



Poland

Pakt na Rzecz Zatrudnienia (Employment Pact)

Framework and setting

Geographic scale The Employment Pact was established as a local government initiative in the southern part of the country (Silesian region) in September 2003. The partnership covers 17 cities with a total population of 2,104,200.

Policy framework As yet there is no formal policy framework for establishing the pacts, the Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development (European Social Fund) provides financing only for single projects and does not finance partnership initiatives on its own.

Partnerships at work

Rationale The restructuring of mining and heavy industry in the region has resulted in a significant increase in the unemployment rate in recent years. In the town of Siemianowice Śląskie, the rate reached 29% in 2003, in comparison with an average of 16.2% in Silesia. Strong co-operation was therefore needed between different labour market actors and neighbouring towns in the Silesian agglomeration to reduce unemployment and improve standards of living. Co-operation between the District Labour Office in Siemianowice Śląskie and the Dublin Employment Pact (DEP) in Ireland resulted in the launch of the first Polish Employment Pact, which was formed by both social partners and governmental institutions. The purpose of the pact, signed at the International Conference on Tackling Unemployment on 5 September 2003 in Siemianowice Śląskie, was to create and implement local development and employment strategies. The need to unite and develop common actions to tackle the high unemployment rate was recognised by many local authorities in the Silesian Region, in Siemianowice Śląskie, by towns that are twinned with those in the region, and by non-governmental organisations – these organisations consequently became the pact's signatories.

Objectives The agreed objectives of the pact are:

- _ fighting unemployment through initiating common projects;
- _ improving employability by means of training for SMEs;
- _ limiting social exclusion;
- _ supporting local development; and
- _ providing training and educational programmes tailored to labour market needs.

Functions _developing and implementing employment projects;
_designing training courses and workshops;
_creating and maintaining cooperation between the pact's partners; and
_promoting the idea of partnership in local communities.

Policy areas Labour market policy, social policy and social economy

**Policy tools/
Instruments** The major instruments used within the pact are: training programmes and workshops provided to SMEs; the design and implementation of various projects; non-profit employment projects targeted at the long-term unemployed, youth, women, people with special needs (disabled) and those with low qualifications, and people who risk social exclusion.

Timeframe The pact has been in existence since September 2003 and is ongoing. The most intensive actions are planned for 2007-2013 according to the new National Development Strategy.

Partners Representatives of local authorities and labour market institutions, entrepreneurs, NGOs, Dublin Employment Pact, Internationaler Bund (Germany).

Contracts All partners signed the partnership agreement.

Legal status The partnership is an informal body and has no legal status. Its work is based on the voluntary participation of signatories.

Sources of Financing Currently local government funds; in the future co-financing from the European Social Fund (ESF).

- Results**
- _ development and implementation of “Leonardo da Vinci” projects dedicated to labour market entrants, people without qualifications or job experience;
 - _ development of ESF projects that focus on long-term unemployed and women who want to set up their own business;
 - _ training of small and medium entrepreneurs;
 - _ training of partners focusing on Structural Funds and the implementation and management of projects;
 - _ exchanges of experience among partners;
 - _ two international conferences on tackling unemployment; and
 - _ an international exchange of experience on effective ways of fighting unemployment.

Partnerships' highlight

Programme/Project “Peer Support Clubs”

This project is implemented within the framework of Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development, Priority 1 – “Active Labour Market and Professional and Social Inclusion Policy”, Measure 1.5 – “Promotion of Active Social Policy in Support of High-Risk Groups”. Eleven partners work together on this project: ten District Labour Offices and one non-governmental organisation. The project provides support to 273 long-term unemployed persons with secondary or higher education. Its keynote is “helping others, helping yourself”. The unemployed go through vocational training and subsidised employment and engage in work for other unemployed people, as a result gaining new skills and experience. At the same time, participants are provided with psychological help, vocational counselling and outplacement assistance. In each “Peer Support Club” the unemployed have access to job offers from all partner District Labour Offices participating in this project.

Timeframe September 2005 – June 2007

- Objectives**
- _ updating the skills and qualifications and working-readiness of the long-term unemployed;
 - _ helping the long-term unemployed find employment in the open labour market;
 - _ supporting unemployed people; and
 - _ improved co-operation between District Labour Offices.

- Activities**
- _ peer support training;
 - _ vocational training and subsidised employment;
 - _ vocational counselling and psychological empowerment; and
 - _ outplacement assistance.

Results The results will be measured six months after the end of the project.

Contacts **Partnership co-ordination at national / sub-regional level**

There is no national partnership co-ordinator as yet.

Partnership co-ordinators at regional / local level

Biuro Paktu (Pact Office), 41-103 Siemianowice Śląskie, ul. Wyzwolenia 17,
Tel.: +48 / 32 / 76529-54, Fax. +48 / 32 / 76529-40
e-mail: SiemianowicePakt@poczta.fm, www.pakt.siemianowice.pl