



Women in the Labour Market, Croatia

What?

'Women in the Labour Market' was a project implemented between 2010 and 2012 by the Croatian Employment Service (CES), under the framework of the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance. The project involved a grant programme to support business creation among unemployed women as a way of returning into work. The objective was to increase the employability of disadvantaged women, particularly those over 40 years old, the long-term unemployed, women from counties with higher-than-average unemployment rates, and women belonging to ethnic minority groups, including Roma.

Why?

The project was initiated to reduce disadvantages faced by unemployed women in the labour market. The key indicators show that although gender disparities have decreased, there is a gender gap in employment rates and women continue to have lower economic activity and earnings compared with men. Women face difficulties in accessing, returning to, and remaining in work. Many hold temporary or insecure jobs which makes them vulnerable to poverty. Unemployed women between 40 and 65 years old face particular obstacles in finding and securing employment.

Key Activities

The programme addressed these challenges by providing grant funding to a range of gender-sensitive and tailored labour market policies and initiatives for disadvantaged women. Local partners, including CES offices, social welfare centres, municipalities, government agencies, trade unions, employers' associations and civil society representatives were involved in designing and implementing support services. The grant scheme was launched in 2009 with a call for proposals. Eligible organisations could apply individually, or in partnerships, for 12-month projects with funding of between EUR 90 000 and EUR 140 000 for a range of activities, including: provision of information on work opportunities, work incentive measures, creation of new methods of work, services facilitating access to the labour market, activities to increase employability, and creation of networks and partnerships supporting disadvantaged women.

From 55 applications, 18 project proposals were awarded funding in 2010. Three of these were designed to address unemployment of disadvantaged women particularly through self-employment, using tools, such as:

information provision and training on basic entrepreneurship skills, including planning and marketing, development of relevant publications, manuals and websites, and organisation of business meetings connecting project participants and potential employers.

Impact

The programme enabled institutions at the national, regional and local levels to develop knowledge and support measures for disadvantaged groups in the labour market, notably women. The key success of the grant scheme was the specificity of the call stimulating competitive bidding as well as flexibility to allow bidding institutions to form consortia and to develop bids most appropriate to the needs of their communities. The three projects aimed at supporting unemployed women helped 105 beneficiaries enter self-employment or paid employment.

This case study was adapted from material published in: OECD/EU (2016), Inclusive Business Creation: Good Practice Compendium, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264251496-en> [1]

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Links

[1] <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264251496-en>