



Guidelines to support disadvantaged women

• RECOMMENDATION: How to reach disadvantaged women?

Disadvantaged women represent quite a broad target group and the way of reaching them can differ in relation to their specific characteristic. We can basically divide them into following groups:

- Unemployed women (with further specification as e.g. young graduates, long-term unemployed, women 50+ etc.)
- Women on the parental leave /young mothers

Unemployed women who are actively looking for the job can be reached through the Labour Office (LO). Beside the exposition of the leaflets on a visible place or on a pin-board, you can effectively address directly the specific target group of unemployed women when organizing a workshop or a seminar directly at the Labour office. A good cooperation with a representative of Labour office is advantageous in many ways:

- 1) S/he can provide you with a room in the premises of the Labour office for free!
- 2) The venue, premises of the LO, is familiar to the target group. They can easily get there and they feel comfortable.
- 3) As the presence of the representative gives impression that the seminar is an official issue, no one dares not to come.
- 4) A representative of LO helps you to choose those unemployed who will be invited. That way s/he is able to pick up those which really fit to your target group specification you need (women 50+, young mothers, long-term unemployed).

Women on parental leave / young mothers

Can be reached mainly through family-centres, nurseries, kindergartens, etc. Using of social networks is also very efficient.

Generally, it is possible to use spreading of brochures to public sites, publication of articles in local newspapers, publication of news to special portals (e.g. for NGOs) etc.

• ACTIVITY: What activities can help disadvantaged women on the labour market?

Activities, which can disadvantaged women go through, to gain new skills or improve those they already have and in response to improve their position on the labour market should always correspond with the potential employer requirements. However, the personal development should not be underestimated. Women that are for a longer time isolated due to unemployment or a parental leave may often feel excluded from the society, unwanted, alone or useless and

these kind of feelings can severely damage their self-esteem and motivation. What a woman experience inside her has impact on how is she perceived by the surrounding, and of course also by the potential employer. These days when the unemployment rate is high and competition on the labour market is strong, these differences can be crucial when choosing new employees. Strong, eager and motivated person with less experience would be probably perceived as more suitable employee than a one, fully qualified but with low self-esteem. Even presence in the group of women which are going through similar life situation and solving similar problems helps to feel not isolated but integrated.

It is very important to get women inspired, to raise their self-confidence and realise their qualities and own potential, to learn them to step out of the box, convince them **to be active** (even as volunteers, exchange of services in local communities etc.),

The activities can focus on these issues:

- building self-esteem;
- personal encouragement;
- recognition of own strengths and weaknesses;
- identification of own hidden abilities and aspirations;
- self-knowledge;
- methods of overcoming difficult situations;
- time-management;
- self-presentation;
- preparation of CV;
- using of efficient methods of searching for a job;
- preparation for job interview.

For development of the hard skills can be useful to visit courses as:

- PC skills (basic PC skills; Internet; Web applications; or specialised courses on specific SW)
- driving license
- retraining courses (depending on the current demand)
- language courses (English).

• **METHOD? What methods can be used?**

Based on our experience we can recommend **mentoring**.

Mentoring is an activity that allows mentee draw advantage from the meeting, examples, tips and mistakes of experienced mentor. Mentor provides mentee with support and advice on the career development outside the scope of normal relations between subordinates and superiors.

For the mentee, mentoring presents active exchange of views with the mentor in order to find a way to achieve the target. The main pillars include support initiatives, guidance, directions for personal development, improving efficiency.

Mentee perceives a process of mentoring as very efficient because it provides many new insights, knowledge, and experience that can quickly penetrates into practice.

Mentoring can be both individual and group one. For some cases the ideal type is the

combination of both of them.

We recommend using of mentoring also as a supplement to standard (re)training courses.

Generally, combining **of individual and group training activities** is very effective.