

change4inclusion

Transnational Project Partner Meeting 2

13.09.22 & 14.09.22

Valladolid (Spain)

Meeting Report

Participants: Ellen Van de Velde, Patrick Ruppol and Wannes Marivoet, GTB (Belgium); Kimberly Desie, Pulso Europe (Belgium); Piet Lareu, Werkplekarchitekten / Sterpunt Inclusief Ondernemen (Belgium); Inga Lezina and Katrina Sevruka, SIVA (Latvia); Claudia Serrano and Pablo Sánchez, Fundación INTRAS (Spain); Loredana Martínez and Mathias Maucher, EPR (Belgium).

Guests from Spain for the afternoon session on Day 2, Wednesday, 14.09.22: Luis Alarcos, CEO of an SME employing people with disability; Gustavo Martín, Director Valladolid, Fundación INTRAS; Reyes Pérez, Head of Disability Unit, Social Services Department, Autonomous Region of Castilla y León; Jesús Sagarra, Director of a Regional Network of Social Employment [Federación Empresarial Española de Asociaciones de Centros Especiales de Empleo Castilla y León (FEACEM CyL)]; Inés Vega, Coordinator of ESF, Disability Unit, Social Services Department, Autonomous Region of Castilla y León)

Day 1: Tuesday, 13.09.22

9h00: **Welcome** [[Pablo/INTRAS & Mathias/EPR](#)]

Pablo welcomed the participants to INTRAS.

Mathias also welcomed everybody for two days of intensive and important work to make progress in the C4I project.

9h05: **Introducing the agenda, objectives and planned outcomes of the meeting** [[Mathias/EPR](#)]

Mathias went through the agenda and gave updates concerning the changed times for the Site Visit on Day 1 and the Round Table on Day 2. The agenda was adopted with these changes.

Mathias announced that

- by the end of the meeting everybody should leave Valladolid with a clear picture on the outstanding tasks, responsibilities and deliverables (and the related timelines) and
- after a final coordination with Patrick before tomorrow afternoon he would go through an [“Overview on Outstanding Tasks, Deliverables and Activities/Events”](#) to be also used as the main planning and monitoring instrument until the end of project.

9h20: Presentation of **results of evaluation of 1st Transnational Project Partner Meeting**, 29 and 30 March 2022, Jūrmala (Latvia) – Evaluation Report (based on Quality Assurance Plan (QAP)) [[Mathias/EPR](#)]

Mathias went through the evaluation report for the 1st Transnational Project Partner Meeting, 29 and 30 March 2022, Jūrmala, including the one open question EPR had asked. It is based on 4 replies with at least one response from all countries covered by the project. All marks for all 16 questions are between 4 and 5. The encouraging overall (non-weighted) average is 4.4.

He announced that an online evaluation form is already ready for this 2nd Transnational Project Partner Meeting and that it will be circulated to all participants immediately after the meeting.

9h30: Overview on **what has been done by Flemish Steering Group since 1st Transnational Project Partner Meeting**, 29 and 30 March 2022, Jūrmala (Latvia) [[Patrick/GTB](#)]

Patrick recapitulated the basic idea of the project, namely the development of an approach and of tools to support employers to shift to and implement an inclusive organisation, thus being a project having as main objective a (lasting) change of the organisational culture. C4I is to bring together a more technical approach (as rolled out with Talentscope) and an ethical/moral one.

The latter implies the need to develop an instrument to measure the (level/extent) of inclusion in the recruitment and retention process of an organisation and more generally in its organisational DNA (cf. article on the [6 building blocks/“batteries of change” for an inclusion climate/inclusive organisation](#): 1) Leadership/ambitious top team, 2) powerful management structure, 3) sound process and project management 4) open, collaborative and healthy culture, 5) engagement of the management/strong connection with employees and 6) engagement of the colleagues.

This task has been reshaped since the last in-person meeting – with the idea of the teaser having been dropped – and is now addressed on the basis of a draft questionnaire and an interview guideline/manual (to be also tested with the project partners in Valladolid, under “Thematic Block 1”). The insights from this survey should be analysed and presented in a way to be useful for employers to understand which action they should or could take.

The mentoring aspect of the project is realised by defining an extended role for experience experts to help convincing employers and to change their mindset. This also implies the development of a training programme for experience experts to exercise their role confidently and well (by empowering them, i.a., to go from the I-level to the WE-level) as well as the elaboration of a “job/activity profile” for them. The related issues and tasks will be addressed under the “Thematic Block 2”.

9h45: **Thematic Block 1: Instruments/toolbox to measure inclusive organisations and inclusion at the workplace:** Presentation of **C4I Interview Guidelines** [[Kimberly/Pulso Europe](#)] and discussion with project partners from Latvia and Spain

- C4I Interview Guidelines to address employers who want to shift the organisational culture towards inclusive an enterprise/organisation
 - ❖ Updates on the process: What has been done since Jūrmala?
 - ❖ Introduction
- Putting ourselves in the shoes of an employer
 - ❖ Running a test session by using the C4I Interview Guidelines with all participants

- ❖ Collecting feedback **from everybody** to improve/“validate” them
- Integrating the feedback/evaluation obtained “on the spot” in the C4I Interview Guidelines
- Exchange with colleagues from **Flemish Project Partners**, **INTRAS** and **SIVA**: What concrete activities can one combine with the C4I Interview Guidelines?

Kimberly [presented](#) the Talentscope/Change4Inclusion Questionnaire and the Manual/Interview Guideline she and Ellen had worked on. She highlighted that most questionnaires they had analysed were about diversity, not about inclusiveness. As already explained by Patrick, after the project partner meeting in Jurmala, it was decided to focus instead on the Talentscope Interview Guide, to adapt it to a [Talentscope/Change4Inclusion Questionnaire](#), to start it with questions about the organisational culture and then to cover other domains and to add extra questions. They also have elaborated a [Manual/Interview Guideline](#) containing definitions and clarifications on how to understand concepts used.

In the coming month, both tools should be tested by the Latvian and Spanish project partners. They should do at least 2 test interviews (of max. 90 minutes) and give feedback on both tools. As shown on slide 9, the proposal is to structure the interview/data collection in an enterprise/organisation in 3 parts: 1) Inspirational session: make them think about it/introduction of the concept. This comprises questions such as “What is inclusive culture?”, “What are the benefits of using it?”, “What are the advantages of involving experts by experience? 2) Deep dive: more extensive, concrete and practical; 3) In-depth change process. The concrete implementation also depends on the size of a company/organisation. This third part cannot be assessed anymore in the context of this project.

In the exchange that followed, colleagues gave concrete feedback on the wording and order of the questions which should be taken up in the revised version of the 2 tools. In addition, the following points were raised (and/or agreed):

- There is a risk of “social washing” if the measures taken are not implemented with conviction, only to respond to a trend of mode around strengthening diversity and inclusion/inclusiveness.
- Do Latvian and Spanish project partners legislation have (legally obligatory) equality and/or diversity plans?
 - Latvia: Not laid down in legislation, if they are pursued it’s an initiative of the employers themselves, as part of the general HR strategy and/or as an element of their corporate social responsibility.
 - Spain: The elaboration of gender plans and of health plans is an obligation set out in the Spanish legislation. There is, however, no overarching or supporting “National Diversity Plan. INTRAS uses Quality Management Questionnaires to detect areas where they can or have to improve.
- Practically, the “test interviews” can be done both with the CEO/top management (preferred option) or with leading HR staff, e.g., the head of the HR department.
- For those colleagues with less experiences with Talentscope and this type of interviews on inclusive organisations with employers, the focus should be on the 11 questions in the 3 thematic blocks contained in the [Talentscope/Change4Inclusion Questionnaire](#).
- INTRAS and SIVA should write down the answers and provide feedback to the two instruments used to collect the evidence.
- The ideal target, based on experiences in Flanders, are middle-sized companies, i.e., enterprises with about 50 employees.
- In order to have a solid empirical basis, we should have data from 50 to 100 enterprises per country.

Action Points

- For Pulso Europe and GTB: Revise [Talentoscope/Change4Inclusion Questionnaire](#) and the [Manual/Interview Guideline](#), to be ready by mid of October
- For INTRAS and SIVA: Do the 2 test interviews with employers, do an internal test and provide feedback on tools by mid-November. EPR can do an internal test with both tools (on a voluntary basis, i.e., the results are not needed in the context of the project)

11h30: **Site visit:** Getting to know **INTRAS** in relation to selected services

The site visit was built around the use of robots, virtual reality (VR) and artificial intelligence (AI) in VET services. Two INTRAS colleagues presented the potential and functioning of a multi-sensory gradior and of “Robot Pepper”¹.

11h30: **Thematic Block 1 continued**

See above.

14h30: **Thematic Block 2: Mentoring:** Importance of co-production of services and strengthened role for experts by experience/experiential experts: Presentations [[Piet Lareu/Sterpunt Inclusief Ondernemen – werkplekarchitekten/Workplace Architects](#)] and discussions with project partners from **Latvia** and **Spain**

- Reflection on mentoring: What is it? What is the conceptual approach?
- Use of instrument “Setting up of fora/cafes”
- How is mentoring currently done/rolled out in Flanders?
- What are the activities we can include in mentoring from Talentoscope or the C4I Project?
- Sharing of experiences from **Latvia** and **Spain** and mutual learning on the issues dealt with under Thematic Block 2

Piet started his [presentation](#) by introducing the main mission (“from an inclusive labour market to inclusive entrepreneurship”) and activities of the network “*Sterpunt Inclusief Ondernemen*”. It currently brings together 35 workplace architects operating non-profit to provide support, guidance, training, advice and consultancy for enterprises. Topics covered by the network and the workplace architects are inclusive recruitment, inclusive job design, return to work, employability, and workable work, i.e., services around inclusive entrepreneurship by collaborating with civil society organisations, sector-related funds and inclusive companies.

In C4I Piet, in close cooperation with the colleagues of GTB, will address a key feature of the service model to support and strengthen companies in their search and growth towards inclusive enterprises and workplaces, the mentoring, i.e., the definition of the role, tasks and responsibilities of peer mentors and the conceptualisation of their training. He informed about examples of using peer mentors in Flanders in the fields of health care and workplace learning. He underlined that main “ingredients” of the mentoring are knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence. The Flemish project partners suggest using in the C4I project as proven approach/methodology the model of “mentorcafé” (elaborated in the project “ESF Exclusive

¹ The multi-sensory gradior, initially developed with another aim, is now being commercialised. The VR software contains features which help stimulate different senses and is also used in hospitals, i.e., in medical rehabilitation. It is the fruit of a co-creation process, involving a group of experts by experience. This method has also been used in other projects to address social isolation to collect input on how loneliness is perceived and how it could be overcome. Robot Pepper: It is used in a clinical setting, as a support tool for the occupational therapists. Research shows that it stimulates the users as it gives direct feedback and reinforcement. Pablo added that INTRAS is also involved in a project where VR is being used to prevent work accidents

Inclusive”). With a number of “Mentorcafé External Coaches” Piet had done a “reality check” and discussed the Talentscope/Change4Inclusion Questionnaire and the Manual/Interview Guideline and also had provided feedback to the relevant colleagues. Piet finally went through a number of challenges he and the workplace architects have identified when it comes to the role, tasks, responsibilities and training of peer mentors.

In the exchange that followed, Piet and GTB colleagues exchanged with the colleagues of INTRAS and SIVA on existing models of using the expertise of peer mentors in working with employers and/or colleagues to promote inclusive enterprises/workplaces and to which extent the experiences from Flanders could be replicated in Latvia and Spain. This seems challenging and for the time being not possible as “Mentorcafé External Coaches” don’t exist in the other two countries and this profile cannot be quickly developed. Still, Pablo mentioned that in sheltered workshops regional funds are used to finance “support units” where job coaches (with 1 job coach responsible for 15 persons with disabilities) work to provide help to persons with disabilities regarding the re-orientation and re-construction of their employment pathways and any support for them to stay at the workplace.

Action Points

- For Piet: Elaborate & share C4I Manual/Guidance for Mentor Café Coaches [end of October]
- For Piet: Share reflections/proposals on a business case (towards employers and public authorities who would fund the training of the Mentors and/or Mentor Café Coaches) with Patrick [end of October/mid-November]
- For INTRAS & SIVA & other the Flemish project partners: Provide feedback to the concept of the C4I Manual/Guidance for Mentor Café Coaches based on own experiences [mid-November]

Day 2: Wednesday, 14/09/22

9h00: Thematic Block 3: Experimental Expertise and the role of experts by experience/experiential experts [Patrick/GTB]

- Updates on the process: What has been done or changed since Jūrmala?
- GTB position/approach on experimental expertise
 - ❖ Vacancy and competence profile to recruit experts by experience/experiential experts in services with employers: Presentation of state of play
 - ❖ Training course: Presentation of content (including storytelling method) and sharing of experiences (so far)
- Reflection on possible activities/tools for experts by experience/experiential experts to engage with employers
- Exchange and mutual learning **with all** on pre-conditions and success factors for an effective involvement of experts by experience/experiential experts
- Exchange and mutual learning **with all** on benefits for professionals, experts by experience/experiential experts and employers from working together

Patrick went through his [presentation “Experience expertise and job inclusion”](#). The key points are summarised below:

- He explained the understanding of “expertise by experience” in the field of services for persons with disabilities. In GTB they distinguish between 3 levels/types of roles and involvement for experience experts”, the “I-level” for the individual mediation process, the “WE-level” in empowered group actions and the support by experts by experience when reaching out to employers.

- Patrick also elaborated on the 3 sets of tasks for experiential experts and on the need to define which training packages and resources are needed for them to be able to be enabled to play their role (= set of generic competences). The training courses are being designed and rolled out together with experts by experience and by involving partner organisations giving them voice as user organisations/disabled persons' organisations (DPOs) – in the case of C4I the cooperation is done with GRIP.
- Patrick explained the role of experts by experience when it comes to a fourth level, i.e., the strategic advice in the context of the facilitation of a comprehensive integration of the customer/user perspective before decisions are taken by policy makers/legislators.
- He finally informed the participants that the written version will next week be presented to the GTB Board (which also has representatives of employers' organisations, trade unions and user organisations) to be adopted as an "official" GTB policy document.

In the exchange that followed, the following points were raised (and/or agreed):

- Patrick clarified that in the GTB approach the deployment of experts by experience is paid work.
- He informed the colleagues that the final document he will circulate before mid of October will also contain an Action Plan for the period between October and December 2022 focusing on the first 3 levels/types of involvement and a detailed estimation of man-days needed to roll it out.
- Challenges when involving experience experts who are sick for a longer time when working with employers on a change of the organisational culture
- Sharing own experiences, Pablo and Claudia informed the colleagues that INTRAS also has developed training courses for experts by experience, condensed into a Manual. This work was framed and supported by a European project bringing in partners from 7 countries.

Action Points

- Patrick, by mid-October, to share the final version of the [document "Policy advice regarding the use of expertise by experience"](#)
- Claudia to share the Manuel elaborated in the context of the internal project (see above)

11h15: Thematic Block 4: Elaboration of business models [Patrick/GTB]

- Business model of Talentoscope
- Adding business model from the C4I Project promoting the involvement of experts by experience/experiential experts: What? How? Who?
- Feedback from colleagues from [Latvia](#) and [Spain](#)

Patrick presented the [Business Model Canvas for Talentoscope](#).

With the project partners he reflected on which items would need to be adapted to work as Business Model Canvas for C4I (see also next paragraph). This also is an obligatory deliverable for projects getting funding from the ESF+ Programme.

Action Points

- Patrick and Wannes to make adaptations in the Business Model Canvas for Talentoscope, based on feedback provided by the other project partners for the categories "partners", "costumer value" and "clients".
- GTB to present the Business Model Canvas for C4I to all project partners in January 2023.

12h15: Presentation and **assessment of communication and dissemination activities** since last meeting and so far in the project (compared to Communication and Dissemination Plan) [[Loredana/EPR + all project partners](#)]

Loredana went through the [presentation](#) wrapping up what already has been done and what still needs to be done when it comes to communication and dissemination activities in the context of the project.

It was agreed to discuss and decide at the next Steering Group meeting about the exact dates and distribution of tasks when it comes to the drafting of the a) 8 articles in EPR's LinkedIn and b) 2 articles in specialised media to reach employers.

All project partners are asked to a) keep up the Dissemination Grid on our dedicated MS Teams Channel and b) keep posting the project's updates on social media.

EPR will keep updating the [C4I Project Webpage](#) and do an infographic/infographic on the project building on an existing Talentoscope infographic.

Action Point

- Have a look at the slide Outstanding Tasks "Communication and Dissemination" in the file "[Overview on Outstanding Tasks, Deliverables and Activities/Events](#)" for all tasks.

12h25 **Project Action Plan => Overview of outstanding tasks, deliverables and activities/events and the related timelines and responsibilities:** Presentation and agreement on next steps in project [[Mathias/EPR & Patrick/GTB](#)]

Mathias went through a DRAFT version of the slide set entitled "[Overview on Outstanding Tasks, Deliverables and Activities/Events](#)". It will be updated after the meeting, also based on feedback needed by Patrick. He explained that he would like to use the document as the main planning and monitoring instrument until the end of project, including for the preparation of the Final Dissemination/Multiplier Event (currently foreseen for end of February 2023)

Regarding evaluation activities in the context of C4I, it was agreed that 1) EPR will do the process evaluation, including the preparation and analysis of online evaluation forms for events and meetings, 2) PULSO Europe is responsible for the Evaluation Report on Project Deliverables and 3) GTB will work on the cost-benefit analysis

Patrick clarified that the C4I Project will undergo a validation process. He, Piet (and possibly Wannes) have to present the project deliverables to external experts (e.g., from academia) and representatives of the Flemish ESF Agency. The first presentation will take place end of November/in early December, a second round in January 2023.

Mathias asked all participants to fill in the [online evaluation form](#) for this 2nd Transnational Project Partner Meeting he will send around to all participants immediately after the meeting.

14h30 **Round Table Discussion:** Opportunities and challenges of transitions to inclusive enterprises/organisations – Regulation in place, instruments used, experiences so far, next steps needed [[moderator: Mathias/EPR](#)]

- **Spain:** [Gustavo Martín, Director Valladolid, Fundación INTRAS](#)
- **Spain:** [Luis Alarcos, CEO of an SME employing people with disability](#)

- **Spain:** Reyes Pérez, Head of Disability Unit, Social Services Department, Autonomous Region of Castilla y León
- **Spain:** Jesús Sagarra, Director of a Regional Network of Social Employment [Federación Empresarial Española de Asociaciones de Centros Especiales de Empleo Castilla y León (FEACEM CyL)]
- **Spain:** Inés Vega, Coordinator of ESF, Disability Unit, Social Services Department, Autonomous Region of Castilla y León
- **Belgium and Latvia:** all colleagues/GTB + both colleagues/SIVA, with comments and inputs from their own country

Summary of some key points from the presentations and discussions with the guest speakers

- If a national labour law prescribes that long-term contracts need to be concluded, this makes the hiring of persons with disabilities (PwD) more difficult as employers see to many risks to be obliged to keep a PwD, in particular in case of intellectual disabilities, even if their work in the job does turn out as not appropriate or adapted. What is thus needed is the introduction of test periods to support the labour market inclusion of PwD in the context of support employment arrangements.
- It is important to help PwD construct a life-project, building on their capacities, skills, talents, aspirations/dreams, not only on an employment/labour market inclusion project
- For persons with intellectual disabilities and/or mental health conditions and for their employers, it is beneficial to offer jobs and tasks without tight deadlines and too much time pressure as this will also help them for days or shorter periods they cannot come to work or cannot reach their regular productivity or their usual “performance”. Another important feature is if the PwD can through the direct contact with the clients get a recognition of their capabilities, talents, skills and strength
- For social service providers and social enterprises, it is preferable to do training with small-sized groups as this allows for individualised programmes and personal attention and support by the trainers, job coaches, etc.
- Another success factor for more inclusive enterprises/organisations is the building up of networks and other fora for a direct exchange amongst employers who already have experience with the employment of PwD and others who are interested
- The shift towards inclusive enterprises/organisations is supported by the availability of a) integrated policies and coordinated benefits for PwD covering aspects of housing, (physical and mental) health, care for dependent family members and labour market inclusion and b) of publicly (co-)funded personal assistants for the PwD. In such a context social service providers and social enterprises can much easier design and put into practice tailor-made pathways in the context of supported employment.
- Special attention needs to be paid to rural areas where often no big and middle-sized enterprises – being able in an easier way to offer employment to PwD, due to their size and the greater variety of tasks, etc. – are operating. This also makes efforts to place PwD in the open/mainstream labour market (and not “only” into sheltered employment arrangements) much more challenging.
- What are the preconditions for social service providers and social enterprises to be able to make the best use of ESF money to a) on the individual level help PwD to find jobs in the open/mainstream labour market and to stay there and b) on the level of policies, corporate responsibility and mindsets to support the shift towards inclusive enterprises/organisations and the rolling out of models of supported employment.