



THE EUROPEAN ORGANISATION OF  
PRISONS AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

## **ACTIVE INCLUSION LEARNING NETWORK**

### **Troubled Families Transnational Event**

**9 – 10 April 2014 London**

*Active Inclusion* is a European Social Fund (ESF) transnational Learning Network, funded through the European Commission. The partners of the network come from: Belgium, Germany, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Sweden and the United Kingdom. The project commenced in June 2013, and is due to finish on 31 May 2015.

The themes that the Learning Network is looking at are:

- Troubled Families (Anti Social Behaviour; Offenders' Families; Long term/multi-generational Unemployed; and Educational Problems.)
- Disaffected Youth (Youth Not in Education, Employment or Training; and Youth Inclusion and Empowerment.)
- Marginalised in Communities (Homelessness; Physical, mental and learning difficulties; Offenders/Ex Offenders; and Drugs and Alcohol abuse.)

The overall goal of the Learning Network is to tackle unemployment amongst 'Troubled Families', 'Marginalised in Communities' and 'Disaffected Youth' by enhancing social inclusion and preventing stigmatisation. The Learning Network will identify where and what type of support is required, and what policies and practices work best and offer the best chance of success for the disadvantaged. It is doing this by examining government strategies and policies, as well as identifying and evaluating programmes, interventions and innovative work, from across the EU, that promote the social inclusion of these disadvantaged groups.

#### *Outcomes and Findings*

The outcomes and findings of the Learning Network will be used to help ESF Managing Authorities make informed decisions when introducing and assessing policy about how best to tackle unemployment amongst those groups that the Learning Network is focusing upon. Finally, the results of the Learning Network will be disseminated through an EU transnational conference and on an EU website which will have a knowledge management database section.

#### *Purpose of the Troubled Families Transnational Expert Event*

The event brought together 40 experts in the field of social inclusion from across Europe. The aim of the event was for the experts to select the six most innovative and effective collected practices about the social inclusion for each of the four disadvantaged groups that fall under the theme 'Troubled Families.' These four sub-themes were:

- a) Anti-social behaviour;



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- b) Offenders' families;
- c) Long term/multi-generational unemployment;
- d) Educational problems.

During the working groups, the most innovative and effective collected practices in the field of employment and employability of disadvantaged groups were selected by assessing a number of questionnaires that had been sent out to NGOs, charities and Government Departments, across the EU.

All the groups have identified the best 6 programmes, except the Offenders' families group which after assessment selected only 2 programmes as best practice out of a number of 12. It was found that even if many projects include offenders' families, most of them focus on the offender but very few projects that focus on supporting the family first. The research team had still to enquire further and find practices/projects that have as target group the offenders' families.

The Learning Network will then invite the organisations who submitted the six most innovative and effective collected practices, for each sub-theme, to attend a second series of transnational peer review events that are being held later in the cycle of the project. At these events the organisations will have the opportunity to present their work, and experts will be able to ask them probing questions. This will then help the European Union to identify which practices are truly the most effective and innovative for the social inclusion of the above disadvantaged groups into employment.