

Local Employment Plans

The Local Employment Plans aim at activating and mobilising local stakeholders in order to guarantee the creation of new jobs for the unemployed, as a result of the diagnosis of specific local needs and of highlighting the development potential in the areas of intervention.

This is being implemented through Local Action Plans, which concern a designated geographical area of intervention.

The planning and implementation of the Local Action Plans are performed by Development Partnerships with the participation of representing organisations in the related geographical area of intervention.

The Local Action Plans, having as reference field the local labour market, focus on supporting the beneficiaries and the enterprises in the area of intervention for coupling supply and demand of labour.

Emphasis is placed both to serve the needs of the existing local business community as well as to further expand it through supporting and strengthening young entrepreneurs and highlighting new sustainable business fields.

The basic activities concern the preparation of unemployed beneficiaries to enter the labour market, through counseling and training. The main characteristic of the Local Employment Plans is that their funding depends at a large extent on the number of beneficiaries who will eventually reach employment.

The Local Action Plans reassure that (a) the beneficiaries who will establish their own business shall be properly prepared so as to set up enterprises that will address identified needs in the areas of intervention and will be based on exploiting the special characteristics of the region, as outlined in the Action Plan, and/or (b) the beneficiaries who will be promoted for a grant/ subsidy from other investment etc. programmes shall be properly prepared to access the related programme, and/or (c) the beneficiaries who will be employed by companies shall be properly prepared so as to cover real and identified needs of the companies that will hire them.

Thessaloniki: Cradle of entrepreneurship and extroversion towards employment

The Development Partnership “Thessaloniki of employment” is implementing a Local Action Plan for boosting employment in the Regional Unit of Thessaloniki.

The Local Action Plan “Thessaloniki: Cradle of entrepreneurship and extroversion towards employment” is part of the Thematic Priority Axis: «Facilitating access to employment», of

the Operational Programme «Human Resources Development 2007 –2013», which is co-financed by the European Social Fund (ESF).

It strengthens employment in the following sectors:

- COMMERCE, focusing on e-commerce
- TOURISM, with special interest in cultural and alternative tourism
- INNOVATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP
- SOCIAL ENTERPRISES.

The Action is addressing to 160 beneficiaries – registered in the unemployed register of the Manpower Employment Organization (OAED) in the Regional Unit of Thessaloniki – who are benefited through:

- **Training programmes** for acquiring professional competencies in the fields of commerce and tourism as well as acquiring social skills.
- **Counseling**, aiming at
 - Needs assessment
 - Business establishment and operation
 - Undertaking initiatives of social entrepreneurship
 - Supporting beneficiaries who will be employed for their (re)entering the labour market,

while being **indirectly benefited** by actions of wide **Networking** and **Information – Awareness Raising**.

Fighting unemployment is achieved within:

- Setting up new enterprises
- Finding job in companies in the Regional Unit of Thessaloniki through recruitment and work experience contacts
- Establishing social enterprises and working in them.

Development Partnership

- Development Non-profit Agency of Professionals of Thessaloniki (*Lead partner*)
- Professional Chamber of Thessaloniki
- Traders Association of Thessaloniki
- Trade Development Institute
- Special Account for Research Funds of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

- Public Consulting & Development – Development Consultants S.A.
- Gnosi Anaptixiaki NGO
- Greek Trade Development Center
- Vocational Training Centre “Dia Viou Gnosi”

Action Plan – Aim

The aim of the Action “Thessaloniki: Cradle of entrepreneurship and extroversion towards employment” is to implement a Local Action Plan in the whole Regional Unit of Thessaloniki within the intervention areas of e-commerce and tourism, focusing on alternative forms of tourism. In parallel, special emphasis is placed on the development on the promising sector of social entrepreneurship.

The focal point of the Action is the preparation of 160 unemployed, through training activities for the acquisition of professional and horizontal qualifications as well as through counseling, information, support and networking activities, in order to be able to carry on business activities and to staff existing enterprises responding to their contemporary requirements.

Sets of Activities

A. STUDIES – TOOLS – RESEARCH

It includes studies for the analysis of the labour market in the region and the intervention fields, the highlighting of good practices in social economy and the design of creation and operation of the necessary networks and tools that will be implemented within the set of networking activities. In this way, the bases for a dynamic and lasting promotion employment model are developed, aiming at constantly monitoring the market and the employment in the intervention fields.

B. NETWORKING

It consists of a series of networking activities with other Development Partnerships, between the members of the Development Partnership, between the labour market and the unemployed, between new enterprises, with mentors as well as with collective, training organisations and employment agencies. It reassures an integrated approach and a multilevel and coordinated cooperation, for the sustainability and dissemination of the project’s results, the concentrated information of the unemployed and the comprehensive tackling of their problems, the consolidation of innovative initiatives.

C. INFORMATION – AWARENESS RAISING

It includes the development of an Information Internet Portal, the organization of career days and of excellence contest with the award of new business ideas, to motivate the target groups. In parallel, it makes use of the dynamics of mass media with various publicity actions and develops promotion material. Moreover, through conferences and press releases the awareness raising of the companies, the local society and the target groups is being targeted. Finally, it includes activities for publicizing the project's results.

D. PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION

It refers to the coordination of the required activities for the implementation and completion of the Action that the Development Partnership has undertaken.

E. TRAINING

It contains training programmes for the unemployed and training sessions on horizontal skills. In the phase before recruiting, four programmes for the acquisition of professional qualifications in the fields of tourism and commerce are organized. Then, emphasis is given on broadening their prospects for undertaking successful business activity with the implementation of training programmes on innovative entrepreneurship issues. Likewise, as the Action promotes social entrepreneurship, a programme for the acquisition of professional qualifications on the operation of social enterprises is realized. Furthermore, supplementary training is carried out on horizontal competencies related to employment, entrepreneurship and social economy.

F. INFORMATION – COUNSELING – SUPPORT

It contains activities that cover all stages for the promotion of the unemployed to employment. Counseling for the selection of beneficiaries and the assessment of their needs for their targeted approach is being initially carried out. Counseling on social entrepreneurship for the establishment of social enterprises and on entrepreneurship for the establishment of new innovative enterprises follows. The support to the unemployed extends to the elaboration of business plans and of studies for applying for grants, whereas for those unemployed who find a job, supportive counseling is being provided. Finally, emphasis is given on corporate social responsibility with the conduction of workshops with companies undertaking such initiatives.