the beneficiaries' realities
 - 1.3. Making accommodations
- 2. Favouring holistic support for the beneficiaries
- 3. An approach to training and support "with the other"
 - 3.1. Supporting autonomy and the exercise of free choices
 - 3.2. Equipping the beneficiaries to face the «social worlds»
- 4. Training schemes that are connected to the reality of the workplace
 - 4.1. Obvious educational advantages
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Chapiter 3 PROVIDING EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL SUPPORT THAT IS ADAPTED TO THOSE IN RECEIPT OF TRAINING

- 5. Teaching methods that are participatory and enhance self-worth
 - 5.1. Giving value to the beneficiaries' experiential knowledge
 - 5.2. Favouring collective learning by and with peers
 - 5.3. Favouring assessments that are at the service of the beneficiaries' progress
- 6. Longer and more flexible training courses
- 7. Developing practices for individual and collective empowerment
 - 7.1. Actions for empowerment at the individual level
 - 7.2. Actions for empowerment at the collective level
- 8. Supporting the transition between training and social and vocational integration

Chapiter 4 EXTENDING THE RANGE OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES OPEN TO THE BENEFICIARIES

1. Acting on the direct opportunities for employment accessible to the beneficiaries

OF TRAINING

- 2. Actions in support of employment opportunities
 - 2.1. Building a network of players in the world of business
 - 2.2. Establishing collaborations with other actors in the world of training
 - 2.3. Establishing links with actors in the field of social work
 - 2.4. Conclusion
- 3. Actions of institutional resistance aimed at increasing the autonomy of the training providers



Chapiter 5
CONCLUSIONS AND
SIGNPOSTS FOR ACTION

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Bibliography





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