

Newsletter

ESF LN transnational projects

Upcoming calendar

Theme sessions

September 22nd	Business Model Canvas
October 13th	Policy briefs
December 15th	Closing event

Validations

October 3rd	Info session validations
November 16-30	Validations
From December 20th (before Christmas break)	Written announcement about validation of the final product

All information about the validation will follow in a separate e-mail.

Transnational Conference

Social Inclusion on the Labour Market

On Friday, June 17th we met in Brussels to talk and learn about Social inclusion on the labour market. What has been done in the past, what we are doing now and what needs to be done in the future to create a more inclusive labour market? We invited keynote speakers from the academic, professional, and European fields but also took time to take a look at some practical examples of ongoing projects.

To kick off the event, Caroline Meyers and Eef Smeyers from ESF Flanders highlighted the urgency of social inclusion and the importance of developing a product and policy recommendations. Next, Nathalie Bekx from Trendhuis introduced the event's keynote speakers.

Social Inclusion Through Employment: Challenges, Opportunities, Solutions

By **prof. dr. Marc De Vos**, Professor at Ghent University, Fellow at Itinera Institute, member of Belgium's High Council for Employment, and columnist for Trends

De Vos opened the conference with a presentation on the **big picture**, as well as **trends** and **policy solutions** when crossing inclusion with employment. He outlined the **challenges** that complicate policy questions such as the service economy, labour and productivity polarisation, industrial decline, wealth inequality etc.

To meet these challenges, De Vos argues we should rather look at the **investment side** of things than at the protection side. The following table was presented as the bottom line:

	Pre-production stage	Production stage	Post-production stage
Bottom incomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary education and early-childhood programs • Vocational training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum wage • Apprenticeships • Reduced social security contributions by firms • In-work benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social transfers (housing, family, child benefits) • Guaranteed minimum income (RSA)
Middle class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public higher education • Adult retraining programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cluster policies (<i>pôles de compétitivité</i>) • SME support programs (BPI) • EU structural and Investment Funds • Occupational licensing • On-the-job training • Collective bargaining and work councils • EU trade policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployment insurance • Pensions
Top incomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inheritance and estate taxes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R&D tax credits (crédit d'impôt recherche) EU competition policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top income tax rates • Wealth taxes

It's not that we don't know *what* to do, but we don't know *how*. Therefore, De Vos gave us a few **reality checks** on how to make this politically possible. Afterwards, we dove into the situation of **Belgium**, which is greatly complicated by the three different regions and the high difference in groups. The big challenge here is not unemployment, but how to activate the group of people who are unavailable for the labour market.

Finally, Marc provided us with some **food for thought** on how we should focus the limited amount of space and money, the issues of incentives, of structural inequalities of locations and sub groups and so on.

IT Needs More Inclusion. How to Involve More Women in ICT?

By **Ingrid Gonnissen**, former CEO Xerox, ICT woman of the year 2018

Ingrid Gonnissen started her keynote with some shocking numbers about women studying ICT or working in the ICT field. Numbers that drove her to initiate a Boostcamp for Young Potentials. She's a strong believer that her Boostcamp can **increase diversity and inclusion within the ICT market and help solve the gap in open positions**.

With her **Young Potential Boostcamp for young women in ICT**, Gonnissen wants to change the dynamics in the ICT sector. In the Boostcamp, she embedded 8 principles of leadership and provides an answer to the concrete needs to create a more balanced sector. She also provides answers to challenges women in technology may encounter.

The Job Market Europe Really Really Wants

By **Maria-Anna Paraskeva**, Former Senior Policy Officer European Commission, DG Employment
Paraskeva introduced us to the **European Commission's view on inclusive labour markets**.

Promoting inclusive labour markets means making it easier for people to join or re-join the workforce. But also removing disincentives to work (linked to tax & benefits systems), promoting quality jobs and preventing in-work poverty by focusing on pay and benefits, working conditions, health and safety, lifelong learning and career prospects. Lastly, in an inclusive labour market people should receive help to stay in work and advance in their careers.

More information on the **EU policy response** (2008 & 2013) can be found on the [website of the European Commission](#) > Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion > Policies and activities > Social protection & social inclusion > Social investment > Inclusive labour markets.

Finally, Paraskeva stressed the importance of:

- the 'open method of coordination'
- upscaling what exists and works and transferring this to regional contexts
- the importance of monitoring and evaluation
- using social innovation for an inclusive labour market

How to create an inclusive labour market in Europe?

Panel with **Marc De Vos, Ingrid Gonnissen & Maria-Anna Paraskeva**
Lead by **Nathalie Bekx**

The three keynotes were followed by a panel discussion inviting the three speakers to share their thoughts on the following topics:

- Is an inclusive labour market realistic?
- What's your advice to make a short-term change?
- How can you grow your own ICT employees?
- Is there evidence of the effect of incentives?
- How can we focus on the activation of people to work? Can we do something differently?

Social Business Is Also Business. Strategies to Improve Your Societal Impact.

By Kaat Peeters, Director Sociale InnovatieFabriek

The first speaker in the afternoon was Kaat Peeters. She presented the do's and don'ts of **social business** and the essential elements of business models. Because let's face it: everybody needs one. Moreover, it must be constantly innovated. She showed inspiring examples of people and projects who are able to **scale their positive impact** with interesting business concepts.

You can find her presentation in the attachment.

Inclusion on the Labour Market: Cases

The Jos-App for More Inclusion

By Sonia Moro, researcher at Odisee

Moro shared a practical example of how to create a more inclusive labour market by presenting the [JOSapp](#). This app is all about 'Disability Inclusive Job Crafting'. Moro argues job crafting is specifically of **value among vulnerable groups**, such as low skilled workers, older people, migrant labourers and temporary employees. The Jos app targets a specific group within these groups, that is people with disabilities.

The app contains different levels focusing on different aspects of a job, like workplace, tasks, colleagues, talents, energy, challenges, task matches and plans. **The app encourages you to learn to know yourself and your work, but also to find out what fits you and what doesn't.** Later on you can choose how you want to craft your work.

Creating an Inclusive Labour Market Together

By Els Ghesquière, project coordinator I-KNOW-HOW, de Werkplekarchitecten

De Werkplekarchitecten is a group of **36 independent non-profit organisations** across Flanders. They all have the same mission: to strive for an inclusive labour market in which people who experience barriers can take on a suitable employment in a regular circuit.

De Werkplekarchitecten are specialised in supporting and offering **training and coachings** to job seekers, employers, employees and coaches in the workplace. Their trainings are tailor made and **each trajectory can be adapted to the specific request** of the employer and the specific needs of the employee or job seeker. They advice on themes such as recruitment, work resumption, employability and workable work.

We're Able

By Laila Ekchouchou, manager Time4Society

Suitable jobs for everyone is the goal of the We're Able project. It encourages employers, society and government to **integrate people with disabilities** (physical or mental health problems) **into the normal economic circuit** using an Empathy Game. The game is designed in the form of a role-play for employers, HR, team leaders, colleagues and based on actual situations.

The Empathy Game focuses specifically on **the experience of the employee with a disability after recruitment**. Not only prejudices but also possible solutions are included in the game. It raises questions about how colleagues can contribute to a successful recruitment, the consequences of the recruitment for the team and practical issues in the workplace.

Can We Create More Societal Impact?

Panel with **Sonia Moro, Els Ghesquière & Laila Ekchouchou**

Lead by **Nathalie Bekx**

Following the first three cases was a panel discussion inviting the three speakers to share their thoughts on topics such as the usability of the developed tools, the challenge to change a mindset, how to make a project sustainable and expanding target groups.

The New ESF Programme

By **Bénédict Wauters**, Director at the Flemish Department of Employment and Social Economy - ESF Division.

Lastly, Bénédict Wauters closed the conference with an insight on why ESF Flanders included inclusion in their new programme and what that implies.

The **five priorities** of the new programme are:

- 1.** Access to employment
- 2.** Social inclusion
- 3.** Lifelong learning (of which inclusive education is a part)
- 4.** Workable jobs and an inclusive labour market
- 5.** Social innovation

One of the biggest changes in the programme is the focus on **work-life approach** for those more distant to the labour market. It takes time to discover what this group of people need, because it is not always what they ask for. With sustainable, dynamic partnerships such as social institutions, labour organizations, local network actors and local authorities, functioning as one team on a territory. There will also be a specific focus on detention and life after incarceration.

Still have questions? Feel free to contact us.

Thank you for joining us.

Kind regards,

Caroline Meyers, Eef Smeyers and Fien Synaeve for ESF Flanders
Nathalie Bekx, Marie Aeyels and Florine Verdonck for Trendhuis