

CEC Political objectives

CEC brings together various organisations at local and regional levels in the field of training and socio-economic integration of people excluded from the labour market or away from it (young & adult's unemployed, low skills persons, migrant or asylum-seekers...). These organizations are active in fifteen countries in the European Union.

CEC's objective is to contribute to the definition and implementation of solidarity policies regarding populations excluded or far away from the labour market and in particular to the strengthening of the European action for promotion of socio-economic integration of these populations.

For this purpose, CEC led its action in two complementary directions: on the one hand, it develops partnerships between its members to promote innovation, identification and dissemination of best practices based on experience. And on the other hand, participates in the public debate on the improvement of public policies in this area, and especially EU policies, and cooperates to this end with all the actors involved in the fight against social exclusion.

A. CEC strengths: partnerships, methodologies and best practices in socio-economic integration

In their action towards people excluded or remote from the labour market, CEC members have in common to develop socio-economic integration pathways including as required assistance towards socialization, training, integration and support towards and into employment. In this perspective, they provide training mainly not formal allowing obtaining a series of technical and behavioural skills, and/or they promote access to work experience combining people needs and business and the labour market realities. Integration pathways favour a tailored accompaniment, anchored in local contexts and mobilizing various partners in an integrated approach using the following methods:

1. Tailored accompaniment:

- σ Continuous guidance and support for the person throughout their training pathway and, if required, during the first months of employment;
- σ Individual or in small group coaching based on learner needs, by formal or informal training (more practical than theoretical) focused on labour market needs.

2. Anchored in local and regional contexts:

- σ The bottom-up approach taking account of the local and/or regional specificities, (and so mobilises the territorial actors);
- σ Region, district or micro-district is often the most relevant scale to reach individuals, early school leavers or low-skilled by setting up formal and informal training pathways targeted the most possible on learners needs.
- σ Cooperation with actor's networks or federations at national and European levels can increase the visibility of local action and have a multiplier effect.

3. Partners mobilization in an integrated approach:

- σ Working in partnership (education, training, business, social enterprises, associative sector and public authorities) allows offering integrated support of the various components of social and economic integration ; this partnership includes engaging in training these people, encouraging learning and having companies offering internships (as appropriate to the title of Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives).

- σ The willingness to constantly assess the actions carried out with these partners encourages research and innovation synergies between actors.

B. CEC contribution to the fight against social exclusion: participation in the public debate on policies and cooperation with the actors and networks of actors.

CEC, and especially some of its members have developed regular cooperation with actors and networks of actors, public and no profit in the areas of integration, education, training and social cohesion. They also committed specific collaborations with actors of social economy and Corporate Social Responsibility. Some CEC members are also directly involved in structures with capacity to mobilise economic, social actors at sectoral or national levels.

CEC and its members are attentive to the initiatives and policies of the European institutions in the social field, not only because the European funding is crucial for the implementation of actions and transnational innovation, but also because the development of European economic integration has a growing impact on national situations and policies orientations including in the areas of employment and social policies.

CEC regrets the erosion of the social dimension of European construction over the past ten years, - because of the economic crisis, probably - but also and above all because of the orientation of political responses given to this crisis (especially austerity measures). So, CEC welcomes positively public debate opened by President Juncker and European Commission to define a European pillar of social rights. CEC finds, like the Commission, that Europe suffers from a lack of social dimension and considers that the credibility of the European project imposes to give new impetus to the promotion of social rights and a real content to the equity concept in European action. Given the increase in social inequalities, reduce the European pillar of social rights to simple exercises in the framework of the European Semester would be betraying its stated ambition.

CEC will also work on the future direction of European Cohesion Policy (Structural Funds). In this regard, it reminded that in the past, the allocation of part of the structural funds to innovative transnational initiatives has been a powerful factor of diffusion of innovations and best practices as well as support for transnational networks of actors.