



“КРЪГОВЕ: Иновативен подход за интегрирани услуги и гъвкаво обучение за насърчаване на ученето през целият живот и заетостта сред уязвими групи”

e-newsletter III, October 2013

CIRCLES PROJECT

As a result of the Circles project from **22nd to 25th October 2013** **3 experts and 3 representatives of targets (NGO and training institutions)** visited the **Province of Castilla y Leon in Spain**.

It was the last visit in a partner country in the form of a transnational meeting. An exciting journey with a lot of new information gained and meetings with inspiring people.



Aim of the visit

- To gain some international experience in the fields of lifelong learning and equal opportunities when creating employment and self-employment;
- To gain some international experience in the field of flexible learning and integrated services;
- To reach symbiosis between two completed EQUAL projects – SFIDA (IT) and CONCILIATE BIEZO (ES), so as to create a methodology and



**“Integrated services and flexible learning for groups at risk
GUIDEBOOK”**



“КРЪГОВЕ: Иновативен подход за интегрирани услуги и гъвкаво обучение за насърчаване на ученето през целият живот и заетостта сред уязвими групи”

Activities

- Experts' workshop;
- Meeting the team of the **“Man Project Association”**, visiting a center for dependent people in Leon;

The centers of the Association could be found all around Spain working with dependent people and offering an educational and therapeutic approach assuming that all types of dependencies indicate deep individual and social disorder.



The dependents and their families are supported in their labour and social reintegration. The Association supports a database of companies which it “is courting” so that they employ their patients. The sectors which most often respond to their efforts are the building and construction industry, as well as the

telecommunication services (Call Centers in particular).

The state, as well as the local and regional authorities, provides finances for the Association. Funds also come from donations and fund-raising campaigns. Strictly individualized approach to each person is applied. There are two types of programs and therapeutic activities – some function in specialized residential buildings, others are applied in the local centers, visited by the dependents and their families.

- Meeting with representatives of **„ASPRONA BIERZO”** - Association for the Care of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities and their Families;

The Association supports these people in working out their individual projects to improve their own quality of life and promotes social insertion in a society of justice and solidarity.

They also apply a personalized approach to each user taking into account different aspects of everyday life (education and training, housing, free time, financial resources, employment, etc.)



“КРЪГОВЕ: Иновативен подход за интегрирани услуги и гъвкаво обучение за насърчаване на ученето през целият живот и заетостта сред уязвими групи”

They believe that the best way to integrate people with intellectual disabilities is by providing training and employment within the limits of their individual abilities. Asprona Bierzo is a member of the National Confederation of Associations serving Intellectual Disability (FEAPS) since 1981. In 2006 they were awarded the Golden Cross of the Civil Order of Social Solidarity "in recognition of their intensive work with people with disabilities and their families in the province of Albacete". About 980 users, 300 of whom are employed people, are served by the Association.

They issue different promotional materials and publications to promote their programs,



activities and special events. It is a way to open the Association to the public.

They make efforts to conciliate their users' family and professional lives by offering

support in developing intellectual abilities and adaptation, psychological and emotional support, as well as physical and health support.

- Meeting with representatives of **"CARITAS"** – formal charity organization supported by the catholic church (68 regional centers in ES and many others around the world);



It works with a variety of targets – from immigrants to socially disadvantaged people. Financial support comes from municipalities, national and European funds, as well as donations.

- Meeting the mayor of the **MUNICIPALITY OF QUADROS (ES)**

The Mayor signed the Memorandum of agreement with the project partners and two more institutions and showed big interest in further collaboration activities on



“КРЪГОВЕ: Иновативен подход за интегрирани услуги и гъвкаво обучение за насърчаване на ученето през целият живот и заетостта сред уязвими групи”

behalf of the Municipality of Quadros, as well as on behalf of the province of Leon where he is a deputy governor



Individual approach in their efforts to integrate people in society and the labour market is the common thing between all the organizations visited.





“КРЪГОВЕ: Иновативен подход за интегрирани услуги и гъвкаво обучение за насърчаване на ученето през целият живот и заетостта сред уязвими групи”

TABUYO DEL MONTE – THE PLACE WHERE ROADS FINISH

About an inspiring meeting in the middle of
nowhere

Our visit to Tabuyo del Monte will remain
unforgettable – the place where roads



finish. Nothing follows after the village, where only 300 people live, among which 5 great women. Ordinary country people they are, and yet not quite. They turned into an example to follow all around Spain. Today a great number of people from around the world come to the place where all roads finish to meet these 5 women, to admire them, to learn from them, to get inspired by them, to enjoy their huge hospitality and delicious meals.

We are meeting Marisa. Severe but, at the same time, amazingly charming Spanish woman. She had inspired the other four and is still leading them. They trust her and do their best, because of their families and their children, because of the village.

In 2004 as a result of an EQUAL project these women attended and completed a course in growing mushrooms. They



withdraw a 600 000 euro bank credit and started to work hard, with enthusiasm and 24-hour energy and being totally aware of the risk they had taken. By so doing they continue even up to this day.

They created a small-scale farm first, then built-up a restaurant, which has recently been extended. They offer people extremely delicious food of various kinds. Of course, mushrooms are a must. A training hall was built up because they discovered many people come to learn from them.

Marisa's memories take her back to the meeting with the bank officials, when the women applied for a 600 000 euro credit.



“КРЪГОВЕ: Иновативен подход за интегрирани услуги и гъвкаво обучение за насърчаване на ученето през целият живот и заетостта сред уязвими групи”

They were asked if their husbands knew. Swallowing the insult the women did not give up. Being treated with distrust as women and envied by most of the other people in addition to their unenviable geographical position appeared not to be an obstacle.

Apart from the mushrooms, they involved all natural resources in their struggle to survive – herbs, forest fruit, historical and cultural heritage, pine trees, etc.

To Marisa, however, nothing of what they had done is as important as the fact that their children, university graduates, live and work in Tabuyo.

They have their own company and produce tar from the pine trees around. Marisa calls the tar “the fresh blood” of Tabuyo.

They all follow one basic principle: –“Do not over-exploit”. They all believe that overexploitation of natural resources means poverty.

They are all open to share the key to their success both with people they know and with strangers. And the key is in Tabuyo – the place, where all roads finish and the lives of 5 women and their children begin.

